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The sweet escape

Perched on the lip of a valley, this Panchgani bungalow by HS Designs is an enticing holiday retreat

Above The approach to this Panchgani farmhouse conceals the sunken storey that lies tucked into the natural slope of the land, making it appear as a single-storey structure from the road.

Facing page A dynamic selection of wall art decks the walls of this house. Seen here is a monochrome wall hanging that tactfully offsets the bright blue of the furniture.

Following page A decorative screen provides an air of privacy between the main entrance and the living room.

"In city apartments we work on proven and tested lines, and this was an opportunity to do something different," says Hitesh Shahanand of HS Designs. The project in question is a holiday home in Panchgani that enjoys beautiful valley views to its east.

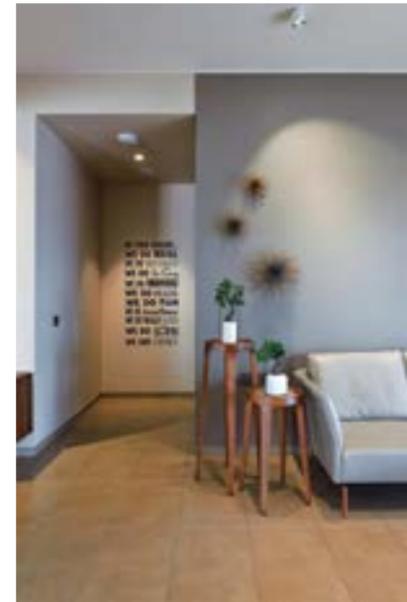
The home is a 4,600 sq ft structure spread over two storeys. Given that the site was situated on a sloping patch of land, the firm chose to create a sunken structure, giving it the appearance of being a single-storey structure from the approach road. "First we visited the land. Then, we went through several

different layouts before we decided on the final structure," says Shahanand.

The site threw up some further issues for the architects. "Being located in a valley-facing plot meant that there would be a lot of wind pressure and moisture during the monsoons," reflects Shahanand. By installing weather-blinds, the house was protected from the elements and forces of wear-and-tear.

Beyond grappling with the site conditions, the firm was given a free reign over the interior design. "Our client's only requirement was no extra furniture was





