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Sans frills, the Bhardwaj bungalow in Vadodara makes its layout the backbone of its design.



A Timeless Refuge

Using local materials, Dipen Gada has designed this two-level bungalow in Vadodra keeping climate, function and aesthetics in a fine balance to deliver a contemporary yet timeless home.

TEXT: DEVYANI JAYAKAR
PHOTOGRAPHS: TEJAS SHAH





Alongside the corridor, the living room is a double height space with flooring in ochre jaisalmer laid in a herringbone pattern.



On one side of the carved wooden main door, a pichwai of Srinathji has a backdrop of cows, hand painted on site on the wall to add symbolic meaning to the cow-herd god.



Tall wooden columns from Kerala stand guard in a row on jaisalmer bases, to mark a corridor which grants access to different spaces. The flooring here is texturised with a pattern, lending a tactile feel to the residents, who walk barefoot in the home.

A combination of cubes in exposed brick and concrete define the exterior of this bungalow in Vadodara, the different heights creating a pleasing geometry. The patterns in the brick hint at the attention to detail within. 'The use of core materials continues on the inside as well, with a muted palette employing kota and jaisalmer stones,' says Dipen Gada.

The client required a courtyard house with a garden, four bedrooms and a family space on this 9665 sq ft plot, resulting in a complex, well deliberated layout. Unusually, there is a different access for vehicles and for pedestrians to this home. From the road, one has to



climb a few steps to the plinth level of this C-shaped house which envelops the courtyard within its folds. An open sit-out leads to a long walkway which bypasses the kitchen and runs past the dining room at the end of one arm of the C-shaped footprint.

A sculpture of a man with a flute sits under the champa tree in the courtyard and is visible from almost every room in the home. 'The view of this life-size sculpture is now inseparably associated with the house. A reinterpretation of the traditional courtyard, the house enfolds the niche created in the centre that is a nucleus connecting all the areas that open up towards it,' says Dipen.

Even in the kitchen, floor length windows obliterate the

The living room has tall floor to ceiling windows guarded by four immovable concrete fins which regulate the sunlight from the southwest. The etched geometrical pattern on their surface adds visual interest while lending a sculptural feel to their monolithic presence.





At the end of the corridor, a family room incorporates a home theatre, its walls and ceiling being acoustically treated. Its L-shaped corner window is wrapped by a water body and overlooks the garden.



The other side of the family room leads to a gazebo with a brick jaali on one wall and a jhoola ubiquitous to homes in Gujarat. The pergola overhead has been painted a leafy green, its patterns playfully casting light and shadow below.



The kitchen has floor length windows which obliterate the boundaries between inside and outside, even as they generously welcome light and air within the home from the southeast.



A T-shaped island fully utilises the space, while a terrace garden on the floor above keeps the space naturally cool.

boundaries between inside and outside, even as they generously welcome light and air within the home from the southeast. A T-shaped island fully utilises the space, while a terrace garden on the floor above keeps the space naturally cool. 'While we haven't applied for a green building rating, eco-friendly measures such as these are always adopted,' says Dipen.

Wrapping around the corner of the dining room, the pathway leads to the main entrance of the house. On one side of the carved wooden main door, a pichwai of Srinathji has a backdrop of cows, hand-painted on site on the wall to add symbolic meaning to the cow-herd god. Alongside, the staircase leading to the floor above is articulated with a customised installation with circular metal rings and lotus shaped glass tea-light holders tailored by local artists, to Dipen's design.

Tall wooden columns from Kerala stand guard in a row on jaisalmer bases, to mark a corridor which grants access to different spaces. 'The flooring here is texturised with a pattern, lending a tactile feel to the residents, who walk barefoot in the home,' says Dipen. Alongside the corridor, the living room is a double height space, its tall floor to ceiling windows guarded by four immovable concrete fins which regulate the sunlight from the southwest. The etched geometrical pattern on their surface adds visual interest while lending a sculptural feel to their monolithic presence. The flooring is in ochre



