

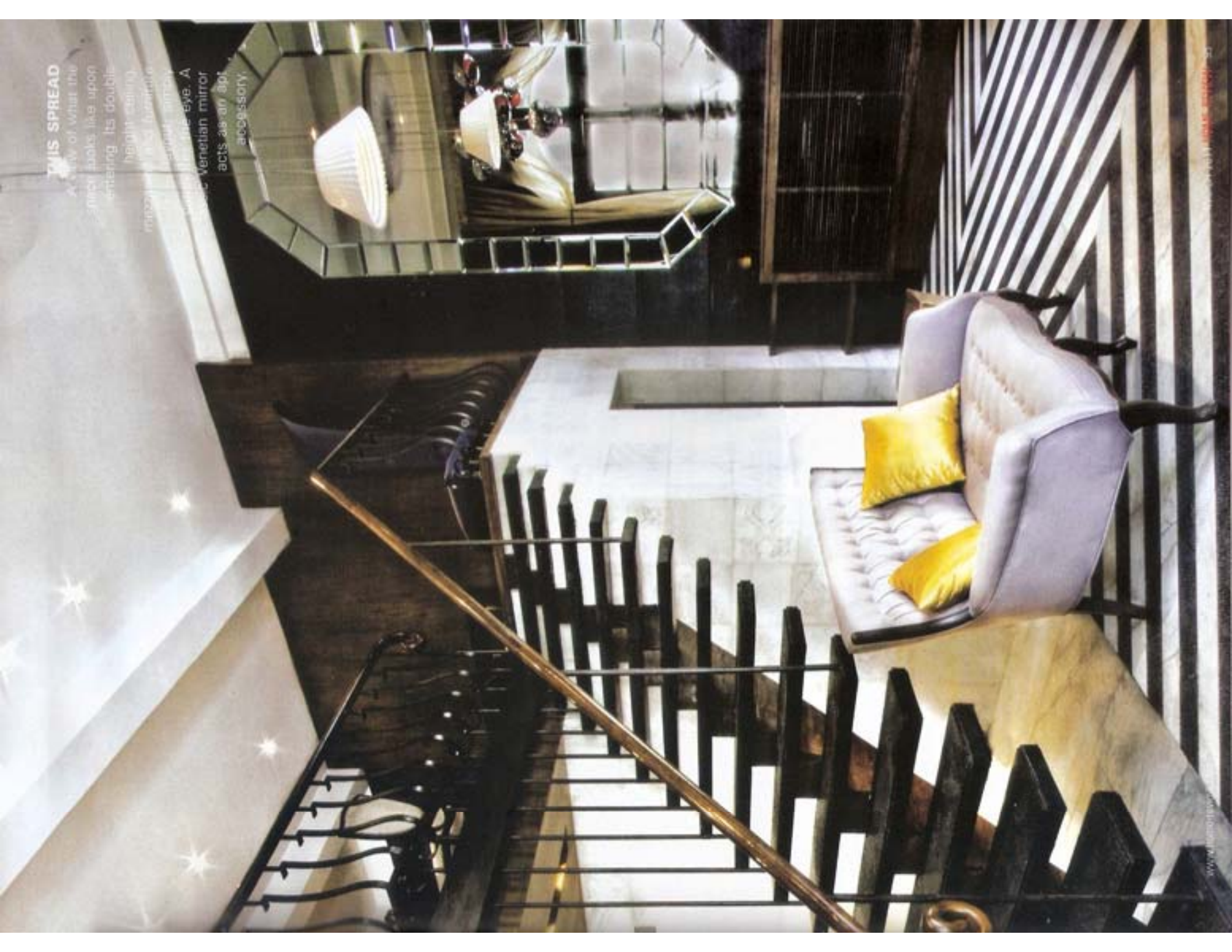
# IN CONVERSATION AT THE TABLE

"The Table," a restaurant in South Mumbai, designed by New York-based architect-designer Tarik Currimbhoy and executed by his Mumbai-based associate architectural partner Pallavi Choksi.

TEXT BY PRIYA MADHAVDAS • PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANITA CHOKSI • TESTY THE TABLE

**TWIS SPREAD**

A view of what the  
space looks like upon  
entering. Its double  
height ceiling,  
masonry and travertine  
floor, and mirror  
panels create a  
Venetian mirror  
effect. A Venetian mirror  
acts as an apt  
accessory.





#### OPPOSITE PAGE

A perspective of the cross-cut, Burma teak wood finished community table, located under the mezzanine. Dining tables seating four, tucked into the arched shaped French windows, enjoy a splendid view of the outside

"We believe architecture is an art form, we create sculpted spaces that are timeless. Our spaces are tranquil, simple and tactile, expressed with a purity of form and material," states New York-based architect and designer Tarik Currimbhoy, heading Currimbhoy Architecture and Design Pvt. Ltd.

His philosophy stands well-articulated in the newly opened restaurant "The Table," designed by him. Located in South Mumbai, the 1800 sq. ft. space occupies the ground floor corner of an old Victorian building. Its exterior is punctured with seven huge 12 ft. arched-shaped French windows that wrap-around the ground plus mezzanine interior space.

