



RAJASTHAN

A MANY SPLENDOURED STATE







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## Enigmatic Rajasthan

Rajasthan epitomizes all that dreams are made of. Think architectural memoirs built with studied detail, effervescent colours, stunning handicrafts, glittering gems, throbbing towns, wildlife sanctuaries, cattle fairs, or pulsating festivities and touching hospitality and you think Rajasthan.

It is perhaps the only State that endures an enigma to the traveller long after the vestiges of the royals has turned sepia. Here tradition blends seamlessly with the modern, resonating exuberance. The land narrates tales of chivalry, valour, royal extravagance, an affluent tradition, and talks of dynasties and the erstwhile rulers, as if it were just yesterday.

Define your quest...be your own enquirer or the guide, pick a circuit, and set out to explore. From the sun kissed sand dunes in Jaisalmer to shimmering lakes in Udaipur, magnificent forts and palaces dot the state's picturesque landscape. From enchanting Shekhawati frescos, a feast for the art connoisseurs, to piety at Pushkar, famous Jain temples at Mt Abu and National Park at Ranthambhore, the magical land is a kaleidoscope of sundry hues.

For the gourmand the land is an epicurean delight. The over 5000-year-old state is a rich mosaic of heritage and cultural diversity. Each quaint town churns out an indigenous recipe that deserves mention. If there is the ubiquitous *dal makhani* and *ker sangri*, there also is *dal-bati-choorma*, Jodhpur *mawa ki kachori*, Alwar *mawa*, Bikaner *rasmalas*, Pushkar *mal pua* et al.

To cater to the comfort of the traveller there are options aplenty. From bed and breakfast options to a plethora of heritage hotels there is accommodation to fit any budget. Rail, road and air network thread the 132,138 sq. miles. And no matter how often you've been around-the subsequent trip will stupefy the city jaded sensibilities, nevertheless.







## Dhundhar Circuit

Jaipur-Samode-Ramgarh-Dausa-Abhaneri



*There is a haunting air of romance, about the state, which is palpable in every nook and corner. This abode of Kings is one of the most exotic locales for tourist world over. The state has not only survived in all its ethnicity but owes its charisma and color to its enduring traditional way of life. It is a land of superlatives; everything over here is breathtakingly beautiful, impressive and fascinating! The state is well connected with other parts of the country and is easily approachable by trains, direct bus and air connections that make your travel easy and comfortable.*

*Jaipur, Rajasthan's vibrant capital, is a city where culture echoes, traditions speak and diversity delights. Whether you have tourism on your agenda, are a fly-by-night business traveller, have a penchant for shopping or just a gourmand, the city has plenty on its platter for you.*

*Once in the Sawai Jai Singh's 'Pink City' you could whirl your mind, dazzle your eyes and fall in love with history, a rich fusion of people and their lifestyles, then and now. While in Jaipur open your mind to the times of yore for it is a city where the old and the new throb in absolute harmony.*

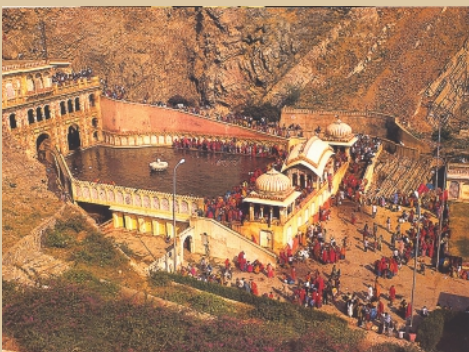
*While you do have the option of exploring Rajasthan on your own, we bring you well studied circuits that could facilitate your itinerary and help you to see all and do all. The conducted half-day and full-day tours will enable you to see the important monuments.*







City Palace, Jaipur



Galtaji, Jaipur



◀ B.M. Birla Auditorium

## Places of Interest

Where do you begin? Well you have options. In Jaipur you could begin your tour with the 286 years old walled city with narrow winding streets, the Hawa Mahal et al or simply take a tour out to the Forts and gardens. Beginning with the forts is an option most tourists opt for.

The enchanting Amber Palace once the throne of power, in Red Sandstone with marble interiors is a fascinating blend of the Rajput and Mughal architecture. A guided tour will showcase the Kali Temple, with huge silver lions and silver doors also known as Shila Devi Temple and the Hall for Public Audiences, Diwan-I-Aam. Ganesh Pol, the Hall of Victory, Jai Mandir with stunning ceiling adorned with mirror work and inlaid panels are simply fantastic.

On your way back, you could visit the old township of Amber that lies at the foothills with ancient temples that you would like to see. The Jagat Shiromani temple, the Narsingh temple and the Panna Meena Ki Baodi are temples worth a visit. Little ahead are the carved cenotaphs that stand memoirs of the Kings and the Queens. Beautifully located Gaitor and Maji Ki Chhatri, or the Maharani's cenotaphs, are a must see.

A little detour would take you on the road uphill to the spectacular Jaigarh and the Nahargarh Fort. Get pedestrian and you could explore the rugged nevertheless majestic forts. Begin with Jaigarh that houses the largest canon on wheels- Jai Van. The 15th century fort architecture showcases an exemplary art of rainwater harvesting with water channels creating a well-concealed stepwell for the queens. And do carry your camera. You can capture some beautiful shots that would stay as pleasant reminiscences.

Done with the hills, then halt at the gardens and lake. The newly restored Kanak Vrindavan temple complex and the Jal Mahal Palace are a sight to behold more so after the rains.

Now take a break from the forts, and go explore the old walled city. Shops stocked with local wares lace the wide streets. And while you fill your bags with the most exquisite handcrafted items to jewellery, exquisite handicrafts, typically rajasthani bandhej (tie and dye) or blissful sanganeri fabric, you have the option of being a part of the artisans at work. While a visit to the Johari Bazaar, M.I. Road, Tripolia and the various streets in the old city are a must for a flavour of the old, don't miss out on



▲ Sisodia Rani ka Bagh





◀ Decorated Elephants

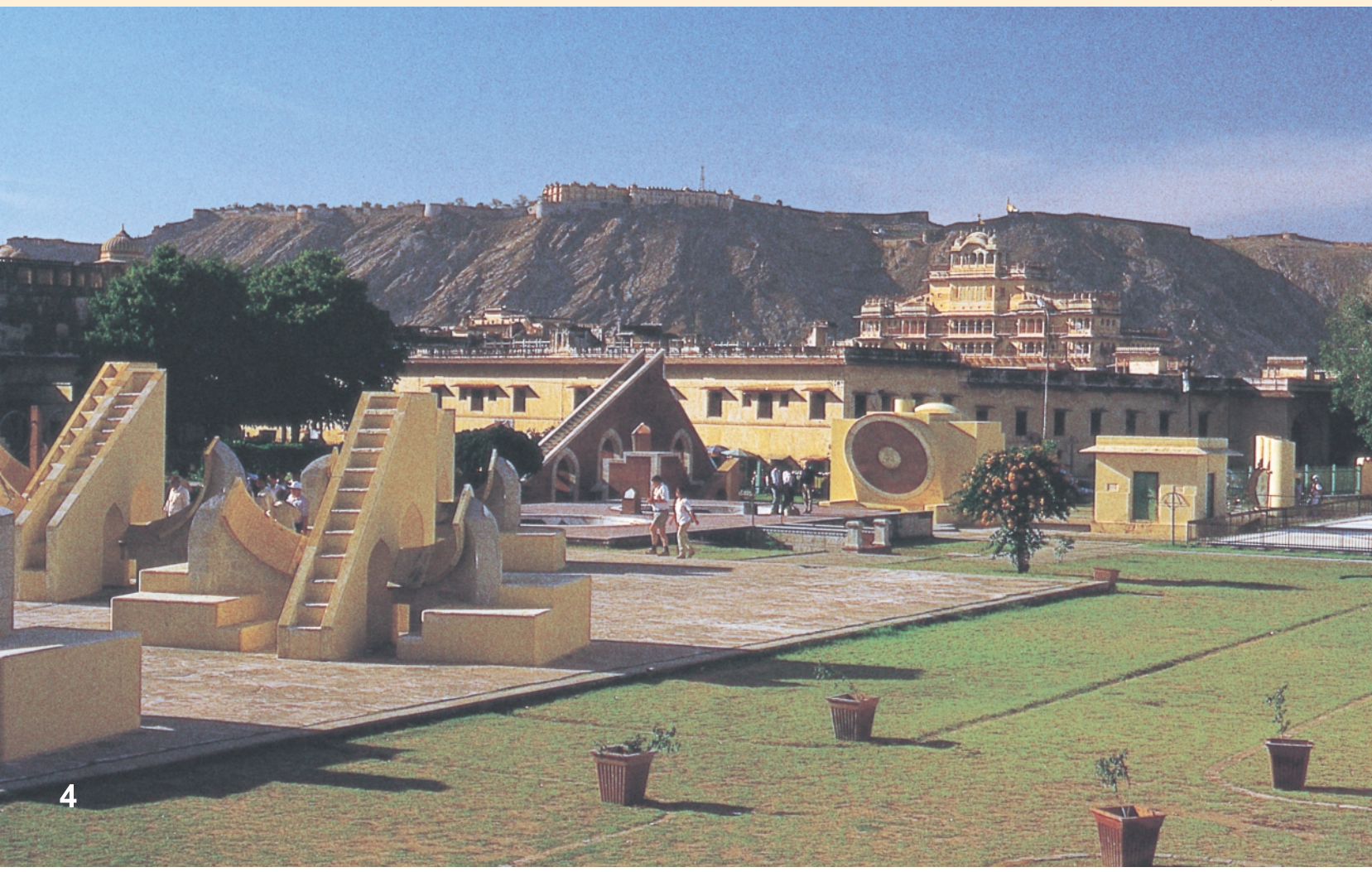
state emporia's for a wide range of handicrafts, that would make your shopping simpler and haggle free.

Heart of the city, a fusion of Rajputana and Mughal architecture, the Palace of Winds, Hawa Mahal stands tall with the latticed jharokhas. Just behind it is the Jantar Mantar the unique observatory built by the founder of Jaipur- Sawai Jai Singh. The City Palace with its fabulous museum displays some of the most amazing possessions of the Jaipur royal family. A little further away are the important temple of Galta, the gardens of Sisodia Rani and Vidyadhar.

Forty kilometers up north is the popular Samode Palace a fairytale palace that has some of the most exquisite mirror work and frescoes. To the east lies the Ramgarh resort with its huge artificial lake and cottages ideal for a weekend getaway. A temple here and the ruins of its old fort would sure interest you. A drive further east, is the historical town of Abhaneri. Though now in ruins, this deserted township has a 8th-9th century temple of Harshad Mata & Chand Baori (Stepwell).

