

City Sanctum



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Images by Ben Hosking*

In a megalopolis like Mumbai, finding calm in the chaos is an art — an art that one family in the city mastered with the help of architects Cyrus Patell and Eliza Higgins of Bangalore-based architecture and design studio CollectiveProject. The designers transformed the family's eighth-floor hilltop apartment into a peaceful sanctuary that maximises the views and ventilation in equal measure.

The brief was based on downsizing the home from three bedrooms to two and converting the third into a lounge. In doing so, Patell and Higgins connected the lounge to the living area to create a semi-open area that oscillates between calming escape and locus for gathering. They situated the dining room in the middle, a quiet interlude between the two spaces. One element they retained, even highlighted, was the waffle-slab ceilings, which add a sculptural flourish to the common areas.

As the architects recall, the treatment of the balcony was not quite as straightforward. 'We spent some time debating its value and even considered absorbing it into the internal footprint. Ultimately, we voted to keep it and even increased its depth,' Higgins says of the veranda that overlooks the city. The reconfiguration entailed replacing the existing window scheme with a trio of floor-to-ceiling glass panels that challenge where, or whether, the indoors end and the outdoors begin. They also fashioned a bench, meant as a sunset perch, from an existing concrete beam and a floating glass handrail.

The bedrooms were an exercise in tactful restraint, especially with respect to colour: one room was enlivened with coastal shades, while another was coated in soft green. Decor was kept to a bare minimum to bring attention to the limestone flooring.

Higgins and Patell's proclivity for personalised detailing is writ large across the interiors. Much of the furniture, including the statement bar cabinet with micro-mosaic embellishment, was custom made for the home. Other bespoke additions include the living room credenza, a bench by the entrance, the dining table, a bookshelf in the lounge and the bedside tables and brass light fixtures in the bedrooms. All woodwork was specified exclusively in reclaimed Burmese teak. Notably, the home demonstrates both local and global sensitivities, with art by such Indian artists as Madhvi Subrahmanian and Hema Upadhyay, furniture from Design Within Reach and Montauk Sofa, and objets d'art from the family's previous home taking equal pride of place.

The architects liken the home's views to a slowly turning kaleidoscope, where scenes change by the hour — or sometimes by the blink. By day, the interior is bathed in natural light, but as darkness falls, the glittering skyline takes centre stage.

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Designed by CollectiveProject, this Mumbai apartment is as much a reprieve from the city as it is an observation deck from which to appreciate the impressive panorama. The extended balcony has two seating areas, one a dining space with a set by Chris Liljenberg Halstrøm for Design Within Reach and the other a more relaxed arrangement, with a sofa from Restoration Hardware and a terrazzo coffee table by CB2







Previous page
In the living room, a Montauk sofa set is teamed with a pair of Knitting chairs by Audo Copenhagen and a coffee table from Restoration Hardware

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The bar was custom designed with a Banswara Indian marble counter and micro-mosaic feature wall by Jaipur-based Frozen Music

Facing page
The living room's floor-to-ceiling glass means that by day the space is bathed in light, and come sunset, the twinkling city is on full view

