

O inside out

Text: Saroni Roy

| DESIGN | INTERIORS | ARCHITECTURE |

A testimony of time and cultures that reigned, transformed into tangible spaces is what we see as architectural marvels today. In the recent past, the Mughals, the Marathas, the Rajputs to the British and now global influences ... have had an impact on Indian architecture since ages. Monuments, hotels and estates are no more the only architectural delights we have, but the sense of creating splendid spaces has percolated also into the spas and salons sector where people are ready to pay a fortune to experience and relive an exotic and almost perfect world.

StyleSpeak spoke to the master craftsmen some of India's splendid salons and spas with inspiring architecture and design who believe in creating a distinct style, revealing their plans from scratch to Z and to answer all your queries for setting up or refurbishing your salon or spa.



Photo: Sohum Spa & Wellness Sanctuary, Mumbai



Photo: Psalm 23 The Salon, Mumbai



Mirrors

Hyderabad

Established in 2003, the **Mirrors Salon**, is a transformation of the concept of the artistic use of mirrors and their myriad reflections in plenty.

The **colour palette** has lots of shimmering silver and white for that ultimate classy finesse with fluorescent lights moulded in acrylic to subdue their harshness.

Uncluttered, clear demarcation of areas, clean flow of space – is what defines the design concept of Mirrors.

Seating is all in soft rexine and leatherite as nature of work involves water, colors, creams and oils. Wall panels in polyester silk fabric, partitions and shelves in laminated glass, mirror frames and stations in etched, beveled mirrors, walls have textured paint in shades of bronze silvers and greys, smattering of red and violet in a few places - this as much for the look as for low maintenance. Flooring- vitrified was already in place.

The challenge was to set up a salon with the men's and women's sections spread over 2 floors and an executive spa on the topmost floor. It was important to maintain a harmony in design which is evident on all floors yet a subtle difference keeps them distinctly apart.

PRO TIPS:

- Plan your type of services and the back spaces, toilets for clients and staff, stores, pantry, etc.
- Design the client space in 3Ds if possible, it gives you an in-depth and clear perspective before you start making your first mistake, this extra cost nullifies the clients' loss of precious time and money rectifying what could not be imagined looking at a 2D plan and elevation.
- Get the details down to the last curtain ring, electricity load, water supply etc.



Owner's Name: G Vijayalakshmi

Size: 4000 sq. ft

Clientele: Elite and from all walks of life

Number of Styling Stations: 17

Number of Back-wash Stations: 7

Design and furniture sources: Custom designed

Sections in the salon & their theme/ character:

Ground flr- Men's section.

1st floor – Ladies section

2nd floor- Exec spas and bridal suite

Terrace – Proposed exclusive luxurious exotic spa

Budget: 75-80 lacs

Name of the Architect/ Designer: Gautam Wadhvani

Address: Plot no 66, Road no. 1, Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad-500033

Contact: 9820143018/022 2431 4604

Ambika Pillai, Hotel Clarion Collection, Qutab Hotel

The site of a former lounge bar and night club, the new flagship hair and beauty salon for Ambika Pillai at the Qutub Hotel in New Delhi, **required both extensive re - conceptualization and re - construction of the existing space.** Located on the second floor of the hotel, the space was conceived of as having two interlocking volumes, ten feet and eighteen feet high, that enabled optimum lighting conditions which were to be a defining factor for the successful working of the salon.

