

## Eco-Architect Benny Kuriakose

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Chennai Architect reuses waste, uses timber to build green homes. One of the first disciples of Laurie Baker, this civil engineer is doing his part to keep the planet live-able, one building at a time!

Benny Kuriakose vibrant career began in 1984. He is the fourth person in India to receive the basic lessons in architecture under the tutelage of Laurie Baker. A retrospective of his work reflects his perseverance to transform the profound concepts of cost-effectiveness, conservation, and sustainable architecture in his designs for personal or public spaces.

He acquired a degree in Civil Engineering from the College of Engineering, Trivandrum in 1984. In 1986, he won a scholarship from Charles Wallace India Trust to pursue a Master's Degree in Conservation Studies from the Institute of Advanced Architectural Studies at the University of York, UK. Later on, he took his doctorate from the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras and his research topic was public housing in Kerala.



One of his prominent projects is the on-going Muziris Heritage Project in collaboration with the Government of Kerala. The ancient port city of Muziris is being restored to its former glory with a sustainable approach. The work began in 2009 and Benny and his team are working to restore mosques, museums, churches, palaces, forts, etc.



The design of each project differs depending on climate, local resources, the client's budget, land availability, and so on. The eco-conscious architect also tries to inculcate traditional aspects like courtyards, verandahs, roofs in modern structures.



“Trees are the only things which can convert carbon dioxide into oxygen. If timber is allowed to decay or is burnt, then carbon dioxide is emitted back into the atmosphere as part of the carbon cycle. But when timber is used for buildings, carbon is not emitted back into the atmosphere. If more and more timber is used in buildings, and more trees are grown, the global warming trend can be reversed and this is the most important thing to be done at the moment,” adds the architect, elaborating on the need to integrate timber as a main construction material.

Check out his projects here: <https://www.bennykuriakose.com/>

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