

VITAMIN SEA

Faisal Manzur transformed a faded beach house into a peaceful holiday haven full of mid-century modern surprises

WORDS BY VAISHNAVI NAYEL TALAWADEKAR
PHOTOS BY PHOSART STUDIO

The living area is divided into three parts—a lounge, a bar and a TV den. The lounge features a 2-Seater Sofa, a Cell Coffee Table and Hug Armchairs from Iqrup & Ritz. The Easy Armchair and the Tangāli Bench are from Phantom Hands, while the cocktail tables are a combination of West Elm and Iqrup & Ritz



Chennai's East Coast Road is thought to be one of India's most picturesque coastal highways. Given that it's neighbored by the Bay of Bengal, and closely framed by greenery, rivers, backwaters, temples, mosques and UNESCO heritage sites, it's little wonder that many city folks choose to call it home. Such was the case of one doctor family, who had purchased a beachside pied-à-terre here many moons ago. "The weekend home was used primarily by the parents, whose kids would visit now and then," says Faisal Manzur—founder and principal designer of his eponymous architecture and interior design firm—who was tapped by the family to give the six-bedroom property a happy facelift.

For Faisal, the vision was clear. "Our design philosophy has always been to traditionalise the modern," he says. "And so, we approached the project with a mid-century modern sensibility." His words ring true in the sea of grey that ripples forth, quietly, unexpectedly: concrete textures on the walls and ceiling, luna grey marble on the floor, and rows and rows of papier-mâché vases. Minimalist the

interior may be, but the textures more than make up for the muted colour, distinguishing one zone from another and lending depth and drama to each.

"The original living room was a tiny little thing," says Faisal of his decision to introduce structural changes. "We absorbed one bedroom and a toilet into the new footprint to carve out a larger living space. But alas, it came at the price of a rather ugly column." The rather ugly column, of course, turned out to be a blessing in disguise for Faisal, for in the weeks that followed, it became the cornerstone of the home's crowning glory—the modish circular bar.

Sometimes, at golden hour, as the sun spills indoors and the sea melds into the sky, the living room looks like it could belong on the coastline. "One of the major parts of the renovation was to make a larger living room that opens to the pool area. The pool, in turn, overlooks the sea," says Faisal, adding that the sequence of spaces was given a deliberate lightness of being to bring the interior closer to the shoreline. The gazebo—which houses a 12-seater dining table—is another addition to the outdoor scheme. Framing the pool on one side and the sea on the other, it makes for an al fresco dining spot with views to remember.

◆ Instagram: @faisal.manzur

Grey and green deliver a two-toned palette in the living room



The rug is from Jaipur Rugs and the 'Lost in Translation' painting is by Triveni Manzur



Accents and artworks serve as a warm counterpoint to the grey shell



“Our design philosophy has always been to traditionalise the modern. And so, we approached the project with a mid-century modern sensibility.”

The guest bedroom was designed as a relaxing haven with a wall-upholstered headboard, a bed and bedside tables from West Elm, and an oversized rug from Jaipur Rugs. The lights were designed by Faisal and custom-made by Atelier Lumys.



Minimalist the interior may be, but the textures more than make up for the muted colour, distinguishing one zone from another and lending depth and drama to each



The tropical palm artwork is from Amethyst Prints.

The bar was magicked out of the column in the living room. The swivel bar chair, upholstered in tan leather from Gulmohar Lane, sits in stark contrast to the black ripped bar counter. Poise Teak Pendant Lamps from Olie overarch the realm. The artwork is from Takomeko



In the living room, a long console houses a full set of papier-mâché vases from Ikai Asai in collaboration with Ravi Vazirani

