



Vaastu and Homes Amita Dalal



VAASTU AND HOMES

Born into a family of affluent industrialists and brought up in an environment surcharged with Indian classical dance and music, Mrs. Amita Dalal is an Arts Graduate from St. Xavier's College, Ahmedabad. In addition, though she does not practise the profession, she is a qualified lawyer, completing her L.L.B from Ahmedabad

Our Vaastuyogam team met with Mrs. Amita Dalal in her flat housed within the immaculately maintained, elegant residential block in the posh Ahmedabad location of Vastrapur/Bodakdev.

Excerpts from the interview :

Introduction

I have always been passionate about my home and am an unrepentant, old-fashioned, conventional housewife dividing time between my household responsibilities, my music and Amberish, my husband. Home, for me, has always been a place for doing what I want to do; a place where I nurture myself and my hobbies, be it printing hand-block fabrics or playing the Sitar.



Mrs. Amita Dalal

Vaastu and the move to the new flat

In the beginning, I was not into Vaastu. I had heard about it and knew the basics, but that was all. It was Amberish, my husband, who was the true Vaastu believer and enthusiast.

Amberish came to know of Dr. Rao through



Aura of golden yellow : Mrs. Amita Dalal's home

the market grapevine. His business had been experiencing minor hiccups that were getting the better of him and he wanted to give Vaastu a try. Dr. Rao came with impressive Vaastu credentials. On seeing the Vaastu results in his business, Amberish's belief in Dr. Rao and his Vaastu firmed into complete faith. Around this time, we were on the lookout for a residential property that we could move into. One of the options we were looking at was a king-size flat in the Vastrapur/Bodakdev area. My husband decided to take Dr. Rao's opinion and that was the first time I met Dr. Rao.

When Dr. Rao came to inspect the premises, there was no flat, not even a building; there was just a vacant plot. As my husband was determined to have as much a Vaastu-perfect flat as possible, we began the Vaastu process from the very inception, with the vacant plot itself because if the plot is not of good Vaastu, then the chances of the flat being of good Vaastu become slim.

I remember the first meeting with Dr. Rao very well. After exchanging brief pleasantries, he took a brisk walk around the plot. "The plot is an excellent one," he had pronounced. "Go ahead with the flat."

That was all. In less than 10 minutes the visit was over! But of course, there was much more to be done.

We were buying the flat from Shaan, a very quality-conscious and ethical builder. When I told him that I needed to get the design of the flat approved from the Vaastu angle from Dr. Rao, he readily shared the drawings of the yet to be built apartments.

To accomplish the changes Dr Rao wanted meant surrendering quite a few of the design objectives of the builder. And this brings us to a very moot question; How far is one willing to go to achieve Vaastu compliance? How many sacrifices is one willing to make? My answer to the question is that you have to be absolutely adamant about the Vaastu implementation if you want to achieve Vaastu perfection.



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Dr Rao suggested a couple of major changes that shuffled the kitchen location and also knocked out a couple of bathrooms. To accomplish the changes that he wanted meant surrendering quite a few of the design objectives of the builder. This brings us to a very moot question; How far is one willing to go to achieve Vaastu compliance? How many sacrifices is one willing to make? My answer to the question is that you have to be absolutely adamant about the Vaastu implementation if you want to achieve Vaastu perfection. We went to any and every length to get the Vaastu right and finally we did get it to an almost perfect Vaastu flat which is far more difficult to achieve than a Vaastu perfect private bungalow.

We achieved Vaastu perfection by giving up on many things, big and small, as well as coping on a permanent basis with some impracticalities created by the Vaastu intervention. To say this is not to say that we are grumbling. We did all we had to with enthusiasm and the full conviction that we were doing the right thing. Once the apartment was completed and possession taken, I have made absolutely no change. This is a major Vaastu implementation lesson. Whatever needed to be done was finalised before construction began. Not even a nail has been hammered at any place.

At home in my house

Now, let me come to the happy part of the Vaastu implementation. By that I mean the happiness and progress we have had and for which I must give Vaastu its true due.

