



VANITY FAIR



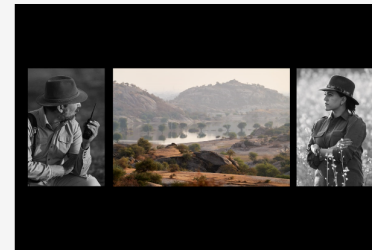
THE VANITY FAIR
CHANGING YOUR MIND
TRAVEL AWARDS 2020

WITH LEICA AND ANANTARA

2020 Vision: The *Vanity Fair* Changing Your Mind Awards 2020

A journey. A picture. A moment. Open your mind to have it changed; herein lies a new way of exploring the world. These individuals do things differently. Remember when you had your last slightly madcap idea and nobody supported you, but you did it anyway? That's their M.O. They're infinitely imaginative, mind-bogglingly original and endearingly unaware of their courage. Here is the 2020 line-up of dreamers, but also doers.

BY MICHELLE JANA CHAN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY CAT GARCIA AND BENNO THOMA
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Gaining Ground: Anjali and Jaisai Singh

Jaisai's was a barefoot childhood, spent running around the wilderness of Ranthambore National Park, watching his father and uncle at work, both renowned wildlife experts in India and documentary filmmakers. "When tiger cubs were born, my parents would pull me out of school so I wouldn't miss them," Jaisai says. "We'd sleep under a banyan tree, we wouldn't even pitch a tent." By contrast, Anjali grew up in the world of the automotive business, a huge conglomerate that she now runs. "It is all factories and conferences, nothing like the space that I long to be in," she sighs. Together, they are a force. Jaisai opened his first lodge 20 years ago, before they met, but after coming together in 2006, they opened three more properties in quick succession, including JAWAI in the Aravalli Hills in southwest Rajasthan, their most ambitious conservation project. Working with local communities, private landowners and government, they are piecing together critical, albeit small, patches of contiguous land to create wildlife corridors, aiming to eventually link up with nearby Kumbhalgarh National Park. "When our guests see what we are doing, they become ambassadors for the project," Jaisai says. "Without responsible tourism all this wilderness would disappear." To my ear, it sounds like a conspiracy, along the lines of the East African model, an initiative untried in India. But if it works, JAWAI could be a template for the region. So far, they have managed to protect more than 50 square kilometers, and the workload is heavy, including having discussions with landowners trying to halt illegal construction projects and purchasing land to strengthen frontiers of national parks. As we parted, Anjali showed me their private app on her phone: a dynamic map which shows updates of their work in the JAWAI area. "We're hoping to almost double the amount of protected wilderness that is already there," she says. "We'll keep chipping away. We want to be able to look back when we're old and say we were able to get it done."