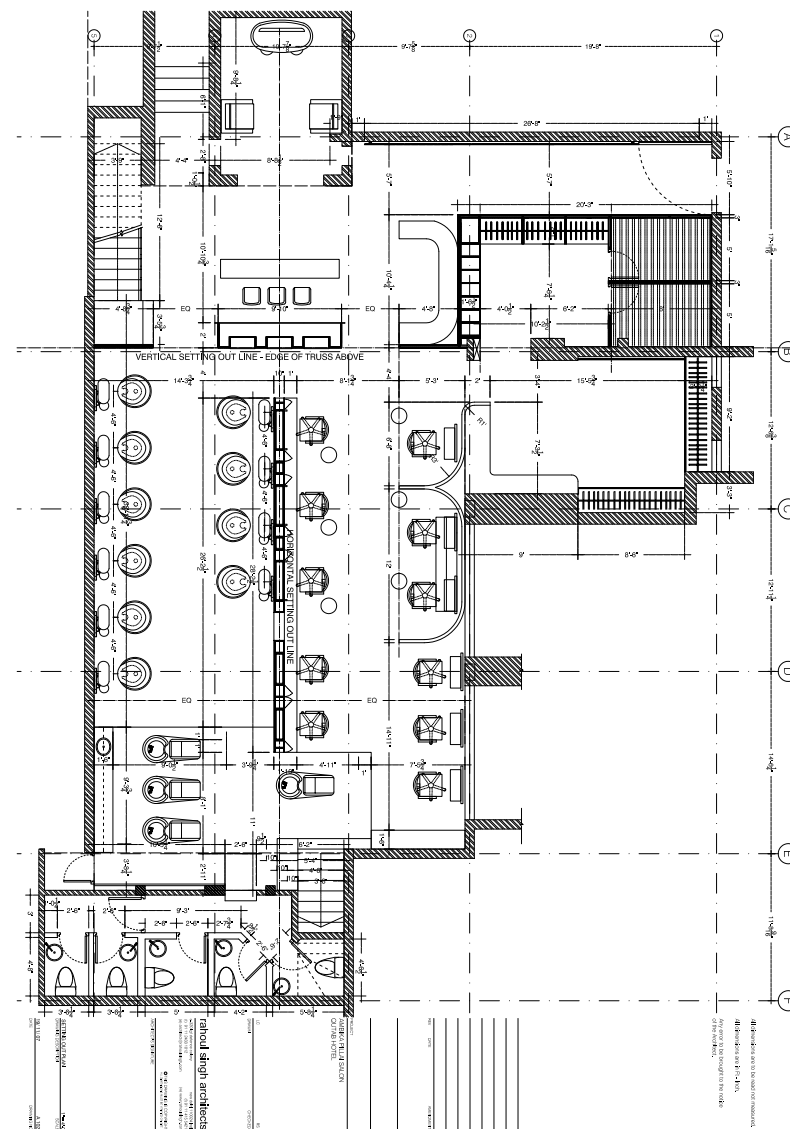
Within and around these volumes were organized spaces for hair cutting, and styling, make up, a jewelry store and changing rooms, spaces for pedicures and manicures, a Kerastase Institute, along with a host of administrative spaces. **The insertion of two mezzanines (an intermediate floor between main floors of a building) augmented the available space.**

The back washes, mirrors and the hair stations are inspired by the Ferrari and therefore the abundant use of the **Ferrari red colour scheme.**

Steel trusses inserted between the floor plates to brace the building against seismic activity on one end of the main work space were exposed allowing for a voluminous and awe inspiring space for the cutting of hair while the encasing of the trusses on the other was motivated by both the desire and the need to accommodate within the **smallest possible carbon foot print the essential services necessary to make a world class salon.**

There are two entrances, one accessed through a lift and the other through a staircase. The first characterized by an eighteen foot long mirror while a fabric clad eight-foot high wall opposite it compressed the space laterally, still maintaining a fourteen foot ceiling height a sense of controlled expansiveness.

The hair cutting salon presents itself from under a mezzanine. Both entrances converge at the reception behind where a central wooden console bifurcates the main work space into two functionally segregated spaces, one for hair cutting and the other for hair styling and make up.



Owner's Name: Ambika Pillai

Size: 3800 sq. ft.

