

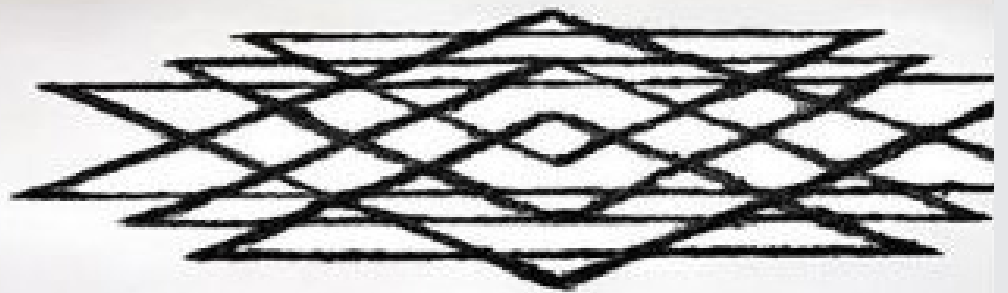
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# AD



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## THE SOUK

*The stepwells of Jaipur, as well as the city's art deco heritage, inspire and inform its new Good Earth boutique, designed by Roshad Shroff*

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In Jaipur, a stone's throw from an 18th-century stepwell, sits the plush new retail outlet of a 22-year-old brand. The outlet is housed in a heritage haveli almost 90 years old—fitting, given that the brand is devoted to an art and crafts tradition that goes back centuries. When Good Earth approached architect Roshad Shroff to design their new store in Jaipur, the first thing they told him was about the old Silk Route—their many trips down the ancient road, the sights and sounds along the way, and how these influenced the brand's key collections. What emerged from the conversation was a store fashioned along the lines of a typical Silk Route souk—a little bit of Samarkand, a dash of the Bosphorus, a contemporary re-imagination by Shroff, all aided by the valuable inputs of Good Earth CEO Sanjay Lal and brand director Bernu Bawa. "We weren't designing only for commercial clientele," says Bawa, alluding to the hordes of tourists who visit Jaipur. To that end, a story was conceived—one filled with references not only to the past, but also to the local context in which the store would find itself. The Toorj ka Jhalara stepwell opposite, resurrected by the JDDH Urban Regeneration project, inspired Shroff to fit certain areas in the store with an almost amphitheatre-like feel; the art deco-inspired furniture pieces were a nod to the city's Umaid Bhawan palace. Primarily, however, it is the heady story of a souk that the space tells—one that consciously integrates the five senses. Divided thematically, the rooms sell the brand's beautifully crafted products—strategically placed protagonists of a two-decade-long endeavour. Upstairs, in the apparel room, twirling skirts hang from the ceiling. "Derivative?" Shroff explains his source of inspiration, adding that it was a "clever way to call attention to the products". Elsewhere, marble, wood and brass lend representation to the store—reiterating his commitment to the art of craft and workmanship. Wall and ceiling murals executed in the traditional *pishtaq* style, by local craftsmen from Udaipur commissioned by Bawa, add the final embellishment to a well-woven tale. You may have just come to shop, but it's the story that will make you linger. ❖



**Above:** A section of the store—Bumi Rose Fragrance Library—that sells spa products. **Left:** Many sections of the store are inspired by the stepwell, such as this display area. The jewellery is by Annapati. **Below right:** In the courtyard named Gasa, the wrought-iron tables and chairs have been sourced from a local workshop. **Below centre:** The Good Earth store is housed in an ancient haveli called Moon House. **Below left:** Twirling skirts hang from the ceiling in the apparel section.

