

# The Sorcerer of CARPETS

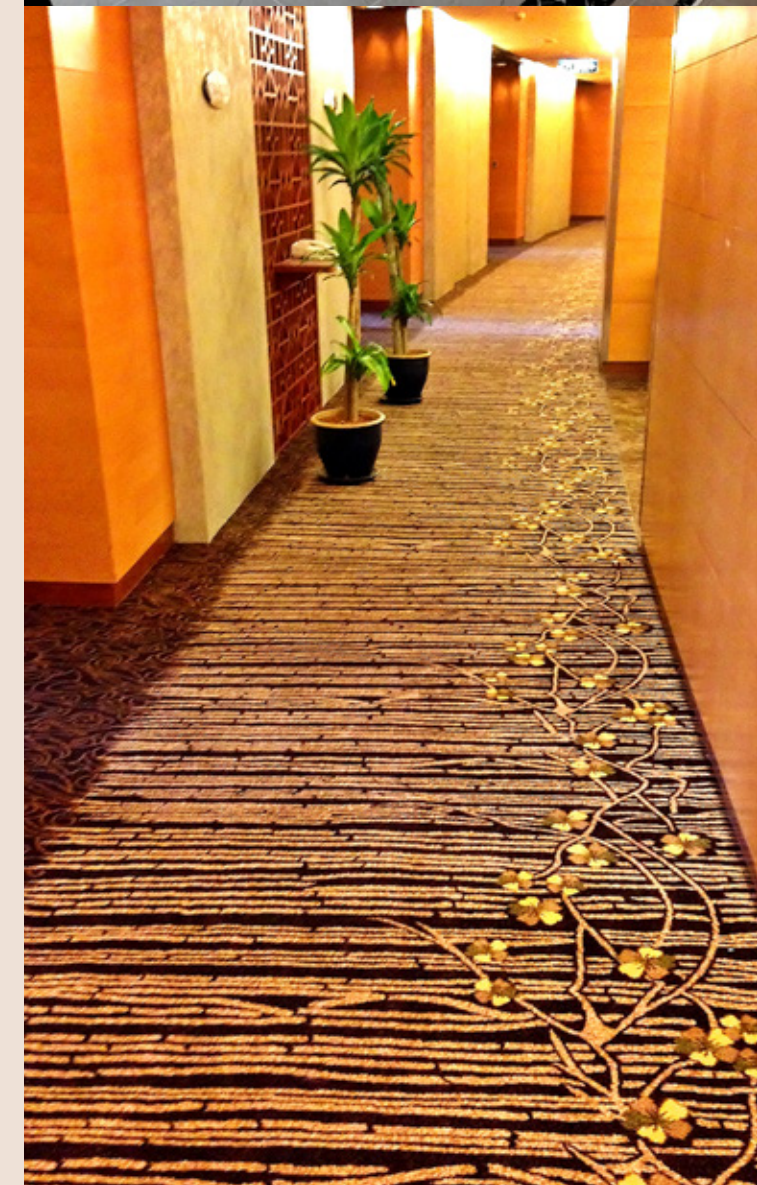
## ARSHIYA GAUHAR

Insigne Carpets, a name with global admiration under the guidance of CEO, Asif Rahman's fine eyes has been an important factor in uplifting the spirit of grand places like Taj Pierre, New York, La Samaritan by LVMH in Paris, Salalah International Airport, Muscat, Oman and many more landmark hotels and palaces.

Combining the age-old craft with latest technology, the Insigne Carpets delivers the upbeat, stylish and luxe array of carpets to resonate with the project requirement. Be it traditional Persian hand Knotted carpets or computerised yarn placement broadloom carpets, the company offers a plethora of products along with adopting the sustainable techniques to create a healthy future. And when it comes to service, the team starts from the scratch to create bespoke designs and deliver a smooth installation, again making the grand names of the industry bow to them.

**With a range of upcoming projects in the bag, Insigne Carpets and Asif Rahman are looking forward to the year to deliver their expertise in the world. In a brief chat with us, the CEO gave us an overview of how the company with a global presence works and establish a foothold with visionary moves:**

**Tell us about your company Insigne Carpets.** Insigne Carpet started with the idea to service the design community. Companies like IKEA, Walmart and other US and Europe based companies, made India as a hub to procure their rug. When I found that there is a vacuum because the Indian rug manufacturers do not understand the need of an architect or an interior designer because they are not habituated to go by the brief or a moodboard, we decided, we'll become the custom carpet manufacturing company and serve the design community. We started the journey and over a period of time our entire field became tuned to understand the body language of an architect and interior designer. We became a project driven carpet manufacturer. When we connected with China, we were able to adopt the technology, new techniques and other methods they were following. Being a local company with global knowledge, we were able to establish ourselves across the world and successfully operated to incorporate architecture into carpet manufacturing.







