

# Brick by brick

M:OFA's latest project, The Chatter House, introduces diners to the famed Irish charm and hospitality in Khan Market, New Delhi

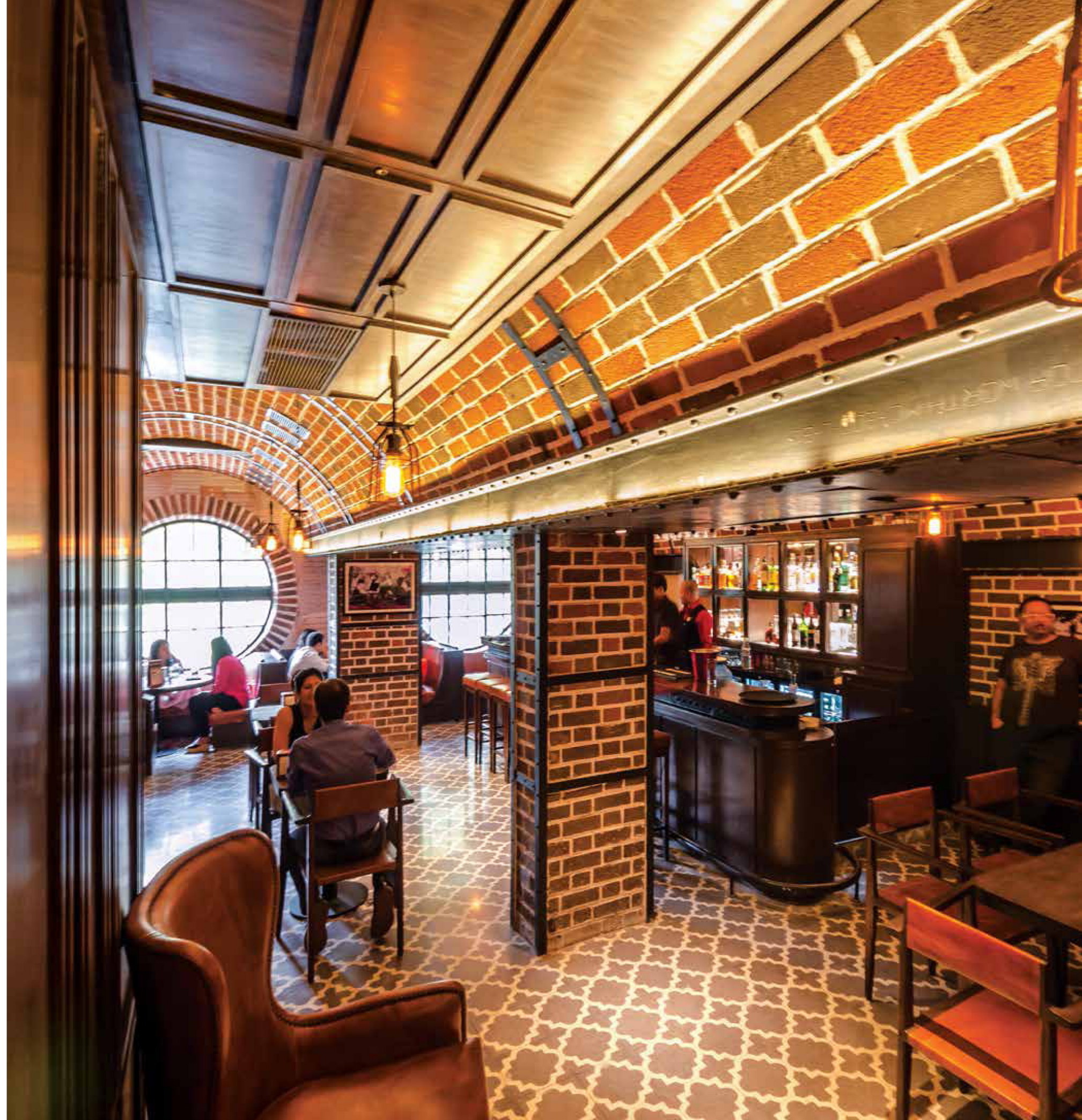


**“The Chatter House originated from the idea of bringing the charm of vintage Irish pubs and bars to New Delhi,”** says Manish Gulati, principal architect of M:OFA. Through design, material and ambience, the restaurant and bar offers a complete pub-dining experience to its patrons.

Located in New Delhi's famed Khan Market, the restaurant is spread across 1,700 sqft over two levels and caters to 75 to 80 diners at a time. Both the levels come equipped with a bar and seating arrangements ranging from fixed to flexible in the form of booth and chair seating. The structure originally housed a high-end café, which Gulati

refurbished with added architectural interventions and furniture pieces to replicate the essence and ambience of an Irish pub.

