

A Taste of Life

By weaving together influences from the Silk Road and epic literature, Mosh Interior creates a stunning waterfront home that celebrates the owners' heritage and their passion for art and antiques



In the home of Dr Lavan Iswaran and his wife, Indra Iswaran, a palpable sense of history and heritage are closely intertwined. It is a magic mix achieved with the help of Mosh Interior, the design firm they enlisted to transform their apartment in Singapore's Corals at Keppel Bay condominium into a stunning sanctuary that is also wholly representative of the couple's passion for the arts.

Comprising two adjacent units, the home already boasted many admirable qualities. But moving the couple's acquisitions from a courtyard house in Bukit Timah to an apartment still required a careful curation of art and furnishings, so that the interior feels characterful, yet well considered. With her keen eye for design and architecture, Indra had a good idea of how she wanted their home to be, but still

Above: The home has a spacious dining area in lieu of a living room, which the designers elevated with wooden details on the ceiling

Opposite page, from top: The couple's favourite artworks include historical photos of South India's courtesan clan; these well-laid-out cupboards house tools and crockery; the antique doors were sourced from a temple



needed the right designer to elicit a nuanced and thoughtful spatial design. She was less keen on a contemporary look, especially as she wanted her and her husband's collection of antiques and family heirlooms to take the spotlight.

Indra had chanced upon the work of Shermaine Maena Ong of Mosh Interior while searching for decor inspiration online, and was won over by the firm's meticulous approach. After receiving the brief, Ong was just as quickly taken by the couple's extensive collection of furnishings and artistic collectibles, and met the intricacies of this project with equal parts gumption and determination.

"Mrs Iswaran had a clear vision of how she wanted her house to be, and my job was to bring that to life. We were tasked to bring as many cultural artefacts, wood carvings, and furniture into the new home as possible," shares Ong.

ON THE MENU

Even before the renovation and design process began, Indra knew that antique doors would make a grand statement when installed in the foyer, and convinced Ong and her team to help bring her vision to life. The ornate wooden doors, formerly installed in a temple, now



grace the foyer of the Iswarans' four-bedroom apartment, and are among the most outstanding features of the home.

Also in the foyer, Mosh Interior installed a folding door with cremone bolts and brass hardware, creating an elegant addition to the space that does not detract from the wooden centrepiece. This door opens up to the sight of the grand dining room, which Indra describes as "the seat of culinary hospitality and the nucleus point of social gatherings".

"Camaraderie, great conversations and cuisine are forged on this grand table for 10 guests. The narratives are memories of the past over the delicious food of the region

and of my traditional roots," shares the homeowner.

As a chef and award-winning author, Indra is ever the consummate host, so naturally the dining area has become the heart of the home. It is also where she organises meals for her private-dining initiative, Plantation Table. This room is dedicated to the ancient epic poem, *Ramayana*—the wall panels that narrate the love story of King Rama and his wife, Sita were among the masterpieces brought over from the old home.

The ceiling was specially made bespoke by Mosh Interior to meld elements of the couple's antique woodwork from their previous house with this new abode. Much



attention was also lavished on the custom-made dining table, which was designed by Ong to feature geometric motifs that echo the details on the ceiling.

The table's faceted legs also bring to mind the architectural form of the pillars in traditional Hindu temples. These are paired with dining chairs and armchairs dressed in coral-themed upholstery from German brand Jab Anstoetz, personally selected by Indra in tribute to the seaside location of the home.

