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*Designers'
State
of Mind*

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INDIA'S TOP 10 SPACES 2020



STORIES TO SPACES

Boston-based interior architect Sashya Thind Fernandes comes with an array of experiences under her belt, all of which have found relevance and representation in her evocative projects at ID8 Design Studio

Text **TINA THAKRAR**

Often, design thinking and execution run parallelly, until they hit common ground and converge. There are a lot of factors that come into play when bringing a homeowner's dream space to life, and the responsibility lies on the shoulders of that one visionary who can see an idea through to fruition. In the case of Sashya Thind Fernandes of ID8 Design Studio in Boston, her projects have an honesty from the very beginning. Idea and execution sit together comfortably from the get go, resulting in a tactile and textural experience of a space through an intuitive, immersive process. It's this approach that has charted Sashya's career and geographical graph, from studying architecture in Mumbai to working in England, until finally setting up home base and her own design firm in Boston.

Born in Mumbai and raised all over the world, Sashya was exposed to architecture early on. Her mother and grandmother are both practicing architects, who have worked on some of the most high-profile projects in Mumbai in the 1980s. ▶



IMAGE COURTESY: JARED KUZIA

(This image and right)
A contemporary home in
Weston, Massachusetts
(Below left) A deck house in
Wellesley, Massachusetts
(Below right)
A penthouse in Boston,
Massachusetts



IMAGE COURTESY: JARED KUZIA

“Inspiration to me comes from observing...people, places, nature, movies, music and the arts. I love to be able to read people and help elevate their experience.”

– Sashya Thind Fernandes, *Founder and Principal Designer, ID8 Design Studio*



IMAGE COURTESY: TAMARA FLANAGAN



IMAGE COURTESY: MICHAEL J LEE

IMAGES COURTESY: JOYELLE WEST



“My father’s work as an airline pilot took us to exotic destinations like Madagascar and the Middle East. Moving was challenging at the time, but the exposure to architecture and travel has a lot to do with how I see the world today. My Indian heritage and love for natural materials is an essential component of my philosophy, as is the eternal quest of engaging with natural light as much as possible!”

Although she studied and worked in architecture and urban planning for many years, in both India and England, it was interior design that held her interest. It allowed her to be intimate with the space, while her architectural background helped her with structural elements. So in 2007, after she moved to Boston with her husband, Sashya worked with a small boutique firm specialising in interior design. This triggered her lifelong goal of setting up her own design studio, and a few years later, ID8 Design Studio came to be.

“It was on a Thursday in 2012 that I had decided to launch ID8, and I had my first project in hand that Saturday! It was a lobby and reception for a boutique hotel,” reveals Sashya, who has, in the last eight years, developed a steady aesthetic that she defines as ‘warm minimalism’.

A lot of this warmth comes from Sashya’s love for natural materials. “I am partial to natural stone and wood. I can get lost in a stone or lumber yard for hours! I love the imperfect and unpredictable qualities of natural materials.” This has been a fixture in all her projects, including the custom pieces of furniture that she likes to bring into every project.

Her never-ending love for nature reflects in her own mid-century abode as well; a hilltop home surrounded by trees, that has also been serving as her office for the past few months. Running a design business can be challenging, and equally gratifying. “With so much access to visual imagery, it can be challenging to nudge clients towards a focused path. It’s gratifying when they trust you enough to get on that path and stay on it, till we arrive at a place that is a true reflection of them.”

For now, Sashya is keeping busy with an impending product collection and three projects - one each in the mountains, on a waterfront and in the city. “They are pretty diverse but equally inspiring in their locations, and all three clients are interested in investing in sustainable materials and artisanal products and pieces that tell a story. It’s incredible to work with clients who get it.” **L&DT**

(Both Above) A kitchen and dining space for a home in Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts