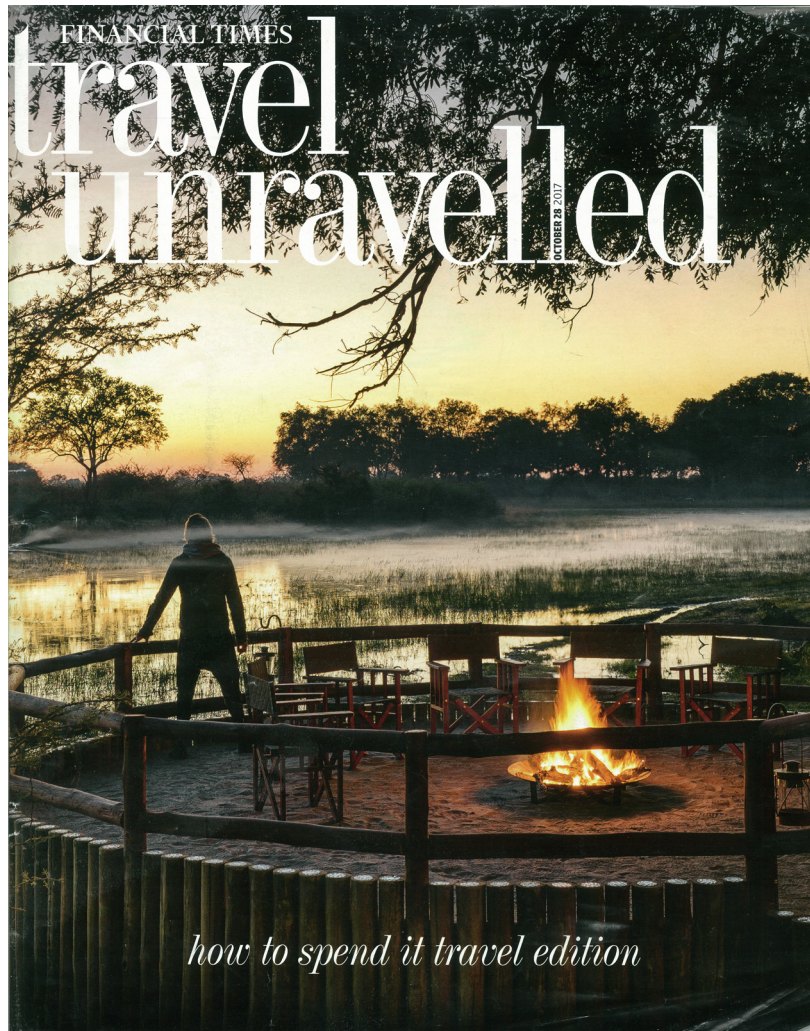


FINANCIAL TIMES TRAVEL UNRAVELLED

UK, October 2017



“Jaisal Singh is one -of- a -kind. It’s a maximalist’s dream, underpinned by some of the finest service in the land – and an outrageously good thali to boot.”

travelista

Wander woman Maria Shollenbarger divulges personal finds and perennial favourites

→ Jaisal Singh is one-of-a-kind, a dandy dedicated to polo, wildlife conservation and history in equal measure.

Suján Rajmahal Palace
(sujanluxury.com; from £600),

the hotel he heads up on the outskirts of **JAIPUR**'s old city, is a ravishing compendium of Rajput heritage and Anglo glamour. Its 14 suites bear the names of the guests who slept in them: Mountbatten, Kennedy, Prince of Wales. It's stuffed with important antiques and good paintings, and 48 individual wallpapers were custom-designed for the many halls, receptions and arcades of the palace – once home to the British resident political officer of Rajputana, then to Sawai Man ("Jai") Singh II, Jaipur's very modern and last ruling maharajah. It's a maximalist's dream, underpinned by some of the finest service in the land – and an outrageously good thali to boot.



Above: Jaipur's Suján Rajmahal Palace's ravishing mix of Rajput heritage and Anglo glamour. Below: the industrial-slick lobby/bar at The Warehouse Hotel on Robertson Quay, Singapore



Above: a restored farmhouse is at the heart of Amankora Penakha Lodge in Bhutan

→ Wilderness Safaris has operated in Mana Pools National Park – in **ZIMBABWE**'s remote but game-rich north – for years, running its 10-tent Ruckomechi Camp. Last May, I stayed at **Little Ruckomechi** (wilderness-safaris.com; from \$1,045 per person), a then brand-new private camp just downriver, on a bluff overlooking a broad wetland. It's a testament to the power of intimate dimensions to convey great luxury: just three canvas-and-timber tents and two open-air living/dining areas dotted with comfy club chairs, deep sofas and stacks of

great books, all bowered in the cool green shade of mopane trees. The guiding, this being a Wilderness outfit, is superb, but even if you skip every drive, you'll likely still see elephants: they tend to amble straight through camp by the dozens en route to the riverbank to drink.

→ **SINGAPORE**'s hotel scene has long suffered a dearth of cool. Enter **The Warehouse Hotel** (thewarehousehotel.com; from £157), which breathed contemporary life into an old godown on Robertson Quay in January. I wouldn't call it the city's cushiest digs, nor its most cutting-edge, but I was impressed by the clever little culture moments in the rooms – the tasty hawker-inspired snacks, the ikat throws from a local design firm – and by the gorgeous (also local) custom metalwork. And the industrial-slick lobby seems to be functioning in the way a cool hotel bar in a big city should, but here, often doesn't – ie, an organically occurring nexus of pre-nightlife for guests and locals alike.

→ The remit of **Uthando** (uthandosa.org; tours from £57 per person) – former paralegal James Fernie's **CAPE TOWN**-based

