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**+INSIDE
KEEPING IT
COOL
AIR CONDITIONER
SPECIAL**

**Devraj
residence
in Goa**

DEVRAJ



Autobiography in Brick and Glass



Rahul Deshpande is a Goa-based architect with a wide body of work to his credit. He was also involved in the creation of a regional development plan for Goa and is connected to the Charles Correa Foundation for urban renewal



The roof complementing the form of the building

Rahul Deshpande is one of the best-known architects in Goa. His work, spanning over two decades, has covered the spectrum from stunning private homes to public architecture including practical yet aesthetic bus stations, jetties, factories and business plazas. Then he finally decided that the time had come to design and build a house of his own. Having articulated and executed the aspirations of so many clients, perhaps the time had come to realize his own dreams and needs.

He was unusually lucky in finding a sloping, wooded plot near the picturesque ruins of St Augustine near Old Goa. Although there is a small community of housing around Rahul's house, seen from a distance, the house appears marooned in a veritable forest and Rahul has made strenuous attempts to incorporate both the greenery and its vistas into the design of the house.

For a modern house, his influences were both eclectic and mediaeval. He sought to bring to the house the influ-



A view of the staggered terraces



The massing of the house is indicated here

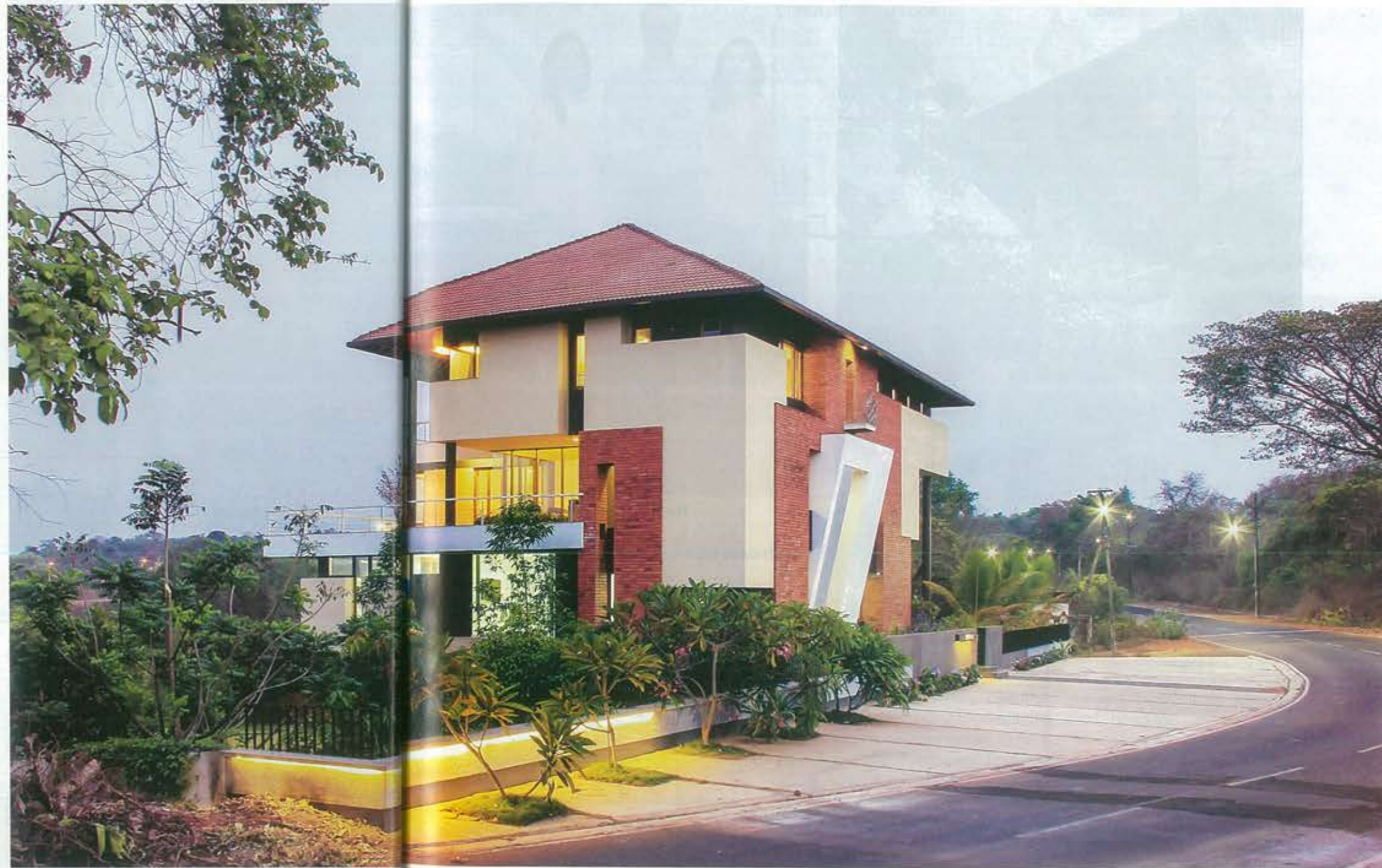


Relaxing on the lush green lawn is very pleasant

ence of all the buildings which had left a lasting impression on him – from Sicilian palazzos to the Purana Pila and other Islamic architecture (albeit in a modernized idiom). At the entrance, is the pearl granite with its tiny flecks illuminating at night and glowing even against the

other discreet lighting along the entrance wall. A cursory glance might miss that the granite is set to Rahul's interpretation of an Islamic geometric design. As you look above, you see a small glass balcony, once again a modern version of a jharoka of old havelis. Towering above

