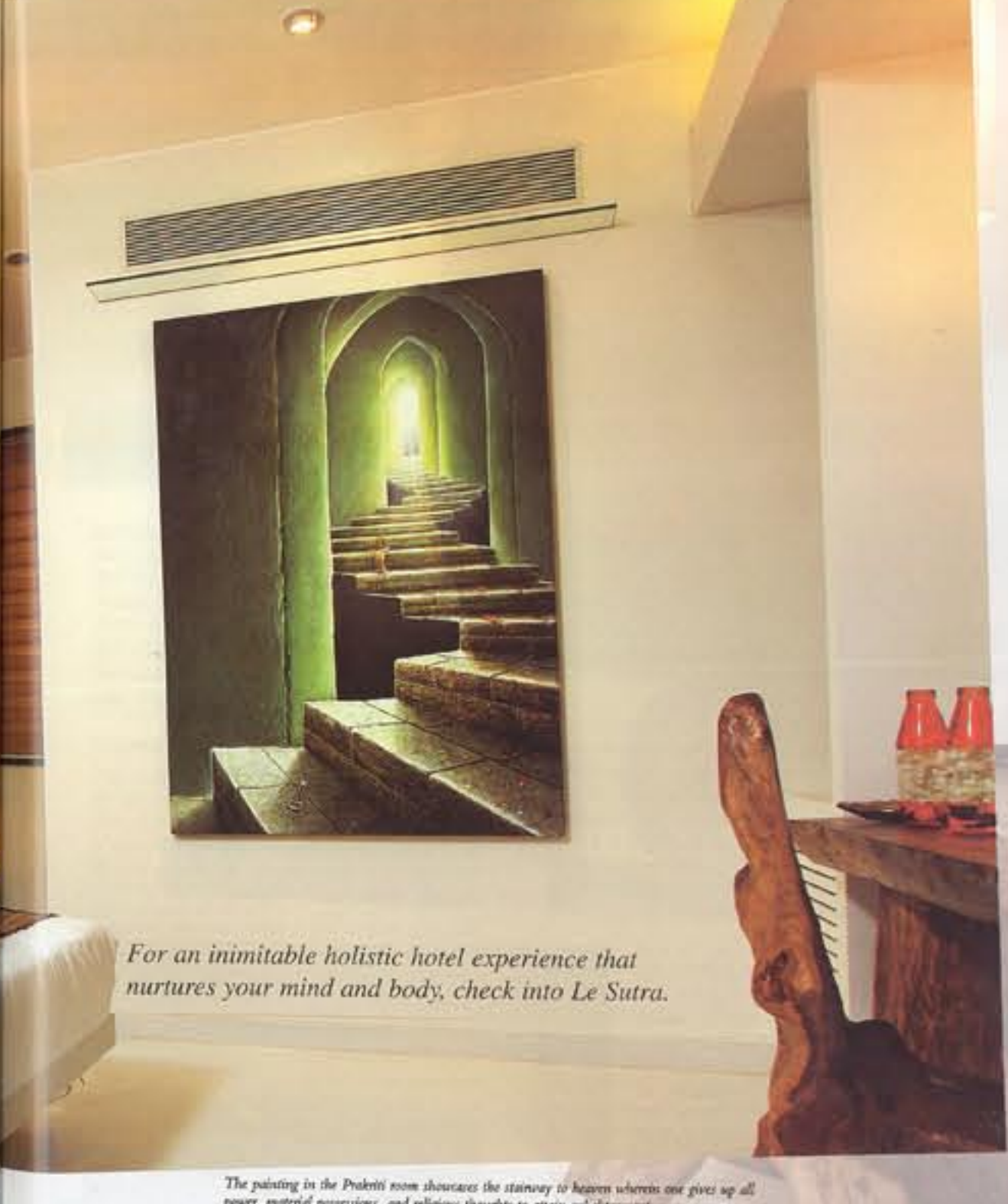


Le Sutra d'art

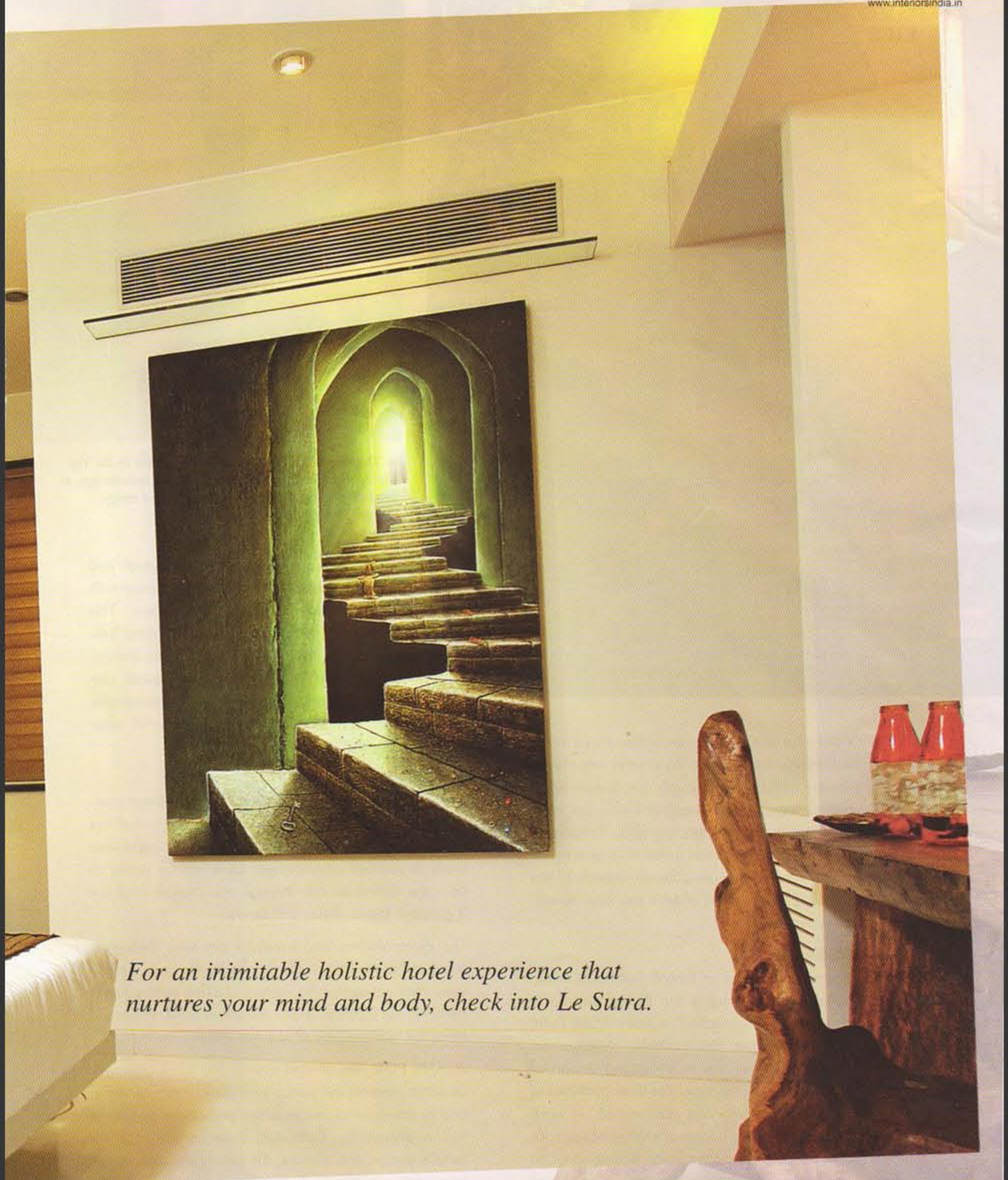


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The three Ashramas - upper, middle and lower that make the heart of the Le Sutra are each the three pillars of the three gunas representing the three marks of attachment on the path to nirvana.



The chair in the Shuddhi room is inspired by the Yogi Dandi, an ancient device designed by Yogi, creates ego, harnesses the power of Yogi by the balancing of energy through various breathing techniques.



The painting in the Shuddhi room talks about an 'out-of-body experience' when the kundalini has fully risen and has come from the Sahasra chakra which is on the top of his head.

It's old wine in a unique new bottle. It's Le Sutra, the first Indian art hotel in the country and maybe even the world. And although one doesn't know what to expect while stepping inside the hotel located at Union Park in Bandra, Mumbai, keeping an open mind is all that's required to be able to enjoy it. The hotel attempts to recreate different aspects of the centuries-old Indian ethos and offers a new and refreshing way of experiencing it.

