

A bird's-eye view of the dreamlike living room (OPPOSITE PAGE) The staircase is the tour de force of the living room, beginning within the single-height volume and rising theatrically into the double-height zone



# DIAMOND IN THE ROUGH

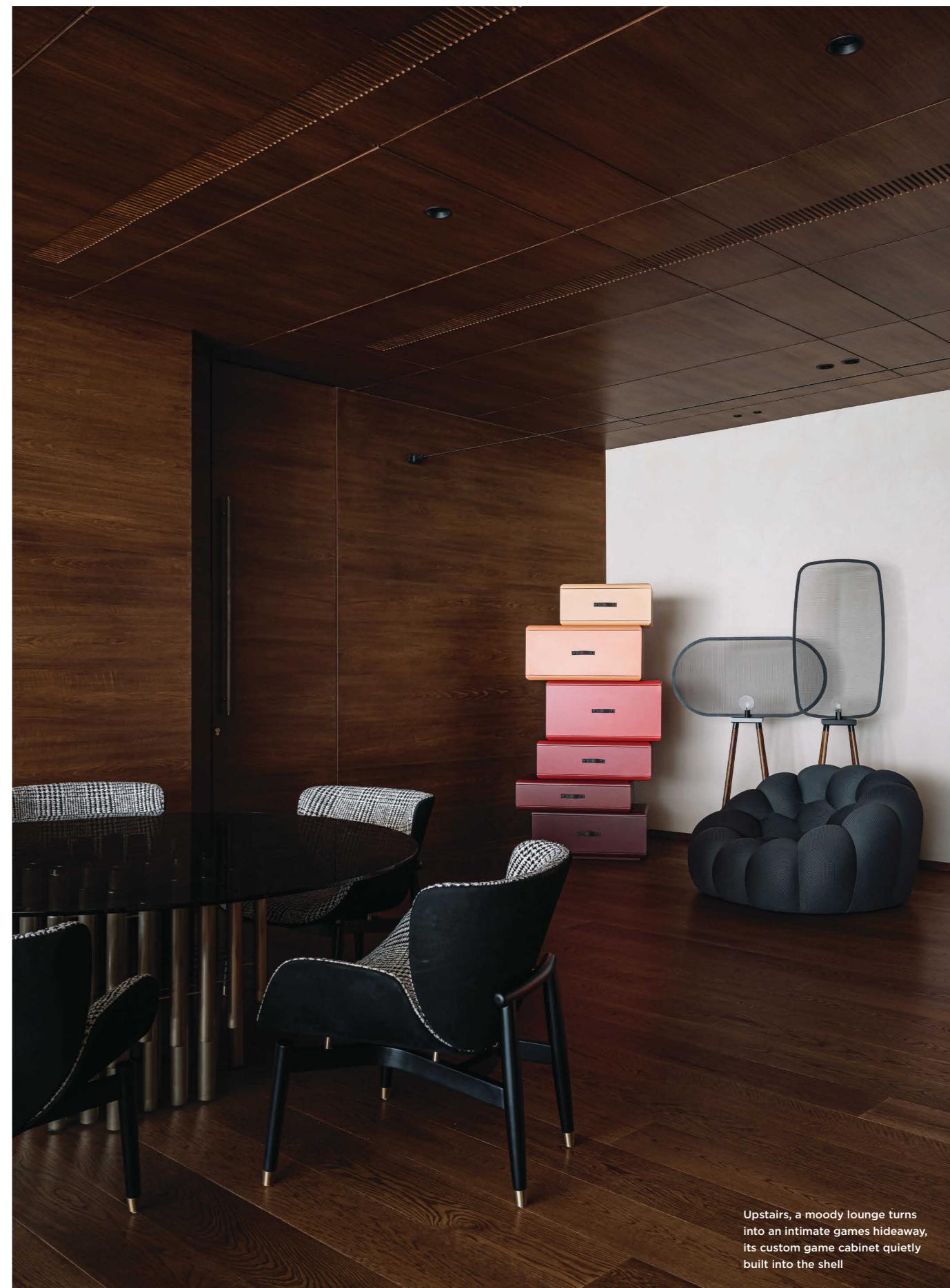
Inside a Mumbai duplex shaped by reD, with ingenuity, play, and a delightfully ingenious diamond cutter

WORDS VAISHNAVI NAYEL TALAWADEKAR PHOTOS ISHITA SITWALA STYLING SAMIR WADEKAR

A bijou seating area provides a spot of calm at the entrance



The dining room, outfitted in monochrome hues, is a study in quiet restraint



Upstairs, a moody lounge turns into an intimate games hideaway, its custom game cabinet quietly built into the shell

