

“The V&A’s big autumn exhibition is a celebration of India’s royal courts. If it inspires you to see Rajasthan for yourself, here’s where to stay and what to do when you get there.”



Word of mouth

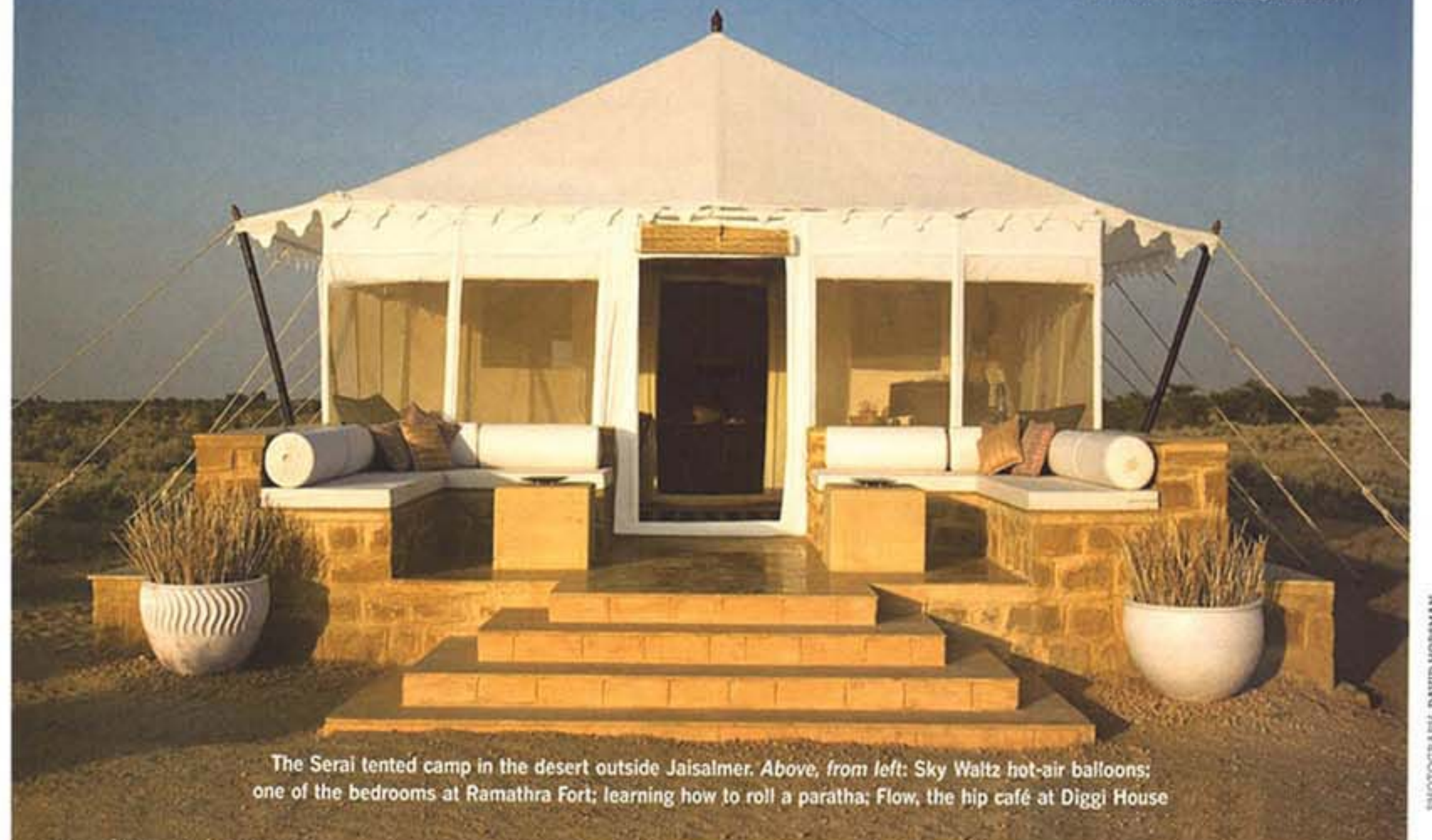


All the Raj

**INDIA** The V&A’s big autumn exhibition is a celebration of India’s royal courts. If it inspires you to see Rajasthan for yourself, here’s where to stay and what to do when you get there

