

Getaway



Reviving Rural Art

Add a rejuvenating weekend to the annual conference this year at the Nalanda Conference Centre.

I sha Yoga Centre at the foothills of the captivating Vellaiangiri hills in Coimbatore, is fast spreading its premises and the latest addition to their artistic Ashram is the Nalanda Conference Centre — with a difference. The head honchos can be accompanied by their families to this exotic locale! It combines facilities that of a retreat and can conduct closed-door meets of upto 30 members.

Surrounded by the hill view, the conference centre is available for executive meets, official conferences and top level managerial meetings. Apart from nature helping one unwind and heal

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even on an official chore, the centre has the advantage of an adjacent rejuvenation and wellness centre that offers Ayurvedic massages and short-term packages as effective treatments. Indeed the proximity to the Dhyana Linga temple as well as the river side forest treks and zero-level pollution are perks of the exceptional package.

Sadhguru Sri Jaggi Vasudev, the founder of Isha Yoga Centre, has a vivid vision for his centre. His accent is on the revival of rural art which he has emphasized and executed in his ashram brilliantly. He has always taken the lead to draw up the plan and design of all projects in the premises of the 100 acres that belong to the ashram. Isha's creative team along with architect Karthik Associates have executed the project that has 25 air-conditioned rooms, 20 deluxe, a presidential suite and two



executive rooms supported by balcony sit-outs, opening to the awesome mountain view that ensures a healing holiday.

Approach to the Nalanda Centre is set with a stone and sleeper wood pathway through granite columns. Accent cove lighting on the fringes light up the way. The compound wall is set artistically in uneven granite slabs with wrought-iron rods set upon them flaring like fire. Bougainvillea that frames the entrance door gives the feel of a farm house.

While the Chairman's suite and deluxe rooms are planned downstairs, two executive



rooms are at the higher level. There is a contrived bridge on the top floor leading to the terrace where one could lounge with the evening *chai* gazing at the setting sun behind the thickets. Isha's design wing has customized the structure right from the grilles to furniture. It is fascinating to see the blend of materials — an inane wrought-iron door finds the creative use of jute plaits woven into them. Vegetable dye paintings are found extensively as wall art in Isha structures. The executive rooms, too, have vegetable dye painted at the headstead along with terracotta tiles. Each room follows a theme and the Indian rural art gets a fascinating revival as decor accent here — for example, ceramics





are embellished with *kolam* patterns.

Chairman's block has a courtyard, a private dining and formal sitting area, it also has an attached sun room to chill after a bath. The terracotta tiles, brass *urlis*, rough granite with optimized utility combined with aesthetics add to the rustic ambiance.

Flow of varied flooring material lends a different feel to the feet – granite (rough and smooth) and wood make for a unique under-foot experience. The dining tables clustered near the formal reception stand out with geometrical patterns lending a contemporary feel to the otherwise traditional ambiance. Candlelight dinners organized here impart a touch of the exotic.

