

DUJOUR
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This hotel in Jaipur, India was literally built for royalty

Written by Etta Meyer

The first thing to understand about the SUJÁN Rajmahal Palace is that the same “palace” is not hyperbole. It is literally a palace owned by the royal family of Jaipur, containing within its walls their glamorous history, art and many of their furnishings. The second thing to understand is that “it is an old, new place,” as Siddhesh Wankar, Chief ADC, explained on our arrival tour. Built in 1729 as a garden retreat for the maharani of Jaipur, the palace served many purposes, including as the official residence of the British Resident Political Officer of Rajputana.

In 2015, the Relais & Chateaux property unveiled new interiors featuring 46 fanciful custom wallpapers inspired by the property’s collective legacy. For example, a cypress tree pattern adorns Durbar Hall, a grand reception room, as a nod to the property’s original gardens. In the maharaja suite entranceway, the flag of Jaipur—bold stripes in five colors—frames old hunting trophies.

What is the most requested room?

Each of the nine suites and four guest rooms are wildly unique, making a “most requested” room impossible to determine; every guest has a favorite. Although one of the most charming is the Kennedy Suite (where this intrepid reporter stayed).



The Kennedy Suite

Why?

Named after its most famous inhabitant, Mrs. Jackie Kennedy, the wallpaper for this room was inspired by camations, which were believed to be her favorite flower. The palette of seafoam green, cream and hot pink run throughout bedroom, private sitting room and dining room.



Entrance to SUJÁN Rajmahal Palace

What makes it so special?

The charm of this room is hard to overemphasize. It’s easy to feel like royalty while staying here, if only for a night.

What is the nightly rate?

Depending on the season, the rate starts at 52,000 INR (approximately \$800 USD).



Upper Lawn

Has the hotel hosted any celebrity guests?

Over the decades the Palace has hosted Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, Prince Charles, the late Princess Diana and eminent international celebrities such as Jackie Kennedy, Lord and Lady Mountbatten, and the Shah of Iran. The privacy of their guests is of the utmost importance, so more recent visitors were not able to be disclosed.



Vestibule with Original Marble Staircase

Fun facts:

The Palace has no long corridors; each corner turned reveals a new and distinct room or wing.

It is also full of beautiful doors leading to nowhere—an architectural ploy to confuse would-be invaders.

Parked in the entranceway is a 1959 custom Thunderbird that was created for the Maharaja H.H. Savai Man Singh II, a polo star and diplomat, who lived in the Palace with his famously regal wife, Maharani Gayatri Devi. The license plate reads: JAIPUR 1.

The 51 Shades of Pink dining room was inspired by Norman Parkinson’s 1952 Vogue cover shoot in Jaipur.

All Images Courtesy of SUJÁN Rajmahal Palace, Relais & Chateaux