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IMAARAT IDEAS

ON THE COVER

Babita Pandey

FOUNDER, STYLEMYKONA



FEATURED FIRMS

Cadence Architects
Alchemy Collective
By The Riverside
1405 Design Studio
Studio Baariki

*An Exclusive Conversation with
Vishal Sharma of Confluence
& Veteran Architect Q. H. Kapadia,
& Outdoor Décor Trends for 2026 by
Design Expert Kushagra Tyagi.*

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ARTPRENEUR

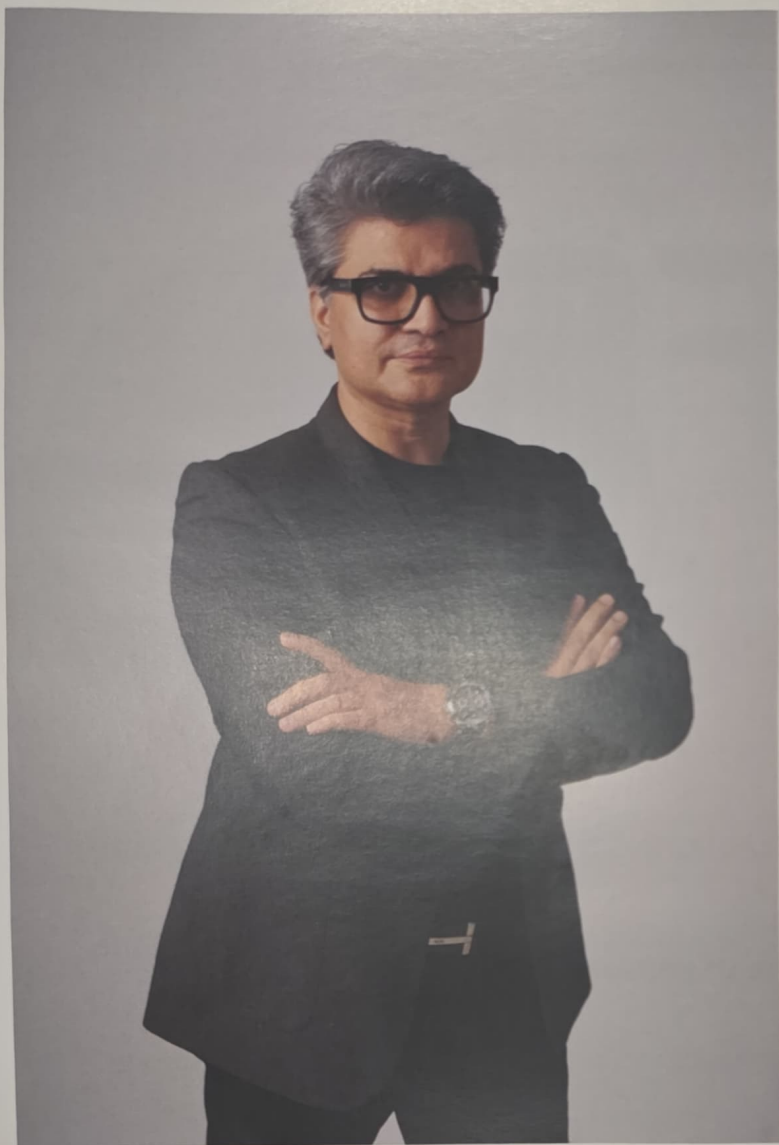
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COVER STORY

Babita Pandey, founder of Style My Kona, shares her inspiring journey and design philosophy.