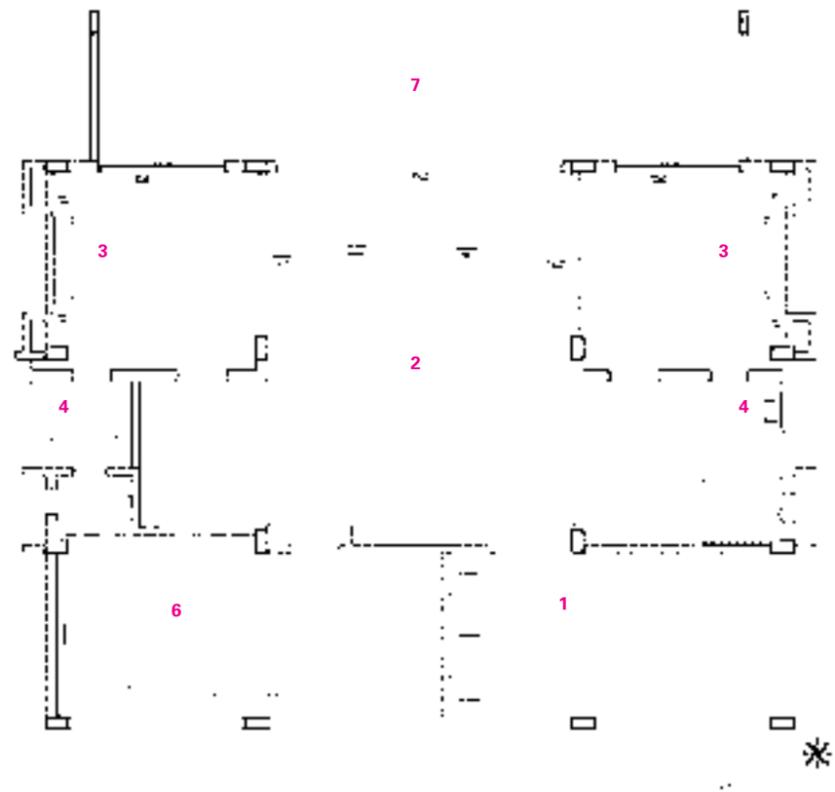
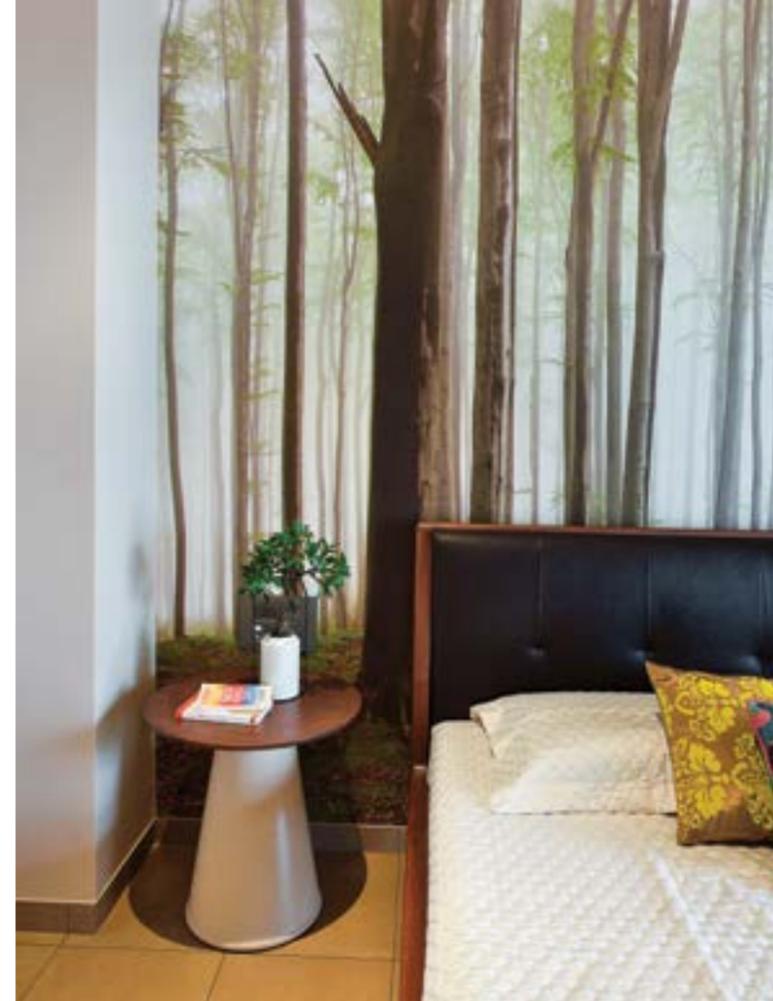
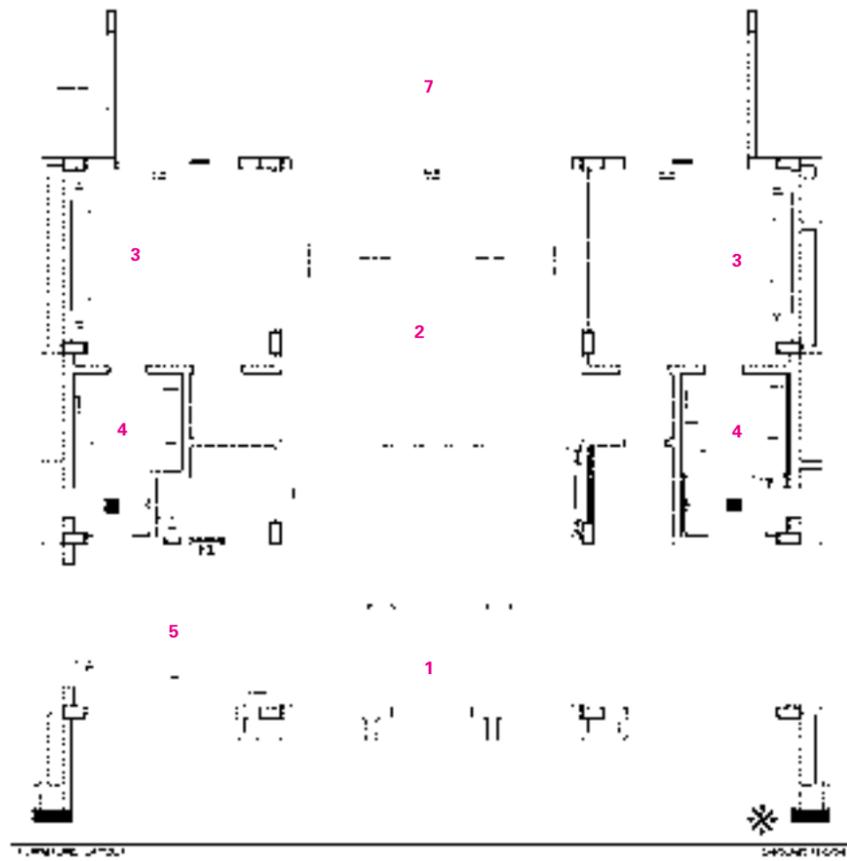
to clutter the interior. We had to create our aesthetic while avoiding making the space look too crowded,” says Shahanand. “We created a mood-board that suited our client’s taste and ended up with a colour palette of natural tones, like white, beige and green. Also, we prominently used wood to further the natural theme,” he adds.

