



INTERIOR DESIGN TRENDS IN INDIA

A research compilation
2009

!nsight i nstore™

RETAIL
HOSPITALITY
COMMERCIAL

CONTENTS

Trends - Definition & Introduction	1
History & Tradition of Interior design in India	2 - 4
An Introduction to the Interior design industry	5
Current scenario in India	6 - 13
Leading Interior designers	14 -17
Trends - An Overview	18
Retail Trends & Examples	19 -24
Significance	25
Hospitality Trends & Examples	26 -31
Significance	32
Office Trends & Examples	33 -38
Significance	39
Analysis & Conclusions	40 -46
About us	47



TRENDS

AN INTRODUCTION



Before we start with this report on Interior design trends in India, let's look at what trends are, or are supposed to mean.

Trends are a manifestation of new enablers unlocking existing human needs.

Human needs are constantly changing with time. Some core needs remain constant throughout where as others evolve in alignment with external variables. Some trends remain, only modifying themselves

along the way whereas others disappear making way for newer manifestations.

Global events give rise to global trends. Local cultures are impacted by local events that shape local trends. Any which way one looks at it, trends are fluid in terms of their dynamics and most certainly affect all kinds of businesses.

"I never predict. I just look out of the window and see what is visible – but not yet seen."

- Peter Drucker

This is certainly a great thought on "predicting" the future. Businesses don't really have to predict things. Knowing the future is not really possible. It is not exactly given to us.

The point is, however, to better see and understand today's landscape in order to be successful in the future. This report from Insight Instore aims to achieve that.

HISTORY AND TRADITION OF INTERIOR DESIGN IN INDIA



Interior Design is, in essence, a part of a larger discipline that is Architecture. Both Interior Design and Architecture are the act of designing within either a building or a space and have been adopted to differentiate the unique foci of work of the interior environment. However, it wasn't until the late 1980's that Interior Design was recognised as a discipline separate from Architecture in India. The historical aspect of Interior Design is almost incomplete without a reference to the grand Architecture that the nation fashioned.

From the times of the Rajahs and till today, Indian arts and crafts have embellished plush luxurious homes around the world. Traditionally, the luxury of a designed space was enjoyed only by the affluent in India since it was only the rich who could afford to use expensive materials and hire craftsmen. This is established in the many palatial buildings that India is home to.

On the other hand, the lower income groups worked with what nature provided and created wonders in the least available. They created marvellous structures which mark the resourceful and energy efficient approach of the majority of Indians. India's rich culture, diversity and heritage have left us with a wonderful architectural legacy whether its mud houses in Rajasthan, sloping roofs in Konkan or the Tanku houses



with wind catchers in Khambat.

Post Independence, a new India was formed. Poverty stricken, India's growth had stagnated at a GDP of 3.5%. India maintained this GDP for almost the next 40 years, until the economic liberalisation in 1991. The economic reforms brought about, changed the face of India by exposing it to the open market, giving way to new avenues in the design fields.

Until then Indians themselves never truly explored the potential of design in the interior sector. Traditionally, Indian interiors are driven by a pure utilitarian motive. Functionality is of prime importance. Simplistic in its style, the interior design of an average house would often consist of stone or mosaic flooring, painted walls, colonial furniture handed down for generations and local arts and crafts adorning the walls.

Over the years, architects took on the responsibility of furnishing a space and designed every aspect that went to its conception – from the furniture to the art work to the tapestries. However, this level of comfort, amenities and beauty, were restricted to spaces belonging to the rich.

Over the last decade, urban India has grown leaps and bounds, from the failing third world country it once was. India is now one of the world's largest democracies and its continuous growth despite the global meltdown has put money into the hands of the middle class youth, who are now living a lifestyle their parents had only dreamed of. A well planned, professionally designed space is now well within their grasp and its being reflected in the growing industry of Interior design.