is a rectangular grey gateway, aligned to the side walls but coming out in the upper member. This entrance, reminiscent of the Purana Qila, appears dramatically majestic from a distance but magically recedes into the building as you approach further. The mammoth sliding glass door



below has a smaller inset door, again reminiscent of the Bulund darwaza of the forts. Both can be used separately as the occasion demands.

The house is built on five levels, the lower two of which are accommodated in the slope of the land. The lowest floor houses the utilities and tech-

nology of the house, the second floor has generous housing for his permanent staff. Although not visible from the front façade, the staff housing has its own view of the forested vista in front.

The inner vestibule at the entrance has Rahul's personal office on the right hand

side, where he not only has privacy from the rest of the office but also has a full view of the coming and goings. The left hand side leads into the office itself, with a conference room on one side and the rest has workstations for his ever-expanding staff. The conference room is dominated by a

The moods created through lights and voids of mass



The large, overhang roof

beautiful cantilevered glass-topped table, designed by Rahul and his team and a work of art in itself. The conference room has a full glass frontage of a well-manicured garden with an amphitheatre for events and lectures. The garden can also be accessed from outside the entrance as well as through the building.

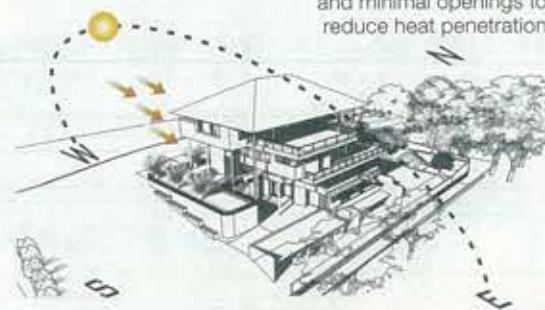
The drama of the entrance and the inner vestibule is not quite over yet. A deep grey staircase on the left hand side takes one up to the living areas of the house. The colour of the walls is unexpected, as is its destination. The destination is a landing,

suffused with light, leading into the house. On the right is a small niche with an exquisite and minimalist Ganesh figurine specially commissioned by Rahul for that particular space. Stepping in, the eye is drawn to a large terrace which feels like a courtyard, which is what Rahul originally intended but could not accommodate given the dimensions of the plot. From the terrace, one is assailed by a sea of green, as if one is sitting on the treetops, punctuated by the spires of several churches that dot the landscape. The L-shaped area around the terrace has a small



