

## ADVENTURE &amp; TRAVEL



JOURNAL CONCIERGE / AN INSIDER'S GUIDE

## Jaipur

Dig past the Indian city's trite tourist tropes to uncover bracingly 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, startles 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.

**THE ROYAL**  
HH Maharajah  
Sawai  
Padmanabh  
Singh  
Maharajah of Jaipur



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



**THE CURATOR**  
Pooja Sood  
Director General,  
Jawahar Kala  
Kendra



**THE DESIGNER**  
Marie-Anne  
Oudejans  
Fashion and  
interiors maven



**FASHION FINDS / Raghavendra Rathore** This Rajasthani brand has great fabrics and fabulous finishing for achkans and bandhgalas. *Ghanerao House, Jacob Road, Civil Lines, iicfashion.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*

**EAT LIKE A LOCAL / Laxmi Mishthan Bhandar and Pandit Kulfi** 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, frangipani—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*

**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. *Sansarchandra Rd, Shri Ram Colony, Sindhi Camp, alsisar.com; doubles from 9,000 rupees a night*

**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, taj.tajhotels.com/en-in/taj-rambagh-palace-jaipur; doubles from £661 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 / Brigitte Singh** Brigitte 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 Hamptons 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 [5]* A palace hotel for the 21st century, with art deco accents and quirky, bold wallpaper. *Sardar Patel Marg, C Scheme, sujanluxury.com/raj-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*