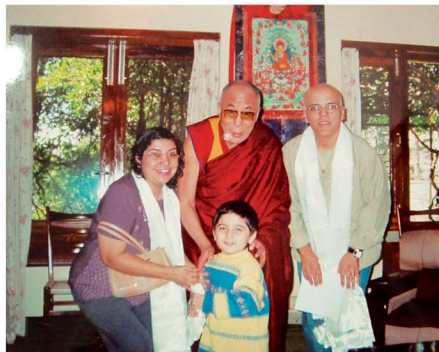


# Sacred Citadel

## Timeless Tibetan Treasures



**When** does furniture store end and art gallery begin? Is it the treasures you seek, or the crafts you cherish? Is furniture practical, and art is held separate from everyday life?

Tucked away in Bangsar Baru, Sacred Citadel is a gallery that blurs the line between practical and beautiful. Dr. Premendra Y. Verma, owner, regularly stocks a fantastic selection of primarily Tibetan art, crafts, furniture, and more.

Every item gives hint to the ancient ways of the Kathmandu valley. Gorgeously carved folding tables, once one of the meagre possessions of wandering Buddhist monks, evoke their simpler lives. Raw silk handmade spreads, prevalent during the age of the Silk Road (now a freshly revived art known to very few artisans), unfurl upon the display beds, their symbolic tiger-eyes staring deeply into the soul. Thangka (painted wall hangings), done by the master in 44-carat gold, betray an age when inspiration wasn't limited by time and office hours. As the Buddha stares back from its deep beauty, the sparkle and detail of his smile and the peaceful gazing eyes set you to peace. You may only see a piece such as a Thangka at Sacred Citadel once in your life. There's an eight-month waiting period, and even then, it's so rare that stocking can't be guaranteed.

Elsewhere, brightly coloured furniture embodies a traditional Tibetan culture. Cabinets, made to disassemble, use no hinges; these were the nomadic furniture from a sky plateau that time seems to have forgot. They're more than beautiful... they're inspirational.

From a past time, but they somehow fit perfectly into today's more complex, contemporary lifestyle. Those cabinets of ages past are now made to store CDs and DVDs, while traditional designs of clouds upon lotus flowers done in pewter can now frame pictures of grandchildren. The past, present, and future merge into something more wonderful than the whole.

Amid are the truly timeless items... brass/bronze statues of the Buddha, depicting in relief his major life events... ornamental incense burners, soothing and focusing a tired soul... jewellery of semi-precious and precious stones set in silver... gift items like scarves, T-shirts of Tibetan motif, and gem boxes... handmade rugs underfoot, in colours made to order... they all reach within, beyond a spectre of time.

And then there are items seemingly out of time, as mere curiosities of the past. There aren't many practical uses for a 'singing' meditation bowl. But sometimes, the world goes beyond practicality – as it should. For once the bowl begins to ring, its hum reaches somewhere ethereal within the human spirit. Perhaps, in today's rushed world, that connection is more practical than most presently acknowledge.

Sacred Citadel seems less a storehouse of items, and more a protectorate of a rich and vibrant Tibetan culture. What's most amazing is you can take a piece of it home with you. Indeed, Sacred Citadel seems blessed.

In fact, it has... by the Dalai Lama himself.