### What were the initial challenges you faced while establishing your company?

Since no one knew us so no one was ready to listen to us. That definitely is the biggest challenge of any startup. The second challenge was understanding the designer requirement. A designer's idea is a whole world of imagination and coping up with their imagination was another challenge.

### How does the designing of the carpets vary with the area of use?

Most of the industries are working on the design prospective which is predominantly focused on Photoshop, CorelDraw. But we design carpets on a software called Axure. Moreover, each carpet is designed according to the specification. If we're designing a carpet for a corridor of Taj Mahal Mumbai then we go by the dimension. The challenge on the designing part is the repeat of the pattern across the corridor should be in sync with the side measurement of Taj Mahal Mumbai. It is not just sitting on a computer and designing a carpet. We know exactly the measurement of our project. At the same time you try to understand the mood board given by the designer and come up with several options. Then we pick one and go ahead with it. Designing is completely dependent on location because one carpet is not good for every location.

### Going ahead with sustainable living, how is Insigne Carpets incorporating an eco-friendly framework in the manufacturing spectrum?

It's a very powerful concept across the world but in India, the concept is yet to come to the ground level. Across the world this is a major subject that we have to follow and that's the reason we collected all possible certifications proving that we are able to produce green carpets. We tuned our own mill with solar panels, water recycling plants and followed all possible norms that should be followed. Moreover, we are using 70 percent of our raw materials which are renewed and reusable fibres. We are also taking our product through a green certification process which is guided by the US Green Building Council and National Sanitation Foundation of America.

### What are the challenges that any carpet manufacturer faces today?

The major challenge is adopting the new technology. We were not very tech-savvy. When the COVID hit the world, we were cut off from the whole world because buyers were not visiting India and no trade fairs were happening. The biggest challenge that India faced was with the digital communication and connecting customer and manufacturer on a web platform. Down the line these industries are very unorganised with low education levels. Though the ownership is quite educated and modern, connecting the industry to the world on a digital platform was a challenge.

### Which project till date has been your favourite? Which is the most appreciated project?

If I have to choose one then I go back to only two projects which I had to look after personally; Taj Pierre, New York and La Samaritan Paris by LVMH (Louis Vuitton). When I was

Combining the age old art with modern technology, Insigne Carpets is a one stop destination for luxe carpets.







involved in the Taj Pierre with David Edward I got to see the layout of the hotel building which was very critical. Then the particular carpet they have chosen was fine hand knotted carpet which is always used as a rug. So, we had to manufacture looms which can make such huge carpets and everything went through customization to suit the process. When we started working in the Louis Vuitton hotel in Paris, a heritage building inaugurated in 1870, we were baffled for about two month whether to do a hand crafted carpet or a hand dusted carpet. Then we finally had to hybrid two different qualities into one to manufacture the carpet for LVMH.

Coming to the project that garnered huge applause, it would be Salalah International Airport Muscat in Oman. It has received very high appreciation from the Communication department of the Sultanate of Oman.

**Please give us an overview of how the company goes for any of the projects. What are some of your upcoming projects?**

When we get approached by a designer the very first question goes what is your budget. After getting a financial number, we see the mood board to estimate what kind of design they want. Once we have the design and the budget, we do the R&D and the specification that can be aligned between the aesthetic and the price quoted by the buyer. Then we do the designing part, followed by sampling. Moving forward, we go for all the tests that's required. If it's Europe they need PSL F1 for the fire, in the US some other certification is needed, so we send the product to the various laboratories across the world as they are not in India. Once we tick the budget, the compliance, the design, the colour then we get the final view and start the production.

Talking about the upcoming endeavours of the company, we are doing all the showroom across the world for Chanel. We are doing a couple of hotel projects across the globe and have just been involved with Marriott in America.

**Any advice for someone starting out after COVID hit the world?**

My first advice would be to learn about the Industry and get people onboard who can really work. Don't jump into the industry just because you have the money and this is the profit making industry. You should be clear about the part of the pie you are eyeing on. You can't have a 360 degree approach on day one. You should be the master of the subject because there's no place to have a childish play. This industry is tricky because India is a very unorganised sector to carpet so knowing the tricks of the trade is not something to achieve in a one or two month of time. ✍

Insigne Carpets,  
weaving the magical  
designs.