

“There are not quite a few sophisticated safari lodges and camps in India, but none come close to JAWAI for extraordinary wildlife encounters.”

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INDIA
JAWAI LEOPARD CAMP,
RAJASTHAN

This sophisticated, eight-tent camp is set in the Aravalli Hills, a comfortable three-hour drive from either Udaipur or Jodhpur. A stay here means avoiding both the crowds and the cumbersome regulations of India's wildlife reserves, while also getting a front-row seat on a fast disappearing way of life. In Jawai, white-bearded temple priests and red-turbaned Rabari herdsman live as their ancestors did for centuries, sharing their rocky surroundings with the wildlife. Leopards are regarded as sacred guardians of the ancient temples that dot the landscape; it is estimated that 30-50 live in the Jawai area. There are also Nilgai antelopes, crocodiles, Langur monkeys, wild boar and more than 100 bird species (including flamingos at the Jawai Dam), and the guides are knowledgeable and passionate. In the tented suites, local stone has been combined with smart stainless steel, leather and dramatic black-and-white wildlife photographs, and there are proper bathrooms with powerful hot showers. The camp's garden supplies fresh organic produce for robust Indian feasts served after cocktails in the evening. **FLASH POINT** There are now quite a few sophisticated safari lodges and camps in India, but none comes close to Jawai for extraordinary wildlife encounters. +91 11 4617 2700; www.sujanluxury.com/jawaileopard-camp. Doubles from £385 including all meals and twice-daily game drives. Open September to June

BRAZIL
BUTTERFLY HOUSE, BAHIA

A jungle retreat tucked between coconut palms and freshwater lagoons on Brazil's Marau peninsula, this deliciously laid-back hotel may be an effort to get to, but boy, is it worth it. There are five bamboo bungalows on stilts, with private porches and grass roofs, and a further three sea-view suites in the main house. Owner Chloe Gibbs raided a Casablancan riad for beautiful tiles, and silk throws are sourced from the Atlas Mountains. Service is reassuringly slick. Tired of snoozing by the pool, strolling the beach or swinging in hammocks? The staff will organise yoga sessions, jungle quad-biking, surf lessons and boat cruises to waterfalls. The abundance of fresh lobster means you may eat nothing else, and so complete is the solitude, it's easy to forget that down the coast lies the hip hotspot of Barra Grande, a hangout for beautiful Brazilians and chic Notting Hill-billies tired of the show-and-tell of Trancoso and on the hunt for pure, unadulterated fun. Add live music in sandy squares and daytime discos that spring out of virgin rainforest, and you may just be in nirvana. **FLASH POINT** Marau is still under the radar, so you have a good few more years before everyone else catches on. +55 7332 584113; www.butterflyhousebahia.com. Doubles from about £95