Dipen Gada

FACT FILE

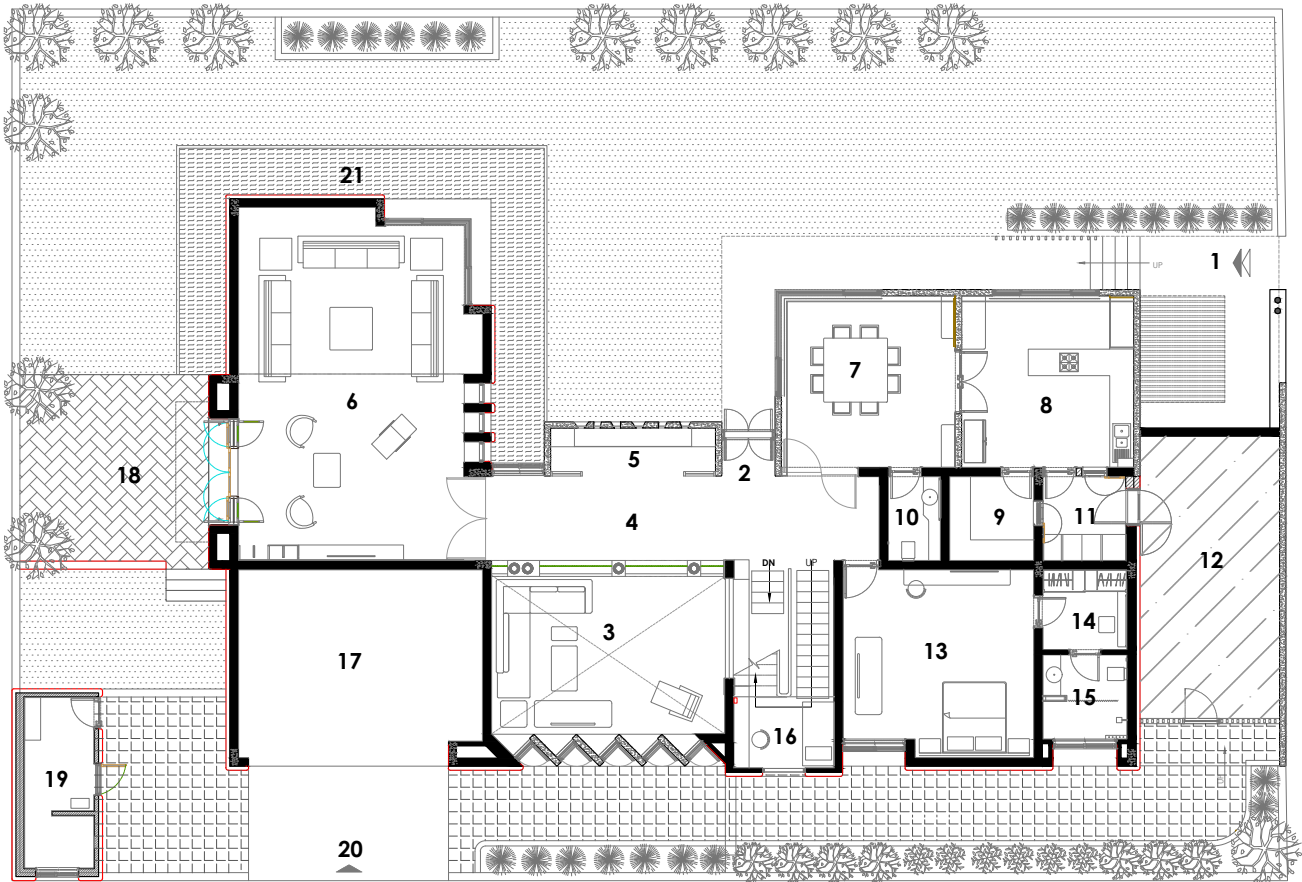
Client's Name: **Ajay Patel**

Plot Area: **9665 sq ft**

Built Up Area: **6810 sq ft**

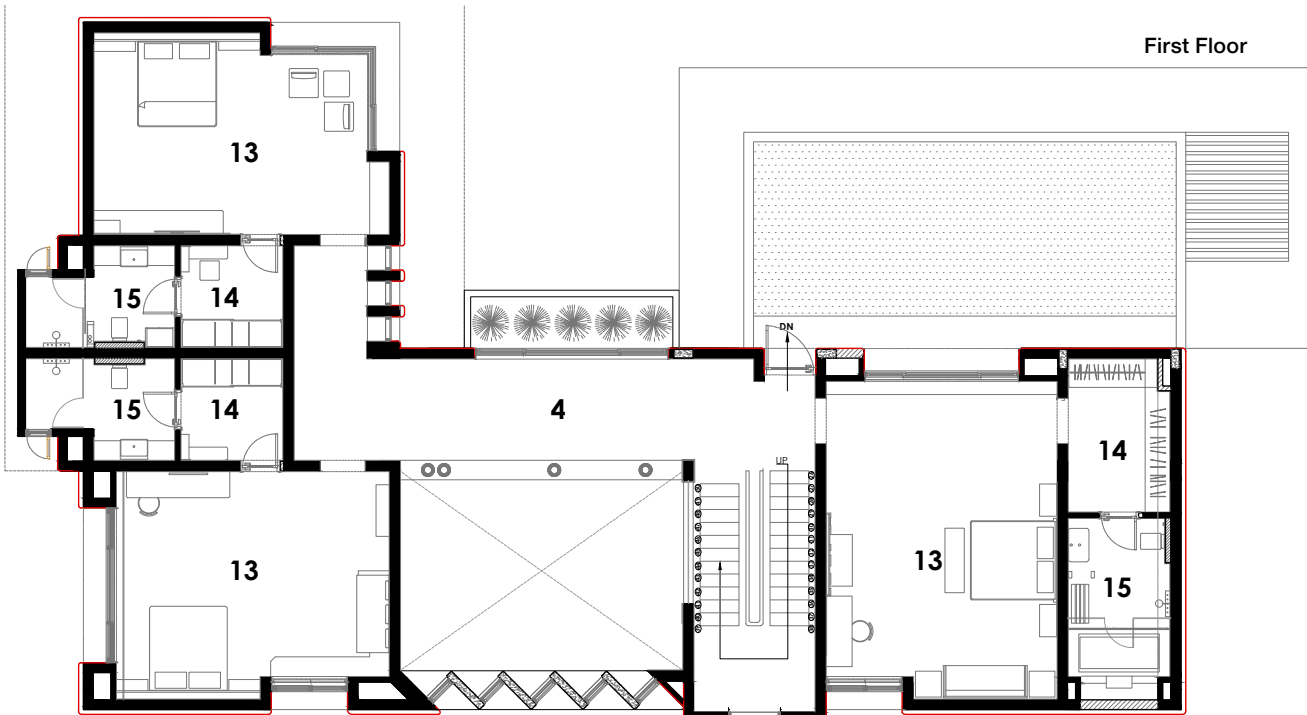
Design Team: **Dipen Gada, Mrunal Bhogayata, Nidhi Patel, Krimmy Patel, Prakash Prajapati.**

