

# AN ARTFUL ABODE

With jewel tones, objets d'art and rare artisanal treasures, this Kasaragod villa, designed by Humming Tree, is nothing like its neighbours

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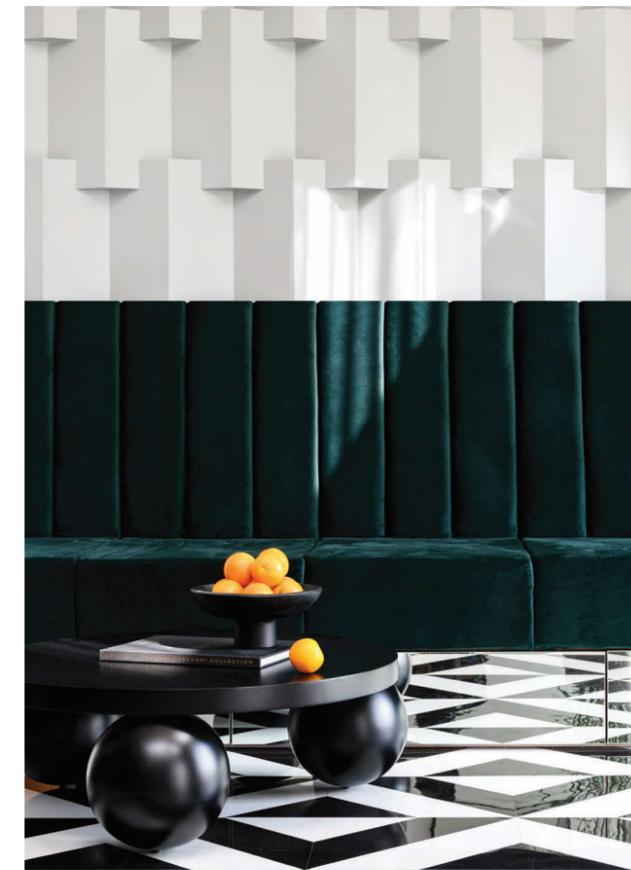
The lounge houses a potpourri of furniture defined by gentle curvatures. A Tantric Chair and a custom-made Nordic chair sit side by side, almost as if in conversation. The lights are from Aura Lights and the rug is from Jaipur Rugs. The pot was designed by Humming Tree and made by local craftsmen



The grand living room, meant for entertaining, is characterised by warm tones and rustic finishes. A brass-capsule partition anchors the realm while demarcating it from other areas. The sofa and the terracotta-inspired decor are custom-made, the light is from Aura Lights, and the rug is from Jaipur Rugs

**H**aving each grown up in traditional Kerala bungalows, Ashraf and Shahnaz knew one thing for certain — that their new home should be far removed from the familiar vernacular style. “We imagined an aesthetic that would help us reconceive the signature Kerala palette and experience a different side of life. With our parents’ homes just a stone’s throw away, we wanted something we could call our own,” says Ashraf. And so it followed that the couple reached out to Mohammed Afnan and Arun Shekar of Kozhikode-based architecture firm Humming Tree, known for their contemporary design approach, to give their new abode a voguish overhaul.

For a facade so prim, the interior is an unexpected antithesis. Jewel-toned upholstery, gleaming mosaic floors and brass embellishments present a modern-day Aladdin’s cave, albeit with a fantastical local twist. As you move from room to room, it’s evident that each space assumes a distinct avatar: While the bedrooms are defined by warm sweeps of wood, sensuous arches give the living room a Mediterranean spin. The dining room cuts a swish figure, with its bronze accents and royal blue seats projecting a modern version of a gentleman’s club. And outside, in the garden, the sea breeze dallies like a bashful visitor over pockets of verdure that make for a mini Eden. “We were given carte blanche over the design process and experimented a fair deal with forms and palettes. We wanted each space to tell a



This spill-out area is edgy and sophisticated, with 3D-panelled walls, custom-made emerald green furniture, and playful, black-and-white flooring. A Bruno Ball Coffee Table doubles as a modish accent. “The best detail of all is the mirrored cabinets underpinning the sofa,” says Afnan. “They are camouflaged in plain sight.”

different story, through its own materiality, texture, style, colour and mood,” say Arun and Afnan.

“Shahnaz and Ashraf wanted the home to be positive, joyful and spirited, while also exuding the aura of an art gallery,” share the architects, who brought in glimmers of Kerala craftsmanship by way of native crafts. “We felt it was important, both culturally and contextually, to absorb the landscape into the shell. After all, it’s part of its heritage.” And yet, the allusion to the surroundings isn’t immediately obvious, manifesting, ever so subtly, in handmade matkas here and local artworks there. Most evenings, the family bonds over tea in the den. “Kerala Sulamani tea to be precise,” laughs Shahnaz. “It’s a special time for reading and reflecting, with just each other and our plants for company.” ♦ [hummingtree.in](http://hummingtree.in)

## HOME KASARAGOD

The den is a cosy oasis perfect for curling up with a good book and Shahnaz's famous Kerala Sulamani tea. A Roly Poly chair and a Saint-Germain bench sit alongside a locally made pot designed by Humming Tree, cutting a truly 'glocal' avatar. The lights are from FLOS and Aura Lights, and the rug is from Jaipur Rugs.



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An exotic marble wall dazzles as the centrepiece of the family room. “The marble’s minute veins project the slightest yellow tint, and we managed to source the perfect couch to go with it,” says Arun. The couch he speaks of is from Baxter, while the light and rug were respectively purchased from FLOS and IKEA

The house has two dining rooms – a bijou and a grand. The former is an understated jewel box of polished wood panels, brass accents and gentle arches. A contrasting colour palette punctuates the muted shell. Anfan and Arun sourced the dining table from Baxter and the chandelier from FLOS



The grand dining room is a picture of monochrome, with a charcoal-toned marble table and sage green Brooklyn dining chairs. The floor is defined by a mottled effect that adds pattern to the pared-back room.



The son's bedroom is steeped in charcoal greys, black accents and rich wood tones—a palette meant to echo the idea of a bachelor's bolthole. The shell is softened by Ralph Lauren bedding and a throw from West Elm.



The master bathroom is cloaked head-to-toe in Statuario marble. A modern oval freestanding bathtub adds a sculptural flair. The fittings are from Vltra.



Targua coffee table from Pepperfry, pepperfry.com



The Roly Poly armchair from Driade, driade.com



Tactile sofa by Vincenzo de Cotiis, from Baxter, baxter.it

Stockholm rug from Ikea, ikea.com

# inspired picks



Maven chair from Bent Chair, bentchair.com



Circle wall mount mirror from Vetromoda, vetromoda.com



Harriet pouf from N Square Studio, nsquarestudio.com



Delphi 3-seater sofa from Finnish Design Shop, finnishdesignshop.com