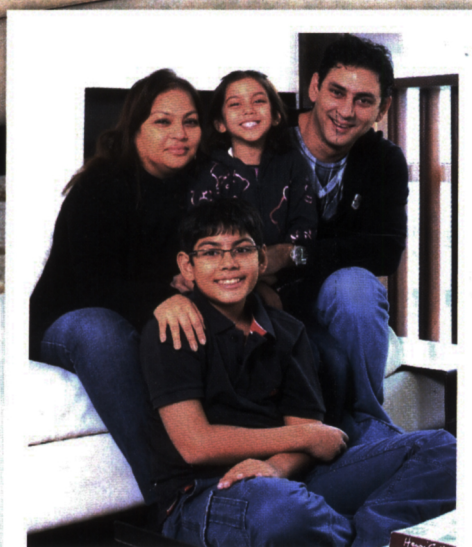


# Sinuous & stylish

The Mehra's penthouse in Noida is a beautiful confluence of the elements

FEATURE SHIBANI BAWA PHOTOGRAPHS ANSHUMAN SEN



## House fact file

**Owners** Aman and Bina Mehra, their kids Aahan and Shanaya

**Property** Penthouse

**Location** Noida

**Area** 6,500 square feet

**Architect** Manish Gulati

This certainly is a first for me... a home exhibiting fluid architecture! The floors rising up and falling, the walls curving to blend one space with another, as if responding to the ever-changing energy fields of the people who live here. It's almost as if this two-level penthouse is an organism on its own, providing warmth and comfort to the family that it houses.

Although the family that inhabits this home comprises Aman Mehra, his wife, two children and his parents, Aman decided to take it upon himself to have this home created exactly the way he wanted, keeping in mind everybody's individual requirements. I am surprised when he says that during the two-odd ▶

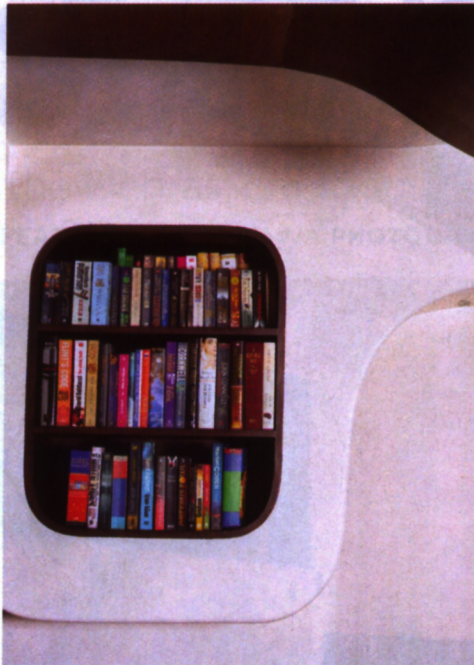
## ▲ Laid-back lounge

The space for this lounge on the upper floor was created by covering half of the double ceiling. This is where the family hangs out in the evenings. Natural light pours in through the day and coupled with pristine white furniture, it makes for a very cheery lounge.

## ▶ Funky bar

The bar area is separated from the living room by a huge bark of a tree. In keeping with the contemporary look, Manish sourced the funky paintings from Mumbai. The mirror on the ceiling accentuates the fluidity of the design.





### ▲ Elegant bookshelf

Aman is very fond of reading, and even though he hardly gets an hour in a day to catch up on reading, there are plenty of bookshelves in various corners of the house, stacked with his favourite tomes.



### ▲ Swanky living room

There's a lot of stone used in this room, right from the walls to the flooring. This leather couch is from Casa Paradox and the coffee table is made with etched granite.



years when the apartment was being built, nobody from his family visited the site: the end result was meant as a surprise for them! "My wife and parents were only too happy to leave it up to me to get this house made almost from scratch," he affirms. With hectic work schedules in their export business, Aman's father and wife were rather relieved when he offered to take the time out to do it.

Having moved to Noida from Mumbai about 10 years ago, the family initially stayed in a rented home. When this

complex (The Forest) was launched by Omaxe, these Mumbaikars were thrilled with the idea of moving in to a building, especially to a penthouse that offered plenty of space and an exclusive terrace with a splash pool. Although the builders were providing furnished apartments (wardrobes, bathrooms, etc), Aman chose to take just the shell, with only the walls built. In the meanwhile, he shortlisted an architect-cum-interiors designer, Manish Gulati of M:OFA Studios (Manifestations of Fluid Architecture). Clearly very happy with his choice,

## ◀ Funky dining area

The double ceiling in the dining area allowed the Mehras to have this red ribbon going all the way from the entrance till the upper floor. The dining table was custom-made by pasting foil on top of solid wood.

## ▼ Dreamy kids' room

One is again reminded about the fluidity in the architecture of this home as you enter the kids' room. With the custom-designed beds and computer table, we can only imagine Aahan and Shanaya having a blast in this room. Needless to say, the upper 'berth' is Aahan's and the lower one is for Shanaya. But despite the kids sharing the room, it is kept extremely neat!

Aman shares how easy Manish made everything for him in creating this home the way it looks today. Being of similar age and having similar sensibilities helped greatly. The primary brief that he gave his architect was that he wanted his home to be young and comfortable... in look and feel. Manish, in turn, made the construction as fluid as possible, giving him plenty of options to choose from, right from the flooring and types of wood to paintings and artefacts. It's a matter of pride that most of the furniture, fittings and artefacts have been sourced or created in New Delhi. Manish even got quite a bit of the furniture custom-made.

The family is clearly very happy with the end result. "After a hectic day at work, one wants to come back to a home that is soothing and where one can calm one's nerves," explains Aman. And relaxing it is.

