

## **Tourism in Rajasthan**

**Introduction** - Tourism is one of the world's fastest-growing industries and a major foreign exchange and employment generation for many countries. It is one of the most remarkable economic and social phenomena. The word 'tour' is derived from the Latin word 'tornus', meaning 'a tool for making a circle.'

**Definitions** - According to WTO (1993), "Tourism encompasses the activities of persons traveling and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business, and other purposes."

Tourism Society, Britain – "Tourism is the temporary short term movement of people to destinations outside the places where they normally live and work and their activities during the way at these destinations, it includes movement for all purposes ,as well as day visits or excursions."

Tourism comes in many different shapes and sizes and there are many different types of tourism. There is mass tourism and special interest tourism. There is domestic tourism and international tourism. There is inbound tourism and outbound tourism. Leiper (1979) believed that defining tourism is more complex than this, proposing that there are three approaches that can be taken. The economic stance focuses on tourism as a business, the technical stance focuses on the tourist in order to provide a common basis by which to collect data and the holistic stance attempts to include the entire essence of the subject.

**A Brief History of Tourism-** The concept of travelling to other locations for pleasure existed in Ancient Egyptian, Greek, and Roman civilizations, meaning tourism, as a concept, has existed for thousands of years. Of course, in early times, travel primarily occurred on horseback or using boats, which meant long-distance travel, was difficult. Initially, tourism was also a pursuit for the most wealthy and powerful in society. This gradually started to change as the centuries passed. However, modern tourism is often traced back to the Industrial Revolution, with British society being among the first to embrace the idea of ordinary people travelling for leisure.

### **Importance of tourism**

When many people think about the tourism industry, they visualise only the front-line workers- the Holiday Representative, the Waiter, the Diving Instructor. But in reality, the tourism industry stretches much, much further than this. The tourism industry is closely interconnected with a number of global industries and sectors ranging from trade to ecological conservation.

### **Why tourism is important for a tourist:**

When we discuss the importance of tourism it is often somewhat one-sided, taking into consideration predominantly those working in the industry and their connections. However, the tourist is just as important, as without them there would be no tourism. The following are the importance of tourism for a tourist:

- **Enhanced quality of life:** Taking a holiday can greatly benefit a person's quality of life. A holiday does have the potential to enhance quality of life.
- **Ability to broaden way of thinking:** Travel is known to help broaden a person's way of thinking. Travel introduces you to new experiences, new cultures and new ways of life.
- **Educational value:** One reason why tourism is important is education. The importance of tourism can be attributed to the educational value that it provides. Travellers and tourists can learn many things while undertaking a tourist experience, from tasting authentic local dishes to learning about the exotic animals that they may encounter.
- **Ability to 'escape':** Tourism provides the opportunity for escapism. Escapism can be good for the mind. It can help you to relax, which in turn often helps you to be more productive in the workplace and in everyday life.
- **Rest and relaxation:** Rest and relaxation is very important. Taking time out for yourself helps you to be a happier, healthier person.
- **Enhanced wellbeing:** Having the opportunity for rest and relaxation in turn helps to enhance wellbeing.

### **Different Tourism Forms**

Tourism can take several forms, and the most significant examples are outlined below, allowing you to build a deeper understanding of the overall tourism meaning.

**Domestic Tourism** - Domestic tourism refers to a person travelling for leisure or business purposes within their home country. However, the precise definition goes beyond this, with domestic tourism meaning that a person travels from where they usually reside and then stays in their new location for at least one night.

Large countries, such as the United States and China, will attract a lot of domestic tourism, primarily because of their size. This means travelling within the same country can encounter vastly different climates, cultures, and experiences. However, most countries will generate domestic tourism, as travelling within one country is often more affordable than travelling internationally.

**Inbound Tourism** - The meaning of inbound tourism can be best explained from the perspective of a single country. When a country receives tourists from other nations, these tourists are referred to as inbound tourists. Again, to qualify as inbound tourism, this travel must last for at least one overnight stay and not exceed one year. Inbound tourism is a major contributor to many economies worldwide, and some nations rely on significant inbound tourism. However, for many countries, inbound tourism is also seasonal. For

instance, many countries experience an increase in inbound tourism in the warmer summer months or around major events.

**Outbound Tourism Meaning** - An outbound tourism meaning can be best obtained by comparing the concept to inbound tourism. Again, from the perspective of a single country, outbound tourism refers to tourism that takes people out to another country. Countries can still make money from outbound tourists because they may purchase travel products and services from a local travel agent and may spend money on transport tickets. It is important to understand that a single traveller leaving their country will be both an inbound and an outbound tourist because they will be leaving one country and entering another. In this sense, the two concepts are heavily reliant on perspective.

### Categories & Types of Tourism

The following table shows the diverse categories within the tourism industry, showcasing the multitude of travel experiences available to individuals worldwide. Each category offers unique opportunities for exploration, cultural immersion, and personal enrichment, shaping the global landscape of travel and tourism.

