

beaming **Harika**, who plays hostess. After completing her higher studies in Mass Communications. Harika decided to move into teaching. Not very keen on standard teaching, Harika opted to train in the Montessori method. After nine months of training, she knew this would be her chosen profession, and now teaches at the Cremon Divine School. We then meet the rest of the family. Harika's father, **Rajesh**, handles the family's industrial electrical products business, and mother **Pramila** is a homemaker. The couple, whose family is based in Delhi, moved to Hyderabad over 20 years ago, where Rajesh decided to branch out the business. We also meet the son of the family, **Raja**, who joined his dad in the business. **Rajeev** and **Sangeeta**, Harika's relatives from the capital city, were in Hyderabad when we dropped in, so we were happy to meet them, too.

Designed with the help of the interior designer couple Riyaz Quereshi and his wife Siman, the bungalow took almost a year to be completed. The house was built with detailed planning, and the three floors all convey a comfortable sense of space and fluidity. We first take a look at the ground floor. **Rajesh**, not too keen on the contemporary and modern, preferred to keep the interiors simple, with a dash of traditionalism. Walking through



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Among the Palms!



Soothing colours and indoor plants greet us as the step inside

Every family speaks lovingly of their own home, not just because of the memories they've shared in it, but because of the care and effort they put into getting it just right. The family watches their home grow step by step, from the dreams they have when they first imagined it, to seeing it in all its glorious reality. This is exactly how the Jains, who we visit this week, look at their special space.

Our visit to the Jain house took us a little away from the city, but as we neared the gated community of Palm Meadows in the outer part of Secunderabad, it was easy to see why the Jains wanted to move here. The roads get wider, the traffic thins out and, as the name suggests, the colony is full of tall green trees... and palms! The driveway takes us to a beautiful row of houses and we finally reach the Jain house, which has a soothing green entrance. As we walk through the huge black gates, a well-manicured front lawn greets us. Potted shrubs define the borders that hug the surrounding walls, and blooming flowers are lined up along the exterior of the main structure of the house. With such a well-planned outdoor space, we figured we'd be in for a treat when we stepped inside, and we were right.

A black-and-white porch takes the visitor to the wooden door, and out comes a

Rajesh and Pramila Jain with children Raja and Harika and relatives Rajeev and Sangeeta



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the entrance, the first room we come across is the living area. Divided into two sections, this area combines a formal area to entertain visitors with another section which is more of a family room. No wall or barrier separates these two sections; instead, a water body naturally splits the area into two clear segments. "When one walks in here, we wanted to create a long and complete view of the house," says Rajesh. "A wall would have broken the flow; so we decided not to have one."

With white flooring and walls in similar tones, the grey furniture in this part of the living room is effective without creating a harsh contrast. Trinkets are kept to a minimum, enhancing the uncluttered look. We move into the next section, traversing a small wooden board placed over the flowing water, which provides a touch of whimsy. Above this little waterfall are a few potted plants which add to that natural touch. Here, the patterned flooring balances the undertones of the brown furniture and is definitely the eye catcher. Dark panels above the seating, along with the complementing wooden cabinet holding various artefacts establish the right contrast. Glass candle holders and a little palm in a glass container give the room that extra elegance. The Jains definitely believe in minimalism, and allow the beautiful interiors to grab the attention.

The ground floor consists of the lounge area, family room, a master bedroom occupied by Rajesh and Pramila, the kitchen and dining area. The eight-seater dining table, made from mother-of-pearl, beige leather seats and dark wooden frames are remarkable. They would be stars in most homes, but here they serve as the supporting cast to the real star of the Jain home's decor. Suspended over two floors is a beautiful crystal chandelier that makes entertaining guests over dinner a meal to remember. Harika

explains, "This is one feature of which we are intensely proud. To get the chandelier passing through the top two floors and highlighting this area on the ground floor took months of planning and executing. But if it stands today as the most unique part of our home, it is all thanks to dad, who patiently got everything to work around it with the designer and masons." On a jovial note, she adds that in all the 320 villas in the colony, no one else can boast of anything similar.

The first floor is occupied by three bedrooms, one each for Harika and Raja, and the third used for overnight guests. The second floor is devoted to a huge entertainment room, with gadgets that would bring joy to the heart of any movie buff.

But this outdoor-loving family's clear favourite is the front lawn. Equipped with comfortable lawn chairs and an umbrella that shields

them from the morning rays, the family loves to sit around here, enjoy both their breakfast and evening cuppa. Rajesh, with his green thumb, has ensured that the garden stays in bloom in all seasons. So fond of gardening that the backyard has been converted into a little kitchen garden, and he proudly tells us that the family sources their produce quite often!

When you visit the Jain home, it is easy to feel the warmth it exudes. Combined with charisma, it reflects the Jain's vibrant personality. This home is supposed to be a special place which represents everything that makes its family unique, the Jains have built for themselves the perfect home, and we're glad to have had the chance to take it in. They've definitely made sure their unique signature is evident all around! - Pallavi



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