VISHAL SHARMA

DESIGNING FOR PEOPLE,
PLACE, AND PLANET

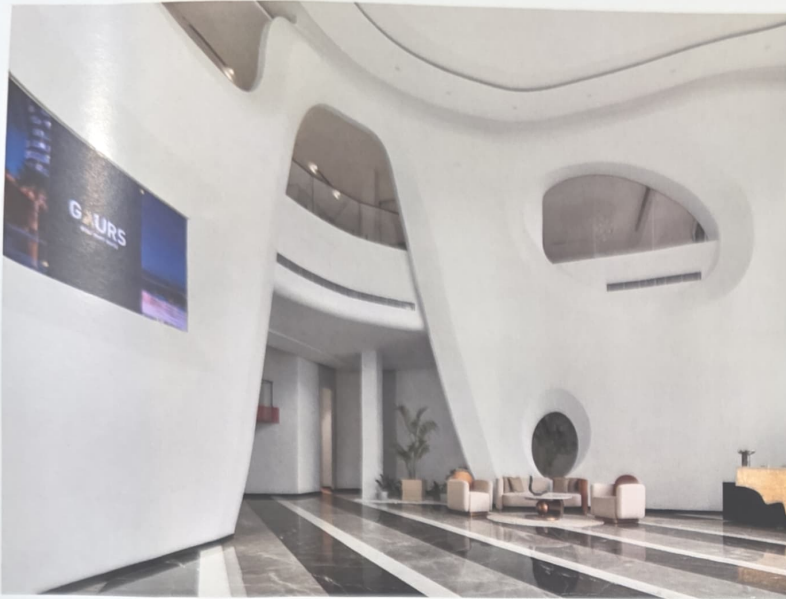
Vishal Sharma is a visionary architect who has spent over twenty-five years redefining the Indian skyline as the Founder Partner and Principal Architect of Confluence. A graduate of the Malaviya National Institute of Technology, Jaipur, he has transformed his firm into a multidisciplinary powerhouse known for its award-winning architectural, interior, and landscape practices. By seamlessly blending a refined design sensibility with a deep understanding of construction techniques and commercial complexities, Vishal turns visionary concepts into tangible, high-quality realities that respect their unique cultural and site contexts. His career is marked by a relentless drive to challenge industry conventions and elevate design standards from macro-urban developments to micro-interior details. This dedication has earned him prestigious recognition, including being named one of the "Top 10 Most Prominent Architects" in 2021 and receiving the Economic Times Real Estate Conclave Award. His portfolio features iconic projects like the "Iconic Project of the Year" winner, Cleo County, and the highly acclaimed Gulshan Experience Centre, which recently secured multiple honors at the 2024 CWAB and IBC Awards. Beyond the drawing board, Vishal is a respected thought leader and a member of the Council of Architecture whose insights are frequently featured in elite publications like Vogue, India Today Home, and Architect & Interiors India. Whether he is speaking at the Eldrok India Architecture Summit or authoring articles on eco-conscious luxury and future-ready homes, his influence extends far across the real estate industry. Today, he continues to shape the fabric of the built environment, ensuring that every project delivered by Confluence stands as a benchmark of innovation and unmatched quality.





A Journey Rooted in Shared Vision

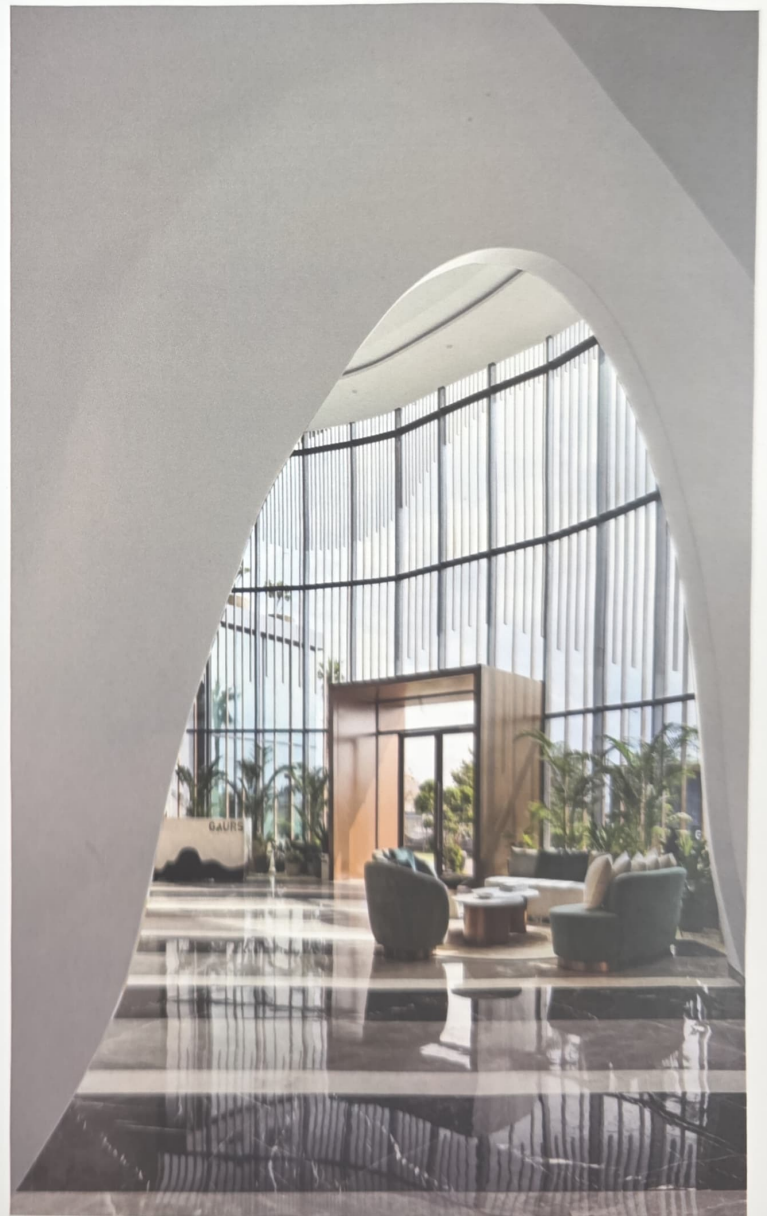
Confluence was established in 1999 with a shared belief that design must serve people, place, and planet. From the beginning, the practice was shaped by a multidisciplinary outlook, combining architecture, interiors, and landscape thinking to address built environments holistically rather than in isolation. The partnership with Vineeta Singhania evolved around a common intent to continuously challenge conventional design approaches while remaining deeply rooted in context and user experience. Over the past 26 years, the studio has grown from a small practice into a collaborative team of architects and designers working across residential, commercial, institutional, transport, and infrastructure projects. This evolution has not been about scale alone but about refining processes and design thinking to respond to changing urban realities while maintaining conceptual clarity and integrity. Sustainability has remained a core design driver throughout this journey as an integrated mindset that prioritises climate-responsive planning, passive design strategies, resource efficiency, and long-term adaptability. The focus has consistently been on creating spaces that are environmentally responsible and socially meaningful.



