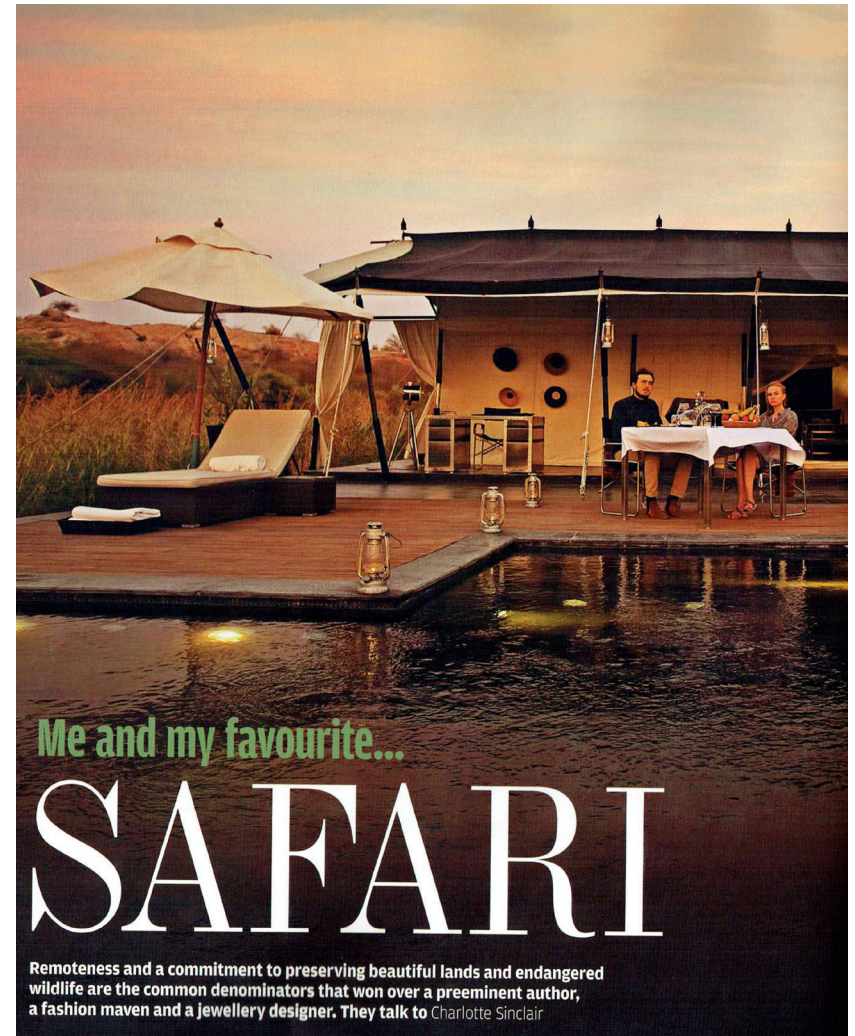


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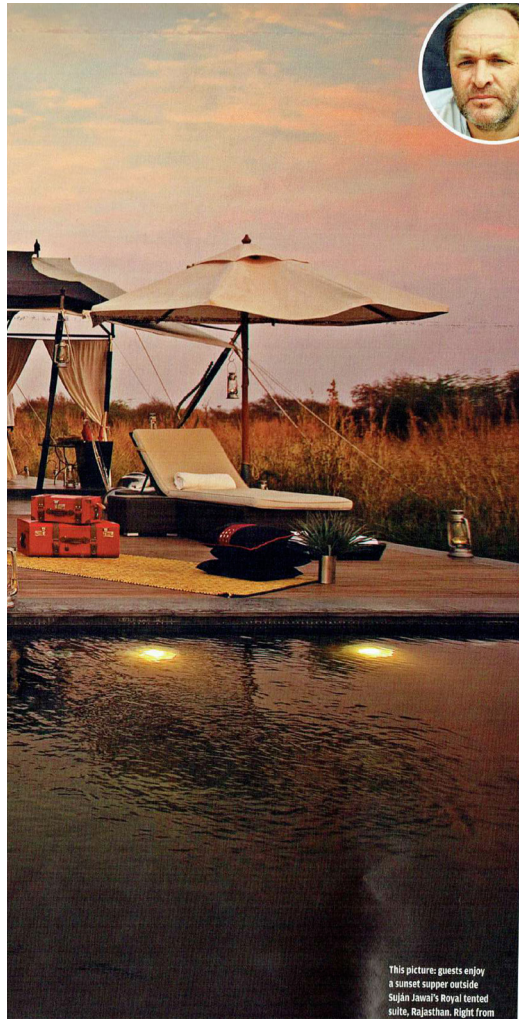
UK, May 2017

