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# NOVEMBER DECEMBER

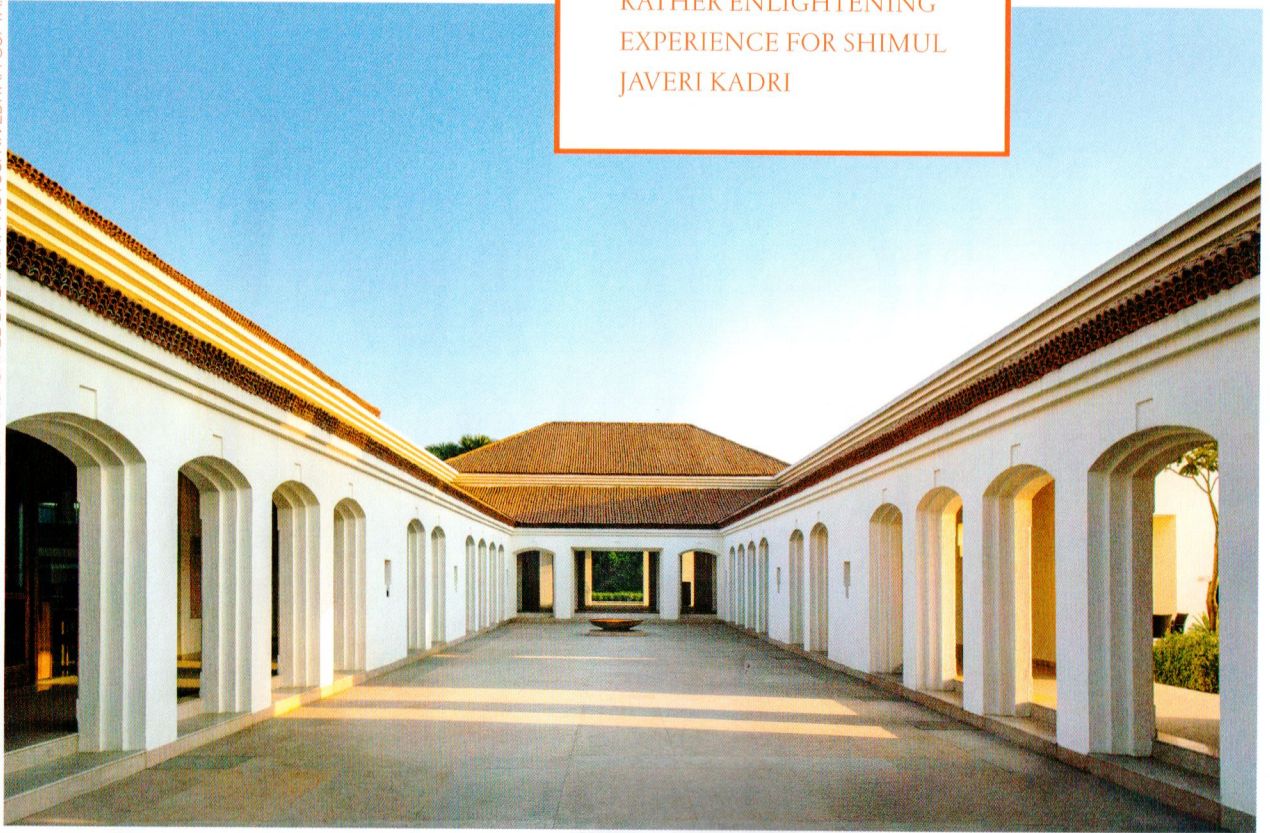
## DISCOVERIES

A peaceful retreat in Bodh Gaya designed by AD100 architect Shimul Javeri Kadri. Good Earth celebrates its 25th anniversary. A peek into Hamish Bowles's New York apartment. And a series of homes in Goa, Chennai, Los Angeles, and Dublin, so richly layered and poetically pieced together that they're true delights for the maximalist at heart. Welcome to AD's year-end celebration issue.

## STILL LIFE

MAKING A QUIET YET  
IMMACULATE BUILDING  
IN BODH GAYA BECAME A  
RATHER ENLIGHTENING  
EXPERIENCE FOR SHIMUL  
JAVERI KADRI

TEXT: RAJASHREE BALARAMI, PHOTOS: NIVEDITAA GUPTA



The central courtyard with corbelled arches, stepped columns and clay-tiled roofs reflects the key features of Buddhist architecture.

When she first visited Bodh Gaya to discuss the making of the Marasa Sarovar Premiere, Shimul Javeri Kadri was moved by the sense of serenity. She knew it was the quietude of the place that she should capture in the 4.5-acre hotel property that she was entrusted to design.

The architect and her team—Vaishali Shankar and Roshni Kshirsagar—made multiple road trips to Bodh Gaya to study Buddhist buildings. They felt in awe of the Mahabodhi Temple and the ruins of Nalanda—both defined predominantly by bricks (Bodh Gaya has a 2,000-year-old legacy in brick-making). Along with their travels, they also pored over books on Buddhism. “I learnt about the Vajradhatu Mandala. It’s like a palace that houses the five Dhyani Buddhas,” explains Kshirsagar. “Each house is defined by a mudra gesture, a colour, a season, a cardinal direction, a natural element, etc. It helped us design the five spaces in the public block: reception, library, spa, banquet, and cafe.”

Soon, a concept emerged that not only celebrated the climate,

Architect Shimul Javeri Kadri amid the glow of oil lamps in the entrance lobby.



context, and local materials, but also the five key virtues that underpin Buddhism: wisdom, courage, compassion, forbearance, and perseverance. Forgoing their initial plan to work entirely with bricks—"The sandy soil had poor load-bearing capacity, and we would have had to go really deep to set the foundations," says Kadri—they used aerated concrete blocks that insulated the structure 1.5 times better than bricks, thus lowering air-conditioning costs. However, the team had set their minds on one material: half-round clay roof tiles called 'country' tiles, made by farmers on potter's wheels, sourced from 12 different villages in Bodh Gaya.

Their guiding design philosophy was all about restraint, which was a challenge while designing the luxe space. "We chose materials that could be easily maintained, such as linen and cotton, and we stuck to a muted palette so the space would seem like an extension of the elements," says Kshirsagar. The property also has a large waterbody, one inspired by the lily pond of the Mahabodhi Temple. "We had visualized it as being full of lotuses," says Shankar, adding, "There are none yet. But someday, we are sure there will be." Patience, after all, is the greatest prayer, said Gautam Buddha. ▲