

For generations the Dayanandan family have been well-known traditional Ayurvedic healers in Central Travancore. They asked architect Nina Jacob to convert their old house, about an hour's drive from Kottayam, and use it as the focus of a living space appropriate to the needs of the present day. The design brief was to maintain the original wooden granary and the adjacent rooms in the heart of the old house and seamlessly create a modern house around these.

Surrounded by luxuriant

greenery and trees, this haven has a long approach road through rubber plantations. The constant sound of rushing water from a nearby fresh-water canal almost gives it the rejuvenating feel of a hill resort.

But there was a downside! This canal has a tendency to breach its boundaries and flood the front of the property. This is what led Nina to envisage a two-level concept for the restoration. The home now comprises the more public spaces on an upper level and more private family areas on a lower level. The difference in

a home that heals

PREVIOUS SPREAD:

Surrounded by greenery, this traditional building is now a charming family residence combining the best of ancient and modern.

Triangular openings in the roof allow natural light into all the rooms.

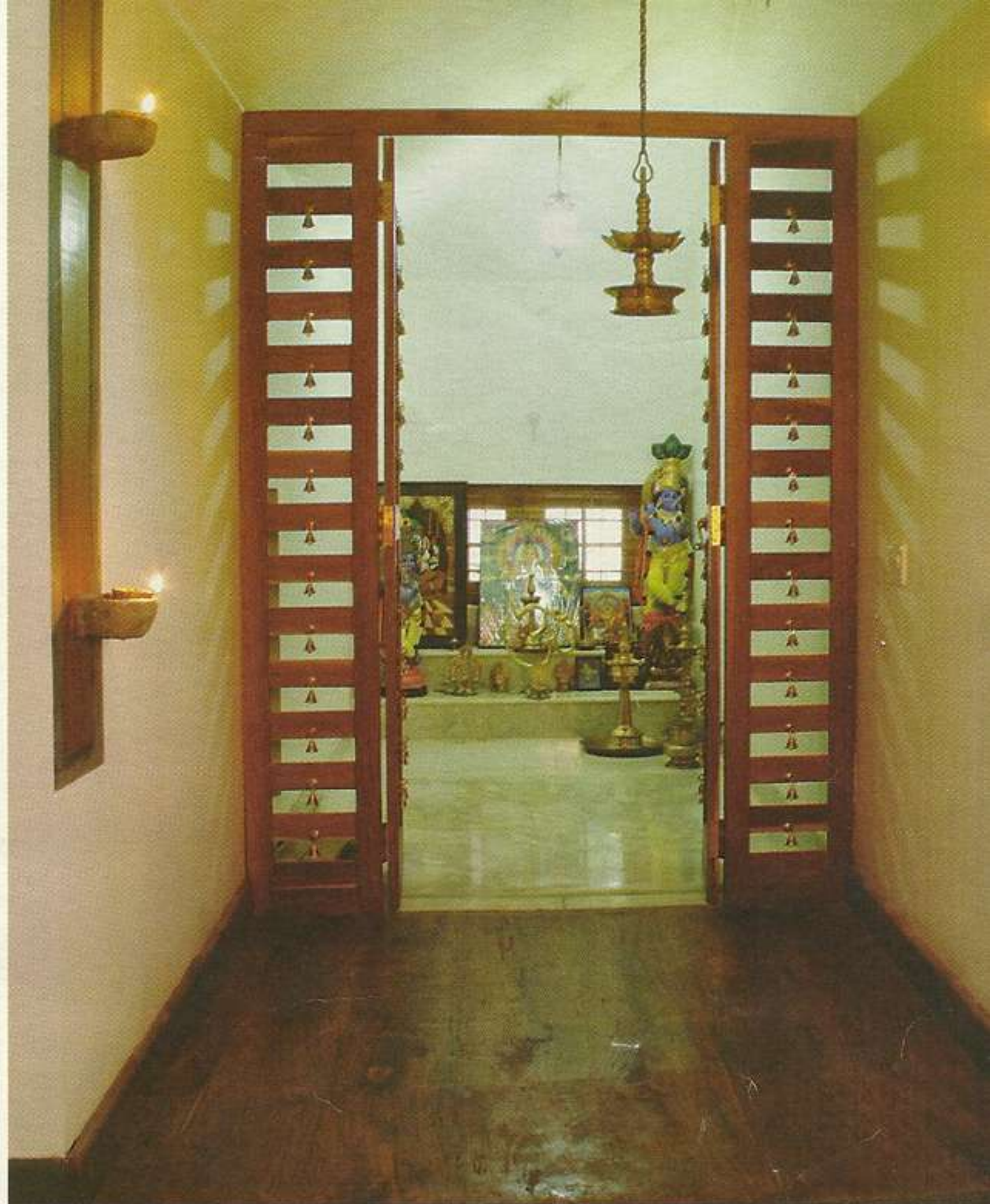


THIS SPREAD:

