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AN EXCLUSIVE
WITH THE
WORLD'S
FAVOURITE
ARCHITECT,
BILL BENSLEY

IT'S A LUSH LUSH WORLD

BEHIND THE
SCENES WITH
BOTANICAL
BEAUTY, KHANOOM

OUR OUTDOOR
HOTLIST PLUS BEST OF
OUTDOOR INSPIRATIONS,
ALFRESCO BARS AND
COMPACT GARDENS



Like many young couples, Himani Agrawal and Krishna Khandelwal had long dreamed of owning their own home in Mumbai. Having met as students at IIT Bombay, and married soon after, there was something utterly magical about forging their next chapter in the Maximum City. So when it came time to make—and design—their maiden home, they knew they had to pick someone special. “The nature of their work requires them to be flexible in terms of location. So one of their prerequisites was that they be able to pick up and move easily, at minimum cost, if and when the scenario arose,” says Deshna Kasliwal, founder and principal designer of her eponymous Mumbai-based design firm.

With a toddler in tow, the couple was mindful about keeping things low-maintenance. “Himani, on her part, is constantly in the know of new technologies, and she and Krishna were never shy of making smart, high-end purchases that they knew would improve their quality of life,” shares Deshna. Together, they agreed on an aesthetic that riffed on coastal-chic, with the colours and character of a beachside holiday.

For a home that reminisces the seaside, the shell is wonderfully neutral. Italian marble floors, daisy walls and solid wood tables channel a breezy vibe, while whimsical prints and patterns enliven the sun and the sea. For the windows, Deshna chose sheers that would make the sun a close neighbour. As for the decor, she created a potpourri of unfussy vignettes: lush plants in the corners, colourful books on shelves, petite ceramics here, botanical prints there. There are plenty of contrasts too: the dining room, for example, with its black wainscoting and sepia photos (of the couple’s travels), is a brooding counterpoint to the living room’s light-toned avatar. Likewise, the entrance is crowned by a forest-green ceiling, while the master bedroom’s marmalade accent wall nods to the sunshine.

The interior is a modular marvel. “It has been designed in a manner that all the furniture, including the wardrobes, can be dismantled easily, packed and moved to fit a new space with minimal hassle,” Deshna reveals. Besides its portability, what makes the furniture special is its functional edge. The lounge, for instance, can change its role to suit the occasion. Equipped with a BoConcept sofa-cum-bed-cum-desk, it is equal parts work and play, swinging between serving as a home office, a lounge and a guest bedroom. Or even a beachside holiday, on demand. ♦ Instagram: @deshnakasliwal

