

The Goan blueprint

Architect Raya Shankwalker's guide to restoring Indo-Portuguese homes and how he creates an interesting aesthetic juxtaposing the new against the old



Remains of the day Soro - The Village Pub is a tavern conceptualised within the ruins of an old corner store (2), with (1) bold graphic cement tiles



Old-world charm Renovated rooms at the Assagao villa (3, 4, 5) and the Villa Ribander (6)



Growing up in the *parijat*-strewn courtyard of our 300-year-old ancestral house in Panjim influenced me a lot. The house is a stunning example of an under-celebrated aspect of Goan architecture. The courtyard was not only a fabulous climatic adaptation, but also an ideal private living space. I still carry vivid memories of the warmth of the space and the smell of flowers and beaten earth. These memories instilled a strong sense of belonging, which later kindled a desire to conserve this unique heritage.

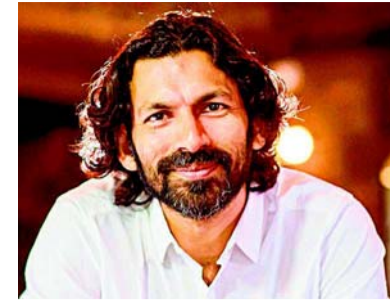
My tryst with conservation began during my college days in Goa. As part of my architecture curriculum, I covered many assignments on Goan heritage and was fascinated by its sheer volume. It challenged my imagination and inspired me to research on the subject. Also, as one of the founding members of the Goa Heritage Action Group (1999), it got me involved in the field further.

First steps

Working with architect Sarto Almeida, to restore the façades of the Custom House and the Police headquarters – two prominent public buildings of historical importance – instilled a liking for conservation. I worked on several similar urban conservation initiatives before I took up my first residential project at Siolim village – converting a 150-year-old residence into a guest house.

Love for open spaces

While British colonial architecture in India evolved over time – adapting to local tastes and climate – Portuguese architecture did not do so. The blueprint for Indo-Portuguese homes was borrowed from homes in North Por-



tugal, where they had harsh winters. So a typical home was linear, with a foyer that leads to two halls on either side, which then splits into rooms.

But tropical living calls for semi-open spaces and we introduced such spaces in our project at Assagao, which was a renovation and extension of an old Goan house. The villa is cocooned by paddy fields; thus a seamless connection between the landscape and the interiors became a key design driver.

Modern twist

Travel is a strong inspiration for me. My earlier trips to Portugal helped develop my approach to conservation. In India, most interventions are replicated from the past, but in Portugal, conservation is looked at with a modern perspective. I believe that not all buildings need to be restored; a few need to be evolved.

Where new meets old

Preservation refers to structures with historical and cultural value, on the other hand, conservation refers to homes that need not hold historical importance. I believe in the latter and when we take up a restoration project, we assess the home and add suitable elements. We approach each project on individual merit.

Lost heritage

Building technologies and materials used in the Portuguese era were distinctive, but unfortunately, most have been lost.

For example, stucco (the application of lime plaster on exteriors that prevented water seepage) is a technique that has been forgotten.

Similarly, the use of broken China mosaic was a traditional element that one can't find today. Several similar techniques have been lost, as they weren't documented. In our projects, we try to understand methods such as plastering techniques, usage of flooring materials. If elements of historical importance are present in a home, we restore them.

Colour wheel

Colour played a significant part in Indo-Portuguese architecture. They used three primary colours – red, yellow, and blue – made with naturally-available pigments. We don't use natural pigments today, so for those looking at incorporating Portuguese décor at home, look for the closest shade in the commercially-available brands.

Buying local crafts and artefacts from Goa will add authenticity to the look. Goan homes are embellished with rich details such as chandeliers and China vases. Goa has a few crafts, too, which are dying art forms now, such as terracotta and cane.

Using them in your décor will not only add to the aesthetics, but also help in their revival and conservation.

For instance, I have used the hand-woven baskets unique to Goa, as a lighting installation in one of our commercial projects, the SinQ Beach Club.

As told to Nidhi Adlakha

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Sunday Soul Sante is back in town with its Neon Edition

Promotional Feature

India's most loved flea market, Sunday Soul Sante is back with its Neon Edition in Bangalore on March 19th, 2017 at Embassy International Riding School. This Edition is going to showcase over 200 pop up stalls of art, craft, design & food and some of the sought after artists in the music scene like Arunaja (Finalist on The Stage TV Show), Threeory and Yohan Marshall & The Mischief. Each market is carefully curated, to bring its visitors only the best handcrafted products of India and this one is no different. Handpicked fashion, accessory and home décor stalls from across the country, all headed your way. There is something for everyone.

5 Reasons Why You Must Visit The Sunday Soul Sante's NEON Edition

- 1. Food for your soul**
This sante brings with it mouth watering dishes from across the country. They've got everything from authentic Gujarati Food to delicious Burmese cuisine and don't Croons who will be serving some moist and fresh macaroons with a twist.
- 2. Shopping**
This edition of Sunday Soul Sante brings you the best art and fashion. They will be showcasing the best of all genres. 200 plus vendors handpicked for a shopping experience you will never forget. Anukta will be showcasing their line of some trendy silver jewellery and Unniyarcha will be bringing you their awesome jewellery collection as well. Looking from some funky lighting for your house, lookout for the Book Lamps that are sure to brighten any corner of your house. Sanyasiee, will be introducing an exclusive collection of modern dhotis. Also, did you know the various health benefits of drinking water from a copper vessel? Drop by Harsha's stall to pick your very own copper metal bottles and learn about the various benefits of the same.
- 3. Music**
Sunday Soul Sante picks it up a notch this time. Arunaja, finalist from the TV show "The Stage" is sure to WoW you with her powerful vocals. Arunaja, a Kochi based vocalist is highly influenced by Gospel, Old-school pop, Rock, R&B, Blues and even Contemporary pop. Threeory, a band based out of Hyderabad are coming to Bangalore Sunday Soul Sante with their vision "To spread love and tranquility through our music and play for the soul and create moments that will always be cherished." They are a five piece instrumental band with influences from Pop to Blues, Progressive, Rock, Indie, Industrial and Indian Classical.
- 4. Fashion**
Here is your chance to get your summer wardrobe ready. Sunday Soul Sante brings to you the best of Fashion, latest trends and a wide range for all ages.
- 5. Fun for the entire family**
We have something for everyone, kids and adults alike. We have a kids corner courtesy The Hindu Young World with various activities to engage your little ones in creative way, and parents can shop till they drop!

There's something for every member of your family at the sante, yes your pets too. Great food, unlimited shopping, great music and mostly importantly, a wonderful experience.

Entry is free for senior citizens and children below the age of 10. Tickets are available online: <https://in.bookmyshow.com/.../sunday-soul-sante-neon.../ET00054191> and will also be available at the venue. Visit Sunday Soul Sante Neon Edition at Embassy International Riding School (Just off BIAL/Airport road) on 19th March from 10 am to 10 pm.

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