Design, Integrity, and Sustainability as Core Values
 At Confluence, design is viewed as a user-centric process that serves as the central framework for every decision. Integrity ensures consistency across design intent, execution, and relationships with clients and collaborators, while sustainability is approached as a responsibility that integrates environmental sensitivity and long-term usability. Empathy and collaboration play an equally important role within the studio's multidisciplinary approach. Working across architecture, interiors, and landscape allows these disciplines to function as interconnected systems. Design processes support clarity and efficiency, while transparency fosters trust and open communication. Together, these principles shape projects that aim to be socially responsible, economically viable, environmentally sustainable, and meaningful in everyday use.

Balancing Contextual Modernism with User-Centric Innovation

Projects such as the Gaur NYC Experience Centre and County 107 reflect the studio's ability to balance contextual modernism with user-centric innovation. The Gaur NYC Experience Centre explores experiential design through fluid forms and immersive environments that engage users beyond functionality. The spatial narrative is carefully designed to create an environment that communicates both identity and aspiration. At County 107, the design approach shifts to large-scale residential planning, where vertical landscaping and community-oriented spaces play a key role. The project prioritises connectivity, shared environments, and long-term livability, demonstrating how thoughtful planning can enhance everyday life within dense urban settings.



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Integrating Environmental Sustainability and Social Responsibility

For large-scale urban projects such as high-rises or malls in India, the design approach begins with passive strategies before mechanical solutions are introduced. Orientation, shading, natural ventilation, and daylight optimisation form the foundation of climate-responsive design. Architectural elements such as climate-responsive façades, deep terraces, and landscape integration improve thermal comfort while reducing energy demands. These strategies help create built environments that are both resource-efficient and comfortable for users. Equally important is the social dimension of sustainability. Large-scale developments are planned to encourage walkability and shared spaces that strengthen community engagement. Mixed-use environments, pedestrian-first planning, and integrated green systems aim to create resilient ecosystems that balance environmental performance with human experience.

Instagram as a Visual Narrative of Design Thinking

In the digital age, Instagram has become a powerful platform for communicating architectural ideas. For *Confluence*, it acts as a visual narrative space where design can be shared beyond drawings and technical descriptions. Through carefully curated visuals, the platform offers insight into design thinking, project processes, collaborations, teamwork, and spatial storytelling. It allows audiences to engage with architecture at a human scale, reinforcing the belief that meaningful design lies in everyday experience and the subtle details that shape how people interact with space





Responding to India's Evolving Urban Landscape

Rapid urbanisation and land constraints are shaping new approaches to urban development across India. Mixed-use developments in emerging corridors such as Noida and Gurugram require a delicate balance between commercial vibrancy, residential comfort, and public accessibility. Challenges such as climate resilience and evolving lifestyle expectations demand design strategies that prioritise community spaces and flexible infrastructure. The future-forward vision lies in creating environments where density enhances experience rather than diminishing it. By transforming vertical growth into socially and environmentally responsive urbanism, these developments aim to redefine how people live, work, and interact within rapidly growing cities.

Building Collaboration Across a Growing Team

With a team of over 275 professionals, collaboration is embedded within the organisational structure through interdisciplinary workflows that encourage dialogue between architecture, interiors, landscape, and technical teams. Clear systems and processes ensure efficiency, while empathy guides decision-making by recognising the needs of clients, stakeholders, and internal teams. Working across diverse project typologies—from bespoke residential environments to institutional infrastructure such as Delhi University facilities—requires flexibility in approach while maintaining consistency in values. Collective ideation, shared learning, and transparent communication help maintain design coherence and allow each project to respond uniquely to its context.

