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W-POWER SELF-MADE WOMEN

Clockwise from left:
Deepti Sharma, cricketer;
Ashwini Bhide, MD,
Mumbai Metro Rail
Corporation; **Nandita
Sinha**, CEO, Myntra; and
(seated) **Kriti Sanon**, actor





Master Craftsmen

Architects who are breaking norms with their smart designs to create spaces that are environmentally conscious and technologically advanced

By **MOHAN SIDDHARTH & KAMAYNI**

Architectural luxury is no longer defined solely by opulence but by the harmonious integration of technology and nature.

“We will never be truly healthy, satisfied or fulfilled if we live apart and alienated from the environment from which we evolved.”— Stephen R Kellert, author of *Biophilic Design*.

Our upcoming series, The Luxury League, explores the convergence of smart buildings and biophilic design, redefining the future of luxurious living.

Architectural luxury is undergoing a profound evolution, transcending traditional notions of opulence and aesthetics. Modern architectural opulence now encompasses a harmonious fusion of exquisite design, technological innovation and a holistic approach to well-being. It is no longer defined by mere grandeur but by the ability to curate

exceptional living experiences that cater to the desires and expectations of discerning individuals.

Season 3 of The Luxury League embarks on a captivating journey into the changing landscape of architectural opulence, introducing audiences to some of the world’s most eminent architects who have carved a name for themselves in the smart building designs. This season redefines architectural luxury in the 21st century, where smart buildings and biophilic design harmonise to create opulent spaces that are environmentally conscious, technologically advanced, and deeply human-centric. The lineup includes architects renowned for crafting some of the most innovative structures in India, visionaries who are reshaping architectural norms, and individuals whose passion for sustainable living has left an indelible mark on the industry.



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology comprised a point system through which 80 top luxury architecture and design firms were assessed on a scale of 1 to 5 based on their approach towards innovation and technology, biophilic design integration, education, sustainability & ESG, clientele and projects, and aesthetic and awards. Eventually, the final list of 30 was selected to form The Luxury League.

COURTESY STUDIO GULMOHAR

Creating Dynamic Spaces

Headed by the husband-wife duo of Aamir Sharma and Hameeda Sharma, AANDH Design Studio is a pioneer in delivering luxurious, chic, refined interior designs. During their diploma course in architecture and interior design, the Sharmas' innate inclination towards interior design ignited their career trajectory. Starting with small steps, they have traversed a path fuelled by an unwavering commitment to the art of design. In their practice of the last two decades, they have won numerous accolades for their versatile and extensive body of work that includes interior design of residences, corporate offices, retail stores and hospitality spaces.

For Sharma, luxury doesn't have a single meaning—everyone perceives luxury in a different way, whether it is in the form of cutting-edge technology, timeless simplicity or harmonious living with nature. Sharma believes that as designers, their role is to orchestrate spaces that cater to diverse tastes, redefining luxury as per the client's aspirations.

At AANDH, any new project brings along a burst of ideas, fuelled by creativity, innovation, out-of-the-box thinking, constantly pushing the boundaries of conventional design to unveil truly exceptional spaces. For most of the projects, they take the biophilic approach, connecting indoors to the outdoors seamlessly, creating environments that resonate with the rhythm of nature. Smart building technology enables them to control light filters and surroundings, creating dynamic spaces.

'Thinnu farmhouse', where indoors and outdoors were blended, and the 'Kotagiri home' built on

the hills are testament to their commitment to innovation and sustainability, giving the occupants a harmonious blend of comfort and connectivity with nature.

Amidst the creative journey, challenges come up, particularly in reconciling luxury with

environmental responsibility. Sharma makes sure that meticulous research and development takes place, and the client expectations and sustainable design principles are adhered to when finalising the design.

Sharma believes that the landscape of architectural luxury is poised for continuous evolution. With changing trends and influence of fashion, preferences change, but one enduring trend is the growing appreciation of simplicity and sustainability. **F**

• KAMAYNI

Aamir Sharma and Hameeda Sharma

Founders and principal designers
 Aamir & Hameeda Design Studio



Redefining Luxury



Ashmit Singh Alag, 46, is a luminary in the world of architecture and design, serving as principal designer at Transform Design, based in New Delhi. A connoisseur of opulence and functionality, Alag's pursuit of a career in architecture and design was inspired by his belief in crafting a thoughtful, luxurious lifestyle. For him, architecture shapes environments and thus, lives, offering a canvas to blend beauty, functionality and exclusivity seamlessly.