AN INTRODUCTION TO THE INTERIOR DESIGN INDUSTRY

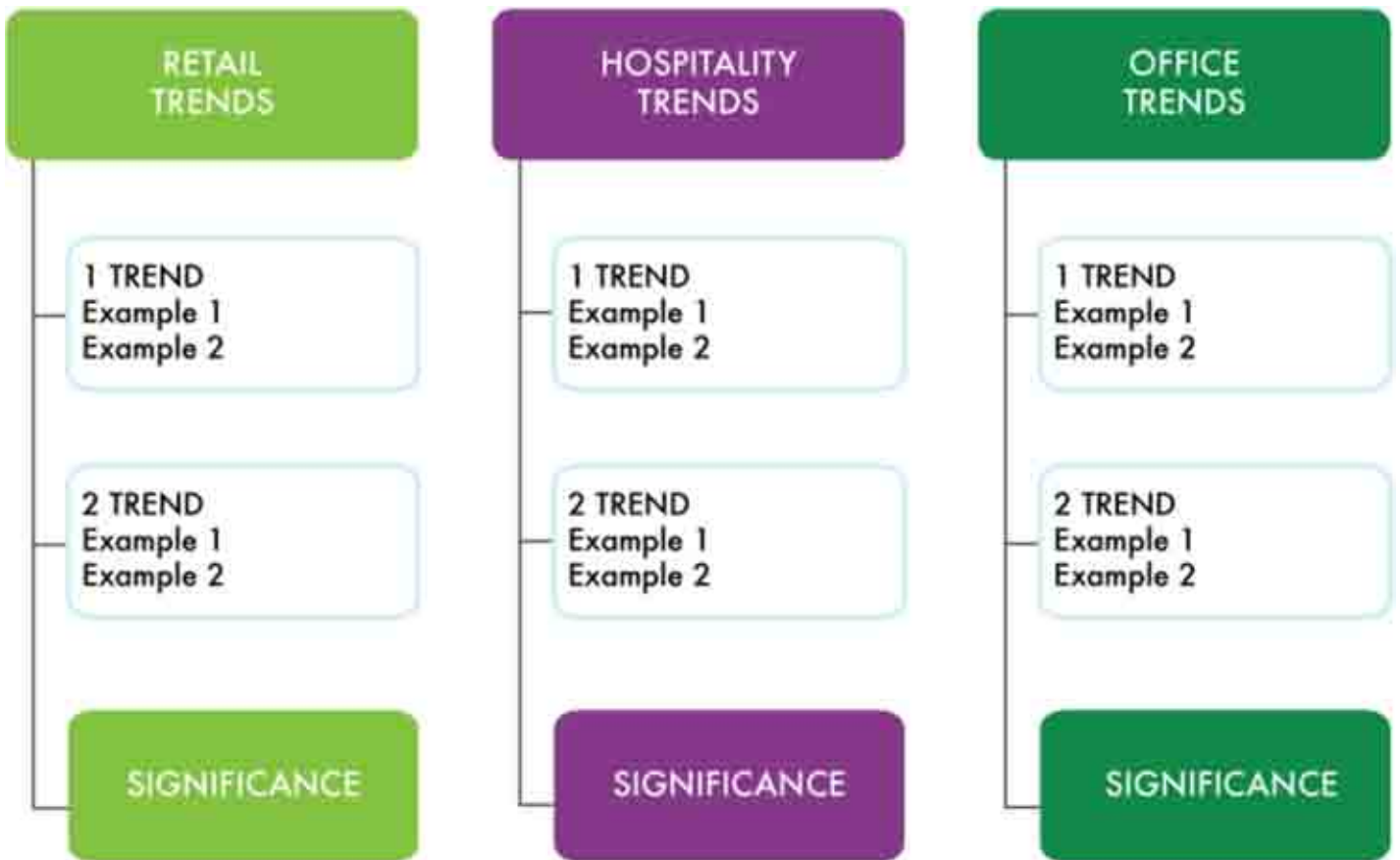


Interior Design, as a separate specialised design discipline, is a relatively new field in India. It has now been recognised as a profession different from decorators and architects dominating the field for historic reasons. Today, Interior design in India has come a long way. It has gained autonomy from Architecture and is not just reduced to decoration and furnishings anymore. Interior Design sees space as a living environment and is a holistic resolution of the socio-cultural, emotional and resource conditions of the context it represents.

