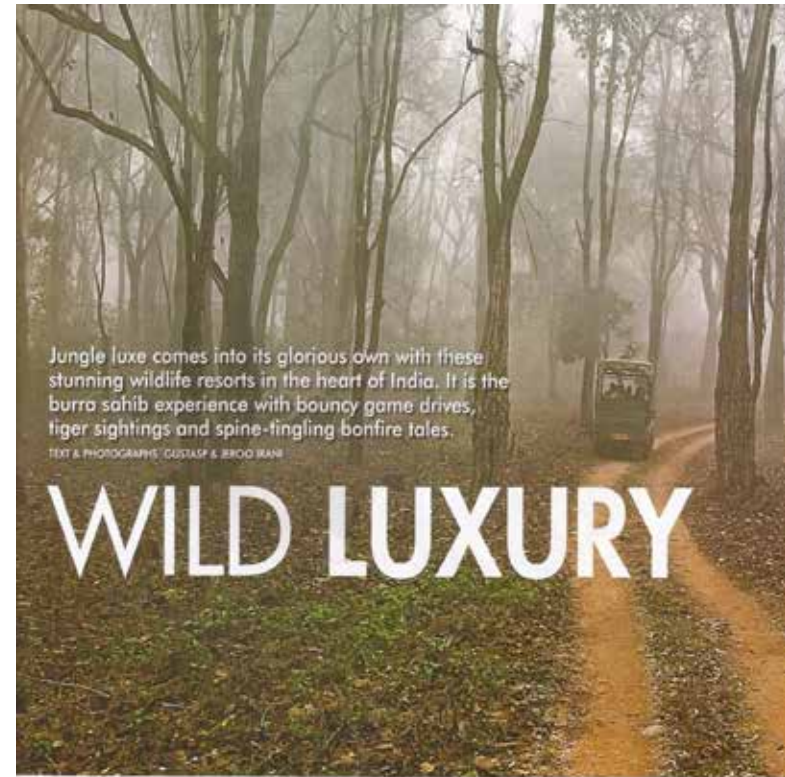


HI! BLITZ

April, 2015

“The ambience is very earthy yet luxe and created partly by Edward VIII’s campaign style furniture which accompanied him on his tour to the Indian Jungles in 1921.”



Jungle luxe comes into its glorious own with these stunning wildlife resorts in the heart of India. It is the burra sahib experience with bouncy game drives, tiger sightings and spine-tingling bonfire tales.

TEXT & PHOTOGRAPHS: GUSTAF & BRIO BRAND

WILD LUXURY

The Serai Bandipur

As we drove past the gate of The Serai Bandipur, we saw a leopard draped on a tree outside the resort, eyes a-glim with menace. This was the shape of things to come—The Serai's promise to unveil the Kipling-esque jungles of Bandipur in all their beauty and mystery, even as guests revelled in the comfort of its teak log huts and courtyard rooms.

The elegant Mountain View Log Huts and Courtyard rooms are set along stone pathways impressed with leaf and pug-mark motifs. Built artfully across 19 acres surrounded by solar fencing, the Serai has 17 acres of dense private wilderness around it.

The sloping thatched roofs, use of local stone and ample woodwork and animal

prints in the interiors gives the resort an aura of rugged sophistication. Yet the local idiom is strong and reiterated in the use of old Nagara drums from the durbars of yore, a cart with vintage milk cans, and aged dowry chests which must have once contained untold riches.

The ambience, in many ways, evokes the accommodation of the white hunters of yore in south and east Africa. The log huts are luxurious glass-enclosed havens with canopied four-poster beds and other mod cons, plus vast en suite facilities. The Residence is the pinnacle of style, an individual villa with its own terrace, where you can sink into a day bed and gaze at the forest and hills.

A restaurant and a bar field stunning views that induce you to daydream, while

the Ona Spa massages away the aches and pains of bouncy game drives.

And if you would like a break from gazing at elephants and deer, just sit back and gaze at the misty Nilgiris that rise in front of your private sun deck, a playground of light and shadow.