- 1 Raas, Jodhpur**  
A 39-room boutique hotel in an immaculately restored haveli at the foot of Mehrangarh Fort, opening 1 December. Doubles from Rs15,000 (about £190). 00 91 9829 024124. [www.raasjodhpur.com](http://www.raasjodhpur.com)
- 2 The Serai, Jaisalmer**  
A 21-tent camp and spa in the Great Thar Desert with an infinity pool inspired by ancient, ornate wells. Tents from £310. 00 91 11 2374 3194. [www.the-serai.com](http://www.the-serai.com)
- 3 Ramathra Fort, Karauli District**  
This remote, 17th-century stronghold, four hours’ drive east of Jaipur, has just added six new rooms on the ramparts (including two suites with outdoor tubs and showers) to its existing six tents. Suites from about £200 full board, including some activities. 00 91 98 29 013 475. [www.ramathrafort.com](http://www.ramathrafort.com)
- 4 The Leela Palace Kempinski, Udaipur**  
All 80 rooms and suites at this new palace hotel on Lake Pichola have lake views. Doubles from about £400. 00 91 294 670 1234. [www.theleela.com](http://www.theleela.com)
- 5 Hot Pink Amber, Jaipur**  
A new branch of a fab shop selling cool Indian labels and travel accessories. Amber Fort: 00 91 141 2530178. [www.hotpinkindia.com](http://www.hotpinkindia.com)
- 6 Sky Waltz, Rajasthan**  
Float over villages, temples and forts in a hot-air balloon, from Jaipur, Ranthambore and Udaipur. About US\$300. 00 91 98104 14012. [www.skywaltz.com](http://www.skywaltz.com)
- 7 Fête Accomplie Culinary Escapes, Jaipur**  
Chef Peta Mathias has hosted gastro tours in Morocco and France; now tours of Rajasthan, based at Amanbagh, are planned for October and March. From €7,500. 00 91 14 65 223333. [www.farfungfeasts.com](http://www.farfungfeasts.com)
- 8 Flow, Jaipur**  
The chic garden café by the pool at Digg House is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Try naan bread with smoked salmon and sour cream, and Indian Sauvignon Blanc. Dinner £25 for two. 00 91 141 237 4044. [www.digghouse.com](http://www.digghouse.com)
- 9 DSC Jaipur Literature Festival**  
Writers at this year’s event include Rohinton Mistry, Hanif Kureishi, Alexander McCall Smith and Vikram Chandra. 21–25 January at Digg House. 00 91 11 260 11430. [www.jaipur.literaturefestival.org](http://www.jaipur.literaturefestival.org)
- 10 Rasa, Jaipur**  
A range of loungewear, homewares and women’s wear that offers a contemporary take on the heritage craft of block printing. S55 Ashok Marg, C-Scheme. 00 91 141 403 8584

**Maharaja: the Splendour of India’s Royal Courts** is on at the V&A from 10 October until 17 January 2010 (020 7942 2000; [www.vam.ac.uk](http://www.vam.ac.uk)). Exhibits include a throne and processional regalia such as peacock-leather fans, fly whisks and elephant jewellery.  
FIONA CAULFIELD  
Fiona Caulfield is the author of *Love Jaipur* ([www.lovetravelguides.com](http://www.lovetravelguides.com))



The Serai tented camp in the desert outside Jaisalmer. Above, from left: Sky Waltz hot-air balloons; one of the bedrooms at Ramathra Fort; learning how to roll a paratha; Flow, the hip café at Digg House

PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID HOBBSMAN