

## Kangana Ranaut gives us a tour of her queen-sized mountain retreat in Manali

The Manali mansion of Kangana Ranaut, designed by Shabnam Gupta, is the ultimate party house!

Greg Foster | May 2, 2018



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*Kangana Ranaut in the living room of her Manali mountain retreat—the chequered armchair and the cast-iron table are from Peacock Life, the furniture label of Shabnam Gupta, who designed the house. The carpet is from Jaipur Rugs. Ranaut’s attire and accessories are all Dior*

### Kangana Ranaut: the Mountain Girl

It’s 5.30am on the tarmac at Mumbai’s Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport and I’m about to nod off, when I glimpse a bus approaching the plane. Inside, there are just two people, one of whom must be Kangana, I think blearily, knowing we are on the same flight to Chandigarh, and then to Manali, to shoot her at home in the Himalayas. I watch her stylist fix her hair inside, just before her dramatic exit from the now incongruous bus. She ascends the stairs with her hands in her pockets, wearing a green fur coat and a

matching Hermès Kelly, channelling Victoria Beckham at Heathrow arrivals—except, no one is looking but me. It’s strangely intimidating.

I'm travelling economy, and I know from her rider that she's in either 1A or 1F, so there's no possibility of any awkward, it's-too-early-for-this hellos. She saves that for Chandigarh, where her bodyguard looks at me suspiciously as I approach her. When she eventually recognizes me, she has that same... candidness, for which she is known and loved. She tells me she came to the airport straight from Olive, where she had been partying with fellow actors.

There's more cold-shouldering when we land in Manali, and it's got nothing to do with the weather, which is glorious. Pulling her best strut, she walks straight past me into an SUV, while her stylist gets her bags, and I wait to be invited in. I'm not; there's a separate car for me, and we travel in convoy for two hours, winding our way up to Manali. So far, so Bollywood.



*The glass conservatory is located at the rear of the house; the cane sofa and single chairs are from Peacock Life. The coffee table, an upcycled cart, was also sourced from Peacock Life. The nude carpet from Jaipur Rugs accentuates the printed tiles from Bharat Floorings & Tiles. On the extreme left is a tractor counter, another upcycled product from Peacock Life*

## 2,000 Metres Above Sea Level

But something changes when we get to Kangana Heights, at 2,000 metres above sea level. Sure, there's a large gate flanked by security. And the house is huge, as you would expect it to be. But it's got that white-picket-fence charm. Kangana immediately runs upstairs to change, not at all fazed by the fact that the house looks like it's been burgled—courtesy the *AD* team, who arrived a day earlier and moved all the furniture around to get the shots they wanted.

When she comes downstairs, she's a different Kangana. Wearing a Burberry poncho (monogrammed with her initials, of course) and cashmere sweatpants, she is... comfortable. She's also house-proud, giving me the full tour with her interior designer, Shabnam Gupta, who delivered the house to her, turnkey in November 2017. "I gave Shabnam carte blanche, except for the timber ceiling in the living room, which I took a picture of in New York, and sent to her."

I'm delighted to hear that she chose Shabnam after seeing Irrfan Khan's apartment in the October 2016 issue of *AD*. "I trusted her with everything. Later in life, I imagine I'll have a clearer idea of my taste in interiors, but for now, I just wanted it finished while I was filming," says Kangana of the interiors that took nine months to install.

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The master bedroom features a classical armchair from Peacock Life, along with a Jaipur Rugs carpet; the wall scone is a customized piece acquired from Mumbai's Chor Bazaar. The bedside table and bed were designed by Gupta and built on site. The bedspread is from Ralph Lauren Home

