

Mana

Hospitality

Ranakpur, Rajasthan



ARCHITECTURE DISCIPLINE



LOCATION: Ranakpur, Rajasthan

PRINCIPAL ARCHITECT: Akshat Bhatt

DESIGN TEAM: Sneha Gurjar, Nidhi Khosla, Stuti Sahni, Debbayoti Dey

BUILT AREA: 65000 sq. ft

COMPLETION OF PROJECT: April 2013

ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS: Lirio Lopez

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER: Isha Consultants Pvt. Ltd.

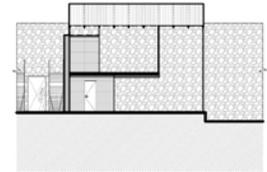
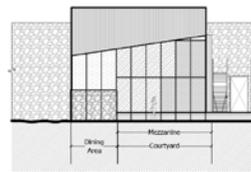
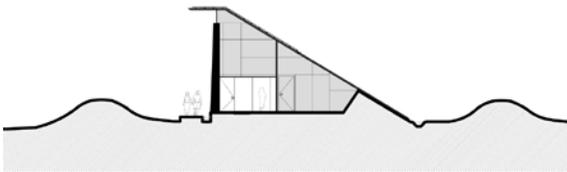
PHOTOGRAPHY: Akshat Bhatt

Like a glasshouse in a jungle, Mana Ranakpur attempts to recreate the site as it was discovered, by unearthing the various layers that have been embedded in time. Rooted in regionality and collective memory, through its architecture, it creates interfaces that are expressed not as mere filigree or ornate decoration, but as a reflection of time.

Traditional Indian architecture is typically associated with ornamental detailing, and more specifically in Rajasthan, the architecture connotes the forts and palaces through techniques that are resonant of the

wealth and culture of the region. Typically, people engage with tradition in a superficial manner in ways that are ordered, orthogonal and more often than not, a contemporary take on Indo-Saracenic architecture. Architectural experience is about creating memories, and often, in an attempt to insinuate traditional architecture in order to create a lasting image while adopting a universal aesthetic, intervention ends up being kitschy and pastiche. Techniques, Technology and methods of construction that draw from the region and are 'of the earth' get lost in the midst of





mainstream processes. Within this context, the design of Mana Ranakpur attempts to demonstrate the studio's agenda of regional expression within a global context while being environmentally conscious, without adopting a kitschy intervention and predictable construction techniques. The local and regional forms of expression are explored as vital resources to create an architecture that engages with the future and is of a progressive disposition.

Sited in the vivid, enchanted Udaipur valley in the Ranakpur province, the hotel as a public space with

a service-intensive program is conceived to celebrate order and dissonance, continuity, stability, the experience of slow-moving time and the vernacular as an imbibed ethos.

These values are celebrated through an architectonic intervention, form and material play in a region with a stark change of seasons and landscape, where the forest changes from Lush Green to bare and arid and the hills turn red during spring as the Tesu trees come to full bloom. Amidst the hills, with a clean, shallow river in the front, a km away from the famed



Jain temple and adjoining a reconstructed old haveli, the client brief called for a boutique hotel that offers a unique, iconic experience for travelers in all seasons.

A minimal palette of stone, glass, steel and vinyl that is not distracted by too many surfaces is adopted to craft an architecture that is intense and bare-boned all at the same time. Concrete is used to a minimum, hard edges are contrasted with timber warmth, and the structural system/ construction techniques are expressed clearly with as little cladding as possible. As a hat tip to the 70's India modern, the solid, minimal furniture in rubber wood and rosewood inlay as inserts is designed to reflect the environmental

concerns of the hotel. The contrasting circular pattern in the perforations also mimics and expresses itself as an intention in the upholstery, linen and furniture. As an attempt to blend in the local craft and culture, the furniture is sourced from local artisans and craftsmen.