<b>Tourism Category</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Examples</b>
<b>Leisure Tourism</b>	Travel for recreational purposes and relaxation	Beach vacations, theme park visits, sightseeing tours
<b>Business Tourism</b>	Travel for professional or corporate purposes	Conferences, trade shows, meetings, conventions
<b>Adventure Tourism</b>	Travel involving thrilling or adrenaline-inducing activities	Trekking, mountaineering, bungee jumping
<b>Cultural Tourism</b>	Travel to explore and experience different cultures, traditions, and heritage	Museum visits, heritage tours, cultural festivals
<b>Eco-tourism</b>	Responsible travel to natural areas, conserving the environment, and improving the well-being of local people	Wildlife safaris, rainforest excursions, sustainable eco-lodges
<b>Wellness Tourism</b>	Travel focused on promoting health and well-being through relaxation, rejuvenation, and	Spa retreats, yoga retreats, wellness resorts

<b>Tourism Category</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Examples</b>
	self-care	
<b>Food Tourism</b>	Travel centered around culinary experiences, exploring local cuisines and dining traditions	Food tours, wine tasting tours, cooking classes
<b>Rural Tourism</b>	Travel to rural areas to experience rural life, traditions, and natural landscapes	Farm stays, agritourism, countryside excursions
<b>Medical Tourism</b>	Travel for the purpose of receiving medical treatment or procedures	Cosmetic surgery trips, dental tourism, fertility treatments abroad

### **Benefits of Tourism**

As a concept, tourism has the potential to deliver significant benefits:

- **Economic and Infrastructural Benefits:** First, it is crucial to understand that tourism can deliver significant economic and infrastructural benefits for the country receiving guests. Tourists will likely spend money in the local area, including shopping, paying for accommodation, visiting bars and restaurants, attending visitor attractions, and buying souvenirs. Meanwhile, the presence of tourists can also produce benefits in terms of local infrastructure. Transport links are likely to improve to accommodate these visitors, new hotels are likely to be built, road systems may be improved to deal with the additional traffic, and all of this can provide jobs for residents.
- **Social and Cultural Benefits:** Aside from the economic and infrastructural benefits associated with tourism, it is also worth highlighting that tourism can deliver social and cultural positives. For instance, bringing people from different cultures into contact with one another can help to expand cultural awareness and improve social cohesion. Moreover, this investment in the local area can potentially help to preserve historic buildings, maintain areas of natural beauty, and lead to the general upkeep of urban and rural environments.

### **Disadvantages of Tourism**

While plus points should be highlighted, there are potential downsides, with increased tourism meaning significant changes for residents. Some of the most significant disadvantages are outlined below:

- **Environmental Disadvantages:** Although tourism has the potential to incentivize environmental upkeep, it is worth highlighting that there are environmental issues, too. By definition, tourism will increase the number of people in a specific area, which means that natural resources will be stretched further; including water. The increase in vehicles can lead to pollution. In contrast, prioritizing attractions for visitors can destroy natural areas and lose natural animal habitats. Disruption to the area can also potentially lead to significant changes in migration patterns, meaning local wildlife may disappear.
- **Social and Cultural Disadvantages:** While tourism has the potential to enhance and preserve aspects of local culture, it can also do the opposite, with tourism meaning the eradication of local culture and the adoption of cultural aspects from visitors. This can be especially problematic for locations attracting many tourists from one country. Unfortunately, some tourists will lack interest in local culture and traditions and seek familiar businesses and attractions. This can create demand for foreign businesses and attractions, which may displace local ones.
- **Economic Disadvantages:** It is easy to over-simplify the economic effects of tourism, with tourism meaning more jobs and more people spending money in the local economy. However, many of these jobs are seasonal or otherwise unstable. Meanwhile, many jobs are considered low-skilled and usually offer low pay rates. Some locations become overly reliant on tourism at the expense of other aspects of their economy. This can lead to a lack of diversity in terms of available jobs.

### Scope of Tourism

- The scope of tourism is very vast as it covers a variety of activities such as hospitality, transportation, and leisure. The scope of tourism is broad and encompasses various aspects that contribute to the travel industry's overall impact on economies, cultures, and individuals.
- Tourism involves the movement of people from one location to another and the associated activities such as leisure and entertainment.
- It also encompasses the hospitality industry, which includes accommodation and food services, and the transportation industry, including air, rail, and road transport.
- Additionally, tourism involves activities such as cultural and natural attractions, exhibitions, festivals, and recreational activities.
- One of the major scopes of tourism is international travel. This includes the transportation of goods and services between countries, as well as international tourism, which involves the movement of people from one country to another. This has been increasing in global importance as globalization has made such travel easier and more accessible.
- Additionally, the scope of international airfare and hotel deals provides travellers with cost-effective ways to experience new places.

- Loyalty programs are often used by international travellers to gain discounts and benefits, thus making the experience of international travel more enjoyable.

**Here are some critical scopes of tourism:** Understanding these aspects helps make tourism a positive force, benefiting places, people, and the environment.

- **Economic Boost:** Creates jobs in hotels, transport, entertainment, Restaurants, Bars, Cruise Lines, Resorts, Camping grounds, Inns, Rest Houses, Series, etc. Money spent by visitors helps local economies.
- **Culture Connection:** Brings people together, fostering understanding of different cultures. Contributions from tourists can protect cultural and historical sites.
- **Nature and Community:** Encourages responsible tourism to minimize harm to nature. Improves local communities by creating opportunities and supporting social programs.
- **Learning and Wellness:** Offers opportunities to learn about history, art, and different cultures. Some tourism focuses on health and adventure for relaxation or exciting activities.
- **Technology Impact:** Changes how we plan trips with technology like apps and virtual tours. Innovations in transport and accommodation, like eco-friendly options, shape the tourism experience.
- **Countries:** Their tourist friendliness, visa regime, security, accessibility, infrastructure.
- **Attractions:** both natural and manmade, monuments, amusement parks, theme parks, museums, beaches, waterfalls, nature parks, mountains, coral islands, etc.
- Airlines, Railways, Motor Coaches, Taxis, Ferries, Cruises etc.