Over the years Jaipur has metamorphosed from a historical city to a bursting metro that still retains its old world charm. So if you are a midnight bird there are ample opportunities with hotels, pubs and discotheques that could sail you smooth till dawn.

▼ Jantar-Mantar, Jaipur







## Braj- Mewat Circuit

Alwar-Sariska-Deeg-Bharatpur-Karauli-Ranthambhore

An archaeologist's delight, Alwar has been among the historic cities in Rajasthan. Once a part of the Matsya kingdom, a visit to Alwar would transport you to an era in history of a satellite town. Its ancient temples, medieval forts and palaces, gardens and wildlife make it an interesting tourist destination.

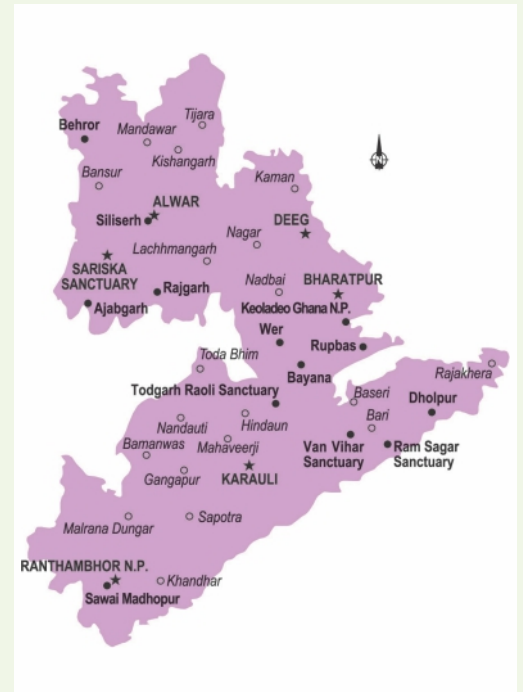
Embraced by the Aravalli ranges and cosseted from the desert sands, the quaint little town can boast of some picturesque locations. Lakes, wooded forests, palaces and some lesser-known forts, yet punctuated phase in history dot the city and its suburbs. Today, Alwar may have matured into an important industrial center yet it retains the mystical charm to attract tourists from across the globe.



Painted Stork



Jogi Mahal



▼ Tiger, Ranthambhore National Park





## Places of Interest

A moment out of history, you have here the Bala Quila where, Babur is believed to have spent one night. The fort now rests on the highest peak of the Aravalli ranges in Alwar with a panoramic view of the city. Nestled on the foothill is the City Palace, now a museum where you would find numerous legendary treasures of Alwar's Maharajas. While the architecture fascinates you- rare manuscripts, paintings, objects made from jade, ivory, silver and a large array of weapons are a visual delight.

The other interesting monuments here are the beautiful Moosi Maharani ki Chhatri a majestic red sand stone and white marble cenotaph built in the memory of a mistress of Maharaja Bakhtawar Singh, a ruler of Alwar. You could also see the Vijay Mandir Palace and Moti Doongri.

A little drive on the road to Jaipur is Alwar's most popular day out spot Siliserh. The summer retreat of the Maharajas is perched on a hill it is surrounded by the Aravalis and a tranquil lake that is very soothing. To the west in the wilderness are the protected forests of Sariska once the hunting grounds of the Kings. The Sariska Tiger Reserve and Wildlife sanctuary is a haven to several species of birds and wildlife that includes sambhar, chinkara, wild boar, jackal and the elusive tiger.

A drive into the forest, site also visited by the Pandava when in exile, would take you to an ancient temple, a relic of the past. In near proximity lies Viratnagar a city revered in history of having given shelter to the mighty Pandava brothers of Mahabharata. It is also one of the oldest historical sites in Rajasthan. An edict of King Ashoka dating back to the 3rd century was found here. In another part of the site are the ruins of the earliest freestanding structure, a circular Buddhist temple.

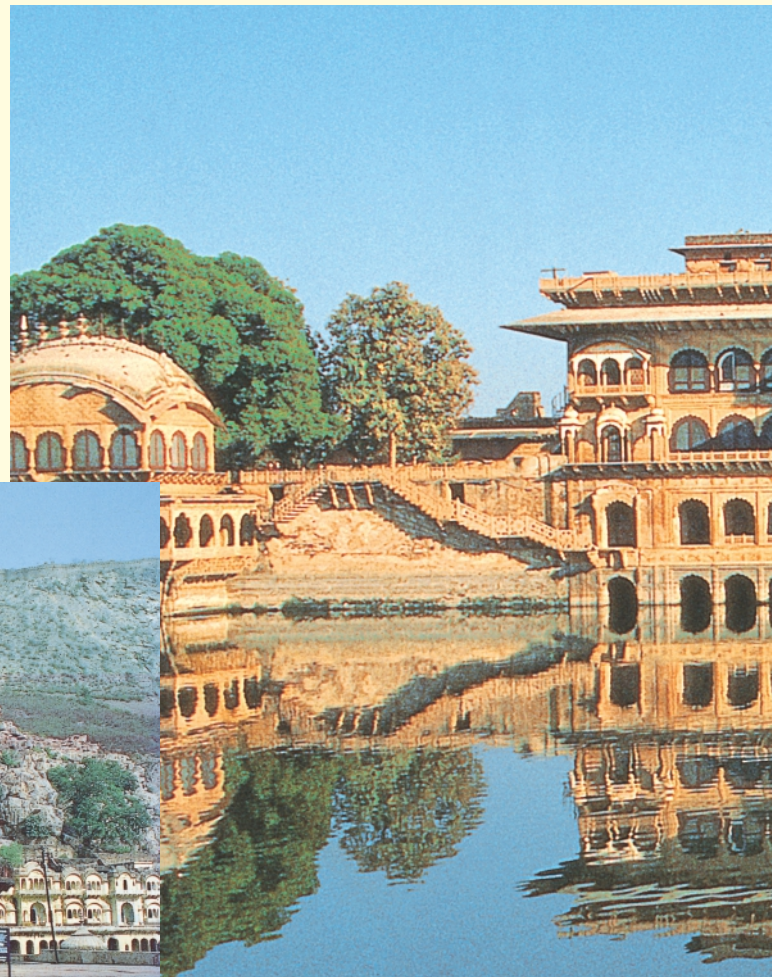
As you move on in the circuit, comes Deeg. With close proximity to Agra and Delhi, Deeg exhibits are the most beautiful in the region, palaces and gardens with strong Mughal influence. Deeg is famous for Coloured fountains, unique in the world, Temples of Kaman and Part of Braj 84 Kus bari Krama are visited by religious tourists.

Moosi Rani ki Chhatri, Alwar ▼

A visit to this region is not complete without a trip to Bharatpur. The history of Bharatpur traces the rise and fall of Jat power in eastern Rajasthan. This was the region where important Jat rulers like Churaman, Badan Singh and Suraj Mal dominated the history of this entire belt. They fought the invading Marathas, Mughals and the interfering British and were a power to reckon with. The Bharatpur fort is now partly used by the government offices but a large part of it houses the government museum. But the icing on the cake is the Lohagarh Fort, the iron fort that took sixty long years to build.

Bharatpur a tiny little place, yet it can boast of one of the world's best bird sanctuaries at the Keoladeo National Park once the hunting preserve of the kings. Every year the sanctuary is visited by over 400 species of water birds, which include exotic migratory birds from Afghanistan, Central Asia, Siberia and Tibet. The greylag and barhead geese are among the important visitors but the star of the sanctuary is the rare Siberian crane. If you're a bird lover, then this is your paradise.

Further on in, lies Dholpur famous for its stone. At a little distance away, at Jhor is the oldest Mughal Garden built by Babar in 1527 and rediscovered in the 1970s. You also see the famous Machkund



Deeg Palace, Deeg



where a religious fair every year sees a gathering of devotees seeking cure for their skin ailments by taking a dip in the holy kund. Other important locations include Bari and Damoh, the Van Vihar and Ram Sagar Sanctuary.

The grand finale on the circuit is the tiger land of international repute Ranthambhor. After the Kings and the palaces let nature lover in you lead you through the kingdom of the king of the jungle. As the various species co-exist in their habitat, you meander through the jungle tracks with verdant landscape satiating the wildlife enthusiast in you. But in that frevour don't miss out the Ranthambhore fort with the famous Ganesh Temple. A little further is the unusual Sunheri Kothi in Tonk. Carry back some felt rugs called namdas and leather items produced here.



Dholpur Palace







## Hadoti Circuit

Bundi-Kota-Jhalawar-Baran



Steeped in history the lesser-explored regions in this circuit are located towards the South East of Rajasthan. The places on track with significant historical importance date back several centuries. Here you get to travel back in time and witness prehistoric cave paintings and look for traces of an early civilisation. Let the archaeologist in you surface as you drive along the Chambal, a vast reservoir of remnants from the past. From sculpted temples in Hadoti to the Garh Palace in Bundi, and the Darrah Wildlife Sanctuary you have a lot to do here.

### Places of Interest

As you touch the first destination on this circuit **Bundi** 'off the beaten track', its undiscovered, pristine beauty would smite you. 36 Kms from Kota ruled by the Hada Chauhans, set in a narrow inclining gorge the splendour at **Hadoti** would leave you spellbound, in a trance with a fairy tale quality about the palaces and forts. Shrines and the intricately carved brackets, pillars and balconies tell tales of Rajput architecture.

Jagmandir, Kishore Sagar, Kota ▼





Soak in the vibrant colours at the **Chitra Shala** the palace of paintings. Traditional murals adorn the palace of paintings where the walls and ceiling are filled with artwork of the Bundi School that date back a few centuries. Most of them depict scenes from Krishna raas-leela, with a few murals thrown in between about the splendors of the kingdom-glimpses of court life, animals of the region, hunting scenes and the like.

While in Bundi you just can't miss the stepwells. **Raniji ki baori** built in 1699 for Rani Nathavatji, the 46 meters deep stepwell has exquisite carvings and arches all along the sides. Interestingly, apart from serving as private swimming pools for the royal ladies, these stepwells also acted as reservoirs in the hotter months. You must also see the **Chaurasi Khambhon-ki-Chhatra** or the 84-pillared cenotaph. Built on a high platform this unique double story cenotaph has a large Shivlinga at the center, which makes it both a temple as well as a cenotaph. A steep cobbled stone climb takes you to the fantastic **Garh Palace**. Being inside the majestic palace is like traveling back in time to another age. You could also see the **Phool Sagar Palace, Sukh Mahal, Shikar Burj** and **Ksar Bagh**.

While in Kota, there is the **Jag Mandir**, the **brajraj Bhawan Palace** and the **Umaid Bhawan Palace** that you need to spend some time in. And before you leave don't forget to pack along some Kota *doria* that Kota is famous for. The fabric makes excellent summer wear.

