

The highlights of the bank reception are the canvas clad columns that narrate the history of barter and the boat shape bench that sits gracefully in the centre of the space.

# The Art of BANKING

The ING Vysya mascot holds a coin with the new rupee symbol, welcoming guests at the entrance.



Art indeed is proving to be a great investment for ING Vysya. The Mumbai-Cuffe Parade branch of the bank has created history by being the first bank in India to be offering customers a banking experience fused with a spurt of creativity. Doubling as an art gallery, the bank is a refreshing break from the staid interiors usually associated with banks. At the entrance, visitors are greeted by two large, smiling lions – the mascots of the bank. Made from UV protected fibre with a duco finish, each lion holds a coin engraved with the new rupee symbol. Moving inside, the space is defined by the staccato rhythms of the money business softened by the soothing effects of art and colour – a confluence that makes banking here a uniquely pleasurable experience.

The journey begins with a framed coinage art piece gracing the wall near the ATM. "This piece speaks of coins that were created right from the medieval to the pre- and post-colonial ages. It boasts of the textures and flavours of all the empires that ruled India," enthuses **Mitali Bajaj, Head, Dr.Art+Design**. The piece has 32 different types of coins cast in aluminium, bronze, brass and steel. Adding to the charm is a small accompanying note on the history of money.

### Gallery fied!

Past this area, one enters the bank space that houses two private meeting rooms on the right and four tellers' kiosks on the left, along with the branch manager's office. Bang in the centre is a bench that draws attention to its backdrop – an entire wall covered with striking pieces of art. Each displayed piece has a short note on the artist and the price. The art that decorates these walls will change periodically as per management's decision, and spans genres from contemporary and tribal art, to work depicting the Mughal period. ING Vysya has tied up with 3Blyindia Art Gallery run by Meenu De and Sashi Jalan, for this art wall.

### Elemental essence

The aforementioned bench – wooden, contemporary and rustic – allows waiting customers to keep an eye on the transaction area as well as appreciate the artwork that lies behind. The private meeting rooms have transparent glass doors and windows for openness. They are illuminated by pretty money lamps, whose alabaster lampshades have the new rupee symbol sponged on them in golden powder on all four sides.

Two columns wrapped in a rustic, yellow and



## Meet the designer

**Mitali Bajaj**



**FIRM:** Dr.Art+Design, founded in 2009.  
**FIRM SPECIALISATION:** Aesthetics (art, sculpture, furniture) & interiors.  
**DESIGN PHILOSOPHY:** Co-Creation: We bring people with different pockets of skills to ideate and conceptualise together. The concept and end product turn out much stronger.

**PHILOSOPHY TOWARDS LIFE:** Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.  
**FAVOURITE ARCHITECT/DESIGNER:** Zaha Hadid and Kamal Malik.



The two private meeting rooms are enveloped in the warm glow of alabaster lamps with the rupee symbol on all sides.  
Minimalist zen-like wood furniture adds to the artistic look of the bank.

The three cabins at the back are characterised by subdued colours highlighted by the trademark orange money exchange board.



The branch manager's office is draped to blend with artwork at the back.

### MATERIAL CHART

AREA	MATERIAL	MATERIAL DESCRIPTION	COST	SOURCES FROM
Main flooring	Vitrified tile	Nitco-Duracore series: Corn Beige: 2' x 2' rustic finish	₹80/sq ft	Nitco Tiles www.nitcotiles.com
Entrance lobby flooring	Vitrified tile	Lapato, Copper Metallic: 2' x 2', Metallic Finish	₹135/sq ft	Saikripa Ceramics Tel: 022-2604 7493
Furniture	Laminate	Samara Oak	₹1,400/sheet	Green Lam M: (0)93228 65957
Walls	Textured paint	Beige colour		Asian Paints www.asianpaints.com
Ceiling	Paint	Plastic Emulsion: White Colour		Asian Paints
Toilet	Tiles	Country Almond & Jaipur Moti, 1ft x 1ft	₹40/sq ft	Nitco Tiles
Column art	Canvas	Narrative on burnt beige		Dr.Art+Design M: (0)98335 91901
Entrance lobby lion sculptures	Fibre	Copper finish		Dr.Art+Design

burnt beige canvas stand on the other side of the bench. The canvas imitates a 'papyrus' and tells the story of money and barter, with doodles and writings tracing how barter started with salt, went on to minerals, boats and animals to even jewellery. The story evolves to conclude with ING Vysya's rebanking solutions. These columns are the focal point of the bank's interiors.

### Decor decisions

"The bank is located in one of Asia's most expensive localities," says Bajaj. "Its customers are well-versed with art. The idea was to create an experience that they could take away with them," she adds.

While selecting the art was no simple process, ensuring that it wouldn't be overshadowed by the overall décor was even tougher. Creating a minimalist look was necessary to bring the

perfect balance with the artwork; every element – the floor, the bench, the columns, the furniture – plays a pivotal role in ensuring this.

Bajaj created the modular and contemporary furniture in shades of beige to bring out the charm of the columns and the art. The vivid orange of the ING Vysya colours is represented in the copper flooring at the entrance. Towards the main portion, the flooring too turns beige to aid in the monochromatisation of the space. The aura of subdued elegance is enhanced by the recessed lighting, with focus lighting for the artwork.

What Bajaj has created is a trend in banking that is incomparable. With the space as the branding, the clinch was in creating artists

pieces related to banking. Indeed, ING Vysya is well on its way to proving that artful banking is a good idea!

**TOTAL AREA:** 1,550 sq ft  
**TOTAL COST:** Approximately ₹60,00,000  
**TEXT:** Shami Padakone  
**PHOTOS:** Indrajit Sarkar

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