So the following are the jobs which can be taken up under Travel and Tourism:-

1. Holiday representative
2. Tour manager
3. Tourism officer
4. Tourist information centre manager
5. Travel agency manager

**Other Jobs include:-**

1. Archaeologist
2. Cruise line worker
3. Destination wedding photographer
4. Flight attendant
5. Peace Corps volunteer
6. Travel agent
7. Travel writer
8. Athletic recruiter
9. Auditor

10. Consultant
11. Event coordinator
12. Field service engineer
13. Destination wedding photographer

### **Significance of tourism in Rajasthan**

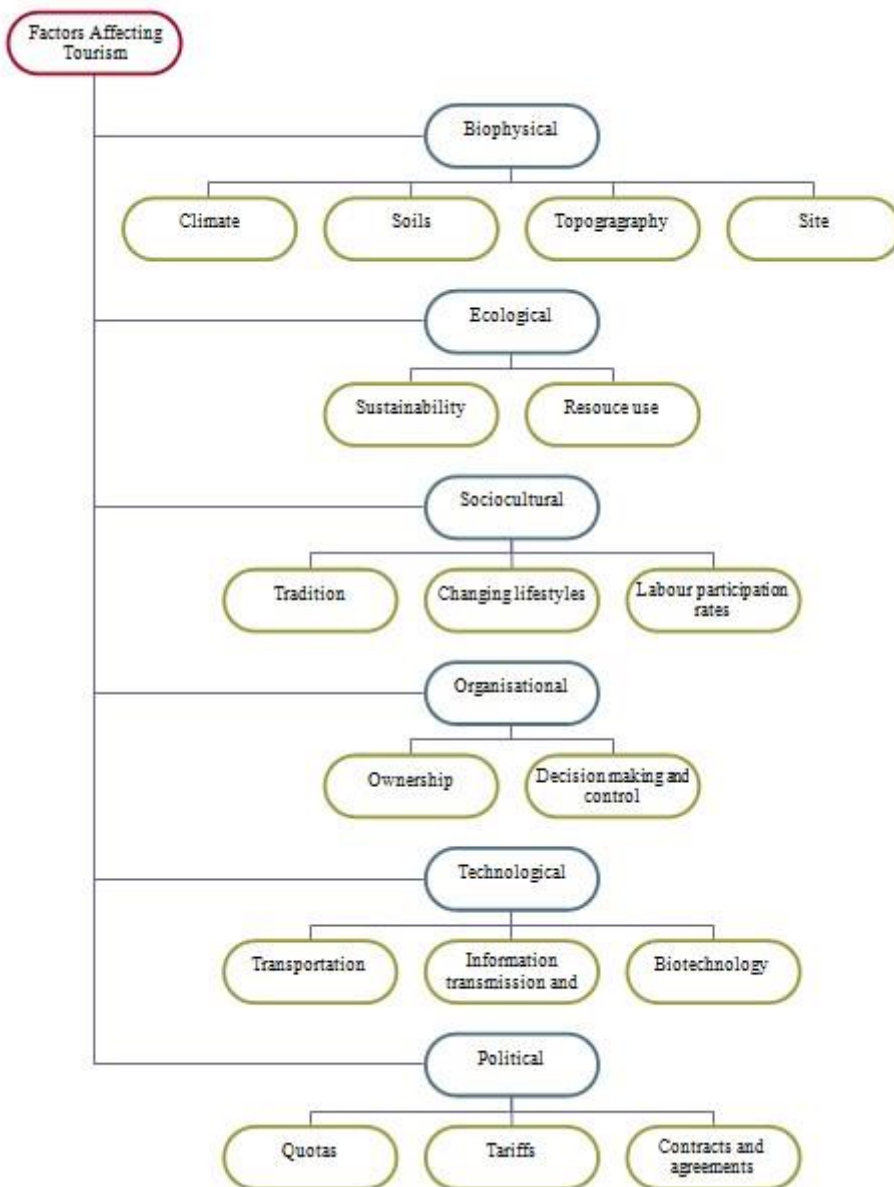
Tourism plays a vital role in the economy and cultural heritage of Rajasthan, India, with several significant implications:

- **Economic Contribution:** Tourism is a major driver of economic growth in Rajasthan, contributing significantly to the state's GDP and providing employment opportunities for millions of people. The tourism industry supports various sectors such as hospitality, transportation, handicrafts, and retail, thereby fostering economic development and income generation.
- **Employment Generation:** The tourism sector in Rajasthan is a significant source of employment, offering jobs to a diverse range of people, including tour guides, hotel staff, artisans, drivers, and service providers. It provides livelihood opportunities for both skilled and unskilled workers, contributing to poverty alleviation and socio-economic empowerment.
- **Infrastructure Development:** The growth of tourism in Rajasthan has led to the development of infrastructure such as hotels, resorts, restaurants, transportation networks, and tourist facilities. This infrastructure development not only enhances the tourist experience but also benefits local residents by improving access to basic amenities and services.
- **Cultural Preservation:** Tourism plays a crucial role in the preservation and promotion of Rajasthan's rich cultural heritage. Tourist attractions such as forts, palaces, temples, and museums receive conservation efforts and financial support, ensuring their preservation for future generations. Additionally, tourism encourages the continuation of traditional arts, crafts, music, and dance forms, thereby safeguarding Rajasthan's cultural identity.
- **Promotion of Heritage and Culture:** Tourism in Rajasthan serves as a platform for showcasing the state's heritage, culture, and traditions to domestic and international visitors. Cultural festivals, events, and heritage sites attract tourists interested in experiencing the vibrant culture and history of Rajasthan, contributing to intercultural exchange and understanding.
- **Revenue Generation:** Tourism generates significant revenue for the state government through various channels such as entry fees, taxes, permits, and licenses. This revenue can be reinvested in infrastructure development, conservation efforts, and community welfare initiatives, benefiting both tourists and local residents.
- **Diversification of Economy:** Tourism diversifies Rajasthan's economy by reducing dependence on traditional sectors such as agriculture and manufacturing. It creates opportunities for entrepreneurship and small-scale businesses, encouraging innovation and economic resilience.