Drive further into the Hadoti region that abounds in temples and forts. In **Baran**, what would seem like a lonely planet with relics of the past you could bank on the local hospitality. And if you do feel like extending your stay, you can indulge in the sinful extravagance of the ancient havelis converted into hotels.

While in this region you could also explore the **Badoli temples** that date back to the 9<sup>th</sup> and the 11<sup>th</sup> century. A picturesque locale, you might just like to spend some time at the **Sitabari** or **Ramgarh Bhanddeora** temple. Then there is the **Darah wildlife sanctuary**, once a royal hunting ground.

Drive into Jhalawar where the Garh Palace takes center stage. Don't miss on the **Zenana Khas** that has some wonderful historic paintings. And once moving out, the 7<sup>th</sup> century temples of **Chandrabhaga**, Sun temple at **Jhalarapatan**, and the magnificent **Gagron fort**.



Raniji-ki-Baori, Bundi

Prithvi Vilas Palace, Jhalawar ▼







## Mewar Circuit

### Udaipur-Rajsamand-Chittaurgarh



'Meywar' as it was spelt in earlier days instantly conjures up the entire panorama of the Indian history. The Mewar region replete with annals of valour and chivalry is an oasis in the arid landscape. Two names Rana Pratap and Meera Bai are absolutely synonymous with the region. It is that region which abounds in superlatives with magnificent hills, azure blue lakes, breathtaking forts and palaces and vivid landscape.

Legend has it that the king of Chittor, Maharana Udai Singh, was out on a hunting expedition, when came across a hermit meditating on the banks of a lake. The hermit blessed the Maharana and told him that if he built a palace at that very spot on the banks of Lake Pichola it would be well protected. The Maharana took his advice. And so did the 'Venice of India' as it is known, Udaipur come into being named after Rana Udai Singh in 1559 AD. You could be a part of the valiant kingdom, pack your bags and set out to explore the region with its rich cultural legacy and beauty par excellence for that unparalleled Indian vacation.

### Places of Interest

Before you set out on this circuit, you probably already know you are headed to the city of lakes. The City Palace resting on Lake Pichola with its courtyards, pavilions, terraces, corridors and spectacular gardens is the focal point of the city. An exemplary testimony of Mughal-Rajput architecture the courtyards lined with columns, pillared terraces, fountains and gardens all add to its stunning image.

Kumbhalgarh Fort ▼





However, besides that there are several areas of tourist attraction like the Mor Chowk with magnificent peacock mosaics, Moti Mahal with spell binding mirror work and the Bhim Vilas Palaces with splendid wall paintings. You could also pay a visit to Suraj Gokhada, Badi mahal, Sheesh Mahal, Chini Chitrashal the Zenana Mahal and Darbar Hall.

Want to know what inspired Taj Mahal's architecture? Then you ought to pay a visit to the Jag Mandir Palace on Lake Pichola with its pleta dura work. The island has an impressive chhatri (cenotaph) carved from grey blue stone and is flanked by a row of enormous stone elephants.

To the north of the city lies Saheliyon-Ki-Bari, a garden of the maids of honour. This small ornamental garden has many fountains, delightful lotus pools, chiseled kiosks and marble elephants.

The Ahar Museum is of great archaeological importance. The museum preserves the excavated items of the ancient period by the Archeological Department of Rajasthan that date back to the 10th century. Here you get to see earthen pots. Iron objects and other artifacts that used to be part of the lifestyle of primordial people.

Some other places you must see in Udaipur are the Gulab Bagh, Doodh Talai, Fateh Sagar, Moti Magri, Bharatiya Lok Kala Mandal, Ahad, Sajjangarh Fort, Shilpgram etc.

Interested in pilgrimage? Shree Eklingji Temple complex dedicated to Lord Shiva Houses 108 temples that are a major attraction. The unusual Sas-Bahu Temple at Nagda dates back to the 10th century. The Nathdwara is famous for its 17th century temple dedicated to Lord Krishna, and a renowned center of pilgrimage for the devotees of Krishna and Vishnu alike. An important

Vaishnava Temple popularly called Dwarikadhish is one of the most important temple of Vallabhacharya sect in Kankroli.

The arresting layout of Fort Kumbhalgarh, the birthplace of the great warrior Maharana Pratap, is worth the travel. It is the second most important fort in Rajasthan built in the 15th century by Maharana Kumbha, it encloses many temples, palaces and garden. A little known fact is that after the Great Wall of China, Kumbhalgarh has the second largest stretch of wall in the world. Kumbhalgarh Wildlife Sanctuary that imbibes its name from the Kumbhalgarh fort is a major attraction for the tourists coming to Udaipur. The sanctuary is home to many endangered species of wildlife. From here to on to visit the historic Battlefield of Rana Pratap at Haldighati.

It you travel 110 kms east of Udaipur, you reach the most important fort, a stronghold of Mewar-Chittorgarh. It epitomizes Rajput spirit, valour, pride and Romance. The imposing and awe inspiring fort stands on 180m high hill that rises rapidly from the plains. Important places to visit on the fort are Victory Tower, Kirti Stambh, Govt. Museum (Fatch Prakash Palace), Rama Kumbha's Palace, Padmini's Palace, Meera Bai's temple. Kalika Mata Temple etc.

Carry back what the region is famous for-its marble art, miniature paintings Kundan and Meenakari work, clay and wooden products of the colourful mud panels of Molela.



Saheliyon-ki-Bari, Udaipur



Victory Tower, Chittaurgarh





## Vagad Circuit

### Dungarpur Banswara



*You could call it a visit to the bamboo town. That's where the place derives its name from for once bamboo grew here in abundance. The undulating green hills, forest thickets, the valleys and lakes give this area its own unique feel. Owing to slightly difficult accessibility, the region has been able to preserve its natural beauty and cultural identity.*

*Located on either side of the banks of river Mahi the two important cities in the Vagad circuit are Dungarpur and Banswara. The region is a stronghold of the Bhils a tribe, inaccessible to the outside world, with its own idiosyncratic lifestyle. This circuit would be an ideal break away, for the nature lover. So put on your walking shoes and explore the terrain ideal for walks and treks midst the flora and fauna that is inimitable to this area. Let the unforeseen be welcome here.*

### Places of Interest

Founded in the 13th century, there are a number of old temples and palaces in and around Dungarpur. Bordering Gujarat, Dungarpur is a picturesque town surrounded by hills on three sides. The region is simply pictorial and the rain adds to its charm. Dungarpur was fortunate to have been

▼ Beneshwar Fair

located in the deep interiors and that enables you to still witness its pristine beauty. The still untouched wall paintings are well preserved and there is little damage to the buildings. The surrounding areas are full of interesting little temple towns, archaeological sites of great importance and ruins.

The major attractions here are the Udai Bilas Palace, which is built by the side of a lake, and famous for its fine architecture and carvings. The Rajput architecture with its intricately sculptured pillars and panels, impressive balconies, bracketed windows and marvelous panels would appeal to you.

The seven-storey Juna Mahal is a treasure house of miniature paintings, frescoes, glass and mirror work. About 24 kms is a temple on the banks of the River Som. The temple known as Dev Somnath is an excellent specimen of Indian temple architecture. Now it is a protected monument, under the management of Archaeological Survey of India.

In Beneshwar several temples are dedicated to Hindu deities, dedicated to Lord Vishnu and Lord Brahma the Beneshwar temple is much revered by the Bhils. Other temples are a sight to behold for their exquisitely carved pillars and gateways. Beneshwar is best visited between the months of January - February, when a tribal fair of the Bhils is held at the confluence of Mahi, Jakham and Som rivers.

You could also visit the famous shrine dedicated to Shrinathji that lies on the bank of the Gaib Sagar Lake. The water bodies in Dungarpur attracts a large variety of migratory birds during the winters.

Then check out the magnificent shrine dedicated to Sayyed Fakhruddin at Galiyakot that was once the capital of the Parmar kings. Scores of devotees gather here during the Urs. Another temple that you could visit is the Dev Somnath a splendid 12th century temple dedicated to Lord Shiva a replica of Somnath temple in Gujarat. When the original temple was destroyed several times by the Muslim invaders, devout Hindus





decided to create this replica in the interiors so that it would remain safe.

A little drive on the outskirts, the area adjoining Arthuna around Lonkiya village still have the remains of Shaivite temples. Some of the idols found here bear inscriptions dating back to 1173 and 1194. Among the dilapidated ruins is a beautifully carved conjugated statue of Shiv, Ganesh and Parvati. The statue is considered to be a marvellous piece of Indian sculpture. Another idol found is that of Lord Hanuman seen in a very unusual posture.

In and around the village of Arthuna, clusters of ruined Hindu and Jain temples of the 11th, 12th and 15th century still exist. Temple Mandanesh or Mandleshwar built in 1080 A.D. by Chamunda Raja Parmara and named after his father, Mandan Deva, bear several inscriptions that speak of the past glory of Arthuna. Talwara is famous for its ancient temples and the ruins of some old monuments. Laxmi Narain temple, Gokarneshwar Mahadeva and Sambhav Nath Jain temple remain main places of tourist interest. If you are looking at carrying back souvenirs then the place is known for exquisite green stone idols made by the local artisans.



