

ADVENTURE & TRAVEL

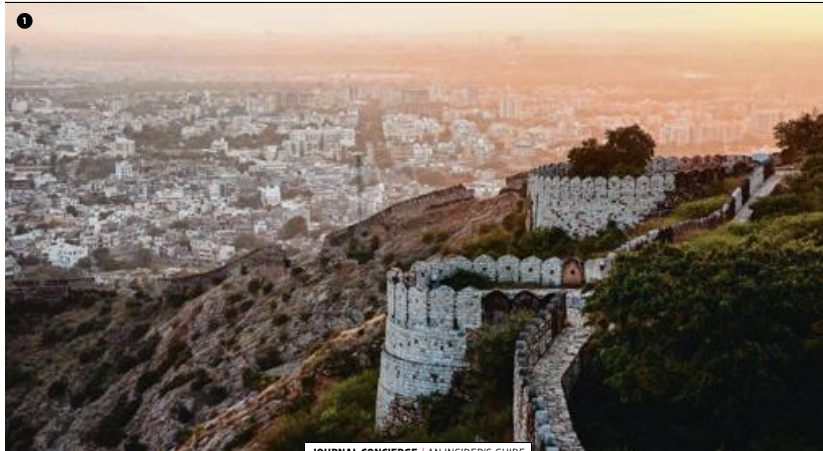
2018

“A palace hotel for the 21st century”

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Jaipur

Dig past the Indian city's trite tourist tropes to uncover brazenly modern festivals and undusty architecture

IN MANY WAYS, Jaipur delivers on the clichéd fantasies first-timers to India have mentally replayed: flute players presiding over ornate courtyards, women in color-drenched saris, men in turbans. But lately, the Rajasthani capital has been dispelling cliché as a new hub of contemporary Indian arts and culture. The Jaipur Literature Festival draws half a million people each January, while February ushers in an international photography festival. The Jawahar Kala Kendra arts complex, a symphony of geometry by architect Charles Correa, just unveiled its renovation. A modern sculpture park, reopening in December, startsles in the withering arches and courtyards of the 18th-century Nahargarh Fort (1). And Jaipur's reputation as India's shopping mecca is undiminished. We asked four expert locals to help navigate the way. —Sarah Khan



PURE JAIPUR Clockwise from top: 1. A view of Jaipur from Nahargarh Fort; 2. Showing off a bridal necklace of diamonds and pearls at Gem Palace, one of the city's iconic jewelry institutions; 3. Jaipur's City Palace; 4. Carrying flowers at Phool Mandi; 5. Arranging a table-setting at Rajmahal Palace; 6. Bar Palladio, a bar with dramatic East-meets-West interiors.

PURE JAIPUR Clockwise from top: 1. A view of Jaipur from Nahargarh Fort; 2. Showing off a bridal necklace of diamonds and pearls at Gem Palace, one of the city's iconic jewelry institutions; 3. Jaipur's City Palace; 4. Carrying flowers at Phool Mandi; 5. Arranging a table-setting at Rajmahal Palace; 6. Bar Palladio, a bar with dramatic East-meets-West interiors.

THE ROYAL
HH Maharajah
Sawai
Padmanabh
Singh
 Maharajah of Jaipur

FASHION FINDS / Raghavendra Rathore This Rajasthani brand has great fabrics and fabulous finishing for achkans and bandhgallas. Ghnerao House, Jacob Road, Civil Lines, icfashion.com.

GLITTERING GIFTS / Amrapali and Gem Palace (2) Jaipur's two iconic jewelry institutions are fun to visit. They each have a distinct style and sell affordable gifts in addition to precious gems. Amrapali, Jewels, Panch Batti, M.I. Road, Near Raj Mandir Cinema, amrapalijewels.com. Gem Palace, Shop No. 348, MI Road, gempalace.com.