Clientele: All leading industrialists, cricketers, socialites, actresses, fashion designers like Rohit Bal, Suneet Varma, Feroze Gujral, Sapna Kumar, Joey Matthews, Gautam Gambhir apart from doing makeup and hair for Aishwarya Rai, Bipasha Basu, Deepika Padukone, Dimple Kapadia, Chitrangada Singh, amongst others.

Staff: 50

Number of Styling Stations: 13 Hair stations and 7 Makeup stations

Number of Back-wash Stations: 5

Design and furniture sources: Maletti Italy.

Name of the Architect/ Designer: Rahoul Singh Architects and Framework interiors in conjunction with Ambika Pillai's inputs.
www.rahoul Singh.com

Address: Ambika Pillai
Hotel Clarion Collection (Qutab hotel)
Shaheed Jeet Singh marg
New Delhi - 110 016
Tel: +91 11 460 64100 - 105



Psalm 23 The Salon Mumbai

“Design develops by imagining the experience of moving through a space...the main idea was to visually connect every area from any point in the salon. The idea of walking through a space without any divisions was given top priority.” says, Udita Dalvi-Hemani, interior designer, of the newly launched Psalm 23 the Salon, in Mumbai.

Lighting in the reception is soft to give a warm lounge effect. The Kerastase Spa has a character of its own with mood lighting. Careful attention is given while designing the lighting of the styling floor. Adequate task lights are positioned in a way to avoid casting of shadows and achieve the right results in technical treatments and precision in styling work.

Nude colors like white, grey, black, ivory and brown are used with just one accent pink wall giving justice to stylist's works displayed in the form of branding and images.

Biggest Challenge:

Plumbing is always the main concern in a salon. As our site is on the first level of an old building we could not add dead load by raising the flooring for plumbing reasons. Therefore, plumbing had to be done close to the periphery which determined the zoning of our salon. Also constraints of comparatively low ceiling with a rigid beam structure dominated our floor plan, electrical and A/C layout.



Pro Tips:

- Use materials that are easy to maintain and have a timeless quality to them.
- Keep spaces open as far as possible to make the interiors look bigger.
- Don't clutter areas with multiple functions.
- Zoning and transition spaces are very important so space your sections well. No one likes places where you are brushing shoulders with the other person especially when you are paying to get pampered.

Palate of materials:

- Rustic tiles for the entire salon.
- Metallic tiles for the reception.
- Mosaic for highlights.
- Wenge veneer for most furniture.
- Frosted and clear glass for doors and certain furniture pieces.
- Mirrors – on all styling stations and a play of mirror and sun board panels for the colour bar.
- Wall papers – highlighting and separating areas like the black wall paper in the waiting area and the pink rose metallic wall paper behind the foot massage area.
- Wall paints with textures – metallic grey texture paint for the juice bar and a bubble gum pink in the staff area
- Loose accessories were picked up from a variety of stores around Mumbai.

Owner's Name: Ity Aggarwal

Size: 1890 Sq. Ft

Clientele: Affordable rates for every class of society. Anyone looking to have beautiful hair and to make a style statement is our clientele.

Staff: 5 Stylists, 2 Warderers, 3 Pedicurists and manicurists, 3 Pions, 2 valet parking drivers.

Number of Styling Stations: 1 Kerastase Spa, 14 Styling Stations

Number of Back-wash Stations: 4 Back- wash Stations

Sections in the salon:

Reception + Waiting + Juice Bar + Product Display and sale
Kerastase Spa
Styling Floor
Foot Massage
Back – Wash area
Colour Bar
Storage
Rest rooms – separate for the clients and staff
Staff area – with lockers, ample storage, a pantry and provision for laundry facility

Design and furniture sources: Melati Styling Chairs, Essenza Furniture, Tatva, Shimera and Address Home

Budget: 35lacs

Name of the Interior Designer: Udita Dalvi-Hemani

Address: Psalm 23 The Salon, 1st Floor Advani Chambers 'A', August Kranti Marg, Kempes Corner, Mumbai

Contact: Udita Dalvi – Hemani, Udit82@gmail.com, 98211 98982



Zen Serena Spa, The Metropolitan Hotel, Delhi

'Contemporary Indian' is the core design concept of the exotic Zen Serena Spa which offers traditional Indian treatments in a contemporary form along with a range of international spa treatments.