- **International Relations and Diplomacy:** Tourism fosters international relations and diplomatic ties by promoting cultural exchange, understanding, and cooperation between Rajasthan and other countries. It enhances India's soft power and global reputation, attracting foreign investment, trade opportunities, and diplomatic engagements.

Overall, tourism in Rajasthan is of immense significance, contributing to economic growth, cultural preservation, employment generation, infrastructure development, and international relations. It plays a pivotal role in shaping the state's identity, prosperity, and sustainable development.

### Factors Affecting Tourism –





Important factors that affect the development of tourism are as follows:

- a. Environmental Factors : Good climate, Beautiful scenery, etc
- b. Socio-economic Factors : Accessibility, Accommodation, Amenities, Ancillary services, etc.
- c. Historical and cultural Factors
- d. Religious factors and Political Factors and other factors

Landscape resources , Seascapes , tourist resources, Culture, Peace, Security, Developed infrastructure, Visa facilities , Natural beautification, Attitude of the people affect tourism.

**Factors Affecting Tourism in Rajasthan** - Tourism in Rajasthan, India, is influenced by various factors, including:

- **Cultural Heritage:** Rajasthan is renowned for its rich cultural heritage, including palaces, forts, temples, and traditional art forms like puppetry and folk music. The preservation and promotion of these cultural assets significantly impact tourism.
- **Historical Monuments:** The state is home to several UNESCO World Heritage Sites such as the Hill Forts of Rajasthan, Jantar Mantar, and Keoladeo National Park. These historical monuments attract tourists interested in history, architecture, and archaeology.
- **Desert Tourism:** The Thar Desert in Rajasthan offers unique experiences such as desert safaris, camel rides, and camping under the stars. The promotion of desert tourism and eco-friendly practices in these areas is crucial for sustaining tourism.
- **Hospitality and Infrastructure:** The availability of quality accommodations, transportation facilities, and tourist amenities play a vital role in attracting and retaining visitors. Investments in hospitality infrastructure, including hotels, resorts, and transportation networks, can enhance the tourist experience.
- **Festivals and Events:** Rajasthan hosts various cultural festivals and events throughout the year, such as the Pushkar Camel Fair, Jaipur Literature Festival, and Desert Festival. These events draw domestic and international tourists, contributing to the state's tourism economy.
- **Marketing and Promotion:** Effective marketing strategies, both domestically and internationally, help in showcasing Rajasthan's tourism potential. Collaborations with travel agencies, online platforms, and government initiatives like "Incredible India" aid in reaching a broader audience.
- **Political Stability and Safety:** Political stability and safety concerns significantly influence tourists' decisions to visit a destination. Ensuring safety and security for tourists through effective law enforcement and infrastructure development is crucial for tourism growth.
- **Environmental Sustainability:** Sustainable tourism practices, including conservation of natural resources, wildlife protection, and responsible waste management, are essential for preserving Rajasthan's natural beauty and biodiversity.

- **Connectivity:** Accessibility through air, rail, and road networks is critical for tourism development. Improving connectivity to major tourist destinations within Rajasthan and with other parts of India enhances accessibility for tourists.
- **Economic Factors:** Economic stability, exchange rates, and disposable income levels influence people's ability to travel. Affordable tourism packages and diverse accommodation options cater to various budget segments, making Rajasthan an attractive destination for tourists from different socio-economic backgrounds.

**Types of Tourism** - Tourism is a vast and diverse industry that has been growing steadily over the years. It is a significant contributor to the global economy, and its impact is felt across various sectors. Tourism can be defined as the act of travelling for entertainment, pleasure or business purposes. It involves visiting places of interest, exploring new cultures, and experiencing different types of tourism, and each has its unique characteristics and attractions. Cultural tourism is one of the most common types of tourism, and it involves visiting places of historical and cultural significance. Eco-tourism is a type of tourism that focuses on the conservation of natural resources and the promotion of sustainable tourism. Health tourism is another type of tourism that involves travelling to destinations for medical treatment or wellness purposes

In Rajasthan, as in many other destinations, various types of tourism cater to diverse interests and preferences of travellers. Here are some prominent types of tourism in Rajasthan:

- **Heritage Tourism:** Rajasthan is renowned for its rich heritage, including majestic forts, palaces, temples, and historical sites. Heritage tourism attracts visitors interested in exploring the architectural marvels, learning about the region's history, and experiencing the grandeur of Rajasthan's royal past.
- **Cultural Tourism:** Rajasthan's vibrant culture, colorful festivals, traditional music and dance, and local customs and traditions make it a popular destination for cultural tourism. Travelers immerse themselves in the cultural richness of Rajasthan by attending festivals, visiting cultural centers, and interacting with local communities.
- **Desert Tourism:** The Thar Desert in Rajasthan offers unique experiences such as camel safaris, desert camping, and cultural performances. Desert tourism allows visitors to explore the vast desert landscape, experience desert life, and witness breath-taking sunsets over the sand dunes.
- **Wildlife Tourism:** Rajasthan is home to several wildlife sanctuaries and national parks, including Ranthambore National Park, Sariska Tiger Reserve, and Keoladeo National Park. Wildlife tourism attracts nature enthusiasts and wildlife lovers who come to spot tigers, leopards, birds, and other wildlife species in their natural habitats.
- **Adventure Tourism:** Rajasthan offers various adventure activities such as hot air ballooning, zip-lining, trekking, and parasailing. Adventure tourism appeals to thrill-seekers and adrenaline junkies looking for unique and adventurous experiences in the diverse landscapes of Rajasthan.

