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Wood-finish to your walls

By Sangeetha G Mar 30 2011 , Chennai
 Tags: wood, Fashion and style

With new cladding materials available in the market, one can get a complete wood-like look to exterior walls

From the rustic houses of yore to sophisticated houses of modern times, wood has always been a part of construction. After wooden floors and wood-clad interiors, now you can extend the wood finish to your exterior walls too.

Exterior walls need not necessarily be made of wood, but with the latest materials available in the market, they can easily acquire the charm of wood.

"Getting a wood-like exterior is a trend that is catching on fast. There are basically two popular brands of wood-finish claddings available in the market — Shera and Fundermax," says Dameem Ansari, chief architect, Ansari Architects, Associates & Interior Designers.

Shera is a cement board with a wood-like grainy surface. Once it is coated with enamel paint, it provides a wooden finish. Fundermax, on the other hand, is a pre-finished cladding made of composite materials, and can easily pass off as wood even if looked at closely.

Shera is priced around Rs 150 per sq ft, but after painting the cost rises to about Rs 200 per sq ft. Fundermax is priced higher, around Rs 500 per sq ft, but does not need any painting. However, Shera demands greater maintenance than Fundermax, like repainting after five years.

Both types of cladding come with metal frames that are fixed to the wall. Compared with aluminum cladding, the material is scratchproof and will not bend with time. It is also waterproof and hence resistant to algae and fungus. An added advantage is that it does not attract much dust and can easily be cleaned using water.

Ansari adds, "The manufacturers give a durability guarantee of 30-40 years. Although the metal frame, made of iron, is susceptible to corrosion, it can be replaced easily."

These claddings also reduce the amount of heat coming inside the house compared with aluminum or glass. An air cavity between the wall and the cladding provides insulation for the interiors. The reflective heat is also negligible, says Ansari.

Getting these wooden finish exteriors would definitely prove to be heavier on the pocket than normal brick walls. But compared with aluminum and glass cladding, Shera is at least Rs 100 per sq ft cheaper. However, it is costlier than stone cladding.

Wooden finish exteriors are commonly used in European countries. In India, they are being increasingly used to clad the gates of residential complexes, as well as capturing the fancy of people with individual homes. zz

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