"Building a spa is much more than just putting in a few showers and lockers – the spa user of today requires not just functionality, but also hygiene and a tranquil and de-stressing atmosphere." says, Jesper Hougaard, owner, Zen Serena Spa.

The main challenge was to incorporate a Gym, Hair Salon and Spa into the same space and ensure that the high energy, music and tempo of a gym did not interfere with the peace, privacy and tranquillity of a spa.

Also the spa location in the hotel, existing load bearing structures and services was a challenge. A spa of course also has to look into safety aspects such as escape routes, emergency exits, fire protection etc.

The surfaces are important in a spa for more than aesthetic reasons – in many areas the guests are walking bare feet, so floors have to be pleasing to touch, but at the same time easy to clean, sturdy and non-skid.

Wall finishes are carefully chosen to enhance the spa feel, yet easy to clean and maintain. The Zen Serena Spa has extensive wet areas for men and women separate and in these areas hygiene is extremely important, hence was the main determinants when choosing materials.

Spa lighting is very important as it must not only enhance the mood of relaxation, but must also be sufficient to ensure that hygiene standards are met.

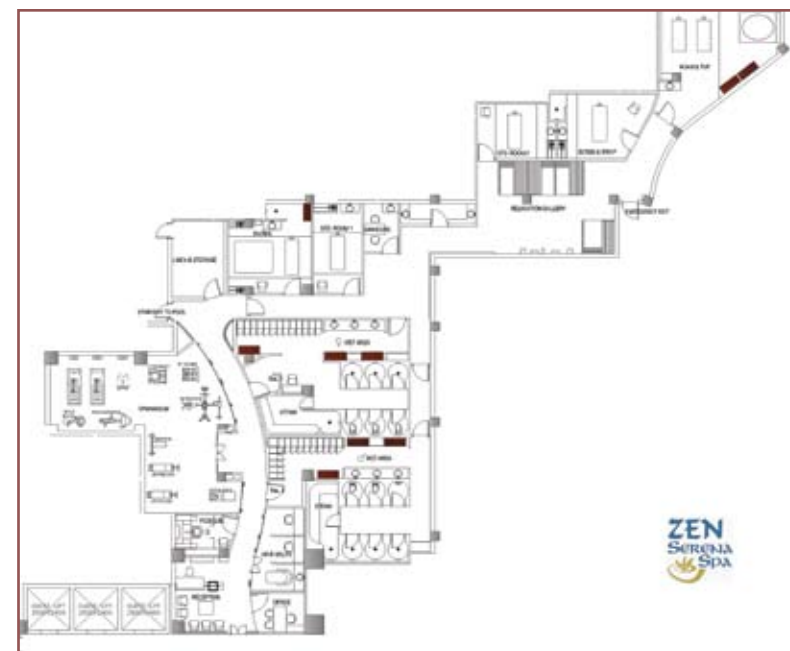
An important but often overlooked fact is that a spa guest is either facing up or down during treatment and any direct ceiling light is therefore not a feasible solution.



We wanted to avoid the stereotype "imported" Far East design elements and instead focused on a contemporary Indian designs. We have emphasized the Indian origins with a collection of antique decorations from both south and north India and have to a large extent used Indian materials for finishes.

The most interesting section is the Adam & Eve Suite which is like a personal resort in the middle of a bustling city.

As part of Serena Spa's policies we always try to localise materials, not just to add the local flavour, but also to minimise the carbon footprint of transporting materials over long distances.