- **Religious Tourism:** Rajasthan has numerous sacred sites, temples, and pilgrimage destinations that attract religious pilgrims and spiritual seekers. Religious tourism allows visitors to explore the spiritual heritage of Rajasthan, participate in religious rituals, and seek blessings at revered shrines.
- **Rural Tourism:** Rural tourism offers travellers an opportunity to experience rural life, interact with local villagers, and learn about traditional farming practices and handicrafts. Rural tourism initiatives in Rajasthan promote sustainable tourism development and empower rural communities economically and socially.
- **Luxury Tourism:** Rajasthan is known for its luxurious heritage hotels, palaces, and resorts that offer royal hospitality and opulent experiences. Luxury tourism caters to high-end travellers seeking exclusive accommodations, personalized services, and extravagant experiences in the lap of luxury.
- **Wellness Tourism:** Wellness tourism in Rajasthan focuses on rejuvenation, relaxation, and holistic healing. Travellers can indulge in spa treatments, yoga retreats, Ayurvedic therapies, and wellness workshops in serene and tranquil settings across Rajasthan.
- **Culinary Tourism:** Rajasthan's rich culinary heritage and traditional cuisine attract food enthusiasts and culinary travellers. Culinary tourism allows visitors to savour authentic Rajasthani dishes, explore local food markets, and participate in cooking classes to learn the art of Rajasthani cooking.

These various types of tourism contribute to the diverse tourism landscape of Rajasthan, offering travellers a wide range of experiences to suit their interests and preferences.

### **Tourism season in Rajasthan**

In Rajasthan, the tourism season typically peaks during the winter months, from October to March. This period experiences favourable weather conditions, with pleasant temperatures ranging from around 10°C to 25°C (50°F to 77°F), making it ideal for sightseeing and outdoor activities. The monsoon season, from July to September, also attracts some tourists, especially to witness the lush greenery and enjoy the occasional rainfall. However, the summer months, from April to June, can be extremely hot, with temperatures soaring above 40°C (104°F) in many parts of the state, which tends to deter tourism activity during this time. Overall, the winter season is the most popular time for tourism in Rajasthan, drawing visitors from both within India and around the world. These months are also considered to be the best time of year to visit Rajasthan for sightseeing as the temperature during the day becomes moderately low, making it comfortable to explore the famous attractions.

The best season to visit Rajasthan other than winters is the monsoons. For the honeymoon months from July to September (Monsoon) is the best time, when the arid and barren landscape turns into a lush green haven. This is not the prime season, so you can get a huge discount on hotels and flights. January is considered to be the best month to visit Rajasthan to attend the festivities as various events are celebrated in the state, such as the Camel Festival, Desert Festival and also the world famous Jaipur literature festival.

## **Best Time to Visit Rajasthan-**

### **- Best Time for Sightseeing in Rajasthan-**

If you're looking for the best time of year to visit **Rajasthan** for sightseeing, then October to March (Winter) should be your ideal choice as the weather becomes quite pleasant, giving you respite from the scorching heat that usually prevails in Rajasthan. The temperature during winters mostly hovers between a maximum of 33°C and a minimum of 2°C. If you're visiting Rajasthan during the peak season, then the temperature may even fall to 0 degrees Celsius. During these months, the temperature during the day becomes moderately low, making it comfortable to explore the famous attractions without the fear of having heat rashes. If you're looking to visit the deserts, then you should consider the winters as during the other months, the temperature is exceptionally humid and scorching, making it difficult to explore the golden dunes. Mandawa, Ranakpur, and Bundi are some of the popular places in Rajasthan that you must visit during winters. You should visit Bikaner during January as it turns into a spiritual city during this month. Bikaner Camel Festival is celebrated in Bikaner during January that offers varied activities like a camel beauty pageant, fur cutting competition, camel acrobatics, and camel-milking competition. During winters, many festivals are also held, such as the Pushkar Mela in November and Abhaneri Festival, and Navaratri in October.

### **- Best Time to visit National Parks in Rajasthan-**

The winter season (October and March) is considered to be the best time to visit national parks in Rajasthan due to the pleasant weather and less humidity in the air. During winters, the temperature ranges between 10°C and 30°C, making it ideal for enjoying jungle safaris and camping amidst the wilderness of these parks. During this season, diverse species of animals can be seen roaming in broad daylight under the sun. Many of the zones of the Popular National Parks like Ranthambore National Park, Bharatpur National Park, and Sariska Wildlife Sanctuary remain closed during monsoon. During summers, the mercury rises to 40 degrees Celsius, making it difficult to explore the jungles. It is therefore recommended to visit the national parks during winters to enjoy flora and fauna to the fullest and to create tons of amazing memories down your memory lane. Winters are also considered to be the best time to see tigers basking under the sun in these national parks. Another popular reason why winters are considered to be the best season to visit Rajasthan is because the monsoon gets over, and therefore the parks remain green, and the wildlife is abundant. You can also spot many migratory birds during winters in these national parks.

