

# home review

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Rs 75

## STROKES OF SYNCHRONICITY

Arup And Arup Associates

## FLIGHTS OF FANCY

Maziar Behrooz Architecture

## HIGHLAND HERITAGE

Zaha Hadid Architects

# Udaan

The Pursuit of Pleasure

+ Hermès Store | Ellinor Ericsson's TubeMe Chair | Dr. Art+Design | RUR Forum





**Just as nature abhors a vacuum, the Indian fashion scene biosphere demanded the presence of Hermès. The awe inspiration begins right with its name 'Air-mez' or 'Her-mees' – in fact both are right – the former is the French pronunciation and the latter the English one. Text By Mala Bajaj, Photographs Harshan Thomson, Roberto Frankenberg Courtesy Hermès**

► 'Spot-the-brand' has become a new sport for the yuppies of India now equipped with huge amounts of disposable incomes – it was then but natural for the high-end labels of the world to come and cash in on this scenario. Opened, as recently as the 20th of July 2011 to the public and situated at 'point zero' (from where the distance to the city is measured) in Mumbai





under the arches of the historic Horniman Circle, this European luxury brand is the first one to be located directly on the street. The French high fashion house of Hermès established in 1837, today specialises in leather, lifestyle accessories, perfumery, luxury goods, and ready-to-wear. Its logo, since the 1950s, is of a duc-carriage with horse and its proven exclusivity reigns supreme in the fashion arena right since its inception.

Talking about Hermès' foray into the Indian market, chief executive officer Patrick Thomas explains, "Artisan, creator of exceptional objects for more than 170 years, Hermès has long witnessed in India a deep understanding of its passion for the most beautiful of materials and excellence of savoir-faire." He promises the Indian patrons of a world in which the collections

of each of the 16 Hermès métiers will surprise and enchant.

Transiting from the street into the store interiors, one is instantly engulfed in a therapist r e c o m m e n d e d ambience; the store has been designed by RDAI, the Parisian architectural company founded by Rena Dumas and directed by Denis Montel; the same firm that wove its spell at the Rive ►

**THIS PAGE** The men's section showcases merchandise that is certain to not only enhance a wardrobe but also reshape identities.

**OPPOSITE PAGE TOP** One of the store's six windows visible from the street.

**BOTTOM** Mosaic, shelves that allow the merchandise to speak and a feeling of openness create a perfect backdrop.





Gauche Hermès store in Paris.

A high-end understated style comes together in an airy and open space; one is instantly compelled to talk in whispers whilst succumbing to the complete package of seduction.

Under the colonnade of the colonial building, the store's six windows are positioned atop Greek meander frieze patterns characteristic of Hermès and four illuminated logos discreetly signal the brand.

The eclectic brand's outlet is spread over two floors and has a number of connected rooms. Standing head and shoulders over other boutique interiors the spine of this space is composed of a sleek and unembellished white stone staircase that wraps itself around a transparent glass elevator shaft and links two levels.

Once past the entrance door a characteristic Hermès ex-libris design set into the mosaic on the floor in the most neutral of colour tones forms a discreet base for the interior design scheme.

The first room is devoted to silk, perfumes, jewelry and watches; its centre is delineated by a square of

white, grey and red mosaic embedded with the traditional 24 Faubourg motif. All around it randomly patterned mosaic, flows freely over the rest of the floor area.

Capture the magic in these white painted seductive rooms, furnished with low leather furniture designed by Rena Dumas, these areas allow you to interface with the heady merchandise, relax and escape to your subconscious thoughts. The various passageways afford tantalising views of the ties and leather bags located in adjoining rooms.

The Hermès story is retold on the Indian shores once again with as much passion and dedication that's required to build a marque as elegant and exclusive as it has always known to be. It's a story as exhilarating as the looks of its merchandise graced with the iconic H. ■



**THIS PAGE LEFT** The '24 Faubourg motif' finds a pride of place in the mosaic pattern on the ground floor. Nothing short of a consummate mastery in architectural design executed by the firm, RDAI Paris, is not only seen but experienced.

**RIGHT TOP** A scarf especially themed upon and designed for India; the bright colours and intricate detailing exemplify the artistry that spells Hermès.

**BOTTOM** Pierre Alexis Dumas, fifth generation Hermès and Artistic Designer of the brand.