For more information, visit: www.theserai.in

Orange County Kabini

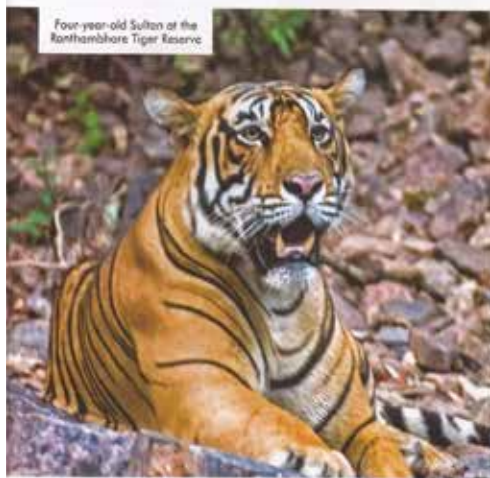
They gather along the banks of the Kabini river, flanked by the Nagarhole and Bandipur national parks, like the slow-swalling ranks of a royal army. Starting late March and going into May, the number of wild elephants grow by the day, and the mighty pachyderms school and trunreep as though conferring with

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The garden cafe at Amanbagh



Four-year-old Sultan at the Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve

experience comes with moments to remember—one can dine in a kettuvallam or a re-configured traditional rice boat while floating down the river; relish fine wines and gourmet food as the country craft sails past dense forests where the air is rent with raucous calls of a peacock or the alarm call of a monkey that has sighted a predator.

There are abundant wildlife experiences to be had in the day too: game drives into the forest, boat safaris, canoe rides, bird watching, nature walks, etc.

For more information, visit: www.orangecounty.in

Sher Bagh, Ranthambhore

He stood transfixed, like a celebrity caught in a mael of popping flashbulbs; the paparazzi with foot-long lenses aiming to get the ultimate shot. Sultan, the four-year-old lithe male tiger at the Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve, was a picture of outraged majesty as excitement spiralled out of control and multiple jeeps converged on the spot where he lay—fairly close to the entrance of the park.

Then he sat down with regal grace, stretched lazily and started to pose and preen. He showed us his handsome

As we drove past the gate of The Serai Bandipur, we saw a leopard draped on a tree outside the resort, eyes a-gleam with menace. This was the shape of things to come—The Serai's promise to unveil the Kipling-esque jungles of Bandipur in all their beauty and mystery, even as guests revelled in the comfort of its teak log huts and courtyard rooms.



Relais & Châteaux Sher Bagh

profile, his velvety coat with stripes that glowed in the dying light and stared into our soul with his green cat eyes. Then like a star tired of the intense public scrutiny, he loped away into the forest. The cavalcade of jeeps trawled away like a retreating army, and we headed back to the Relais & Châteaux Sher Bagh, a luxe camp neighbouring the reserve.

Twelve hand-stitched canvas tents pitched in a semi-circle around a garden fringed with wild grass are furnished in the 1920s Raj style. They surround you in comfort and sheer style, even as the wilderness beyond seems to loom with menace. The lounge and dining tents evoke an era long gone by.

The ambience is very raffish yet low-key and created partly by Edward VIII's campaign-style furniture which accompanied him on his tour of the Indian jungles in 1923. The vast double bed tents with private verandas, vintage dressing-room-sewing desks and prints of royal shikaris are complemented by capacious bathrooms. The perennially spoilt can even indulge in a butler service. The Durra Sahib Tent comes with a plunge pool overlooking the forest and the Pukka Sahib Tent has an outdoor jacuzzi.

In between game drives, stringently placed mud decks with chapeyas or loungers invite guests to relax and feel the pulse of the surrounding forest. And the icing on the cake is the swimming pool with its all-embracing view of the reserve beyond, where one can laze with a



Orange County Relais has been rated as one of the 25 best eco-lodges in the world



Indian roller bird with a frog in its beak at the Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve

April 2015 #1 100 Miles

Sultan, the four-year-old lithe male tiger at the Ranthambhore Tiger Reserve, sat down with regal grace, stretched lazily and started to pose and preen. He showed us his handsome profile, his velvety coat with stripes that glowed in the dying light. Then like a star tired of the intense public scrutiny, he loped away into the forest...and we headed back to the Relais & Châteaux Sher Bagh, a luxe camp neighbouring the reserve.

tall drink. The Jungle Spa unfurls under a hospitable-peepal tree where supine guests can revel in massages and bird song.

But most guests revel in the South African-style boma or brazier that takes place every evening in a glade on the property. Here guests get to exchange notes on their game drives under starry skies and oohs and aahs resound across the clearing as each one raves about his or her sightings that day. And that ultimately is what a wildlife vacation's all about.

For more information, visit: www.sujanluxury.com