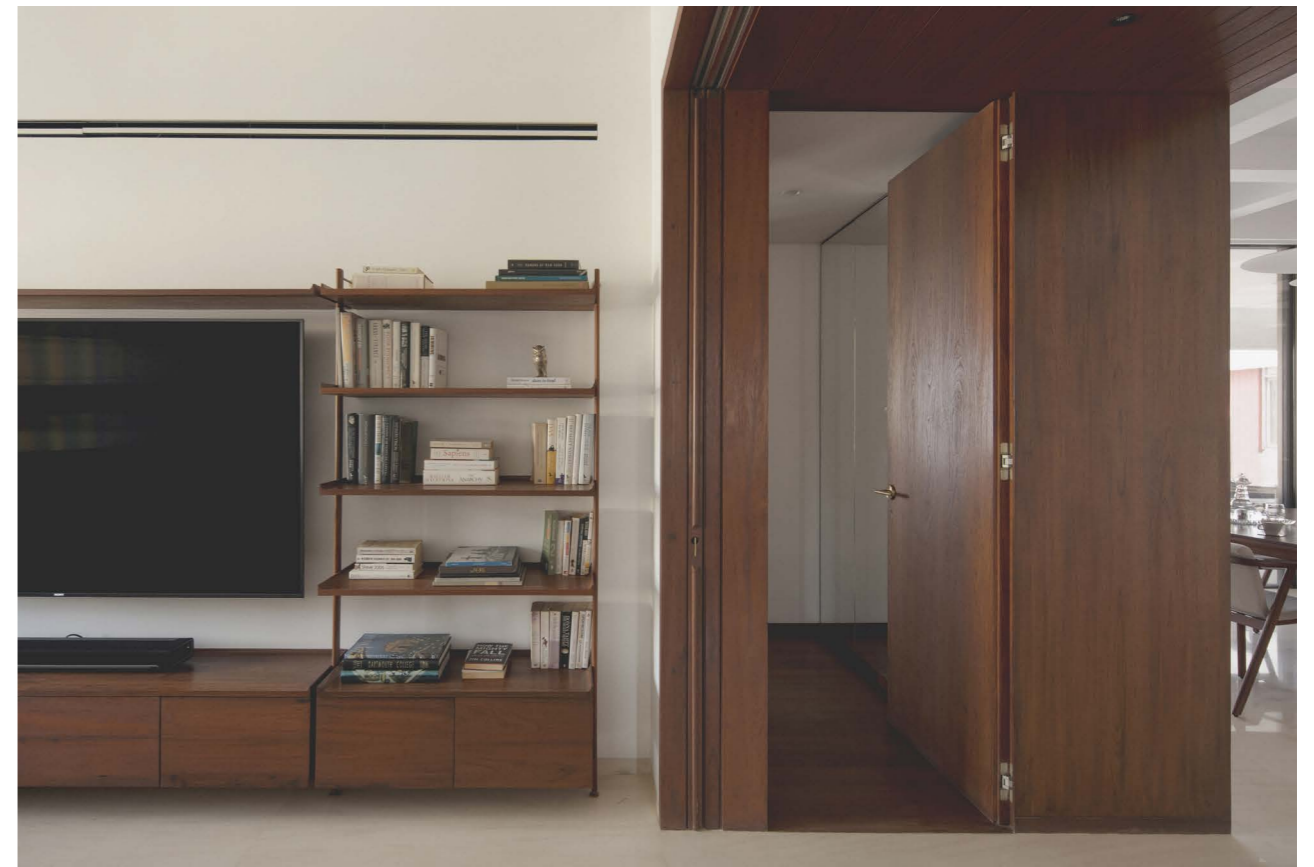




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The communal spaces flow together, separated by glass fabric and teak screen doors. Like the other custom features in the home, the dining table and chairs are made from Burmese teak, their dark hue juxtaposed with the white Flamingo pendant from Vibia and a lithograph by Korean artist Do Ho Suh

Facing page, top
Adjacent to the dining room and separated by the sliding screen, the family room is outfitted with a custom teak bookshelf and desk, and seating from Restoration Hardware. A clay artwork by Indian artist Madhvi Subrahmanian hangs on the far wall

Facing page, bottom
A bedroom leads off the family room. Both bedroom doors are concealed to facilitate subtle and seamless connection between the communal areas of the home



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The bedrooms are guided by the same design principles as the rest of the home. In one of the children's bedrooms, the custom Burmese teak bedside tables and desk are matched with the Raleigh bed by Design Within Reach and a pair of Louis Poulsen VL45 Radiohus pendants

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The home's entrance sets the tone, with a carved Burmese teak door opening into a vestibule with a custom bench

Facing page, top right
In another of the children's bedrooms, the plush textures of a padded Nest bed from Design Within Reach and bed linen sourced from Sarita Handa meet more industrial custom brass pendant lights

Facing page, bottom left
The linearity of the teak desk and window frames is offset by the curves of a moulded plywood Cherner chair

Facing page, bottom right
In the family bathroom, the custom teak vanity stands out against terrazzo walls and a grey marble counter

