



*Designers are primarily known to utilise materials that are both functional and malleable. Hence if the material in question is natural stone, I wonder to what limits you can endorse it as a supple component of the creative order.*

My doubts are put to rest by our specialist of the month Ruchika Grover, the Director for Business and Design Development at Odyssey.





# CAST IN STONE

TEXT BY VIKAS BHADRA

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Ruchika begins to tell us how she was interested in stone and its applications since her early childhood days. "Trading of granite and marble blocks was a family business and I travelled extensively with my father to most of the quarries and stone processing units all over the world. When I came back from my studies, I explored the various available options for value addition to stone. My sister, Shruti, joined me soon after and together we dabbled in carving, sculpting, creating murals and exploring a variety of different stones. Supported by my father's experience, Odyssey was born."



Odyssey was conceived in 2006 by Mr. Ajay Grover of NATCO Exports. It was launched as its domestic arm, positioned to undertake turnkey projects of stone supply and fixing. It also offered services such as exterior and interior stone floor installations, exterior dry cladding, stone restoration services, made-to-order products in gemstones and continued to grow with an increasingly diversified portfolio. Since then, Odyssey has come a long way; today it partners on large projects collaborating with architects and designers from across the world.

Ruchika's work over the last 6 years has enabled her to understand the vast varieties of stone available and use it in a manner that highlights its natural beauty. She works towards helping architects and interior designers realise the immense possibilities that exist. Ruchika's work speaks volumes about her devotion to innovation in design. Today, Odyssey is known for its hardscape projects for Pune's Hyatt Regency, The Ritz Carlton, Bangalore, The Indira Gandhi International Airport, Terminal 3, New Delhi, Kempinski, Shahdra and even for an awe inspiring 32-foot-high pylon for a bio-diversity park in Hyderabad.

To ensure best practice, Ruchika keeps herself abreast with the latest technology and trends. An 1,800 sq m production facility is strategically located at Noida within close proximity to Rajasthan - the epicentre for raw stone block processing. Odyssey has made significant investment in the purchase of 3-axis and 5-axis interpolated CNC machines at its Noida production facility along with water-jet machines, laser-etching machines and stone finishing equipment.





This ensures easy handling of multiple projects simultaneously, whilst guaranteeing timely delivery. "Our firm belief in R&D, state-of-the-art machinery, skilled artisans and an extremely enthusiastic design and development team has helped us become a market leader in the natural stone domain within a short span of time," says Ruchika proudly.

Today, Ruchika is focussed on expanding in newer markets, both within India and internationally. "Each day is a challenge," says Ruchika "With hundreds of varieties of stone available in India and abroad, we are continuously experimenting to produce novel designs. Our collections are representative of our design ethos and we strongly believe in recognizing the talent of Indian craftsmanship; it inspires us and motivates us to dream of endless possibilities," she signs off.



**Odyssey**  
Natco Exports Pvt Ltd  
A-106, Sector - 5,  
Noida 201301, UP,  
+91 120 4279256  
info@odysseystone.com  
www.odysseystone.com