25 Years OF Taste Timeless Style

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An example of clean inimitable design characteristic of Paradise Road

From a little store down Flower Road in 1987, to restaurants, a chic city boutique hotel, a resort hotel, and five retail stores, narrates the Paradise Road story. While earning high praise from numerous lifestyle connoisseurs both locally and internationally, to date Paradise Road remains true to the mantra behind its success, ‘taste, timeless, style’.

Words Prasadini Nanayakkara Photographs Menaka Aravinda and Indika De Silva

Paradise Road, a lifestyle brand that resonates across all of its ventures is one that has been nurtured by its proprietor, Shanth Fernando since the opening of the first retail store 25 years ago. He furthered his signature style that can be defined by its neutral colour palette of black and white and transforming local crafts with a touch of sophistication. “It’s all about how you live. People don’t keep changing their interiors. There is a calming and soothing aspect in using a neutral palette, and

colour is brought in from the objects added," explained Shanth Fernando on the doctrine of Paradise Road that culminates to, "incomparable stlye, timeless design and good taste."

The Paradise Road store that was established at Dharmapala Mawatha comprise of products handpicked or designed by its proprietor. Clean white ceramics, ceramics with the Sinhala alphabet and Batik designs of black and white stripes have become Paradise Road classics. The retail stores introduced his distinct flair of restraint that he abides by with the belief that "less is more". Over time the ever-evolving range of products made locally or imported remains much sought-after for the inimitable flair they bring to homes, hotels and resorts. "I only compete with myself, I travel the world, find inspiration and create work for people here in Sri Lanka," states Shanth Fernando.

This innate sensitivity in taste is reflected in all other ventures that followed beginning with the Paradise Road Galleries and The Gallery Café. The Café remains as one of the foremost restaurants in the city where "it's all about serving good food," says Fernando, simply. With the choicest offerings of international fusion cuisine the Gallery Café soon became known for its selection of desserts. "The restaurant is very people oriented. I go from table to table, and I am very much a part of this restaurant. My desk is any table here, I do not sit in an office," he adds. Furthermore, The Gallery serves as a platform for established and emerging Sri Lankan artists.

While the retail stores expanded to five in total with Design Ware House having opened most recently, Paradise Road has also found its niche in the hospitality industry. The first hotel, Tintagel opened its doors as the chic boutique hotel in the city. A heritage structure that has been tastefully transformed in Paradise Road taste, Tintagel comprises of individually designed suites and has earned its place as a special choice of accommodation amongst discerning and corporate travellers. This was followed by Villa Bentota in 2009. Originally, an ancestral home converted to a boutique hotel by renowned architect Geoffrey Bawa, Villa Bentota has been sensitively refurbished by Shanth Fernando to its present state. Housed within the 'Mohotti Walauwa', The Villa offers beachside respite in seclusion for travellers in its individually designed rooms and suites. "We do not experiment with people, we are genuine about what we offer," stresses Shanth Fernando of his many ventures.

While reflecting on realising a single-minded vision he further attributes his success to meticulous attention to detail. "It is said that God is in the details and I am very

focused in what I do, I have wonderful people who work for me, and I have no regrets.” While Paradise Road has come a long way from its first retail store, Shanth Fernando continues to look to the future in defining lifestyle. “When opportunity knocks, I answer,” he says.

For more information visit paradiseroad.lk

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