

PROJECT

The SKY LIFE

The upcoming Four Seasons Private Residences, a 55-storey tower in south Mumbai topping off at 650 feet, is set to redefine exclusivity, and introduce to the city a first-of-its-kind concept of 'bungalows in the sky'

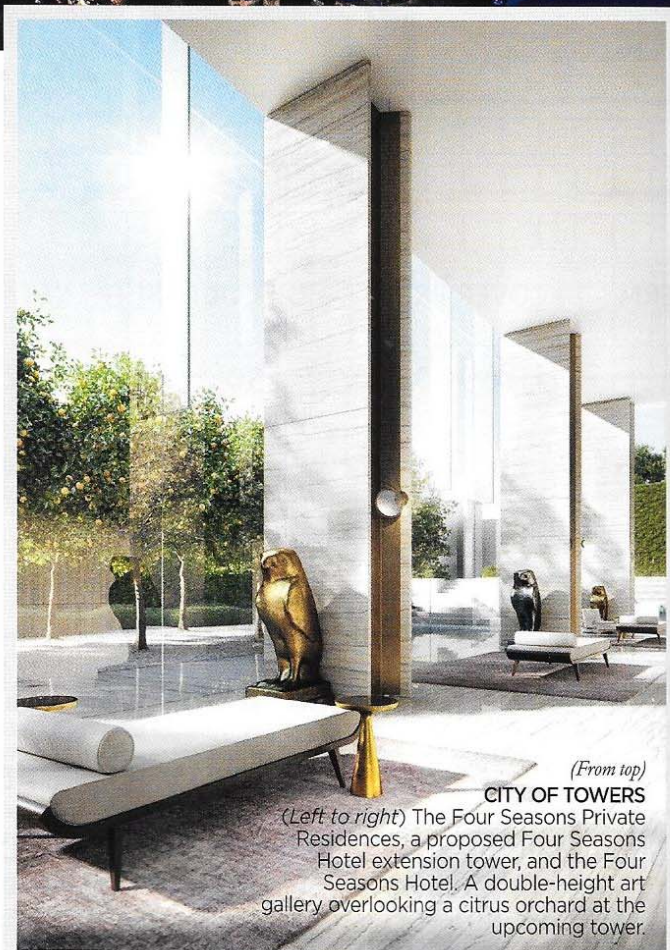
WRITER GAURI KELKAR

Telling anyone about yet another high-rise coming up in Mumbai will probably earn you a twitched eyebrow at most, given that this is now fast gaining popularity as a city of towers, jutting out of the ground like posh stalagmites jostling for space with the clouds. But the Four Seasons Private Residences are as far from the 'run-of-the-mill luxury towers' proliferating around the city as it is possible to get.

The result of an alliance between Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts and Provenance Land, one of India's oldest hospitality development groups, these private residences are taking luxury lifestyle notches higher than what even the most city-hardened cynics can expect. The planned 55-storey building will have just 26 homes, offering panoramic views of the city from its enviable location in south Mumbai's Worli. Unimaginable? So it would seem, if not for the fact that Gensler and Yabu Pushelberg—two of the most distinguished firms in architecture and interior design—have put the full weight of their considerable talent and experience behind the project.

MASTER MINDS

Internationally renowned Gensler, whose portfolio reads like the what's what of modern landmarks—the upcoming Shanghai Tower readily springs to mind—are the master planners and architects. "It was a unique design opportunity to have each unit occupy an entire floor [if not more]," says principal Steve Weindel, who is the design director for the residences. The brief, he says,



(From top)

CITY OF TOWERS

(Left to right) The Four Seasons Private Residences, a proposed Four Seasons Hotel extension tower, and the Four Seasons Hotel. A double-height art gallery overlooking a citrus orchard at the upcoming tower.



(Clockwise from this picture)
VIEW FROM THE TOP

The master bedroom in the penthouse, like the rest of the apartment has floor-to-ceiling windows. The en-suite master bathroom features an extensive use of marble. The fully equipped state-of-the-art kitchen.



“It was important that we preserved that history, incorporating textures throughout the interior design process.”

This is something that Yabu Pushelberg has accomplished with a sublime subtlety. For this project, they wanted “to keep the space pared-back, so that specific details like pops of colour or specific finishes make more of a bold statement.” Then, there was the added challenge of creating distinctive homes without knowing the tastes of the homeowner who would inhabit it. “We started the project by imagining who the owner would be and gaining an understanding of the target clientele. This allowed us to get more personal in the way we designed the interiors,” Pushelberg explains. “We created a metaphor around an heirloom jewel passed through successive generations, and designed each apartment to be a modern interpretation of that. Within the penthouse, the glass-and-metal staircase that connects the two floors also becomes a unique architectural expression within the space.”

The common-access spaces, the lobby, rooftop facilities and other regulation five-star appurtenances expected from a Four Seasons property have been masterfully conceived. “The entry and ground floor has a tremendous amount of synergy. The lobby opens up to the garden and the paving materials go from inside to

out seamlessly,” says Weindel. Pushelberg agrees, adding that they “wanted the amenities’ spaces to feel as residential as the apartments, so we designed them as an extension of the home.”

SCENE STEALER

All creative decisions revolved around the protagonist—the unprecedented panorama. Pushelberg says, “[The view was] very important. Mumbai is a vibrant city with a history of yachting, so creating views of the water was necessary. If you go up into the residence, as soon as you come off the elevator, you have a spectacular view of the city. Gensler also pulled all the stops to make the view the focal point of the space,” asserts Pushelberg. The architecture firm’s approach was to consider the residences to be “more like villas, or a home on a piece of land overlooking the surroundings below. This allowed us to make the connection to the outside in all four directions.”

The breathtaking views are just one of the lures of these homes. As Pushelberg puts it, these homes are “about all the spaces working together to create a beautiful retreat from the outside world.” Just imagine: an oasis in an island city that doesn’t stop, or pause, to rest or sleep. It can’t get more exclusive than that. ❖