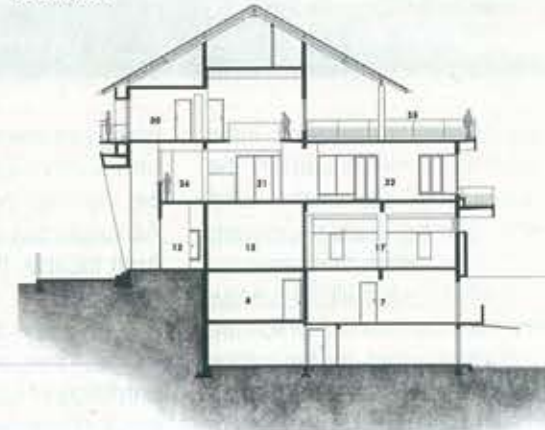
The Deshpandes

SOUTHEAST VIEW



Axonometric view showing large overhang and minimal openings to reduce heat penetration

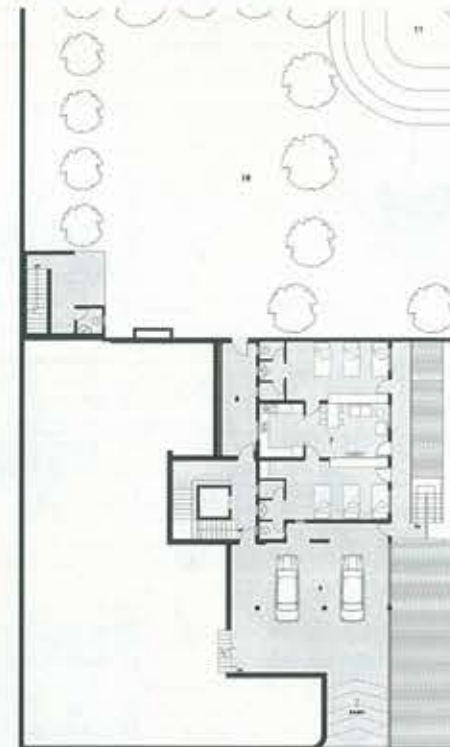
SECTION



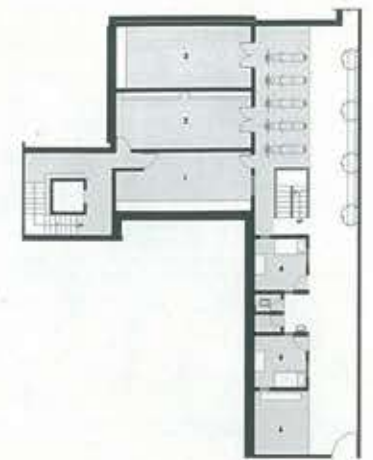
GROUND FLOOR



UPPER GROUND FLOOR



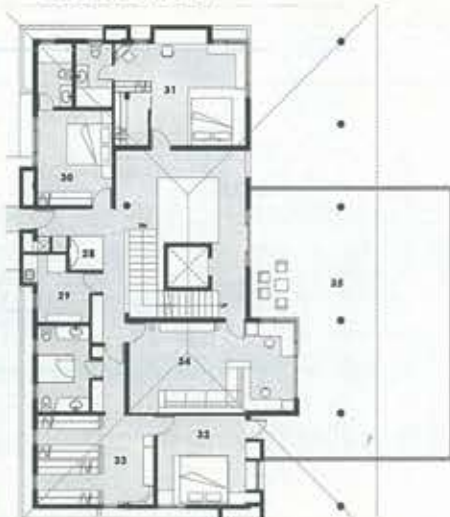
LOWER GROUND FLOOR



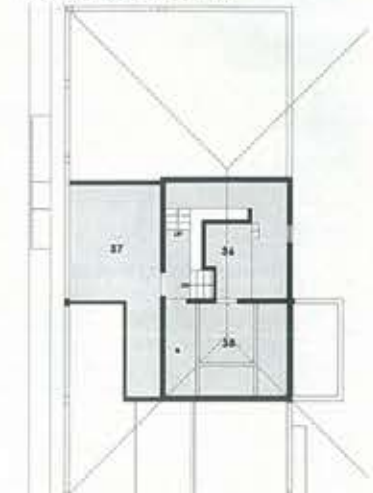
FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR



MEZZANINE FLOOR



- 1 Office Store
- 2 House Store
- 3 Garden Store
- 4 Security Room
- 5 Driver's Room
- 6 Electrical Room
- 7 Staff Quarters
- 8 Garden Entry
- 9 Parking
- 10 Garden
- 11 Fish Pad + Amphitheatre
- 12 Lobby
- 13 Reception

