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“Jaisal Singh’s Sher Bagh bought luxury camping to India”

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CONNECT STAY

JOSHUA TREE HOUSE
Joshua Tree, California

RENT THIS HOUSE
Joshua Tree House, California

The quirky namesake trees outside are just the first sign you've left real life behind.

by ANN ABEL

On Sara and Rich Combs' first road trip to the town of Joshua Tree, in Southern California, they knew they'd be back. "The draws

for us were the surreal landscape, the creative community, and the affordable real estate," says Sara. They bought this 1949 hacienda-

style home last year. "We're completely in awe of the goofy Joshua trees, the precarious boulders, and the inspiring artists who live here."

The two-bedroom house, available to rent, has mid-century modern furniture, vaulted wood ceilings, and a flagstone fireplace

(ideal for those cold desert nights) and is just a 10-minute walk from the village. Watch sunrises on the front porch, stargaze from the Jacuzzi, or simply marvel at the 100-plus Joshua trees—some 300 years old—scattered across the grounds. From \$185. airbnb.com

SPOTLIGHT

The Suján Way

Jaisal Singh's Sher Bagh brought luxury camping to India. With the opening of his latest, **Suján Rajmahal Palace in Jaipur**, he breaks down what sets his retreats apart.

by JENNIFER FLOWERS

Tell us about your latest hotel.

Suján Rajmahal Palace is a perfect example of what we do. This palace in Jaipur has a living connection to the destination because it's the only hotel in the Pink City that still belongs to the Maharaja. In the restaurant, we serve the family's original household recipes.

How do you help connect guests to a destination?

Having relationships with local communities enables us to share another side of India. Jawai Leopard Camp in Rajasthan is known for its remarkable wildlife sightings, but we have also created cultural encounters in the area's exceptional temples. We work with priests so that guests can observe practices that don't exist anymore in urban India.

How do you build those relationships?

At Suján properties our staff is made up of at least 75 percent local people. We also look for ways to give back. For example, a percentage of what we charge for a stay at Jawai goes into a fund to help with community projects, such as a water well or sheds for cattle.

How does your philosophy influence your design?

Each of our camps was designed to both reflect and complement its surroundings. At the Serai in Rajasthan, we used the area's golden Jaisalmer stone to build the plunge pools, and we use colorful handmade carpets, throws, and cushions that contrast beautifully with the stark terrain of the Thar Desert.



EXIT THROUGH THE GIFT SHOP: GO AHEAD AND POP OFF

Let's just get this out of the way: Yes, this custom St. Regis Christofle stainless steel saber, with its hand-etched sterling silver handle and its \$25,000 price tag, is over the top. Yes, there are much simpler ways to uncork a bottle of champagne. But there isn't a more dramatic gesture to celebrate a special occasion. If you're unsure how to wield one of these, don't worry. Every purchase comes with a hands-on master class, the same demo St. Regis butlers receive as part of their training. —ANDREW RICHDALE