

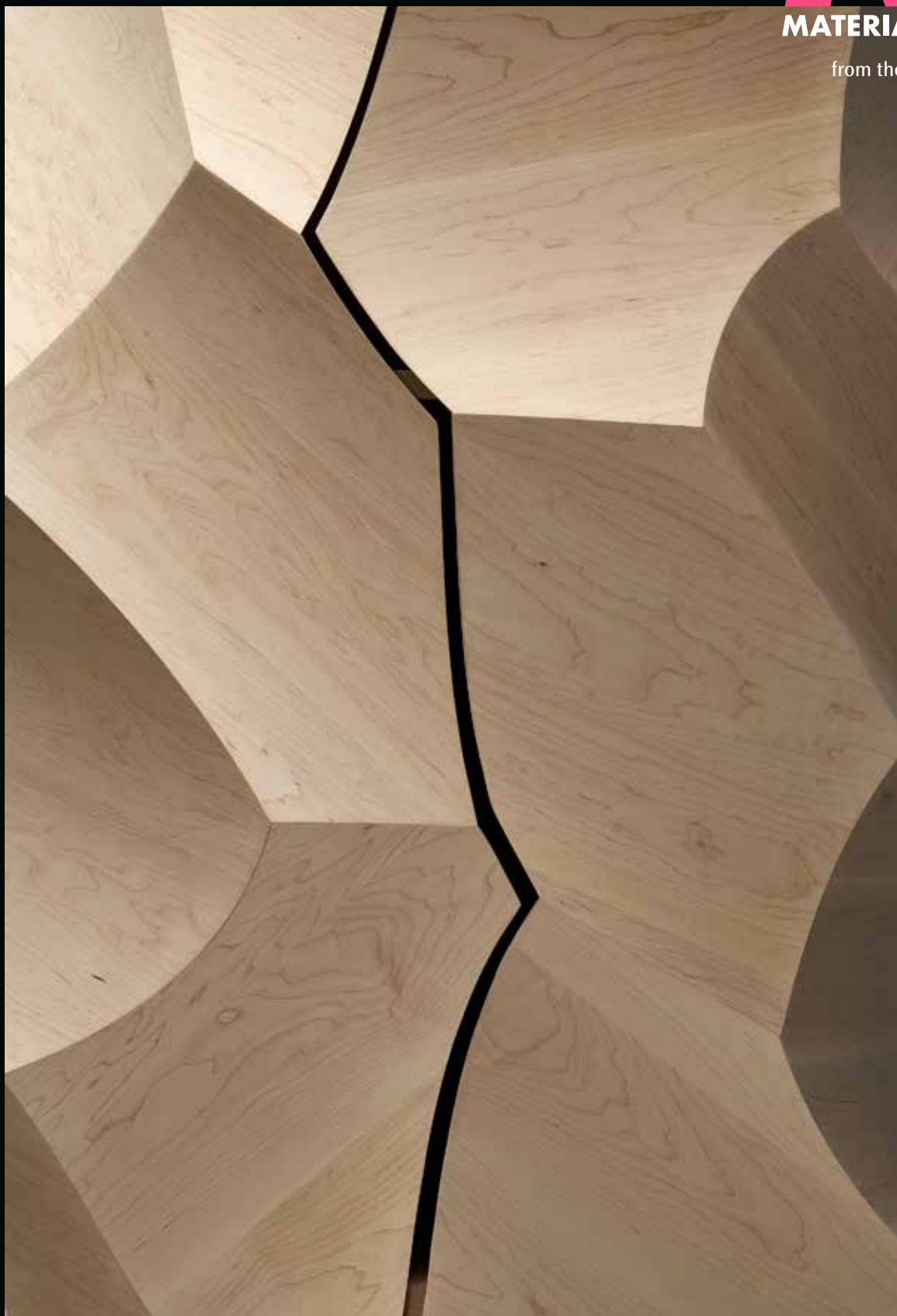
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MATERIAL PLUS

from the publishers of



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Peter Zumthor



INSIDE:



INDUSTRIES IN FOCUS : WOODEN DOORS | GRANITE



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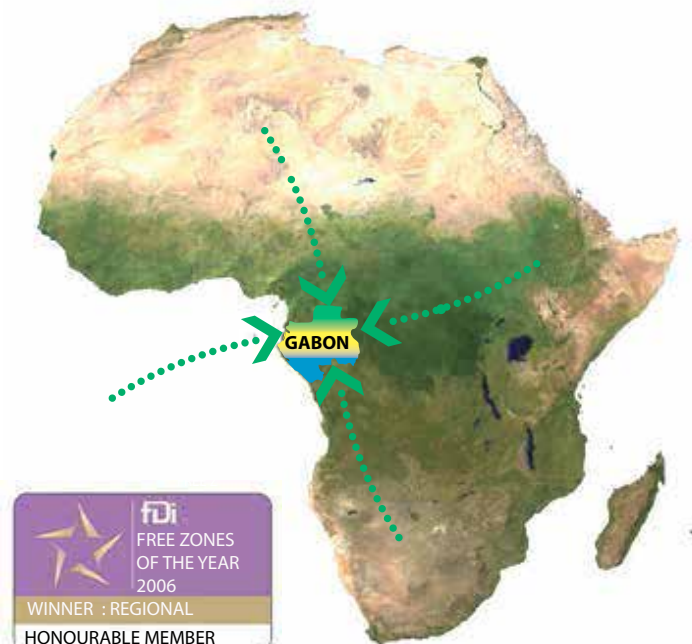
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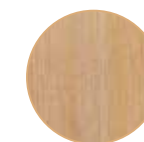
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The materials sector has always been one that inspires the look of interiors while adding durability and strength to the structures that are created by architects and designers. Despite the vast size and the very significant contribution to the economy and employment, the various sectors of the materials sector, are all still in the unorganised sector. Some key players are looking to change this dynamic.

M+ looks to these market movers to better understand the working of the industry, with a deep dive into their thinking and the paths they have taken to reaching their current position. Why this is of particular value is that the industry itself is largely defined by the individuals and the companies who comprise it. A lack of government presence in organising and charting this path is also a factor that adds to the profound influence of each individual member of the industry.

Always interesting and inspiring, these are the stories we hope to share with our readers. In doing so, we hope to create a platform for connection as well as for conversation, making the industry even more robust and dynamic.

M+ is not limited to a specific segment of the materials industry, seeing it as a huge inter-connected and inter-related market, where the key players in the retail sector wear numerous hats, covering several segments of the industry.

In this context, our formats see 3 main categories by market share: wood and wood products, stone and ceramic. Also of importance, metal, glass and new materials like resin and agglomerates, are treated in ad hoc sections, through the year. We hope to provide both information and inspiration in an aesthetic and pleasing manner, to this important industry and cover wooden doors and granite this time, with a key interview in the ceramics sector.

Sylvia Khan

Sylvia Khan
Editor & Creative Head, Material Plus

ANSAL VILLA

New Delhi

Commission: Aparna Kaushik Design Studio, Noida



Materials: Sandstone cladding, bronze, mild steel, texture paint, Gwalior mint sandstone, Indian sandstone, Italian marble and wood.

The client wanted a Mediterranean-inspired villa that blended with the landscape. Spanning 1400 sq. m., the space is nestled in expansive greenery far away from the city. The driveway has colonnades that have glazing between them, creating a sense of built and unbuilt architecture.

Following a warm palette and natural colors, the firm uses Indian sandstone and Gwalior mint sandstone for the exteriors. It follows a natural layout with the pool in the background that is framed by open windows, providing a glimpse of tropical paradise living. The entrance opens up to a huge lawn with landscaping contrasting with the other city houses in the vicinity.

A small water body at the foyer, designed with an onyx-clad backlit wall adds a luxurious feel to the entrance. This is followed by the open courtyard, bar and living room. A customized brass handle with a semi-precious stone inlay catches immediate attention, introducing one to the detailing used in the villa. The L-shaped residence looks inwards and spaces are arranged around the aforementioned water body and greens. One can see the swimming pool and cabanas through clear glass windows.

Off the entrance foyer, a semi-circular staircase with art nouveau railings encircles a blown glass silver chandelier. The living room and bar are divided by a partition with large expansive windows, framing the surrounding landscape. The kitchen is closer to the billiards room and study room that's opposite the living room.

A semi-covered verandah at the front of the corridor creates an interplay of light and shadow and leads to the dining room that faces the swimming pool. They bring in abundant natural light with a curved staircase separating the lounge and bedroom from the common spaces that face the pool. Glazed windows throughout the villa allow in natural light, also visually expanding its spaciousness.

Two bedrooms located at one end open up to the pool and cabana, also facing the balconies and terrace on one side. Windows provide spectacular views of the surrounding landscape, thus recreating a Mediterranean oasis. Long passageways are ornamented with Italian marble for opulence and are also curated with designer paintings and consoles. +



BONUS GELATO

Shanghai

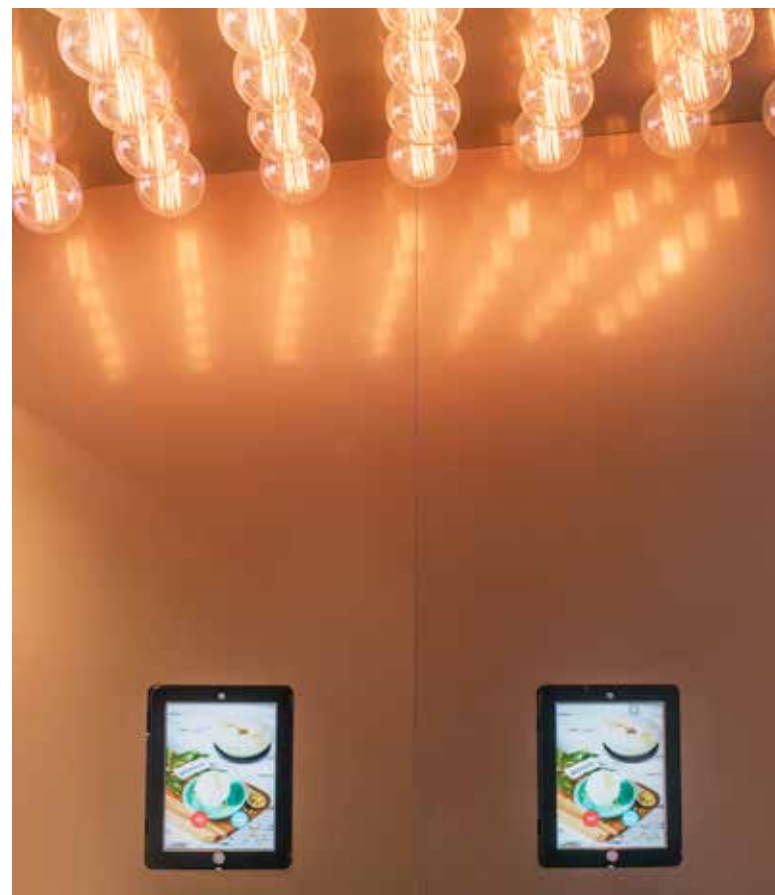
Commission: Studio Ippolito Fleitz Group, Germany



Materials: Terrazzo, wood, glass.

The firm was commissioned to design an ice cream parlor in a central city location, which integrates the making and selling of ice cream with a café. With the concept extremely popular in Chinese cities, the clients wanted a stylish little boutique for fun encounters and creative self-expression.

