

## Havelis of Rajasthan

For ages, havelis in Rajasthan were the abode of nobility. Here, gracious hospitality was a way of life and deep rooted traditions were an inherent part of royal lifestyles. After India became independent, reform policies forced the nobles and wealthy people to abandon these splendid havelis. For many years, Rajasthan was dotted with unattended large castles and mansions, until a few enterprising pioneers realized the latent potential, started restoration and took to business. Today, holidaying in an ancient haveli is a style statement for world travellers. And why not? It's actually the stuff dreams are made of! It's exclusive, it's exquisite and it's extraordinary...

**Fateh Bagh, Ranakpur-** Hotel Fateh Bagh, Ranakpur is no ordinary palace hotel. It is perhaps India's first attempt at 'transplanting a palace' reincarnating the rich heritage and the brilliant architecture of the Rajputs. It was in 1802 AD that Rawla Koshilav flourished as a palace on the foothills of Aravallis near Jodhpur. Two hundred years later, in 2002, almost 65,000 pieces of the crumbling palace were dismantled and recreated piece-by-piece almost in the same design, in a scenic spot, in the temple town of Ranakpur, to create Fateh Bagh. Located amidst picturesque orchards and on the banks of a rain fed river, Fateh Bagh recreates a forgotten chapter of Rajasthan's history.

One of the latest additions to the heritage group of hotels, this royal retreat holds the promise of nurturing the body, heart, mind and soul for visitors from far and near. Apart from all modern day facilities and luxuries, it offers that something extra which makes it just the perfect retreat from hectic city life. Fateh Bagh recreates the romance of Rajasthan with room interiors done in distinct themes like Krishna Kunj (Krishna's Abode), Mayur Mahal, Purnima Mahal, Gulab Mahal and Kamal Talai (Lotus Pond). Combined with steam, sauna, jacuzzi and a chill pool, the spa at Fateh Bagh offers total rejuvenation and relaxation. It is the perfect place to optimize your well-being to soothe your body, stimulate your mind and strengthen your spirit.

**Samode Haveli, Jaipur** – No other place epitomises the spirit and history of Rajasthan than the state's capital, the beautiful city of Jaipur. Built in pink stone more than two centuries ago, the capital is a testimony of the master craftsmanship. And a fine example of the magnificent Rajasthani architecture is the Samode Haveli, built over 150 years ago by Rawal Sheo Singhji, a Prime Minister in the Jaipur court. It was built as the Samode Royal family's suburban manor house and was later converted into a heritage hotel in 1988. Although the haveli has been renovated to fit in modern comforts and luxury, it still stands as a reminder of a grand history.

The perfect blend of the modern and the historic elements gives Samode Haveli a warm and friendly atmosphere, encouraging guests to relax and treat it as a home away from home. It boasts of all modern day comforts like magnificent dining hall, a pool side bar, open air swimming pool, jacuzzi, steam room, ayurvedic massage centre, conference room, gift shop, safely vaults, doctor on call, etc, and yet, still



Mandawa Haveli

maintains its grand aura, giving a feel of the royal Indian ethos. With its understated luxury, antique furniture, furnishings and original work-of-art, the hotel is a celebration of the Rajasthani traditional and gracious living. Every evening, enjoy a puppet show or a traditional Rajasthani dance and music over a drink in the open-air lounge and of course a sumptuous Indian dinner.

**Mandawa Haveli, Jaipur** - Built in the Jaipur style of architecture with numerous pillars and arches, and furnished with intricately carved wooden beds, historic photographs and king-size royal portraits, the Mandawa haveli combines old world charm with the best of present day facilities. Thakur Bhagwat Singh, the 15th ruler of Mandawa, built the haveli in 1896. Originally conceived as a town house it was under the guidance of Thakur Devi Singhji, the 17th ruler, that the Haveli was converted into a hotel with all modern amenities-be it the swimming pool, the conference hall, restaurants and all other luxuries.