Beyond the veneer of grandeur, Alag defines luxurious living as a harmonious interplay of high service, thoughtfulness and timelessness. His ethos resonates with the convergence of smart

Ashmit Singh Alag


Principal designer,
Transform Design

buildings and biophilic design, where technology seamlessly integrates with nature to redefine luxury living. Alag's excitement lies in the potential of this fusion to offer serenity, well-being, and prosperity, while enhancing privacy and reducing the need for extensive housekeeping.

In his projects, Alag successfully integrates smart building technology and biophilic design principles, creating spaces that evoke a profound connection with nature. An example is the master

bedroom with a backlit Barrisol panel mimicking sunlight, nurturing plants and providing a luminous, nature-inspired sanctuary.

For Alag, inspiration stems from the opportunity to create exclusive, groundbreaking designs that enrich lives. While challenges in designing environmentally responsible-yet-luxurious spaces exist, Alag tackles them with expertise and innovation, prioritising timelessness and meticulous planning.

Looking ahead, Alag envisions luxury as a timeless concept, rooted in culture, education and wealth. He foresees technology liberating the human element, enabling consistent, quick results without compromising on luxury's essence. 

• MOHAN SIDDHARTH

Spirit Of Excellence



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In the realm of architecture and design, the names Hardesh and Monica Chawla resonate with innovation, elegance and a commitment to excellence. The dynamic duo stumbled into architecture and design while dealing with property investments in the late 90s. The need to develop properties sparked their interest in the field and they ended up as co-founders of Essentia Environments. With a rich tapestry of achievements spanning over 25 years in the industry, their journey is marked by accolades, creativity, and a profound dedication to crafting spaces that transcend the ordinary.

Educationally diverse, yet united, in their passion for design, Chawla's engineering and business background complement Monica's artistic flair, forging a partnership grounded in expertise and vision. For the Chawlas, architecture is not merely about aesthetics; it's a harmonious blend of functionality, uniqueness and personality of the client.

Hardesh Chawla & Monica Chawla


Co-founders, Essentia Environments

The convergence of smart buildings and biophilic design excites the Chawlas, who recognise its potential to shape the future of luxury living. With a keen focus on sustainability and a deep appreciation for nature, they seamlessly integrate biophilic principles into their designs, fostering a sense of harmony and well-being. They feel that their inner sensibility leans towards connecting with nature, and they try to ensure their clients find a deeper connection in their daily living.

The Chawlas remain driven by a relentless creative spirit, finding inspiration in the opportunity to craft spaces that delight and inspire their clients. Challenges, they acknowledge, are part of the creative process, mostly related

to budget and time constraints. Yet, such obstacles coax them to think creatively and accomplish the tasks within limitations.

Looking ahead, the Chawlas foresee a shift towards innovation and smart living, with clients increasingly prioritising functionality and personalised experiences over ostentatious displays of wealth. As India's economy flourishes, the demand for comprehensive design solutions is poised to surge, positioning firms like Essentia Environments at the forefront of architectural innovation.

In the ever-evolving landscape of architectural luxury, the Chawlas stand as visionary leaders, reshaping the way we perceive and experience the spaces we inhabit. With a blend of creativity, expertise, and commitment to excellence, they redefine the boundaries of architectural luxury, leaving an indelible mark on the world of design. 

• MOHAN SIDDHARTH

Playing It 'Smart'

Architecture is an art form to design spaces that engage your senses and elevate the human experience within that space.”

Inspired by the works of legends like Frank Lloyd Wright, Charles Correa, BV Doshi and Tadao Ando, Haresh P Lakhani is a self-taught architect with an experience of more than 30 years. He is the founder and principal designer of HP Lakhani Associates, an architecture and interior designing firm.

Growing up in a modest background in Mumbai, Lakhani was intrigued by the architectural marvels that surrounded him. It was the sight of Kanchanjunga Apartment, designed by Correa, that ignited his passion for architecture and design.

While pursuing the interior designing course at LS Raheja College of Interior Design and Architecture, he worked with his brother, a seasoned practitioner, and gained practical experience and exposure, which clubbed with his curiosity and love for structures, nurtured and polished the architect within him.