### **- Best Time for Shopping in Rajasthan-**

If you wish to avoid the crowd and get great discounts and offers while shopping in Rajasthan, then July to September is considered to be the best time for shopping over here. During these months, most tourists avoid visiting the colourful state of Rajasthan, and hence you can buy your favourite stuff at the famous shopping halts without the usual hustle and bustle. You can also enjoy your favourite kulhad-Lassi and Ice cream while shopping at the popular markets like Bapu Bazaar, Nehru Bazar, and Sadar Bazar to get some respite from the hot and humid weather. The only con is the scorching heat as the temperature rises to 45 degrees

Celsius, making it difficult to explore the markets in the daytime. Another interesting reason why summers are considered to be the best time of year to visit Rajasthan for shopping is that since this is the hottest month and the sale is low, the sellers usually offer great discounts on the items.

### **- Best Time for Festivals in Rajasthan-**

November and January is considered to be the best time to visit Rajasthan to attend famous festivals. During this time of the year, Rajasthan turns into a hotspot of festivities and music, dance, puppet shows, and various entertaining activities can be enjoyed during these events.

In January, Camel Festival is celebrated in Bikaner, which offers a varied range of activities, including camel acrobatics, camel beauty pageant, fur cutting competition, best breed competition, and camel-milking competition. During January, Desert Festival happens in Jaisalmer, attracting art lovers from all across the globe to witness Rajasthani art, making it the best month to visit Rajasthan. You can also attend the Nagaur Festival, which is a three to four-day-long festival during January. People from around the globe gather to trade cattle and enjoy activities like Camel Racing, Tug of War, etc. Kumbhalgarh festival, is also famous.

Pushkar Mela is another grand festival that is celebrated in Pushkar during October or November, during which many entertaining activities such as Rajasthani dance, musical performances, puppet shows, and jalebi eating competitions are organized. The fun, excitement, and endless entertainment during these events is something that each one must experience by visiting Rajasthan during November and January.

### **Domestic Tourist in Rajasthan**

Domestic tourism plays a significant role in Rajasthan's tourism industry, with millions of Indian tourists visiting the state each year. There are several reasons why domestic tourists are drawn to Rajasthan:

- **Cultural Heritage:** Rajasthan boasts a rich cultural heritage, including magnificent palaces, forts, temples, and vibrant traditional arts and crafts. Domestic tourists are often eager to explore these historical and cultural landmarks, such as the Amber Fort in Jaipur, Mehrangarh Fort in Jodhpur, and Hawa Mahal in Jaipur.
- **Festivals and Events:** Rajasthan hosts numerous festivals and events throughout the year, celebrating its cultural diversity and traditions. Events like the Pushkar Camel Fair, Jaipur Literature Festival, and Desert Festival attract domestic tourists from various parts of India who are keen to experience the state's vibrant culture and festivities.
- **Religious Tourism:** Rajasthan is home to several sacred sites and pilgrimage destinations, including the Brahma Temple in Pushkar, the Karni Mata Temple in Bikaner, and the Dilwara Temples in Mount Abu. Domestic tourists, especially those with religious inclinations, visit these sites for spiritual fulfillment and blessings.
- **Adventure and Wildlife Tourism:** Rajasthan offers opportunities for adventure and wildlife enthusiasts. Tourists can enjoy activities such as camel safaris in the Thar Desert, tiger safaris in Ranthambhore

National Park, and bird watching in Kevladev National Park. These experiences attract nature lovers and adventure seekers from across India.

- **Shopping:** Rajasthan is famous for its vibrant markets and shopping experiences. Domestic tourists often visit places like Jaipur's Johari Bazaar and Jodhpur's Sardar Market to purchase traditional Rajasthani handicrafts, textiles, jewellery, and souvenirs.
- **Cuisine:** Rajasthan's cuisine is another draw for domestic tourists. Traditional Rajasthani dishes like dal-baati-churma, gatte-ki-sabzi, and laalmaas are popular among food enthusiasts. Domestic tourists often explore local eateries and indulge in Rajasthani culinary delights during their visit.
- **Accessibility and Connectivity:** Rajasthan is well-connected by road, rail, and air to major cities across India. This accessibility makes it convenient for domestic tourists to travel to and explore various destinations within the state.

Overall, domestic tourism in Rajasthan is driven by the state's rich cultural heritage, diverse experiences, accessibility, and the desire of Indian travellers to explore and experience the beauty and uniqueness of their own country.

### Foreign Tourist in Rajasthan

Foreign tourists also play a significant role in Rajasthan's tourism industry, contributing to the state's economy and cultural exchange. There are several reasons why Rajasthan attracts foreign tourists:

- **Cultural Heritage:** Rajasthan's rich cultural heritage, including its majestic forts, palaces, temples, and vibrant traditions, fascinates foreign tourists. Landmarks such as the Amber Fort, City Palace, and Mehrangarh Fort showcase the state's architectural and historical grandeur.
- **Festivals and Events:** Foreign tourists are drawn to Rajasthan's colorful festivals and events, such as the Pushkar Camel Fair, Jaipur Literature Festival, and Desert Festival. These events offer unique cultural experiences and insights into Rajasthan's rich traditions.
- **Desert Tourism:** The Thar Desert's unique landscape and experiences like camel safaris, desert camping, and cultural performances appeal to foreign tourists seeking adventure and authentic cultural encounters.
- **Luxury Tourism:** Rajasthan offers luxurious accommodations in heritage hotels, palaces, and resorts, providing foreign tourists with an opportunity to experience royal hospitality and opulent lifestyles reminiscent of the bygone era of maharajas and maharanis.
- **Arts and Crafts:** Rajasthan is renowned for its exquisite handicrafts, textiles, jewelry, and artwork. Foreign tourists often visit local markets and artisan villages to purchase authentic Rajasthani souvenirs and handicrafts.
- **Wildlife Tourism:** Rajasthan is home to several wildlife sanctuaries and national parks, including Ranthambore National Park and Keoladeo National Park, where tourists can spot tigers, leopards, birds, and other wildlife species in their natural habitats.

