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In the Footsteps
of the Maharajas



KNOWLEDGE IS BASED ON EXPERIENCE
EVERYTHING ELSE IS JUST INFORMATION

Come explore with us



Dear Friends,

A LEGENDARY LAND of kingdoms and principalities, India till 1947 was in parts ruled by Maharajas, Nizams, Rajas, Ranas and Rawals.

Bards that roam the countryside still sing of heroic battles, chivalry and sacrifices. Silent, rocky outcrops transform themselves into magnificent forts that stand sentinel over the land. It is not difficult to imagine rank upon rank of loyal warriors streaming down the hillside ready for battle. If you listen carefully, you may still hear faint echoes of clashing armour, neighing of horses and above it all, the spine-chilling trumpet of a charging elephant. Today, many of these former royals have opened their homes to visitors. Staying here is a travel back in time - to an era that was glorious, graceful and romantic. Starting from regal Delhi, the capital city of India, this two week itinerary takes you across what was once Rajputana bringing alive the vibrant colours of the desert state. Visit the great kingdoms of former Rajputana - Jodhpur, Udaipur, Jaipur and down south in the Deccan, Hyderabad. In most places, erstwhile rulers are still addressed as 'father', 'protector', 'provider of food', and command both respect and loyalty. And, though the pomp and ceremony may not compare with what it was in the days of the yore, just a mere glimpse is a fascinating and memorable experience. We have carefully added another dimension to the programme by including the business hub of India, Mumbai with its iconic Taj Mahal Palace.

I hope you will enjoy this carefully curated journey into the footsteps of the maharajas!

Come explore with us[®]

Dipak Deva
Managing Director



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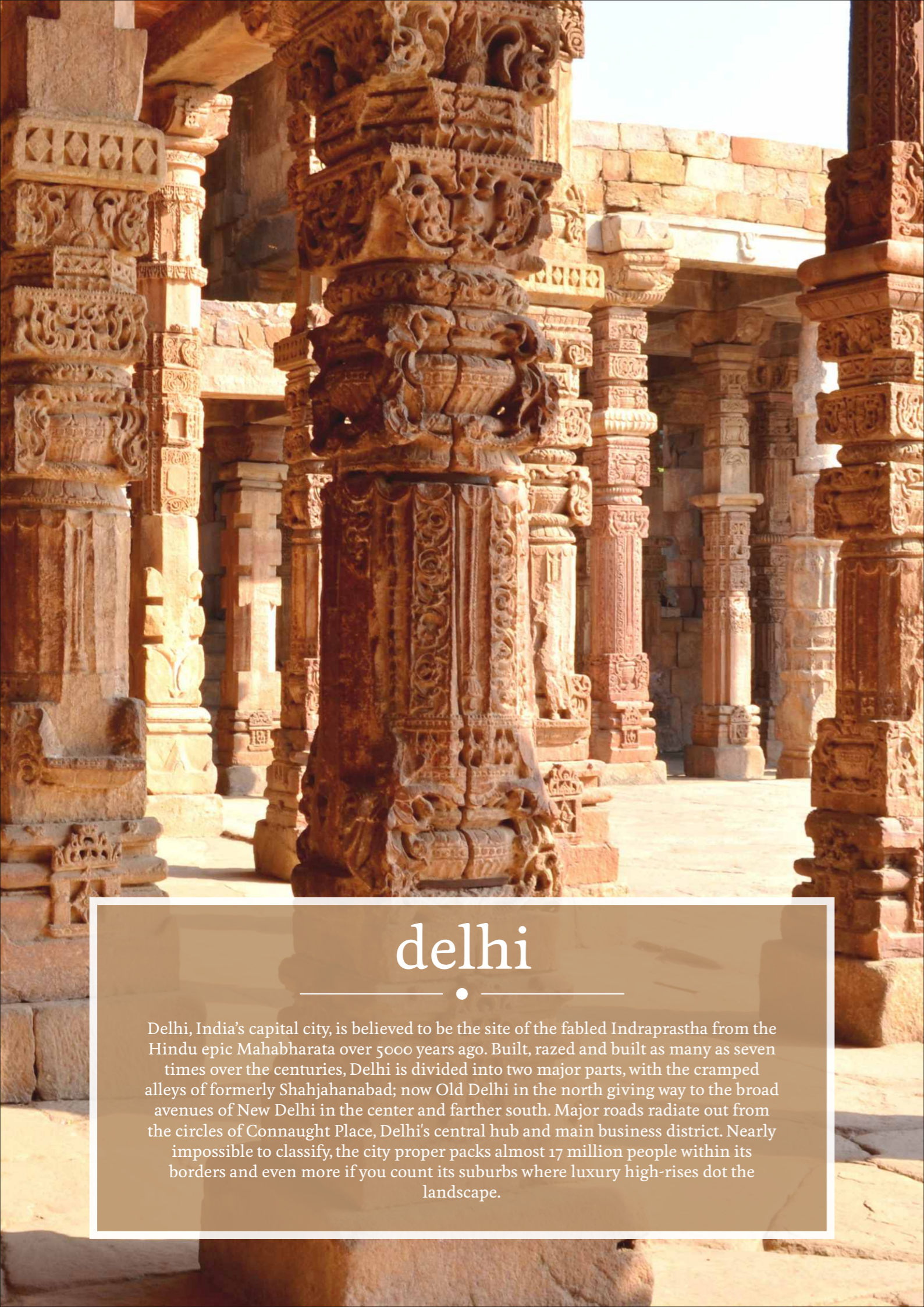
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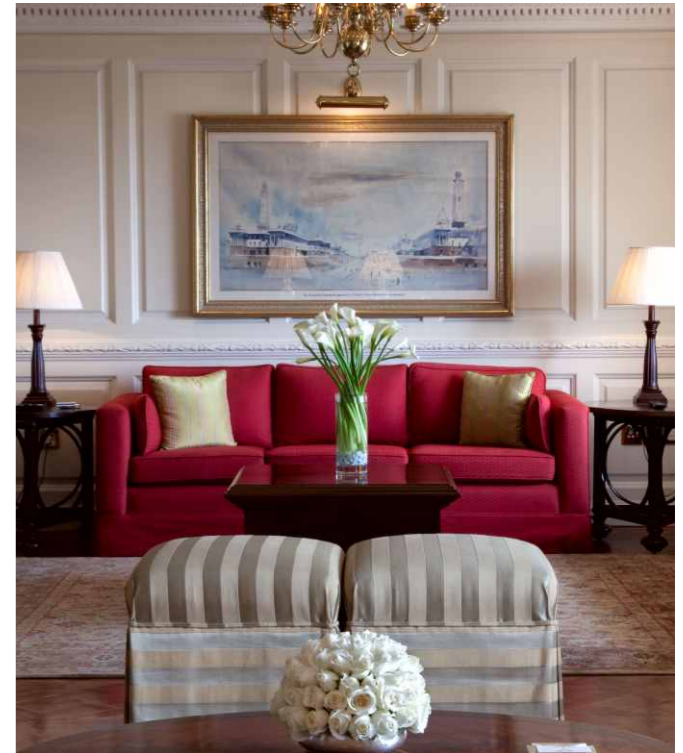


Story of Taj Mahal Hotel Delhi

Located in the heart of New Delhi, the hotel is in proximity to the seat of the government, the city's diplomatic corps and business districts.

The hotel's prominence is its old-world charm blended with contemporary comforts and amenities. The 294 rooms and suites features classical decor and refined ambience and all are "rooms with a view". Very popular with the locals with their state of the art restaurants.

Lutyen's Delhi is known for its gracious vistas, manicured gardens, watercourses, and tree-lined avenues. It gives New Delhi a beautiful regal character.



delhi

Delhi, India's capital city, is believed to be the site of the fabled Indraprastha from the Hindu epic Mahabharata over 5000 years ago. Built, razed and built as many as seven times over the centuries, Delhi is divided into two major parts, with the cramped alleys of formerly Shahjahanabad; now Old Delhi in the north giving way to the broad avenues of New Delhi in the center and farther south. Major roads radiate out from the circles of Connaught Place, Delhi's central hub and main business district. Nearly impossible to classify, the city proper packs almost 17 million people within its borders and even more if you count its suburbs where luxury high-rises dot the landscape.



Bespoke Experiences

OLD DELHI BY RICKSHAW

One of its kind tour in specially designed rickshaws that transports you 400 years back in history through the narrow lanes of Chandni Chowk in Old Delhi. On this tour one can visit architectural marvels of Old Delhi such as the 16th century Jama Masjid, Asia's largest spice market and witness delightfully decorated shops, famous eateries, and colourful bazaars.

OLD DELHI BAZAAR & FOOD WALK

Walk through the charming quarter of Old Delhi, experiencing the variety of food and visiting one of the Havelis (Private Mansion), a 3-storied home with a central courtyard flanked by rooms all around and having a total of 58 doors. Before visiting the home for a cooking demonstration and tasting of traditional home-style Indian vegetarian cooking, you will take a walk through the local bazaar. You will be encouraged to try few of the local delicacies from carefully selected shops. The area is also home to several small temples, shrines, old mosques etc. Cows wander the streets, small dharamshalas (rest-houses) and pyaus (water-stations) attest to the pious contributions of local merchants. The walk ends at your host's home.

SHAHJAHANABAD- A JOURNEY THROUGH OLD DELHI

Explore the history of more than 350 year old city of Shahjahanabad (Old Delhi) built by the Mughal Emperor Shahjahan. This walk starts from monuments of the pre-Shahjahan period like Kalan Masjid, Tomb of Turkman Shah. Walking through the lanes and by-lanes one comes across different Havelis of the Rich and famous people of that time such as the Haveli of Chunna Mal, the colourful Bazaars, and Religious places of all faiths.