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## Cultural Calendar for October 2007

### October 3

Celebration to commemorate the 138<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi  
A Violin recital by Visharadh Somasiri Illesinghe, eminent musician  
Venue & Time: ICC 6.00 p.m.

### October 10

Film: Sardar  
Language: Hindi  
Directed by: Ketan Mehta  
Venue & Time: ICC 5.30 p.m. Duration : 3 hrs

### October 12

Bharatha Natyam Recital  
by Ms. Suriyakala Chandrika Jeevananthan,  
Director of Shri Ram Shrishti School of Dance  
Venue & Time: ICC 6.00 p.m.

### October 17

Film: Ankur (with English subtitles)  
Language: Hindi  
Directed by: Shyam Benegal  
Venue & Time: ICC 5.30 p.m. Duration : 3 hrs

### October 26

Sangeet Bhavana - Musical Meditation  
by Sangeet Shastrapathi Anil Mihiripenne,  
eminent musician  
Venue & Time: ICC 6.00 p.m.

(Admission to all programmes is free and on first come first served basis)



Gajner Palace

True to the Rajasthani culture, the hotel hosts gala evenings of folk dances, music and puppet shows, traditional welcome with tilak and garlands, Rajasthani lunch and dinner and sightseeing trips to Amber Fort, Nahargarh Fort, The City Palace and The Jantar Mantar. There are pleasant courtyards, lawns and terraces with a view of the splendid Nahargarh Fort. It has a beautiful dining hall overlooking one of the terraces, serving a variety of delicious world cuisines.

**Pushkar Palace, Pushkar** - Revelling beside the beautiful Pushkar Lake, the 'Pushkar palace' offers a memorable stay to the guests with its serene ambience and warm hospitality. As you sit by the window of your room, enjoy the view of the lake, palaces, hills, sand dunes and the sunset - all creating a magical ambience. The 'Kishangarh Kunj' Haveli built by Maharaja of Jaisalmer about 400 years ago and later on presented to Maharaja of Kishangarh, was converted into this heritage hotel presenting its guests with royal comforts in traditional Rajasthani style.

While remaining true to its identity as a remnant of the past, it provides its guests with all modern amenities and comforts, along with spacious well-appointed rooms and great food. Each room of the Haveli has different period furniture, frescoes, family portraits and decoration of old paintings, which add to the ambience. Although Hotel Pushkar Palace has no conference hall in the hotel premises, but this facility can be availed at its branch hotel Jagat Singh Palace Hotel which is hardly 500 yards away. Apart from essential facilities, the hotel also arranges jeep, camel and horse safaris, bicycle and



Alsisar Haveli

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## Indian Cultural Centre

133, Bauddhaloka Mawatha,  
Colombo 4, Sri Lanka  
Telephone: 2500014, Fax: 2598674  
E-mail: [icc@sltnet.lk](mailto:icc@sltnet.lk)  
ICCR Website: [www.iccrindia.org](http://www.iccrindia.org)

SANDESH

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October 2007

Painting by Chhaya Parekh

## Past Events

August 15

Odissi dance recital by Smt. Bindu Juneja & her troupe from India to celebrate the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of India's Independence



Renowned Odissi dance exponent Smt. Bindu Juneja & her troupe captivated the audiences in Sri Lanka with their classical Odissi dance performance. Bindu's dazzling display of the rhythmic wizardry and grace inherent in the Odissi dance style, proved to be a marvellous exposition of this East Indian classical dance.