The inviting ice cream parlor has a compact retail space, a small façade and a busy street outside. A huge gray terrazzo slab hangs above the entrance and is equipped with a neon sign and a glass façade to generate awareness. Upon entering, the ice cream counter features cold pastel shades with a warm wood ceiling and copper lamps. The counter resembles layers of frozen ice, and the small retail space integrates two self-ordering terminals for selfies. +



DAV RESTAURANT

Milan

Commission: Andrea Maffei Architects, Milan



Materials: Wood, piastina stone, Thala stone.

Located on the first floor of the Allianz Tower designed by Arata Isozaki and Andrea Maffei within the Citylife Complex, the client wanted to convert the space into a three-star Michelin-star restaurant designed for a younger cosmopolitan audience. The floor used to accommodate an office with an outdoor terrace earlier, and the DAV restaurant was the first venue of the restaurant chain in Milan.

The tower plan has two cores and a long rectangular space at the center, glazed towards the terrace. The restaurant kitchen is on the northern side, the guest reception is on the southern side and the central space begins with a cocktail bar and leads to the outdoor terrace through the long glazed façade. Spaces are designed with the same finish to render the feel of a single fluid space instead of clearly defining the areas.

Long wooden paneling composed of pyramids that rotate in several ways resembles fractals. This extends to one side of the restaurant to become the leading theme, including the backdrop to the main room. Lights emphasize geometric patterns with shadows and reflections in the kitchen. The paneling also runs through the bathroom and technical shaft doors to blend into the geometric design.

Floors and walls in the rest of the restaurant feature Laminam 'pietra piastina stoneware' in a light-gray texture. An hors d'oeuvres counter and a glassed-in pizza box at the bar counter allow clients to see how the food is prepared. Counters are covered with light-gray pleated Thala stone to continue the cold gray base theme contrasting the warmth of the cherry-colored paneling.

Lighting is focused on the walls and tables, complementing the softer urbane setting. The client requested that the ceiling remain serviceable to access the fixtures for maintenance. Thus, the space uses long dark-gray wooden laths such as the façade doors and windows. A series of slanted laths houses sound-absorbing panels that can be easily removed for maintenance. Laths are joined at points where adjustable spotlights are provided for concentrated lighting on the tables.

One can view the large outdoor terrace through the long windows of the Allianz Towers which houses the additional cocktail and hors d'oeuvres bar in the center. The Thala stone finishes are used in the restaurant. Seating and tables are arranged around the bar guided by the green pools comprising the terraced landscape, and large roll-up curtains cover the outdoor spaces in the hot summer. +





NILAYA Ludhiana

Commission: Varun Boweja Designs, Ludhiana



Materials: Brass, stones, mother-of-pearl, African horn, metal, textiles, mirror, glass, agate, onyx and chalcedony.

The project's palatial grandeur was inspired by the client's desire for an atypical luxury home with high-quality materials, customized features and vibrant colors. The maximalist two-storey mansion has five en suite bedrooms, powder rooms, lounges, an entertainment area, a home theater and a spa. Spread across 13,000 sq. ft, the space is spread across the ground, first and second floors with a landscaped lawn, sculptural water bodies, green plantations and outdoor accessories.

As per the brief, the firm conceived a blend of glamor and aesthetics that evoke sensuality at the same time. One enters through the double-height entrance, decorated with a chandelier comprising 560 fairies designed by the designer. A 10-ft.-tall hand-carved wooden mirror reflects exquisite floral wall art, and 5-ft.-tall planters fill up the vertical spaces. Victorian casements, wall panellings, hand-carved brass motifs and railings, fine wooden and Italian marble flooring, marble inlay in mother of pearl and customized lights spell opulence.

The mirrored ceiling in the central lobby leading to the rooms reflects the surroundings, and one would find hand-carved artwork along the

staircase. A double-height window with Victorian casement detailing looks out towards the manicured garden. The ground floor has a foyer, central lobby, formal living room, kitchen, dining room, family lounge, powder room, and a connecting foyer to the master bedroom and the daughter's room.

The kitchen is designed with pendant lights and onyx walls and an island bar. Terracotta sofas add style and warmth to the family lounge, while the metal chairs with animal skin on the sea depict maximalism. A mirror television encased in marble paneling above the fireplace becomes the backdrop. Quirky artwork, an African horn chandelier and comfortable blue upholstered chairs with metal details grace the dining room.

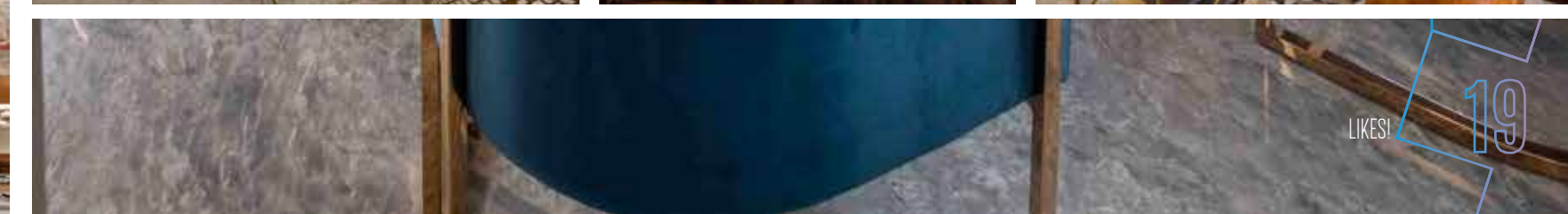
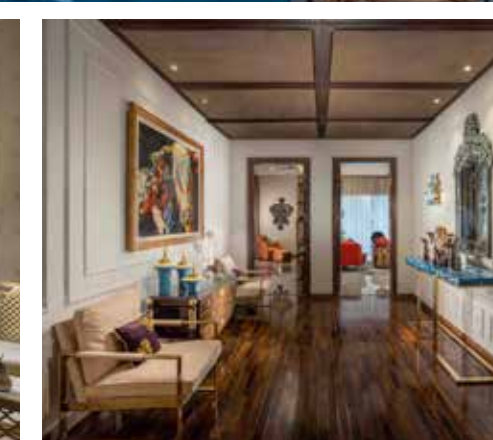
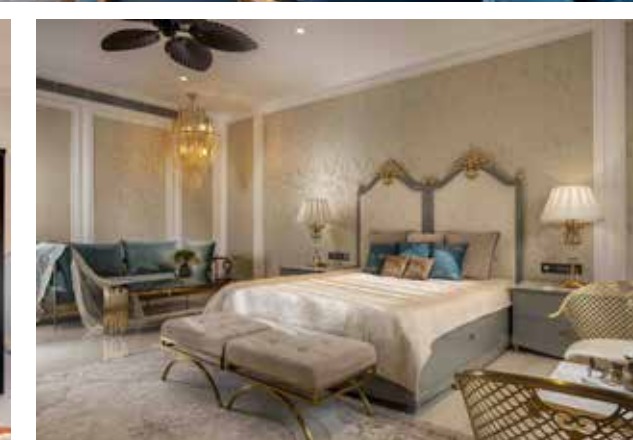
Each bedroom is developed with a concept to bring out the owner's personality. The master bedroom has gold leafing detailing, Victorian wall paneling covered with customized hand-embroidered wallpaper and customized cushions with embroidery. The daughter's room is inspired by her love for Venetian mirrors, and her room has a four-poster mirrored bed. The side table, LED unit and wardrobe are designed with mirrors with etching details.

The first floor has two bedrooms for the sons, a common lobby, a prayer room and a guest bedroom. A rose gold, the black, red and beige color

scheme is chosen for the younger son's bedroom. His bed is hand-carved by the in-house team and finished in copper leafing, along with copper coffee tables with glass tops and the LED unit customized with brass handles and knobs. The black-copper washroom exudes drama and luxury with mosaic wall art along with Saint Laurent marble wall and flooring. Twin Venetian mirrors reflect the bold color palette.

Moving up to the second floor, one would find the entertainment area with a lounge and bar, a foyer leading to the home theater, spa, gymnasium and a second guest room. This opens out to an open-to-sky terrace with a lawn. The entertainment lounge has a bar area with a burgundy sofa, an onyx coffee table and an animal-print carpet to depict high style. Venetian mirrors with golden detailing add depth and glamor, and chandeliers illuminate the statement bar cabinet made from metal with a veneer and onyx top and glass shutters.

The spa has a soothing material palette dominated by onyx, Victorian-paneled walls and wooden flooring. A wooden sculpture and the saxophone chandelier further add drama to the space. The home theater has sufficient space optimization as per the light's intensity and direction, along with leather recliners, fabric wall and ceiling paneling and floor-to-ceiling alcove lighting. +





SARAL

New Delhi

Commission: Jam Storey, New Delhi

Materials: Glass, tiles, teak, cane, wallpaper.

Following the name that means 'easy' or 'effortless' in Hindi, the compact apartment flat was redesigned for a small family. Spanning over 1200 sq. ft., the young couple with two children wanted a cost-efficient revamping of their house on a limited budget. Simple and uncluttered spaces comprise the minimalist palette of a living room, dining room, kitchen, prayer room, a master bedroom with an attached toilet and two small bedrooms with a common toilet.

Earthy colors and simple forms further maintain the minimal mood board and pastel upholstery balance the overall shades of gray. The client is a voracious reader and wanted a library right at the entrance. However, the firm found it challenging to design a prayer room as there was no possible space in the compact house. To resolve the same, they brought the balcony into the living room and converted it into the prayer room. A fluted glass partition maintains the privacy of the two areas.

The living room is dotted with greenery and abundant natural light, sweeping the space with light and freshness while remaining connected to nature. As the client was drawn towards the Indian tradition, they wanted Madhubani artwork in the house to stay in touch with their Bihari heritage. Patterned tiles in the corridor break the continuous gray flooring.

Simple and minimalistic designs are chosen for the master bedroom, with customized teak and cane furniture to add warmth. Blue and yellow wallpaper adds quirkiness to the son's room and a floral pink adds a feminine touch to the daughter's room. The washroom uses self-textured white and gray tiles. +





INDIAN WOODEN DOOR MARKET

The wooden door industry in India is a thriving sector that caters to both domestic and international markets. Wooden doors are widely used in residential, commercial, and institutional buildings, making them an integral part of the construction and interior design industry.

India has a rich tradition of using wood in architecture and carpentry, which has contributed to the growth of the wooden door industry. The country is blessed with diverse species of wood, including teak, sheesham, sal, mango, and others, which are popularly used for manufacturing high-quality wooden doors.

The wooden door industry in India consists of manufacturers, suppliers, distributors, and retailers. These players offer a wide range of door types, designs, and finishes to cater to different customer preferences and architectural styles.



The Indian door market was valued at US\$ 978.17 mn in 2022 and is projected to reach US\$ 1,601.04 mn during the forecast period 2023-2030. The market is segmented by material into wood, engineered wood, metal, glass, plastic and composite, of which engineered wood doors occupied the highest segmental share in India door market in 2022. Engineered wood doors are made from a combination of real wood and other materials, such as particle or HD, and they offer many benefits over solid wood doors, such as improved stability, resistance to moisture costs.

The market is categorized into solid, wood doors, flush doors, panel doors and others.

The industry has witnessed advancements in manufacturing processes and technologies, leading to improved quality, precision, and durability of wooden doors. Modern manufacturing techniques such as



computer numerical control (CNC) machines, laser cutting, and digital printing have significantly enhanced the design capabilities and customization options within the industry.