DELHI - ART TOUR

An exciting Art Tour accompanied by one of India's young avant-garde artist. On the tour you will get to know about contemporary art in India through interactive sessions with well know faces of India art by visiting their studios.

THE LODHI GARDEN & MEHERCHAND MARKET EXPERIENCE

A four kilometer stretch, located not so far from the heart of Delhi, is flanked by mosques, architectural marvels, dargahs, step wells, colonies from the British era, cultural centers, and a fledging marketplace that's home to some of our country's most vibrant, young enterprises. We go back in time while walking through the beautifully manicured gardens of Lodhi. A walk over a bridge and under a canopy of trees takes us to 'Steinabad', an area nick-named after famous American architect Joseph Allen Stein, where we'll introduce you to behemoth cultural hubs. Making our way forward, we'll acquaint you with a few of the best and most quaint lifestyle stores in town.

MORNING IN HAUZ KHAS

Morning in Hauz Khas: An Oriya Temple, village walk, 14th Century monuments, boutique shopping for antiques, furniture, silver jewellery and designer clothes. A sumptuous lunch followed by Champi and Chai. Start the day by visiting an Oriya Temple, unique in its architecture. The temple belongs to the ethnic community from Orissa, a state bordering Bengal. You would see the priest offering prayers on behalf of the devotees, temple bells ringing and strong temple incense wafting through the air. A ten minute walk and you are in the Hauz Khas village. From quaint little shops selling antique maps, books and film posters to avant-garde fashion houses, Hauz Khas offers an eclectic mix of places to shop, dine and explore with a constant buzz of new outlets mushrooming up and old ones closing. After exploring, stop for a meal at one of the village's restaurants, particularly the south Indian specialty restaurant, Naivedyam. The rasam (spicy tomato soup) is brilliant and the dosas (south Indian rice pancakes) & idlis really authentic.

LAUGHTER YOGA

Laughter Yoga Clubs were started in India in 1995 with just five people. Today, the Laughter Movement is widely accepted and has become a global phenomenon with over 6000 clubs in 60 countries. Realizing the tremendous power of laughter and its efficacy as the best prescription for wellness, Laughter Clubs have brought smiles and laughter in the lives of many people suffering from physical, mental and emotional upsets. We give you an opportunity to participate in one such season with a Laughter Yoga Practitioner in the beautiful backdrop of one of the best garden of Delhi.

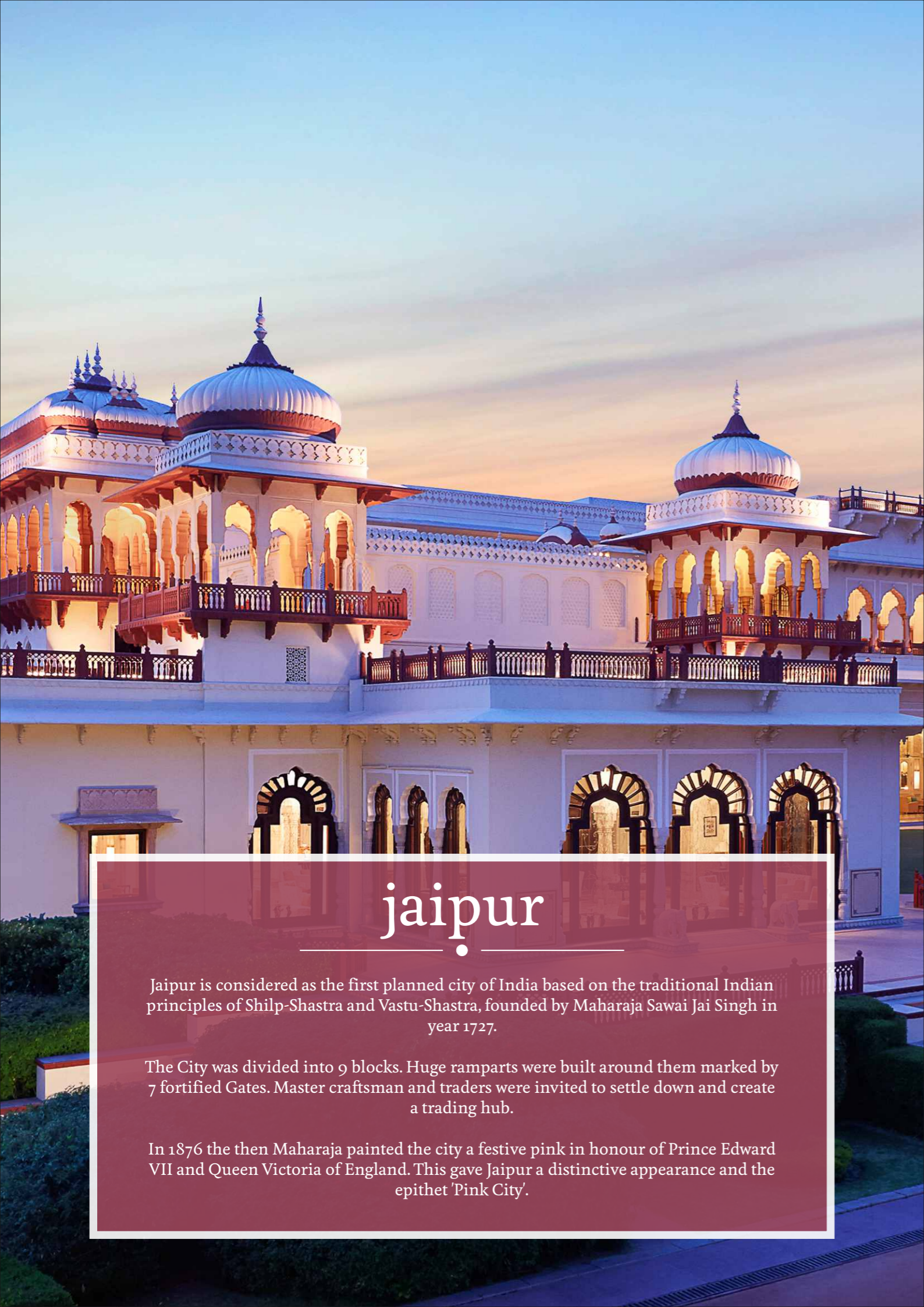
SHAHPUR JAT - DELHI'S URBAN VILLAGE

The lively eclectic jungle of creativity and art is the "other village", the design and lifestyle hamlet. We explore the changing hues of this urban village, making our way through meandering streets, past tailoring sweatshops and hole-in-the-wall vendors selling beads and baubles, unpainted brick buildings, overhanging wires and the numerous chaiwallahs serving hot chai {interesting snippet of how they started}, to understand the co-existing cosmos of cultures.



Special "Themed Dinner" Options

- Colours of India Theme showcases traditional and classical dances of India; the rich cultural heritage and diversity of India at its best.
- Wedding Theme Evening is based on traditional Indian wedding ceremony wherein the group is divided into two sub-groups : one from the groom's side and the other from the bride's side.
- Village Theme Evening is created with bamboo huts and stalls with thatched roof where villagers mingle with guests and display their traditional skills.
- Dinner with Indian Fashion show where a delectable array of regional cuisines of India are laid out followed by a 30 minute fashion show.
- A Private Dinner in a local speciality restaurant can also be arranged.

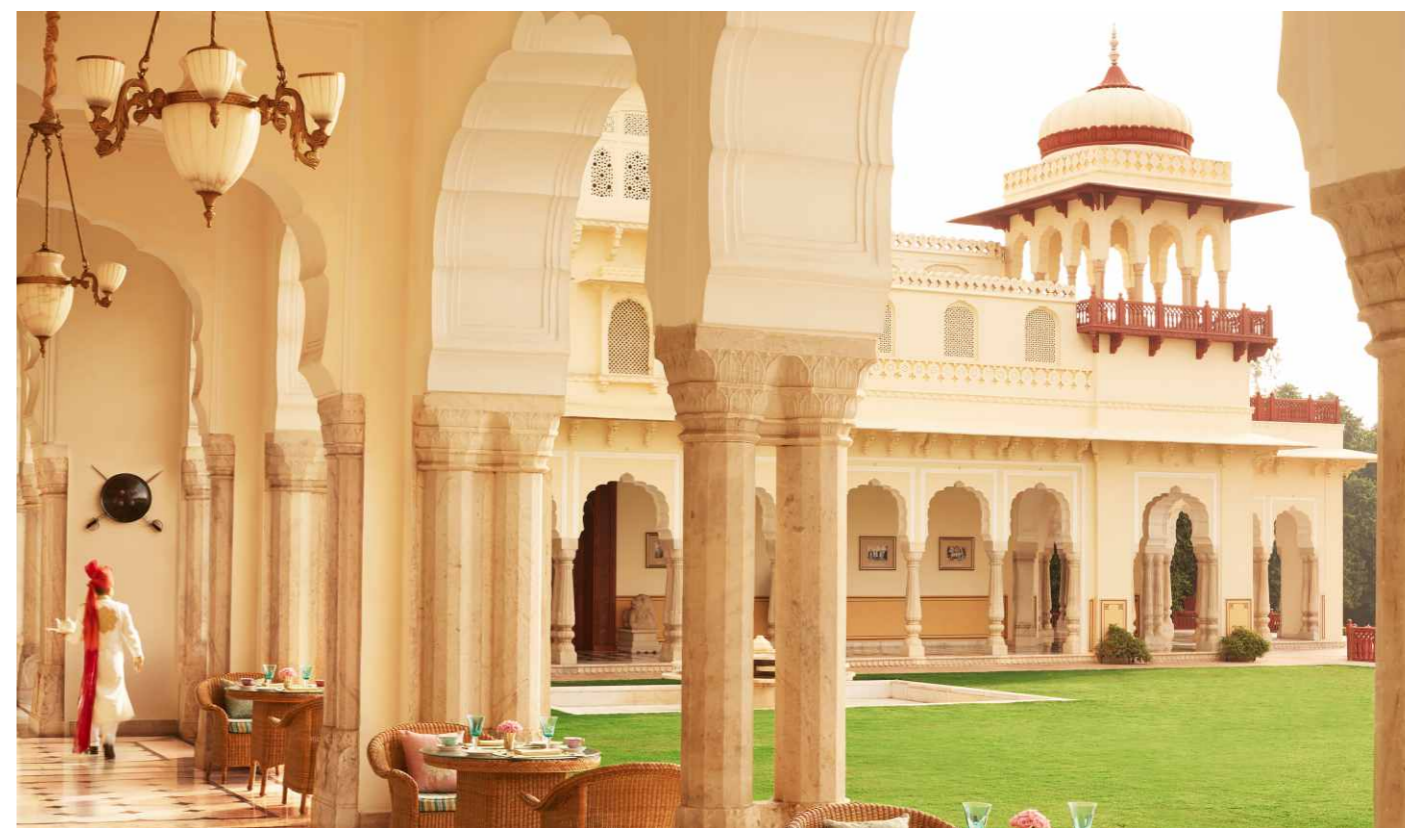


jaipur

Jaipur is considered as the first planned city of India based on the traditional Indian principles of Shilp-Shastra and Vastu-Shastra, founded by Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh in year 1727.

