

Women
Entrepreneur
India

TOP 10 WOMEN IN
INTERIOR DESIGN - 2021



**NEHA ARORA N,
FOUNDER, NEHA ARORA N DESIGN**

Neha is India's leading co-living and hospitality interior designer, who designs for both private and corporate real estate clients. She specializes in Co-living Spaces, Student Living, Senior Living, Service Apartments and Boutique Hotels & Resorts.

**DESIGN MOTTO: "ALL
YOU NEED IS FOUR
WALLS AND A WHOLE
LOT OF PIXIE DUST"**

NEHA ARORA N

DESIGNING MAGICAL
SPACES THAT
TRANSPORT PEOPLE TO
ANOTHER WORLD!

"All you need is four walls, and a whole lot of pixie dust" says Neha Arora N.

Neha Arora N is India's leading co-living and hospitality interior designer, who uses her pixie dust. i.e. her magical touches to design spaces that transport people to another world. She specializes in designing Co-Living Spaces, Student Living, Senior Living, Service Apartments and Boutique Hotels & Resorts. She is one of the first designers to set the new rules for the coliving industry, changing the concept of urban accommodation in India, and is also a frequent global panelist, speaker and guest lecturer. Neha believes in creating, not just beautiful, but magical spaces.

To know more about her, read this exclusive interview between her and Women Entrepreneur.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR PRIOR INDUSTRY EXPERIENCE BEFORE FOUNDING NEHA ARORA N. HOW AND WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO TAKE THE ENTREPRENEURIAL ROUTE TO ESTABLISH THE INTERIOR DESIGN FIRM?

Well, it was certainly not a 'planned' transition to becoming an entrepreneur. I always had a passion for interior designing but never took the conventional method of becoming one. I am an Economics graduate, who went on to do post-graduation in Mass Communications, following a corporate career. But as it turned out, life had different plans for me.

An acquaintance who knew about my lifelong passion and skills for interior design, asked me to do it professionally, for his upcoming project. Before I knew it, I was neck deep into

designing one coliving space after the other, and there has been no looking back ever since.

CAN YOU TELL US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOUR DESIGN MOTTO – “ALL YOU NEED IS FOUR WALLS AND A WHOLE LOT OF PIXIE DUST”?

Pixie Dust is the magical dust used by Pixies and Fairies to create Magic.

I believe that your space cannot just be beautiful. It has to be MAGICAL. It has to transport you and your guests to another world - a world of fantasy and dreams and escape from reality. It has to mesmerize and emotionally move them. People want escapism, and every space you design, should provide that. Especially in hospitality design.

That's why I tell my clients – “Give me your four walls, let me sprinkle some of my pixie dust i.e my magical touches and watch me transform your space and transport your guests to another world.”

THROW SOME LIGHT ON THE VARIOUS ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES THAT YOU CURRENTLY HANDLE AS THE FOUNDER OF THE FIRM. WHAT ARE SOME OF THE MOST CHALLENGING ASPECTS OF YOUR CURRENT ROLE?

As any founder will attest, the role is to wear many different hats and knowing which hat to wear when!

As the leading designer in Coliving, where budgets are fairly limited, the biggest challenge is to find creative ways to give the most Instagrammable designs at an affordable cost.

TELL US ABOUT SOME OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT PROJECTS THAT YOU HAVE WORKED ON?

One of the Key Projects that I have designed, from inception to date, is 'FF21' - a leading coliving brand for millennials in India. And presently I'm working on a 700 beds project for a to-be-launched Student Housing brand called 'Ivy League House' by Curated Living Solutions, backed by the Divyasree Group.

HOW DO YOU KEEP YOURSELF ALIGNED WITH THE VARIOUS TRENDS AND TECHNOLOGIES DEVELOPING IN THE INTERIOR DESIGN INDUSTRY?

While Design Magazines, Pinterest and Instagram are great sources, for me, my design inspirations are greatly influenced by my Travels. From Swiss Chalets to Danish Hygge Homes; Scandinavian Chic to Parisian Splendor; Tuscan countryside to English Cottages; they all inspire me to create work that

transports people to different parts of the world.

GIVEN THE TIME-CONSUMING NATURE OF YOUR ROLE, HOW DO YOU STRIKE A BALANCE BETWEEN YOUR WORK AND PERSONAL LIFE? ARE THERE ANY ACTIVITIES OR HOBBIES THAT YOU ENJOY



INDULGING IN WHEN NOT WORKING?

It's important to maintain that balance and I strictly adhere to it. I have a 'no work' on weekends policy and I communicate the same to my clients. This way, I get my personal time on weekends and strike the work-life balance.

Besides, I am an avid pursuer of the creative arts. They keep me motivated and creative. I am a trained Latin & classical dancer, racquet sports player, neuroscience maven, voracious reader, music addict and love travelling the world.

WHAT APPROACH DO YOU TAKE WHILE WORKING ON A NEW PROJECT?

I design spaces using what I call the '5 I's of Design':

1. Inspiration or Story; 2. Instagrammable; 3. Immersive; 4. Inclusive; 5. Inviting.

WHAT WOULD BE YOUR WORDS OF ADVICE FOR WOMEN ASPIRING TO BECOME BUSINESS LEADERS IN THE INTERIOR DESIGN SPACE?

Be Sweet & Strong. Use both your feminine powers (creativity, empathy, grace, intuition) and masculine energies (assertive, focused, visionary, practical) to succeed as business leaders in the interior design space. The power lies in balancing your YIN & YANG. [WFA](#)