- 14 Meeting Area
- 15 Conference Room
- 16 MD's Cabin
- 17 Studio
- 18 Library
- 19 Pantry
- 20 Staff Dining
- 21 Entrance Foyer
- 22 Living and Dining
- 23 Kitchen
- 24 Service Area
- 25 Guest Bedroom
- 26 Bar Counter

- 27 Terrace
- 28 Puja Area
- 30 Guest Bedroom
- 31 Daughter's Room
- 32 Master Bedroom
- 33 Dressing and Walk-in Closet
- 34 Entertainment Room
- 35 Terrace
- 36 Machine Room
- 37 Gym
- 38 Pump Room

FACT FILE

NAME OF THE PROJECT, LOCATION
'Devraj', Old Goa, Goa

NAME OF THE FIRM, LOCATION
Rahul Deshpande & Associates,
Old Goa

CLIENT
Rahul Deshpande

DESIGN TEAM
Rahul Deshpande, Varun
Kulkarni

CONSULTANTS
UCS electrical Consultant

CONTRACTORS
Self Constructed

BUILT-UP AREA
395 sq.m

COST OF PROJECT
180 lakhs

YEAR OF COMPLETION
2016



The living-cum-dining space



The entertainment room



Vertical connection of the house assists in various social interactions



The work space has splendid views

as well as a large sitting room and a dining room. Since the house is built on five levels, a lift was essential. The lift is set back on two sides with a skylight on top, giving a floating-like effect. Hence the lift is hardly visible and appears to just be one of the walls. A compact bar, a powder room and a guest room complete the amenities of this floor.

A floor above, the courtyard-like terrace becomes an L-shaped terrace. Here Rahul has situated his home-theatre-cum-two small study areas for himself and his wife. Another guest room and his young daughter's room complete this floor. A flight of stairs up leads to Rahul's gym.

The interior has light-coloured furnishings, some sourced, some custom-made but Rahul believes that less is more and that the flow of



A contemporary chair design



The staircase has a contemporary design as does the minimalist railing



The dynamic furniture design of the cabin



The cantilevered table designed for small meetings

space must speak for itself without being cluttered with too much furniture or artifacts. A harmonious blending of space, light and air is most important to him. The other impressive aspect of the house is the sheer detail that has gone into providing appropriate space for everything that needs to be accommodated, from the carefully appointed spaces of the work areas to the detailed dressing rooms of the bedrooms. There appears to be no object that does not have its appointed place. The house, as all houses do, may evolve further but at the moment, the balance of aesthetics and utility is perfect. The other striking feature of the house is that, without compromising privacy, the outside is inside everywhere. Full, wall-size windows, smaller windows,

office-cum-house



The topmost floor looks as if it has a small house on it



A well balanced and proportioned house



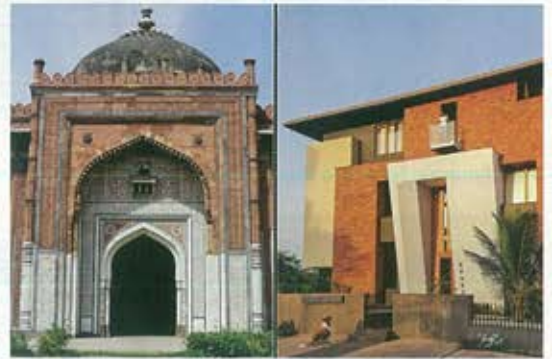
The cantilevered terraces overlooks the greenery and old churches of Goa



Goan houses and their proportions



The niches used in the wadas of Maharashtra



The jharokha of purana qila



The grand door of shaniwar wada

narrow glass panels all bring the exterior inside.

Devraj is a work of high maturity, a combination of both architectural and life experience and memories,

with a sensitivity to the environment and its context. Perhaps it is a house that Rahul could not have built any earlier in his life. It is the culmination of a lived experience,

replete with sophisticated passion. Nothing is for mere effect. In fact, it is a reflection of the architect himself, a autobiography in Brick and Glass.