- **Spiritual Tourism:** Rajasthan has numerous sacred sites and pilgrimage destinations that attract foreign tourists interested in spirituality and religious traditions. Places like the Brahma Temple in Pushkar and the Jain temples in Mount Abu are popular among foreign visitors seeking spiritual experiences.
- **Photography and Filming:** The picturesque landscapes, vibrant culture, and architectural marvels of Rajasthan make it a favourite destination for photographers, filmmakers, and artists from around the world.
- Overall, Rajasthan's charm, hospitality, diverse experiences, and cultural richness make it a magnet for foreign tourists seeking to immerse themselves in the heritage and beauty of India's largest state

## **Problems of Tourism –**

Top challenges confronting tourism are taxation, travel marketing, infrastructure issues, and security and cross border regulations. Too many tourism destinations are not prepared for visitors. Tourists or travellers can at times deem travel marketing to be exaggerated. Another major challenge that the tourism industry faces is the fluctuating rates and cost inflation.

## **Problems of Tourism in Rajasthan**

While tourism in Rajasthan brings significant economic benefits and cultural exchange, it also faces several challenges:

- **Seasonal Dependency:** Tourism in Rajasthan is highly seasonal, with the majority of tourists visiting during the winter months. This seasonality can lead to fluctuations in revenue and employment opportunities, making it challenging for businesses to sustain themselves throughout the year.
- **Infrastructure Development:** Despite improvements in recent years, there is still a need for further development of infrastructure, including roads, transportation networks, sanitation facilities, and waste management systems, to accommodate the growing number of tourists and ensure their comfort and safety.
- **Environmental Degradation:** Over-tourism and inadequate waste management practices can lead to environmental degradation, including pollution of water bodies, degradation of natural habitats, and littering in tourist destinations. Sustainable tourism practices are crucial to mitigate these environmental impacts.
- **Cultural Commodification:** The commercialization of culture and heritage sites can lead to the commodification of local traditions and the loss of authenticity. Balancing tourism development with the preservation of cultural identity and integrity is essential to sustain Rajasthan's unique cultural heritage.
- **Water Scarcity:** Rajasthan is a water-stressed region, and the influx of tourists exacerbates water scarcity issues, especially in popular tourist destinations. Sustainable water management practices are needed to ensure the availability of water for both residents and tourists.

- **Pressure on Wildlife:** Wildlife tourism in Rajasthan, particularly in national parks like Ranthambore, can put pressure on fragile ecosystems and disrupt wildlife habitats. Responsible tourism practices, such as limiting tourist numbers and adhering to wildlife viewing guidelines, are necessary to minimize the impact on wildlife.
- **Social and Economic Disparities:** While tourism brings economic opportunities, it can also exacerbate social and economic disparities within local communities. Ensuring that tourism benefits are equitably distributed among residents, including marginalized communities, is essential for inclusive and sustainable tourism development.
- **Cultural Sensitivity and Respect:** Foreign tourists may sometimes lack awareness of local customs, traditions, and cultural sensitivities, leading to instances of cultural disrespect or misunderstanding. Cultural sensitivity training for tourists and efforts to promote intercultural understanding can help mitigate these challenges. Addressing these issues requires collaboration between government authorities, local communities, businesses, and tourists to ensure that tourism in Rajasthan is sustainable, responsible, and beneficial for all stakeholders involved.

### **Attractions of tourism in Rajasthan**

Rajasthan, a state located in the northwest of India, is renowned for its rich history, vibrant culture, majestic palaces, and stunning landscapes. Here are some of the top attractions that draw tourists to Rajasthan:

- **Palaces and Forts**

#### **1. Lake Palace, Udaipur**

The Lake Palace was built in 1743-1746 during the reign of Maharaja Jagat Singh II who was the 62nd successor of the royal family of Mewar. This palace was built to serve as the summer palace and was originally named after its founder as Jagniwas. The palace complex is spread across an area of four acres in the Jagniwas Island located in the Lake Pichola. The palace was constructed as east facing so that the members of the royal family could pray to the Sun God at the crack of the dawn. The flooring of the palace is done with black and white marbles with its walls being adorned by colorful arabesques in their best forms. This island played an important role during the mutiny of 1847, as it provided shelter to several European families who fled from Nimach. The then ruler, Maharaja Swarrop Singh did everything to protect his guests by destroying all the boats of the town so that the rebels couldn't reach the island. It was later when the building of the palace started deteriorating. It was decided by the managing committee to turn it into a hotel, so that by its revenue the palace could be well maintained. Later in 1971 the palace hotel was taken over by the Taj Hotels and Resorts Palaces. They added seventy five more rooms to the original hotels and restored it to look more opulent and luxurious. At present the hotel has eighty three rooms and is voted as one of the most romantic palaces of the country.

#### **2. Neemrana Fort Palace, Alwar**



Neemrana Fort was once one of the most royal forts in the country. The fort and palace known for being located on a high hillock, offers magnificent panoramic views of the city of Alwar. This stunningly beautiful palace is now recognised for serving as a heritage hotel for all those who seek to enjoy their trip to Alwar. Just as the way kings and royal family members did. Built by Raja Dup Raj in 1467, the palace was converted into a hotel in 1986 and is one of the oldest heritage resort hotel in the country. The beautiful palace derives its name from Local chieftain, NimolaMeo, who was known for its bravery. The fort is one of the best ways to enjoy a luxurious trip to the city and acquaint oneself to the culture of Rajasthan.