Name of the Architect & Interior Designer:

The floor plan was done in-house by Serena Spa, working with Total Interior Design, New Delhi for interior specifications and services

Number of Rooms:

5 treatment rooms (1 double and 4 single), pedicure rooms and relaxation area, separate wet areas for men and women, a hair salon, gym and an outdoor swimming pool.

Total Area: 5300 sq.ft.

Total Spa Personnel: 14

Address:

Zen Serena Spa
The Metropolitan Hotel New Delhi
Bangla Sahib Road, Connaught Place
New Delhi 110 001

Contact: +91 11 32659068

Jargon Buster

Carbon footprint is a representation of the effect human activities have on the climate in terms of the total amount of greenhouse gases produced (measured in units of carbon dioxide). So, it is a measure of the impact we make individually on the earth by the choices we make regarding our lifestyles.



Sohum Spa and Wellness Sanctuary, Mumbai

The entrance foyer of the Sohum Spa overlooks the busy city streets but as you enter further, lush green gardens lined with trees surround the building.

Amidst the greens, sits a stone Buddha statue, and the Yoga lawn at the back of the spa, the soothing sound of cascading water flowing across the flooring pose a sharp contrast to the regular chaos of the city and at once transport you to a sanctuary of healing and wellness.

The compound wall is clad in Sandstone with concealed light fittings within them which when lit after dark illuminates the entire space.

The ivory white walls of the reception area are sectioned by neat, contemporary wooden shelves and the waiting area is furnished with couches in matt gold.

The music is usually the like from Buddha Bar with intermittent sounds of chirping birds adding freshness to the ambience. A small pond with colorful pebbles drenched in water gleam as soft yellow lights fall on them.

Dark Oak wood has been used in plenty for the spa's flooring and an opulent wooden staircase helps you into the spa on the first floor.

As you climb up the first set of stairs a rich **bronze Buddha statuette** is placed with a sequined gold backdrop and an ornate crystal chandelier hung from the sky high ceiling. Tall diya stands with non-polluting self-lit boxes light up the corners of the spa.

"Setting seven therapy rooms on one level posed a unique challenge so I made them box-like in appearance for optimum space utilization" says Ninad Pardeshi.

The therapy rooms accommodate massage beds, the shower space, the basin counters for the masseurs and the dry counters for the towel warmers and oils.

Hand made Italian wallpapers and handcrafted mirrors set in royal bronze frames have been used to create a rich but serene space in each therapy room.



Each room has automated light controls and sound controls to alter the ambience according to the therapy offered.

The Couple Massage Suite has a custom-made Italian marble Jacuzzi and has an earthy look with dark chipped tiles on the wall and diffused lights.

The Vichy Shower room has the perfect jet massage space and has been created with stone and water resistant materials.

The Open Terrace or the relaxation zone is done up with Swedish floors laid in grids and African pine wood tables are laid with custom made all weather umbrellas. The boundary walls are clad with china white tiles with designer pottery and shrubs lining the area.



Name of the Architect & Interior Designer:
Ninad Pardeshi, CMD ELM Designs Pvt. Ltd.

Number of Rooms:
Consultation Room, Account Executives, Vichy Shower Room, 2 Couple Therapy Rooms, Changing Room, Foot Reflexology, 7 Therapy Rooms, Waiting Lounge, V. VIP Room, Reception Area, Display Area, Pantry, Segregated Washrooms.

Total Area:
14,000 sq.ft. with 4000 Sq.ft.(Indoor Space) + 10,000 sq.ft. (Outdoor space with garden area)

Number of Therapists: 18

Budget: Rs. 3 crores

Address:
Sohum Spa and Wellness Sanctuary
Juhu Vile Parle Sports Club, Plot No. B 10,
Vaikunthlal Mehta Road,
Kapole Co-operative Hsg Soc Ltd, JVPD Scheme,
Vile Parle (W), Mumbai-400049

Contact: +91 22 26139603



Taj Spa, Rambagh Palace Jaipur

The Taj Spa at Rambagh Palace, recreates the grandeur of royal India at a spa reminiscent of India's beautiful Rajput palaces, water gardens, and fabled regal lifestyle.