Tarik informs, "The space used to be an Irani restaurant." Originally its mezzanine bordered all four walls; revealing an access point in the centre. Unfortunately, the double-height interior was restricted to 8ft at the entrance, the arched-shaped French windows projected disrupted views; and the overall look

felt dark, dingy and claustrophobic.

Tarik and his Mumbai-based team partnered by designer Pallavi Choksi, adroitly replaced the existing mezzanine with a cantilevered one that changed the space's topography. Enconced in a corner, it now runs along the wall opposite the entrance and part of a side wall. A 15 ft. high ceiling comes into focus upon entering; owing which an instant connection with the space is established. Also, the restored arch-shaped French windows yield uninterrupted views; and a tall, glass-finished door built-in one marks the entrance.

The mezzanine location lends the ground level an L-shaped, relaxed living room ambience. One side displays informal dining seating tucked into window arches; and a community table accentuated by elegant pendant lights hanging from the double-height ceiling. The other exhibits a funky chandelier, enhancing the formal lounge-type seating also placed by the window arches.

The seating arrangements overlook the parallel ▶



**THIS PAGE TOP**

A tall glass finished door built into one of the arches defines the entrance to the restaurant. A 15 ft. high ceiling greets one upon entering, leaving one mesmerized by the space's scale.

**BOTTOM** "The Table" occupies the ground floor corner of an old Victorian building, running parallel to the paved colonnade and road outside.



paved colonnade and road; bringing a feel of the outdoors into the space. The French windows filter in lots of natural light; minimising the need for artificial lighting during daytime.

A gamut of natural, handcrafted materials adorn the space. Its yellow sandstone exterior seamlessly continues onto the interior wall as black kadappa stone. The arched window framework artistically matches the stone joints of the external and internal walls. Matt gold silk curtains dress the windows from inside; softening their encompassing stark black kadappa stone background. Tarik says, "We focused on creating a classical space evoking Victorian Mumbai; devoid of any other style affectations."

Banswara white and black kadappa stone defines the carpet like floor in a chevron pattern at the ground level. The floor's silky sheen lies in its unique hand chiselled, buffed quality. A white painted ceiling brightens the space; and its visible beams render the status of false ceilings minimal.

The cantilevered mezzanine carries Burma teak wood on its top and bottom planes. Its top flaunts the main dining area; and a cushioned banquet seating aligns a wall padded in deep purple leather. Its bottom holds light fittings concealed in slits, which evenly highlight the community table below.

The mezzanine edge is slanted upwards; to give it a light, floating persona. A decorative M.S. railing coated



#### THIS PAGE

A breathtaking overall view of the space; complete with the community table, informal dining seating with shield-back chairs, the cantilevered staircase leading to the mezzanine and a funky silver and red chandelier.

#### OPPOSITE PAGE

The deep purple, padded suede wall running along one side of the restaurant is continuous with the seating on that side; its cushioniness may be experienced visually by those seated across

in antique finished paint; sporting a Burma teak wood hand rail lines it. Its railing is aesthetically designed to depict musical notes resembling old Mumbai balconies. It connects to hold the hand chiselled black kadappa stone treads of the suspended staircase at the side. The staircase rests on a central beam that emphasises its weightless, see-through disposition. A high-backed chair in deep purple leather makes a lovely accent piece at the mezzanine's entry point.

The space gets its name from its focal point, which is the 20 ft. long x 3.4 ft. high community table. "Japas-style" tir-bits are served at one half; while the other half indulges a wine bar. Burma teak wood, cabriole legged low-back bar stools with swivel seats; finished in deep purple leather surround the table. A classy wine rack and cooler nearby complete its pretty picture.

The community table is 0.7 ft. lower than the actual floor; a detail incorporated for providing sufficient headroom beneath the mezzanine. Likewise sunk, the functional kitchen and two identical toilets lie under the mezzanine.

The kitchen's internal spiral staircase directly leads to the mezzanine service counter above; ensuring serving staff functionalities. A Banswara white stone clad wall skillfully inlaid with pockets of mother-of-pearl, provides an enthralling backdrop to the community table and partitions the kitchen. A narrow slit through it, lends a fleeting glimpse of the kitchen behind. ▶





Laid in black and white chequered patterns; the same hand chiselled stone graces the toilet floors and its walls till the basin counter. Gleaming white washbasins rest atop Burma teak wood console-type tables; placed against hand chiselled black kadappa stone backslashes.

"The classical look of the restaurant is improvised to suit contemporary designs," mentions Tarik. For instance, traditional shades like red, deeppurple, emerald green and gold blend with its present day decor. Burma teak wood cabriole legged, shield back dining chairs upholstered in cream linen; add a touch of royalty. The classic cabriole-legged furniture and modified, large Venetian bevelled mirror adds charm to the lounge area.

Beautifully sculpted by Tarik and expertly executed by Pallavi, the restaurant shapes the perfect amalgamation of old and new fashions; well interpreted in this bistro cum California inspired wine bar. ■

#### THIS PAGE TOP

Burma teak wood cabriole legged classic high-back chairs befit the lounge area. **CENTRE** Innovatively clad cross cut Burma teak wood adorns the top of the community table; as well as forms all the dining table tops. **BOTTOM** Hand chiselled black kadappa stone slabs with brooks that co-ordinate with the Burma teak wood arched window frames on the internal wall.