The City was divided into 9 blocks. Huge ramparts were built around them marked by 7 fortified Gates. Master craftsman and traders were invited to settle down and create a trading hub.

In 1876 the then Maharaja painted the city a festive pink in honour of Prince Edward VII and Queen Victoria of England. This gave Jaipur a distinctive appearance and the epithet 'Pink City'.



The Royal Family of Jaipur

Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh II is remembered as the most enlightened King of the 18th century India. He had a great interest in mathematics, architecture and astronomy. An interesting anecdote from this life states that Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb, gave him the title 'Sawai', meaning "a quarter more over others in intelligence", impressed by his wit at the age of 11. Later, Jai Singh proved to be 'Sawai' in warfare too! In spite of local wars, foreign invasions and constant turmoil around him, he was able to build Observatories to study Astronomy in Delhi, Mathura, Varanasi, Ujjain and Jaipur.

Another famous Royal from Jaipur is the legendary Maharani Gayatri Devi (1919 - 2009), named 'the most beautiful woman in the world' by Vogue magazine in 1940 was the elegant second queen of Maharaja Sawai Mansingh II. We recommend her autobiography, "A Princess Remembers" to get an insight into the world of Maharanis & Maharajahs.



Story of Rambagh Palace

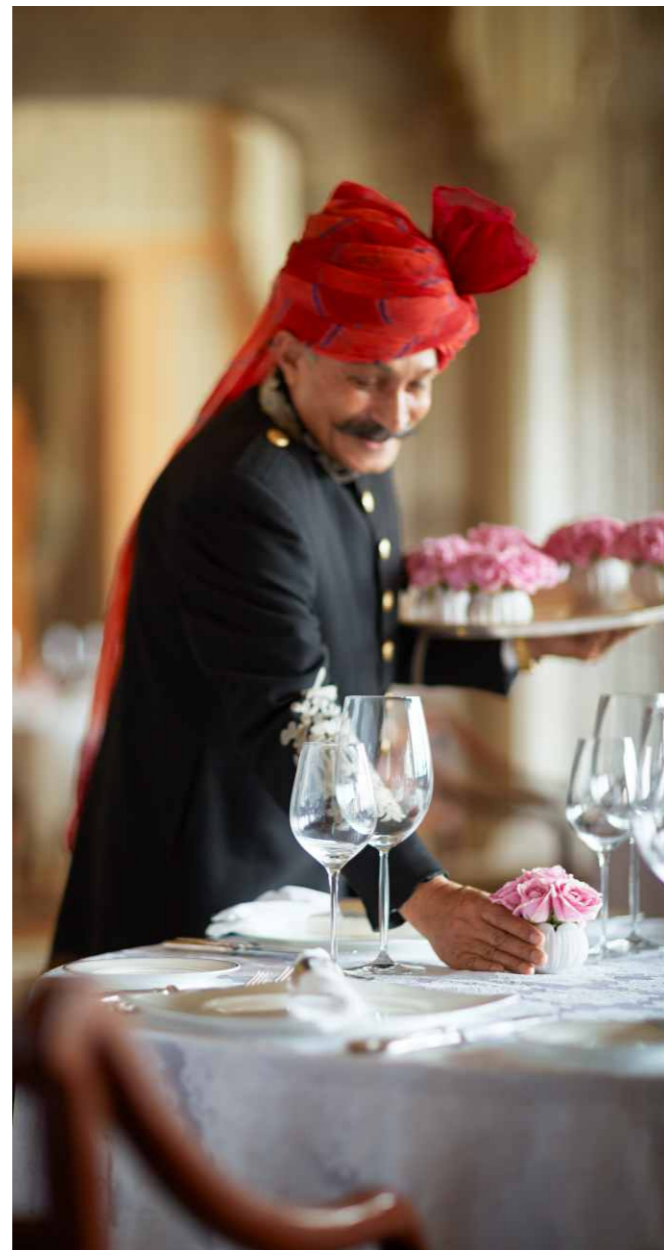
From the home of the queen's favourite handmaiden, to royal guesthouse and hunting lodge, and later as the residence of the Maharaja, this 'Jewel of Jaipur' has stepped gracefully through many royal transitions. Its elegant rooms, marbled corridors and majestic gardens echo with history, and every corner has a story to tell.

Rambagh Palace was built in 1835 on a modest scale for the queen's favourite handmaiden, and later refurbished as a royal guesthouse and hunting lodge, the mansion was renamed Rambagh, after the then reigning Maharaja.

Sawai Man Singh II converted Rambagh into the magnificent palace it is today, drawing inspiration from Mughal and Rajasthani styles of architecture. His majestic expansions transformed the palace into its glory of today. In 1925, Rambagh Palace became the permanent residence of the Maharaja of Jaipur. The pride of the palace was the sprawling garden that featured in Peter Coat's 'Most Beautiful Gardens of the World'.

"The 30s were undoubtedly the glorious, golden years of Rambagh", reminisced Rajmata Gayatri Devi.

Over the years Rambagh has played gracious host to several illustrious guests, such as Lord Louis Mountbatten, (who gave his name to a suite), Prince Charles, Jacqueline Kennedy and many other luminaries.



Bespoke Experiences

CLASSIC JOYRIDE (VINTAGE CAR RIDE IN THE NEW PARTS OF JAIPUR)

Away from the clamour and the chaos of the Old City, drive past some of the notable landmarks of modern day Jaipur whilst cutting across wide roads, avenues and roundabouts. The beautiful Birla Mandir falls enroute. The Joy ride ends at Narain Niwas Palace.

A BESPOKE WALKING TOUR: TEMPLES AND HAVELIS OF OLD JAIPUR

This walking tour of Jaipur is a unique way to explore the living traditions of the city. Experience the religious life of local communities by visiting colorful temples, interact with residents over tea and snacks in their home and discover some of the architectural wonders of this fascinating aspect of Jaipur. It will be a genuinely interactive experience getting to meet the residents and as a result gaining an insight into traditional ways of life.

A BESPOKE WALKING TOUR : ART & ANTIQUITIES WALK

A walk through the planned city, where trader communities lived; see the beautiful Havelis, Temples, public buildings, and craft areas, a unique representation of the living heritage of the city. This walk provides an interactive, innovative encounter with the trading communities of the old city. With some story telling from our resident guides, this walk reveals the life style, craft activities and historic buildings.

JAIPUR - BAGRU BLOCK PRINTING

Bagru is a little town 30 km from Jaipur known for its unique art of Block Printing. It has emerged as one of the industrial areas for textile printing in Rajasthan with over a 100 small and large scale factories. This is a 'hands on experience' where you create your own piece of art under a mentor to take back a memento of your travel to India. Be careful you might be judged for your printing proficiency and alignment!

JAIPUR - A MORNING WALK IN THE OLD CITY

Cities, like people have a daily rhythm. During the morning, the first stirrings of activities occur as people begin to make their way to work, children go to school, and stores open their doors. It is only in the morning when its true identity comes to the fore, unburdened by the accumulations, struggles and strains which are present at daytime.



