

Inspiring trends



Granted, architects have distinct personalities, but what do Paul and Tanuja Jacob have in common, other than friends who brought them together? A love for design? Or the creative process? Let's find out.

Paul Jacob grew up listening to business and architecture lingo. Tanuja Jacob grew up in an army home. He studied in REC, Trichy. She had her footprints across the country. He's a man of few words. She's spirited and finds words – sharp and smooth – at rapid-fire speed. So where's the common ground you ask? Both are trendsetters and believe in a contemporary look. And they call it Modarchs.

Remember those groovy SIFY cyber cafés? Thank Modarchs for it. And who knew that data centres – like those for Ashok Leyland and

VSNL— could spell complete elegance? “We do the full range — commercial/ residential buildings, resorts, and IT parks,” says Paul, who bought out the four-decades-old business in Kochi and branched out in Chennai.

Since then, with Tanuja doing the interiors, Modarchs has quietly been ‘subverting’ people’s ideas of homes, workplaces, schools, and gated communities. Theirs is an impressive portfolio of work. But it’s all low-key. “There are two ways to run this business,” Paul explains. “By volume, like a supermarket where you put your products



on a check-out counter; the turnover is large but without the architect’s signature. Or the boutique style where you accept as much as you can do. Modarchs, obviously, has gone the boutique route. “Work can’t be delegated beyond a point, and experience counts,” adds Paul.

With the construction boom and a mature industry, Paul believes that there is money, awareness, and exposure. “Designers are called in to dress up homes, shops, and spas. IT pros sit



New Year, new focus

A New Year brings new challenges, new opportunities, and new ideas. And it's critical to reassess your objectives and strategies to keep pace with the changing nature of the world.

Here we are at the beginning of 2011 and I am sure that you have made New Year resolutions to become healthier, wealthier, and generally happier individuals. Even as we follow this ritual, I believe that the dawn of a new year is akin to pressing the refresh button.

So, while you renew your zest and refresh your spirit, we bring you some interesting reading material. You've heard of parmesan and mozzarella cheeses, but what about a vegan cheese? Millie Mitra dishes out cheese spreads made from cashew nuts and soyabean, and they're just as creamy and delicious!

While cheese caters to your taste buds, here's something to tickle your olfactory system. A whiff of 2011 showcases the most expensive perfumes — Clive Christian's Imperial Majesty pegged at \$215,000 is sure to take your breath away!

Also meet Paul and Tanuja Jacob, the architect-designer duo from Chennai. They have perpetuated, refined, and combined distinctive and typical trends in their designs.

There is a lot more in store... just turn the pages.

Cheers!



Shiraz Ibrahim
Managing Director



in well-designed offices and want their specific needs answered in their homes and villas. A significant shift from architects working for large corporates alone," says Paul.

So is it a rosy time for architects now? Paul moderates that view. "Education hasn't caught up with demand. There is a cloud over the quality of students. Most have poor communication skills and cannot articulate their thought process in the design," he rues. "Architecture is creativity expressed through a product. Architects are made, artists are born," he adds.

So, what can one look for in a Modarchs design? "The best services," says Paul. "Aesthetically, we go into great detail. We promote eco-solutions and are hopeful about emerging technology and new materials." Tanuja ticks off her list, "Functional, clear in detail, and compliance with building standards."

And here's something more that Paul and Tanuja have in common — strong work ethics. "There are shared projects, but when Paul addresses an area, I don't have to re-look at it," says Tanuja. They may do the elevation together, get the team on the same page, but Paul doesn't interfere with the interiors. "If you've collected art or old furniture, Tanuja will find the right space for it, and give you an eclectic mix of Indian-ness with a contemporary touch," says Paul.

For Paul and Tanuja, it's not about square footage, but about creating memorable spaces. "We look for quality projects, client goodwill, and a healthy work-life balance," signs off Tanuja as she turns her attention to creating spaces that inspire people to appreciate beauty.