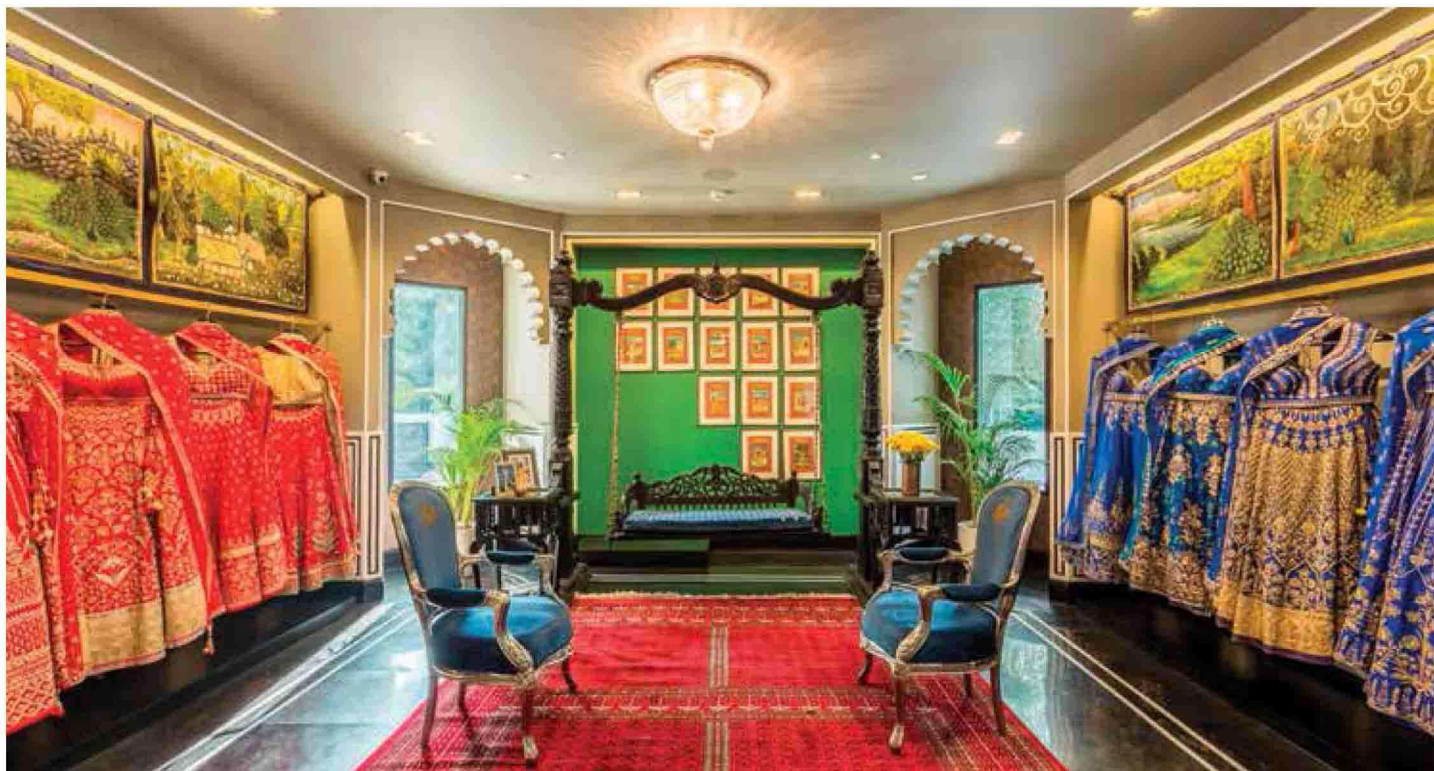


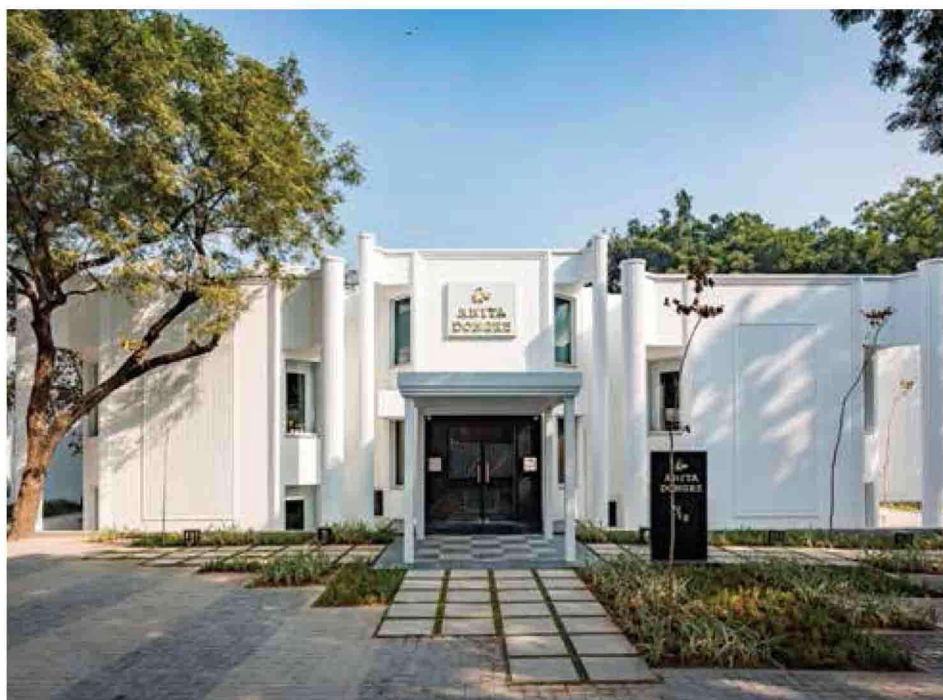
Quiet Elegance

Anita Dongre's new flagship store sprawling over 10,000 sq ft at Delhi's Qutub is the designer's ode to her Rajasthani childhood connect. The ostentatious haveli makes you forget whether you are at a store or at some majestic expedition. VM&RD chose the latter!



Designer Anita Dongre has a very deep-rooted connect to Rajasthan that comes from spending a substantive period of her childhood in Jaipur at her grandparents haveli (house). The design thus seeks to recreate spatial patterns of the architecture of Rajasthan, (a region that influences Anita's work too significantly), transporting the visitor to the bygone era and regal splendor of a stately haveli. The store is spread across two floors. Like old Indian homes, the rooms of the Haveli meander into one another without any formal delineation - a progression of spaces akin to a home, with many rooms and passages intermingling.

The store at Qutub is in an ASI (Archeological Survey of India)-protected bungalow within the Qutub Garden Estate. As the building comes under the purview of the ASI it could not be re-modelled externally and was retained in its original state, which





surprisingly went along with the idea of the design too.

The space takes shape with the various architectural elements that define Rajasthan – arches, jallis, nooks & corners, niches & alcoves. The alcoves which in earlier days were built in with storage serves to hold the various stories or collections. Like in havelis of yore, a strong spatial geometry and planning around various axes heightens the spatial experience with drama and perspective. The architectural elements that make up the space maybe traditional in nature - they are however distilled down to their minimal modern outline devoid of any ornamentation.