THE MEANING
"Sutra in Sanskrit is a rope or thread that holds everything together and Le Sutra is the thread that binds Indian art and Indian hospitality," explains Mitali Bajaj head of Dr Art+Design, the aesthetic management company responsible for the awe-inspiring design of the hotel. The beauty of the hotel lies in its portrayal of the three universal gunas: one represented on each level of the hotel. Guna is a form of energy, which connotes the innate character, complexion and constitution of mind and matter. The three gunas - satva, rajas and

tamas - are present in every individual and object in varying degrees of concentration with one more dominant than the others. This defines the characteristics, personality and temperament of the individual. So, as an individual, you could be satvic (simple, celestial, aesthetic, ethereal), rajasic (lustful, passionate, vivacious, stylish) or karmic (colourful, opulent, intricate, erotic).

BEGINNING THE JOURNEY
The story begins from the lobby which has been envisioned as the Kundalini - the cosmic energy that lies dormant at the base of the spine. It's awakening is what leads to spiritual advancement, as it has the power to help the individual rise through the chakras and the 3 gunas - Tamas, Rajas and Satva.

The rising chakras and kundalini are seen through a mural in the elevator lobby. As one travels up in the elevator they encounter the various chakras before finally reaching the topmost level - the satvic level, which signifies the achievement of self-realisation.

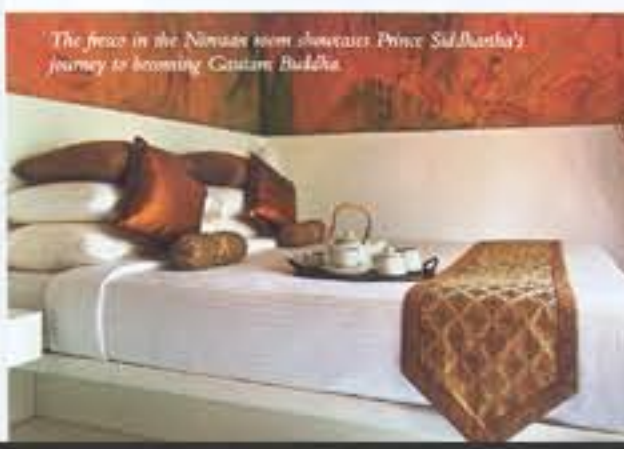
ROOM FOR THOUGHT
Le Sutra presents the gunas spatially in every rendition and in doing so recreates a comprehensive palette of Indian philosophy. Embodied in every form of the hotel's design and interiors, the artistry encourages self introspection to enable discovery and the tuning of ones'

senses to reach a higher level of consciousness. Each of its 16 rooms is based on either characters (Ravana, Ashoka, Buddha) or characteristics (sensuality, love, purification) inspired by Indian mythology. In effect, every room is a metaphor for a story; a mood board depicting feelings and ideas through design, painting and sculpture. The chair in every room is treated as the seat of influence and power and has been accorded a singular stature which silently controls the room's theme.

STORIES TO TELL
Since every room is different from the other, each piece of art on the floor and walls and even the furniture is based on a story. The topmost floor has an art gallery and four rooms christened - Prakriti, Nirvaan, Shuddhi and Mandala. Paintings, art installations, idols, frescos etc put together by a talented team of artists and designers bring this floor to life. There is much to see and do in every room. For instance the

