

## GREEN HOMES

### Not Just Another Brick In The Wall: 10 Indian Architects Who Are Building Sustainable Homes

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India is in the throes of a planning frenzy and several smart cities are on the anvil. The country's property boom besides being hungry for sand, iron, cement and water is quickly obliterating any nuances that existed in traditional design to address a region's climate, environment and culture.

But, there is a breed of Indian architects who are going against the grain and espousing sustainability as a defining feature of their work. Choosing to turn their backs on green rating systems and sustainability certifications, these visionary architects look instead towards honouring time-tested building techniques to create structures that interfere as little as possible with nature both in design and materials used.

They build to suit the local socio-environmental contexts, embrace the use of reusable and renewable materials, and harness traditional building wisdom.

They show that eco-friendly does not mean shabby, dull and boring. Combining sustainability with contemporary, modern designs and a range of materials, textures, and colours they're making homes of the future - homes that are gaining popularity as much for their small footprint and various health benefits as for their aesthetic appeal. Spaces that reflect our culture, environment and needs rather than aping a bland Western style.

## Biome Environmental Solutions - Bangalore

Helmed by Chitra Vishwanath, an expert in sustainable architecture, Biome focuses on building in response to climate, using natural resources wisely and minimising waste streams. Emphasis is on building with renewable materials such as mud and timber using energy-efficient techniques, eliminating chemical-based paints and plasters, harvesting rainwater and solar energy, preserving local biodiversity, and promoting recycling and reuse.



[Source](#)

## The Auroma Group - Pondicherry

Co-founded by architect Trupti Doshi whose designs are informed by her philosophy 'Buildings are meant to complement their environment, not compete with it'. This Pondicherry-based architect is known for her ecologically-sensitive, vernacular architecture that incorporate natural building materials, revive traditional craftsmanship, and builds in response to local needs and harnessing local talent.



[Source](#)



## **Kamath Design Studio - Delhi**

Revathi Kamath of Kamath Design Studio is one of India's most well-known proponents of earth architecture, celebrating the use of mud in all her creations. Her own house, a mud structure built on the site of an abandoned quarry, is testimony of her love for this earth-friendly material.



Source: Wikimedia Commons

## **Thannal Hand Sculpted Homes - Tiruvanamalai**

Thannal is the brainchild of natural builder Biju Bhaskar who believes that 'the place we live in is a material extension of our minds'. The studio is focused on creating awareness about low embodied-energy materials and appropriate technologies, and reviving indigenous architectural wisdom.

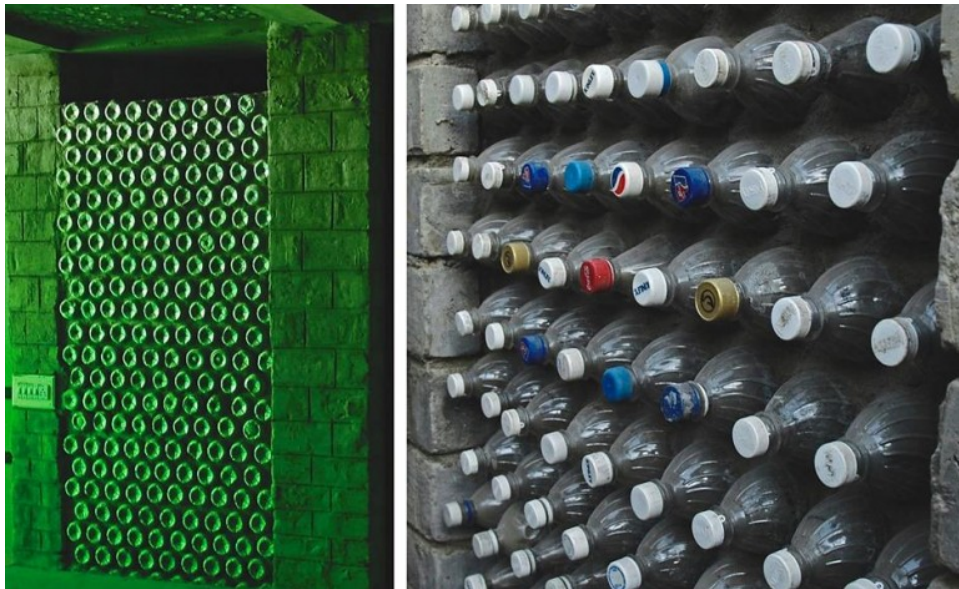


Source: Facebook / Thannal



## Footprints E.A.R.T.H. - Ahmedabad

Started by ecological architect Yatin Pandya, the firm uses industrial and municipal plastic and metal waste in construction. Under Pandya's guidance, the firm popularised several innovative building techniques that involve the repurposing of waste. For instance, recycling discarded plastic bottles filled with fly ash and waste residue as an eco-friendly, cost-effective substitute for brick in wall construction, or using empty vegetable crates as doors.



