

Architecture Update

Project-in-Focus
A River in Need, Morphogenesis

**Landscape
Architecture**
Redefining Cityscapes

'A Villa in the Sky'



Qutub Z. Mandviwala, Architect – One Mahalaxmi; Founder & Principal Architect, Mandviwala Qutub & Associates

Qutub Z. Mandviwala is the founder and Principal Architect of Mandviwala Qutub & Associates, the architectural and interior designing firm based out of Mumbai. Founded in 1992 with forte in design and planning, MQA consists of a team of more than 100 people who are proudly striding the set path of creating landmarks in and around Mumbai and has its works spread across most parts of India. MQA has also showcased its expertise in Dubai for the projects Residential Dubai and Solitaire Dubai. MQA's works are inspired by quality living, beautiful experiences and ultimately the most unique architecture.

Mumbai-based Mandviwala Qutub and Associates (MQA) are well-known for providing innovative and contextual design solutions for over two decades now. Their expertise and impressive body of work has prompted many developers to approach the firm to design and build their properties.

Tell us about your design journey.

MQA was founded in 1992. Prior to that I took an experience of 8 years, 4 years each as an intern and an architect with Architect Hafeez Contractor. I started my own office at Shivaji Park in 1992, then we shifted to Mahim and then here at Famous Studio in 2002. The journey started with a small design oriented firm with 2-3 people working under me. Initially we were working on a few hospitality projects in Ahmedabad and a few residential projects in Mumbai and some small projects in Surat. In the next three years, the firm expanded and moved to another level with a few township projects and residential development in our portfolio. Simultaneously, we were working on corporate interiors and hospitals for Wockhardt. Hospitality was always

One Mahalaxmi, standing tall at a prime location in Mumbai with Ocean on one side and race course on the other, is an ode to spacious luxurious living. Developed by DB Realty and Radius Developers, the project is a unique concept designed by Mandviwala Qutub & Associates (MQA). In a conversation with **Ambarin Chougale, Qutub Mandviwala, Founder & Principal Architect, MQA** gives details about the high-end opulent edifice.

our core working area but we were moving in different directions. Post 2003, there was a boom in real estate. Since we had a lot of experience in redevelopment projects, we started getting more projects in Mumbai of similar kind. We started with Orchid Enclave for DB Realty in Mumbai Central. Parallely, we were working for other developers as well. Apart from our prime designing for hotels, we were also engaged in corporate interiors and institutional projects. In 2009, we got associated with the Bhendi Bazaar Project which is still ongoing. We've worked with a number of developers like Runwal, DB Realty, Raheja Universal throughout the journey. We are now working pan India with 80 people in the office working on various kinds of projects.

Which is your key working segment?

We are currently working on multiple high-end projects. We are present in all segments from residential, commercial to institutional, healthcare, hospitality, town planning. Our forte has always been design and planning. Once you venture into design, it doesn't matter which segment you are catering to. Everything is oriented towards design.

Give us a brief about your recent project One Mahalaxmi

One Mahalaxmi by DB Realty and Radius Developers, is a very different project in many ways. The height, which is approximately 300 metres, is the aura of the project and the concept is unique unlike any other residential building. Every apartment is conceptualised as a villa in the sky. If you observe any other residential building, the apartments share walls with one another. Here, every apartment is placed in a manner to develop a form of a building such that most of the apartments get the South-West wind and the South-West view. One of the four apartments takes the east coast harbour view. While designing, four apartments designed like villas were placed adjacently with three sides free and were stacked vertically. Unlike a normal building which has tight apartments, this project is designed to bring opulence. One Mahalaxmi has long curved passage so there is no wall



sharing between the apartments. All rooms are cross ventilated and is designed to have minimum passage areas. The interior of the house is designed to its full utility so that every inch of the house is worth the money paid.

Mention the details of site and the building elevation.

The One Mahalaxmi tower is placed on 3.5 acres green lush podium at the height of 25 metres which is rare in Mumbai. It is designed as a crescent since the right side of the plot is lined by Raheja Vivarea project blocking the road towards the racecourse. The shape and design of the building is site-centric and not developed forcefully. The site is connected to the main road but it is actually off the road and diminishes the traffic and the railway noise. The building faces South-West direction, developed with the beauty of the site and it brings good amount of breeze, light and ventilation into the apartment.

The façade of One Mahalaxmi is also not a typical glass building. However, there is adequate glass to give you the feel of the exterior from inside. Although the height of the building is 300m, it is warm upfront and does not force itself onto you. The building is majestic yet subtle in design with exquisite elevations.

What was your philosophy while designing this project

Design is based on two factors- user centric and site centric. To compliment that, we try to add art and flavour. The crescent shape of the building is derived due to the site and location. But the villas and the apartments are user centric and the shape gives the art and the feel to the building.

So these are the factors we take care. When one uses site contextually and user as the core, the building becomes timeless. When one combines these philosophies to develop a form, a piece of art is achieved.

What are the special features of this project?

One of the features is floor to floor height which is more than the usual height of an apartment. Another feature is that the houses are designed as villas and unlike any apartment, where the entire house is looking towards one directions of the site, these have windows opening to three sides. They virtually give you a neighbour-free experience. Including the value of space, these are the few factors of opulence in the design. The 4-BHK homes are free of linear long passages and irrespective of the shape of the building, the rooms are rectangular in shape providing complete utility and functionality.

Which are the amenities provided at One Mahalaxmi?

One Mahalaxmi is replete with all choices of leisure at the podium level some of which are the clubhouse, swimming pool, spa, tennis court, kids play area, multipurpose hall, cinema. The entire 3.5 acres area has a jogging track running along. Its a lifestyle and value for the money spent for the high end apartment. The idea was to create a life for the person between the tower and the podium. Creating comfort zones with facilities available around you makes it worthwhile. ▲

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