Additionally, the store is peppered with various Indian miniature paintings, water colours of Rajasthan artists, a collection of old brass pots and boxes and some old bronzes. An antique palkhi takes prominence in the ladies bridal section while the men's section has a snooker table throw in to keep boredom away whilst shopping with the ladies. The furniture is a mix of colonial reproductions and bespoke handcrafted furniture from Rajasthan. Custom made block printed fabric is extensively used throughout to clad walls within the store as well as inside the trial rooms while the restroom has handmade blue pottery tiles of Jaipur.

The focus of the store is however undeniably the thirty hand made pichwai style paintings that adorn every room with each room owning for itself one animal subject. "So, we have the peacock, the deer, the bird, the flamingo, the horse, the elephant and the tiger represented in all their glory," Kutar added. Simple classic handcrafted furniture



Speaking about the store design, Percy Kutar of 4.4 Design says, "Everything in the design strives to achieve an ambience – not of opulence but of quiet elegance. The materiality follows in the same vein shunning any ostentation. Various craft forms specially commissioned for the store propagate Anita's belief in lending patronage to Indian crafts persons. Polished black lime stone floors with white Udaipur marble inlay, walls in Indian custom made block printed fabrics, sandstone jallis, the quintessentially Rajasthani Tikri work, the famous blue pottery craft of Jaipur, and wall painting are extensively used throughout the Haveli."

with inlay and white metal are interspaced with bespoke colonial furniture upholstered in custom designed embroidered fabrics lend to the ambience of quiet luxury and complete the brand story.●

Satarupa Chakraborty

Lighting consultant :

Ms Suman Aggarwal

General Interior contractor:

KDM Enterprises

Electrical contractor:

Om krishna Prajapati

Lights:

Decon Lights

Furniture:

Metro Furniture, Just A Glance, Indian Arts, National art

Blue pottery:

Neerja International