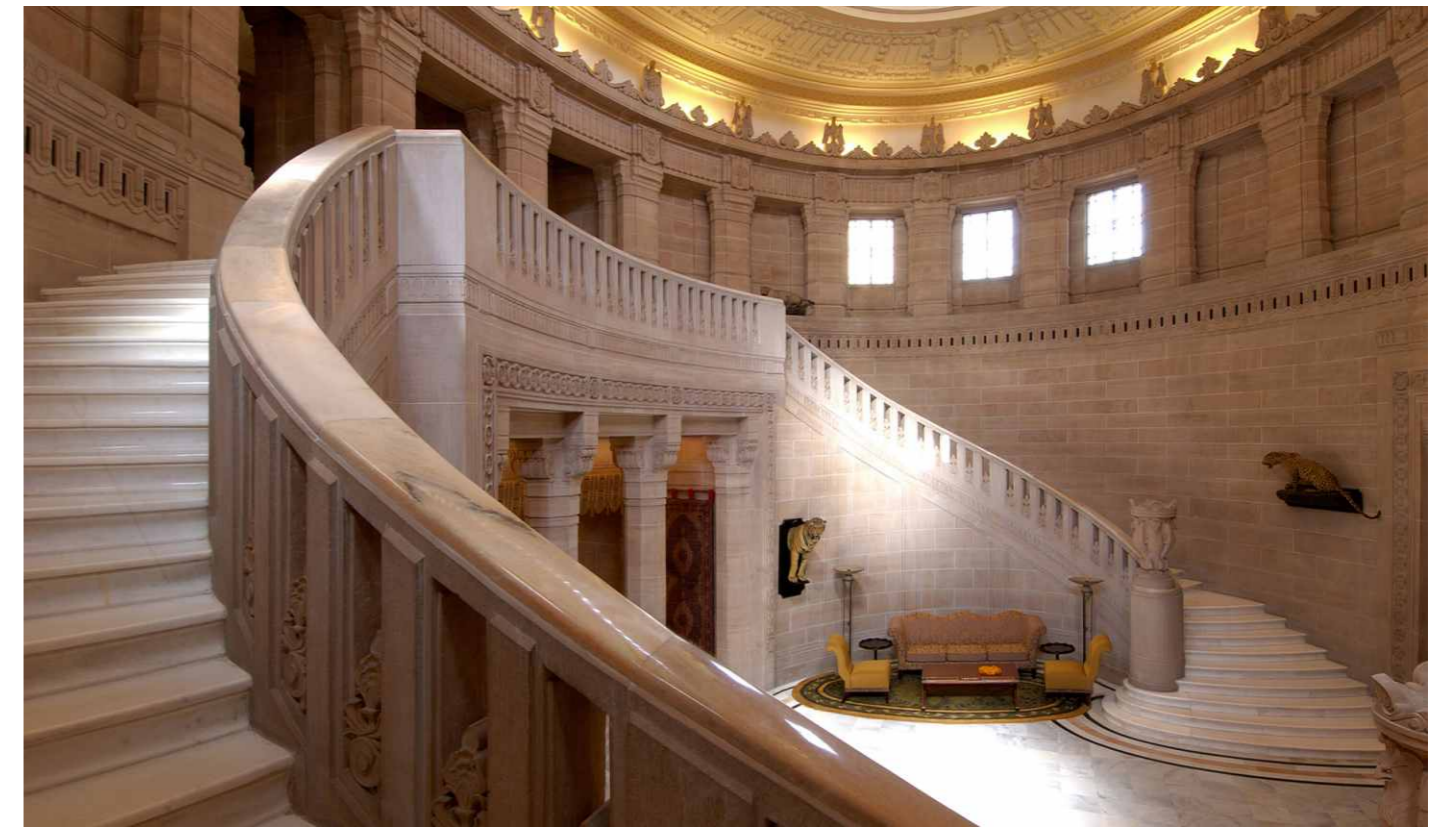
Special "Themed Dinner" Options

- Royal Dinner at the City Palace.
- Camel Polo with a dinner in the wilderness of the countryside.
- Horse Polo with a dinner in the grand polo gardens.
- Gala Dinner at Samode Palace.



jodhpur

Jodhpur is inhabited by Rathores who trace their ancestral genealogy to Lord Rama. History describes them as Kings of Kannauj (Lucknow & Kanpur area in Uttar Pradesh) from 470 AD to 1192 AD. Due to conflicts with the Muslim rulers in North India, they had to shift their base to Pali in western India. Slowly they consolidated their position and started ruling over the whole of Marwar region of Rajasthan. In 1459 Rao Jodha abandoned Pali and came to the rocky desert of Jodhpur to set up a new kingdom. His new citadel Mehrangarh Fort was constructed atop a rocky hill, around 40 metres above the plains surrounding it, its soaring ramparts arising from the rocky outcrops. At the base of this strategically positioned massive fort grew a city called Jodhpur. Nestled within the depths of the Thar Desert, Jodhpur is a modern city with medieval charm with rich heritage and culture, best reflected in its fairy-tale palaces, majestic fort, richly sculpted havelis, alluring water bodies and temples.



The Royal Family of Jodhpur

A very benevolent Maharaja Umaid Singh II ruled Jodhpur between 1918 and 1947. He had an illustrious military career with the British Indian Army rising up to the post of Lieutenant General in 1947. He was responsible for reorganising and reforming the Jodhpur State Forces and the judicial department. Further more, he also introduced a scheme for expanding primary education and established state pensions, revised the land revenue settlement and incorporated a Provident Fund for state employees. The decision to build Umaid Bhawan Palace in Jodhpur was taken by Maharaja Umaid Singh II in 1923 to provide employment to the famine-stricken farmers of his state.



Story of Umaid Bhawan Palace

In 1923 Jodhpur was famine stricken and was in desperate need of water and food. This is when Maharaja Umaid Singh II benevolently commissioned a new palace to give employment to the people of Marwar. The Palace was built between 1928 and 1943 and replaced Mehrangarh Fort as the new landmark of Jodhpur.

This golden-yellow sandstone monument was conceived on the grandest possible scale, in the fashionable Art Deco Style of that time. Known as Chittar Palace because of the local Chittar sandstone used, this masterpiece of craftsmanship was constructed by special system of interlocking with no mortar binding. After 15 years in construction, the 347-room palace was finally completed in 1943 - and has served as the principal residence of the Jodhpur royal family since. HRH, Maharaja Gaj Singh, fondly called "Bapji", stays in a part of the palace with his family.

Designed by renowned Edwardian architect Henry Lanchester, the palace is a blend of eastern and western architectural influences. Its majestic 105-foot high cupola is influenced by the Renaissance, while the towers draw inspiration from Rajput tradition. The lavish interiors with gilt furniture and elegant artwork follow the Art Deco style, complemented by the exotic murals of the self-exiled Polish artist Stefan Norblin.

Perched high above the desert capital of Jodhpur, Umaid Bhawan Palace stands as the last of the great palaces of India and one of the largest private residences in the world.



Bespoke Experiences

A DAY WITH THE ART PATRONS AT JOG NIWAS

An interaction with two families who have been giving patronage to development and preservation of the erstwhile aristocratic and royal, fine and decorative arts of South Asia. They are happy to entertain guests in their salons where you can explore the entire range of mediums they have lovingly revived, some from near extinction to their former glory.

THE BANDHANI ART OF JODHPUR

Walk into the back alleys of Ek Minar Masjid to meet a family who has been involved in the Fabric Art of tie and dye (Bandhani) for generations. Bandhani is an ancient art practiced by people mainly of Rajasthan and Gujarat. There are about 700 to 800 Muslim families in Jodhpur who practice the Bandhani technique and have been catering to merchants and wholesalers for centuries.

BESPOKE DESERT EXPERIENCE

This is a unique and genuine desert experience that explores rural Rajasthan through the semi-arid terrain. You will witness the simple life of different communities that have lived in harmony with nature for centuries. The variety of wildlife and avian life makes for a photographer's paradise. Added to this rich cultural experience is the thrill, excitement and adrenaline rush of off-road driving as you tackle this terrain in our 4x4 vehicles through sandy river beds, sharp twists and turns.

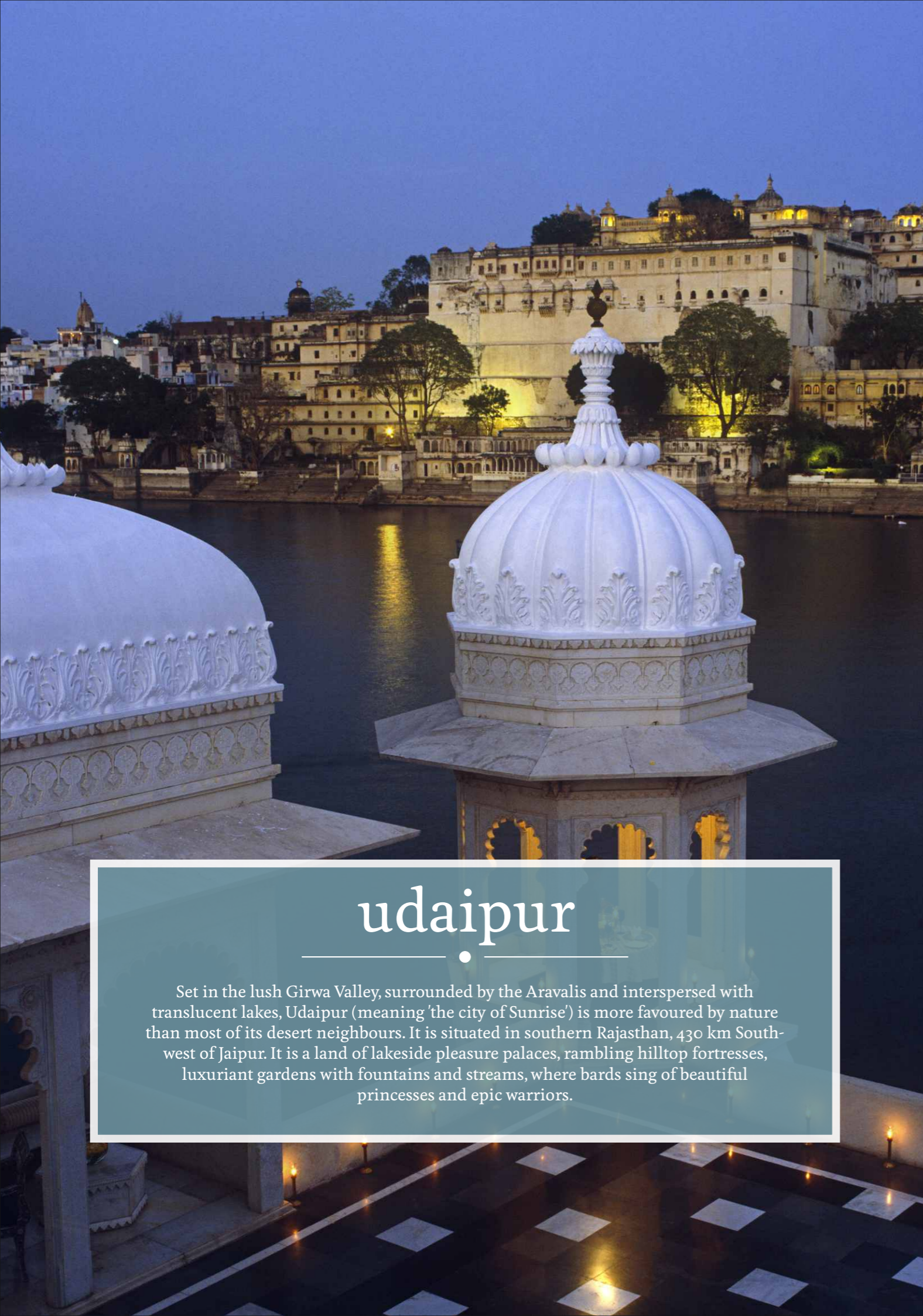
ZIP LINE AT MEHRANGARH FORT

If you are looking for a thrill and a bit of adventure, this outdoor activity will give you the opportunity to discover an exciting new way to experience Jodhpur aerially. The Zipline Tours have been designed by Switzerland's leading zip tour engineers. The personal protective equipment is made by Petzl of France, which is one of the world's leading Climbing brands. All equipment is subject to daily safety checks before use. Scare and fear disappear as soon as you interact with the super friendly, experienced and efficient staff.