“Remoteness and a commitment to preserving beautiful lands and endangered wildlife.”



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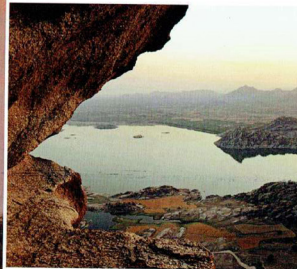


This picture: guests enjoy a sunset supper outside Suján Jawai's Royal tented suite, Rajasthan. Right from



William Dalrymple

A sleek redoubt in the hills of western Rajasthan is where the writer and broadcaster enjoyed top-notch hospitality and came face-to-face with an apex predator



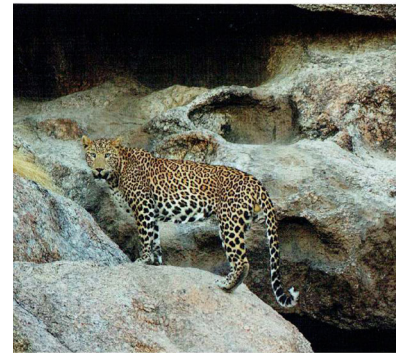
I visited Suján Jawai when it first opened and thought it was by a long way the best game sanctuary I'd seen in India. Principally, this was because of the animal sightings – I've been endless at Ranthambore and seen nothing more than the flicker tail of a tiger, while a dozen vehicles clustered with mine around the same spot. At Jawai, I saw six or seven leopards every morning – and without any other vehicle around. But what really made it stand out for me was the incredible landscape. I thought I knew Rajasthan, but it's unlike anywhere else I've seen in India, almost resembling a CS Lewis sketch for his book *The Horse and His Boy*. There are wide, green fields around Jawai lak home to crocodiles and flamingos – and then, rising out of the open plains are these granite rocks, as smooth-sided and sculpted as Henry Moore works. It could be the cover of a Yes album from the 1970s.

The owner, Jaisal Singh, is a friend and was there with us. His company, Suján, does things very well; he's got a good eye and knows how to make you feel comfortable. The food is good, the quality of the jeeps is good, then hot-water bottles for morning drives and lovely drinks the evening. He also knows how to throw a party.

There are nine very smart, quite hip white tents outfitted with chrome desks, large black-and-white photographs of leopards and monochrome blankets. The colour scheme is lifted with red accents, like the stack steamer trunks at the end of your bed, echoing the red



"At Jawai, humans and animals seem to live in a symbiosis that verges on the magical"



turbans worn by the local Rabari herdsmen. There's a swimming pool for cooling off in the afternoon, a dining tent serving delicious curries and even an African-style bonna for dinner by lantern-light.

Not far from camp – you reach it across dry riverbeds and past acacia trees – there's a rock next to a village that sticks out from the ground like a molar. It was here that we'd see the leopards every morning. In the evening we'd stop the vehicle and walk onto the rock faces, many of which are sacred, to sit with a pair of binoculars and watch a leopard leaving its cave for the evening. Another extraordinary facet of Jawai is that it's a populated landscape. As you drive the dusty tracks, you encounter villagers going about their daily lives, herding cattle or farming, while a family of enormous wild cats looks down from the rocks. Humans and animals seem to live in a symbiosis that verges on the magical. As I left to catch my flight the driver braked suddenly – there was a leopard in the middle of the road, caught in the headlights.

From **Rs65,000** (about **£790**) per person per night, full board, +9111-4617-2700; sujanluxury.com.