## Manali Spelled as St. Moritz

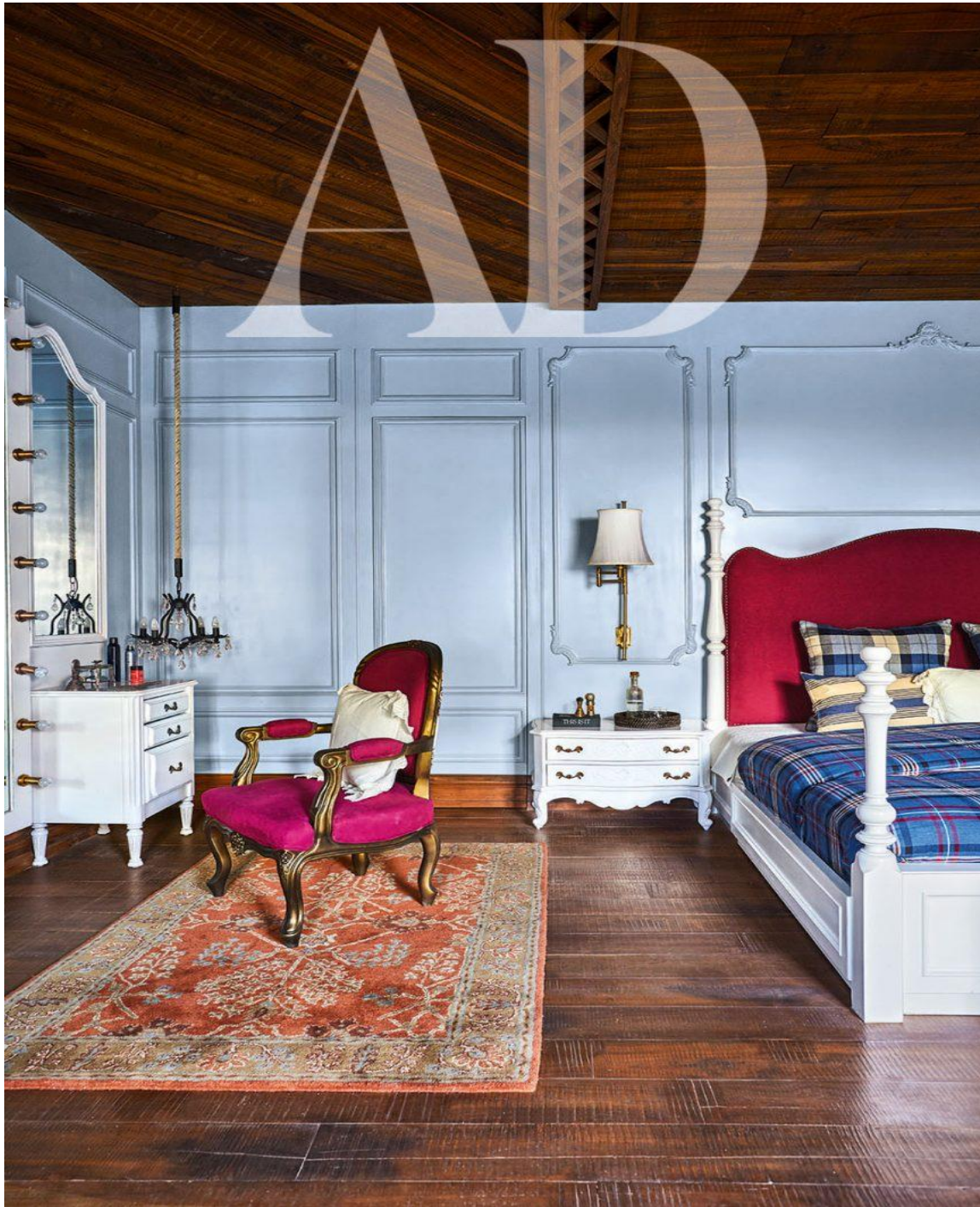
Shabnam's interiors are filled with mountain charm. Hand-painted wood panelling in the hallway looks like it belongs in St. Moritz, not Manali; there's plaid upholstery, family photos and antique shawls that double as throws. It's the definition of homey. The only giveaways that you're in the home of a major Bollywood starlet are the home gym and the cinematic snow-topped mountain views from every room, including the all-glass conservatory where Kangana chills on her own, while we finish shooting the house.

"I thought this would be a retreat but it's the ultimate party house," she says, as her assistant delivers wine, and she steps behind the home bar to open a bottle. It's 5pm and this marks the start of an unexpected evening of copious drinks, electric banter, and terrible relationship advice. Let's call it *Kocktails With Kangana*.

## Kangana Ranaut: Fierce & Feisty

"I used to be fiercely private. People used to think I was a witch; that I went home and my house would be filled with dead bodies. That's how few people had visited my house," she says of why we've been invited in. "I'm changing though. It's okay to be more open." Her conversation is sprinkled with references to her family, to which she is clearly close. Her father may have supervised buying the land and constructing the house, but it was only Shabnam who had a say in the interiors. "My mum prefers what she calls the 'Dubai style', with chandeliers and lots of glitz. She really wanted me to do at least one 'Dubai' room!" She has an uncle who lives at the end of the street, and her parents are two hours away. "That's close enough," she says, raising her glass to pragmatism, I assume.





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We’re sitting around a fire with the entire team: Shabnam; AD’s photographer, and stylist; and her assistant, fashion stylist and hairstylist. Even with new people in the audience, Kangana is happy to talk about the men in her life; from Karan Johar (“He says he’s going to stop talking about me, and then again he’ll be saying something new!”), to the man she claims to have had her most significant relationship with (a British doctor, who couldn’t give up his practice in London to be with her). The evening ends with her stylist—the hilarious Sanjay Kumar Dauhaliya—doing his best impression of her runway walk from the movie *Fashion*, as Kangana sits on the floor in hysterics, surprisingly unfrazzled by the fact that someone has spilt wine on her new carpet. What happens in Manali stays in Manali, I hope.

## Kangana Ranaut: Ultimate Cover Girl

Cut to day two of the shoot, which is less relaxed, with the pressure to get a spectacular cover shot. AD's Ashish Sahi looks stressed as we scout for the best location in the house. Kangana, though, is thoroughly at home, doing an early morning yoga class on her balcony. When she comes down—dressed head-to-toe in a green Gucci jumpsuit that looks like retro skiwear—she immediately tells Ashish that she wants to wrap up before lunch. Poor guy! “Cover or no cover, it’s important you have a good time,” she tells him, as she opens another bottle of wine, and he runs for cover. It’s time for *Kocktails with Kangana*, Episode II.

It feels unnatural to engage Kangana Ranaut over design, and our talk immediately turns to our love lives—or the lack of them. She asks me if I know any eligible single men. (Yes, but not for you, darling!) She’s keen to set me up with someone and lists a string of apparently eligible suitors, all of whom I know already. Once we work each other out, she asks: “Are you a mess, too?” Oh, she’s quick.

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In the entrance foyer—a set of red ‘Cinema’ chairs from Peacock Life add drama to the pastel palette, while the birdcage lighting is from The Kaleido Store in Mumbai

Ranaut’s yoga room features teak hardwood flooring, while the ceiling is in vaulted concrete. The chandelier is from Good Earth

Afterwards, we go for a team dinner. No one is spared her quick wit, and she pays everyone at the table equal attention. I can’t imagine she’s the same at Olive, where all eyes are on her. We leave for Mumbai early the next morning, but Kangana stays back. Later, I learn that she’s extended her stay till before filming on her next movie begins. She’s having some me time, and I bet she’s having a ball. In Manali, Kangana Ranaut is at home.