Their visit was organized by the High Commission of India in association with the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, with the support of ICICI Bank, Ministry of Cultural Affairs of Sri Lanka, State Bank of India and Sri Lanka – India Cultural Association of Central Province in celebration of the 60th anniversary of India's independence

The performance by Smt. Bindu Juneja & her troupe received rave reviews from the press and dance devotees. In addition, she gave performances at the Indian Cultural Centre, Colombo, on 17 August and at the Dharmaraj College Auditorium in Kandy on 16 August

August 31

Vocal & Instrumental Recital by the students of Nadeshwaralaya Academy of Fine Arts



The students of Nadeshwaralaya Academy of Fine Arts presented a vocal & instrument recital at recital Centre. The programme included a veena recital, vocal recital by senior & junior students of the academy and a Carnatic music recital on keyboard

August 17

Lecture cum demonstration by Ms. Bindu Juneja & her troupe from India



Smt. Bindu Juneja also gave a lecture cum demo at the Indian Cultural Centre on 17<sup>th</sup> August. In her lecture she explained the origin of the Odissi dance and the two broad divisions Nritya is pure dance without symbolism or story, usually performed to music without words; and Nritya – the expressional dance in which the dancer through symbolic gestures, poses and facial expressions interprets the poem sung. She interspersed her talk with demonstrations

August 29

Bharatha Natyam Recital By Ms. Prashanthini Yogaraja & Ms. Rishathini Vamadevan

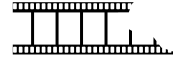


Ms. Prashanthini Yogaraja & Ms. Rishathini Vamadevan, diploma holders of Rukmini Devi College of Fine Arts, India captivated the audience with their brilliant Bharatha Natyam performance. Their performance commenced with "Alarippu" followed by "Varnam", "Padham" and concluded with "Thillana".

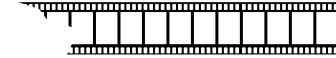
## LIBRARY

### Recent Library Accessions

- 1. Compendium on Policies ,Incentives and Investment Opportunities for Overseas Indians**
- 2. Handbook for Overseas Indians**  
[The Handbook is aimed at providing information generally required by Overseas Indians for investment purposes etc. The Compendium contains detailed information On tax incentives for Non-Residents, Foreign Exchange Management Act, Baggage Rules, RBI Guidelines, Foreign Contributions etc.]
- 3. Marriages to Overseas Indians.**  
[The book "Marriages to Overseas Indians" is a guidance booklet which intends to serve as a guide for prospective brides and their parents who are considering a matrimonial alliance with overseas Indians.
- 4. Gandhi : Messiah of Peace**  
New Delhi : Roli Books,2002,200p.  
002874  
GAN
- 5. The Mahatma and the Poet : Letters and Debates Between Gandhi and Tagore**  
1915-1941  
Bhattacharya, S  
New Delhi,National Book Trust,1997,216p.  
002872  
GAN
- 6. Gandhi and Sri Lanka 1905-1947**  
Gandhi,G  
Ratmalana,Sarvodaya,2002,334p.  
002871  
GAN
- 7. Satyagraha**  
Singh,Savita  
New Delhi,Min. of Information and Broadcasting,2006,260p.  
002875  
GAN



## Films in October



### Sardar

Sardar, is an authentic narration of facts on one of the great sons of India, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel – "The Hindu"

Language: Hindi Starring: Paresh Raval, Annu Kapoor, Tom Alter, Benjamin Gillani and many others Directed by: Ketan Mehta

### Ankur (with English subtitles)

The debut directorial film from Shyam Benegal, deals with social disparities and exploitation. This film focuses on power and privilege with careful thought and acute perception. This film won the award as second best feature film in 1974.

Language: Hindi Starring: Anant Nag, Shabana Azmi, Priya Tendulkar, Sadhu Meher, Kadar Ali Beg & Agha Mohammed Hussain Directed by: Shyam Benegal

## Havelis of Rajasthan.. Contd..

motorcycle rides on request.

Pushkar is also known for its fairs and festivals and a stay in the Haveli during the festival is a great option. The whole town comes alive with vibrant folk music, dances and other traditional entertainments.