Lakhani believes that sustainable structures and resilient design are the biggest trends today. The convergence of smart buildings and biophilic designs holds immense potential to redefine the future of architecture, offering sustainable solutions that prioritise the well-being of both occupants and the environment. He states, “Biophilic designs try to erase the defining lines between human and nature interactions in creative and sustainable ways.”

For Lakhani, each new project comes with excitement and




Haresh P Lakhani

Principal designer, HP Lakhani Associates

inspiration, planning and synergising ideas with clients, and collaborating with associates and partners to plan, counsel and develop environmentally responsible designs and architecture solutions. He implores that creating designs using elements such as natural ventilation, passive solar design, and organic and natural materials, seeks to connect indoors and outdoors seamlessly, bringing us close to nature. This approach makes the structures more energy-efficient and reduces the overall carbon footprint, and has a positive and

healthy impact on human well-being.

At HP Lakhani Associates, they have spearheaded projects that induce biophilic with other green building features to encourage interactions with nature. From residential complexes to commercial spaces, each design reflects a meticulous balance between luxury and environmental responsibility.

According to Lakhani, the idea of luxury living is evolving, with sustainability and biophilic design at the centre stage. Lakhani envisions a future where energy-efficient solutions and eco-friendly designs are seamlessly incorporated in luxury homes and offices, having a positive impact on the environment and quality of human living. 

• MOHAN SIDDHARTH

Iram Sultan, principal designer at Iram Sultan Design Studio, is a respected name in the architectural and design sector. With over two decades of experience and a distinguished list of accolades, Sultan embodies a standard of excellence in her field.

For Sultan, luxury is not merely about grandeur; it's about crafting an experience that resonates with depth and sophistication. Her signature style is marked by a quiet-yet-profound sense of luxury, emphasising timeless

Iram Sultan

Principal designer, Iram Sultan Design Studio

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elegance over fleeting trends.

At the heart of Sultan's philosophy lies the belief that every space should tell a unique and intimate story. She champions the concept of "invisible design", where art, heritage and emotional resonance converge to create environments that inspire and delight.

Sultan believes that the fusion of smart buildings and biophilic design extends the potential of flexibility in the way we live, using technology to aid in a better lifestyle and the greatest luxury of living amidst nature.

Driven by a deep sense of collaboration, Sultan finds inspiration in her clients, whom she views as partners in the creative process. Each project is a narrative woven from the dreams and aspirations of those who inhabit the spaces she designs.

"I am not a believer in trends. I am a proponent of timeless design that can grow and evolve with you, like

Timeless Elegance



fine wine that ages well," says Sultan about her core design philosophy.

In a sector dominated by fleeting fads, Sultan's steadfast dedication to timeless elegance sets her apart

as a true visionary in the world of design. With her relentless pursuit of excellence, she continues to shape the landscape of luxury living. **F**

● MOHAN SIDDHARTH

Artistic Vision

Kanhai Bharat Gandhi, Neemesh Ashwin Shah, and Shresht Kewal Kashyap, co-founders of KNS Architects, exemplify a blend of artistic vision, architectural prowess and a commitment to sustainability. With a combined experience of 29 years since the inception of KNS Architects in 1997, they have steered their firm to become a beacon of innovation in the field.

Operating from their offices in Worli and Andheri, Mumbai, KNS Architects has carved a niche for itself in redefining luxury living through a holistic approach to design. Their portfolio boasts projects that seamlessly integrate smart building technology and biophilic design principles, setting new benchmarks in the industry.

For the trio, luxury transcends opulence; it embodies an identity that marries efficiency with comfort. Their philosophy revolves around creating spaces that not only look good but also make people feel good. From the sprawling villas of Goa to the minimalist residences of Mumbai, each project is a testament to their belief in personalised, timeless design.

The convergence of smart buildings and biophilic design excites them as it offers a unique opportunity to create spaces that are technologically advanced, sustainable and human-centric. By seamlessly blending cutting-edge technology with elements of nature, KNS Architects crafts environments that prioritise the well-being and vitality of their occupants.