The demand for wooden doors in India is driven by factors such as rapid urbanization, increasing disposable incomes, and a growing emphasis on aesthetics and

interior design. The residential sector accounts for a significant portion of the demand, with homeowners seeking doors that enhance the visual appeal of their homes while providing security and functionality.

While the wooden door industry in India has immense potential, it also faces challenges such as the availability and sustainability of



raw materials, responsible sourcing and forest management practices that are crucial to ensure the long-term viability of the industry.

Competition from alternative materials like PVC and aluminum doors poses a challenge to the wooden door industry.

Overall, the wooden door industry in India offers a promising market with ongoing growth opportunities. The combination of traditional craftsmanship, diverse wood species, technological advancements, and evolving customer preferences make it a dynamic and vibrant sector within the construction and interior design landscape. +



+ DES. MISBAH KAPADIA

Principal Designer and Creator,
Design Konstruct, Mumbai



Wooden doors are a timeless and elegant element in interior design. They are versatile enough to be used in different design styles that include classic, rustic, contemporary, and minimalist. Offering warmth and sophistication, wooden doors are customized with different finishes and colors to match the room's décor.

Doors carved out of wood have a natural beauty which is hard to replicate with other materials, as wood's patterns, textures, and warm tones create a visually interesting and organic look. Whether made of mahogany, oak, or maple, wooden doors have a richness that enhances a space's overall appearance.

Wooden doors also provide good insulation, thus regulating temperature and reducing noise. This makes them suitable for bedrooms, home offices, and libraries in need of a peaceful atmosphere. They are solid and secure, thus creating a sense of privacy and comfort. Wooden doors symbolize opportunity, transition, and protection. They mark the boundary between the outside world and the interior, emphasizing the importance of



privacy and security. Opening and closing a wooden door represents entering a new space or leaving distractions behind. Over time, wooden doors age naturally, adding character and depth to the overall design.

When properly maintained, wooden doors are durable and long-lasting, as regular cleaning and occasional refinishing keep them in excellent condition for several years. They are also resistant to everyday wear and tear, making them practical for areas with high traffic.

Despite the availability of alternative materials, wooden doors remain popular among interior designers and homeowners due to their authenticity and longevity. They have a natural beauty, adapt to different design styles, have symbolic meaning, and add character to a space. With maintenance, they have the potential for long-lasting durability. As interior design trends change, wooden doors continue to be a timeless choice that adds sophistication and warmth to any space. +



AKHILESH CHITLANGIA

Executive Director, COO, Duroply Industries Ltd

In Pursuit of Excellence

Founded in 1957, Duroply Industries Limited is a leading manufacturer of high-quality plywood and veneer products in India. Since then, our company has flourished into a well-established and respected brand. Today, we are known as one of the national players in the plywood industry with a state-of-the-art manufacturing facility in Rajkot and a pan-India presence.

While sustainability, innovation, and quality have been central to our philosophy, in these 65 years, we have expanded our product line to include a wide range of plywood and veneer products, such as plywood, blockboards, decorative veneers, and doors. Today, we are recognized as the most trusted brand in India, that offers high-quality, innovative solutions for the Indian construction and interior design industry.



Our premium product quality along with innovation in material and manufacturing processes have helped us lead the way in the plywood business. Today we have built a reputation as a trusted brand that provides long-lasting plywood products that meet the diverse needs of its customers.

Another aspect that has helped us stand out among our competitors is sustainability. At Duroply, we use sustainable, plantation-grown timber to manufacture our products, ensuring that the production processes are environmentally responsible. In addition, our range of wooden doors offers an impressive array of options to suit every taste and style. From traditional to contemporary, the brand's range includes a variety of veneer textures and colors and is available in myriad sizes, including standard and customizable options. The collection comes incorporated with a range of safety features, including fire-rated options, to provide added protection to homes and businesses.

Evolving Trends and Timeless Designs

The wooden door industry has seen an evolution in the past two years, with more and more consumers seeking sustainable and environmentally responsible solutions. At Duroply, we have responded to this shift by offering a wider range of eco-friendly options that meet the diverse needs of our customers while maintaining strict quality control standards to

ensure high-quality and efficient solutions.

In general, the trend in wooden doors has shifted towards more natural, raw finishes that showcase the beauty of the wood's natural grain and texture. Lighter, neutral tones such as light oak, ash, and beech are becoming increasingly popular in modern homes as these create a sense of warmth and lightness in a space.

Our range of wooden doors is lightweight and budget-friendly.

The Rising Popularity

Today consumers are seeking designs that correspond to global trends and offer superior quality. We are seeing a rising demand for wood products that are high-quality with minimalist and subtle designs. It is a design that evokes a sense of quiet luxury rather than an overemphasis on intricate detailing that is trending today.

Additionally, the industry is likely to continue its focus on sustainability, durability, and eco-friendly products. Also, consumers today are interested in wooden doors with unique textures, colors, and finishes, especially with a contemporary aesthetic. In future, to meet our customer demand, we aim to continue to innovate and offer new products that will meet the evolving needs of the masses while upholding our brand's core values. +

MANOJ TULSIAN

Joint Managing Director & CEO, Greenply Industries Limited

For A Great First Impression

Greenply Industries Ltd. is among India's largest interior eco-friendly infrastructure companies with over three decades of experience in manufacturing and marketing a comprehensive range of plywood, block boards, decorative, veneers, doors, and other allied products. We have a widespread presence in over 1100 cities, towns, and villages across 27 states and 6 union territories, serviced through a well-entrenched distribution network of more than 2,300 dealers and authorized stockists, a retail network exceeding 6,000 and more than 50 physical and virtual branches pan-India. In addition, we also have a strong international presence, with 8 state-of-the-art manufacturing facilities, which include one each in Myanmar & Gabon.

We constantly strive on building a sustainable operational framework crucial for continued value creation and have forayed into the MDF sector with the new plant located at Vadodara, Gujarat.

It's because of our continuous efforts that the company has seen robust growth in recent years and has consolidated its place as a market leader.

In terms of wooden door designs, there is a wider attraction towards pre-made doors and applying veneer surfaces on them. In terms of textures, these veneer surfaces provide detail and architectural depth to the overall design. Also, in terms of colors and finishes, consumers are opting for clear wood finishes because of their authentic, nostalgic, and vintage look.

When it comes to selecting a door, strength still plays an important role but there is a wider attraction towards pine-wood doors. The distinctive style of pine doors makes them fit equally well into both traditional and contemporary interiors. Also, the pine-wood can withstand wear and tear over several years. Eco-friendliness and sustainability are other drivers in the consumer buying process. Also,

sliding doors are getting popular because of their functionality and convenience.

Minimizing Environmental Impact

At the heart of the brand Greenply - sustainability, product innovation and unmatched quality are strongly anchored. Greenply believes in sustainable sourcing of its raw material. In fact, 97% of our raw material comes from plantation timber. The company has planted more than 24 million saplings across the country. Greenply is amongst the first ones in this sector to use Okoume – a natural timber harvested under the Sustainable Forest Management plan. We are also the first company in the wood panel industry to have been certified with the prestigious Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Certification in forest management. To further its brand ethos of sustainability and care, we have launched a zero-emission range of products, keeping in mind the health interest of our consumers by assuring to safeguard indoor air quality by reducing formaldehyde emission in homes. Besides,



our products are manufactured in compliance with The California Air Resources Board (CARB) air pollution rules and regulations and have attained and maintained all the parameters that ensure healthy indoor air quality and protect consumers from exposure to toxic air contaminants.

Timeless Door Designs

Greenply offers a range of premium doors that combines aesthetics and strength in a perfect mix. Our latest launch has been the Green Range series which is amongst the most premium products available in the market. These pine-wood based, double-pressed doors are borer-proof and come with an anti-termite warranty.

Greenply doors offer strength, dimensional stability, and high impact resistance to offer security, protection, and privacy. These doors are tailor-made to suit the varying needs of the consumers, be it for residential or commercial purposes. These doors have provisions for locks on both sides and are available in three varieties - one-sided decorative, both-sided decorative and non-decorative wooden doors. The mix of aesthetics and strength makes them the prime choice for any consumer.

Industry Outlook

The steady growth of the Indian economy, an ever-growing realty and hospitality sector and increased spending power with lifestyle changes have fuelled the industry to a large extent. The industry is

witnessing a shift from unbranded to branded products and the fast-growing replacement market is helping the industry to expand in a big way.

Consumers nowadays have become more aware of the usage of good quality products, and they are also looking for products with additional health and environmental benefits. This paradigm shift in the consumer pattern has made organized players invest more in R&D. The shift in the buying pattern has benefited both the consumer as well as the manufacturer.

In the coming years, the Indian door market is projected for double-digit growth. The increasing demand for doors in the construction and real estate sectors, as well as in the renovation and replacement markets, offers a potential for growth and expansion of the market. Wood-based doors will continue to dominate the market due to their affordability, durability, and versatility. In addition, changing consumer preferences towards eco-friendliness and sustainability will further drive research and innovation in the industry.

The market is also witnessing a significant surge in collaboration among the market players to expand product offerings, enter new markets, and enhance distribution. That said, brands will continue focusing on value-added services like customized designs and size options, installation, and after-sales services, to gain a competitive edge. +



RIYA KAPOOR

Creative Director, Quba Homes



Elegant Entry

At Quba Homes, we curate bespoke products and services for homes, and our skill set includes designing, manufacturing and installing doors, kitchens, millwork, and furniture. We carefully craft our range of residential spaces to showcase an artistic, intricate, and contemporary or neo-classic impression.

We garner our strength from continually evolving and making the experience of buying customized doors and kitchens easier and more satisfying for our customers because these days people prefer modular closets and kitchens and factory-

finished bespoke doors and furniture for their homes.

The USP of our brand is to experiment with varied materials to bring about a chic avant-garde look in our products, which creates just the right amount of drama and luxury while keeping its functionality intact. Besides prioritizing a thorough understanding of materials, we also focus on quality manufacturing.

Door Design Trends

Nowadays, homeowners are much more aware and educated in terms of materials and the variety of finishes available in the market, which has,



in turn, caused a radical change in how consumers move towards factory-made products. The significant shift in consumer mentality in the last few years is a pan-India stride. It's not just restricted to metropolitan cities.

Keeping consumer tastes in mind, our latest collection includes doors with leather and metal detailing, doors with fluted veneers, and classical PU-finished doors. In addition, various finishes that are available these days include raw dead Matt look and ultra glossy finish, depending on the client's requirements. Lately, there's been a colossal inclination towards engineered doors with wooden

finishes like exotic veneers, PU shades with metal play and more. Also, many homeowners are opting for large wooden doors, up to 9-12 feet.

Another major trend is replacing old-school wooden frames with metal frames, which makes the door look much sleeker and modish.