Rajajeshwar Temple, Dungarpur



▲ Beneshwar Temple Dungarpur



Interior view of Juna Palace, Dungarpur

Interior view of Juna Palace, Dungarpur ▼



Shiv Temple, Banswara







## Godwar Circuit

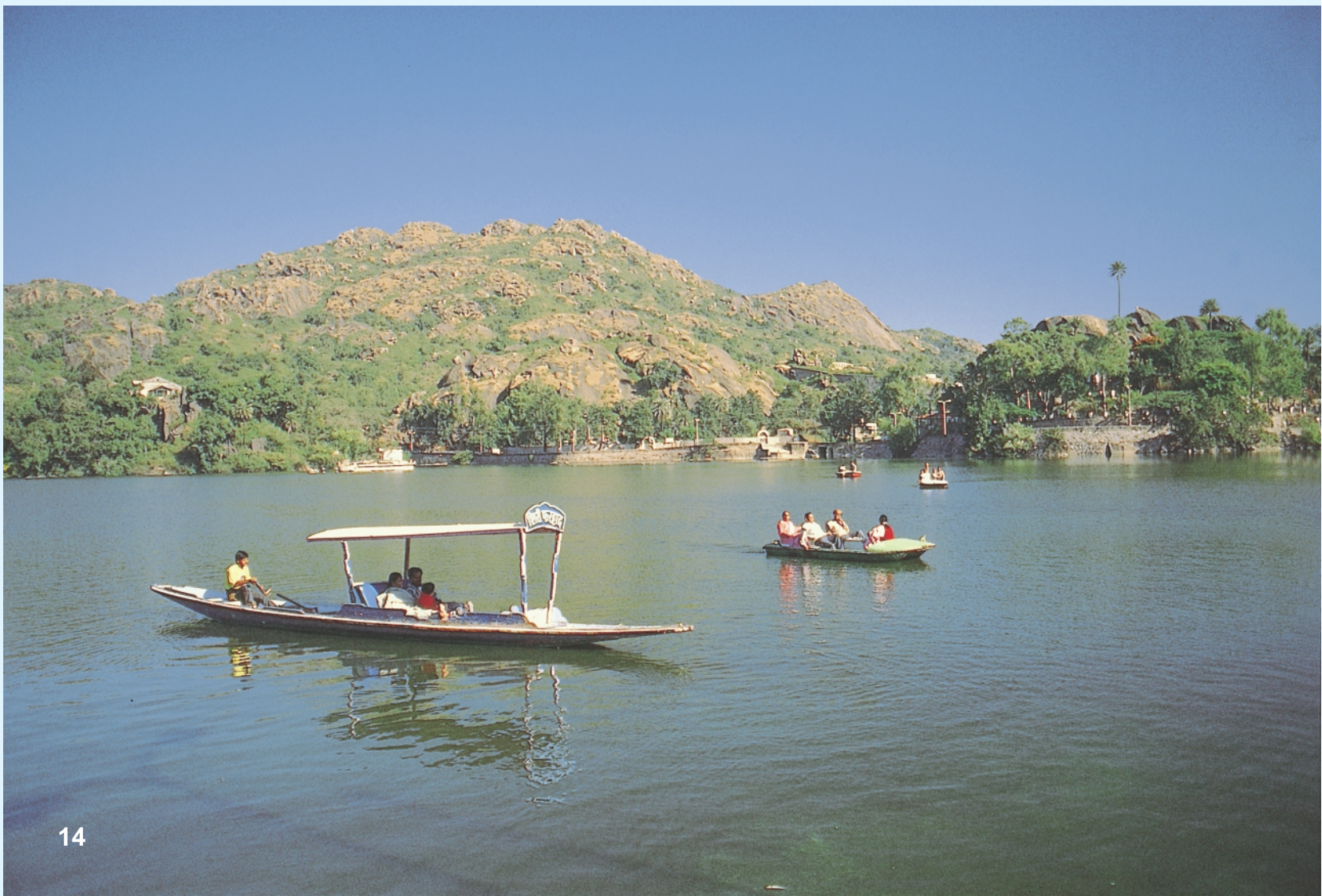
Mount Abu-Ranakpur-Jalore



*The circuit is a feel of the hills in the desert-scape. This is where the hills are at their zenith between the Nilgiris and the Himalayan range. The only hill destination, Mt Abu is located at the south western end of Rajasthan. As the legend has it, the name Abu means son of Himalayas or Ar-Booda, “the hill of wisdom”, deriving its name from Arbuada - the powerful serpent, which rescued Nandi the sacred bull of Lord Shiva. Mount Abu has been home, to many rishis and munis, sages and saints, including the famous Rishi Vashishtha, who is believed to have created four Agnikul Rajput clans, from a fire-pit, by performing a yagna or fire sacrifice, to protect the earth from the demons. From this mystical fire rose the mighty Rajputs who later dominated the history of Rajasthan.*

*At a distance of about 190 km from Udaipur, this hill station is famous for its temples, the most noteworthy being the Dilwara Temples. As per legend, the Nakki Lake at Mount Abu was carved out by the Gods with their nails. The land of meditating rishi and munis, Mount Abu was said to be the home to 33 crore God and Goddesses and an important Vaishnava and Shaivite pilgrim center up to the 11th century. Today it is recognised the world over for its magnificent Jain temples.*

Nakki Lake, Mt. Abu ▼





## Places of Interest

The hills are known for their temples. Owing to it being a quaint locale you could just trek all along. For the Jains and the Hindus this is a pilgrimage. When in Mt Abu, all roads lead to the **Delwara Temples** made out of intricately carved marble dedicated to the Jain Tirthankaras or Saints. You would get to see several ornately carved temples constructed between the 11th and 13th century A.D.

The main temple known as the **Vimal Vasahi** is the oldest one dedicated to the first Tirthankara. A minister of Bhima Dev I, Solanki ruler of Gujarat, Vasahi built the temple at a cost of Rs 18.53 crore. It took 14 years to build this temple by 1,500 artisans and 1,200 labourers. This would absolutely leave you to marvel at the mission. But there are more temples each a masterpiece of perfection in art.

The temples at Delwara is a cluster of five temples. Archaeological evidence suggests that Mahavira himself visited the site, making it especially sacred to the Jains as a tirtha, or a place of pilgrimage. As a temple city it ranks among the finest ones. Among the other known temples are, **Gaumukh temple** that served as the venue for Sage Vashishtha's yagna is also a must see. The temple gets its name from a nearby natural spring that surges through a carved cow's head. **Arbuda** is another temple that finds a special mention.

▼ Delwara Temple

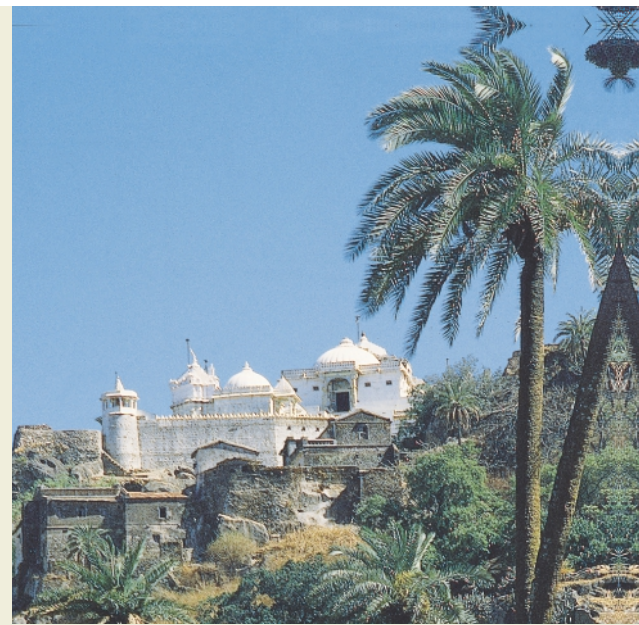


Then there is the Nakki Lake. As the legend has it, this was carved out by the Gods with their nails. This is the only artificial lake in India that is 1200 mts above sea level. The lake is a major tourist attraction and a place where you could take a boat ride or simply, walk by the lakeside. You could also trek to the **Anadra Point**, or as it is known in common parlance as the sunset or honeymoon point. A favourite jaunt for tourists, the hill offers a spectacular view of the setting sun. Then there is the Toad's Rock a nature's marvel carved out like a toad.

If you travel 150 kms towards Jalore you would witness a very different topography. Jalore was a flourishing town in the 8th century A.D. under the rule of Pratihara Kings, there are of beautiful temples here. The fort and the palaces passed into many hands before finally falling into the hands of rulers of Marwar. The Hindu rulers while being great warriors were also great patrons of art and culture. Two of the greatest poetic works in any Indian language, namely, 'Kulayamala' and 'Kanhad Dev Prabandh' were composed in Jalore.

Jalore is famous for its fort built by the Parmaras, probably in the 10th century. The palaces here are simple, without any superfluous embellishment. The **Jalore fort** is built on the lines of traditional Hindu architecture. The enclosure is spacious with the mosque of saint **Malik Shah**, said to have been built by Alauddin Khilji.

Another temple complex is at **Ranakpur**, 140 kms is a marvel in stone. A massive metal



Achalgarh, Mt. Abu



Ranakpur Temple

statue with rich carving of its elaborate parikar of Rishabdev, cast in five metals, mainly Pittal or brass is installed, hence the name Pittalhar temple. The Shrine consists of main **Garbhagraha**, **Gudh Mandap** and **Navchowki** that is exquisitely carved with 1444 pillars. Explore the various mandaps and study the intricate carving that on no two pillars is identical. You could easily spend half a day here awestruck by the temple architecture surrounded by the sylvan valley.

▼ Wallar Dance







## Desert Circuit

Jodhpur-Barmer-Jaisalmer-Bikaner



*If you think sand dunes in Marwar, you also think them juxtaposed with the camels, led by the silhouetted men in vibrant headgears. The desert hues make the perfect backdrop. But you may be pleasantly surprised that the region is not all sand. It is dotted with lush green flora, reservoirs and gardens. You could begin your trip with Jodhpur, the Sun City.*

### Places of Interest

A lot different from the other cities, Jodhpur gives the impression of being a rugged no frills city. Consider **Mehrangarh Fort** on a perpendicular hill, the most imposing and impressive structure that presents a majestic birds eye view of city from a height of 125m. Situated on a steep hill, Mehrangarh fort is one of the largest forts in India. Like every other this one too has a story to tell. The beauty and grandeur in the fort narrates a saga of hard sandstones yielding to the chisels of skilled Jodhpuri sculptures.

▼ Kiradu Temple, Barmer



Mehrangarh Fort, Jodhpur ▼





But once inside you traverse through a different world altogether with magnificent palaces with marvelously carved panels and latticed windows like the **Moti Mahal**, **Phool Mahal**, **Sheesh Mahal** and the **Daulat Khana**. Spend a lot of time in the museum, one of the best in Rajasthan, and see the fabulous collection of Jodhpur royal palanquins, furniture, miniature paintings, and musical instruments.

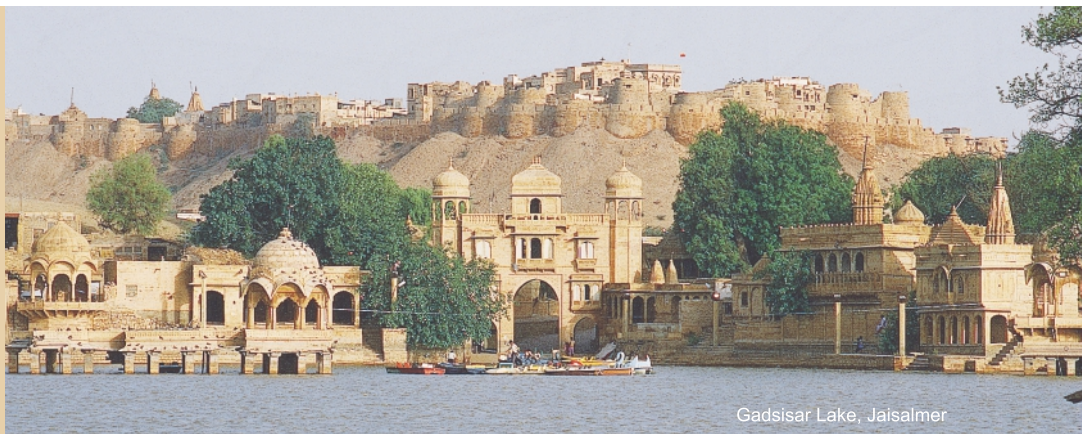
Close to the fort complex, a tribute to Maharaja Jaswant Singh II lies **Jaswant Thada** the 19th century white marble royal cenotaph. From here you could move on to the romantic **Umaid Bhawan Palace**-a gesture that spells royal. The palace was built only with the purpose of giving employment to the people of Jodhpur during a long drawn famine. Another part of the palace houses a well-maintained museum, displaying an amazing array of items belonging to the Maharaja and the royal family - weapons, antiques & fascinating clocks, crockery and trophies. You could also see the **Girdikot** and **Sardar market**. A little further from the city **Balsamand Lake** and gardens will charm you.