Originally two bedrooms, the primary suite was reimagined as a single expansive retreat, with a lounge, a study and a bookshelf carved from what was once a brick-and-mortar wall. A floating leather desk defines the transition between zones (OPPOSITE PAGE) The older child's bedroom is tailor-made for its pint-sized superhero, complete with an oversized cushioned bed and stuffed polar bear



Whoever said diamonds are a girl's best friend – the whoever being Marilyn Monroe – clearly never met Ekta Parekh or Maithili Raut. Or, for that matter, their fellow co-founder Rajiv Parekh, who'll tell you that the three architects behind Mumbai-based reD are far more fascinated by diamond cutters than diamonds. Take their latest adventure: an 11,000 sq ft duplex in Mumbai's Worli neighbourhood, stitched together from two apartments stacked one atop the other. The challenge? Connecting the units without losing access to the upper-level, sea-facing balcony. Ambitious, yes – but so were the architects. What began as a routine structural check soon turned into a full-blown diamond-cutting escapade, opening the slab and carving a discreet, hidden passage from two rooms to the balcony.

Slabs, however, were only the beginning. "What really fascinated us," Rajiv says, "was the family inside the walls." They spent weeks observing routines, quirks and little habits: the lady of the house, precise and methodical; the gentleman, more spontaneous, with notepads tucked into unexpected corners; and their mother, who has a flair for hosting. Even tiny details – the number of shampoo bottles, the kids' routines – shaped how they imagined every room.

Step inside, and the architects' touch is evident everywhere. An informal lounge flows into a double-height living room, defined not by walls but by a parade of indoor plants. A patterned stone inlay, initially modest, snakes across the floor, extended at the architects' insistence into a joyful flourish. Every corner has a story, a purpose, a playful nod to the way the family actually lives.

Upstairs, the first-floor volume floats like a suspended wooden box. Veneer wraps the space, ceiling treatments flow seamlessly and the staircase rises from the single-height into the double-height zone without requiring another structural cutout – classic reD ingenuity. "We love a problem to solve," Rajiv grins, pointing out how the staircase doubles as a sculptural moment.



Their playful approach continues throughout. A den doubles as a screening room and bar, sliding open to merge with the living area for bigger gatherings. The dining room glows with a monolithic marble table, tribal-print wallpaper and wood-panelled walls, while a compact study nods to timeless charm.

Downstairs, the bedrooms reflect the family's personalities: the mother's is serene and classical, the guest room flexible with a Murphy bed, and a tucked-away *puja* room offers a quiet corner of calm. Upstairs, a dark-wood lounge hosts intimate evenings, while the master suite – once two bedrooms – is now a sprawling retreat with a lounge, study and a reclaimed-brick bookshelf. The children's suite is pure imagination: oversized beds, a 20-foot bunk platform, a hammock, rock-climbing wall and pegboard system. Every playful detail – penny tiles, floating vanities, fluted-glass wardrobes – puts the 'fun' in function throughout daily life.

Indeed, if diamonds are a girl's best friend, diamond cutters are an architect's. A challenge-filled project is now a home as bold, intimate, and surprising as its creators – alive with clever twists at every turn. ♦ [redarchitects.in](http://redarchitects.in)

The living room exudes a lightness of being, with shapes and forms that evoke a soft lunar glow (OPPOSITE PAGE) Now you see it, now you don't: the guest bedroom's panelled Murphy bed is a space-saving sleight of hand, allowing the room to oscillate between a secondary lounge and an additional bedroom



**reD ARCHITECTS**, led by Rajiv Parekh, Ekta Parekh and Maithili Raut, is a Mumbai-based studio founded in 2004 that has grown from two people to a team of over 30 architects and interior designers. Their work spans architecture, interiors and planning, guided by research-driven design and close collaboration with clients. They focus on bespoke, site-specific solutions that respond thoughtfully to each client's lifestyle and context.

**WHAT'S THE ONE RULE YOU ALWAYS BREAK IN DESIGN?**  
Design never really has a rule. At reD, there's no absolute right or wrong – only what's right for this client, or the next one.

**IF THE HOME HAD A SPIRIT ANIMAL, WHAT WOULD IT BE?**  
An eagle soaring above the city.

**WHICH DESIGN DETAIL ALWAYS MAKES GUESTS GO "WOW"?**

The staircase. When crafted from a single material and curving upwards, it always grabs attention. We built three mock-ups before finally getting it right.

**WHAT WAS YOUR BIGGEST 'AHA!' MOMENT DURING THE DESIGN?**

Accessing the upstairs balcony without cutting through the double-height space. What felt like a small win transforms the way the double-height area feels.

**WHAT'S YOUR CURRENT COLOUR CRUSH?**

Anything Tony Piloseno creates under his brand, Tonester Paints – especially his orange-black.