The growth of the Indian interior design market is attributed to the growing real estate market, rising income levels and urbanization, which are soaring presently. This is expected to lead to a surge in demand for ID services and other related commodities like hard and soft finishes. +





H&M HOME

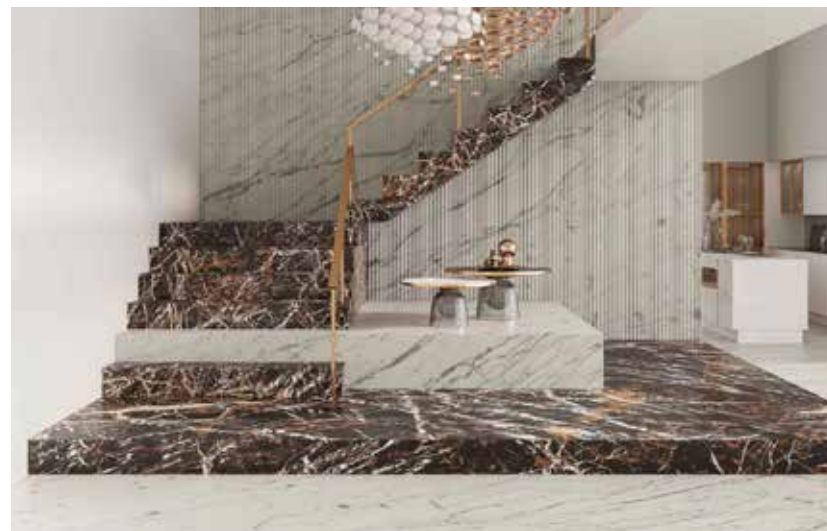
H&M India Announces the Expansion of H&M Home

H&M India has introduced H&M HOME via the brand's revamped retail store in Select Citywalk, New Delhi. The introduction follows a successful nationwide online launch and offline launch at the Ambience Mall, Vasant Kunj, in the capital, in 2022. Spread over 2,730 square meters and designed with the latest interior trends, the store at Select Citywalk offers a modern, inspiring, and welcoming experience featuring H&M's latest collections in fashion for Women, Men & Kids and H&M Home. For H&M Home, the collections include the latest interior trends ranging from high-quality bedlinen to clever storage and timeless dinnerware, starting at INR 149. The store also presents H&M Home's latest summer décor collection designed for the outdoors and indoors - all encapsulated by energy, vibrancy, and joy. Additionally, H&M HOME has collaborated with the social initiative SNEH to craft a collection which features handmade details for the home, crafted by the women of project SNEH in Moradabad, India. "H&M began its journey in India in 2015 with the Select Citywalk store, and we are delighted to re-open with the introduction of H&M Home. We have seen incredible love for H&M Home since its launch in India in 2022. Our aim is to continue offering the best in home and fashion with great quality at the best price in a sustainable way," said Yanira Ramirez, Country Sales Manager, H&M India. H&M India operates in 51 stores across 26 cities and is also present online on HM.com and Myntra.

The Quarry Season of Love Unites Marble, Granite, and Onyx in Perfect Harmony

For the first time in India and probably the world, The Quarry launches perfectly paired marble, granite, and onyx. The all-new collection is called: The Quarry Season of Love. With their extensive knowledge about these quintessential and rare stones, The Quarry are curators of luxury through Italian craftsmanship. The Quarry rigorously maintains a consistent standard of 20mm/ 2cm thickness and an unmatched level of service with The Quarry Projects team of installation experts.

The Quarry Season of Love gives you a variety of options to choose from like the rare Sodalite — which is perfected by mother nature over millions of years to the exquisite Laas Authentico — a collection of the finest white marble hand-picked from the village of Laas Italy. The charm and exclusivity of each of the paired two-of-a-kind natural stones cut and polished will leave you awestruck and spellbound. They are equipped with the latest technology, state-of-the-art materials and international techniques to bring your vision into a reality.



SPAN FLOORS Launches Tranquil & Serene Summer Flooring Collection

Span Floors has introduced a collection of Summer Flooring called the Serene Summer Collection. The collection comprises soothing and composed light shades which help create an easy and relaxing Nordic style. The eco-friendly collection comes in a variety of Engineered and laminate decors. The collection is available in multiple formats such as planks, herringbone & Chevron patterns. Mr. Satinder Chawla, Managing Director, Span Floors, says "This new range of summer floors is inspired by the English countryside with soothing tones. The materials used in the production process are selected based on strict requirements for ecological safety and impact on indoor air quality."



Nepali Women Recycle Corn Husk into Art

Women from the ancient city of Patan, Laxmi Nakarmi are turning the less-regarded corn husk into stunning works of art. The pilot project that had started some three decades back has now transformed into a lucrative business with demands surging. Maize is one of the cash crops of Nepal which suits the typography as well as the weather conditions in the hilly and plain areas of the Himalayan Nation. As per the statistical information from the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock in the year 2020-21, a total of 2,997,733 metric tons of maize was produced across Nepal which was cultivated in an area covering 979,776-hectare land mass. The team involved is making art pieces such as dolls, key rings, souvenir pieces, boxes, and animals, all made using corn husk.



Saya Group to Develop India's Tallest Mall

Saya Group, a Delhi-based real estate firm, has announced its plans to develop India's tallest mall, known as Saya Status. Situated on the Noida-Greater Noida Expressway, the mall will reach an impressive height of 150 feet and will span over nine floors. The construction of the mall to be fully operational by 2025 is currently underway. The architectural design of the project is being handled by Singapore-based DP Architects. The company intends to invest over Rs 20 billion in the project, which encompasses a total built-up area of 1.4 million square feet, with 1.1 million square feet dedicated to leasable space. Saya Group also has other projects in the pipeline, including Saya Piazza in Jaypee Wish Town and Saya South X in Greater Noida West.





Greenply Industries Envisions Greener Future; Pledges to plant 50 million saplings by the year 2025

As part of its green initiative, Greenply Industries, one of India's largest interior infrastructure brands with over 30 years of experience in manufacturing a comprehensive range of plywood, block boards, MDF, decorative veneers, flush doors, and other allied products, has announced to plant 50 million saplings by the year 2025. The company plans to plant these saplings across the states of Gujarat, Nagaland, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. Besides environmental protection and conservation, the plantation drive will help in the sustainable procurement of raw materials and the financial viability of the ecosystem while generating employment opportunities for the local communities where the organization functions. With an ever-growing focus on environmental responsibility and the insistent need to combat climate change, Greenply Industries recognizes the significance of committed involvement in creating a greener future. While addressing the media during a virtual conference, Mr Manoj Tulsian, Joint Managing Director & CEO, Greenply Industries, said, "Our pledge to plant 50 million saplings by 2025 is an extension to our commitment towards environment and sustainability. Environment Social Governance has become an integral part of decision-making for Greenply, and the company has been undertaking activities beyond tree plantation to keep its environmental impact under check, to reduce emissions and move towards renewable energy generation." Greenply has already implemented various sustainable practices and initiatives throughout its operations. The company has already planted 24.85 million saplings by March 31, 2023, covering an area of nearly 31,714 acres of plantation land in India.



Housing Sales in India's Top 7 Cities Hit All-Time High

According to property consultancy Anarock, house sales in India's top seven cities would reach an all-time high of 115,100 units in the quarter ending June 30. Despite increased mortgage rates and global headwinds, this is 36% more than the 84,940 units sold in the same period last year. Anarock calculated the quarterly figure by taking into account the average sales velocity in these cities. The Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) and Pune were the only two cities that saw an increase in housing sales when compared to the previous quarter. Based on Anarock data, a total of 38,090 units will be sold in MMR, which is 10% more than the 34,690 units sold the previous year. Pune is predicted to experience a 4% increase in total sales, with 20,680 units sold compared to 19,920 units last year. Pune and MMR together account for 51% of total housing sales in the top seven cities. Other cities, including the National Capital Region (NCR), Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Chennai, and Kolkata, are likely to suffer a drop in sales quarter on quarter (QoQ).



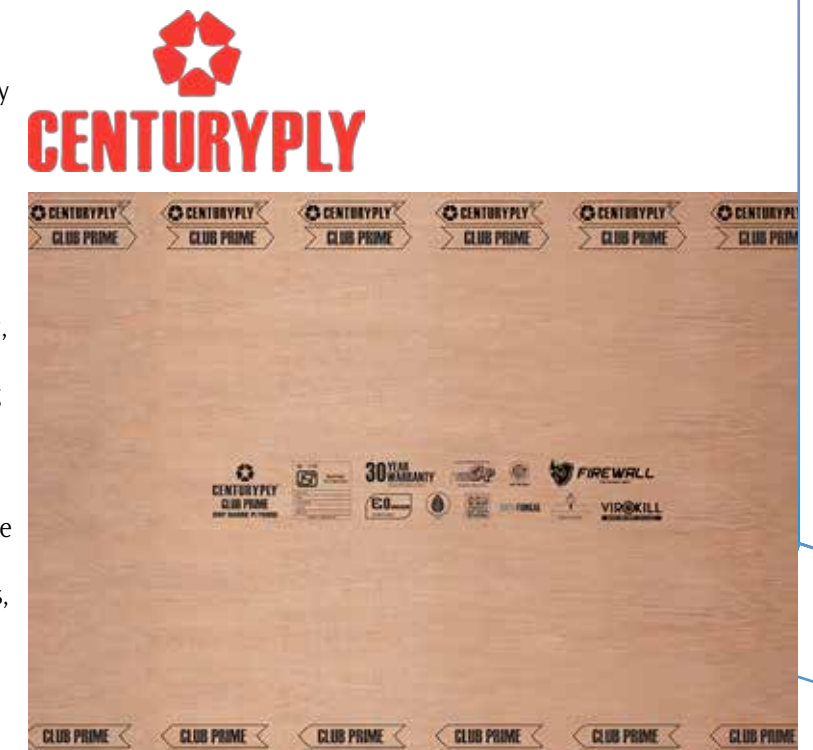
Godrej Locks Expands its Architectural Fittings Category, Launches Home Décor Handles with Unparalleled Design and Safety



Godrej Locks & Architectural Fittings and Systems (GLAFS), a flagship company of Godrej & Boyce, expands its Architectural Fittings Category by unveiling a new range of Home Décor Handles alongside their latest range of interconnected digital locks, in Mumbai. Propelled by the fusion of functionality and aesthetics, this newly launched diverse range of home décor handles, will be available in distinctive styles and design such as Neo-luxury, Euro-Modern, Urban Chic, and Smart Ethnic. The brand takes pride in introducing sophisticated finishes such as Rose Gold and Black, adding a touch of elegance while meeting the evolving demands of customers. With a strong position in India's digital locks market, Godrej Locks also announced the launch of India's first-ever interconnected digital locks for the residential and hospitality sector. With the growth of the consumer segment and an increasing trend towards the adoption of digital home safety solutions, Godrej Locks prioritizes safety and privacy by providing modern design and technologically advanced solutions. Building upon its strong focus on design, safety, and customization, the brand aims to offer a wide range of architectural fittings and digital locks that seamlessly blend functionality and aesthetics. GLAFS has also introduced India's first-ever interconnected digital locks for hospitality. With cloud technology and BLE mesh networking, this lock provides complete control of individual hotel premises as well as nationwide hotel setups. The 5 in 1 connected lock can be operated by fingerprint, passcode, RFID card, Mechanical Key and Mobile. It can be seamlessly integrated with various smart home devices, including a Video Door phone. With WiFi connectivity, it can be operated from anywhere in the world.

