

GLOBAL STYLE ARRIVES

VELVET drapes and Venetian chandeliers. Silver candelabra and Tabriz carpets. Old masters and stained glass. For over 75 years, these symbols of interior elegance have defined style in Hyderabad. Inspired by Salar Jung's fascination with European ornamentation and the Viceregal style of colonial India, Hyderabad's aristocracy has emulated luxury and class by decorating their homes in turn-of-the-century Western fashion. Indeed, antique artifacts, carved wooden furniture, crystal and carpets came to epitomise the gracious grandeur of sprawling homes of the city's elite.

Thankfully, these are now passé.

Hyderabad has gone from over-the-top kitsch to minimalist Zen styling in one decade. It has kept pace with rest of the world, says

YESHWANT

RAMAMURTHY

Change has been rapid. As in all stylistic transitions, new trends were first looked upon with hesitation, even suspicion. But the simultaneously evolving scenario in other life-style sensibilities such as couture and cuisine has accelerated the paradigm shift to a wider, universal perception of interior space.

Globalisation is the matrix of change. The one singularly most influential catalyst has been the establishment of the IT and BPO industries in Hyderabad.

Spawning a whole new sub-culture of professional youth, interiors of their work places were the first venues of the design revolution. Foreign collaborators set standards of space, comfort and aesthetics to optimise productivity. The mood is young, uncluttered and efficient. Old office barriers are dismantled both literally and metaphorically. Vast open offices are shared over democratically linear configurations of workstations. The computer dictates space parameters rather than partitioned rank and filing cabinets. Colour plays as much a pivotal role in behavioural psychology as it does in the general aesthete. Ancillary spaces like gyms and cafeterias carry through the cheery youthfulness, unfettered by geographical ambit.

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Global style arrives

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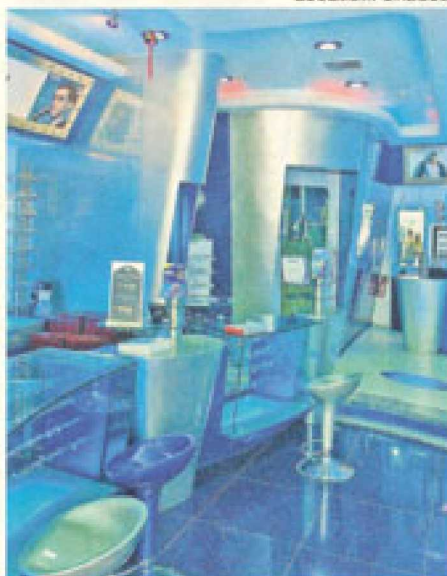
The global phenomenon of consumerism has contributed to retail space being conceived and executed with strongly international stylistic elements.

Previously, only high-end products were sold out of opulently appointed showrooms. Today cars, cell phones, even humble spectacle frames sell at designed stores where stark settings accentuate the product rather than smother it in kitsch.

International style is very evident in Hyderabad's changing hospitality scenario. The established mantra of culinary success was a sanskritised name with craftily conceived interiors to match. Ethnicity and over-spiced food were shovelled down one's throat in equal proportions.

Designer homes, once the privilege of affluence, are increasingly affordable for the bur-

Location: Shades



Stores are getting hot too!

Location: Prasad's Multiplex, Pics: Md Ilias



Movie-watching experience in the city is now truly world-class

geoning professional class of society. Exposure to contemporary design is a result of proliferating design periodicals and newspaper features that discuss innovative trends in home design. Acquiring furniture and decorative accessories is made easier from the swiftly widening choice of products in Hyderabad. Modular kitchens, sanitary ware, laminated flooring, light fittings and vitrified tiles are only some of the products from Europe and China. Comfortable repayment terms make financing of furniture that much easier.

Today, we've travelled far up the professional road, qualified interior designers (unlike mere decorators), practice their state-of-the-art skills with competence and thematic cohesiveness. Hyderabad has an active chapter of the Indian Institute of Interior Designers, dedicated to the advancement of style. The spread of global design sensibilities in Hyderabad owes much to their collective endeavour.

So, put your hands together for global interiors. If it's hip and high style, it's happening right here.

(The author heads a Hyderabad based architectural consultancy and is a visiting Professor of design at the School of Planning and Architecture, JNTU. His writings on design have appeared extensively in periodicals. The Council of Architecture has inducted him to convene a committee for publication of technical information.)

Location: Koyla



Restaurants in town are getting plush and exciting!