

ARCHITECTURE+DESIGN

A N I N D I A N J O U R N A L O F A R C H I T E C T U R E

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& JASREEN SHANGARI

ICONIC BY NATURE, FUTURE-READY BY DESIGN

NEW URBAN FRONTIERS

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A NEXUS FOR URBAN SOCIALISATION

PROJECT: Eldeco Centre, New Delhi **ARCHITECTS:** Design Forum International (DFI)

Mixed-use developments have become the blueprint for cities in India. The Eldeco Centre in Delhi, designed by Design Forum International, is an intersection — of commerce and culture, of urgency and pause





GOONMEET SINGH CHAUHAN

Founder & Partner, Design Forum International (DFI)

Goonmeet Singh Chauhan is an architect, urbanist, author and a futurist with boundless enthusiasm to push the frontiers of possibility and bring forth 'Newness' that is both 'Delightful' and 'Useful' into all that he does. As the Founding partner at DFI, he believes in an architecture that is unshackled by 'isms'. With a focus on creating design with a purpose, he is passionate about transforming the lives of people and truly believes that our shared destiny can be altered through pragmatic ideation and collective action fairly rapidly.





India has been witnessing a constant evolution when it comes to its built environment. As the skyline gets concentrated, the land sprawl gets compromised too. As land tightens and commutes stretch, cities are forced to innovate. Earlier the urban landscape was demarcated into zones, today the lines are blurring. Our cities are waking up to the fact that commerce, governance, and daily life belong in conversation, not in isolation. Over the last few years, mixed-use developments have surged across Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru — with satellite cities quick to follow. This isn't just a trend in real estate. It's a correction. For Delhi especially, where every square foot is contested, these developments do more than save land — they restore time, cut traffic, and give the city back its neighborhood.

Located in the socially thriving pocket of Malviya Nagar in South Delhi, the Eldeco Centre designed by Design Forum International shapeshifts into an active social arena with retail and entertainment from a highly efficient office environment. With its completion in 2024, the Eldeco Centre has become a preferred destination for the urban youth demographic of the city. Spread over a three-acre campus, the hub blends the requirement of modern-day workplace efficiency with the accessibility of a retail and community environment. The large footfall enables higher visibility for the retail and commerce half of the master plan, making it an active marketplace. The Eldeco Centre sits between the Saket and Malviya Nagar Metro Stations—two active junctions catering to a large young population commuting routinely. The Eldeco campus also neighbours the Rai Pithora Qila, a heritage fort just a stone's throw away. The sandstone materiality of this fort is also mirrored in the overall materiality of the centre.

INTEGRATING FUNCTIONALITY OF A WORKPLACE INTO RECREATIONAL DEMANDS OF A RETAIL SPACE

The planning of Eldeco Centre tactfully segregates its functional requirements. A system that accommodates easy vertical circulation is designed to allow for smooth and efficient mobility. Column-free spaces—the active store frontage on the ground level—are planned to keep the space flexible and adaptable. The retail spaces, overlooking the central water body, elevate the shopping experience. A grand triple-height reception area welcomes visitors, exuding an atmosphere of elegance and spaciousness. The workspaces, isolated on the top floors, spill over into the courtyard to view the central plaza. At the same time, their privacy is not compromised by mixing its functionality with common, interactive areas on the lower floors. Shaded double-height corridors protect from the sun, ensuring a comfortable environment for shoppers during the daytime. These corridors also create a visually appealing and inviting atmosphere, drawing visitors into the retail areas.

WEAVING THE ELEMENT OF SUSTAINABILITY INTO THE MASTER PLAN

The Eldeco Centre's design anchors around the central water feature, with the frontages of all three faces opening onto it. The courtyard creates its own microclimate with interactive levels, strategic greening, and a water feature. The centre-open design maximises daylight ingress for not only the rooms on the ground level but also the cornered spaces of the basements.

The built form, extending itself with a pedestrian walkway on the southwest face, maintains a shaded trail through the days.





1. ENTRY
2. EXIT
3. GURAD ROOM
4. PARKING ENTRY
5. DMRC PARKING
6. AUTO STAND
7. METRO STATION
8. AMPHITHEATRE
9. WATER BODY
10. EVENT LAWN
11. RAMP IN
12. RAMP OUT
13. DROP-OFF/ PICKUP

SITE PLAN

The triple-coated window panes, acting on similar lines to maximise daylight dependence, keep the interior temperature in check. Eldeco Centre holds a LEED certification for sustainable development through conscious interventions like these. The central plaza, sitting atop underground water pipelines, tactfully provided an expansive open arena—an uncommon but widely desired feature in semi-public spaces in urban centres.

AN ARCHITECTURAL VOCABULARY THAT IS REFLECTIVE OF ITS CONTEXT

The area nearby respects the heritage of the Rai Pithora Fort and has evolved around it. As a historical homage, the design of this mixed-use development draws from the fort's legacy and integrates it into the high-efficiency model of a contemporary office and commercial complex. The building's primary facade, clad in rugged stone, modernises the connection to the neighbouring fort, making for an intriguing streetscape.

PRESENTING A SOLUTION BEYOND THE DEMANDS OF A WORKPLACE OR ENTERTAINMENT ARENA

Densely populated urban centres have persistently overlooked the need for a semi-public community space as the city changes. The Eldeco Centre, by offering work, play, and retail in the same setting, addresses the need for a convenience-first social hub for the community to come together. By planning for a space that fosters interaction, the community-mindedness of the Eldeco Centre sets itself apart from the neighbourhood mixed-use developments. ✚

FACTFILE

Typology: Mercantile **Client/Developer:** Eldeco **Project:** Eldeco Center, New Delhi
Principal Architect: Goonmeet Singh Chauhan
Design Team: Harish, Jimmi, Himanshu **Site Area:** 131524.22 sq ft
Built-Up Area: 352358.1 sq ft **Completion Year:** April 2024