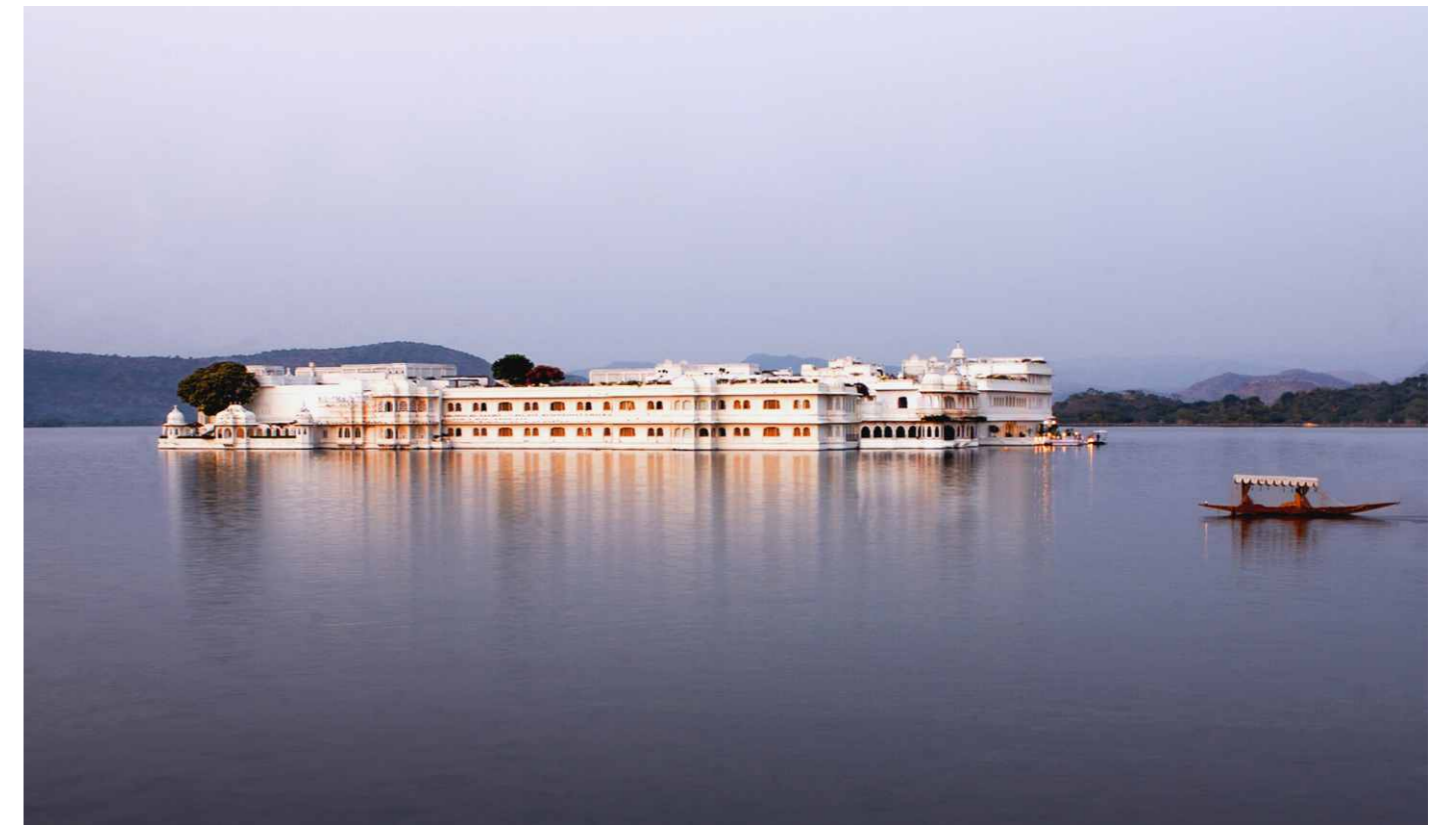
Special "Themed Dinner" Options

- Gala Dinner on the ramparts of the Mehrangarh Fort, overlooking the entire city of Jodhpur.
- Gala Dinner at Chokelao terrace overlooking the Mehrangarh Fort.
- Dinner on the sand dunes, under the star-lit sky with a bonfire, folk dances and music.
- Horse Polo followed by dinner.



udaipur

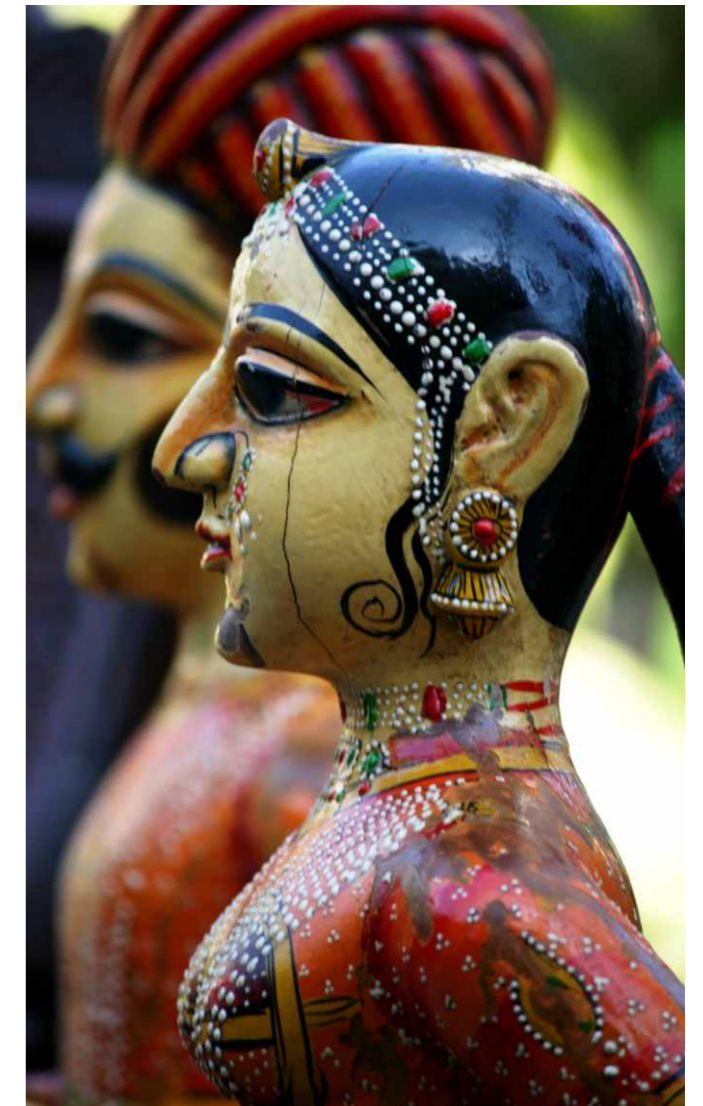
Set in the lush Girwa Valley, surrounded by the Aravalis and interspersed with translucent lakes, Udaipur (meaning 'the city of Sunrise') is more favoured by nature than most of its desert neighbours. It is situated in southern Rajasthan, 430 km South-west of Jaipur. It is a land of lakeside pleasure palaces, rambling hilltop fortresses, luxuriant gardens with fountains and streams, where bards sing of beautiful princesses and epic warriors.



The Royal Family of Udaipur

The city was founded in 1559 AD by Maharana Udai Singh II, the 53rd ruler of the Mewar dynasty. The story of his survival amidst external and internal threats is inspirational. The external threat was the growing influence of the Mughals in the Indian Subcontinent and the internal threat being the tussle for succession amongst a large group of relatives of the Mewar dynasty.

Maharana Pratap Singh was the most valorous king known from the house of Mewar. He is widely regarded as a fearless warrior and ingenious strategist, who successfully fought the Mughals and safeguarded his people until his death. In popular Indian culture, he is hailed as an inspirational figure for exemplifying gallantry and resourcefulness.



Story of Taj Lake Palace

Legend has it that the young prince, Maharana Jagat Singh indulged in moonlight picnics with the ladies of the Zenana on the lake island palace of Jag Mandir. A pleasurable pastime - until his father found out. He built his own pleasure palace on a different island in Lake Pichola, and thus was born Lake Palace.

Begun in 1743 and inaugurated in 1746, the new palace was named Jag Niwas after his highness Maharana Jagat Singh II, 62nd successor to the royal dynasty of Mewar. Jag Niwas has since been renamed, Lake Palace, is on one of four lovely islands in Lake Pichola.

What may have begun as a prince's rebellious gesture was turned into one of the most romantic hotels in the world by Maharana Bhagwat Singhji in 1963. The palace's decadent reputation was cemented when the James Bond film Octopussy was filmed on the premises. Taj Lake Palace was the secluded lair of the film's eponymous Bond girl.



