

Better by design

A common thread runs through every striking piece of work – and it all starts with attention to detail. Case in point, the Toyota Yaris and the Global Vipassana Pagoda



Like all Toyotas, owning a Yaris is a fuss-free, cost-effective experience.

WHO SAYS YOU

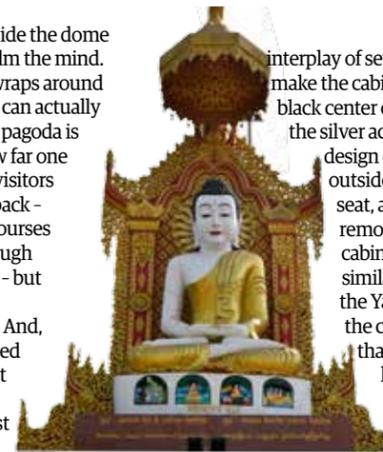
can't find peace in Mumbai? That is a misconception that needs to be corrected. There is indeed such a place that makes gives one pause, and it is about 50 km from the centre of town. If you were to set out early in the morning and drive towards Gorai, in northwest Mumbai, in a capable machine such as the Toyota Yaris, you'll find yourself at the Global Vipassana Pagoda sooner than you'd think. The resplendent pagoda is a tribute to Lord Buddha, and has been modeled after Yangon's Shwedagon Pagoda, which was among the few places in the world that preserved the non-sectarian Vipassana Meditation. You can see the pagoda's shimmering spire from afar; and once you enter it, you will discover the strength of clever engineering and design. Since one is talking about the inherent strengths of design, one can't help but draw parallels between the pagoda and the car that took us there. The sharp headlamps, the sleek combination tail lamps and those bright LED daytime running lamps make the Yaris stand out in a sea of anodyne vehicles. And that shark-fin antenna is the icing on the proverbial cake.

The pagoda's real beauty lies in the details. It is one of Asia's largest stone monuments, and contains the biggest pillar-less stone dome on Earth. The 6000 sq metre dome hall can seat about 8,000 people. Actually, there are three domes, and the second and third domes sit atop the big one. (The Buddha's corporeal relics were enshrined in the second dome in 2006.) They are all built from sandstone from Rajasthan - each individual stone block weighs some 700 kg and they are all held together, thanks to an interlocking design. The domes' considerable weight rests on a basalt foundation. The Yaris certainly can't seat that many people but clever engineering works magic both inside and outside the car. That long wheelbase and wide stance means five adults can spend several hours together in great comfort. And, like with the pagoda, several different, quality materials have gone into its construction and bolstered the design.

Vipassana is an ancient meditation technique discovered by Lord Buddha. He saw it as a remedy for universal ills. The aim of Vipassana is to discipline the mind, and cleanse it of impurities, but to do that, one needs a place, like the pagoda, that

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radiates peace. The silence inside the dome hall is deafening, and helps calm the mind. The space - and the silence - wraps around visitors like a cocoon, and one can actually feel the mind slow down. The pagoda is an ideal place to reflect on how far one has journeyed in life. Several visitors would probably want to stay back - there are several meditation courses on offer; signing up is free, though the pagoda accepts donations - but there are, of course, life's daily battles that need to be fought. And, in that regard, the Yaris's hushed cabin is an ideal place to reflect on the road ahead. It not only cuts you off from the heat, dust and chaos of the city, but the



interplay of several different materials also make the cabin a great place to be. The piano black center console, the beige interiors, and the silver accents complement the elegant design of the Yaris. The chaotic world outside, when viewed from the driver's seat, appears to be a place miles removed from the luxurious, spacious cabin. There is another compelling similarity between the pagoda and the Yaris. Like the grand monument, the car, too, is built to last. And, thanks to the low cost of service, high resale value that Toyotas are famous for, and a 3-year (or 100,000-km) warranty, peace of mind is guaranteed.



Piano black centre console, silver accents and a dash of beige make the cabin a special place to be.



Shark fin antenna: cutting edge styling sets Yaris apart from rivals.