In its pursuit of architectural excellence, KNS Architects has successfully integrated smart building technology and biophilic design principles in projects like 'Thrive' in Goa, 'Muted Minimalism'



From left: Neemesh Ashwin Shah, Kanhai Bharat Gandhi and Shresht Kewal Kashyap

Kanhai Bharat Gandhi, Neemesh Ashwin Shah, and Shresht Kewal Kashyap

Principal architects and co-founders, KNS Architects

in Mumbai, and 'Riddhi Siddhi' in Lonavala. These spaces not only showcase their technical expertise but also reflect their deep-rooted commitment to creating experiences that resonate with the human spirit.

Challenges abound when designing spaces that are both luxurious and environmentally

responsible, yet KNS Architects tackles them with creativity and innovation. By carefully selecting materials, embracing sustainable practices, and leveraging advanced technologies, they strike a balance between aesthetics and environmental consciousness.

They believe that architectural luxury is evolving towards sustainability, wellness and flexibility. They envision a future where luxury is not just about material possessions but also about meaningful experiences that enrich lives and respect the planet. 

• KAMAYNI

Beyond Opulence



From left: Jasem Pirani and Huzefa Rangwala

design stresses on the principles of connectivity to the natural environment and further builds on the ideas of good design in the built environment, and smart buildings use technology and various resources to create a habitable environment.


One such project exemplifying their commitment to the above principles that was completed under their mentorship is the 'Bombay HQ for Aquagreen water solutions'. The challenging project was to

Huzefa Rangwala & Jasem Pirani

Co-founders, MuseLAB

transform an existing warehouse into a high tech, sustainable and relevant smart office and experience centre. They relied on fluid dynamics and similar softwares, and worked with a team of consultants to make it smart, biophilic and economically sustainable.

As they embark on a new project, Rangwala and Pirani find inspiration in their conversations with the client, the story, to understand the context and the brief. A good story coming to life through the process of creating tangible from the intangible excites them and propels them to create luxurious and sustainable architecture.

In future, they foresee a shift towards a holistic approach to luxury that prioritises sustainability, biodiversity and its impact on the environment. At MuseLAB, they are constantly striving to blur the boundaries between design typologies and scale, to explore new technological tools to be able to adapt to the changing environment and deliver unique solutions. 

• KAMAYNI

Huzefa Rangwala and Jasem Pirani founded MuseLAB Architects in 2012, built upon their shared passion for design. Unable to pursue his dream of becoming a chemical engineer, a chance encounter with a friend led Rangwala to explore architecture, and find a perfect synergy with his passion for art. Pirani, on the other hand, had always been intrigued by the built environment. His keen observation of buildings and sketching them out made it evident early on that he wanted to pursue architecture.

Rangwala and Pirani, believe that the term luxury transcends

mere opulence and extravagance. They champion the concept of 'quiet luxury', a timeless movement deep-rooted in tradition and craftsmanship, and celebrating subtlety and comfort. In architecture, it is about using local materials to create something timeless, thus creating harmonious environments contributing to a sense of well-being and comfort.

For them, the convergence of smart build technology and biophilic designs create a human-centric environment and focus on wellness. They believe that this fusion holds immense potential to redefine the future of luxury living. Biophilic

Comfort Zone

With three decades of experience in residential and hospitality interiors, Nitin Kohli has garnered recognition both domestically and internationally for his exemplary work. Graduating in economics and later completing his master's in business administration, his journey in the world of design was ignited by transformative travels that started at the age of 28.

For Kohli, design isn't merely about aesthetics but about creating personalised experiences that resonate with the clients' aspirations. His approach revolves around balancing grandeur with practicality, infusing sophistication with vibrancy to craft spaces that transcend boundaries. At the heart of his creations lies a deep understanding of the clients' needs, resulting in designs that reflect the modern spirit of India.

"Luxurious living surpasses opulence and grand aesthetics. It's about the beautiful harmony of comfort, meaningful experiences

Nitin Kohli

Founder-director, Nitin Kohli Home

and the freedom to enjoy life's finest moments in a space that feels individually crafted," says Kohli.

He envisions future homes as eco-friendly sanctuaries, blending high-tech features with biophilic design elements to create harmonious living spaces.

Kohli's inspiration stems from interactions with clients, fuelling fresh perspectives and innovative ideas for each project.

However, designing spaces that are both luxurious and



environmentally responsible poses distinct challenges, requiring a delicate balance between aesthetics and sustainability.