BELOW: Wooden steps lead to the central foyer, blending with the hardwood flooring and wood-finish Nitco tiles of the family room.

RIGHT: The puja room, where oil lamps cast their soft glow on the lustrous wooden floor.

BELOW RIGHT: The entrance, reminiscent of a traditional 'padipura', with four antique wooden pillars.



RIGHT: The original 'arra' or granary, with gleaming brassware.

BELOW: A newly created wood-panelled corridor connects the rooms at the rear.

OPPOSITE: The family room is a space filled with light and greenery, and ever-changing shadows cast by sunlight filtering through slatted wood.



One's first impression of the house is of Kerala's striking heritage architectural forms, and the way it showcases the legendary skills of Kerala carpenters.



levels results in an added advantage: a view of the sky and the treetops from all the rooms, through triangular openings in the roof.

One's first impression of the house is of Kerala's striking heritage architectural forms and skilful craftsmanship. Facing the gate is a two-car garage, built with reused wood from the original house. A curved pathway leads to a porch, the roof of which is also made of reused

wood. Antique wooden gables showcase the legendary skills of the Kerala carpenters. Hand-cut granite in the car porch reinforces the natural look, while the entrance to the house, defined by four antique wooden pillars, symbolically recreates the traditional 'padipura'.

The natural ambience continues in the interiors. The formal living room is spartanly furnished with rosewood furniture, while the sheen of khadi silk curtains is

reflected in the glossy kota stone flooring. The soft glow from oil lamps inset into the walls frames the entrance to the puja room, whose solid wood floor adds its own lustre to the space.

Wooden steps lead down to the central foyer, blending with the wood-finish Nitco tiles and hardwood flooring of the family living space. River pebbles and ficus plants bring in the outdoors to this light-filled space. Adding warmth to the wood tones is a





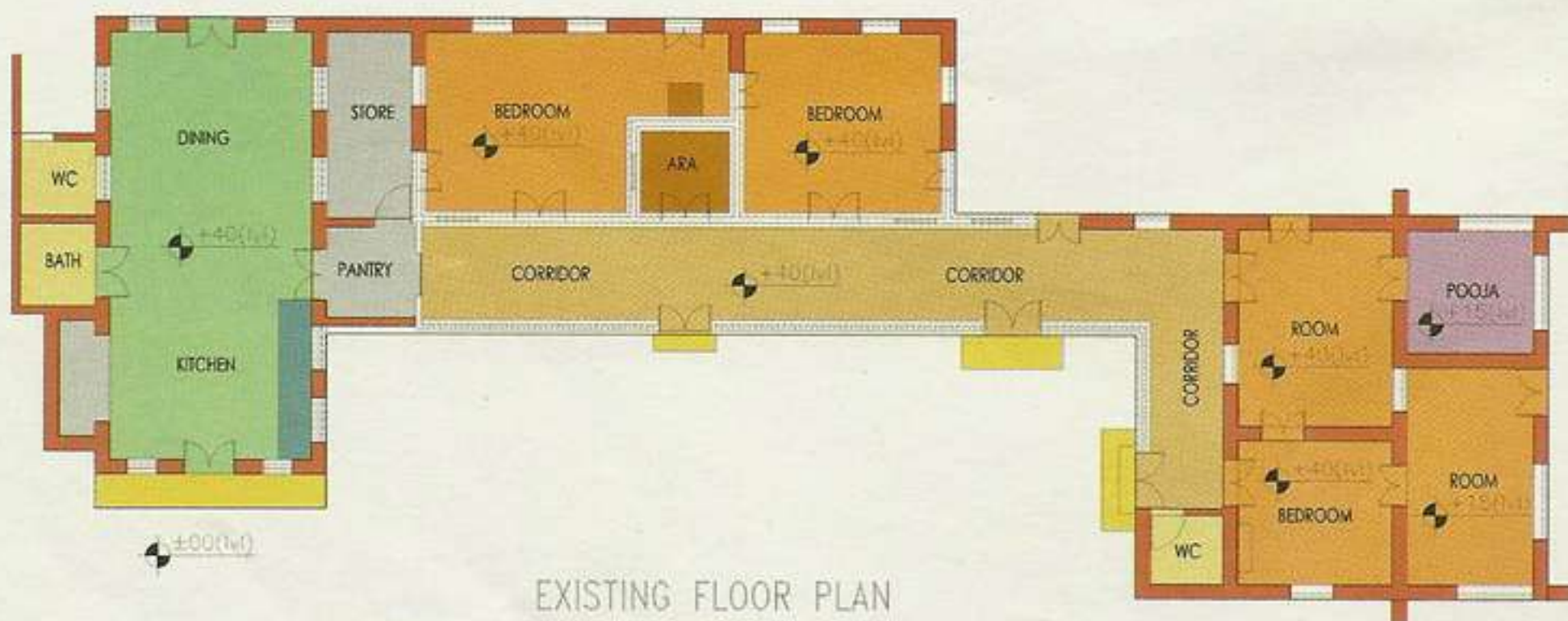
touch of colour from Jotun Paints' special ochre hue. The interplay between light and shade created by the reused wooden slats creates an ever-changing, dramatic interior. Made-to-order light fixtures in natural materials like wood, cane and granite reinforce the ambience.

