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**A villa in Nashik
designed by
architect Behzad Kharas**





Vintage Treat



Farah Ahmed and Dhaval Shellugar of FADD Studio, Bengaluru, design a quaint office space using elegant and classic elements, representing the nature of their clients' work in an artistic manner.

TEXT: KANUPRIYA GARG

PHOTOGRAPHS: PALLON DARUWALA

COURTESY THE ARCHITECT

W

e like to push beyond what we know, achieve something new and unique in every project, and be constantly pushed out of our comfort zone into a world where we not only embrace new concepts and techniques but also create fads of our own,' say designers Farah and Dhaval. They have clearly put their thoughts into action in this innovative office space, designed for a company called 'La vie', run by a mother and daughter duo who specialise in creating personalised stationery, themed table décor and wedding giveaways and also arrange themed parties.

'A terrace garden office with a view is exactly what the "La Vie" owners wanted. We were asked to design a space which was symbolic of their work – very English, French and mostly vintage,' say Farah and Dhaval. The design inspiration of using floral patterns and vintage imagery was picked up from this clients' brief. Their design sensibilities are



Farah Ahmed and Dhaval Shellugar



recreated for them in their office space with an abundance of pastels and floral touches.

The location of the office is quite interesting in itself. 'The office is situated on a terrace under a dreary overhead tank. It was quite a challenge for us, as we had to work with a low ceiling height and just the space under the tank for the interior areas of the office. We converted most of the concrete walls into glass walls to enable the beautiful views

of the Ulsoor Lake to be seen. To make the entrance fascinating, we created a garden before the main entry. A hedge with a picket fence isolates the garden from the rest of the terrace area of the building.

The format of the office is unconventional with no fixed walls and cabins. The space is loosely divided by a simple screen into two areas – one for the receptionist and visitors, and the other one for the directors. The outdoor space



has a discussion area and a garden which can also double-up as a lunch table.

The office interiors are subtle with no dominant or bold elements. This was done intentionally by Farah and Dhaval as they wanted the whole space to have a sense of understated elegance and provide a visual treat for its visitors. A lot of pastel yellows, patina greens and blues imbue the interiors of the office.

Since the office space is compact, the vintage furniture forms the main decorative element. 'We have not cluttered the space with unnecessary accessories and furniture. Classic and industrial chairs, vintage clocks and a few small accessories embellish the space. The upholstery in solids, stripes and prints is intentionally paired together to create drama. Birdcages and flowers are the most significant motifs, recalling the elements of

office



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the 'La Vie' logo. The reception area has an unadorned cream distressed desk and is separated from the rest of the space by a vintage screen with bird imagery.

White French laces like outlines are stenciled on the grey cement floor using a customised stencil. A fading effect was created in the lace to evoke a feeling of an antique floor that tells tales of times gone by. In contrast to the floor, a vivid floral wallpaper hugs the ceiling as if a garden was hung upside down. Simple architectural down lighters, two patina hanging pendants and a birdcage

light in the corner by the waiting area illuminate this workplace.

The bathroom is an eye-catching space with a black and white striped shell and a bright cross-stitched wallpaper on the adjacent wall. A bright vermilion Victorian vanity breaks the monotony of the monochrome colour scheme.

To be able to design a compact space efficiently can be a daunting task. Farah and Dhaval have modeled this workspace with extreme sophistication and panache – one that transports you to a fairy-tale world!!



A black and white striped shell, a bright cross-stitched wallpaper on the adjacent wall along with a vermilion vanity adorn the bathroom.

FACT FILE

PRINCIPAL ARCHITECTS

Farah Ahmed and
Dhaval Shellugar

LOCATION

Ulsoor, Bengaluru

TOTAL FLOOR AREA

1,000 sq ft

DATE OF COMPLETION

March 2015