In the context of design, 'Interiors' refers to any space within an enclosed structure that is inhabitable and human centred. These spaces include residences, offices, institutions, schools, hospitals, theatres, restaurants, hotels and resorts, airports and the like. This context also spills onto the structures' extensions such as porches, entrances, swimming pools, landscaped areas, decks, patios etc.

The scope is so diverse in today's times that the aspects of Interior Design encompass all those contexts and more. This has led to Interior Design's fragmentation into a variety of specialised micro-disciplines such as Residential Design, Office Design, Retail and Commercial Design, and Hospitality Design. In this report, we focus on trends in the Residential sector.

TRENDS IN INTERIOR DESIGN



INTERACTIVE SPACES

RETAIL
TREND 1

Interaction design is an emerging trend in the retail design sector. Interaction design is creating a new and unique experience for the consumer by exploring ways of enhancing interaction with other individuals, products and the environment by blending traditional design techniques, an understanding of human behaviour and modern technology.

This trend is an important development in the retail sector in understanding the psychology of the customer as well as being abreast with the latest technology.

One can experience this interaction in various stores such as Levi's Rivet in Bangalore where a 34 feet long Heritage wall has been created and a second store in Mumbai which has been described here.

INTERACTIVE SPACES

EXAMPLE 1 - LEVI'S RIVET STORE, BANGALORE

RETAIL
TREND 1

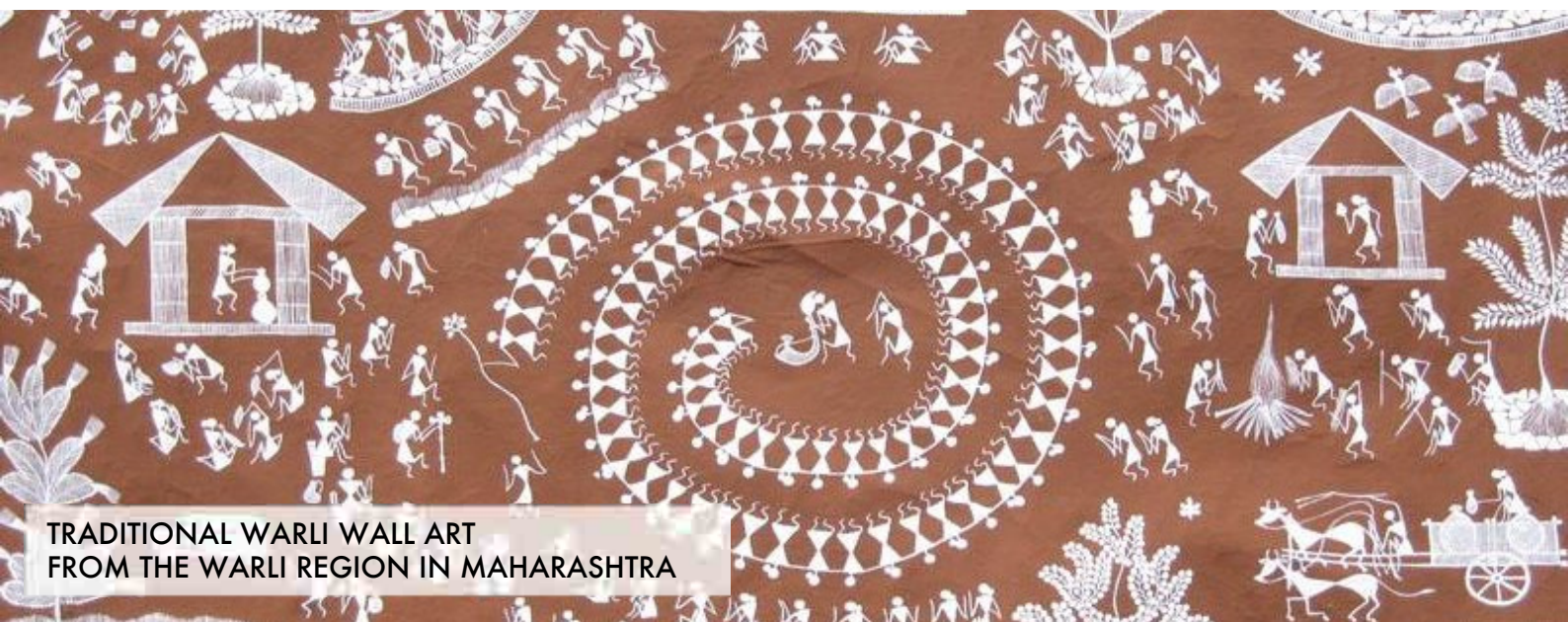
The mandate of the Levi's Rivet at Bangalore was to create a sense of "premium-ness" and edginess and build a sense of mystery. Levi's has a long history and heritage and that had to be obvious to every customer. The brand did this by using a combination of classical and cutting edge technologies.