CenturyPly's new ad campaign puts consumers' concerns at the forefront

CenturyPly has released a new ad film which urges end users to 'invest' in its flagship product - Club Prime. With so many brands available, consumers are confused and do not know which ply to purchase. The ad urges the consumers to put their faith in Club Prime from CenturyPly and enjoy complete peace of mind. Produced by Small Fry, the film 'The Best Investment' is about an investment tip the protagonist, played by Pratik Gandhi, gives away for free. He uses investment speak to talk about the various attributes of Club Prime before signing off with a rhetorical question, "Ab isse better investment hai toh batao!!" ["If there's a better investment, let me know!!"] Keshav Bhajanka, Executive Director, CenturyPly, said, "It's very easy to get conned when buying plywood. A customer has a hard time, having to weigh the pros and cons of various brands of plywood in order to arrive at the right choice. CenturyPly has always kept the customer front and center in everything that it does. In line with its corporate philosophy, this new advertisement for Club Prime is intended to give peace of mind to customers, helping them make the best 'investment'."





DSM Engineering helps launch light, eco-friendly chairs

DSM Engineering Materials recently announced the launch of its first collaboration with New Zealand-based direct-to-consumer furniture brand Noho, with their 'Lightly' stackable chairs. The new plant- and recycled-based product is the first chair to be manufactured from DSM Engineering Materials' EcoPaXX bio-based polyamide, which is derived from the castor bean plant. This renewable resource is highly CO₂-absorbent while it is growing, giving EcoPaXX a lower carbon footprint compared to fossil-based alternatives. It combines superior functional performance, optimal durability and excellent aesthetics, with a significantly reduced environmental impact. In line with Noho's strong environmental commitments, it collaborated with DSM Engineering Materials to create Lightly, helping accelerate the next phase of the brand's sustainability journey. The launch of Lightly marks the second entry in Noho's portfolio of ergonomically designed and more sustainably produced chairs for work, home and events.



Formica launches flagship store in Delhi

Formica launches its New Delhi store for the AID community and individuals to experience premium and eco-friendly laminates. Visitors experience the latest trends and high-quality surfaces, offering them a lasting impression. The store features an interactive design studio equipped with state-of-the-art technology, allowing customers to visualize their design concepts from countertops, cabinets, furniture and wall panels. The team of design consultants guide on product selection, customization options, or technical specifications. "We are delighted to introduce the Formica store as a unique destination for the AID community and individuals to explore the world of premium laminates. We believe that every surface tells a story, and our store aims to inspire and empower designers and consumers alike to create remarkable spaces with our exceptional range of laminates," said Mr. Ajay Khurana, MD, Formica India.



Lucknow government launches agroforestry app

The state government of Lucknow plans to develop an agroforestry application for farmers about different tree species, and how to facilitate them in agroforestry plantations. Officials of the environment, forestry and climate change discussed ways in agroforestry to increase the state's green cover from 9.23 per cent to 15 per cent at a day-long workshop with officials of the Centre for International forestry Research. Source: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/lucknow/govt-to-develop-agroforestry-app-for-farmers/articleshow/91953082.cms>



Zynna brings US-based luxury fabric brand Fabricut to India

Zynna has recently launched the US-based luxury fabric brand Fabricut Inc. in India, which is a family-run and employee-owned company to create fabrics, trimmings, decorative drapery hardware, finished window treatments, wall coverings, furniture and rugs. Zynna builds a long-term strategic cooperative partnership with Fabricut and commits to offer superior-quality fabric products through continuous innovation to meet the growing demand for fabrics and furnishing products. Available fabrics include linen, cotton, jersey, and polyester. Mr. Retesh Sharma, Managing Director, Zynna says, "India is a competitive market but Zynna with the concept of 'innovative and creative designs' strives to provide quality premium products, keeping customer satisfaction as a priority."



GHMC slaps notice on timber depots after Kushaiguda

After the unfortunate Kushaiguda fire incident, the Great Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) has slapped notices on 1000 timber depots and sawmills located in residential colonies. The notice served by the deputy commissioners of the aforementioned segments asks the operators to move out in fifteen days to prevent future fire accidents. The chief secretary, Santhi Kumari, also in charge of the forest department, has asked timber depot owners to shift outside the city. As per reports, most timber godowns in the city disregard the GHMC fire safety regulations. Source: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/hyderabad/timber-tinderbox-ghmc-eviction-order-to-1000-depots-after-kushaiguda-inferno/articleshow/99650818.cms>





CMC introduces Microban Antimicrobial Technology for Kalingastone

Classic Marble Company announces its partnership with Microban International to bring antimicrobial product protection to KalingaStone Marble, Quartz and Terrazzo surfaces. Its range of marble, quartz and terrazzo products remains protected against bacterial growth, maintain surface hygiene and cleanliness. It is recommended for installation in hospitals, laboratories, clinics, kitchens and toilets to prevent staining and odours. Mr. Amit Shah, Managing Director, CMC, says, "Microbes thrive in moist and humid environments, doubling in number on an untreated surface every 20 minutes. KalingaStone Marble, Quartz and Terrazzo is installed in a CMC treated Marble, Quartz and Terrazzo slabs now have Microban antimicrobial technology built into them during the manufacturing process. This ensures that the products benefit from continuous antimicrobial protection for their lifetime."

Action Tesa introduces HDHMR, India's first 'HARA' Board

Action Tesa introduces India's first, genuine and patented green HDHMR boards. Their uniformity in density gradient and compact core is accomplished with German Technology for MAT formation, eight cylinders, and 18 daylight presses. They are water, termite and borer resistant, sustainable, have a high density and a higher screw holding strength and zero bubble finish. Mr. Ajay Aggarwal, Managing Director, Action TESA says "The HDHMR Board by Action TESA is the perfect solution to replace traditional plywood, as it has the same performance is affordable too. The use of HDHMR Boards in the residential as well as commercial construction has been steadily increasing in recent years, which is mainly due to its affordability and performance."



JSW Cement signs SLL with BNP Paribas Singapore

JSW Cement, a subsidiary of the \$23 billion JSW Group, announced the signing of a Sustainability Linked Loan (SLL) deal with BNP Paribas Singapore to raise INR 400 crores. It has raised its second green debt capital in a year, bringing its SLL-based green investment to INR 800 crores. The brand plans to use the funds to fund capacity growth to meet its long-term goal of reaching 50 MTPA cement-making capacities in India. Parth Jindal, Managing Director, says, "This is our second Sustainability Linked Loan signed in the last few months. During the last eight years, we have grown our production capacity four times while reducing our carbon emission intensity by half. The new capital will enable us to fund our capacity expansion with the long-term target of achieving 50 MTPA capacities, to ensure the availability of our high-quality green cement and building material products."



AHEC reveals hardwood exports to India at Interzum 2023

The total value of U.S. hardwood exports to India reached USD 3.247 million in the first quarter of this year, according to the American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC), the leading international trade association for the American hardwood industry. The statistics are compiled from the latest data released by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), were announced at the opening of Interzum 2023 (May 9, 2023). Hardwood lumber shipped from the United States to India increased by 36 percent in value to USD 2.142 million, and by 68 percent in volume to reach 3,796 cubic meters. Direct exports of American hardwood veneers to the market reached USD 77,000. Lastly, exports of hardwood logs increased by 50 percent and 29 percent to reach 2,023 cubic meters and USD 1.03 million respectively. The top five American hardwood species exported to India in Q1 include ash, white oak, red oak, maple and hickory According to AHEC, the increase in exports follows a new record for exports of U.S. hardwood lumber to India in 2022, with the total value of American hardwood lumber and veneer exported reaching USD 8.618 million.



Kamdhenu Paints enjoy INR 2.51 billion growth in 2023

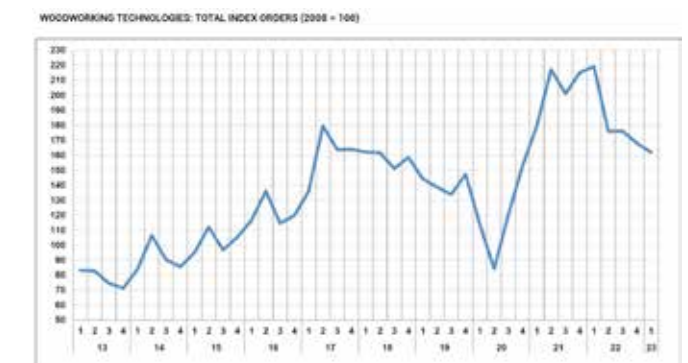
Kamdhenu Paints targets a four-fold increase to reach INR 10 billion over the next three years. It has implemented a separation in business to strengthen its presence in the paints and steel sectors in India, and aims to increase presence in the north and eastern regions by expanding its dealer and distribution network. Mr. Satish Kumar Agarwal, CMD, stated, "We have set our sights on achieving a four-fold growth in revenue, reaching INR 10 billion by the end of FY28. In the last financial year of 2023, the company's revenue amounted to INR 2.51 billion."



ACIMALL records a negative trend in Italian woodworking and furniture technology

The quarterly survey by the Studies Office of Acimall (Association of Italian Woodworking Technology Manufacturers) shows a negative trend for the fourth quarter in a row. The first quarter 2023 confirmed a slowdown of orders for Italian woodworking and furniture technology. In the first Q1, orders recorded a 25.7 percent reduction due to decreasing demand from international markets and the domestic market.

The period of comparison, January-March 2022, was still an expansion phase with significant growth rates in Italy and abroad, supported by public subsidies in many countries. The survey revealed that 71 per cent of interviewed companies expect substantial stability of production, while 24 per cent indicate a growing trend and 5 per cent a decrease. Employment is increasing according to 14 per cent of the sample, stationary for 81 per cent, decreasing for 5 per cent. Looking at the Italian market, 57 per cent of the interviewees predict substantial stability, 19 per cent increasing orders and 24 per cent decreasing orders.





AHEC REAFFIRMS ITS INDIA PRESENCE

The American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC), the leading international trade association for the American hardwood industry, has demonstrated its commitment to India with several initiatives to reinforce its presence in this populous market.

Committed to supplying India, which has demonstrated a growing appetite for U.S. hardwoods in recent years, AHEC participated at DelhiWood 2023 with an American hardwood pavilion, which included 12 U.S.-based hardwood lumber exporters.

A closer look at the numbers for 2022 reveal that total hardwood lumber shipped from the United States to India increased by 13 percent in value to USD 6.902 million (up from USD 6.120 million in 2021) but decreased marginally by 4 percent in volume to 9,724 cubic meters (down from 10,133 cubic meters in 2021). At the same time, direct exports of American hardwood veneers to the market reached USD 1.716 million.

AHEC also hosted 'mini-convention' and trade servicing mission to Jodhpur ahead of participation at DelhiWood 2023. A total of 12 U.S. hardwood exporting companies in addition to the Chief Inspector from the National Hardwood Lumber Association (NHLA), AHEC technical consultants and representatives from the USDA Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) travelled to Jodhpur in Rajasthan in order to conduct a series of factory visits in conjunction with the Jodhpur Handicrafts Exporters Association (JHEA), ahead of AHEC's participation at DelhiWood 2023.



Building on previous successful activities that have been jointly hosted by AHEC and the JHEA, this latest initiative aimed to facilitate real trade between the manufacturers in Jodhpur and AHEC members. Visits to some of the leading manufacturers helped the American hardwood exporters better understand the needs of JHEA members with regard to their timber requirements, while the seminar and mini-convention shone light on new opportunities for American hardwoods, particularly for products destined for export markets.

Following this, the delegation proceeded to India's national capital, New Delhi where AHEC is hosted a pavilion with 12 hardwood lumber exporters at DelhiWood 2023, which ran from March 2 - 5, 2023.