On either side of the family room are the master bedroom and children's bedroom. The master bathroom, clad in tiles in shades of ivory and beige, with a border in earth tones, has an additional outdoor bathing area, which recreates the sensation of wellbeing that one experiences with open air bathing.

OPPOSITE & LEFT: The master bathroom also has a charming outdoor bathing area, where Himalayan white pebbles, pebbled tiles from Spain, flame-finished granite and greenery, together form an enchanting setting.

BELOW: A custom-designed kitchen with all the modern amenities, in teakwood, frosted glass and automobile lac paint, complemented by textured Spanish tile flooring and Cotto wall tiles, inset with special designer tiles.







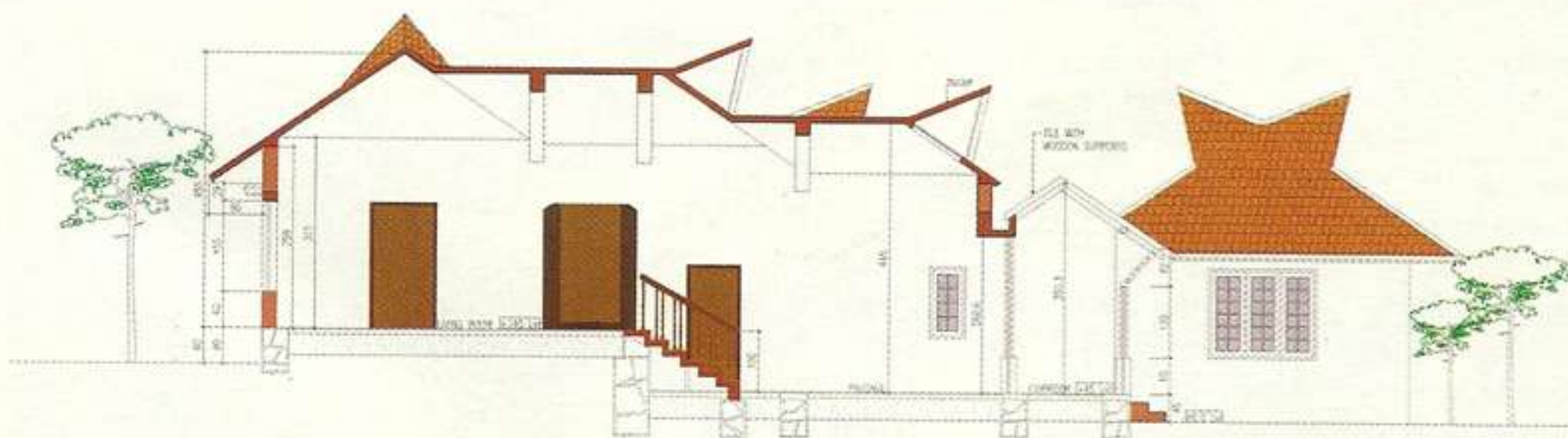
Surrounded by luxuriant greenery and trees,
this haven has a long approach road
through rubber plantations
A pavilion with traditional wooden seating,
stone pillars and tiled roof,
forms a favourite space to relax in the open.