One enters the home on the upper storey. The main doors lead into a lobby space created by the placement of a decorative hand-painted screen made from MS and wood, whose perforations offer glimpses into the spaces within the house. The upper



Above left and above The furniture for the house was sourced from a variety of places. As the designers had a free reign in selection, it resulted in a unified aesthetic for the collection.

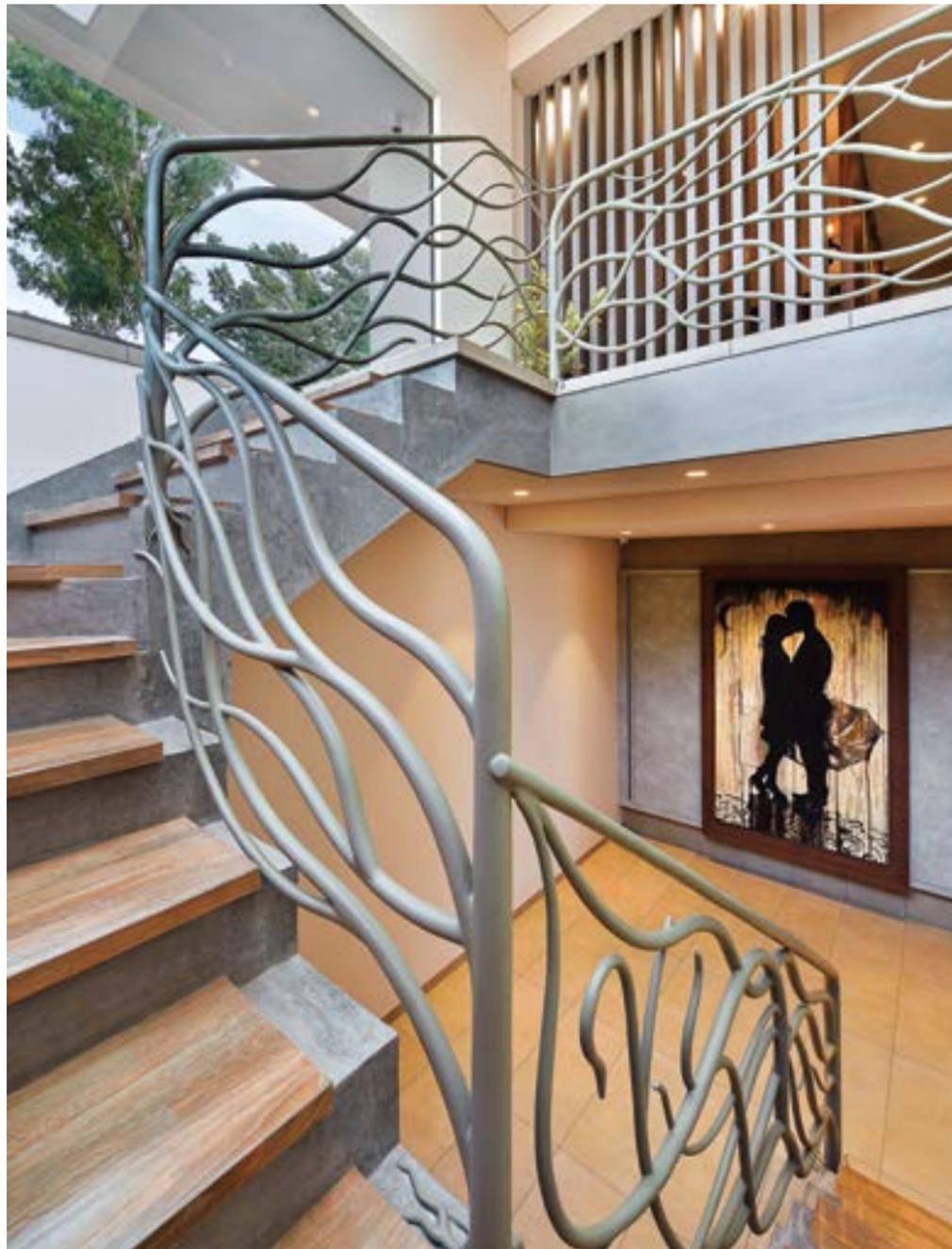
Left The kitchen is tucked into a corner on the entrance level of the house and enjoys views of the large front lawns.



Legend 1 Lobby 2 Living and dining areas
3 Bedrooms 4 Bathrooms 5 Kitchen 6 Home
Theatre 7 Verandahs

Facing page top left and top right The bedrooms have nature-inspired backdrops which were painted on-site by the in-house art team while the bathrooms continue the theme with their natural tones.

Facing page bottom left and bottom right The verandah has a cut-out on its right side to let views of the valley in, while a decorative jaali screens the left side for privacy's sake.



