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fatal attractions
the restaurant issue



serene sequel

A sibling for a venerable
New Delhi restaurant

Past and present co-exist in India, where a billion people strive for material progress while retaining a deep respect for ancient customs. Sequel, a stylish new restaurant in an upscale neighborhood of New Delhi, embodies that dichotomy.

Designed by Morphogenesis, a local architectural firm established by the husband-wife partnership of Manik and Sonali Rastogi, Sequel is a serene and distinctive sibling to United Coffee House, a long-established family restaurant. To mark the newcomer off from the visual chaos of a bustling marketplace, the architects wrapped the three-story, 10-foot-wide facade with a jaali—a fretted screen that filters sunlight. In this fresh spin on a traditional device, they achieved a visual identity that can be animated with colored lighting after dark, and which dapples the interior with shadow patterns. “We wanted to create a sense of magic that is constantly changing, and ensure that the restaurant doesn’t become dated,” Manik says.

A lofty staircase, lit from bamboo tubes, links the dining areas on the first and second floors and a lounge on the third. “We conceived each as a box within the box

Left: Sequel is definable from the street, thanks to the beaded screen that wraps its three-story facade. Opposite page, from top: Harshvihar cuts up the staircase and sets in the third-floor lounge.



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Above and opposite page: Handcrafted wooden room dividers create separate dining areas.

of the building shell," explains Sonali, "and we wanted to reinterpret and revive traditional Indian crafts, which are currently suffering from neglect." They abstracted the motif of the time-honored *barshingaar* (night jasmine) as a cutout throughout—in the wooden room dividers, drop ceiling, tabletops, applique work on the walls, and high-backed chairs. The motif is also employed as a positive feature in the stair balustrade, creating a layering of patterns that complement the *jaalis* at the front and back.

Overall the space has a sense of warmth and intimacy thanks to the handcrafted wood surfaces and furnishings, and a limited palette of red and beige. It's far cry from the cool, modern house the Hosagis built for themselves and their practice, but it's a perfect solution for their design brief: "blend the contemporary nature and function of the new fine dining/lounge with the traditional paradigm of a family restaurant that *United Coffee House* stands for." hd
www.morphogenesis.org