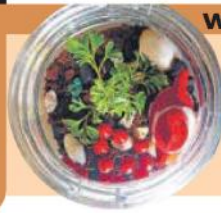


# htestates

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## LOBBYING FOR SUCCESS

When it comes to luxury projects trying to make an impression, the fun now starts right at the entrance

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There's nothing like a great first impression. India's real-estate developers know this only too well. This explains why lobbies in the city's plush upcoming projects are getting ever grander.

A lobby or an entrance area (often a hall or atrium) is the first thing a visitor or prospective buyer encounters when visiting a building. So developers know they have one shot at making sure your jaw drop, and are going to considerable lengths to make the areas as impressive as possible.

From crystal-studded ceilings and vertical water installations to world-class interiors and air-conditioned insides that take up nearly four floors, lobbies in some luxury projects are now more than just waiting areas. For developers the idea is to create larger-than-life spaces to draw prospective buyers and make an impression on their guests and visitors for years to come.

Ramesh Nair, chief operating officer, business, and international director at realty consultancy, JLL India, says that a lobby offers a "pull factor" or a big draw for those entering.

"Even more so in the premium and luxury segments," he adds. "Home buyers want a welcoming atmosphere right from the word 'go'. Lobbies are obviously the first port of call."

### FIRST LOOK

Nishant Agarwal, managing director of Avighna Group says that a majestic lobby not only gives a preview of what is to come, but also leaves a memorable impact on the visitor. He would know. The lobby of the 61-storey twin towers at One Avighna Park in Parel has an illuminated ceiling laden with 54,450 crystals sourced from Egypt. The installation stretches across 1.7km, weighs 5.5 tonnes and was created by DHA Design Services, a London company that also helped redesign the entrance for that city's iconic Victoria & Albert Museum.

"The idea was to give residents and visitors a 'wow' feeling the moment they stepped in," says Agarwal. It took nearly four months to complete.

In Worli, The Ahuja Towers, a 53-storey project, has a lobby lounge that features a 28-foot-high water installation that goes from ceiling to floor. It is designed by New York-based Wilson Associates (who also worked on the Atlantis Hotel lobby in the UAE) and not only looks striking, but also reduces



(Top) The lobby of One Avighna Park in Parel has an illuminated ceiling laden with 54,450 crystals sourced from Egypt. (Above) Lodha's World Towers in Lower Parel has white-gold-finish detailing.

the temperature of the lobby, saving energy.

The lobby also doubles as a lounge. "There are comfy chairs, sofas and television screens so guests have plenty to do while waiting for residents," says a spokesperson of Ahuja.

### OPULENT, UNIQUE

Another factor that has led to the increased grandeur of entrance lobbies is the allowance given by the Municipal Corporation's development control rules. "The lobby is free up to a height of 7.2 metres and is not included in the FSI of a project," says Mumbai-based architect Carl Bhesania. He says that developers are making the

most of this allowance to give an impressive first-look to projects.

So when homes cost upwards of Rs 4 crore, how can a lobby reflect that luxury? With amenities that match the opulence. The 48-storey Indiabulls Sky has a 48-foot quadruple-height lobby with local and international art works and installations. There's also a gourmet restaurant and deli for residents and visitors.

The Lodha Group has roped in a Milan-based interior design company Armani/Casa for their double-height lobby at The World Towers in Lower Parel. The décor in the entry zone features white gold plating, marble-paste-finished

walls and a luxury-on-call concierge service.

In Bandra-Kurla Complex, Rustomjee Oriana's lobby offers premium concierge services. The lobby staff can make restaurant reservations and travel plans, manage spa appointments and at-home services. Oriana's 3,300-square-foot gallery-like lobby has been designed by Singapore interior designer David Tay. It also houses a lounge, a recording studio and a coffee shop.

"When residents of luxury projects expect the best, our challenge is to exceed their expectations through exclusivity," says Percy Chowdhry,

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RAMESH NAIR,  
chief operating officer,  
JLL India

director, Rustomjee Group. He adds that Oriana's services influence the decision-making process for buyers.