Then you could drive north to **Mandore** the ancient capital of Marwar. You would witness the **Hall of Heroes** where sixteen huge figures have been carved out of a single rock, the shrine of 330 million Gods and the royal cenotaph **Mahamandir** temple. Don't miss out the ancient town **Osian** 65 Kms from Jodhpur. This town is famous for Brahmanical and Jain temples, which belong to 8th and 12th century.

If you travel further, the offbeat **Barmer** the city founded in the 13<sup>th</sup> century is a journey through rural Rajasthan. You would actually want to go back and imitate the fascinating folk art on mud houses-only if you had a cottage like that. A little further away **Kiradu** would interest the artist or the archeologist in you. It has an inscription dating back to 1161 A.D. Check out the **Someshwar Temple** here.

Moving on in the circuit you would find yourself in the once a quiet desert city, **Jaisalmer** the golden city, situated amid picturesque Thar Desert, that has transformed itself into a major tourist destination. The terrain barren, and undulating with its famous sand dunes, slopes towards the Indus valley and the Runn of Kutch. Even the soil here is grateful to a little rain and turns lush green during the monsoon. Rest of the time Jaisalmer wears a golden veneer.

Like various other cities of Rajasthan, you will discover different facets of Jaisalmer as you explore this wonderful city. Though there are historical monuments scattered all over the city,



Gadsisar Lake, Jaisalmer

the **Jaisalmer Fort** will immediately command your attention. Made of sand stone and famous as **Sonar Quila**, the Jaisalmer Fort is a dominating structure midst a sea of sand. The city is also known for its old mansions, better known as Havelis. Among many of them you will find **Salim Singh ki haveli** and **Nathmal ki haveli** as the most striking. There are other monuments too, which are equally important because of their distinct and individual architecture. The amalgamation of ancient and the medieval era architecture will allure.

Visit **Lodurva**, the ancient capital of the Bhattis and appreciate the Dilwara style paintings scattered all around the ruins. If you are a history freak then opt for **Amar Sagar** and **Bada Bagh** and relive the rich cultural legacy. Want to wind the clock backward! Visit **Fossil Park** and let your geological nature take the initiative. In case you are a conservationist you can spend time at the **Desert National park**.

And if you want to take a break for a while soak yourself in the inimitable Rajasthani hospitality 'padharo mahare desh'. The **Desert Festival** organized every year in February by the Department of Tourism, is very popular worldwide.

The small market located just outside the fort is the main hub of activity where you can pick up a large variety of local crafts and explore the streets on foot. However bumpy you must experience a camel ride on the dunes and gear yourself up for an unforgettable experience of watching the sunset over the desert.

Some more desert life awaits you at **Bikaner** as you move on to Bikaner for that throbbing medieval flavour. This city lies on the northern point of the triangle of the desert cities. The city that goes back 500 years, was founded by one of the Princes of Jodhpur clan. You would observe a rather interesting element about the history of these desert cities. They are located on the major trade routes that connected Central Asia and North India with the Gujarat Ports.

The important places of interests are **Junagarh Fort**, **Sadul Museum** and **Devi Kund Sagar**. The **Ganga Golden Jubilee museum** here has a vast collection of rare exhibits covering almost every period of Indian history. When in Bikaner don't miss the famous temple of **Karni Mata** at Deshnok, it is a beautiful temple where the humble rats are also venerated, **Gajner** for lovers of wildlife, and **Kolayat**, an ancient pilgrimage centre. Carry some camel wool products of this region. Carpets, Durries, carved wooden furniture, stone carving and block printing are the most shopped for here.







## Merwara-Marwar Circuit

Ajmer-Pushkar-Merta-Nagaur



Heart of Rajasthan and the erstwhile seat of power for the Chauhans, Ajmer is an oasis. The city was founded by Raja Ajay Pal Chauhan in the 7th Century A.D. and continued to be a major centre of the Chauhan power till 1193 A.D., when Prithviraj Chauhan lost it to Mohammad Ghauri. Since then, Ajmer became home to many dynasties.

It was from Ajmer that the last Hindu ruler of Delhi, Prithviraj Chauhan, controlled a major part of Northern India. The legendary Prithviraj lived here and became a force to reckon with. His exploits are related with great wonder and sometimes disbelief. Few rulers of that time could match the charisma and heroism of this dynamic ruler. The Chauhans dominated Ajmer for many years and it was only towards the end of the 12th century that Prithviraj was killed in battle with Muhammad Ghauri. That changed the history of this region totally. The importance of Ajmer diminished with the death of its most valiant ruler and Ajmer passed under the Delhi Sultanate. From then on, Ajmer saw many upheavals until Emperor Akbar came to the throne in 1556 and gave Ajmer the Status of a full-fledged province. He also used Ajmer as a base for his operations in Rajputana. Today, Ajmer is a popular pilgrimage centre for the Hindus as well as Muslims.

The British chose Ajmer for its prestigious Mayo College, a school exclusively for Indian nobility. Ajmer is also the base for visiting Pushkar the abode of Lord Brahma. The Dargah of the Great Sufi Saint Khwaja Moinuddin Hasan Chishti here is a sacred centre of pilgrimage. Each year, the followers of the master, congregate here from all parts of the world on the occasion of the annual fair of Urs to pay their obeisance.

Pushkar Fair, Pushkar ▼





## Places of Interest

Today Ajmer is synonymous with the **Dargah Sharif** the resting place of Sufi Saint Khwaja Moinuddin Hasan Chishti. The town comes alive during the annual Urs festivities when lakhs of Muslim devotees gather here to pay homage to the Garib Nawaz the protector of the poor.

You could visit the **Adhai Din-Ka-Jhonpra** a masterpiece of Indo- Islamic architecture. As the legend goes its was constructed in two and a-half days (Adhi-Din). A relic of an old mosque this consists of a quadrangle with a front screen wall of seven pointed arches. Each distinct pillar and arched screen with its ruined minarets make it a splendid architectural masterpiece.

Then you could see the **Ana Sagar** an artificial lake named after Anaji Chauhan. With its marble pavilions overlooking the serene lake it's a place to spend some quiet moments. You could also see the giant fort that stands guarding the city with six gates.

A trip on the circuit would be incomplete without a trip to Pushkar the sacred Hindu town. You would need to drive 14 kms northwest through the picturesque landscape. Legend has it that Pushkar existed during the fourth century B.C. Another legend about the Creator God, Brahma describes the creation of the Pushkar lake. According to an off-quoted legend, Lord Brahma was in search of an auspicious place to perform Yagna and was flying over the Rajasthan Desert on his swan. Some lotus petals fell from his hand and wafted down. Miraculously, blue lakes sprang up where the flowers touched land. A lake sprang up at Pushkar. Brahma is supposed to have performed sacrifice at this lake on Kartik Purnima (the full moon day of the Kartik month, Oct.-Nov.), hallowing the place. Sacred to Brahma, Pushkar boasts of 400 temples, and 52 ghats, which is the only one of its kind in the world. A dip in the waters of Pushkar and worship at his temple ensure salvation. The Great Hindu epics of Mahabharat and Ramayana make references to this religious place regarded to be Adi Tiratha.

The right time for you to be in Pushkar would definitely be the Pushkar fair and absorb the infectious exuberance. A sacrilege to call it a annual cattle & religious fair it is when the place throbs with activity with lakhs of visitors. You just can't go back from here without the awesome syrupy Maal Puas and the legendry silver jewellery. A little away **Merta** that can claim some historic ruins also has **Charbhuja** the 400 years old **Meera Bai Temple**.

**Nagaur**, on the other hand is a small town but with numerous fascinating monuments. The Mughal Emperor Shah Jehan granted this town to Raja Amar Singh Rathore and the focal point here is the fort itself. Now

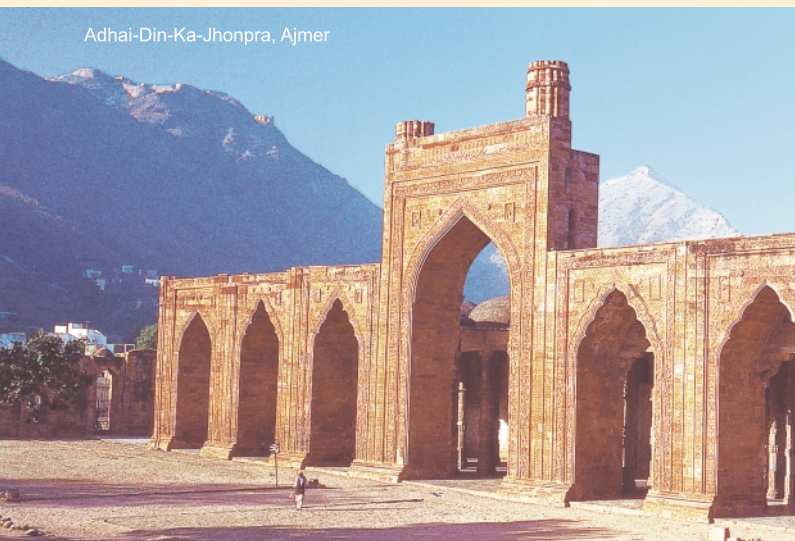
painstakingly restored. The **Nagaur fort** has some splendid palaces, temples and palatial mansions some of which have been built by Akbar and Shah Jehan. The Beautiful **Moti Mahal**, **Badal Mahal** and **Hawa Mahal** are superb architectural creations. The walls are adorned with some exquisite frescoes which are a combination of Persian and Nagaur styles. Cenotaphs of Rao Amar Rathore Singh, Tarkin ki Dargah, Bansiwala temple, Bade Pir Saheb ki Dargah are worth a visit.

