



Composed of restorations and modern constructions, architect Golda Pereira's repertoire looks equally to the past and the future

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# Golda Pereira

With much of her work rooted in restoration and adaptive reuse, architect Golda Pereira rediscovers the joy and glory of Goa's heritage structures

**A**s a child growing up in Goa, Golda Pereira would summer at her dad's ancestral home on the island of Divar, along with all her cousins. "We'd spend our days playing in the village, fishing, and walking through the dusty summer fields. At night, we'd sit together on a long dining table for dinner, and then convene in the balcao to exchange stories," she remembers. But the highlight of those annual vacations was a makeshift hut, or homti, that the cousins would build in the backyard, along with some help from their uncles. "Every year, we'd build it at the start of summer, and take it down before the monsoons arrived," she recalls, adding that as the years progressed, the homtis became more complex, and the cousins would try to outdo themselves every summer. "There was a feeling of excitement of having built it with our own bare hands. Today, my outlook on design comes

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from these experiences, besides the more obvious influences: Goa's heritage homes, our beautiful village lanes, rivers, and the environment where they coexist."

From attending a preschool designed by prominent architect Gerard de Cunha, to graduating from Goa College of Architecture, a career in built form was probably predestined for Golda. After completing a one-year fellowship with the Charles Correa Foundation, and working on a few projects in the field of urban heritage documentation, she worked with Goan architect Amit Sardesai, before finally venturing out on her own in 2017. "I've always been fascinated by restoration and adaptive reuse, and I've been fortunate to have an abundance of projects within that niche right here in Goa," she shares. When restoring heritage houses, she intervenes only where necessary. "I love bringing in light through openings, while respecting the overall structure. I try to use materials that these homes are familiar with. And while I do love restorations, I also take up modern interiors and new constructions."

Amongst her most memorable projects is the 2017 restoration of her family's ancestral bungalow. "The house is around 150 years old and it is where we currently reside. But at the time I began the project, it had been left dilapidated for a long time," she reflects. Staying true to her design ethos, she added a few contemporary interventions—including restored roofs, additional windows and rooms, and furniture sourced from stores and scrap yards—while respecting the overall structure and scale of the house. The intention, she says, was to create a blended space that pays homage to its roots while embracing modern conveniences. "We christened it Casa Dora, after my husband's grandmother." That Golda has made strides in heritage restoration in Goa would be stating the obvious. But by her own admission, there are miles to go—and this is just the beginning. ♦  
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From top: Restored heritage tiles, antique camp chairs and modern furniture characterise the interior at Casa Dora; The 150-year-old Casa Dora, which Golda restored to its former glory