

TRUTH IN TRAVEL

CONDÉ NAST

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INSPIRED BY

Taj Falaknuma Palace, Hyderabad

In 1894, the local prime minister built himself this massive Tudor-Italianate palace. Japanese, Mogul, and European gardens; 24-karat-gold light fixtures; and a cantilevered suspension staircase with each step carved from Italian marble are just some of its lavish features. The prime minister actually ran out of money because of all these extravagances and wound up gifting the palace to the nizam, who settled the prime minister's debt. In 2010, this otherworldly estate was turned into a 60-room hotel after a three-year restoration. The details above remain, along with the stately dining room and its legendary 101-seat table. The acoustics allowed the nizam to hear the conversations of guests seated at either end—a party trick for you to try out on your next visit. —SARAH KHAN



LOCATION IS EVERYTHING

The Taj Falaknuma Palace is set on a hill about 2,000 feet above Hyderabad (Falaknuma means "Mirror of the Sky" in Urdu), and its Adaa restaurant, one of two on the stained-glass-domed Gol Bungalow terrace, has some of the city's best views—and biryani. The hotel is just a 15-minute drive from Hyderabad's two main sights, the iconic Charminar monument and the Chowmahalla Palace.

Clockwise from top left: Effy Jewelry Hematian New York earrings (effyjewelry.com; \$22,748); Gucci Ivory Cameo dress (gucci.com; \$6,990); Oscar de la Renta Marigold evening bag (for info, see oscardearenta.com; \$1,690); Dior Fine Jewelry La Rose Dior Bagatelle ring (select Dior boutiques; price upon request); Gucci criss-cross heeled slide (gucci.com; \$990); Dolce & Gabbana DG4267 2999/13 sunglasses (sunglasshut.com; \$495).