▼ Ana Sagar, Ajmer



Rural women inside Nagaur Fort

Adhai-Din-Ka-Jhonpra, Ajmer







## Shekhawati Circuit

Sikar-Nawalgarh-Dundlod-Mandawa-Fatehpur-Jhunjhunu



The region Shekhawati gets its name from the Rajput Kachhwaha chieftain Rao Shekha. The story of Shekha's birth is rather interesting to understand the origin of Shekhawati. Mokal Ji and his wife were a disturbed couple as they had no son or heir for several years. They heard about the miraculous powers of the Sheikh Burhan, a Muslim saint. Upon hearing this they decided to pay the man a visit. After they received the blessings of the Sheikh, a son was born to the couple. In honour of the mendicant, the couple named their son Shekha.

Rao Shekha came to power at a prime age of 12 reigned for 43 years and was a power to reckon with. But after the reign of Rajputs, came in the British. The latter patronized their own kind of trade that required the marwaris to rush to fresh pastures like Kolkata and Mumbai. Thus the beautiful Shekhawati towns gradually came to be abandoned. But while they prospered elsewhere, they sent back huge sums for the welfare of their communities to build schools, colleges, reservoirs, dharamshalas and gaushalas. And the nouveau rich marwaris found a way to display their wealth by commissioning intricate frescos on their havelis.

It is only in the last two decades that the Shekhawati region acquired a fillip, with its art being the central focus. And the children of the house of Shekha are now back, opening their dusty family castles and turning them into hotels. And the rest as they say is history.

Fresco Shekhawati ▾





## Places of Interest

When you travel through the region an 'open art gallery' its like going through a riot of colour. Wherever you cast an eye, frescoes smile back. In Shekhawati you journey through the magical land of havelis painted in vivid, vibrant hues with white chattries. As you walk through the narrow winding lanes, you begin slowing down, infected with the pace of life here. Soak in the effervescence of colour, colour and just more colour all around you.

Although the idea of frescoes might have been imported from the splendid Fort-Palace of Amber, which was in turn influenced by those of the Mughal courts, it reached a completely new form in the hands of the artists of Shekhawati. And as you do you'll find that Shekhawati has the greatest concentration of painted forts, chhatris (cenotaphs), temples and havelis in the country.

In fact, this is also the largest collection of murals in the entire world. The Shekhawat Rajputs financed the earlier frescoes in this colourful fantasy world, but later the wealthy business class of the Marwar region the marwaris patronized the art. Apart from adding vitality to the arid landscape, the frescoes are an interesting documentation of the history of the region ranging from religious to folk and mythological themes. Gradually the influence of the British east meets west percolated into the artwork with hats, cars, ships, airplanes and men in suits.

Some of the flourishing towns to visit in the

region are **Sikar** with **Gopinath, Raghunath temples** as well as the **Biyani** blue and white havelies. You must also pay a visit to the **Harsh Nath** and **Jeen Mata** temples in the vicinity.

A little out of the city **Nawalgarh** founded in the 18th Century by Nawal Singh, has some of the finest frescos in the Shekhawati region. A huge fort here with colourful bazaars and numerous havelis with elaborate architecture makes it an interesting destination. There are a few prominent havelis like **Anandilal Poddar Haveli, Aath Haveli, Hodh Raj Patodia Haveli.**

Then **Dundlod fort** heart of Shekhawati Region, 7 km from Nawalgarh is a blend of the Rajput and Mughal art and architecture. Now the fort is converted into a cosy heritage hotel. The **Goenka Haveli** too is worth a visit for the beautiful frescos and the fine mirror work above the windows and features of florets and birds in the outer courtyard.

And if you have a passion for riding a fine breed of horses await you. Besides the thikana Khansamas (chefs) can dole out delicious cuisines for epicurean in you.

Close to the fort lies the Chhatra of Ram Dutt Goenka. Also worth a visit is the **Satyanarayan Temple** built by the Goenka family. On the wall of the temples is a huge fresco with modern trappings showing British men and women on bicycles and cars, it also shows a long train and has a backdrop of telegraph wires.



Decorated Gate

A must see for you would be the imposing mirage like fort **Mandawa** now a heritage hotel that is maintained in the classic medieval theme with modern luxuries. It also houses the ceremonial costumes of the family collection and the precious arms with jade handles and beautiful curios brought by the British as a gift for the nobles.

▼ Mukundgarh Fort



Hotel Mandawa







# Events Through

A trip through Rajasthan is like a story telling session where each place, monument and celebration has a story to tell, be that historical or mythological. Celebrating these events, laced with pomp and gaiety, festivities are an integral part quintessential way of life for the people here.

Wherever you go, you would find people partake in vivacious festivities with gay abandon. And once here, you would as much feel a part of that infectious rhythm and driven to rejoice in the festive gaiety with enthusiasm. These could be fairs dedicated to gods and goddesses, celebrating events of mythological or historical significance, cattle fairs or simply crafts bazaars.

If Pushkar in Ajmer comes alive during the Kartik Purnima a cosmopolitan mystical congregation of the modern and the ancient, the Golden City of Jaisalmer has the Desert Festival extravaganza, The festival of colours, Holi celebrated with fervour makes for a dazzling display. Then Gangaur is a festival of significance for the maidens.

Some of the better-known fairs and festivals are the Desert Festival of Jaisalmer in the month of January- February, Pushkar fair in November, Gangaur of Jaipur in March-April, Marwar Festival at Jodhpur in October, Camel Festival at Bikaner in January, Mewar Festival at Udaipur et al.

## FAIRS & FESTIVALS CALENDAR

S.No.	Fairs & Festivals	Place	Vikram Samwat
1.	Kite Festival	Jaipur	–
2.	Camel Festival	Bikaner	2nd Saturday Sunday of Jan
3.	Kumbhalgarh Festival	Kumbhal-garh	–
4.	Nagaur Fair (Ramdeoiji Cattle)	Nagaur	Magh-S (5-8)
5.	Desert Festival	Jaisalmer	Magh-S (13-15)
6.	Beneshwar Festival	Dungarpur	Magh-S (11-15)
7.	Braj Holi Festival	Bharatpur	Falgun-S (10-11)
8.	Dhulandi Festival	Jaipur	–
9.	Gangaur Fair	Jaipur	Chaitra-S (3-4)
10.	Mewar Festival	Udaipur	Chaitra-S (3-5)
11.	Mahaveerji Fair	Sawai Madhopur	Chaitra-S (9-15)
12.	Summer Festival	Mt. Abu	Vaishakh (13-15, Budh Purn)
13.	Teej Festival	Jaipur	Shravan-S (3-4)
14.	Kajli Teej	Bundi	Bhadra-K (2-3)
15.	Abhaneri Festival	Dausa	–
16.	Marwar Festival	Jodhpur	Asvinan-S (14-15)
17.	Ranakpur Festival	Pali	December
18.	Matasya Festival	Alwar	November
19.	Pushkar Fair	Ajmer	Kartik-S (8-15)
20.	Chandrabhaga Fair	Jhalawar	Kartik-S-14, Magh-K-1
21.	Bundi Festival	Bundi	–
22.	Winter Festival	Mount Abu	Pausha
23.	Kolayat Fair	Bikaner	Kartik Poornima



Fire Performance







# hout the year

## ENDER 2018 - 2020

	2018	2019	2020
	13-14 Jan.	13-14 Jan.	13-14 Jan.
n.	13-14 Jan.	12-13 Jan.	11-12 Jan.
	1-3 Dec.	1-3 Dec.	1-3 Dec.
	22-25 Jan.	10-13 Feb.	30 Jan-2 Feb.
	29-31 Jan.	17-19 Feb.	7-9 Feb.
	27-31 Jan.	15-19 Feb.	5-9 Feb.
	25-26 Jan.	16-17 Mar.	5-6 Mar.
	2 Mar.	21 Mar.	10 Mar.
	18-19 Mar.	6-7 Apr.	27-28 Mar.
	18-20 Mar.	6-8 Apr.	27-29 Mar.
	28 Mar.	18 Apr.	6 Apr.
rnima)	29-30 April	17-18 May	6-7 May
	13-14 Aug.	3-4 Aug.	23-24 July
	28-29 Aug.	17-18 Aug.	5-6 Aug.
	10-13 Sept.	29-30 Sept.	17-19 Sept.
	23-24 Oct.	12-13 Oct.	30-31 Oct.
	21-22 Dec.	21-22 Dec.	21-22 Dec.
	25-26 Nov.	25-26 Nov.	25-26 Nov.
	15-23 Nov.	4-12 Nov.	22-30 Nov.
	22-24 Nov.	11-13 Nov.	29 Nov-1 Dec.
	26-28 Nov.	15-17 Nov.	3-5 Nov.
	29-30 Dec.	29-30 Dec.	29-30 Dec.
	21-23 Nov.	10-12 Nov.	28-30 Nov.



We list for you some significant festivals and their schedule to facilitate you plan your trip. Details of these are also available with the Rajasthan Tourism offices throughout the country and on the website.

**Gangaur Festival, Jaipur (March-April)** The 18-Day festival devoted to Goddess Parvati, is time for maidens to pray for the dream grooms while the married pray for the well being of their husbands. Celebrations culminate in a grand procession in the city, marking the arrival of Shiva to escort his bride home.

**Desert Festival, Jaisalmer (Jan-Feb.)** Be there. This is the most popular festival that magnets people from across the globe. The sand dunes in the Golden City throb with festivities and celebrations.

**Urs, Ajmer (Based on Lunar Calendar)** Thousands of devotees from world over congregate at the Dargah of revered Sufi saint Khawaja Moinuddin Chisti, to offer prayers.

**Kite Festival Jaipur (13th/14th Jan every year)** Kites of varying hues, size and design dot the sky during the day and shine like stars at night along with dazzling fireworks.

**Teej, Jaipur (July-August)** The festival in the otherwise arid landscape celebrates the advent of monsoon.

**Mewar Festival, Udaipur (March-April)** The city of lakes this time of the year celebrates spring. The festive spirit permeates the cityscape with dance, processions, devotional music and fireworks.

**Pushkar Fair, Ajmer (November)** Another well-known and visited festival also known as the cattle fair, is not just about cattle. The important pilgrimage site attracts a humongous crowd. Good time to be there.

**Summer Festival, Mount Abu (June)** The quaint and only hill destination in Rajasthan comes alive with festivities. Fun and gaiety. An aura of festivities cloak the coolest place in Rajasthan at this time. Take a break from the heat.

**Marwar Festival, Jodhpur (October)** The otherwise somber Jodhpur celebrates with the traditional folk music and dance of the Marwar region. Good time to rejoice in the rich traditional past.





Rajasthani Thali

## Delectable Rajasthani Cuisine

When it comes to food and drink, each city has a fantastic range of restaurants that offer local Rajasthani cuisine as well as Indian, Mughlai, Chinese and Continental food. To try some local specialities just visit one of the many restaurants that can be found on almost every important street. People can also be seen in small teashops washing down local delicacies with cups of special tea, lassi and flavoured milk.

