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Inspiration and insight for architects and interior designers

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On the cover:
Amitabh Bachchan's
Residence by Infiqitti
Design Studio

Global projects:
TreeHotel by BIG
Cork House by Inês
Brandão Arquitectura

THE LUXE EFFECT

The pandemic has redefined the way we look at our homes. Clearly, what was luxury earlier is now mundane. But then what is luxury now? We speak to designers from across the country.



While the next-gen panelists shared their views, the audience was agog, with admiration, and we straight away went on to hear the views of the doyens. The doyens panel comprised Noor Dasmesh Singh, Principal Architect, NNOOR Architects Consultants; Sabena Khanna, Founding Principal, Studio K.L.A.; Sanjay Goel, Chief Architect, Designx Architects; Surinder Bagha, Principal Architect, Sarkar Foundation; Tara Atul Singla, Co-Founder & Design Head, IDEARCH and Partha Karmakar, Business Head, Professional Lighting, Havells India. Each doyen made a short presentation on their views on the topic and we dived straight into the panel discussion, once again moderated by the much renowned architect, Sangset Sharma.

On the panel, all the doyens had some very interesting observations to make. Tara Singla said, "Technology is a boon but the disappearance of tradition in design development is a curse." Sabena Khanna agreed when she added, "Technology vs Tradition is a mindful debate wherein a mélange of the two is the perfect solution for a sustainable tomorrow. Reinforcing the traditional, vernacular principles of architecture, design, materiality, orientation for natural sun and wind ventilation and contextual relevance, combined with technology can optimise smart design solutions with cost effectiveness, time saving and quality. The old wisdoms of tradition can spread far and wide through technology today for global usage," Sanjay Goel further added, "Any architecture (traditional or modern) is incomplete without technology."

On that note, we concluded the discussion with the new understanding that the debate must be on technology and tradition rather than technology vs tradition and that we need to look at the future with both. As Sangset Sharma aptly put it, "The panelists opened up on the trending issues on the subject with substantial knowledge and aplomb. The conclusion was on a long term positivity of looking at both tradition and technology. It was a wonderful experience exchanging notes on the determinators of the subject." We echo. ■



7. The Doyens panelists.

8. Team Foundames with Architects: Sanjay Goel and Surinder Bagha.

9. Facilitating Architect Noor Dasmesh Singh.

10. Partha Karmakar, Business Head, Professional Lighting, Havells, India.

11. Facilitating Architect Sangset Sharma.



THE MARKET DESIGN

CONCEPTUALISED BY GROUPDCA, LE MARCHE AIMS TO BE A ONE-STOP-SHOP VENUE THAT BRINGS GOURMET RETAIL SERVICES TO ITS PATRONS THROUGH A SPACE REplete WITH PARED-BACK DESIGN FLOURISHES.

With floor plate retail destinations gaining momentum in India, groupDCA was brought on board by the company to align the brand's identity and the spatial design scheme of their newest branch. The impetus stemmed from the need to recalibrate the retailer's vision through design interventions while ensuring an immersive, curated retail experience.

The storefront is composed of classic, black-bodied wain-scotting panelling that extends as sectioned glazing, offering expansive views of the store's interiors. The vermillion logo signage assumes centerstage, complementing the prominent monochrome colour palette. The entrance is flanked on either side by focal LED screens, utilised as dynamic surfaces for the store to display their products and offers effectively.

INSPIRATIONS FROM BUSTLING COMMUNITIES

The anterior section of the store has been designed taking cues from the organic and lively layout of bustling bazaars and communal marketplaces common in towns and cities. This zone has deliberately been kept void of towering storage racks to institute an engaging and fluidic sense of circulation.

The left-hand side hosts the cash desk lined with small items that patrons can impulsively pick up while checking out. The right side is earmarked by a salad bar, a cheese variety display, and an open-oven pizzeria for the customers to indulge in, with compact seating spots peppered across the store. The central zone consists of gondolas that house the latest product inventory and fresh produce.

ERGONOMIC COMFORT FOR IMMERSIVE SHOPPING
As one navigates further into the layout, the core organised retail section assumes the spotlight. Keeping the end-user's comfort in mind, the number of aisles and the distance between them were optimised to allow the retailer to showcase a wide spectrum of inventory and ensure a hassle-free shopping experience. Ergonomically driven details, like that of rack spacings, heights and positions, were considered to further elevate the efficiency of these zones.

The rear portion of the Le Marche store anchors a dedicated cold cuts section and a wine and beverages boutique. This





FACT FILE

Location: Ardee Mall, Bangalore
Square Footage: 7,000 sq ft
Architecture Design Firm: groupDCA
Principal Architect: Ar. Kishor Bansal
Text Credit: Lavanya Chopra
Photography credit: Jayan and Dong

store needed to be prioritised. The monochrome colour scheme becomes the leitmotif at Le Marche, building on the brand recall sentiment via materials and finishes.

The broadly black and white interiors are timeless in nature, giving the space a unique character. The harlequin checkered floors, the stretches of monochrome tiles, the sleek metal partition systems, and the light wood tones punctuate the blueprint as binding threads of design. The myriad hues that adorn the products housed within the store act as embellishments of colour against the neutral canvas of Le Marche.

LIGHTING UP LIVELY ZONES

Lighting plays a crucial role in the conceptualisation of retail environments. This design element influences customer behaviour as the overarching ambience of a space is impacted instantly by the tailored lighting scheme employed therein. Steering clear of generic ambient lighting, all the lighting fixtures at Le Marche are customised task lights that enable the vast range of products to become the purposeful visual focus within the space.

The spotlights mounted upon the track systems illuminate the area they come in contact with in a diffused light that makes for an aesthetic and pragmatic intervention. These lights also divert the visual focus away from the utilitarian exposed ceiling which is a composite of wooden louvred and metal grid members. These lights also pose as subconscious visual guides that aid customer circulation across the layout. Brightly illuminated signage boards dot the layout, enabling customers to easily traverse the store.

At Le Marche, groupDCA has belimed the endeavour of reimagining and planning the primary retail design of the brand while curating a premium shopping experience. The pivotal creative penchant has been to transform the chore of visiting a departmental store into a sumptuous and appealing retail visit that strikes a chord with the end-user through evocative design. ■



3. Keen ergonomic details in distance between aisles and rack spacing ensure a seamless shopping experience.

4. Black and white interiors of the store give it a bold appeal.

5. The tailored display of products complements the monochrome scheme.

6. Tailored lighting methods, like the spotlights mounted on track systems, add to the aesthetic nuance of Le Marche.

offers the customers independent enclosed areas to shop for these products in the form of separate rooms integrated into the layout while keeping the schematic services intact; imagined as shopping for select items under the roof of one larger centralised store.

DEMARCATING CIRCULATION AND VISUAL IDENTITY

As a venue that offers an extensive range of world foods, household items and other staples, navigation within the

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