The awareness of the brand's heritage value was created by applying interaction design through tactile surfaces. This allows the customer to interact with the store and create experiences while being educated about the brand. The Store front is constructed of 8000 copper rods and 16000 buttons from the denim, that slide in a giant perforated wall creating 3D patterns. This encourages the customer to dabble with the entire facade, in turn forming niches framing products on the rear of the wall, which is inside the store.

Rajesh Dahiya, founder of Co-Design created the installation. Dahiya specialises in interaction design, an emerging tool that is catching the fancy of retailers these days.

INTERIOR DESIGN TRENDS ANALYSIS & CONCLUSIONS

Trends in India are many, given the diversity factor. Add to India's rich and varied cultural heritage, the new wave of progressive development in both urban and rural areas, and diversity deepens. In the past, each region had its own distinct characteristic elements. Although even today, places have their own design language, the 'genius loci' or the spirit of the place has undergone minor to massive changes. While some old features continue to exist, some others have reinvented themselves in the light of development, while still others have merged with influences from other quarters, with the world becoming a much smaller place. Given the current day scenario, it is indeed difficult to fit all the trends signifying India into a few pages. In realizing that, we chose a path, where we scanned the most prominent trends in a few sectors. These trends are more depictive of the Indian urban lifestyle and of course, are not free from influences of rural elements. What we have done in compiling these trends is to give a bird's eye view of interior design in the urban scenarios, some of which have a deep yet new cultural significance and others that are highly relevant to fast-paced global India.



TRADITIONAL WARLI WALL ART
FROM THE WARLI REGION IN MAHARASHTRA

In conclusion, like an iceberg, design has a deeper invisible portion than just the small portion that one can see above the surface. Design has a deeper meaning and responsibility than the superfluous trends that come and go.

One must define intentions, explore options and eventually create compositions that can take design to a new level. This can result in judgements that create innovations, and implement, promote and nurture concepts, that can build a foundation of good and deep design.

Today, design comes under the umbrella of “Social Sustainability”. Here, there is a commitment to universal design over design being just about the individual and it also looks to include many aspects of design that work to improve quality of life globally. This movement addresses the issues of sensitivity and diversity and brings socially responsibility to everything that is designed.

Indian design needs to advance at a faster pace, to constantly evolve in tune with global demands and expectations. All design decisions have environmental, social and ethical impacts and so there is a pressing need to provide guidelines for designers and design students within an overall framework, that takes a holistic approach to socially responsible design. Indian design is now coming of age and possesses the promise of responsible design.

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ABOUT US

Insight Instore is a trend research and retail shopper marketing consultancy. We study trends and shoppers. We see the shop as our laboratory. Our aim is to create impact instore, through insight and innovation.

Our areas of work include shopper research and instore consulting, design consulting, trend research and forecasting.

Our solutions are driven by a combination of various skills and disciplines, coming together on a vibrant and receptive platform. Research forms the basis of our consulting work. Consulting for us does not stop at developing a strategy, but extends to helping our clients to execute and evaluate the strategy. We also use this entire experience for trend research and forecasting.

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