The soft curves in the walls almost cast a calming spell on you while you're within this apartment. Not being restricted to the walls or the floors, the curves have been taken a notch further. From the long curvy dining table to a similar-shaped bed for the kids, albeit in two levels, fluidity permeates every aspect of this home.

As we walk through the house, I realise that it's not only a predominance of the water element. Another thing that's subtly common all through the apartment are the huge pieces of wood in various nooks. In extremely exotic shapes and sizes, these unsculpted and untouched barks of trees bring in the element of earth. Then there are pebbles lining the floor near the entrance or in the study. In all this design, I'm surprised how well aesthetics and ergonomics meet. The double ceiling in the dining area was reduced to half, making ▶



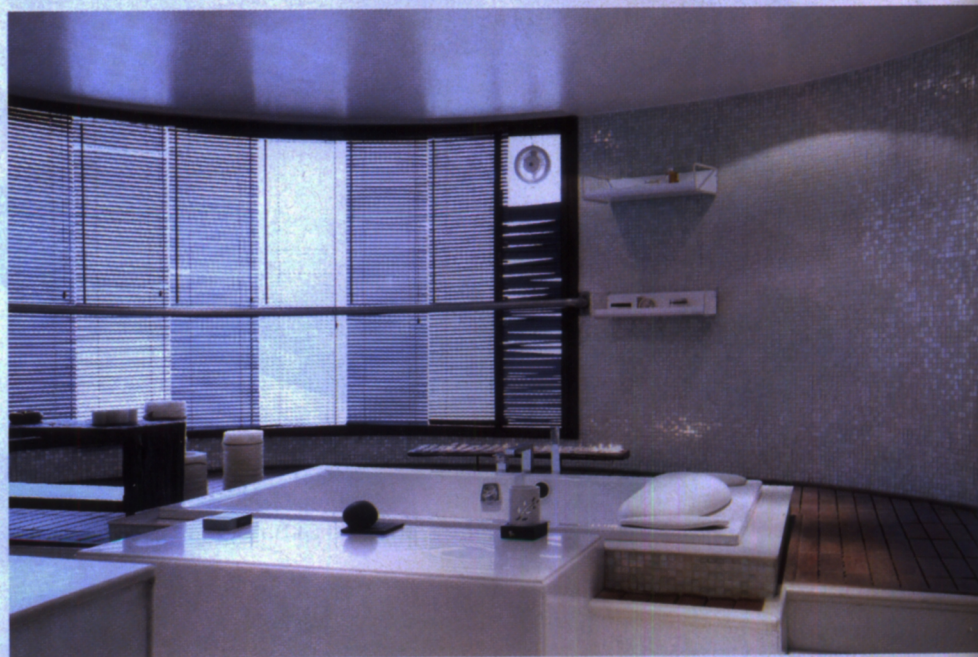


▲ Massive master bedroom

The master bedroom is huge, to say the least. With a separate sitting area that is visible behind the bed, it gives the couple enough space (literally) to unwind after a hectic work day. And just in case you think that those are lamps on the bedside tables, look again! These are table fans!

► Luxe bathroom

Doing complete justice to the size of the master bedroom, the bathroom is fitted with double sinks, a Jacuzzi, a standing shower cubicle and a sauna. The wooden-planked flooring leading to the tub looks like a part of a spa. And Aman admits that this is actually his favourite corner in the house! Doesn't come as too much of a surprise, does it?





### ▲ Posh terrace

The terrace of this penthouse is breathtaking. Overlooking a lot of open space, it is ideal for having pool parties with a splash pool, a barbecue area, a bar and a kitchenette and cosy seating around a fireplace. Its a perfect space for entertaining guests, and that the family loves to do so, is quite obvious by this elegant space. Aman says proudly that evenings do real justice to this area when the lights are on. Even if they don't have any guests, the family still loves spending a lot of time here.

space to create a little lounge on the upper level as well. And the two levels have been merged with a bright red, 25-metre-long winding 'ribbon' that goes all the way from the entrance till above the dining table, at eye level with the upper lounge. Looking back, Aman states that creating this ribbon was probably the most gruelling part of the entire finishing process.

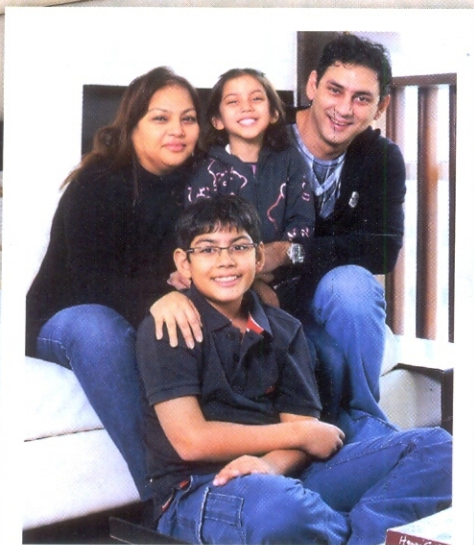
With four bedrooms and a rooftop, this penthouse offers enough space for the family. The lower floor has a formal living room with a bar, a dining room, huge kitchen, informal lounge, a little

mandir in the lobby, Aman's father's study and his parents' bedroom. The upper floor has Aman and his wife's master bedroom, the kids' room and a guest bedroom. The rooftop, with its splash pool, a bar with a little kitchenette, a barbecue area and a seating with a fireplace, gives the family a cosy space to enjoy spectacular views. With a lot of close and careful attention to detail, and a concerted effort to retain a beautiful, effortless flow, Aman and Bina have succeeded in creating a versatile pad that adjusts itself according to the family's moods. **GH**

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