



Biophilic Design:

Connecting Architecture with Human Well-being

In the rush of urban life, where glass towers rise and green spaces shrink, there is a growing realisation that buildings cannot remain disconnected from nature. Biophilic design, once seen as a design trend, is now being understood as a necessity—especially in a country like India, where the relationship between people and nature has always been deeply cultural and intuitive.

At its simplest, biophilic design is about bringing nature into the spaces we inhabit. But it goes far beyond adding a few plants to an interior. It is about designing environments that mirror natural systems—spaces that allow light to filter in, air to move freely, and materials to feel tactile and

alive. It is about creating a sensory connection to the outdoors, even within dense urban settings.

In Indian architecture, this is not entirely new. Traditional homes across regions have long embraced courtyards, verandahs, jaalis, and shaded transitions that blur the line between inside and outside. These elements not only respond to climate but also create spaces that feel calm, breathable, and human. What biophilic design does today is reinterpret these ideas through a contemporary lens.



The impact on well-being is tangible. Access to daylight, views of greenery, natural ventilation, and the use of organic materials have been shown to reduce stress, improve productivity, and enhance overall mental health. In workplaces, this translates to better focus and creativity. In homes, it fosters a sense of comfort and belonging—qualities that are often overlooked in the race for efficiency.

Yet, the real challenge lies in applying these principles meaningfully, rather than superficially. True biophilic design is not about aesthetic gestures; it requires an understanding of climate, context, and user behaviour. A shaded courtyard in a hot, dry region will function very differently from a semi-open space in a humid coastal city. The design must respond accordingly.



There is also an opportunity here to rethink density. Even in compact urban housing, small interventions—like green balconies, light wells, or shared gardens—can create moments of connection with nature. These do not require large budgets, but they do require intent.

In the context of Sustainable Futures: People. Place. Planet., biophilic design sits at a powerful intersection. It prioritises people by enhancing well-being, responds to place through climate-sensitive strategies, and supports the planet by reducing dependence on artificial systems.

As our cities continue to grow, the question is not whether we can afford to design with nature, but whether we can afford not to.