



SABLE SANCTUM

Envisioned by Asim Merchant of Red Blue & Yellow, Deanne Panday's ebony tower is a harmony of materials that define modern luxury

TEXT BY **TASNEEM MERCHANT** PHOTOGRAPHY BY **JIGNESH JHAVERI/PHOTOLINK**
PRODUCED BY **MRUDUL PATHAK KUNDU**

Since time immemorial, the old has always paved way for the new. This holds true even for fitness expert and author Deanne Panday's 4,000 sq ft home in a posh Mumbai suburb. She enlisted the expertise of the team at Red Blue & Yellow, a renowned furniture and interiors studio in the city, to turn around an old, dilapidating family bungalow in Bandra into a swish habitat for a family of four. The result of the collaboration is a fabulous three-storeyed abode awashed in a magnificent obsidian. Completed in 18 months, the structure has a natural envelope of tall stemmed bamboo, which serves the dual purpose of providing privacy as well as cooling the environs. Great care was taken to ensure that the requirements of each family member were met, resulting in open gathering spaces as well as personal alcoves satisfying individual —needs. Asim and Deanne tell us how they developed this “refined, well styled” villa.

ELLE DECOR: What were the key changes made in the architectural elements of the old edifice?

Asim Merchant: The most important thing was to have windows – not the typical sliding ones, as security was an issue. So we built them like shelves, with glass panels that can be opened for cross ventilation. Another vital aspect would be the wooden slats introduced for privacy. We decided to not have box grills and incorporated timber partitions instead. Also, I wanted the house to be in the dark shade, as it is an unconventional choice and not many people opt for the hue, making it a stand out feature.

ED: Even though there are bursts of colour, black dominates the space. Was this a conscious decision?

Deanne Panday: Earlier, we had done parts in deep brown as an experiment, then switched to a darker shade and ultimately decided on the coal hue. Initially, the kids were hesitant, but when they saw the master boudoir, they came around. My favourite section is my own bedroom, which is in this shade, including the sitting area – it's meditative and I can switch off once I'm here. In fact, I read and practice yoga here as well. ♦



Asim envisioned this nook in the front yard to be a living area, where the family can sit together and unwind after a long day. Thin, long stemmed bamboos were planted around the concrete seating to provide a natural cover from neighbouring structures and filter harsh sunlight. The strategically placed mirror serves as a "live art form", constantly reflecting any changes in the area. Left: Asim and Deanne seated in the same space. At night, ambient lighting placed under the bamboo shoots, and tea lights suspended from the branches bathes the surroundings in a warm glow.



The dining room is part of the family den. All the Burma teakwood furniture in the house was sourced from Red Blue & Yellow. On the black wall behind the bar hang monochromatic Picasso prints. While some of the pieces on the shelving were bought locally, the others belong to Deanne. In contrast to the charcoal shade of the exteriors, the burst of deep olive green connects the interiors with the outside. Right, from Top The front yard offers sweeping views of sliding screens and wooden slats, the standout features of the house. Lazing on the slate floor is the family's dog, Sukhi; The timber deck in the backyard prevents it from overheating. The columns provide protection from prying eyes and a visual break from the monotone.





The filament bulbs, suspended from the skylight, are staggered in order to emphasise the levels. The stucco wall lends additional depth to the black partitions. The Spanish handmade tiles pop against the dark colour. Right The industrial master boudoir has an exposed concrete ceiling with sliding lamps. Outside, the attached living room is in stark contrast to the space, which was intentionally kept dark so that Deanne could cut off from the world once she was here. The custom black velvet bed has a burst of floral patterns to soften the harshness of the dominant shade



**COMPLETED IN 18 MONTHS, THE STRUCTURE
HAS A NATURAL ENVELOPE OF TALL STEMMED
BAMBOO...PROVIDING PRIVACY...**



Initially, the daughter's room was supposed to be all white. But when she saw the master boudoir, she insisted on switching over to the dark shade. The flooring from Squarefoot, Mumbai and custom-made bed were thus last minute additions. The organza curtains lend a mellow touch while the wall clock from Crate and Barrel, above the wooden cabinet immediately catches the eye Left, from Top Asim likes creating paradoxes and Deanne's living room with a geometrical floor offset by the floral upholstery on the chair, is a prime example; The WC on the ground level flaunts several forms of black: Glossy on the door, matte on the wall and slate with grey swirls on the ground