Local restaurants known as dhabas and bhojnalayas can provide some basic vegetarian fare that could include daal, one seasonal vegetable, green salad, pickle and the good old tandoori roti. The little shops that dot the highways are a popular stopping off point for truckers and families for a cheap, fresh and quick meal. You can try the food here but be careful that you have your own drinking water with you.

In bigger cities, there is a greater choice. It is easy to find good restaurants that can serve you delicious local fare like gatte ki sabzi, papad ki sabzi, mangori, alu methi and ker sangri. A large variety of daals are also available. Rice is not very popular in Rajasthan though most restaurants do serve plain rice as well as pulao. Non-vegetarian delicacies are also available in the bigger hotels. What is interesting there are the various rotis that one can get even in the smallest of eating places. Bajra ki roti, makki ki roti, jau-channa ki roti, besan ki roti, are better tasted than described. Try the bati, the parantha, puri and cheelra. The range is mind boggling.

Each region has its own special food item that is identified with the town or city. While trying the various delicacies don't miss out the special ghewar of Jaipur, laddoos and mirchi badas from Jodhpur, malpuas from Pushkar, rasgullas and namkeen bhujia from Bikaner, sohan halwa from Ajmer, dil jani from Udaipur, mawa (milk cake) from Alwar, til papdi from Beawar. Hot jalebies are available in most towns and cities. Kachories, dahi baras and dal, bati, churma are other delicacies to keep in mind when you're in Rajasthan.



Malpua



Laddu





## Where To Stay and Eating Out

You have a wide range of choice as far as accommodation is concerned. Right from luxurious palace hotels and chain of five star deluxe hotels, there are havelis converted to heritage hotels with that slice of history to low budget tourist hotels operated by the Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation RTDC, paying guest bed and breakfast to fit your budget.

While you can expect enviable luxury in the five star hotels with state of the art facilities, you can also opt for heritage hotels that aim at giving you that feel and experience of the times of yore yet adorned with antique artifacts midst natural surrounds and hospitality par excellence.

Upon reaching Rajasthan a detailed list of accommodation can be obtained from the tourist information counters or the travel agent. But by and large the accommodation falls under the following categories:

### Palace Hotels

Old palaces and forts the abodes of the erstwhile Maharajas are now converted to luxury hotels. For that feel of extravagance and indulgence you can opt for these but at a price.

### Heritage Hotels

Old havelis steeped in history are now hotels that still retain the old world charm but equipped with modern facilities. These are at par with the best hotels in the world.



Umaid Bhawan Palace, Jodhpur

### Five Star Hotels

Catering to lacs of tourists several renowned chain of hotels are spread across the state. These offer every possible comfort.

### Three Star Hotels

The budget hotels some by international chains operate in Rajasthan and offer reasonably good accommodation at affordable price.

### RTDC Hotels and Tourist Bungalows

Rajasthan tourism operates an excellent network of hotels. These are clean, comfortable and provide the basic facilities.

### Bed and Breakfast accommodation

A good option for travelers seeking a home away from home, the paying guest accommodation available in plenty is a good option if you are looking at home made food, clean homes and a peep into the Indian homes. A complete list of enlisted paying guest accommodation is available with Rajasthan Tourism at its information counters.



Hotel Sariska Palace, Sariska



Hotel Laxmi Vilas Palace, Bharatpur





# Travelling Around Rajasthan

## By Air

Daily air service connects Jaipur to New Delhi and Mumbai. There are regular flights available for important tourist destinations like Bangalore, Chennai, Goa and Kolkata. International flights to Sharjah, Muskat and Dubai are available from Jaipur. Some of the major airlines operating in and out of Rajasthan are the Air India, Jet Airways, Indigo and Spice Jet. Extra flights are operated during the tourist season. It is advisable to check with travel agents for the exact timings.

## By Train

There are a number of good trains available that are convenient and fast. Most of the cities in Rajasthan are connected by trains. Tickets can be purchased in advance and seats reserved. Most of the trains have comfortable air-conditioned coaches and refreshments are provided on board. Some good trains are the Shatabdi Express that leaves Delhi very early in the morning and reaches Jaipur at 10.45 am. This is one of the most convenient trains coming into Jaipur and allows the visitor to reach Jaipur at a decent hour. A lot of business travelers find it convenient to spend the day in Jaipur and take the same train back to Delhi in the evening at 5.50 pm. Trains like the **Intercity** (Jaisalmer-Delhi), **Super Fast Express** (Jammu Tawi-Jaipur), **Super Fast Express** (Jaipur-Mumbai), **Chennai-Jaipur Express**, **Chetak Express**, **Marudhar Express**, **Mandore Express**, **Indore Express**, **Rajdhani Express** and **Ashram Express**, **Double Decker** (Jaipur-Delhi) connect the state to other major cities. Connecting trains are available at short intervals.

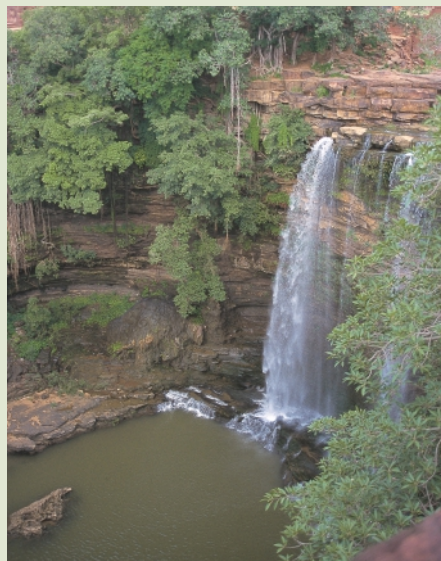


If you prefer to see Rajasthan in royal style then hop on the Palace on Wheels. This is a luxury train that operates from Delhi and takes the passengers on an unforgettable royal tour of Rajasthan.

## By Road

The Rajasthan Government, as well as private tour operators, have good buses and taxis plying throughout the state and outside. They are convenient and reasonably priced. The Silverline, Pinkline, Goldline and Volvo buses operated by the Rajasthan State Road Transport Corporation are comfortable, air-conditioned coaches that connect Delhi to Jaipur and also operate within the state connecting important cities with each other. The buses make brief stops for tea and refreshments en route and are mostly always on time. You can enjoy the country side and talk to the other passengers who will happily give you a lot of invaluable tips. Talk all you want but do keep in mind the fact that it is not advisable to accept any eatables from strangers.

If you are looking for a more private way of traveling then take a taxi from one of the approved travel agencies. This will give you the freedom of traveling at your own convenience. You can also count on the help of your taxi driver, he will ensure that you do not have a problem with the language. Rent-a-Car agencies are also fast becoming popular in the bigger cities and details can be obtained from your travel agents or the Tourist Reception Centres.



Waterfall, Menal

Luxury Bus







# Romance of the Rail

## The Palace on Wheels

Aboard the Palace on Wheels you cruise through the land of Kings in that luxuriant flamboyant style, once only the privilege of the Maharajas. The luxury train pampers you to hilt for the 7 nights and 8 days tour through the princely Rajasthan. Boarding at New Delhi you go through Jaipur, Sawai Madhopur, Chittaurgarh, Udaipur, Jaisalmer, Jodhpur, Bharatpur, Agra and back to Delhi. For that one week and once in a lifetime experience you virtually live in a Palace on Wheels!

The exquisite luxurious cabins, wall to wall carpeting, a lounge cum bar, two dining cars and hospitality par excellence would make that experience simply 'out of this world.'



## The Heritage Palace on Wheels

The Heritage Palace on Wheels which is having the codal life limitation. This train having 14 air conditioned coaches are named after former Rajput states matching the aesthetics and interiors of the royal past. Each saloon has a mini pantry to ensure availability of hot and cold beverages, and refreshments. The modern conveniences have been thoughtfully provided sofas to sink into, strategically placed lights to read by, wonderfully appointed beds with comfortable furnishings, inbuilt wardrobe and huge glass windows to watch the countryside roll past.

The train has two lavish Restaurants "Maharaja" and "Maharani" with a Rajasthani ambience serving palate tickling Continental, Chinese, Indian and Rajasthani cuisines. The restaurants offer seating arranged thoughtfully near the windows. Chefs in the attached pantry prepare Continental and Indian specialties, with an emphasis on the cuisine of Rajasthan.

The three days journey will take you to three beautiful cities of Rajasthan, be it the pink city Jaipur; each proud of its heritage, be it the trail of the mighty tiger in Ranthambhore, be it the exquisite Taj Mahal, the immortal symbol of love; the sights, sounds and feeling are permanently etched on the travelers' heart and mind. Guests come on board with mixed feelings and fall in love with the train, the journey and the warm and friendly staff. After three/four days when it is time to depart and bid adieu there are a lot of teary eyes.

The Heritage Palace on Wheels comprises 14 accommodation saloons named on different gun saluting states of old Rajputana i.e. Rajasthan State now, 2 Restaurants, 1 Bar and Royal SPA. The interior decor of Heritage Palace on Wheels is on the state theme. "The Heritage Palace on Wheels is having facilities of laundry, liquor, sightseeing by Volvo coaches (first time in the history of POW).

with guides, Internet, live channel Television, Music, Royal Spa, free Doctor consultancy at every destination, optimum shopping, lunches at the best hotels of the cities.

### Tariff of Heritage Palace on Wheels

RTDC has proposed following tariff for these two itineraries.

Single Occupancy	500 USD
Double Occupancy	300 USD
Triple Occupancy	250 USD

We may fix the tariff in rupees also in order to facilitate Indian Citizens. The calculation will be done on the basis of prevailing market rate

This train commences every year between September to April. Each tour can accommodate 104 pax onboard from all over the world. It starts from Safadarjung Railway Station on every Friday between September to April for Delhi-Jaipur-Sawai Madhopur-Agra-Delhi.