Kohli foresees a shift towards maximalist luxury in architectural trends, where spaces exude richness and timeless elegance. His vision for the future of architectural luxury encompasses celebrating classical elements while embracing modernity.

As Kohli continues to redefine architectural luxury, his work serves as a testament to the evolving landscape of design. With a commitment to innovation, sustainability and client-centricity, he paves the way for a new era of luxurious living, where every space tells a unique story of craftsmanship and elegance. 

• KAMAYNI

Lavish Look

Pavan K Suryadevara's passion for architecture and design was fuelled by his father, an esteemed architect. A fascination for the built environment and a keen desire to contribute to the transformation of spaces where people live, work and play instilled in him a desire to pursue architecture as a career. After completing his master's in architecture, he established Clark Lloyd Architects, a multi-skilled design, planning and regeneration consultancy in 2007. Since then, they have delivered a wide range of projects in all domains.

For Suryadevara, luxurious living is defined by the harmonious fusion of smart home systems, automation and innovative technologies where every element serves to elevate convenience, security and connectivity. His focus is on creating spaces where technology serves as an invisible facilitator of a sophisticated lifestyle.

Suryadevara believes that the fusion of smart buildings and biophilic designs unleashes boundless possibilities, enabling the creation of architecturally stunning and innovative structures; buildings adorned with living walls, green roofs and natural elements seamlessly integrated with state-of-the-art amenities. This synergy results in aesthetically pleasing, futuristic, and visually captivating designs that redefine the traditional notions of luxury. Suryadevara's portfolio boasts of many such initiatives, notably 'Vasuki residence', 'Lanco Madhu residence',



Pavan K Suryadevara

Architect, Clark Lloyd Architects

'Sumana residence' and many more.

Suryadevara asserts that designing spaces that epitomise luxury with environmental responsibility is a complex-yet-rewarding endeavour. He further states that one must navigate the landscape of material choices, energy efficiency, waste management

and client expectations with an unwavering commitment to creating spaces that epitomise opulence.

He is optimistic that in future there will be continued incorporation of biophilic design principles with an emphasis on nature. His focus would be on creating spaces that enhance well-being by integrating natural elements and sustainability, while shaping the landscape of architectural luxury. **E**

● MOHAN SIDDHARTH



Holistic Solutions

A storyteller par excellence and an award-winning interior designer, Shabnam Gupta had always been inclined towards creative arts. Exposure to the vibrant culture of Indian arts and crafts as a teenager while accompanying her father to the cottage industries and design stores served as an inspiration for her to pursue a career in design. Driven by her passion for design and encouraged by her strong entrepreneurial spirit, Gupta established The Orange Lane, an interior design firm that is home to holistic design solutions since 2003. In two decades, they have completed various projects in the residential, corporate, farmhouses, hospitality and retail sectors.

Gupta's conception of luxurious living transcends mere aesthetics, it's about the feelings a space evokes. She believes that luxury

is no longer about acquiring expensive brands, but about being able to free one's mind from the chaos and hustle of life. In her words, "Luxurious living is about homes that can balm your soul and transport you into your bubble."

She believes the convergence of smart buildings and biophilic designs holds immense potential to redefine the way one inhabits a space. By blurring the lines between nature and indoor living, this fusion offers a retreat from the concrete jungle and moves a step closer to the way the Earth is meant to be lived in.


For Gupta, the inspiration for a project springs from the ever-changing tapestry of nature and nuances of day-to-day interactions; sometimes a simple conversation can lead to a creative chain of thought. Designing luxurious and environmentally responsible spaces is challenging as they are more

Shabnam Gupta

Founder, The Orange Lane & Peacock Life

expensive than conventional designs, but Gupta believes that investing in such designs is a commitment to a better future for generations to come.

An epitome of this commitment is 'The Lakeside Home', designed by the firm where the indoor luxury spaces are seamlessly connected with the outdoor courtyard and verandah which further blur the lines with a lake touching the property, giving the feeling of living without walls and fostering a sense of serenity and connection.

Going forward, Gupta envisions a future where luxury is not defined by brands alone but by personal style and values. As trends evolve, she is dedicated to lending her distinctive style to crafting spaces that resonate with the individuality and aspirations of the clients. 

• KAMAYNI