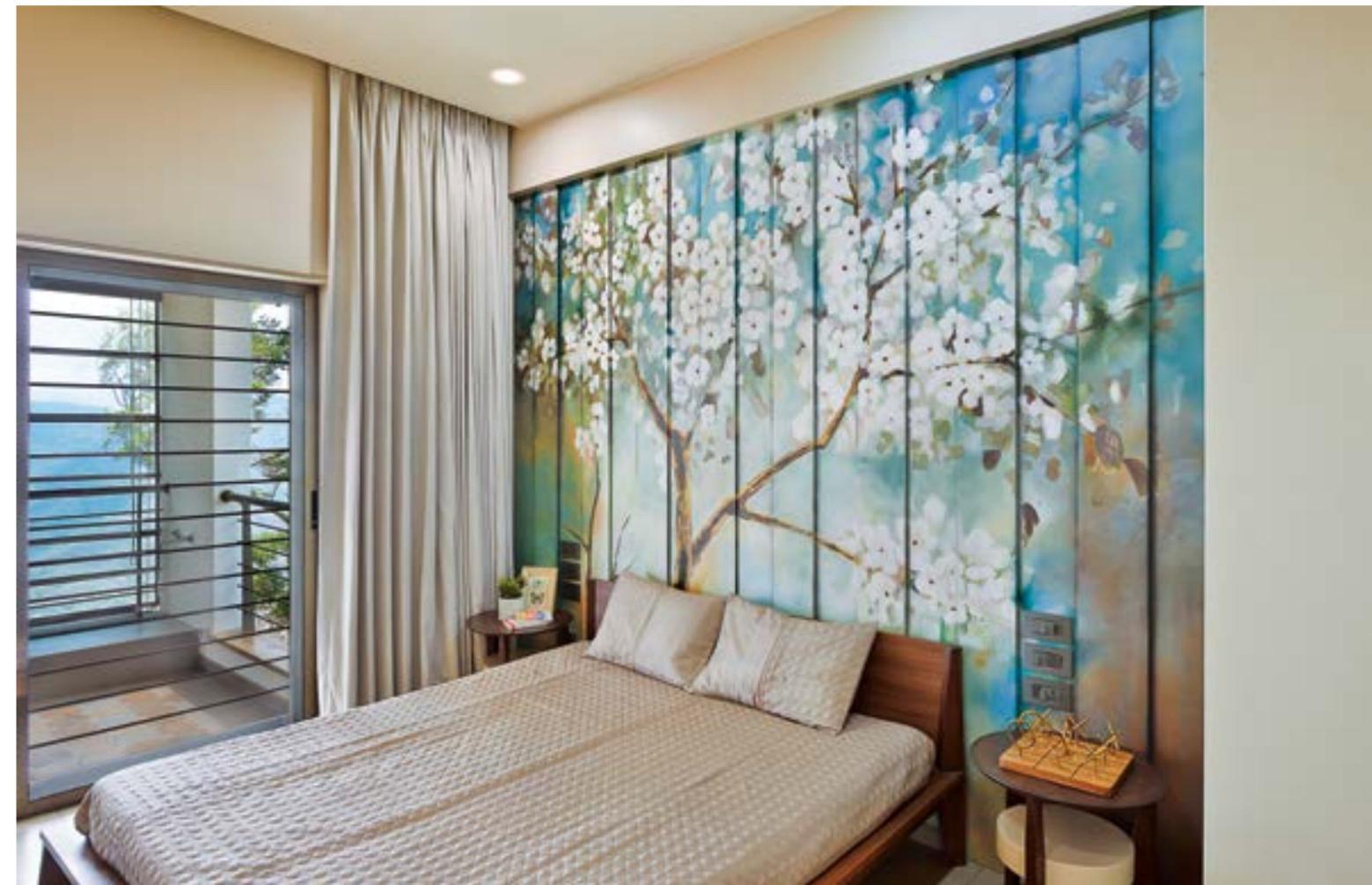
Above right The staircase banister was custom-made from MS, and the designer worked closely with the fabricator to create its organic form.

Right Situated behind the storage area, the home theatre boasts a collection of imported lounge furniture.

Facing page top left and top right Avoiding cluttering the space with too much furniture, the designers worked on creating attractive corners and placing the select few pieces within them.

floor houses the family spaces, such as the bedrooms and dining rooms. The lower floor is the social hub of the home. The spaces for recreation and entertaining guests, such as the back lawns overlooking the valley and the home theatre, are all situated on this level. A staircase leading from the entrance lobby connects the two floors.

This holiday home represented an opportunity to break away from the mould and try new things for the firm. By exploiting the natural features of the plot and creating a unified aesthetic, HS Designs gave this holiday home a character of its own. ■





Interior designer Hitesh Shahanand (Principal), Rakesh Adivarekar (Associate)
Lighting consultant Lyle Lopez
Lighting supplier Maroo Lights.
Furniture (sourced) Defurn
Accessories (sourced) Defurn
Home theater system and automation Inicio automation

Story by Dushyant Shekhawat
Photography by Ravindra Kanade

Preceding page bottom The bedrooms are situated towards the back end of the house, which faces west for the stunning valley views lying to the west.

These pages A 700 sq ft lawn abuts the backside of the house on the lower level, providing the perfect place for outdoor evening get-togethers.