

While we may leave home physically, our ancestral lands always remain in our hearts. The Vijaykumars decided to build Kerala into their home in Chennai



A slice of God's own country



IT took two years to build, but the end result of those years of sweat and toil and running after carpenters and different workmen was the creation of an uber-classy Kerala-styled home, just metres away from the Bay of Bengal. Dripping in sophistication, style and tradition, Aruna and Vijaykumar's sprawling abode is a slice straight out of Kerala.

"When we decided to build this house, we were very clear that we wanted it to be Kerala styled and our architect Benny Kuriakose helped us build it the way we wanted it," says Aruna, opening the doors of the French windows that look out upon an expansive green space. As sitting back and enjoying the garden, which even has almond and cashew trees, a charu padi or a covered space with wooden backrests overlooks the grounds. There is also a gazebo at one end of the garden.

Keeping with the Kerala style, the house also has a courtyard inside that is supported by wooden pillars from Calicut. An elaborately carved door, transported all the



way from Chettinad, occupies one wall of the courtyard, while murals by artists from Guruvayoor bring colour to other walls. An ancient desk, over a century old, stands modestly in a corner, supporting pictures of the family it belongs to. "We brought this desk from our ancestral home and restored it. It's very difficult to maintain it, but it's worth the trouble," says Aruna with a smile.

The only part of the house distinctive from the rest is the formal sitting room. Done up entirely in off-white and royal blue, this too has a large glass window overlooking the garden.

Modern yet traditional, their home is more than just a place of shelter. Resplendent, with warmth, light and colour, it's the Vijaykumars' little heaven on earth.

—Divya Nair

