

Height of privacy

The making of high-value residences in cities



Floored: A living room at the Four Seasons Residences.

BY SAPNA AGARWAL
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When Adarsh Jatia, managing director of Provenance Land Pvt. Ltd, which has built the Four Seasons Hotel in Mumbai and the Hyatt Regency in Pune, was searching for an apartment for himself, he didn't find what he was looking for. The luxury apartments were small, without enough wardrobe space in the master bedroom and with little flexibility in terms of design. Also, many of his questions about maintenance remained unanswered.

Jatia then thought of building a bungalow on a plot alongside the Four Seasons Hotel, but dropped the idea as the family would be surrounded by high-rises. "The hunt for the perfect home led to the conceptualization of the Four Seasons Private Residences," he says.

The numbers tell this story—55 floors for 26 apartments. Similar high-rise developments are known to house 100 families or even 300-400 families. Jatia focused on the needs of ultra-high networth households. "They require privacy, service and world-class infrastructure," he says, adding that one-two floors have been allocated per home in the slender 240-metre building.

In fiscal year 2015, there were 137,000 ultra-high networth households in India, according to Kotak Wealth's 'Top of the Pyramid' report. There is a growing trend among the younger generation of ultra-high networth individuals to opt for high-value apartments in prime locations as opposed to living in smaller houses across the city, says the report.

At a minimum, the Four Seasons Private Residences will offer three large bedrooms, with an option to reconfigure the space to four bedrooms before moving in. These will be single-floor apartments. The apartments can go up to six bedrooms, with two master bedrooms, spread over one-and-a-half or two floors, which will suit multigenerational families.

Jatia has incorporated the traditional Indian science of construction, Vastu Shastra, in the design—with a prayer room facing the north. Globally, Four Seasons has over 31 private residence apartment buildings and 50 more are in the pipeline. "Fully serviced resident apartments command a huge premium the world over. The Four Seasons in Yorkville, one of the poshest streets in Toronto, commanded a 100% premium over similar residential apartments in the neighbourhood," says Jatia.

The apartments are large, their carpet areas ranging between 3,275 sq. ft and 6,500 sq. ft for a penthouse and prices range from ₹30 crore to more than ₹100 crore. In Mumbai, these homes are still cheaper than in Singapore, New York or London. Ultra-high networth individuals travel across the world and tend to own homes in various cities, he says.

Those staying here could avail of amenities like a butler and laundry service. Four Seasons will also look after the maintenance and upkeep of public utilities and common spaces like the lobby, gardens, gym, terrace, conference rooms, club, rooftop lounge and outdoor cinema for the use of residents and their guests.

Architects Gensler, who designed the Shanghai Tower, a commercial complex in the Chinese city, provided the master planning and architectural services for the Four Seasons Residence Apartments. Interior design has been done by Yabu Pushelberg, based in Toronto and New York and known for its work on the Opus in Hong Kong, which commands one of the highest rates per sq. ft in the business hub.

To develop the pencil-like tower in Mumbai, the expertise of structural and civil engineering firm Magnusson Klemencic Associates from Seattle was sought. The homes have been designed in such a way that people inside can look out in all four directions, including an unhindered, column-free panoramic view of the Arabian Sea with a 50x80 ft-wide unbroken expanse of glazing.

To make it look like a retreat away from the hustle and bustle of the city, extensive landscaping has been provided by landscape architects P. Landscape Co. Ltd (Bangkok). Pieces of two or three dimensional art will be put up at prominent places in the building. The interiors are inspired by gemstones and the jewels are aimed at capturing the age-old Indian tradition of families

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The traditional parquet flooring also has a bespoke design of a chain-link pattern. The light above the dining table is again a gemstone-inspired fixture. These residences are available for purchase and eight have already been sold.