Two luxurious couple spa suite tents, with **wooden floors embellished with glowing chandeliers and regal Indian love swings**, exude the magic of an exotic era and invite guests to savour an exclusive spa experience.

The suites have attached showers and copper soak tubs and a changing area that offers complete privacy. **The lounge areas within the tents have air-conditioning options that are adjusted as per the guest's preference.** After the treatments, guests can relax in the charming outdoor relaxation area.

The design reflects the elements of nature, of India and its regal splendor in a Royal tented environment. The ambience has a sense of nurture with nature. Candle light nooks, lanterns, torches; the presence of water, shimmering lights and billowing fabrics; bring in confluence and balance of the five elements of nature. Plants, shrubs, flowering and fruit bearing trees, fragrant and colourful bushes, enhance visual and sensory appeal.

The color scheme for external and interior surfaces includes softer shades associated with the regal culture of India.

Spa design takes care to provide a comfortable environment keeping in mind the extreme heat, cold and rain weather conditions to ensure a greater and pleasurable usage any time of the year. **Use of traditional means to deal with these conditions adds to the appeal of the concept, for instance, crucible stands for wood fire, khus and other blinds, mist coolers, regal awnings etc.**



Each of the Spa suites at Rambagh Palace, Jaipur has a **wooden swing carved by local craftsmen with cushions in the tented relaxation verandah overlooking the gardens.** The couple is encouraged to relish the signature drink and gently sway on the swing as they watch the birds in the garden, or the water body, with melodic sounds of the flute or sitar wafting around them.

Name of the Architect & Interior Designer: Mr. Amit Ghelot

Number of Rooms: 2 (Tents)

Total Area: 4500 Sq. ft

Number of Therapists:
6 + 1 (Female + Male)

Budget: 81.60 Lacs

Address: Rambagh Palace, Bawani Singh Road
Jaipur - 302005, Rajasthan

Contact: 0141 - 2211919





Mandara Spa

Radisson Hotel & Spa, Alibaug

Tucked in the lovely locales of Alibaug, the Mandara Spa, is a luxurious escape from the demanding city life. Being a getaway spa, set within the beautiful Radisson Resort, the spa interiors reflect a unique blend of the tropical with the traditionally Indian. "We wanted a sense of a 'fantasy escape' within the spaces! Relaxation spaces were brought into the Central Courtyard as private cocoons" says Carl Almeida.

Lighting is dramatic and subdued with soft and strong lights played around dynamically for added drama. A uniform contemporary vibe flows through the spa as well as throughout the resort, with an underlying local essence whether it is a wall panel or a lighting design or a furniture accent.

Influence of the location

Alibaug being a resort destination, relaxation poses to be the ultimate aim of the guests, because they have more time to unwind and enjoy. Therefore, the spa treatments are more personalized and elaborate. Also because of the wide international clientele that visits the Radisson Resort, the spa menu is diverse.

The dramatic 'Axis' of water- reflection pool, leading to the Yoga Studio at the end draws one's view deep into the spa. The relaxation 'Cocoons' on either side of the water also provide a dramatic 'frame' to the vista.

The main Relaxation Room has sheer curtains in white and subdued lighting effects to create a sensuous feel. Beautiful floral designs adorn the walls that have been created using medium density fibre. At various other rooms, walls display veneer paneling further enhanced with melamine polish.



Name of the Architect/Interior Designer: Carl Almeida, P49 Design (based in Bangkok)

www.p49deesign.com

Principal Designer : Mr. Somchai Tuntipatanavong

Number of Treatment Rooms: 8

Area: 20,000 sq.ft.

Number of Therapists: 8

Contact: Carl Almeida. carl@p49deesign.com