The newfound focus on creating imposing lobbies serves a twin purpose. It impresses buyers as well as serves as a vibrant socialising zone for residents. "Developers are borrowing the concept from 5-star hotels, where a lavish lobby represent the luxury that the hotel stands for," says Pankaj Kapoor, managing director of realty research firm Iases Foras. A good lobby can become an ideal space for get-togethers among eventual residents.

A luxury home that is impressive, has world-class amenities and is a great place to chill with the neighbours – now that's exclusivity.

## PROPERTY RATES IN MUMBAI

SOUTH MUMBAI			
Location	Rate (per sq ft*)		
Colaba*	33,500 to 51,500	Borivli East 12,000 to 12,700	
Cuffe Parade	54,300 to 79,600	Mira Road East 6,900 to 7,000	
Nariman Point	60,000 to 1.2L	Vihar 4,700 to 4,800	
Churchgate*	48,400 to 65,500	Nalgaon East 4,000 to 7,000	
Marine Drive*	46,500 to 69,000	Vasai 4,900 to 4,600	
Malabar Hills	58,700 to 82,500	CENTRAL SUBURBS	
Walkeshwar	45,000 to 81,500	Location	Rate (per sq ft*)
Nepeansea Road	66,100 to 68,000	Byculla	24,000 to 25,100
Peddar Road	38,500 to 58,700	Kurla	12,200 to 13,600
Komps Corner	42,300 to 65,500	Dadar	27,400 to 28,100
Warden Road	41,000 to 79,500	Kings Circle	19,500 to 31,400
Altamount Road	54,600 to 79,500	Sion	17,100 to 18,500
Bombay Central	25,400 to 53,600	Ward Road	12,200 to 13,600
Mahalaxmi	29,200 to 30,800	Chembur	13,400 to 21,400
Worli	38,200 to 39,700	Ghatkopar East	14,400 to 15,100
Lower Parel	28,100 to 30,400	Ghatkopar West	13,500 to 21,200
Prabhadevi	33,100 to 34,100	Vikhroli	10,000 to 11,400
Shivaji Park	25,500 to 41,500	Powai	15,700 to 16,600
WESTERN SUBURBS		Kanjurmarg	10,000 to 11,000
Bandra West	33,500 to 51,600	Bhandup	10,900 to 11,200
Bandra East	25,100 to 26,300	Mulund	12,700 to 13,300
Khar East	35,900 to 37,500	Thane	7,500 to 15,700
Khar West	35,900 to 37,500	Dombivli	4,900 to 11,200
Santacruz East	15,800 to 30,000	Kalyan	4,200 to 8,100
Santacruz West	46,200 to 48,200	Ambarnath	3,500 to 4,500
Vile Parle East	25,000 to 42,000	Badlapur	2,600 to 4,300
Vile Parle West	24,400 to 35,600	NAVI MUMBAI	
Andheri West	18,000 to 19,100	Location	Rate (per sq ft*)
Andheri East	14,500 to 24,000	Vashi	11,800 to 12,900
Goregan East	13,200 to 21,900	Airoli	8,200 to 9,100
Goregan West	13,300 to 14,300	Kopar Khairano	9,400 to 10,500
Malad West	12,500 to 23,000	Sarapada	12,000 to 13,600
Kandivli West	11,800 to 18,100	Nerul	10,100 to 11,200
Kandivli East	10,600 to 11,900	CBD Belapur	8,300 to 9,300
Borivli West	12,500 to 22,500	Kharghar	6,900 to 7,700
		Kaiamboli	4,500 to 5,600
		Panvel	5,200 to 5,300

Source: Proptiger.com  
1) These are asking rates for properties on primary and secondary sale, and not transacted rates.  
2) The rates may vary depending on market conditions.  
3) Range of values varying depending on the building, location, amenities provided, floor, view from the apartment and age of the building.  
\* Pagn/old tenancy deals are dominant in these micro markets