Special "Themed Dinner" Options

- Gala Dinner at the Jagmandir Island.
- Gala Dinner at the City Palace venues:
 - Mor Chowk
 - Sunset Terrace (Fateh Prakash Palace)
 - Durbar Hall



Bespoke Experiences

EXPLORE THE QUIANT VILLAGE OF SAMAL

Explore the quaint village of Samal near Ranakpur that still stands rustic and has retained its rural character. This two hour walk gives you an opportunity to closely interact and observe rural life in the most authentic way without being obtrusive. Samal village is located about an hour and a half's drive from Udaipur. A part of the income from this walk goes to improving public sanitation and hygiene facilities in the village.

UDAIPUR BY CYCLE

This little adventurous cycling tour is very special as it gives you a chance to peek into the hustle bustle of Udaipur's city life in a short span of time, where cars dread to go. Explore the heart of Udaipur and absorb the passionate dedication of the local craftsmen and artists of various specialties. See Udaipur beyond lakes and palaces. When you peddle your way through Udaipur and explore it on bicycles with us, you contribute towards responsible travel & help reduce the carbon footprint.

MEET RARE TEXTILE AND MINIATURE PAINTING ARTISTS

For centuries artisans of Udaipur have created woven, printed dyed and embroidered textiles. These artists have practiced for generations preserving the identity of each art form. Variations in colour, print, texture and finish of these textiles are inherent to the handmade process that have changed little over the years and reflect the individuality of the artist. We will visit the homes of traditional artisans, some of them the last remaining in the line, to witness, understand, and appreciate the subtle nuances of these art forms unique to Udaipur. It is also a rare opportunity to see some classic Miniature paintings of this region and meet artists behind the scene.

WALK FOR THE TONGAWALLAHS

A Tonga is a light horse-drawn carriage used for transportation and an integral part of the culturescape of the Indian sub-continent. It was once the favourite mode of transport for the ladies of the royal house to travel between the City Palace and the Saheliyon-ki-bari, the pleasure garden of the Queen, far away from political intrigues of the court. The Walk for the Tongawallahs has been designed to help revive this once popular and eco-friendly mode of transport in Udaipur. The aim is to create awareness among our guests as we believe that their patronage will help stop this unique mode of transport from disappearing from Udaipur's culturescape and will result in the horses being treated fairly by their owners who will benefit financially from this Walk.

UDAIPUR - IN AND AROUND : MEET THE WOMEN OF SADHNA

Visit Delwara village to meet women of Sadhna, an N.G.O working towards empowering women. Some of the women of Sadhna are now members of the local self governance body and hold important positions. Many have travelled to Europe and Asia to sell their products in international trade fairs. Have a chit chat over a cup of tea where they share wonderful stories about how their learning and confidence building within Sadhna has helped them evolve into playing an important role in their families and neighbourhood. The village of Delwara is about 45 minutes' drive from the city centre.

COOKING LESSON AT DAKSHU'S PLACE

Our local friends, Rakshita and her husband Dakshu take you through a fun, interactive cooking experience. Visit a local market with Rakshita in her original jeep of 1962 to choose the vegetables you want to eat for dinner. Rakshita will prepare the dish according to the vegetables you want and in discussion with you, gently giving you insights into Indian home-cooking. Help Rakshita prepare your dinner and enjoy and share what you have prepared with her.

MUSIC MEDITATION

This forty five minute relaxing Music Meditation session will help 'delete' your stress. The meditation Guru plays the guitar, gently introducing a dreamy journey where the mind floats and calms...



mumbai

Mumbai (formerly Bombay) was born out of reclamation of land from the sea around a group of seven islands inhabited by Kolis, the fishermen community. It is their Goddess Mumba Devi from which Bombay and later Mumbai derived their names.

Ruled by neighbouring Gujarat, Portuguese and finally the British, the city has a beautiful confluence of cultures. Its proximity to the Arabian Sea ensured its emergence as an important trading town, with maritime trade contacts with the Arab world as early as the medieval times. Economic and educational development characterised the city during the 19th century with the first-ever Indian railway line beginning operations between Mumbai and neighbouring Thane in 1853. It is today the progressive business capital of India!

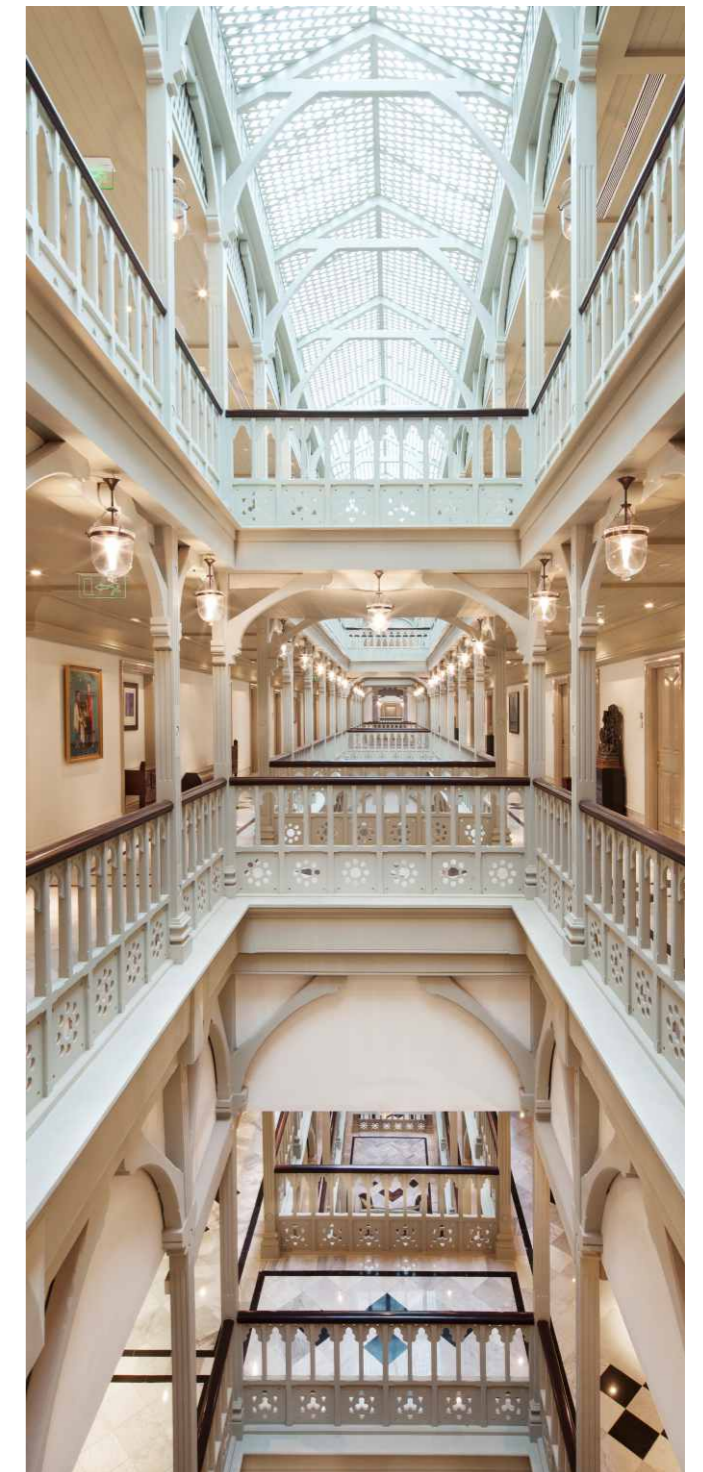
Story of Taj Mahal Palace

Visionary businessman, Jamsetji Tata built the grand Taj Mahal Palace in the late 19th century when the hotels in Mumbai left much to be desired. His partners were surprised and his sisters, critical.

Mr. Tata stayed true to his vision and it was completed in 1903. From the day it opened, the hotel was a leader in the city scene. This playground of Princes was also a home to the Indian Freedom movement. Jinnah, the future first leader of Pakistan and Naidu, the President of the Indian National Congress, both held court here. In 1947, The Taj Mahal Palace, Mumbai played host to the legends and architects of Independence and one of the first major speeches representing Independent India was given at the hotel.

The only thing that can rival the hotel's collection of events and memories is perhaps its artifacts. Over the past century, The Taj Mahal Palace, Mumbai has amassed a diverse collection of paintings and works of art. From massive Belgian chandeliers to the finest in Bastar tribal art, from Anglo-Indian inlaid chairs and tables to Goan Christian artifacts, from Mughal-inspired Jali designs to contemporary sculpture, the hotel manages to incorporate a myriad of artistic styles and tastes.

Luminary guests who have stayed here include various Kings, Presidents, legends, performers, religious figures and entertainers such as George Bernard Shaw, Irving Stone, Barbara Cartland, Douglas Fairbanks, Sir Richard Attenborough, Baz Luhrmann, Yehudi Menuhin, Andrew Lloyd Weber, Mick Jagger, Margaret Thatcher, Prince Charles, Jacqueline Onassis, William Jefferson Clinton, David Rockefeller, Robert McNamara and Lord Wedgwood, just to name a few.



Bespoke Experiences

MUMBAI BY DAWN

Get up at the crack of dawn for an exclusive peek into the underbelly of the city, an insight into what makes this magnificent city tick. From seeing the newspaper vendor distribution network, to a wholesale fruit and vegetable market, the exploration continues till you reach Sassoon docks to witness the tonnes of fish arrive in the city every day. Finally see glimpses of daily life - bread-boys carrying fresh bread, the milkman riding past with milk canisters, the flower market and the fresh vegetable market.