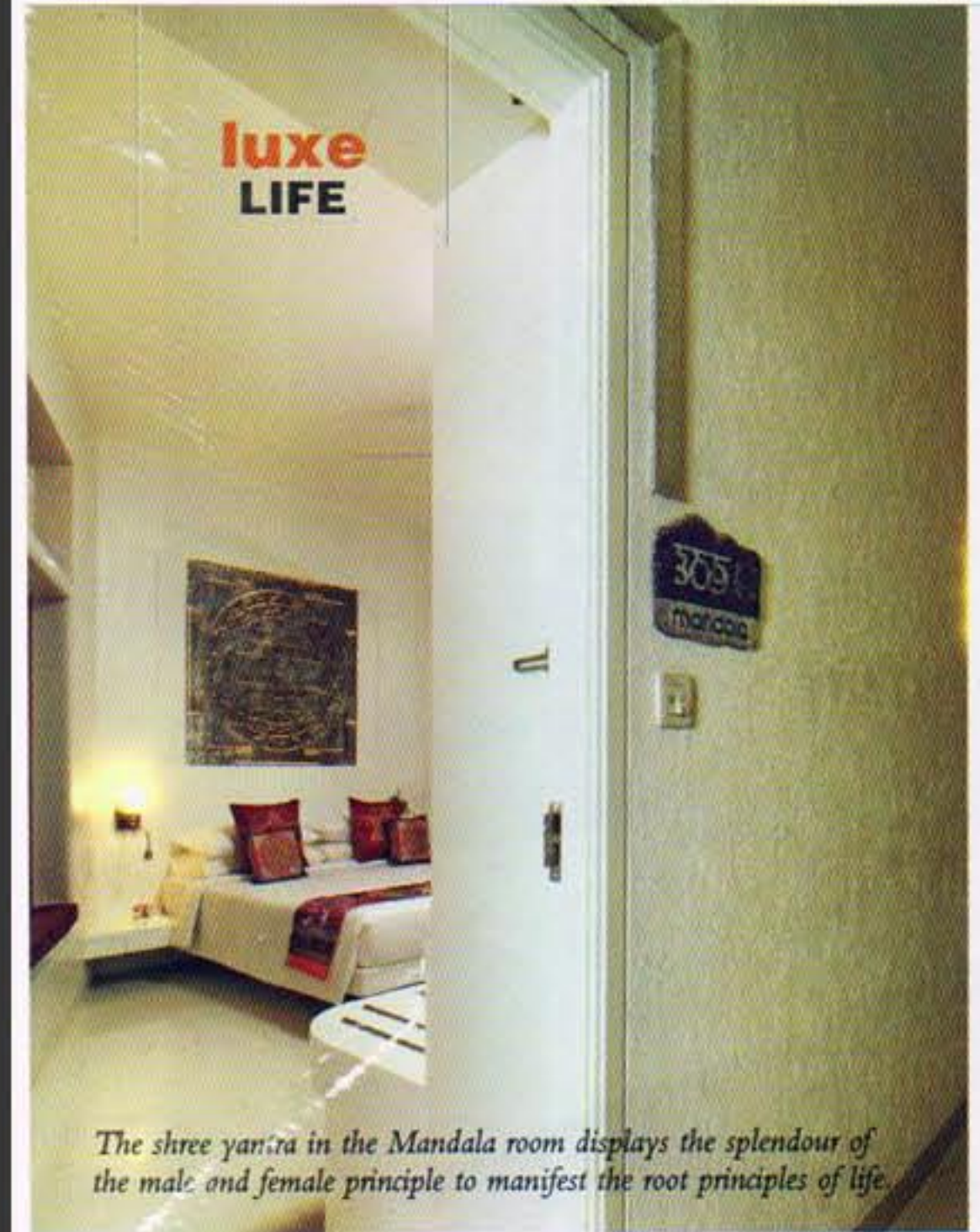


The message is based on the concept of the 'Sam-Lava'.

