

Paradise Road Design Ware House: Pieces Of Eternity

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A view of the timeless pieces on display

Turn in from a bustling Ward Place into a faraway land, where temple trees and furred palms adorn a haven of ancient quaintness. Once you've been acquainted with the life-size Tang horses and the giant rustic jars at the entrance, everything else from there on is timeless.

Words Sonali Kadurugamuwa Photographs Menaka Aravinda Mahesh Prasantha

Paradise Road has been around for over 23 years and is acclaimed for its intuitive eye for the ware that abounds in its boutique store spaces. One such place is the Design Ware House at Ward Place, yet another lifestyle expression of Shanth

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Fernando's designs. Nestled within an intriguingly picturesque cavity just off the bustling main road, previously an old Colombo home and also a signature Geoffrey Bawa creation, now transformed into a modern space with an air of antiquity, by Paradise Road.

Inside lies a flow of contrasts – on the ground floor there is an almost sacred atmosphere from that of the modernity, which swathes the top floor. Giant woven baskets rise above antique-style cabinets and samara washed walls and polished cement floors only add richness to the miniature jade green lions, grand brusque vases and tall glass candle stands, all in one breath. Everything, from the smiling white horses beyond the luring incense fragrances, the vibrant shades of distinct wooden tables, to large and storied leather trunks, the Design Ware House was in bloom with treasures that were indeed unique, simple and as atypical as the 'Food Trunk' sitting unassumingly atop a 'Tibetan Cabinet,' further into the store.

The top floor housed the warmth of wooden floors with the contemporary cool of steel, glass, wood and leather furniture. The large spacious leather couches, freshly worked glass tables, the ambient pleasure on faces of customers as they trial rested on the furniture or swept their fingers along the sparkling glass over wrought iron frames, exuded volumes to the intensity of emotion serenading throughout the spaces.

Windows open from the top to the bottom floor, for a view, which once again beckons another rendezvous with its earthy allure. A second visit to the space from where the journey first began sprouts new items, ones that may have been missed through the inimitability of others... wooden lamps, meek white rabbits amongst 'Distressed Gold Mirrors' or perhaps the blue and white hand painted Ming vases with a name label, which read 'Happiness Vase.' I couldn't have described the Design Ware House any better... with a million and one things to say in depiction of its exuberance – I left feeling only 'Happiness.'

Paradise Road Design Ware House is one of six lifestyle outlets by Shanth Fernando; the boutique hotel Villa Bentota, Paradise Road, Gallery Café, Tintagel Colombo and Paradise Road Gift Boutique...each one with its own share of timeless paradise.

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