



The Pyramid – A quaint paradise

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After crossing the Cholamandal Artists' Village on the hurly-burly of East Coast Road, you can find a small street that leads you to a quaint yellow gate at a dead end, behind which is a picturesque residence by the name 'The Pyramid'. Located just few hundred metres away from the sea, The Pyramid is a calm place with a poised ambience. When Yamuna, the owner of the house decided to buy a land next to the Cholamandal Village in 1975, there was nothing but sand and pebbles around it. Four decades later, The Pyramid still remains tranquil amidst all the houses and resorts that have swarmed the surrounding.

The Pyramid is one of the magnificent works of renowned Chennai-based interior designer Benny Kuriakose. Benny worked along with long time friend Yamuna to create a pyramid-structured home with minimum walls and more space. This duplex residential building has ample space both inside and outside its premises. You can also credit the serenity of the house to the greenery that surrounds its outdoors.

Benny worked on this old-styled building to give it a modish and desired pyramid look. He says, "The challenge was to give the home a different look by retaining some of its core components. The 1600 square feet hall had to be converted into a two bedroom house without increasing the plinth. This 40 square feet space had a central roof of 40 feet that was held together by several roofs. Now, the outer walls of the pyramid structure rest on the same foundation. The building looks more spacious than before."

The capacious home includes two large bedrooms, a sitting room, dining area and the kitchen. The wooden doors in the house look quaint. The hall, dining and the kitchen are connected and there is ideal spacing for all the three. A metal Ganesha statue along with a traditional 'kuthu vilaku' placed next to the entrance door welcomes you into the house. Vibrant green tiles for the floor add a sluggish brightness to the home. The walls are painted in light colours to contrast the dark wooden furniture that is the quintessence of the décor.

Yamuna, 70, is a proud admirer of the aesthetics of her house. "Wanting a place near the sea motivated me to buy this land. The surrounding environment has seen a lot of changes over the years, but the house continues to be the same calm shelter to me and my three lovely pets. Every part of the home has its own graceful appeal," she says.

The dining looks perfect in the company of hanging lanterns. The open kitchen blends well with the dining too. The astounding feature that makes the design all the more unique is a mezzanine lounge in the hall. A set of steep spiral steps takes you to the mezzanine floor, which is used as a workspace. This space is decorated with quirky showpieces and books. Antiques are placed on both sides of the spiral staircase to give it a wholesome look. Below the mezzanine floor, in the hall, the floor is lowered from the rest and it accommodates some bright furniture pieces with brickwork in the background wall. An alluring swing is hung at the bottom of the mezzanine space.

The two bedrooms are capacious and warm. Benny says, "Each bedroom has a courtyard that thrusts outward consisting of an enclosed toilet, but an open-to-sky bath area. As traditional courtyards do, this one also encourages leisurely bath, beauty care and relaxing. The terracotta vessels, storage baskets and plant pots placed here takes you closer to mother nature."

The store room is embedded into the space in the hall, like an alcove with a flat roof that serves as a display area for a family collection of brass and copper vessels. The walls are graced with a set of framed artworks and photographs. The antique décor elements of the house complement its look perfectly.

"Though the house is modified into a contemporary one, the essence of the home is defined by its traditional flavour. Yamuna decided to use the old-fashioned furniture and antiques as the décor. The kitchen is a perfect example where you can see the convergence of modish and traditional style. It is designed with a three-sided counter of polished black granite with a chimney over it. You can also see the display of vessels that are both traditional and modern," explains Benny.

The open plan area which spills on to the verandahs and the garden is ideal for relaxing and also for carrying out your routine works. The huge space that is available on the sides of the house can be used for informal ceremonies or an outdoor dining in the evening.

The spaces in the house are not divided by walls, they are divided visually instead, according to the functionalities of the space. All these features of the house truly make 'The Pyramid' an appealing and unique residential place.