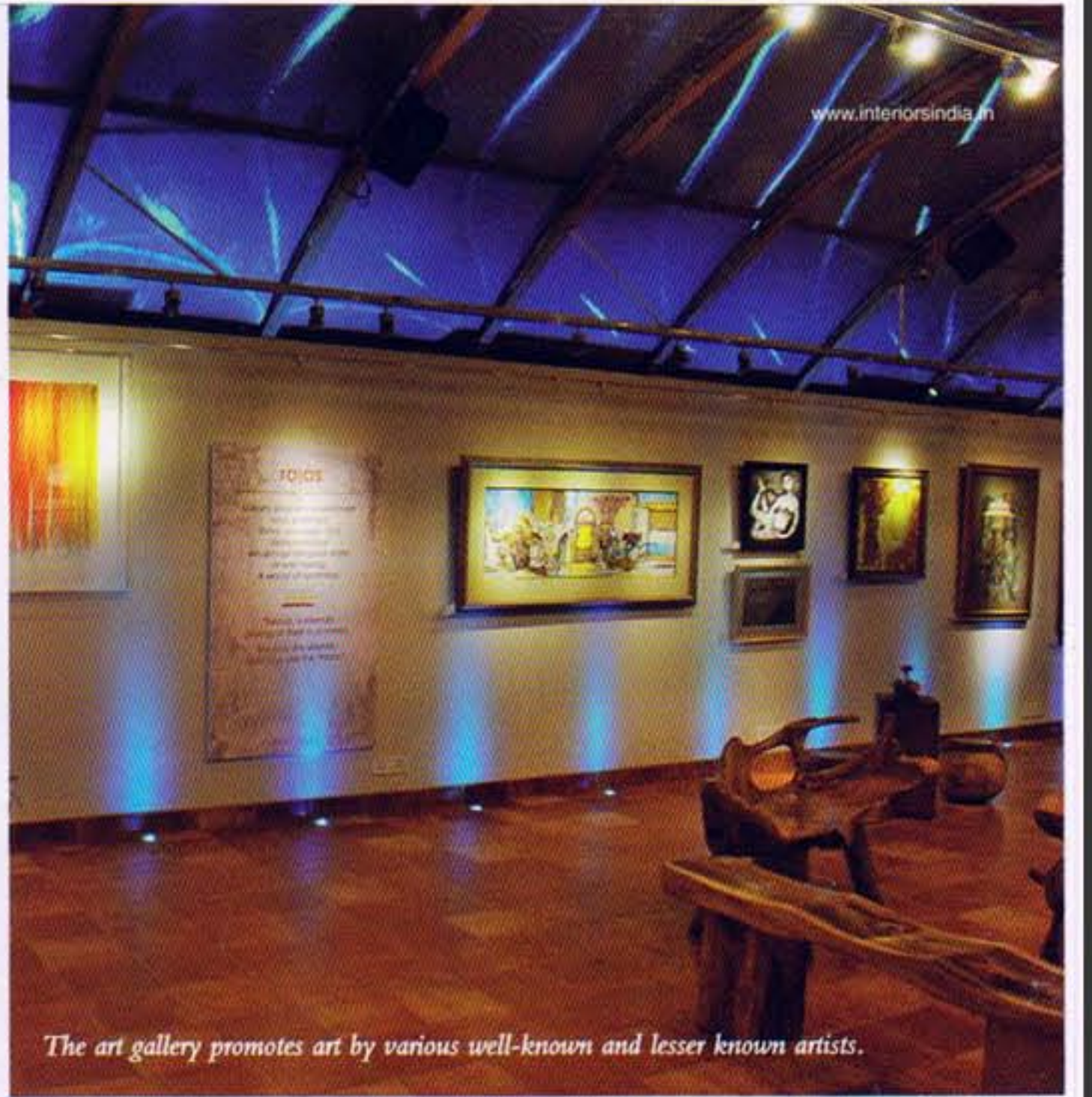


The fence in the Nirvaan room showcases Prince Siddhartha's journey to becoming Gautam Buddha.

painting in the Prakriti room showcases the stairway to heaven wherein one gives up all power, material possessions, and religious thoughts to attain enlightenment. The floor is inlaid with leaves representing mobility and fluidity of thought and the cupboards are embedded with seeds portraying the birth of new life. The teak root chair signifies that everything has an expiry date and reminds us of our mortality and the urgency to evolve.



The three yantra in the Mandala room displays the splendour of the male and female principle to manifest the root principles of life.



The art gallery promotes art by various well-known and lesser known artists.

ATTAINING NIRVANA

Buddha has reached Nirvana as the unconditioned mind that has exceeded a point of perfect lucidity and clarity due to the cessation of active decision making. It is a state of deathlessness and the highest spiritual attainment. The Nirvaan room explains that we can face various defeats, obstacles and temptations which work to bring us down to lower realms of existence. This is done through a fresco that showcases Prince Siddhartha's journey to becoming Gautam Buddha. The dove and the hand on the cupboard speak of controlling the flighty mind and preventing it from being carried away. The four toranas of the Sanchi Stupa representing love, peace, trust and courage - all important attributes for attaining the Bodhisattva state of mind - are seen here.

CLEANSING THE SOUL

As a person conquers weakness, temptations and desires of the lower chakras, his kundalini or level of consciousness rises. But for this, one needs to be cleansed of impurities at a gross and subtle level. The Shuddhi room is a representation of this cleansing. Its mandu inlaid floor represents an ancient water purification system which signifies unburdening the mind of thoughts and desires, and the need to decelerate to attain tranquillity and advance towards a higher state of consciousness. The painting in the room indicates an out-of-body experience where the kundalini has fully risen, the soul leaves

and is greeted by a devi/angel who gifts it a lotus. The damaru-shaped devotional table nurtures the conscious and the unconscious states of existence.

THE DESTINATION

The fourth room christened Mandala represents wholeness and can be seen as a geometrical cosmic diagram which connects the finite to the infinite - the worlds that exist both beyond and within our mind. The highlight of this room is the Mandala chair that shows a lotus in full bloom representing enlightenment. It stands for the thousand petal chakra or Sahasra chakra on the crown of the head, which controls cosmic energy linking the microcosm to the macrocosm. An aluminium sculpture of the shri yantra and a quartz lamp are also seen in the room.

As the world's first Indian art hotel, Le Sutra offers a beautiful journey in time into Indian ideology. Bajaj describes their design experience in three words, "It was tough". And why wouldn't it be? Creating something unique with meaning, art with functionality, learning with luxury, and individualism with commonness would surely challenge the very best.

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