

WHEN GOD IS IN THE DETAILS

Bonanza for the visiting pilgrim: Marasa Sarovar Premiere hotel, designed by Shimul Javeri Kadri, is a piece of heaven on earth that consciously symbolises the ten avatars of Lord Vishnu

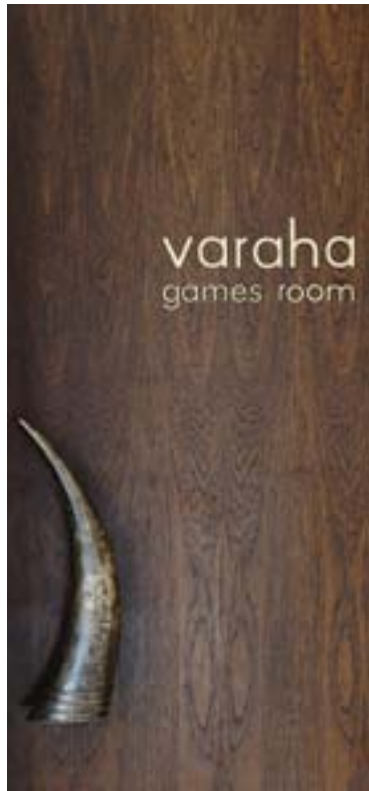
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A central water body forms the design core of this hotel, both spatially and experientially. Within this floats the all-day dining space The Lotus Cafe, imagined as an inverted flower in the pond and characterised by its multi-faceted concrete roof with a brass finial over it. An airy, open walkway abuts this water body and connects the hotel's public areas with its suites. The guest block painted in black and gold, subtly stands against the beautiful Saptagiri (the seven hills)

GETAWAY TIRUPATI



Clockwise, from Top Left On a wall at the reception, brass dhokra artworks made by bastar artists through Baaya Design, symbolise the ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu; At the same area on the ceiling, a bevelled glass and brass chandelier represents Kurma; Fresh tuberoses accentuate the heavenly decor; Inside a guest room: The sofa, in purple chenille, is flanked by beaten brass and fabric lamps; The bed's headboard is in grained teak, inlaid with brass strips. Furnishings pay an ode to temple borders of Mangalgiri fabrics; Pendant light with lotus-like jali pattern



“OUR DESIGN EMBODIES THE CLASSICAL INTROVERTED HINDU TEMPLE PLAN”

Clockwise, from Top Left Krishna's distinctive characteristics come through on the 30 feet long wall in the namesake thali restaurant with Holi inspired coloured pots painted by artist Deven Bane and the deep blue stucco wall with brass signage; Three artistic dhokra handles on teak doors, fit with the hotel's theme perfectly: Fish (Matsya), tortoise shell (Kurma) and bow (Rama); The teak grain finished service station with brass cutwork grasp inspired by lotus motifs from Banarasi fabrics; Another door clasp, taking the shape of a boar's tusk (Varaha)



GETAWAY TIRUPATI



Ensconced near the seven hills of Tirupati, Marasa Sarovar Premiere hotel is an homage to Lord Venkateswara, deity of Tirumala, by invoking his 10 incarnations (the Dasavatara of Lord Vishnu) through the decor of its various spaces: Matsya, Kurma, Varaha, Narasimha, Vamana, Parashurama, Rama, Krishna, Buddha and Kalki. The new four-star is a far cry from the typical fare devotees reside in. The focal point is the all day eatery Lotus Cafe with its inverted blossom roof (the flower is the symbol of Vishnu), atop high glass walls set amid a shallow water body, imparting a tranquil vibe. Simple luxury, modern conveniences, multi-cuisine restaurants, spa and activity centres offer much needed R&R after hours spent in long queues for *darshan* at any of the city's renowned temples. Customised craft and handlooms are used extensively as accessories. The handles are largely dhokra (a traditional metal art form from North India), bed covers are in local Mangalgi fabric, while metal bidri plates adorn the walls of each floor.

“Our design embodies the classical introverted Hindu temple plan,” explains Shimul Javeri Kadri, the hotel’s architect and interior designer based in Mumbai. “My clients wanted a model that could be duplicated at other religious centres; but I feel each region and temple has distinct traditions and rituals, so a one-size-fits-all concept would not work.” Depicting the various forms of Vishnu graphically and through linear symbolism, like the glass pendant lamps at the reception replicating the pattern of the tortoise shell (Kurma), or the peacock motif wallpaper, flute burst illuminators and predominant blue of the specialty restaurant (Krishna), Shimul has achieved a highly stylised lodging with a strong sense of design. ♦

The ELLE DECOR team travelled to Tirupati courtesy Marasa Sarovar Premiere, Upadyaya Nagar, Karakambadi Road, Tirupati 07. Inquiries: (0) 8772282001

Clockwise, from Top Left The banquet hall entrance: A natural stone wall serves as the backdrop for Rama’s black treated brass bow; The gym is named after Parasurama, who uses his physical strength to vanquish evil. The axe (his weapon) was crafted using dhokra techniques; Brass framed sepia photographs of a bodhi leaf and lotus, both associated with Vishnu, hang on a wall in a guest room; Bidri plates by artist Heemanshu Ashar adorn partitions on every lobby floor Right A custom pendant light with radiating flutes integrated with LEDs. In the background, bespoke wallpaper in a colourful play of Krishna’s ornament, the peacock feather