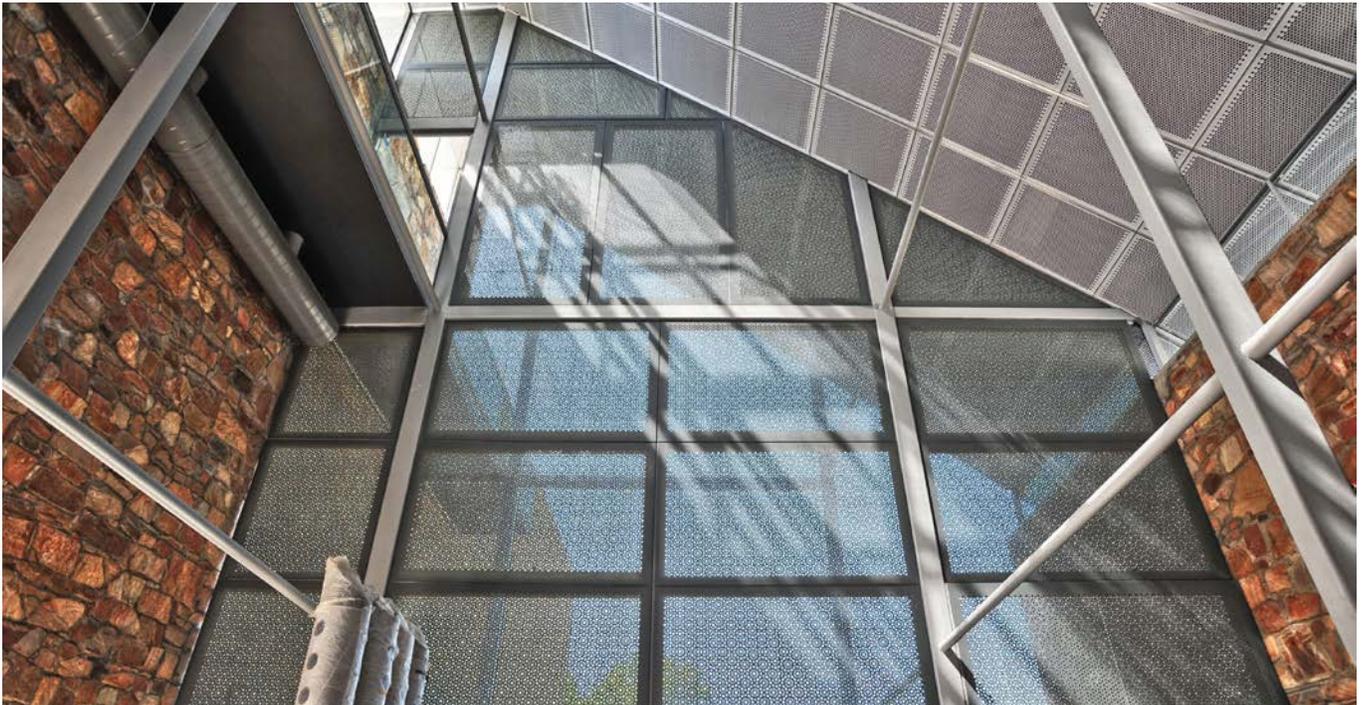
In order to be environmentally conscious by reducing transportation, local material and manpower dictated the architectural intervention; only what was not available was prefabricated and brought from the outside. Apprising the visitor of local ethnicity, an archetypal regional material palette of Stone Masonry and Sandstone floors has been adopted.





For most part, the local Rajasthani craftsmen and construction workers were employed to build in a manner rooted in the region and its landscape. Structural steel has been used as it is a long life span material, reducing dead load & thereby overall material consumption. The concrete consumption is insignificant for a building of this type and size.

Daylight ingress into the building is ensured in a manner that eliminates the use of artificial light during the day. Night lighting resonates that of an art gallery; all lighting is from the top with a hint of the sky, the jaali or the clear glass.



The overhang roof is used to bounce light from under the cottage and the overall intent is to efficiently orchestrate lighting in line with the running cables with no sharp rendering. Light from the west that is a dramatic, warm yellow, crafts an array of experiences in the different rooms, while bright southern light is used to bring in luminosity into interior spaces.

