



View showing resort on the site.

# Aearth Resort

Drawing inspiration from the local architecture of Manali, the Aearth Resort, by M:OFA Studios, flaunts a geomorphic design, the idea being to blend with natural topography without intruding into ecological micro-systems.

*Text compiled by: Shalmali Wagle*  
*Images: courtesy M:OFA Studios*

Cradled in a coppice of deodar trees, looking out into the stunning Himalayan peaks, the Aearth Resort by M:OFA Studios is envisioned as a boutique art resort in Naggar, a quaint little village in the Kullu District. Located at an altitude of 1760 meters above mean sea level, the highly-contoured site is windswept throughout the year with extreme winter temperatures. The concept draws inspiration from the local architecture of Manali with its use of slate walls, pine wood windows and sloping roofs. The project is divided in two parts; the cottages designed as biomorphic pods emulating ant hills on a slope; and the main resort building striking a balance with traditional architecture with an origami roof unfolding over it.

The resort will offer six cottages, a main building and an amphitheater among other amenities. The main building will comprise of a reception lounge, a restaurant, a spa and an art gallery with a bar and will be



Cottages developed as biomorphic pods.



View from the cottages.



Development of the resort on site.

green-roof panels, each cottage appears to emerge from the hill as a manipulation of the grass-covered slopes. Skylights will allow natural light into the construction during winters, washing the white interiors with sufficient light and helping passive solar gains.

The cottages are shaped out from steel frames that will rest upon the concrete slabs placed at various locations. This framework will be covered with glass and concrete. Construction materials and joineries have been detailed to employ recycled or renewable materials wherever possible. The roofs of the cottages are a hybrid; partially glass and partially green in a triangulated fashion with natural green growth over the walls. Local species of vegetation will be used on the green roofs and walls so that the entire resort acts as a part to the landscape itself. The spa will be carved out under the cottages.

The art gallery, restaurant, lounge and reception are clubbed together to form a single block wrapped around by a steel and glass structure with a triangulated grid. The open areas are intended to be soft paved where ever possible. The project is under construction on site and it is projected to see its completion by April 2013.

constructed around the existing trees on site conspicuously carving an entrance between the existing clusters. The reception block at the entrance level, with its folded roof and a transparent façade, will provide clear unobstructed views of the panorama outside.

The idea of the design is to blend in with natural topography without intruding into ongoing ecological micro-systems. A geomorphic design, every cottage unit within the resort is conceived as a cocoon growing sporadically from the land, as an anthill connected in parts, and not as individual components competing for attention. With the use of triangulated folded plate system and a calculated balance of sky-lit and

**FACT FILE:**

Project	:	Aearth Resort
Location	:	Naggar, Manali (H.P.)
Client	:	Ms. Palak Singh
Architect	:	M:OFA Studios Pvt Ltd
Design team	:	Manish Gulati (Principal Architect), Tanushree Gulati (Principal Planner), Abhinav Chaudhary, Abhishek Sorampuri, Priyanka Mahajan
Project Area	:	950 sqm
Structural Consultants	:	ROARK Consulting Engineers