Dappled sunlight on Himalayan white pebbles, pebbled tiles from Spain, flame-finished granite and rich green vegetation together form a variety of textures, forms, light and shade – a setting that truly exhilarates the senses. In sharp contrast, the children's bedroom is a happy departure from tradition – simple and youthful.

Traditionally, the original granary or 'arra' is usually sited at least 60 centimetres above floor level, with the crouch space underneath used as a storage room. This is to prevent the

seepage and dampness prevalent during the monsoons. The floor has now been lowered for easy access and houses a collection of brassware. The roof of the arra and the adjoining two rooms had to be dismantled and raised for technical reasons, and this has now created a cozy loft accessible by an antique set of steps made of jack wood.

A wooden corridor has been newly created to connect the rooms at the rear. The wooden panelling was designed to create continuity with the antique wooden panels of the 'arra'.



SECTION A



The dining room is elegantly simple. It overlooks the fruit orchard at the rear with nutmeg and jackfruit trees and coconut palms vying for space and sunlight.

A modern kitchen, custom-designed with all the modern amenities, has a variety of interesting details and finishes in teakwood, frosted glass and automobile lac paint, complemented by textured Spanish tile flooring and Cotto wall tiles, inset with special

designer tiles at intervals.

The deck in the rear also overlooks the orchard. With its traditional wooden seating, stone pillars and tiled roof, this is an inviting space to relax and watch the antics of squirrels and birds. The view of emerald paddy fields beyond, bordered by the blue ridges of distant hills, creates its own tranquillity and sense of wellbeing. Truly this is a home in God's Own Country!

PREVIOUS SPREAD & ABOVE:
Plans showing the refurbished and extended heritage home.

OPPOSITE: In the office of Prestige Construction, graphic inserts of rice boats add a touch of Kerala to the discussion room.



bay
watch



In the reception area, water falls gently from curved wall curtains onto river pebbles. Honey-hued Dyna marble and wenge panelling clads the walls. Custom-designed furniture of toughened glass, steel and wenge veneer adds a touch of class.





For Prestige Construction, a company building waterfront apartments, an office with an amazing bay view comprises its own great sales strategy! Situated on the first floor of a plush shopping mall, it overlooks the waterfront with its ever-changing vistas and moods.

It was but natural for the architect to use the concept of water in her design for the interiors. And so, in the reception area, the soothing sound of water falling on river pebbles from curved wall curtains is a constant reminder of the bay and forms an appealing visual connection between the entrance and the workspaces further inside.

To convey the elegance and élan inherent in this prestigious locale, the entrance is minimalistic, with wenge wood flooring and panelling offset by honey-coloured Dyna marble on the wall. An interlocking panel that uses both materials gives a sense of continuity and contrast. The lounge seating is in natural khadi silk, offset by a woollen rug in multi-hued earth tones from FabIndia. Stylish accessories in natural and aqua tints provide a touch of colour and soften the severity of the interior. Concealed lighting highlights the textures and tones of the materials used.

The importance of the bay view dictated that wall-less, sheer glass partitions should separate spaces, making it possible to see the bay from every area. The public and semi-private areas are demarcated by differences in levels and flooring materials – wenge wood and honey-coloured carpeting. Custom-designed furniture made of toughened glass, wenge veneer and steel continues the




minimalistic theme in the private offices, while aqua-tinted glass panels on pillars provide relief from the starkness.

Light from custom-designed lighting fixtures and from recessed and accent lighting bounces off

the walls and ceiling and creates multi-hued images that are reflected on the sheer glass.

In the discussion room, graphic insets of rice boats add a touch of Kerala, while standard workstations are given a new look by

being clubbed with wenge panelling and brightly coloured prints on the wall.

A great example of teamwork, this office, which was completed in record time, is a sleek, sophisticated corporate interior. 



Wall-less, sheer glass partitions ensure that nothing impedes the bay view, while skilful lighting creates multiple images reflected in the glass.

Standard workstations get the designer touch with wenge panelling and brightly coloured prints on the wall.