**Alisisar Haveli, Jaipur** - The Alisisar Haveli in Jaipur is one of the best-managed and well maintained heritage hotels in Rajasthan. It incorporates the finesse of traditional Rajput architecture and brings back to life the grandeur of the old days, presenting the guests with a regal Rajasthani experience. Some five centuries ago the Shekhawat branch of Rajputs once owned this elegant haveli. The descendants of the family have renovated and refurbished their old mansion into a modern day heritage hotel so that the guests can enjoy the comforts of modern day luxuries, while getting a feel of the Raj days. The rooms are still very much like the ones that were used by Thakurs of Alisisar. Antique furniture and medieval Rajasthani style-fabrics charmingly enhance the Rajasthani experience. The large elevated platform that dominates the central area of the ground floor and once used for get-togethers by the gents of the house now hosts puppet shows and folk dances for the guests' entertainment, while enjoying culinary delights.

While quenching your thirst for a feel of history, the hotel fulfils all your luxurious desires, for care has been taken to equip the hotel with virtually everything. The interiors are tastefully done, boasting of a beautiful dining room with real gold inlay work on the walls, bar with all the modern drinks, a swimming pool, which is nestled in plants of various kinds and the 'Sheesh Mahal' which reminds you of old 'Amer Fort' of Jaipur. Known since 1982 as one of the most famous and comfortable stay in Jaipur, Alisisar Haveli gives you the true taste of traditional Rajasthani hospitality.

**Jai Mahal Palace, Jaipur** – The Jai Mahal Palace in Jaipur takes you on a journey through the lanes of history. Set amidst acres of the breathtaking Moghul gardens, this magnificent palace dates back to 1745 AD. Its a perfect blend of contemporary and classic living, making it just the perfect retreat for visitors. A masterpiece in the IndoSaracenic style of architecture, it combines yester years' opulent lifestyle with ravishing modern-day comforts that transport guests to a world of Rajasthani magnificence.

Unique in its own way, the interiors of this palace exemplify luxurious living. It caters to all your holiday needs like a choice of breathtaking views, elegantly designed rooms, spacious sitting areas, bar, music, fine cuisine, banquets and conference hall and all other basic facilities. The hotel has three balcony suites: Jaipur, Peacock and Gangaur; each with its own rich and colourful theme and two magnificently decorated luxury suites namely The Topaz Suite and the Crystal Suite. Excellent service and modern amenities make Jai Mahal Palace one of the finest hotels in Jaipur.

**Gajner Palace, Bikaner** - Built by H.H. Maharaja Sir Ganga Singhji of Bikaner, the Gajner Palace takes you into the era of the Raj, presenting the best of both Rajput and Mughal architecture. Spread over 6,000 acres, the former Maharajas and visiting British dignitaries used the palace as a hunting resort during the days of British rule. Photographs and souvenirs of the days of the Raj have been meticulously arranged in the corridors; each suite has been carefully restored to its original grandeur - right from the furniture to the wall-paper - to recreate the aura of a bygone age. Gajner Palace has four distinctive wings. The Dungar Niwas, which has the hotel's 11 historic suites; Mandir Chowk which is part of the reception area dominated by the presence of an ancient temple and age-old Banyan trees; Gulab Niwas which was once home to railway officers; and Champa Niwas, the recently built section which has a beautiful courtyard. All rooms are tastefully decorated and are fitted with every modern convenience. You can experience the grandeur of royal dining at the multi cuisine lakeside restaurant 'Mirage', the terrace restaurant 'Imperial Sand Grouse' or cook for yourself in an open air state-of-the-art kitchen. During the stay at Gajner Palace, you can enjoy a camel, horse or a jeep safari into the wildlife sanctuary or through the desert dunes, or simply relax by the lake. Folk performances and cultural programmes are also organized making your trip a complete 'Thar' experience.

These exotic and beautiful havelis bring back the historical grandeur offering cherished memories and experiences for the tourists. Built over the hills, in the desert, in the wild waters, these buildings tell the story of an altogether different world.

Source: Ahir Bhairab Borthakur, *Incredible India*