

CITIZEN FEMME

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TRAVEL EXPERIENCE TASTE SKY SHOP

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A Luxury Woman's Travel Guide

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Bookle Reviews

Hotel Wishlist:
Sujan Jawai
Leopard Camp,
Rajasthan


By: Hiraal Vora

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Rajasthan's majestic allure is mostly derived from its rich royal history and through captivating stories of the Maharajahs (Kings) and Maharanis(Queens) of the time.

If some of those tales were not true they would indeed pass as fairy tales. Apart from its obvious and celebrated regal history, its palaces and forts, there is one other aspect that Rajasthan is equally well known for – and that is its wildlife.

Whilst the tiger has quite rightly earned its respected place of pride in India as her national animal, the elusive leopard has made a prominent mark and established a place of pride too. No other place gives it that respect than Jawai, Rajasthan where the Sujan Jawai Leopard Camp is located.




Being privileged to live in a country with arguably the most famous national park in the world – the Maasai Mara, I admittedly did not have the greatest expectations about visiting the Jawai Leopard Camp. I was utterly ignorant of what lay in store for me. After a long six hour drive from Jaipur we pulled off the main road into the side bushes and were met by a couple of members of the Camp – our home for the next two nights. From there we were driven to the camp itself by their own four wheel drive jeeps.

The Village

Jawai is a village that is probably as old as the land itself. It is where the Rabari herdsmen (immediately identifiable by their red turbans) wander freely through mustard plantations, granite hills and incredibly with the leopards! Indeed this phenomena of the leopard and the villagers co-existing peacefully for centuries has been has been the focus of study and many conservationists and wildlife experts.

Where human conflict with wildlife is increasingly getting worse and intolerable, here Man and Leopard co-exist. This cat is a revered animal in Jawai and that is probably why there is little conflict with them. Local tribesmen go about their daily life as they have been for eons in graceful tandem with the leopards. Interestingly the leopards at Jawai are considerably bigger than their African counterpart because here they are at the top of the food chain.




“ This camp is everything and a lot more.”

The Camp

Set near the Jawai dam, the camp blends in perfectly with the desert landscape and the property is purposefully designed so that the surrounding granite hills and the Rabari herdsmen are given their tribute through the colours and design of the interiors of the camp. In keeping with the State's Royal hospitality, the eleven camp marvel is faultless unless you consider understated luxury a fault. Each tent has large double beds, its own expansive deck with style stainless steel bathroom fittings and power rain showers.

When the heat of the desert has taken its toll on you, there is a good sized pool to cool off, or you could have a massage in their spa. Yoga and wellness excursions at remote and stunning locations in the wilderness are also on offer if booked in advance.

Apart from spotting the leopards, it is also a bird watchers haven and the Jawai Bandis reservoir is home to geese, flamingos and cranes.



The Royal Tentel Suite at Jawai Leopard Camp is the ultimate in luxury and has a private pool. PHOTO: SUJAN LUXURY

Eat

All cooked food on the property is prepared from fresh ingredients grown in their local garden and there is always a choice to have the traditional rajasthani "Thali" (plate) which typically consists of a couple of curries, chapattis, pickles and a sweet dish. Follow the rhythm of the safari drives and excursions, with no "set time" to eat. Breakfasts in the bush and picnics in the wild. Lunches by the lakes and dinners under constellations. It quite simply is irresistible.

Worth it?

My trip to Sujan Jawai Leopard Camp was a treat, and an unforgettable one. Seeing leopards in this kind of environment was truly special and nothing like I had seen in any national park before. This camp is everything and a lot more.

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