

# better interiors

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IDEAS AND DESIGN FOR BETTER LIVING

## Soldering On

The Bar Stock Exchange touches down in Bengaluru with an outlet where army bunker meets grunge art courtesy The Orange Lane

### BEST BUYS

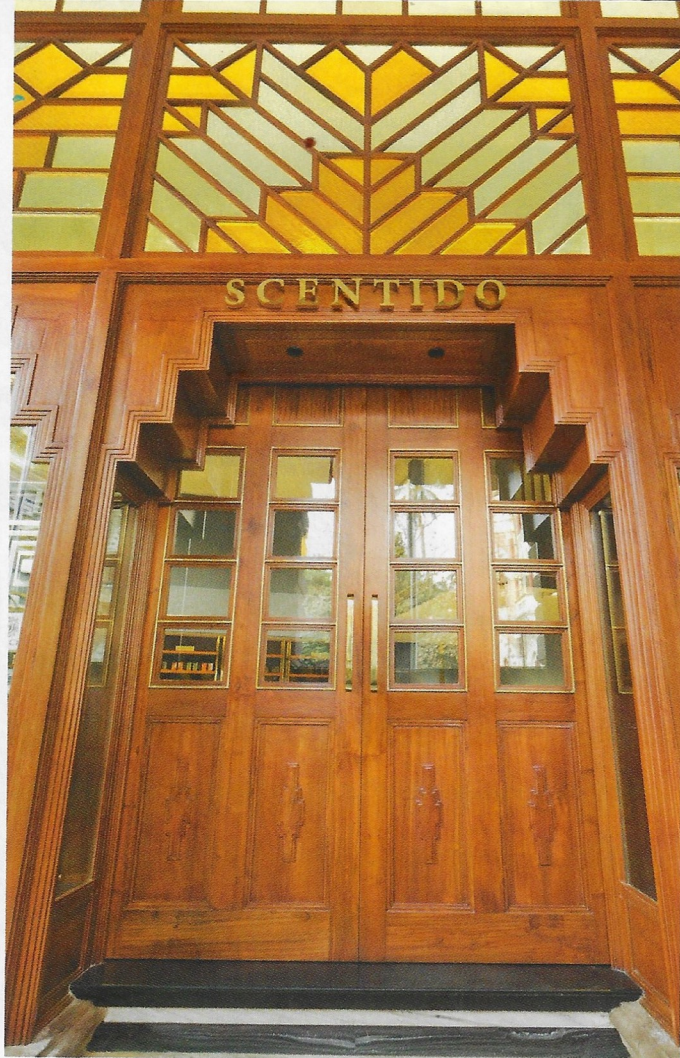
80 sanitaryware and fittings with the latest in design and technology for the modern bathroom

Also featuring: Exhibit D, Kavita Trivedi, MYVN Architecture, Patel-Vadodaria Design Research Studio and Zed Designs

Network 18



Off the Shelf



The Kermani building is a classic example of the Deco-Saracenic style, which amalgamated the clean geometrics of Art Deco with Indo-Islamic architectural features. Here, one gets a glimpse of the stunning stone facade accentuated by the wooden doors, window display and the stained glass work that was restored to its original glory.





# A Sensory Delight

Located in the heart of South Mumbai, Scentido, an experiential niche luxury fragrance store, boasts of Art Deco-inspired interiors realized by architect Kavita Trivedi as an ode to the iconic Kermani building where it is situated.

TEXT: ALIFIYA MEHAMDABADWALA; PHOTOGRAPHS: KUNAL BHATIA, COURTESY SCENTIDO

Whether it's the perfume your grandmother wore or the aroma of your mother's cooking, a scent can trigger the most vivid of memories. Acknowledging the power of scents, Shishir Mehta recently opened Scentido, a perfumery brand that offers an olfactory escape to places far and wide. The fragrances retailed here have been curated not from luxury departmental stores, but carefully picked from hidden boutiques and perfumeries from Europe and the USA. Even the packaging is beautifully thought out and complements the uniqueness of every bottle.

Shishir discovered his love for rare scents during his many travels around the world and wanted to share his passion with others. He settled on a 1,000 square-foot space in the beautiful historic Kermani building in Fort, Mumbai's business district. The space was completely dilapidated and would need an overhaul, a task for which he roped in architect Kavita Trivedi. Once the decrepit site was handed over to her, Kavita noticed that it was filled with partitions and false ceilings. Her aim, therefore, was to restore it to its original glory while infusing it with classic modernity. "The client wanted the boutique to be inspired by old European perfume houses," she informs.

Mumbai is famous for having one of the largest number of buildings constructed in the Art

Deco style — which further evolved into a unique form called Deco-Saracenic, which drew stylistic and decorative elements from native Indo-Islamic architecture — and of which the Kermani building is a fine example. Kavita therefore tried to amalgamate the nuances of this architectural style with those of English perfume houses.

As the partitions and panelling were removed, the magnificence of the space revealed itself with soaring ceilings embellished with beautiful cornices and stained glass. The architect found remnants of the original woodwork and plaster details and decided to revive them rather than introducing something new and alien.

A shade of blue inspired by old England has been used on the walls while the flooring is a bespoke tiled design that's a modern nod to the original Art Deco architecture of the structure. Art Deco chandeliers, display shelves with brass trimmings and colonial-era furniture accentuate the old world elegance. The monochromatic colour palette adds a cool element, working in harmony with the warm teak detailing of the doors, shelves and the spiral stairway.

The external stone facade had to undergo several washes to clean the grime that had accumulated over the years. Some of the wood detailing was visible in a few places, influences of which the architect used to rebuild the magnificent windows and doors. The stained glass that had been concealed behind



ARCHITECT

Kavita Trivedi



## Off the Shelf

This wonderful heightened ceiling, wooden doors and windows were initially hidden behind tacky partitions and false ceilings. Once the space was stripped down to the bone, it revealed its true beauty, which was further enhanced by laying custom-made Art Deco tiles on the floor, and highlighting the walls in an English blue.



**CONCEPT:** To design a perfume store that is as unique and classic as the fragrances that are available there.



The Art Deco-inspired setting lends gravitas to the store that holds scents hand-picked from century-old fragrance houses as well as distinctive new-comers.



The combination of the blue paint and the plaster on original stone is a poignant amalgamation of the old and new.





## Off the Shelf

This stunning and dramatic spiral staircase leads to the office area that has been created on the mezzanine.







**ABOVE** Display units have been erected on one side of the store with space in the centre free for movement. Each unit has been designed with brass trimmings to add a touch of glamour.

**LEFT** A close view of the display units that house some of the most exquisite scents from brands like Roja Parfums, Escentric Molecules, and Berdoues to name a few.

## MATERIALS

**Flooring** Custom-made ceramic tiles  
**Ceiling** Plaster  
**Walls** Plaster and original stone of the structure

panelling was also restored to its former glory piece by piece.

While the citrusy, woody, aquatic and floral notes that fill up the interiors of Scentido, from brands like Roja Parfums, Escentric Molecules and Ormonde Jayne from the UK; France's Berdoues, Jeroboam and Jovoy, Aedes De Venustas from New York; and Gabriella Chieffo from Italy amongst others engage the olfactory senses, the geometric-patterned flooring, clean blue walls and wood panels are a visual treat for anyone who walks into the store. It's a sensory overload of the welcome kind. **BI**

**FACT FILE:** **Project** Scentido  
**Location** Fort, Mumbai **Area** 1,000 sq ft  
**Principal architect** Kavita Trivedi