"The furniture and handicraft manufacturers in Jodhpur consume significant volumes of hardwood lumber in their production, which is almost exclusively destined for export to the United States, Europe, Australia and the Middle East. More recently, they have had to deal with the challenges of decreasing traditional sources of wood supply and ensuring the wood products they use do not come from illegal sources. An effective strategy to overcome these challenges is to manufacture products from American hardwoods, which are not only abundant in supply and of consistent quality, but backed by an assurance of legal and sustainable sourcing, which is already well recognized in the main consumer markets," said Roderick Wiles, AHEC Regional Director.

According to AHEC, India offers massive potential for the consumption of American hardwoods across many different sectors, both for domestic and export manufacturing. Jodhpur is just one center for the production of wooden furniture and handicrafts and there are others in Rajasthan, as well as in other states.

The scale of manufacturing is very significant and the requirement for hardwood lumber is substantial. The seminar and mini-convention was timely as it offered a perfect forum for the Jodhpur handicrafts sector to meet members of the U.S. hardwood industry in person and to discuss ways of working together, particularly given the pressing need for alternative sources of hardwood lumber in India.

"The American hardwood industry is committed to supplying India, which has demonstrated a growing appetite for U.S. hardwoods in recent years. This is underlined by the fact that so many U.S. company representatives joined us on the trip to Jodhpur and at DelhiWood. While U.S. hardwood exports to India remain low relative to the potential size of market, awareness is increasing, perceptions are changing, and demand is on the rise. Given that the market is at a turning point, we fully intend to keep up the momentum in India in the coming months. Based on the success of this event, we are looking to host similar events later this year," concluded Wiles. +



DI-NOC architectural finishes: 3M India

The 3M DI-NOC decorative surface finishes are suitable to be applied on hard, nonporous interior and exterior surfaces. Available in over 1000+ designs, these offer the resemblance of wood grain, metal and natural stone on products. The multi-layered films provide superior functionality with impact resistance, abrasion resistance, chemical resistance, and stain resistance properties. It can be used on ACP and metal panels, walls, columns, ceilings, partitions, doors, elevators and lift lobbies.

Website: www.3mindia.in

MDF, HDHMR and particle boards: Action Tesa

As part of Action Tesa's Boilo collection, the premium range of boiling water-proof engineering board is designed for restroom cubicles, gymnasiums and hotel locker rooms. It is water-resistant, fire-retardant and has a higher density for high load-bearing capacity. The high-impact resistance board is built to carry above 1000+ Kg/M3 densities with a toughened surface that is termite-proof, fungus-resistant and environment-friendly.

Website: www.actiontesa.com

High-pressure decorative laminate: Merino Laminates

The MR+ Tuff Gloss is highly resistant to heat, scuff, micro-scratches and abrasions, yet maintains its shine. It can be applied on almirahs, wall panels, premium countertops, kitchen cabinets and dining tables. The product is heat-resistant, abrasion-resistant, impact-resistant, stain-resistant, non-toxic and non-porous. It is available in 65+ solids, woodgrains, marble and stone textures. Colors available are blue, yellow, pink, pastel blue and beige.

Website: www.merinolaminates.com



THE LATEST PRODUCTS



Wallpaper: Dialogues by Nirmal

Part of the Coordonné called Tiles collection, the wallpaper is inspired by Antoni Gaudi's Modernist Barcelona architecture such as the palaces of 11th-century Andalusia. It depicts the history of Spain through repeated ancient mosaic and tile designs, including Damascus, Fez, Marble Chess, Celosia Grey and Tarifa in symmetric florals, triangles, monotones and geometric patterns.

Website: www.dialoguesbynirmals.com



Patented wood protection coating: Span Floors

SiOO:X Wood Protection is a 100 per cent silicone-based coating by Sioo Wood Protection AB, Sweden, which protects wood from natural elements. Its weathered finish is long-lasting, low-maintenance and durable even in fully-exposed applications. The patented formula is in the base wood protection and supplementary surface protection coating that produces a natural silver-gray color, and comes in six shades from light to dark gray.

Website: www.spanfloors.com

THE NEWEST INNOVATION ONLY IN



Outdoor flooring: Squarefoot

Squarefoot offers a large decking range including Ipe natural wood decking, Java Teak decking, composite decking and co-extrusion decking. All of them are visually elegant, resilient, low-maintenance products that resemble natural wood. Its protective cap made of advanced polymer resists scratches, fade, mould and mildew. It is made up of a combination of bamboo fibre, high-density polyethylene and chemical additives, making them recyclable and eco-friendly.

Website: www.squarefoot.co.in



Edgebands: REHAU

RAUKANTEX Edgebands extend life, improve functionality and enhance the appearance of furniture. They are available in several materials such as wood, plywood multiplex effects, stone and metallic. One would find 2,000,000 options by combining different materials, dimensions, gloss levels and application levels. They are antibacterial, antifungal, DOP-free, and available in different materials like uPVC, ABS, Veneer and PMMA.

Website: www.rehau.com



Marble: Classic Marble Company

Part of the KalingaStone Terrazzo range, the Greta Grey and Colosseo are taken from the Venetian and Roma collections. The Greta Grey is a grey terrazzo with delicate black and white mosaic, while the Colosseo is a pristine white terrazzo with grey and beige mosaic. They have a glossiness reflection of more than 75 per cent and water absorption rate of less than 0.2 per cent, with additional Microban antimicrobial technology and low-maintenance capabilities.

Website: www.classicmarble.com



INDIA GRANITE INDUSTRY : DEMAND AND TRENDS

One of the largest producers and exporters of granite in the world, the Indian granite industry is a significant contributor to the country's economic growth and development. India remains at the top position among the largest granite exporters internationally. The industry primarily operates in the states of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Odisha. In addition, the states of West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, and Jharkhand have significant granite deposits. The Kollegal region in Karnataka has the greatest deposits of jet black granite in India, totalling 1.10 million tonnes. This includes parts of the districts of Mandya, Chamarajanagar, and Mysore. Rajasthan's granite sector too, has been expanding at a rate of 50% YOY.

Indian granite is known for its vast range of color and texture, making it highly sought after in construction and architectural projects globally. The granite extracted from Indian quarries is renowned for its quality, durability, and aesthetic appeal.



The granite industry in India has developed rapidly based first on the abundant granite resources, both in quality and quantity. This availability has encouraged investments in quarrying and processing units. The Indian government has also undertaken various initiatives to promote the industry. This includes establishing granite parks and special economic zones (SEZs) to facilitate granite processing and support export units. It has also implemented policies that promote ease of doing business and provide incentives to the industry.

The granite industry in India is a significant contributor to employment generation, particularly in rural areas where most quarries are located. It provides livelihoods to thousands of skilled and unskilled workers involved in quarrying, processing, and exporting granite.

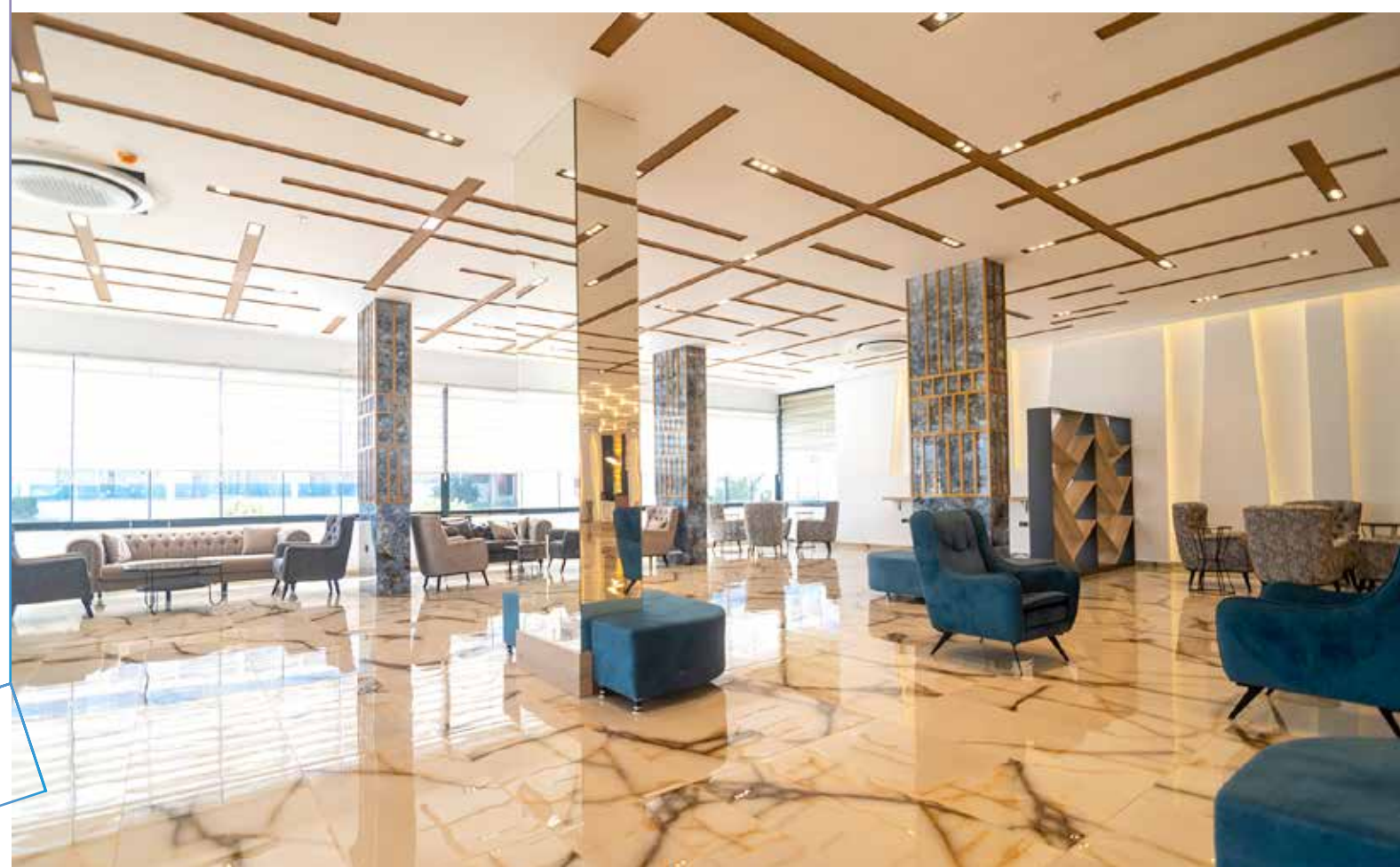




Global conditions post-Covid caused India's exports of granite in 2022 to fall by 11.28% in value terms and by 17.10% in quantity terms. The decline was mainly due to a decrease in availability of granite blocks and slabs and less processed granite. Granite imports were low, given that India is the largest granite producing country.

Despite these challenges, the granite industry in India is expected to flourish and meet global demands. With its immense potential, favorable government policies, and commitment to sustainable practices, the industry is poised for further growth and success in the coming years.

Industry leaders throw more light on this important sector. +



SEEING BUSINESS IN A NEW LIGHT

In conversation with Shrivatsa Somany,
Business Head, Somany Bathware

If you can briefly tell us about the growth of your company?

Over the years, Somany Ceramics has witnessed significant growth in the field of bathware. We began our journey in 2011 in the bathware category and to date, we have over 1200 direct dealers & distributors across India. The sanitaryware & bath fitting range from Somany offers comprehensive and classy washroom solutions. Each product in the range is crafted to cater to those who appreciate style and fine design. Designed to soothe and stimulate the urbane and sophisticated, the styles range from contemporary to neoclassical. This growth has been possible due to our relentless pursuit of excellence and our dedication to providing superior products and services.