[Source](#)

## Mozaic - Goa

Behind Mozaic is Dean D'Cruz, well known for turning full time to sustainable building practices in 2012. He has since focused on environment-friendly, cost-effective architecture, conserving Goa's heritage structures and reviving its local building traditions. He is also a staunch proponent of equitable design and including all stakeholders in the design and execution of the building process.



[Source](#)

## **Benny Kuriakose - Chennai**

Kuriakose is known for promoting the sustainable and vernacular architectural principles of his mentor of many years, Laurie Baker. His architectural oeuvre is highlighted by natural materials and cost-effective technologies that are also climate, environment and culture appropriate. He embraces the use of eco-friendly practices such as the use of recycled fittings and encourages making the most of the site's natural elements - light, ventilation and greenery - using cooling clay tiled roofs, large verandahs and open courtyards.



[Source](#)

## **Made In Earth - Bangalore**

Started by a team of four young architects, Made in Earth promotes low-impact architecture using locally available, natural building materials and building techniques that keep energy consumption to a minimum. Their designs boast a range of materials, creating diverse textures, colours and finishes.



[Source](#)



## Eugene Pandala - Kollam

Pandala is recognised for building with mud and other natural materials, and for his unique, free-flowing designs that incorporate the cob technique using straw, soil, and often, gravel. He is known for incorporating mud even into the furniture and fixtures of the homes he builds.

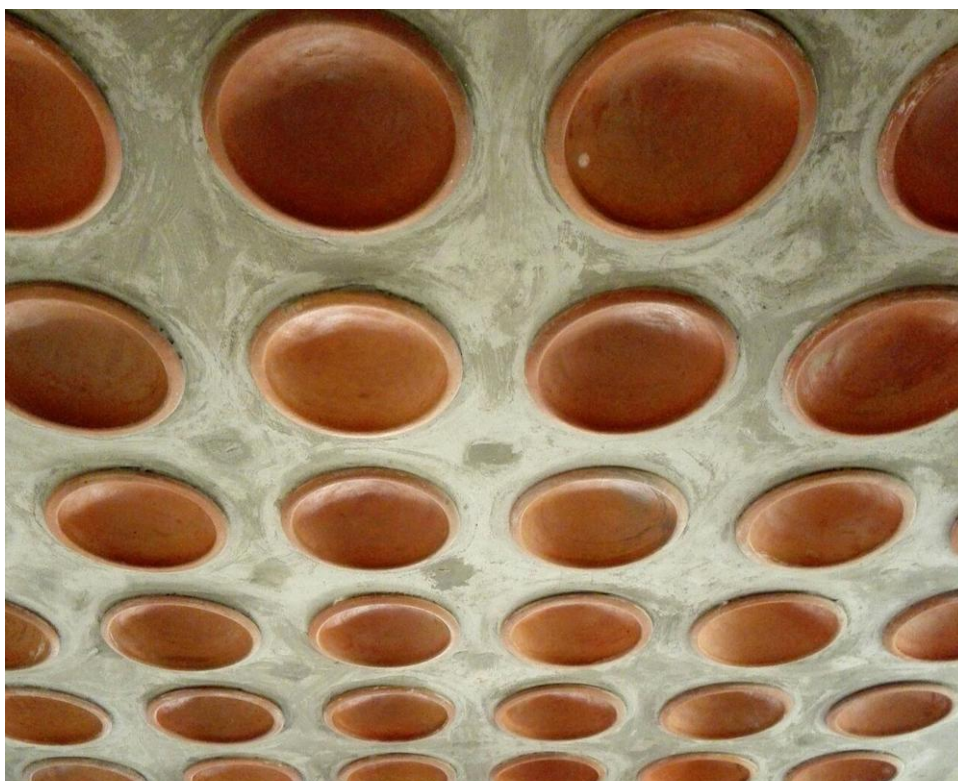


©OWIYAM SCHOOL OF NATURAL LIFE, Photo: Christine Graf

Source: Wikipedia

## Dustudio - Auroville

Dharmesh Jadeja of Dustudio bridges traditional knowledge and contemporary practices to produce designs that are environmentally sustainable, economically viable and energy-efficient. He embraces the use of locally available materials, furthers traditional crafts and creates opportunities to promote the skills and opportunities for local artisans, all the while adapting them to contemporary sensibilities and contexts.



Source: Facebook / Dustudio

Source Link : <http://www.earthmag.org>