

INTERIORS

**DESIGNERS COMBINE'S
AWE-INSPIRING
DESIGN FOR
A VILLA IN KASAULI**

**COMPETITIVE AND
TRANSFORMATIVE
DESIGNS FROM
SHASHI PRABHU &
ASSOCIATES**

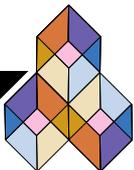


PLUS

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FIRST LOOK



IN SYNC WITH NATURE



**PARNAGRAH, A
FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND
GLASS HOUSE PROJECT,
SEAMLESSLY CONNECTS
THE INDOOR AND
OUTDOOR SPACES.**

Text: Meeta Mishra

Photographs: Courtesy the architect

One of the major concerns in New Delhi is the rising level of pollution and lack of green outdoor community spaces; one rarely comes across sites dedicated exclusively to green areas.

So it is quite a treat to see a project like an outdoor glass house nestled in greens that is meant to reconnect people and nature. **ParnaGrah** serves as a transitional space from the noisy urban atmosphere to the much quieter home setting. "We envisioned a space for the family to unwind, entertain and revel in the oh-so-precious greenery," says

Nitish Goel of Conarch Architects.

The glass house is designed as an accessory to the existing home and is connected via a semi-covered pathway from the living room of the existing residence. The area of the plot is 2,166 sq.ft.

It took several brainstorming sessions between the architects and the client to assess the experience that the client was seeking. "Since there wasn't a prescribed brief to begin with, there was plenty of room to evolve and refine our ideas as we went. Several aspects of the project, like the shaded walkway and vertical garden are the result of a participatory design process that included the client's family members and designers," informs Goel.

The conception of the outhouse on the site adjacent to the existing owner's home led to some transformations — carving out new openings in the otherwise continuous wall, creation of a connecting semi-covered pathway to unite the existing and new, and re-thinking the fragmented boundary walls of the adjoining plots as a cohesive piece.

The windows inside the existing home practically become a board framing the landscape outside to create a visual connection, 'drawing' in greenery to the living spaces, which were once devoid of any. Filtered daylight and direct sunlight are used tactically to uplift the human spirit and create vibrant environs.





The glass-enclosed space is sited to occupy only a one third of the site and located to be perpetually in shade by the surrounding walls and existing buildings. With the means of strategic location, the structure in itself stands shielded from direct sunlight to reduce energy loads. A vertical garden occupies most of the rear wall to optimize the site area and provides a large green backdrop surrounding the glass house. Strategically located on the site are bio-retention planters, indigenous tropical flowering plants, water body, turf and the green wall serving multiple functions- reduce urban heat island effect, collect and absorb storm water runoff, allow the water to seep into the soil below, enhances views and biodiversity by attracting honey bees and butterflies.

The structure is composed of a simple palette of materials, orderly shapes, lines and forms; at the same time, complex and contrasting patterns of greens create a stimulating and varied environment. The form is refined to its essence of structural steel and glass systems.

To have the floor inside unencumbered from fixtures, a custom light fixture has been detailed into the steel ceiling allowing for a dimly lit, sophisticated, warm interiors. The space makes way for a family get together or a quiet meditative moment, whichever may be the desire of the inhabitants. ■

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