As I said in the beginning, a "home, for me, has always been a place for doing what I want to do; a place where I nurture myself..."

This is truly home. It has worked for my happiness and worked for my music.

For me, Vaastu is just like my Sitar. Unless you tune the Sitar, the strings will not resonate and the music will play flat. But once it's been tuned, playing the Sitar is bliss. If I was made to play a Sitar that had not been tuned, I would be listless and lost because the strings will not respond. Vaastu too, is the same. It tunes the home and harmonizes it with the natural elements and energies. Living in a Vaastu home is bliss. It elevates your confidence and self-esteem. With Vaastu you are in tune with nature.

"If music be the food of love play on"

..William Shakespeare



Mrs. Amita Dalal

Mrs. Amita Dalal was introduced to the Sitar by her mother Bharti Parikh, a theatre artiste, sitarist and kathak dancer. For more than thirty years, she has been under the tutelage of her Guru Manju Mehta, a disciple of Pandit Ravi Shankar. Additionally, Amita has also been learning her music from Pandit Vishwamohan Bhatt

Mrs. Amita Dalal is part of the prestigious Saptak Music Festival which is a festival of Indian classical music that usually takes place during the first week of January in Ahmedabad every year and is organized by a charitable trust which runs the Saptak School of Music.

In 1978, the state university selected Amitaji under the student exchange programme to visit Japan and perform in Osaka at the Syongunyama. She was also part of the cultural troupe that represented India in the 1980 Summer Olympics at Moscow. She has made her mark with her music at the NCPA, Mumbai and Sankat Mochan Festival, Banaras. She has performed in tennis pro Boris Becker's hometown Leimen and the Prince Carlz Auditorium at Heidelberg, Frankfurt. She also has a classical album Prayas to her credit.

Riyaz camps that Pandit Ravi Shankar organised at her mother's home exposed Amita to music stalwarts like Manju Mehta, Pandit Vishwamohan Bhatt, Shamim Ahmed, Kartik Kumar, Shubendra Rao and Partho Chatterjee who were part of these sessions.

She is an accredited artiste with AIR(All India Radio) and Doordarshan.

Very recently, she has released her own album, Different Strokes, a fusion of east-west music composed by Grammy Award winner Pandit Vishwamohan Bhatt. This was followed by Different Strokes - 2, which is part of the tourist museum at Heidelberg, Frankfurt.

Mrs. Amita Dalal has won the following awards :

Sur Mani Award, Mumbai • Navdeep Pratishthan Award • Pandit Omkarnath Award

Home – for me – has always been a place for doing what I want to do; a place where I nurture myself and my hobbies, be it printing hand-block fabrics or be it playing the Sitar.



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As soon as we moved here, a happy chapter opened up in my life. I have been playing music for the past thirty years. Within two months of entering this home, I set out and completed a long delayed and unrealized dream of cutting my own fusion music albums. I don't know what took place to open the gates of my will power, but in a single stretch, I brought out my album, "Different Strokes" with music conducted by Grammy Award winner, Pandit Vishwamohan Bhatt, my Guruji Manju Mehta's brother. The album was well received and excited me into bringing out another in quick succession.

Every day, for over eight to ten hours we worked on the albums, the new house echoed with the strains of music. It was almost as if we were having havans (Traditional Vedic puja and offerings to fire accompanied by chanting of hymns, shlokas and bhajans) every day. All this was possible here; I cannot imagine it happening elsewhere.

Aura of golden yellow

I believe in colours and their aura and



Travel Enthusiasts.
Amita with her husband Amberish

perhaps that is the reason why I believe in Vaastu too. What is natural appeals to me the most. As far as colours go, Golden Yellow and Orange are my favourites. I associate them with sunshine, brightness, happiness and energy. Even though Dr. Rao was not involved in the interiors of the house, he advised that the east facing wall in my music room should be a shade of yellow. When completed, the yellow added such an aesthetic and warm touch to the room that I painted the east wall of the sitting

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room, too, in the same colour.

Conclusion

I want to cherish every moment of my life and to do that I need the kind of home that I am living in. ■