Project Coordinator: **Rahi Construction**



Ground Floor

- 1** Main entry, **2** House entry, **3** Living room, **4** Passage, **5** Pooja, **6** Family + library, **7** Dining, **8** Kitchen, **9** Store, **10** Powder toilet, **11** Indoor utility, **12** Outdoor utility, **13** Bedroom, **14** Toilet, **15** Dressing, **16** Day room, **17** Car park, **18** Deck, **19** Servant room, **20** Vehicular entry



First Floor



The master bedroom on the first floor has wooden flooring and a tiled headboard for the bed which has two posts.



The parents' bedroom on the ground floor has a terracotta mural behind the headboard of the bed, contrasting with the white palette of the rest of the room. The artwork on the walls adds small colour accents.



jaisalmer laid in a herring-bone pattern, the earth tones continued in the large triptych on the wall. A custom designed floor lamp in copper has acquired an attractive verdigris patina, while the ceiling has an intricate Indian jaali in brass and wood, from which are suspended two large dome shaped customised lamps.

'On the other side of the corridor across the living room, the pooja area is a simple open space looking out to the east sun and the landscape outside through stained glass slit windows. The delicate mother of pearl

inlay in the floor highlights the importance of the space,' says Dipen.

At the end of the corridor, a family room incorporates a home theatre, its walls and ceiling being acoustically treated. Its L-shaped corner window is wrapped by a water body and overlooks the garden. 'Viewed from outside, the house seems to be floating above the water body which is lined with blue mosaic and holds white marble lotus fountains,' says Dipen.

The other side of the family room leads to a gazebo with a brick jaali on one wall and a jhoola, ubiquitous to

homes in Gujarat. The pergola overhead has been painted a leafy green, its patterns playfully casting light and shadow below. Also on the ground floor is the parents' bedroom with a terracotta mural behind the headboard of the bed, contrasting with the white palette of the rest of the room. The artwork on the walls adds small colour accents.

On the first floor, the Kerala columns continue their vigil in the corridor which overlooks the living room, even as it leads to three bedrooms. Facing east, it is flooded with light in the morning hours,

At the end of the corridor on the first floor, the oikos finish wall forms a perfect backdrop for a collection of family photographs in black and white, personalising the space and taking the residents pleasantly down memory lane.

bungalow



Blues and greens dominate in the daughter's bedroom. Soft furnishings have been carefully handpicked to suit the design vocabulary of the house. All ceilings are simple, largely with concealed spot lights for illumination.



In the son's bedroom, red V-shaped book shelves and upholstery contrast with the grey palette.

washing the ceiling of the living room with a glow. At the end of the corridor, the oikos finish wall forms a perfect backdrop for a collection of family photographs in black and white, personalising the space and taking the residents pleasantly down memory lane.

The large bedrooms all have the bed positioned in one corner of the room, leaving ample circulation space in the rest of the room. The master bedroom has wooden flooring and a tiled headboard for the bed which has two posts, while the bedrooms for the son and daughter employ an aesthetic tailored to their preferences. 'The master bedroom opens out to a terrace garden and has a large window that supports

a kota ledge, creating a cosy seating arrangement,' says Dipen. In the son's bedroom, red V-shaped book shelves and upholstery contrast with the grey palette, while blues and greens dominate in the daughter's bedroom. Soft furnishings have been carefully handpicked to suit the design vocabulary of the house. All ceilings are simple, largely with concealed spotlights for illumination.

'It is to be noted that our studio hasn't used anything from abroad for the last four years. We are making a conscious effort to go local,' says Dipen. 'As for this project, contrary to most designs which revolve around problem solving, it was the faith of the client in our abilities which drove the design.' 