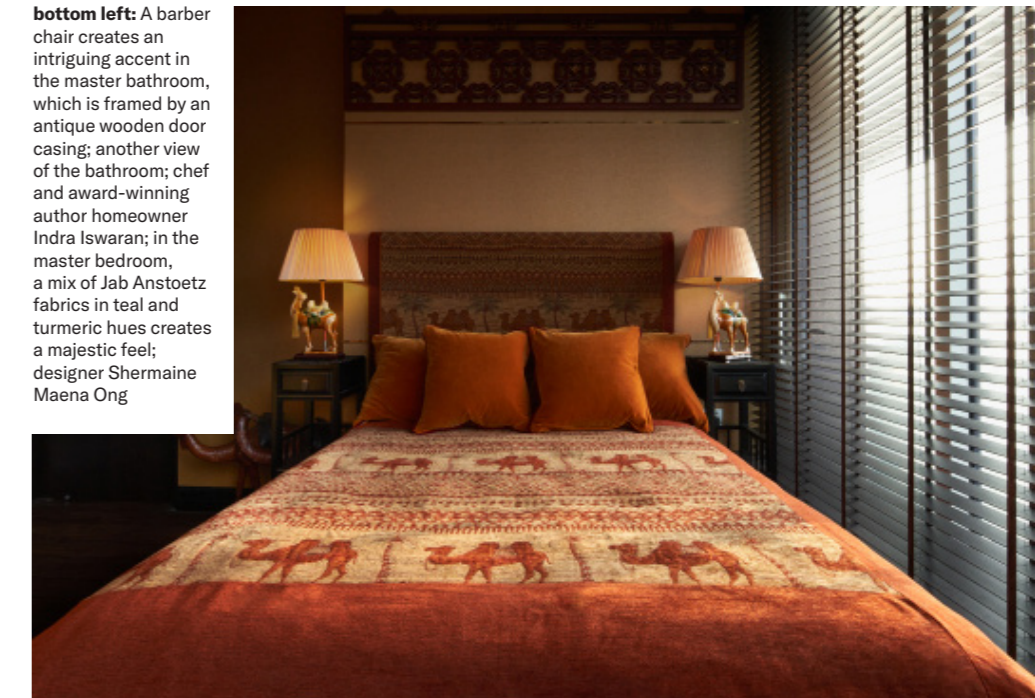
Keeping Indra's passion for the culinary arts in mind, Ong and her team took as much care in designing the kitchen, which was tailored to fit the necessary requirements for hosting the private dinners. They selected South Indian wooden horse brackets and corbels to adorn the pantry counter. The kitchen counters and island are clad in a beautiful Cristallo quartzite from Brazil, which features burnished gold veins and white crystals.

HEART AND SOUL

The culturally rich narrative continues in the bedrooms, which include the couple's master suite and guest rooms for visiting family and friends. The master bedroom is a sumptuous space that reflects the couple's impeccable taste, and is dressed in the Mughal-themed Destinesia wallcovering from Jab Anstoetz Indra had handpicked.



This spread, clockwise from bottom left: A barber chair creates an intriguing accent in the master bathroom, which is framed by an antique wooden door casing; another view of the bathroom; chef and award-winning author homeowner Indra Iswaran; in the master bedroom, a mix of Jab Anstoetz fabrics in teal and turmeric hues creates a majestic feel; designer Shermaine Maena Ong



It accentuates her collection of marble-inlay pieces, which include antique Chola-style horse brackets from India; these are paired with various accent pieces as well as furnishings in rich tones of teal blue and turmeric yellow. Here, European-style candelabras, Chinese-style solid wood furnishings and an antique South Indian chaise longue also keep the look eclectic.

In contrast, the master bathroom takes on a more understated look, and is framed by an antique wooden door casing from the couple's previous house. The wicker vanity, and a charming black-and-white tiled floor, keep the bathroom design elegant and classic. An antique barber chair adds a playful touch to this space.

Altogether, the completed interior is both enchanting to behold and a joy to live in. It is the perfect canvas for a colourful life, representing the couple's personal history and passions in a tasteful manner while turning an apartment into a home that is now their cherished sanctuary.

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MOSH INTERIOR

Backed by decades of experience, founder Shermaine Maena Ong of Mosh Interior has the passion, grit and drive to create beautiful homes that convey the unique nuances needed for each brief and site. Together, she and her team have designed a wide range of apartments and houses around Singapore, as well as a selection of elegant workspaces in the city-state.