What are some of the latest trends in ceramic sanitaryware?

In recent years, there have been several exciting trends in ceramic sanitaryware. One prominent trend is the increasing demand for eco-friendly and sustainable products. Consumers are now more conscious of the environmental impact of their choices and are actively seeking products that are made using sustainable materials and manufacturing processes. Another trend witnessed is the resurgence of demand for colored products amongst consumers particularly in the category of Washbasin & Wall Hung WC. Additionally, there is a growing preference for minimalist and contemporary designs that enhance the aesthetics of bathrooms.



Talking about your latest range, how is Somany staying ahead of time?

Our latest range of sanitaryware reflects our dedication to staying at the forefront of design and technology. We have introduced a collection that combines contemporary aesthetics with functional features. The range includes sleek and modern designs, incorporating clean lines and minimalist forms. We have also focused on offering a variety of color options to suit different bathroom styles. In terms of functionality, our latest range features water-saving mechanisms, and hygienic solutions that ensure durability and ease of use. By combining style and substance, our latest range aims to provide a complete bathroom solution for our customers. From French, Signature to Somany collection — we have a wide range of bathware which includes traditional ones to the sensor based ones.

How has the industry evolved in the last 2 years, especially in terms of the perception of people and the attitude of consumers?

Over the past two years, the bathware industry has witnessed significant changes in terms of consumer perception and attitudes. With the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a heightened focus on hygiene and cleanliness, leading to increased awareness about the importance of maintaining a healthy environment in a washroom. Consumers are now more conscious of the quality, durability, and functionality of bathroom products. There is a growing demand for products that offer ease of cleaning and antimicrobial properties. Additionally, people are increasingly seeking products that blend seamlessly with their overall bathroom decor, making aesthetics

an important factor in purchasing decisions. The industry has responded to these evolving consumer preferences by introducing innovative products and incorporating advanced technologies into product offerings.

What is your industry outlook for the coming year?

Looking ahead, the Bathware industry is poised for further growth and innovation. We anticipate that there will be continued emphasis on sustainability, with an increased focus on eco-friendly manufacturing processes and materials. Smart technology integration will also gain more prominence, providing consumers with enhanced functionality and convenience. Furthermore, we expect a greater emphasis on value-added products which are on the lines of minimalism and designs that feel more global and not confined to a particular geography. More pastels with extreme darks should be trending in the sanitaryware category. +



+ DES. GOBIND KAPUR

Director, Maison Du Luxe, Faridabad



Formed from the slow crystallization of magma deep beneath the Earth's surface, Granite is primarily composed of quartz, feldspar, and mica, which gives the rock its distinct strength, durability, and appealing appearance. With its wide range of colors, patterns, and textures, granite has become a sought-after material in both residential and commercial spaces. It is primarily used in countertops, flooring, wall cladding, backsplashes and decorative accents. In India, granite holds significant popularity due to its abundant availability and diverse variety.

The country is one of the leading producers and exporters of granite globally. India's landscape features a vast array of granite deposits, each offering unique colors and patterns. This abundance of high-quality granite at competitive prices has contributed to its widespread usage and popularity in the Indian market.

The usage of granite enhances the value of any property as granite is a natural stone known for its exceptional elegance, durability and longevity. It is resistant to scratches, heat, stains, and general wear and tear, making it ideal for high-traffic areas. Additionally, granite is considered a premium material, which can increase the perceived value of a property.



When selecting the perfect granite for residential or commercial spaces, one considers the color and pattern of the granite. Factors such as lighting conditions, existing decor, and personal preferences should be taken into account. Different granite varieties vary in hardness and durability. For areas with high foot traffic or heavy usage, one must select harder and more resilient varieties of granite to withstand the demands of daily wear and tear.

Granite can be polished to a high shine, honed for a matte or satin finish, or leathered for a textured appearance. The choice of finish depends on the desired look and feel of the space and should align with the overall design concept.

In terms of maintenance requirements, granite varieties require periodic sealing to protect against staining, while others are more resistant and low-maintenance. It is important to select a granite variety that aligns with your lifestyle and maintenance preferences. Regular cleaning with mild soap and water, coupled with periodic sealing, ensures the longevity of granite surfaces.

Granite has properties that discourage bacterial growth, making it an excellent choice for surfaces that demand impeccable cleanliness. Its non-porous nature prevents liquid

absorption and impedes bacterial proliferation, fostering a healthier environment. As a natural stone, granite stands as an environmentally-friendly choice. Its production entails minimal processing and prevents the release of harmful chemicals or volatile organic compounds (VOCs) into the environment.

Granite comes in a wide range of price points, depending on factors such as rarity, quality, and origin. While granite presents numerous advantages, it is essential to consider project-specific requirements, budgetary constraints, and maintenance obligations when finalizing the selection of granite for a particular application. +



GAURAV AGGARWAL

Chief Managing Director, Stonex India Pvt Ltd

Embracing the Beauty of Imperfection

It was in the year 2000 that we entered the marble industry but the company - Stonex India formally came into being only in 2003. We started with dealing in Indian marble from Rajasthan. But back then, India lacked organized players in the stone and marble industry, the reason being 90% of the people from Rajasthan had a monopoly. So, along the way, we faced a lot of challenges.

However, due to our consistent efforts, we have enjoyed exponential growth in the last decade and have become one of the top companies in our sector in India. Our exquisite stones are responsibly sourced from quarries from all across the world including Italy, Spain, Greece, Brazil & Turkey.

Today as leaders in Marble export, we believe in responsible business practices. We have incorporated sustainable measures like Solar Power Generation with a capacity of 960 KW, rainwater harvesting pits, Bio STP (Sewage Treatment) Plants that treat and recycle sewage and wastewater, etc., at our Kishangarh factory. It is one of the best factories in the world.



Leaving No Stone Unturned

Instead of being a product oriented brand, we have always envisioned ourselves to be a service-oriented brand. So besides selling stones we also offer technical support to our clients. Our Granite range is durable and has an elegant finish.

Granite and quartzite are hard igneous rocks and chiefly comprise mica, quartz and feldspar and a wide variety of minerals which gives them different patterns and a wide variety of colors. Granite in particular remains a popular surface choice in new-age constructions due to its durability and overall pleasing beauty. Fine-grained granite is used for ornamental and monumental work, as well as for inscription purposes. It is ideal for fabricating countertops, floorings, staircases, vanities and exterior landscaping. The best part is it is a maintenance-free stone and can withstand years of use.

Besides, Granite has great structural benefits as it is one of the hardest substances available and is often used in foundations, floors and walls. The stone is widely acknowledged for its aesthetic value and is a right fit for any residential, light commercial or even industrial project.

Future of Granite Market

The global Granite market is anticipated to rise at a considerable rate during the forecast period, between 2022 and 2029. Even in India, the market is growing at a steady rate and with the rising adoption of strategies by key players, the market is expected to rise over the projected horizon.

Talking about the overall export of Granite from India in the past, according to the released data, the country ranks second with a total export of 2 million tonnes of natural stone in 2020. The first position was occupied by China with a total Granite export of 4.8 million tonnes. +





RAJESH BHANDARI

Director, A-Class Marble



Where Excellence is Set in Stone

Accomplishing perfection in marble and stones by amalgamating technologies, innovation, and sustainable techniques, A-Class Marble is a testament to reinstating India's glory through excellence in stone. It all began in Makrana, Rajasthan in the year 1971 when Mr. Roopchand Bhandari started his business of Indian Marble. Later, in 1973, his son Mr Raichand Bhandari joined the family business and under his diligent leadership and vision, the venture reached new heights, which is now running its 50th year.

It was in 2005 when we formally launched A-Class Marble with a vision to bring the world's most magnificent marble collection to India. Since then, the company has been on a relentless journey, leaving impressive

footprints all over India. Today, we own the largest warehouse sprawling over 1,20,000 sq. ft. in New Delhi. We also have a state-of-the-art production unit spread over 10 lakh sq. ft. at Asia's biggest Marble Market at RIICO Industrial Area in Kishangarh, Rajasthan.

Working with a long list of distinguished clients that includes celebrities, designers, and architects, we are known for a diversified and premium quality product range, unwavering patronage and carrying forward more than a decade-old legacy of stone reinforcement.

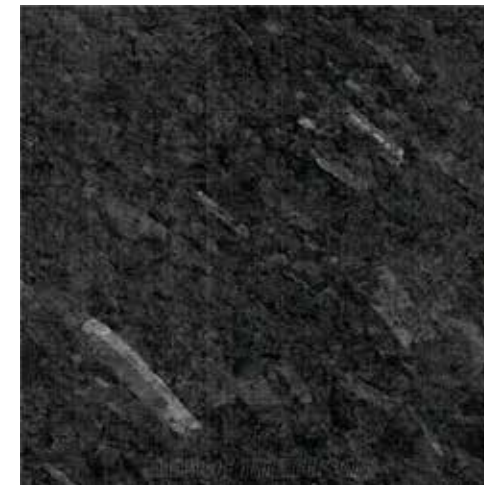
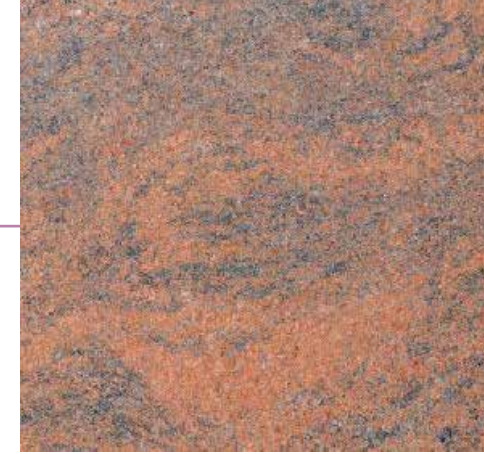
We are the one-stop destination for ideas and inspiration in the world of stones. Consolidating our foothold in the marble industry whilst exploring the potential of new-age materials, in 2017, we successfully introduced our new range of surfaces that included Italian porcelain stoneware.

Unraveling the strength and beauty of new-age materials in India, we aim to transform the landscape of luxury interiors and architecture in the country.

Find Inspiration

Renowned for remarkable depth and dimension, Granite gains an aesthetic edge over other materials for its exceptional strength and durability. As industry experts, we believe that Granite countertops remain a pragmatic and popular choice, specifically for bathrooms and kitchens that are frequently used. Our latest range of Granite is in line with the latest trends. This consists of neutral tones such as gray and beige, and granites that have dramatic veining such as certain shades of black, blue, gray, etc.

The most popular Granite colors in 2022 continue to dominate 2023 design trends. White Granite countertops and neutral finishes or black Granite kitchen countertops complemented by gold fittings for a bold yet luxurious palette have been in trend. +



RAHUL MAHESHWARI

Director, Marble Centre International



From the Quarry to your Home

The journey of Marble Centre International (MCI) spans almost three decades since the company launched its brand in 1989 in Bangalore. The journey that began with Indian marble, later expanded its range to Indian granite, followed by imported stones. Since then, the company has registered exponential growth, with a network spread across 6 locations in Bangalore.

With an exquisite range of 600+ stones such as marble, granite, quartzite, and many more procured from the world's finest quarries, we are the largest importers and retailers of fully processed and finished natural stones in India. Today we cater to top architects, designers, builders, and high-net-worth customers across the country.