WORLI FISHING VILLAGE TOUR

Nestled in an area dotted by state-of-the art architectural wonders and towering sky-scrappers, exist the quaint and picturesque Worli Fishing Village. An essential part of the 7 villages that make the island city of Mumbai, this 600 years old village is a quintessential settlement of the original Inhabitants of Mumbai. A walk through this village transports you to the land of stories, of people, of legends, of folklores, of superstitions. There is also a short walk inside the Worli Fort. Lost in the pages of history, this British watch tower still stands tall as it overlooks the beautiful Arabian Sea.

FOR GOD'S SAKE- THE RELIGIOUS SOJOURN

Mumbai is a city with heady eclecticism - owing to the diversity in its people, and the unique traditions and cultures they follow. Over the years, the city has welcomed people of different races, religion and cultures. The tour For God's Sake takes you on this religious sojourn, where you meet people following different faiths, observe and understand culture and tradition as they carry them out in a way quintessential to their religion. Hindus, Muslims, Jews, Christians, Parsis or the Buddhist, this journey gives you a deep insight into lives and beliefs of Mumbai and its faiths.

BYLANES OF BANDRA

Bandra or Bandor as the erstwhile Portuguese called it is christened as the 'Queen of Suburbs'. This quiet neighbourhood, which is home to small east-indian villages or 'Ghoutans', has over the years become one of the trendiest and plushiest part of the city. This tour takes you through the journey of the East Indian community that still inhabit Bandra. The tour starts with the famous Mount Mary Church, then the beautiful St. Stephen's Church, the Castelle de Agauda, an Old Portuguese fort and a handful of old Portuguese style houses, which instantly take you back a couple of hundred years.

MUMBAI ART WALK

If you're one of those who like to saunter in art galleries, understand art and it's nuances, or like to know the inspirations behind works of art, this Tour De' Art is designed just for you. This day starts at 11 am in the morning when our expert art connoisseur will take you for an exclusive look into the contemporary art scene of Mumbai. Visit, interact and admire the contemporary art galleries which have been venerated and revered by artists, collectors and curators world-wide, such as NGMA, Jehangir Art Gallery, Volte, Tasveer, Chemound Prescott and Chaterjee and Lal, to name a few.

ENTREPRENEUR'S ENTOURAGE

This is a tour designed to show you the world of Dharavi - the industry that throbs in the largest slum with its hard working people. You will visit various cottage industries including the leather industry, embroidery, cardboard, recycling, Poppadum and finally take a walk down a winding route through the narrow utilitarian residential areas. You will marvel at the industrious nature of people here, the secular harmony, a zeal for life and hope of a better future. Your guide is a native, for whom Dharavi has been home since childhood.

GIRANGAON - THE MILL VILLAGE

The Lalbagh area is the heart of the textile mill industry which flourished in Mumbai from the mid-1800's to the late 1900's. The Mill Village, or Girangaon, as the people called it, bought millions of people from all over the city with one objective - Work. It was the epicentre of all the trade in the city. This walk provides a cultural introduction to the area and its people. We will explore the religious, economic, political and social fabric of this multi-cultural area which is home to Marathi-speaking Hindus as well as small communities of Parsis and Muslims. You will also see the hundred year old chawl - a place where the Mill workers resided. You will get to travel inside the ruins of an old mill and the Lalbagh Spice Market, which is a special highlight of this tour.

MUMBAI- IN-DESIGN - ARCHITECTURE AND THE CITY

Through Mumbai in Design we unearth various creations from different eras of the city's history and give you a cultural and architectural aspect of it. Embark from the Colaba area, where you will be given an introduction to the British era and the architecture styles they brought with them. The Gateway of India or the arc de triomphe of Mumbai, will be your first stop. The next will be Kala Ghoda, the cultural and architectural precinct of Mumbai. After driving past the Colonial structures of the High court and University, you will reach Marine Drive - The Mecca of Art Deco structures in Mumbai. Your penultimate stop is Kothachiwadi, where you will see beautiful East Indian (read Portuguese) bungalows. The final stop is the magnificent Victoria Terminus Building, a UNESCO World Heritage Site built by architect FW Stevens.



Special "Themed Dinner" Options

- Dhow Cruise dinner with a live band.
- Bollywood Themed Dinner experience.
- A Private Dinner in a local speciality restaurant can also be arranged.



hyderabad

The Qutub Shahi dynasty of the 15th century is credited with establishing Hyderabad in 1589, although civilization in Hyderabad dates back to Iron Age circa 500 BCE.

All seven Qutb Shahi sultans were patrons of learning and were great builders. They contributed to the growth and development of Indo-Persian and Indo-Islamic literature and culture in Hyderabad. Some of the sultans were known as patrons of local Telugu culture as well. During the Qutb Shahi reign Golconda became one of the leading markets in the world for diamonds, pearls, steel, arms, and also printed fabric. In the 16th century the city grew to accommodate the surplus population of Golconda and eventually became the capital of the Qutb Shahi rulers. Hyderabad became known for its gardens and its comfortable weather.

Hyderabad today is a beautiful contrast like so many cities in India, of the Old heritage and the new business centre for Information Technology and backend Business Processing Offices of multi-national corporations.



The Nizam of Hyderabad

The Nizam-ul-Mulk of Hyderabad, popularly known as the Nizam of Hyderabad, was a monarch of the Hyderabad State, which was the largest and most prosperous of all princely states in India.

Hyderabad State had its own army, airline, telecommunication system, railway network, postal system, currency and radio broadcasting service. In 1947 when the British left India, the Nizam decided to keep Hyderabad independent, unlike the other princely states which irked the newly formed Indian Government. In September 1948, the Indian Army marched into Hyderabad, deposed the Nizam, and annexed the state into the Indian Union.

Seven Nizams ruled Hyderabad for two centuries until 1947. The Asaf Jahi rulers were great patrons of literature, art, architecture, culture and rich food, which had huge Persian influences. This Indo-Persian culture became central to the Hyderabad Muslim identity.

The last Nizam is said to have been the richest man in the world in his time. The Salarjung Museum which has their family heirlooms and jewels are worth visiting. He is credited with developing the railways, roads, introducing electricity; airways, irrigation and reservoirs; in fact, all major public buildings in Hyderabad City were built during his reign under the British Raj. He pushed education, science, and establishment of Osmania University.



Story of Taj Falaknuma Palace

Taj Falaknuma Palace literally means a mirror of the sky, aptly so as it is perched at 2000 feet, built in the clouds and reflects the ever-changing moods of the sky. Set in 32 acres of land and spread over 19400 square meters, the Palace was commissioned by a Hyderabadi nobleman, a Prime Minister in the court of the Nizam. It caught the eye of the Nizam who was rumoured to be so smitten by the Palace that his prime minister, had no choice but to succumb to time-honoured tradition and offer it as a gift to the Nizam.

Built in 1894, it took ten years and four million rupees for its magnificent, physical evolution in the shape of a scorpion. Designed by British architect William Mard Marret, the Palace took a rumoured 22 years to perfect.

Taj Falaknuma Palace later went on to be used as a royal guesthouse for dignitaries, including free India's first President Dr. Rajendra Prasad who availed of its famed, lavish hospitality in 1951. The echoes of visiting European monarchs, the Duke of Windsor, heads of state and distinguished governors can still be heard in this newly refurbished inner sanctum of Hyderabad.

Since 1995, The Taj Group of Hotels has sensitively restored the palace not only to accommodate the privileged in 60 glamorous rooms and suites, but also to accommodate the extravagance of the "then" with all the comfort of the "now".



Special "Themed Dinner" Options

- Hyderabadi evening at 101 Dining Hall.
- Sufi Qawwali music followed by a traditional Hyderabadi dinner.



Bespoke Experiences

THE OLD CITY TRAIL

Discover the old city and its monuments - Mecca Masjid, Tombs of the Nizams and Charminar. Climb the Charminar to have a bird's eye view of the Mecca Masjid and Unani Hospital. Walk across to the Laad Bazaar for bangles, ittr, soorma etc and the local artisans at work. Visit Mehboob Chowk to see how a typical Muslim family still lives in a Devdi. Visit Badshahi Ashoorkhana, the royal mourning place of the Qutub Shahi kings.

THE QUTUB SHAHI TRAIL

Visit the Golconda Fort, the impregnable fort of the Qutub Shahi rulers to see what is left of it after the Mughals plundered it. Hear its 700 year long history with local yarns. Walk a short way along the high strong rampart walls of the fort to listen to stories of war and treachery and get a fabulous view of the tombs and the fort. Visit the Qutub Shahi tombs, the world's largest royal necropolis.

THE NECROPOLIS TRAIL

This tour takes you to the Qutub Shahi tombs, the world largest Royal Necropolis. Visit the tombs of the Nizams in the courtyards of the Mecca Masjid. Visit the Paigah tombs to witness the aesthetic tastes of the greatest noble family of Hyderabad, who even in death wanted to lie in grandeur. In doing so, they left for posterity an architectural beauty that has to be seen to be believed.

PALACES, DEVDIS & ROYAL GUESTHOUSES TRAIL

A rather interesting way to see local architecture where we take you to the Mirde Hamidkhan Devdi, a typical local Muslim home. Visit the Devdis of Paigah noblemen Asman Jah, Kursheed Jah and Sir Vicar-Ul-Umara. Visit the Chowmahalla Palace, the seat of the Asaf Jah dynasty, where the Nizams lived and ruled Hyderabad. Visit the Taj Falaknuma Palace, once the Royal Guest House of the Nizam of Hyderabad where he entertained his foreign dignitaries.

THE MUSEUM TRAIL

Visit Salarjung Museum, the third largest museum in India housing the world's largest collection of artefacts by an individual. Followed by the Nizam's Museum at the Purani Haveli, Chowmahalla Palace, where the later Nizams lived and ruled Hyderabad. Chowmahalla Palace has been recently awarded the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Heritage Merit Award for Culture Heritage Conservation.