HORSING AROUND / Rambagh Polo Grounds Especially during the polo season but mostly year-round, one can find either myself or others playing matches, practicing, or just doing stick-and-ball with the horses—especially in the morning or early evening, when it's not so hot. Even during most matches, entry is free. Near Rambagh Circle, rajasthanpoloclub.co.in

THE JEWELER
Siddharth
Kasliwal
 Partner and designer,
 the Gem Palace, and
 owner, 28 Kothi hotel

EAT LIKE A LOCAL / Laxmi Mishthan Bhandar and Pandit Kulfi (4) Go to Laxmi Mishthan Bhandar in the old city to have samosas and dahi badas. Finish off with ice cream at Pandit Kulfi, Laxmi Mishthan Bhandar, Shop No. 98-99, Johari Bazar. Imbsweets.com. Pandit Kulfi, 110 Hawa Mahal Market.

REFINED FLOWER / Phool Mandi (4) Walk through this flower market. There are tons of flowers—marigolds, roses, frangi-pani—all local. All the flower sellers come there and the dealers gather and collect to take to different temples, Phool Mandi, Gangori Bazar, Janta Market, J.D.A. Market, Kanwar Nagar.

CHIC SHOP / Teatro Dhora Teatro Dhora is run by my friend, and it has fun jewelry and a cute cafe. It's a store that a lot of foreigners living in Jaipur like for their dresses—it's cool summer wear. Yashwant Palace, Ajmer Road, dhoraindia.in

THE CURATOR
Pooja Sood
 Director General,
 Jawahar Kala
 Kendra

HOUSE OF WONDERS / Gyan Museum A private collection in a beautifully done space. It's run by jewelers—the father was an art aficionado. From textiles to jewelry to knives to nutcrackers, it's eclectic but beautifully displayed. G-1/21-23, Gems & Jewelry Zone Export Promotional Industrial Park, Sitapura Industrial Area, gyanjaipur.com

FAB FABRICS / Riddhi Siddhi If you're into textiles, you should go to Riddhi Siddhi. You can buy the best mulmul and muslins on rolls, kurtis for 900 rupees, fabulously hand-blocked bedspreads, garden umbrellas. Govind Nagar (East), Amber Palace Road, riddhisiddhitextile.in

HEAVENLY HOTEL / Alsisar Haveli It's tucked away in the city and the family still lives there. I love their food. I enjoyed their thal and their subzi and curry; it's like home food. Sansarchandio Rd, Shiv Ram Colony, Sindhi Camp, alsisar.com; doubles from 9000 rupees a night

THE DESIGNER
Marie-Anne
Oudejans
 Fashion and
 interiors maven

SET A HIGH BAR / Rambagh Palace The bar is where I go to have a club sandwich and a drink. It's wonderful to sit on the veranda and look outside to the garden. It's completely timeless. Bhawani Singh Road, tajhotels.com/en-in/taj/rambagh-palace-jaipur; doubles from 6661 a night

FRANCO-STYLE / Idli Thierry Journo is a good friend of mine, and he has a really beautiful store called Idli. He makes prints, a great home line, and menswear: Indian designs with a French twist. Hotel Narain Niwas Palace Hotel, Narain Singh Road, idlidesign.com

BLOOM YONDER / Brigette Singh Brigette Singh makes extraordinary block prints: bathrobes, linens, clothes for kids, shirts for men, traditional block prints inspired by Mughal flowers. You can take the finds to your Hampton's house and it's perfect. Narad Ka Bagh, Amber, brigittesingh.com

PLUS, DON'T MISS...

Bar Palladio (6) This beguiling bar on the grounds of the Narain Niwas Palace hotel has dramatic East-meets-West interiors by Marie-Anne Oudejans: think Italian-style murals nestled amid arches awash in electric shades of blue. Kanota Bagh, Narain Singh Road, bar-palladio.com / **Rajmahal Palace (3)** A palace hotel for the 21st century, with art deco accents and quirky, bold wallpaper. Sardar Patel Marg, C Scheme, sujanluxury.com/ra-mahal, doubles from 41,000 rupees / **Baradari** A restaurant tucked away in the courtyard of the 300-year-old City Palace (3) with fusion fare far better than one expects from a museum restaurant—Royal Lal Maas, house-made pasta, apple jalebi with rose-petal ice cream. A great spot for a late-night drink as well. Jaleb Chowk, Near Gate No 2, City Palace, facebook.com/baradarijaipur