

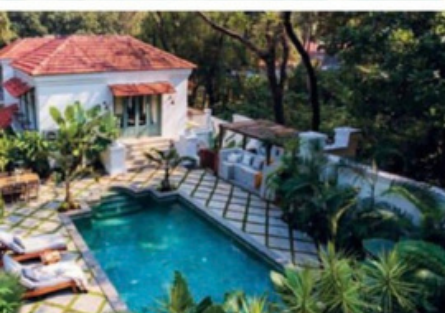
THE WIND BENEATH HER 'KITE'

CAROLINE MULLIEZ

With her heart in Goa but sight set on offering global standards of luxury with The Blue Kite — the hospitality arm of premium real-estate developer Vianaar Homes — this entrepreneur shares why infusing a personal touch is the key to her successful businesses



Caroline Mulliez, CEO Of The Blue Kite, with her husband Varun Nagpal, Co-Founder of Vianaar Homes; luxury properties in Goa under The Blue Kite banner (below)



Caroline Mulliez perceives purpose, performance, and profit as goals worth pursuing in tandem. It's with this approach that she spearheads The Blue Kite, the hospitality arm of Vianaar Homes — a distinguished real-estate developer that builds premium holiday homes across Goa and is now expanding to Kasauli and Sri Lanka. Under her leadership as CEO, the firm has grown to become a trusted name in luxury rental-management, offering curated short- and long-stay villas and fully-furnished apartments.

"My vision is to build a transparent and dependable platform that allows homeowners to earn income from their second homes," she says, revealing more in this tête-à-tête with HELLO!.

You come from the Mulliez family that's behind some influential retail businesses, including Decathlon, a sports gear and fitness equipment

giant. In fact, you spent years helping scale Decathlon in India before moving into hospitality. When did you decide to build something of your own?

In truth, I didn't set out to build a company of my own. The Blue Kite started almost by accident. I was on maternity leave when I noticed a recurring challenge. My husband, Varun [Nagpal, Co-Founder of Vianaar Homes], was developing villas and apartments in Goa, and many homeowners wanted to rent their properties when they weren't using them. Yet managing short-term rentals remotely was challenging.

What began as a small side project at the end of 2019 quickly gained momentum. Then during the pandemic, Goa became a refuge for many families looking for space, nature, and flexibility, and demand accelerated dramatically.

Vianaar has played a significant role in redefining luxury living in Goa. What drew you to the partnership?

Vianaar Homes are beautifully designed, with large windows that blur the line between indoors and outdoors. They are also located in some of the most sought-after areas of the state. For a hospitality company, the quality of the homes is fundamental, so it is a true privilege to be able to rent these homes.

As Vianaar expands into South Goa, Kasauli and Sri Lanka, we look forward to accompanying homeowners and bringing the same level of care and service to these new destinations.

Has your understanding of luxury evolved since moving from Europe?

Living in Goa changed my perception of luxury. When I was younger, luxury was associated with beautiful objects, exceptional hotels, or exclusive experiences. Today, I see luxury differently. It's having time. It's being able to walk with your children on the beach after school, share an unhurried meal with friends, or spend an evening outdoors without looking at your phone.

'Initially, Goa's natural beauty — the forests, the beaches, the slower pace of life — drew us in, but it was the sense of community that made us stay'

For decades, Goa has attracted dreamers, artists, entrepreneurs, and free spirits. What did you see in the Sunshine State that made you want to build a life here?

We never planned to settle in Goa. We were here on holiday when the pandemic struck, and then I was pregnant with our second child. At the same time, The Blue Kite was beginning to gain traction, so returning to our previous life no longer felt like a choice. Six years later, I can honestly say Goa is one of the most unique places I've experienced. What initially drew us in was the natural beauty, but it was the sense of community that made us stay.

What are your favourite rituals that help you reconnect with yourself?

At the beginning of every year, I create a vision board on what would make it truly special — family moments, personal growth, adventures, health, and professional ambitions. Whenever life becomes overwhelming, I look at it, and it helps me distinguish between what feels urgent and what is actually important.

Nature is another anchor. Some of my happiest moments are walking our dogs through the forests of Assagao, watching my children explore outdoors, or kitesurfing in the sea. And on a daily basis, sport is non-negotiable. Exercise allows me to step out of my head and clear my thoughts.

Travel has played a defining role in your life — from Europe to Singapore, and India. Which destination had the biggest impact on you, so far? And what do you think today's discerning traveller is really looking for?

Living and travelling across different countries taught me that beyond landscapes, monuments, or hotels, what stays with you are the conversations, the friendships, and the ways people approach life. As for today's traveller, I believe people are increasingly searching for authenticity. In our connected world, many are looking for opportunities to disconnect — from



their routines, screens, and the pressures of life. They want meaningful experiences, genuine hospitality, and a sense of connection — to nature, to local culture, and to the people they are travelling with.

If you could host a long weekend at one of your properties with any three guests — living or historical figures — who would make the list?

I'd choose three remarkable women. Simone Veil would be at the top of the list for her humanity and resilience. After surviving the Holocaust, she dedicated her life to public service and to advancing the rights and dignity of others. Next would be Margaret Thatcher for her determination and fearlessness. She demonstrated an extraordinary willingness to take responsibility and confront difficult situations head-on. And finally, Frida Kahlo for her 'Viva la Vida' spirit — it's a powerful reminder that life should be embraced fully, with all its imperfections, joys, and challenges.



Ten years from now, what would you like people to say about you? Not Caroline the CEO, but the person.

I'd hope people would say that I stayed true to my values and focussed on what truly mattered. That I was present for my family and friends. That I treated people with respect and kindness. That I remained curious, kept learning, and never stopped trying to grow. That I was someone who cared deeply about people. 

INTERVIEW: SHRADDHA CHOWDHURY