THE WHITE MUGHAL TRAIL

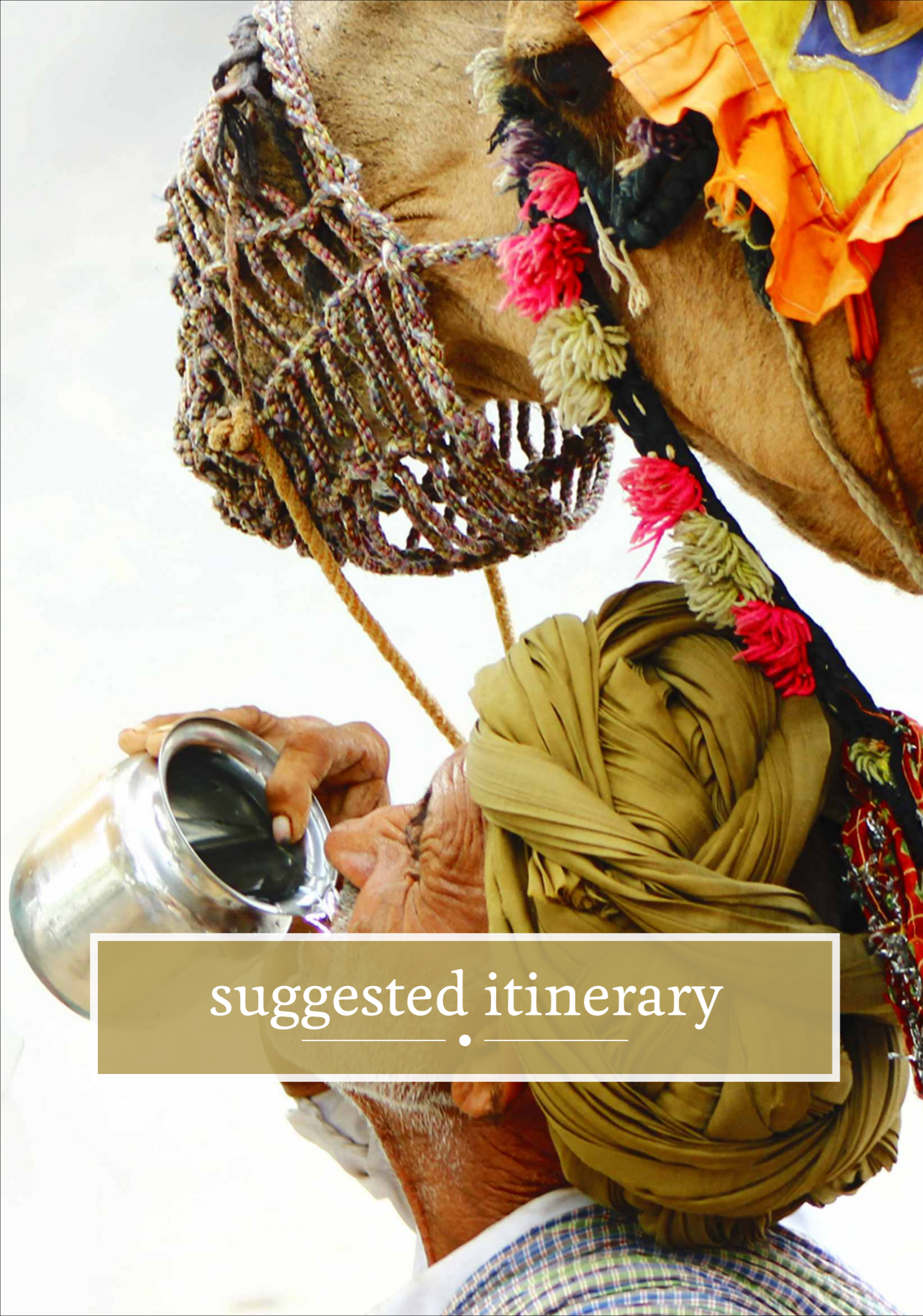
This tour takes you to the former British Residency (now a women's college). Visit the graves of British officials who served the Residency, Secunderabad where the British had their cantonment (now with the Indian army). Drive through the Cantonment Area to see the British areas and buildings. See the house where Winston Churchill lived while he served the British Army and was posted in Secunderabad.

THE WEAVER'S TRAIL

This excursion takes you to villages known for their traditional weaves of ikat in cotton and silks, to see how families still live and weave on looms in their homes. Visit the Pochampalli Handloom Park, a combined effort of the government of India and Andhra Pradesh to witness how modernisation and mechanisation has changed the face of this art through sustainable employment.

THE BIRYANI TRAIL

Discover why Hyderabad is so passionate about its Biryani, challenge your senses with fragrant rice and secret combinations of meat and spices, Get a cooking lesson from a Biryani expert and have a meal with a local family. We weave our way through Hyderabad's many Biryani hubs and see the huge 'handis' of fragrant rice and secret combinations of meat and spices that beguile the senses. We will receive cooking lesson from an expert and enjoy a traditional Biryani meal with one family in Hyderabad. The lady of the house who is our friend is known as one of the leading experts of Hyderabadi cuisine and has given cooking lessons to top chefs all over the world.



suggested itinerary

Itinerary

- Day 01 Arrive Delhi
Welcome and private assisted transfer.
- Day 02 Delhi
Afternoon sightseeing of New Delhi - India Gate and surroundings, Humayun's Tomb and Qutab Minar.
- Day 03 Delhi
Old Delhi Bazaars and Food experience walk.
- Day 04 Delhi (Day trip to Agra)
Visit Taj Mahal & Agra Fort.
Experience Beyond the Taj Mahal - Tales from Across the River.
- Day 05 Delhi - Jaipur
Experience: TCI's Bespoke Walking Tour: Art & Antiquities Walk.
- Day 06 Jaipur
Excursion to Amber Fort.
- Day 07 Jaipur
Visit City Palace and Royal Observatory (Jantar Mantar).
Experience: Bagru Block Printing Workshop.
- Day 08 Jaipur - Jodhpur
Day at leisure.
- Day 09 Jodhpur
Sightseeing of Mehrangarh fort & Jaswant Thada.
Experience: The Bandhani Art of Jodhpur.

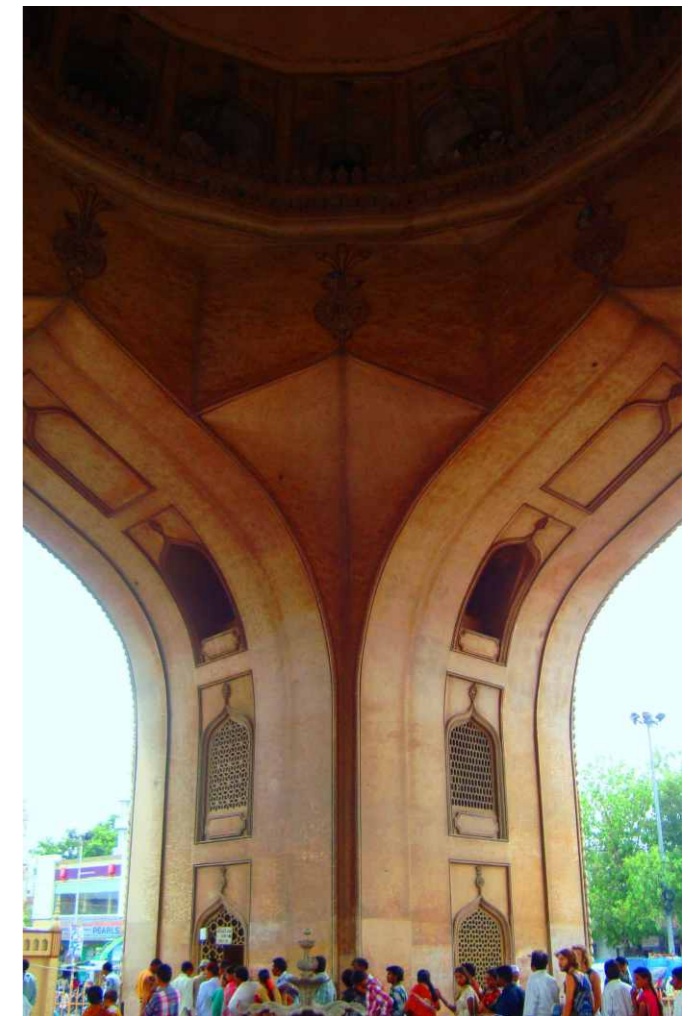


- Day 10 Jodhpur - Udaipur
Day at leisure.
- Day 11 Udaipur
Sightseeing of City Palace Museum and Crystal Gallery.
Experience a cooking session in a private home. Followed by boat ride in Lake Pichola.
- Day 12 Udaipur
A full day excursion to Eklingji Temple & Nagda Ruins and explore the Quaint Samal village.
Lunch at Raas Devigarh.
- Day 13 Udaipur - Mumbai
Experience Mumbai - in - design: Architecture and the City.
- Day 14 Mumbai
Experience Mumbai by Dawn.
- Day 15 Depart Mumbai.



Extend Your Journey

- Day 15 Mumbai - Hyderabad
Experience: Palaces, Devdis & Royal Guesthouses Trail.
- Day 16 Hyderabad
Sightseeing of Hyderabad (Char Minar, Mecca Masjid, Chowmahala Palace, Qutab Shahi Tombs & Golconda Fort).
Experience: The Weaver's Trail.
- Day 17 Hyderabad - Mumbai
Day at leisure.
- Day 18 Depart Mumbai
Depart early in the morning by an International flight.





Our Commitment

Experiences and impressions of particular intensity and profundity, instants that endure and can leave a lasting positive impression. They are unique and memorable at par at appreciating a great work of art. TCI is intent on making those moments happen.