After years of research and understanding the industry's potential, our focus has been to deliver consistent quality and superior natural stones. Our exclusive range of imported

granites from around the world are processed at the best facilities across the globe and come with exotic colors and patterns ranging from green, brown, and blue with crystals and fossils.

Latest Trends in Natural Stone

Granite is one of the oldest and most reliable natural stones and a great choice for any contemporary construction. It is a hard and versatile material and can be adapted to various spaces. As a result, it can be used extensively for various applications from countertops, walls, floors, facades, and exterior floors.

While everyone has heard of Granite, only a few know the unique characteristics that make it a sought-after building material. A deeper dive will reveal how diverse the stone is. The subtle distribution of the minerals in granite reveals beautiful color patterns and characteristics.

Speaking of trends, Granite can be made available in a variety of finishes including honed, matte, brushed Lapatura and some exotic computer-generated designs. Another layer of design can be added over the natural material to enhance the look.

Granite's flexibility allows it to be used in a wide range of applications, especially facades. The natural stone's strength, exotic colors and patterns can embellish a building's exterior with an elegant and distinct look. Additionally, Granite's neutrality allows it to easily blend with other facade materials.

A trend for rare granites is also emerging, primarily from South America and other parts of the world. In recent years, consumers have become more aware of the benefits of using natural materials over manufactured ones with high chemical compositions. Consumers now look at natural stones not just as a material, but also as an expression of their style, beliefs and values. They choose a stone that appeals to their sensibilities and reflects their personal style preference.

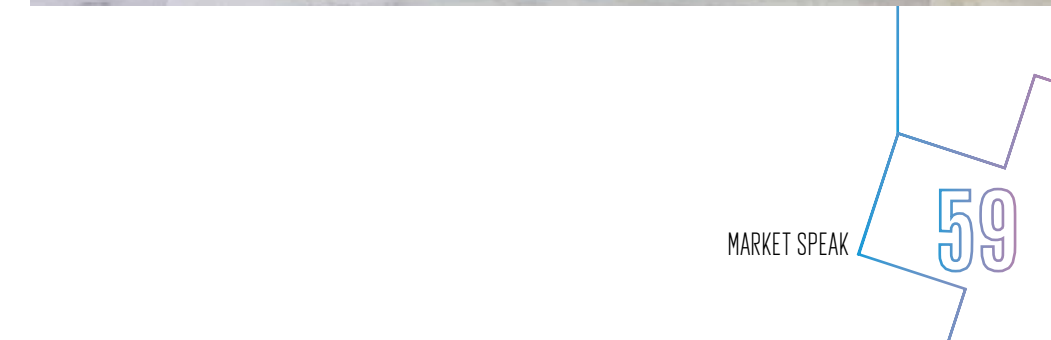
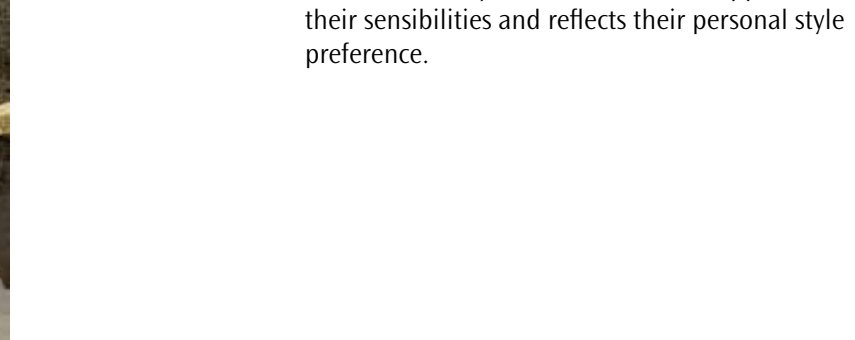
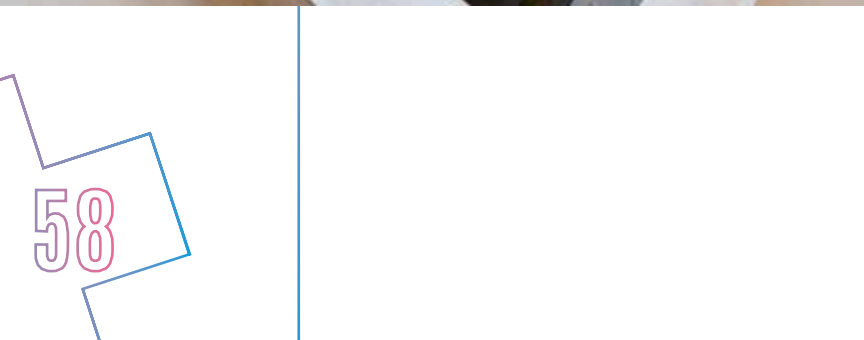


Consumers are often intrigued by natural stone's colors and characteristics. Having this curiosity leads to a more comprehensive understanding of the options available at the consideration stage, such as knowing what stone to opt for a particular space, and how and why prices vary with quality so that they can make an informed decision when making a purchase. As a result, they increasingly tend to gravitate towards collections that offer a wide variety.

Opportunities and Forecast

Natural stones such as Granite have always remained a popular and preferred choice. Numerous artificial materials have been introduced as alternatives today. However, their durability is yet to be determined, making it impossible to say whether they will last or if they are just another fad in the materials industry. For a consumer who knows what level of quality they want, the natural stone industry has much to offer.

Further, advancement in technology is helping improve the extraction, recovery, and processing of the material. This is to enable and ensure that the product serves its functional and aesthetic purpose while standing the test of time. +





UNDERSTANDING NATURAL DURABILITY OF TIMBER

The durability of a timber species refers to its ability to resist attack from pests which have the ability to utilize the wood as a food source and, at the same time, have the potential to cause damage, sometimes even serious structural damage if left unchecked. These pests include wood-decaying fungi, which can be present if the timber is exposed to moisture for a long period, or termites, which are present in the warmer regions of the world. It is important to note that when we talk about durability, we are only referring to the durability of the heartwood of the timber.



The heartwood is the central part of the tree, which has shut down and plays no further role in conducting sap upwards or in the continued growth of the tree. The growing role is performed by the outer part of the tree – the sapwood. The sapwood, even when dried and after it has been sawn into boards, contains nutrients such as sugars and carbohydrates which fungi and insects are attracted to. The sapwood of all timber species is what wood scientists would refer to as ‘not durable’ as it is a lot more susceptible to the risk of decay or insect attack. Even the sapwood of teak is not durable!

It is the heartwood that contains the waste deposits from the growth of the tree, which are known as extractives and are much less attractive to insects and fungi than the sapwood. The presence of these extractives will very often change the color of the heartwood, generally making it darker and distinct from the lighter-colored sapwood. It is also these extractives that make the wood resistant to attack to a lesser or greater degree, depending on the species. This will give the timber a level of ‘natural durability’, which is a species’ own ability to withstand attack without any form of added preservative treatment.

Natural durability varies greatly between timber species. An assessment is made in order to determine the difference, which, for resistance to fungal decay, is usually derived from the performance of hardwood stakes exposed half buried out of doors in soil. In Europe, the performance of a wide range of commercial timber species, both softwoods and hardwoods are listed in the European Standard BS EN 350-2, where they are categorized in a five-grade durability classification depending on how long they are able to resist decay in the ground:

- Class 1: Very durable and includes Teak, Ekki – more than 25 years.
- Class 2: Durable. This includes Utile, Western Red Cedar – 15 to 25 years.
- Class 3: Moderately durable, and includes American Walnut, Douglas Fir – 10 to 15 years.
- Class 4: Slightly durable, and includes American Red Oak, Obeche – 5 to 10 years.
- Class 5: Not durable. This category includes Ash, Beech and Sapwood – less than 5 years.



If the heartwood has high natural durability against fungal decay, then it will generally give the same natural protection against insects, including termites. The most durable timber species that are commercially available from the North American temperate forest is the American white oak, which falls between Class 2 and 3. Generally speaking, the most durable timber species in the world grow in tropical forests.

The durability of the timber is an important consideration when deciding where it will be used and what conditions it will be subjected to. The risk of fungal decay depends on the exposure to moisture. If the timber isn’t going to get wet, then there is no risk of decay, and sapwood can be included, such as in interior joinery or furniture. If the risk of exposure to moisture increases and if sapwood is to be included, then it should be adequately treated with a suitable wood preservative.

In tropical regions, the risk of wood-boring insects is so much greater that, even in dry conditions, the sapwood should be restricted if the timber is untreated for permanent use. In these regions, it is advisable to exclude sapwood completely for high-end applications, such as flooring and furniture.

Although sapwood may be used in a number of circumstances, it must not be overlooked that its presence is a potential source of weakness should the site or building conditions change. This should always be taken into account when specifying timber for a particular end use, particularly if the intention is for long service life. +



INVESTIGATIONS AT THE INTERSECTION OF ART AND ARCHITECTURE

Ar. Mujib Ahmed, Ar. Lalita Tharani
(Collaborative Architecture) X Artist Riyas Komu.

Rasa Totem

(Collaborative Architecture teams up with celebrated artist Riyas Komu to recreate a scaled down prototype of their collaborative Art Installation titled Rasa Totem.

The project falls under the Studio's continuing Investigations at the intersection of Art and Architecture, often collaborating with some of the leading names in the art-world)



Background

The project was initiated as a competition proposal, calling for an artistic intervention at the new Kempa Gowda International Terminal, Bengaluru. The original design is conceived as a 20 meters tall Totem, made of 8 thk high-yield steel plates on a 4 meter high, granite clad pedestal. The scaled version exhibit is realised with 6thk Corian, in collaboration with DuPont India and their channel partners.

The Project

The Artist-Architect team looks at the brief as a convergent point to create new narratives at the intersection of classical forms and contemporary architectural representation. The collaborative effort leverages on the precedents of deeply embedded abstractions, persistent in both the classical and contemporary domains, to propose a large & daring contemporary totem. The design is a synthesis of the foundational thesis on how mathematics played a foundational role in the development and evolution of India's classical art forms.

The feminine anthropometric form presented in the totem is derived out of a series of algorithmic explorations of movements of classical / folk dancers of South India and the state of Karnataka, in particular. The design expressively put forward the universal relevance of the aesthetic thesis, central to the cultural heritage and history of the nation that stride across various art forms, literature, and geography over many millennia.





The art project is placed at the intersection Art-Architecture, by a collaborative effort by the artist, and the architects, to manifest an idea, which is simple to capture in its text and oral form; but difficult to place in a contemporary context as physical / artistic expression without relegating it into nuanced kitsch.

The Totem is made of a series of 8-6thk steel plates with varying shapes and width, stacked together to achieve the unique dynamic form. The curved profile in the parting section in the middle mimics the abstracted facial expressions of various Rasas.

The tower takes a literal dynamic form with images of the classical art, representative of the rich cultural heritage and history of the state, projected on to them, transforming the sculpture into a performative art installation, during the evening hours.



Design Team

Principal Design : Lalita Tharani + Mujib Ahmed | Collaborative Architecture
with Riyas Komu | Artist Collaborator
Asst. Architect : Mihir Mistry | Collaborative Architecture

Architectural Structure

WebStructures + Rambol | Singapore | Kuala Lumpur

Collaborators

DuPont India Ltd
Ace Spaces India, Bengaluru
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