



Standing tall

An imposing element of this house is a high wall that takes central position on the plot and demarcates the spaces within

Architects have to pay attention to homeowners' wishes while designing their homes. But there are times when a creative suggestion may be contrary to what homeowners want. In such cases, allowing an architect's creativity the upper hand can lead to wonderful results.

Dipen Gada, principal architect of Dipen Gada and Associates, while designing this 5500 sq ft house, convinced its owners to retain a neem tree (*Azadirachta indica*) on the plot in Bharuch, Gujarat. This inadvertently led to the creation of a 65x35 ft wall, which has become the dominating structural element in this house.

"The owners are superstitious and asked us to axe the tree several times. But we insisted on saving it. It was the most crucial element for planning the space," says Gada.

The tree, which stands at the centre of the plot, has not only defined the planning of the house, but has also influenced its façade.

"The owners wanted their home to look different from the ones in the locality. They did not want sloping or flat roofs, but a structure that stood out," says Gada.

The narrow layout of the plot limited the scope for experimenting and since Gada wanted

Facing page: The 65x35 ft Kota stone wall dominates the façade of this house. A neem tree in the courtyard led to the design of the wall, which forms the backbone of this house by Dipen Gada and Associates in Bharuch, Gujarat.

Above: Light fixtures in the punctures illuminate to add glamour to the rough stone wall. A pergola atop the landing floods the double-height foyer with light.



to retain the tree, he has conceptualised a house that stems out of a dominating wall. The Kota stone wall stands next to the tree in the courtyard and has been used by the architect to define living spaces within.

The entrance foyer leads to a long passage lined with the wall embellished with round punctures. These were designed to break monotony of the structure. A lengthy staircase runs along most of the wall and looks into a double-height vacuum. A glass-covered pergola on the landing fills the foyer with natural light while a small outlet next to it allows warm air to escape.

Left: The exposed ceiling adds volume to the living room while keeping with the rough look set by the house's dominant Kota wall. In contrast, in-built lighting in the pelmet gives a soft glow to the place. French windows lead to the lawns outside.

Above: Shutters with rolling curtains open the dining room to the garden. The painting has been bought from China whereas the bronze figurines are from Ahmedabad.





Preceding pages: Drawers and cabinets occupy a wall and provide storage spaces. A separate stove counter increases functionality and provides enough room for other chores.

Above: The entertainment room has low seating chairs that have been created at the base of the French window. A backlit mural features the footprint of the owner's daughter-in-law.

At certain times in the day, the pergola creates an interesting light pattern on the lower level.

The living room, dining, kitchen, entertainment room and a guest bedroom occupy the lower level. The ceiling has been left unfinished in the living room while one of its walls has been painted in a neutral shade for a raw look. The living room looks out to the lawn on one side and to a patio with a water body on the other.

The patio is a bridge between the living and dining rooms. Accessed through a French door in the foyer, the patio visually connects the indoors and outdoors and is linked to the lawn.

The dining room has full-length shutters, for ventilation and light purpose.

A long granite counter runs along the length of the kitchen and breaks in between to form an additional counter for the stove. Windows along the counter flood the cooking area with light while a smaller window at the kitchen's entrance enables a view of the dining and the foyer. The kitchen also has two storerooms. A prayer room too has been created between the dining and the kitchen.

Gada has left another exposed section in the ceiling over the entertainment room. Designed



Architect/designer: Dipen Gada, Rinkesh Panchal, Tanvi Gala, Yatin Kavaiya and Archis Patel; Dipen Gada & Associates

Kitchen manufacturer: Tiara Kitchen
Roof: RCC

Tiling: RAK, Harmony

Paints: ICI, Asian Paints

Light fixtures: Dipen Gada Associates, T.J. Kansara & Co

Furniture: Customised, China

Cabinets: Marine Plywood

Benchtops: Pearl Black

Oven: Siemens

Stove: Siemens

Ventilation: Siemens

Microwave: Siemens

Refrigerator: Siemens

Dishwasher: Siemens

Waste Unit: Siemens

Vanity: Kohler

Taps: Jaquar, Hansgrohe

Shower: Hansgrohe

Hot water systems: Solar System

Tiles: Bathworld

Toilet: Kohler

Accessories: Jaquar

Bed linen: Maishaa

Mirrors: Saint Gobin

Sculptures & artwork: China

in black and white, the room has a backlit mural. The guest bedroom is adjacent to this area and leads to a covered courtyard. One of the courtyard walls is a part of the dominant Kota stone wall and features niches. The courtyard has rough stone and marble as flooring with a wooden ceiling. Swings along with reclining chairs have been used in this courtyard.

There are three bedrooms on the first floor. With wooden flooring and a ceiling in a similar colour, brown dominates the master suite. Glass doors have been used to divide the walk-in dressing and bathroom. The master suite also

has a private terrace garden. The other two bedrooms have been predominantly done in purple and neutral shades.

This floor also has a gym that overlooks the patio and the garden on the ground floor.

Materials like Kota stone, marble and wood have been extensively used in this house. While Italian marble holds the lower level area together, the patio uses granite and tiles.

Furniture and accessories in the living room and the entertainment room have been bought either locally or from China. Furniture for the bedrooms has been custom-made.

Top and above: Wood defines the master bedroom on the first level. A platform holds the mattress while the headrest is fitted in the wall. A walk-in wardrobe and bathroom form a part of this suite. Italian marble and mosaic tiles have been used in the bathroom. The shower is distinguished by the use of glass. The basin counter seeks to maximise storage.



Above: A covered courtyard at the rear end of the foyer can be accessed from the guest room as well. To complement the swing, the ceiling also uses wood. The Kota wall has niches with focus lights and visually connects the courtyard to the foyer.



Ground Floor



First Floor



Longitudinal Section



Left: The patio along with the asymmetrical water body sits between the living and the dining rooms. Glazed glass screens with inscriptions separate the water body from the foyer. Bedrooms on the first level look out to this water body. Wooden ceiling features focus lights.

Legend of plans: 1 Foyer, 2 garden, 3 living room, 4 patio, 5 dining, 6 kitchen, 7 prayer room, 8 bedrooms, 9 covered courtyard, 10 entertainment room, 11 terrace garden, 12 master suite, 13 gym.

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