For More Details log on to :  
[rtdc.tourism.rajasthan.gov.in](http://rtdc.tourism.rajasthan.gov.in)  
 E-mail : [delhi@rtdc.in](mailto:delhi@rtdc.in), [pow@rtdc.in](mailto:pow@rtdc.in)







## Suggested Itineraries

### PACKAGE TOURS

Tour No.	Name of Package Tour	Duration	Places Covered
01.	Religious Tour	11 Nights/12 Days	Jaipur-Bikaner-Jaisalmer-Jodhpur-Ranakpur-Udaipur-Pushkar-Jaipur
02.	Rajasthan Darshan	10 Nights/11 Days	Jaipur-Chittaurgarh-Udaipur-Mount Abu-Jodhpur-Jaisalmer-Bikaner-Jaipur
03.	Pearls of Rajasthan	6 Nights/7 Days	Jaipur-Jodhpur-Udaipur-Jaipur
04.	Best of Wild Life Package	5 Nights/6 Days	Jaipur-Ranthambhor-Bharatpur-Deeg-Sariska-Jaipur
05.	Rajasthan Package	12 Nights/13 Days	Jaipur-Bikaner-Jaisalmer-Jodhpur-Mount Abu-Ranakpur-Udaipur-Ajmer-Jaipur
06.	Desert Circuit	7 Nights/8 Days	Jaipur-Bikaner-Jaisalmer-Jodhpur-Ajmer/Pushkar-Jaipur
07.	Best of Rajasthan Ist	8 Nights/9 Days	Jaipur-Ajmer-Pushkar-Jodhpur-Jaisalmer-Bikaner-Jaipur
08.	Exotic Rajasthan	9 Nights/10 Days	Jaipur-Bikaner-Jaisalmer-Jodhpur-Udaipur-Jaipur
09.	Desert Package	8 Nights/9 Days	Jaipur-Ajmer-Jaisalmer-Jodhpur-Udaipur-Jaipur
10.	Best of Rajasthan IIInd	7 Nights/8 Days	Udaipur-Chittaurgarh-Kota-Jaipur
11.	Aravali Package	7 Nights/8 Days	Jaipur-Udaipur-Mount Abu-Pushkar-Jaipur
12.	Wild Life Package Ist	1 Nights/2 Days	Jaipur-Sawai Madhopur-Jaipur
13.	Wild Life Package IIInd	2 Nights/3 Days	Jaipur-Sariska-Siliserh-Jaipur
14.	Wild Life with Religious	2 Nights/3 Days	Jaipur-Sawai Madhopur-Ajmer-Pushkar-Jaipur
15.	Religious Package	1 Nights/2 Days	Jaipur-Ajmer-Pushkar-Jaipur



## RAJASTHAN

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#### For Reservation in RTDC Hotels and details, Please Contact:

Jaipur : 3rd Floor, 'Paryatan Bhawan', Opp. Vidhayakpuri Police Station, Sanjay Marg, M.I. Road, Jaipur- 302001, Rajasthan, India.  
 Tel : +91-141-5114768/69, 2202586  
 E-mail: croho@rtdc.in  
 Railway Station : Tel.: +91-141-2200778

Delhi : Bikaner House, Pandara Road, New Delhi 110001 (India), Tel.: +91-11-23381884, 23386069  
 Fax: +91-11-23382823, E-mail: delhi@rtdc.in, website : www.rtdc.in  
 Toll free No. : 1800 1033 500

Online reservation for both luxury trains - Palace on wheels, Heritage Palace on Wheels and all Hotels of RTDC available - log on to www.rtdc.in, rtdc.tourism.rajasthan.gov.in







Jagat Shiromani Temple, Amber

Photo Courtesy : Maharana of Mewar Charitable Foundation

City Palace, Udaipur



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# RAJASTHAN

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Department of Tourism, Government of Rajasthan  
'Paryatan Bhawan', Opp. Vidhayakpuri Police Station  
M.I. Road, Jaipur- 302001, Rajasthan, India.  
Tel : +91 141 5155100, 5110598  
[tourism.rajasthan.gov.in](http://tourism.rajasthan.gov.in)





# RAJASTHAN

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## WHERE TO STAY

Accommodation is easy to arrange for, as you can choose from 5-star suites, heritage hotels, luxury resorts and even budget accommodations.

The Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation (RTDC) runs and operates hotels across the state that offer a comfortable stay and are reasonably priced.

## HOW TO MOVE AROUND?

All cities in Rajasthan are well-connected by a strong road and rail network to major metros across India. The state capital, Jaipur, is connected through national and international air links. Udaipur and Jodhpur also operate domestic flights.

## WHAT TO EAT?

Rajasthani cooking was influenced by the war-like lifestyle of the Rajput inhabitants. Local dishes that should not be missed are Daal-Baati, Churma and Gatte Ki Sabzi. If you have a sweet tooth, do order for Ghevar, Malpuas, Mawa Kachori and Rasgollas. A number of restaurants and eating joints offer a variety of Indian and Continental cuisine options.

## HOW'S THE WEATHER?

April to June is the pre-monsoon or summer season when temperatures go up to 45°C. July to September is the monsoon period which sees its rainfall, with temperatures between 35°C to 40°C. October to November are the post-monsoon season months when the climate is pleasant. Temperatures fall between 18°C and 35°C. December to March is the winter season, which sees temperatures falling to freezing in some parts. December to January are the year's coldest months.

## 3 DAY TOURS

- Jaipur - Ajmer - Pushkar - Jaipur
- Jaipur - Bharatpur - Deeg - Sariska - Jaipur
- Udaipur - Ranakpur - Kumbhalgrath - Udaipur/Jodhpur
- Bikaner - Mandawa - Dundlod - Jaipur
- Jodhpur - Jaisalmer - Jodhpur
- Kota - Bundi - Ranthambhore - Jaipur
- Jodhpur - Mandore - Bikaner - Jodhpur

## 5 DAY TOURS

- Jaipur - Alwar - Sariska - Deeg - Bharatpur - Agra
- Chittaurgarh - Udaipur - Kumbhalgarh - Ranakpur - Udaipur/Jodhpur
- Bikaner - Fatehpur - Mandawa - Dundlod - Nawalgarh - Jaipur
- Kota - Bundi - Chittaurgarh - Udaipur
- Jaipur - Pushkar - Ajmer - Chittaurgarh - Udaipur

## 7 DAY TOURS

- Jaipur - Pushkar - Ajmer - Udaipur - Kumbhalgarh - Ranakpur - Jodhpur
- Jaipur - Bharatpur - Deeg - Sariska - Alwar - Delhi
- Chittaurgarh - Nathdwara - Kumbhalgarh - Ranakpur - Mount-Abu - Udaipur
- Jaipur - Ranthambhore - Bundi - Kota - Chittaurgarh - Udaipur
- Jaipur - Samode - Mandawa - Bikaner - Jaisalmer - Jodhpur
- Jaipur - Bikaner - Jaisalmer - Jodhpur - Mount Abu - Udaipur

tourism.rajasthan.gov.in



- Railway
- Other Roads
- 76 National Highway
- River/ Water body
- Tourist Places

Ajmer	Alwar	Bharatpur	Bikaner	Bundi	Chittaurgarh	Jaipur	Jodhpur	Jaisalmer	Kota	Mount Abu	Udaipur	Delhi	Mumbai	Agra	Ahmedabad
272	116	497	382	396	322	336	285	690	455	185	767	664	1461	1204	889
332	462	382	396	322	336	285	690	455	185	767	664	1461	1204	889	
233	347	382	396	322	336	285	690	455	185	767	664	1461	1204	889	
163	347	382	396	322	336	285	690	455	185	767	664	1461	1204	889	
191	463	523	424	165	322	336	285	690	455	185	767	664	1461	1204	889
131	141	176	321	206	322	336	285	690	455	185	767	664	1461	1204	889
205	477	537	243	368	372	336	285	690	455	185	767	664	1461	1204	889
490	762	922	333	653	657	621	285	690	455	185	767	664	1461	1204	889
200	383	418	432	36	168	245	405	690	455	185	767	664	1461	1204	889
375	647	707	569	418	297	505	326	572	455	185	767	664	1461	1204	889
274	551	581	506	233	112	405	260	545	270	185	767	664	1461	1204	889
382	163	251	490	465	583	259	597	882	504	767	664	1461	1204	889	
1071	1343	945	1299	1041	928	1202	1051	1341	1005	766	797	1461	1204	889	
388	172	56	665	438	579	232	568	853	453	737	637	195	1204	889	
526	798	658	754	485	364	657	511	796	522	221	252	916	554	889	

Road Distance Chart

To find out distance between two cities, trace down the vertical column of one city to its intersection with the column of the other city.



JAANE KYA DIKH JAAYEI

# RAJASTHAN



## Home to EXPERIENCE

Rajasthan, India's largest and most vibrant state takes you on an unforgettable journey. The land of legends charms every soul with its rich history, majestic monuments, colourful culture, lively festivals and adventurous getaways. From the heights of a royal fort, into the depths of an age old tradition, from a run into the wild to a stroll in the desert, Rajasthan takes you around an experience at every step.

## Take home memories while SHOPPING

In the bustling lanes of local bazaars, you are given an entire array of products to shop from. Rajasthan's rich local textile cloth, miniature painting, finely-crafted jewellery and ethnic artifacts are some of the few things you'll consider treasuring for life. As you explore the variety of goods, you'll discover traditional richness in minute detail and take home a reflection of royal legacy.



## Relive the ROYALTY

While entering Amber Fort in Jaipur or boating across the Lake Palace in the middle of Lake Pichola in Udaipur, you will be charmed by the grandeur of Rajasthan's royalty. Beautiful palaces and gigantic forts are inherent gifts of royals that your eyes can treasure. You can opt for a royal stay in selected palaces which presently serve as hotels. What else? You can explore this regal land in extravagant style. Rajasthan's luxury wagons- Palace on Wheels and Royal Rajasthan on Wheels take you to the most breathtaking spots across the State in 5-star comfort.



## Go on an ADVENTURE

If adrenaline-rushing activities define adventure for you, then the adventure has just begun. From trekking in the heights of Mount Abu, to sightseeing from the sky in the Hot Air Balloon, Elephant rides at Amber and Jeep safari at many places, Rajasthan gives you every reason to let loose. The Camel Safari through the sun-kissed dune of desert will leave you equally amazed.



## Soak in the CULTURE

As you walk around the stalls at traditional fairs, you capture the real spirit of culture in Rajasthan. The jingle of camel bells, excitement amongst cattle traders, liveliness of folk dancers and the pride with which Rajasthani men show off their moustaches; you experience culture unplugged. Colourful dance, soul-stirring music, processions, traditional art, lovely ornaments and high-spirited people form the soul of this land's art and culture.



As you laze on the camel's back, you see more than a sunset across the desert horizon. In the backdrop of a fading sky, you see the colours of culture dancing in the form of folk artists, and hear tunes that relive age-old glory. Even as the music fades away, you stay back with its charm.

## GET CARRIED AWAY...

Department of Tourism, Government of Rajasthan, 'Paryatan Bhawan', opp. Vidhayakpuri Police Station  
M.I. Road, Jaipur-302001, Rajasthan, India . Tel : +91 141 5155100, 5110598, Website : [tourism.rajasthan.gov.in](http://tourism.rajasthan.gov.in)

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## Take a step in the WILD

Your ride through Ranthambore may just give you goosebumps as you are welcomed by the roar of the majestic Indian Tiger, while the Blackbucks, one of the most beautiful antelopes in the world will greet you in the open fields of the Tal Chhapar Sanctuary. As you go around Keoladeo National Park, Bharatpur chasing and taking snapshots of the migratory birds, you come closer to nature.

