

Designs on the home

The interiors of a home speak about the owner's personality, taste and lifestyle. Every house speaks a different language and has a different impact. The choices vary from person to person and so do the requirements. But, in a busy schedule, it's difficult to take time out to do up your home. That's where an ideal helper -- your friendly neighbourhood interior designer -- comes in. This leads Akansha Agarwal and Anchal Malik to the home of interior designer Amita Trehan, who's been helping people convert their dream homes into reality

Entering the house of ever-smiling interior designer Amita Trehan is an experience in itself. It's true what they say about a home reflecting the owner's personality; this one is as lovely as the woman herself. We learn that all the furniture in her home has been designed by her. As we glance around her pretty sitting room, we realise that Amita loves to play and experiment with shapes and designs and is inspired by "the place itself -- a room has to tell what it wants," she avers. "It's a myth that 'interiors is all about looking pretty'. Rather, it is all about functionality, detailing and design sensibility, which are equally important," believes this alumnus from the School of Architecture, Ahmedabad.

AN INVETERATE TRAVELLER

We are told that Amita hails from a *fauji* family in Delhi and has seen a lot of India, but chose salubrious

Pune as her home base. Once the niceties are done with and we sit down for a heart-to-heart, we wonder where it all began for the designing woman. "I am just plain lucky as I have never really needed to run behind anyone to get work," she declares with a laugh.

STROKE OF LUCK

That one line sums up Amita's professional graph. She actually began her career with the prestigious Delhi-based Kothari Associates. You know there is a saying that fate plays delightful little games with us that change the course of lives. Ditto for Amita. At a do hosted by her firm, she bumped into an architect who was doing a business hotel called Sun City International in Jodhpur and was looking for an interior designer. From talking shop,

the two of them were soon partners in design as Amita formally joined him as an interior designer. That first break took her places -- literally! For four months she was on her toes, shuttling between Delhi and Jodhpur in a bid to breathe life into her maiden designing venture. To say that she enjoyed the assignment would probably be akin to saying that Michelangelo created a masterpiece at the Sistine chapel. Tell her that and



she winces. Not for her the grand or the extravagant, she discloses; she is happier when she is “not fashion-oriented or clued into the haute and the happening.”

BAGGING OPPORTUNITIES

Buoyed by the success of Sun City International, Amita's work got more than an eye-full of attention. Before she knew it, she was on to a Mahindra showroom assignment in Alwar, which really got her noticed on the interior designing horizon. In another eight months, she had designed around 40 showrooms in the entire northern belt. Her next project was a centrally air-conditioned school in Agra, the one-lakh-sq feet Prelude Public School, where she looked into “every small detail”. After spending nine years in Delhi, she decided to shift to Pune in 2005 and started work by designing her friends' apartment.

Amita strongly feels that she is a “people's person. I help create interesting spaces in keeping with an individual's personality. What is the use of putting my ideas of what I think the person should be like... if that individual whose home I am designing, isn't comfortable living in it?” she wonders pragmatically. “People live and work with the kind of inspiration they derive from their surroundings.”

PEOPLE'S PERSON

Aesthetics may be her main point of base, but being a practical sort, Amita makes sure that she has one eye trained on the logistics as well. “Like I said earlier, every place has a tale to tell. Whether it is a bungalow or a studio apartment, budgeting plays a major role as it saves the extra buck that can be invested later. It all starts with listing down one's needs and desires and working towards the practicality of the house,” she advises.

When she gives us a guided tour around her home, we realise that Amita actually practises what she preaches. Her home speaks about her

personality as well as that of her family, whom she is “obsessed” with. Filled with myriad colours, shapes, lights and textures, it reflects the new trend of refinishing old furniture. Looking at it, you suddenly feel inspired to lend a new dimension to your own home, but without going broke. She agrees and reiterates, “All you need to have is an eye to pick up good stuff at the right price.”

FUTURE PERFECT

As we wrap up our morning with her, Amita admits that the future looks bright. She plans to delve into a design solution firm where she can unleash her creativity into landscape designing, furniture and architecture.

She has even come up with a name for it: BRAVUR'A.

All we can say is, bravo! ■

