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Hot Now!
AL FRESCO
INSPIRED
TRENDS

People We Love

SIMON VELEZ
RED ARCHITECTS
JEAN NOUVEL
NACHIKET BARVE

TAKE IT OUTSIDE!

WIDE OPEN SPACES

HOMES & GETAWAYS THE GREENEST ENVIRONS IN AHMEDABAD,
NAINITAL, GOA & FORMENTERA **FOCUS ON OUTDOORS** WABI SABI
GARDENS, PLUNGE POOLS, LOUNGERS, SURFACES & MORE



MAKING THE OUTDOORS GREAT AGAIN

For this special, the Chipko movement served as quite the inspiration (did you catch Google's sweetest doodle tribute to mark its 45th anniversary too?). The forest conservation initiative created quite a stir in 1973, when India was still young, grappling with widespread deforestation to make way for a menacing urban skyline. At the forefront of this non-violent protest were the brave women of Chamoli district, Uttar Pradesh, who defiantly wrapped their arms around trees, putting themselves in apparent danger before the chainsaws of industrialisation. Not only did this *andolan* pave the way for awareness on forest rights; the *babus* that he took notice and worked to fix the country's loopholed environmental laws.

Forward to today though, are we really better off? While every major city's green cover is being held to ransom, allowing glass towers to thrive and multiply, maybe it's time to reinforce Chipko now more than ever. Fortunately, there are designers and architects, who strongly believe, their structures and nature must co-exist...this edition recognises them and their projects. For starters, read about Colombian native Simon Velez, a speaker at this year's ID Symposium, India Design ID, whose "vegetal steel" bamboo architecture is totally biodegradable. From eco-conscious homes in Goa, Ahmedabad and Formentera (Jade Jagger's beach villa is a dream) to remote getaways in Nainital, Thekkady and Gir forest – these stories will inspire you to tread your own path to grassroots activism. Also, congratulations to the legendary green hero, Prof BV Doshi – the guest editor of our 17th anniversary issue was just announced as this year's Pritzker Prize laureate! His friends and family share why he deserves the honour on Pg 104. More power to him!

Of course, you can't miss our summer kissed trends: Tropical Modern that lets the outside in, in unexpected ways and Passion Flower, Asian Paints' sunny Colour of the year. Our Focus is packed with essentials to tend to your wabi sabi or poolside garden; highly recommended for those who plan to stay within the periphery of their home, this unforgiving summer. Go on, embrace all of this goodness (pun totally intended).

SNEHA ULLAL GOEL
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Write to me on edfeatures@ogaan.co.in. Profile photography by Bajirao Pawar

LOOK OUT

The stilted timber cabins, rooms with spacious decks and views of the surrounding dense spice plantation... sensitively imagined by Bengaluru firm Kumar La Noce, Niramayya Retreats Cardamom Club is unlike your typical weekend escape. Read the full story "From The Ground Up" on Pg 86

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ELLE DECOR brings you more in-depth articles and insights into design, decor and culture. Introducing our special contributors



NICOLA LA NOCE
ARCHITECT, BENGALURU

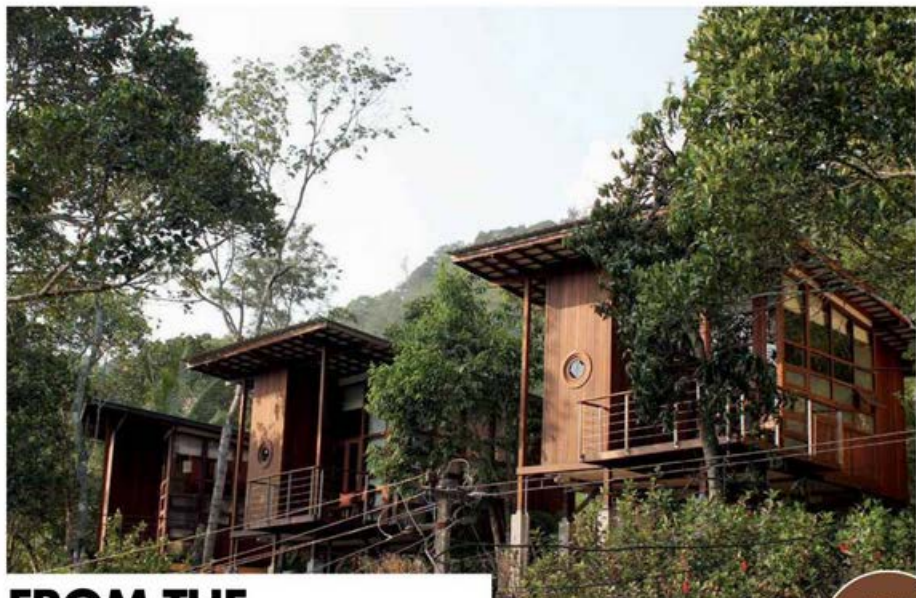
The Italian architect-urbanist and co-founder at Kumar La Noce Studio, Bengaluru holds an MA in Housing and Urbanism from the Architectural Association, London

Design to me Is the research of beauty

Comfort food Masala dosa

What I do to unwind Listen to music, mostly jazz and U2

In this issue Shows us around a quiet, luxurious retreat surrounded by a spice plantation he imagined in Thekkady in "From The Ground Up," Pg 86



FROM THE GROUND UP

Bengaluru based Italian architect Nicola La Noce recounts the making of Niraamaya Retreats Cardamom Club, set amidst a lush spice plantation in Thekkady, Kerala

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Clockwise, from Top The tilted timber cabins are envisioned as floating volumes that emerge from within the lush landscape; Floor to ceiling windows in each cabin provide unhindered views of the surrounding landscape; The rooms come with spacious decks that encourage the guests' interaction with nature





... THE OVERALL SCHEME WAS AN EXERCISE IN BALANCING LUXURY WITH QUIETNESS AND DISCIPLINE



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Located in Thekkady, Kerala, a region known for its steep terrain and formidable monsoons, Cardamom Club was designed as a response to the spectacular plantation setting with utmost restraint. The guest cabins were imagined as light, floating volumes that seem to emerge from within the landscape. Inspiration also came from quaint shops with framed glass enclosures and simple wooden furnishings, dotting the surrounding villages. The units, crafted primarily out of rich, reddish hardwood sourced from sustainably managed plantations, feature floor to ceiling wooden frame openings that were envisioned to enhance the impact of the dramatic views while ensuring privacy between the rooms. They open out to spacious decks, creating the experience of belonging to the surrounding vegetation. The interiors are minimal yet sophisticated, keeping the focus on the dramatic setting. Handcrafted teak, rattan furniture and rice paper light fixtures complement the rich wood panelled surfaces. The en suite bathroom is compact and raw, with locally sourced black granite counters and a shower area with a porthole window that frames the views beyond. Set within a functioning cardamom plantation, the overall scheme was an exercise in balancing luxury with quietness and discipline. The property comes alive during the rains, surrounded by a rich glistening sea of green, a feast for the senses. ♦ **Nicola La Noce**

Clockwise, from Top Left The interiors of Niraamaya Retreats Cardamom Club feature sophisticated furniture crafted from teak and rattan; The cabins were designed as light, aerial units that appear to be a part of the natural landscape; Openings within luxurious wood panelled surfaces frame the stunning green views outside. Photographs by Vivek Muthuramalingam courtesy Kumar La Noce