“The brick-lined, barrel vaulted ceiling and circular windows were new additions to the structure. It was built exclusively to iterate the design brief of an Irish pub. But a restaurant like this in Delhi with its relevant contextual and climatic parameters needed an essence of the stated theme to harmoniously mingle with the culture of our society,” he points out. The design draws these parallels with the indigenous use of materials like the brick cladding done in lime mortar, the terrazzo flooring and Indian







**Preceding pages** The Chatter House, designed by M:OFA Studio, brings the spirit and structure of an Irish pub to the bustling Khan Market area of New Delhi. This two-level space is spread over 1700 sqft and caters to both formal and informal diners.

**These pages** The barrel-vaulted ceiling and oversized circular windows are pronounced elements of the design. This is seen on the first floor of the restaurant. The space also has multiple seating arrangements such as booth seating, bar tables and free seating.









**These pages** To capitalise on the outside view, Manish Gulati, principal architect of M:OFA Studio created oversized windows, which continued as skylights. The space during the day is flooded with an influx of natural light giving it a relaxed summery vibe.

**Design Team** Manish Gulati (Principal Architect), Jagbir Singh & Tonoy Sarma (Associate Architect)  
**Text Credit** Zohra Khan (Media Researcher)  
**Sanitaryware/Fittings** Existing  
**Flooring** Nitco Terrazzo tiles  
**Furniture** Custom designed by M:OFA with Universal Wood Crafts  
**Air Conditioning** Trane  
**Lighting** Custom designed by M:OFA & Luxxor Lighting Design  
**Wallpaper** Prasun Mazumdar Design (PmdIndia.in)  
**Skylight** Designed by M:OFA, fabricated on site  
**Wall Cladding** Jindal Brick Tiles double sandblasted  
**Mechanical** M:OFA Studios Pvt Ltd  
**Electrical** M:OFA Studios Pvt Ltd  
**Civil** M:OFA Studios Pvt Ltd  
**HVAC** M:OFA Studios Pvt Ltd, Arrow Refrigeration  
**PMC** Jade Consultants  
**Civil & Interiors** Limra  
**Electrical** Limra

**Story by** Moshita Prajapati  
**Photography by** Niveditaa Gupta



teak wood in panelling.

The lower level of the restaurant is designed as a linear space, crafted through the use of brick-lined barrel vaults. This resulted in the subterranean vibe for the space, pockmarked with bespoke Edison bulb lighting to counter the lack of natural light. These vaults, resting on heavily riveted steel girders in a balanced symmetry, open up to the oversized circular windows that bring in a bit of the outside inside.

“Khan Market is one of the many green lungs of Delhi. There is a green pocket visible from the restaurant and I wanted to capitalise on this and give the space a sort of ‘outdoorsy’ feel,” Gulati adds.

A majestic Art Deco-inspired wood bar counter is placed against one side of the space, punctuated with a mixed brick-colour pattern highlighted with frames depicting musical acts. Square wood and tanned leather bar stools are placed in the front of the bar and seating booths are created closer to the circular windows. The seating booths with their sinuous curves and components are designed to accommodate a group of eight diners or even two.

The flooring is done in grey and white terrazzo tiles, which are a delightful contrast to the multiple

tones of brown present in the space. The utility spaces, such as the liquor storage cabinet, pizza kitchen and other facilities are tucked into the rear end of this level.

“With its deep tones, primarily in eclectic shades of brown, the lower level evokes a multi-sensorial experience, with a sense of warmth lingering through its vintage furniture, picture frames and décor accessories,” Gulati points out. This contrasts with the ambience that he has created on the second level of the space.

The layout of the second level is similar to the first, albeit with a slight difference. To offer the patrons an uninterrupted view, Gulati has incorporated oversized windows, which continue as skylights. The flush of natural light infuses the space with an open and welcoming vibe.

Summing up the approach he adopted, Gulati says, “With the The Chatter House, we tried to maintain the formality of fine dining while opening up the space with modes of informality. It brings the culture of spending time having fun over food and drinks in a formal environment, leaving room for fun and freewheeling conversations.” ■

**Preceding pages** The subterranean vibe in the space speaks of a contemporary interpretation of emulating the rustic essence of an Irish underground station or tunnel. An Art Deco-inspired long wooden bar teams well with leather square chair tools.

**These pages** The second level of the restaurant has an easy-going vibe complemented by the grey and white terrazzo tile flooring.