### **3. Uda Vilas Palace, Udaipur**

Udaipur is considered as the royal sojourn to the lake city and consists of various Rajasthan Palaces and Forts of which the Uda Villas Palace is one of the famous one. Situated on the banks of Lake Pichola, the Udaivillas Palace is a magnificent building which is known for its traditional and flamboyant style of architecture and artistic designs. The palace is adorned with an array of beautiful fountains, huge courtyards and succulent gardens, which would mesmerize you to the very core of your heart. This palace is now converted into a heritage hotel that is run by the Oberoi Group of Hotels. It is ranked as the best hotel in Asia and the fifth best in the world. Each and every guest of the hotel is treated in a royal manner and served by some of the chefs whose predecessors have served as a chef to the royal family. The Udaivillas palace is located twenty seven kilometres from the International Airport and eight kilometres from the nearby railway station.

### **4. City Palace, Udaipur**

Built by Maharaja Udaï Singh, this palace was setup as the capital of the Sisodia Rajpur clan. The City Palace is basically a palace complex that comprises of several other palaces within its periphery. This palace is built in a very flamboyant style and is located on the east banks of the Lake Pichola. The structure is considered to be one of the largest Palaces in Rajasthan, which is quite unique of its type. Similar to most of the Palaces in Rajasthan this palace too reflects an amalgamation of Rajput and Mughal Style of architecture. The City Palace is built on hilltop so as to provide a panoramic view of whole city along with its surroundings such as the Lake Palace, Jag Mandir, Monsoon Palace and the Neemach Mata Mandir. The best trivia about this place is that the Lake and the Monsoon Palaces were used in the filming of the very famous James Bond movie “Octopussy”. Owing to the great publicity and the popularity of the City Palace and its surroundings, Udaipur is also known as the “Venice of the East”.

### **5. Hawa Mahal, Jaipur**

Designed in the form of the crown of Krishna, the striking HawaMahal was built by Maharaja Sawai Pratap Singh in 1799 and is one among the most famous palaces in Rajasthan. This palace is located in the heart of the city of Jaipur and is built of superior quality red bricks and sandstone. The exterior of the palace is basically a five storey building, which looks similar to the honeycomb of the beehives because of its nine hundred and fifty three small windows that are known as the Jharokhas. The name Hawa Mahal stands for the “Palace of Winds”, which very much justifies it perfectly created airy structure. It has been designed in such a

manner that creates an air conditioning effect inside the palace using the Venturi Effect. Apart from this, the intricate structure of the palace also served as a veil that allowed the female members of the royal family to observe the everyday ongoing of the streets below without being seen, as they had to follow the strict purdah or the face covering system. The Hawa Mahal forms the part of the City Palace and extends up to Zenana, the harem chambers. The best time to view this palace is early in the morning since its red colour becomes extremely vivid in the soft glow of the morning sun.

## **6. Jal Mahal Palace, Jaipur**

The Jal Mahal Palace, Jaipur is considered as an absolute beauty constructed in the Rajput and Mughal style architecture. As its names states the palace is a water palace that is situated in the midst of the beautiful Man Sagar Lake. The palace and lake has undergone lots of restoration of process with the last one being in the 18th century by Maharaja Jai Singh II of Amber. In this process the lake was enlarged, drains were diverted and tons of silt was dredged from its bottom. Similar to the Hawa Mahal, the palace is a five storey building in which four of its floors remain underwater during the times when the lake is full. The terrace of palace has a beautiful garden along with having semi octagonal towers with elegant cupola located at each of the four corners of the palace. Since the development of the water treatment system of the lake and the regeneration of the surrounding wetlands, five nestling islands have been created in order to attract various species of migratory birds.

## **7. Rambagh Palace, Jaipur**

A very interesting history runs behind the building of this beautiful palace, which was once the home of the Maharaja of Jaipur. Initially, the first building of the palace was built as garden house in 1835, which was later converted into a hunting lodge by Maharaja Sawai Madho Singh since this palace was located in the midst of thick forest. It was later in the early 20th century that this hunting lodge was expanded into a palace. However after the independence of India, this palace was taken over by the Indian Government and by 1950s the royal family felt that the upkeep of the palace as well as its surrounding is becoming very costly. This lead to their decision of turning it into a heritage hotel in 1957. This hotel is run by the Taj Group of Hotels and is considered to be one of the best and most luxurious hotels in the world. Due to its magnificent structure, amazing architecture and intricate designing this palace is very famous amongst tourist who visit this region, with most of them dreaming of staying in this hotel to experience its opulence and luxury.

## **8. Jag Mandir Palace, Udaipur**

Built in the 17th century, the Jag mandir Palace, today, is all set to serve the guests of 21st century. This vintage royal palace is now renovated with all day cafes, world class restaurants, bar, spas and cozy accommodations, giving its guests the royal experience in the modern surroundings. To reach the Jag mandir Island Palace, the guests have to be ferried, as it is located at the center of the lake. The mesmerizing elegance of Jag mandir Palace has given it a beautiful name, viz. "Swarg Ki Vatika," or

"Garden of Heaven."The resort has seven decorated suites equipped with all the modern amenities, giving its guests a perfect blend of high-tech services in an anciently designed architecture.

### **9. City Palace, Jaipur**

Jaipur City Palace is one of the central attractions of the city due to its magnanimous complex and the fact that it is still a royal residence. Similar to the human heart this palace is located slightly south west of the centre of the city and hence it is considered to be the heart of Jaipur. The palace complex consists of several other building such as Mubrak Mahal, Chandra Mahal (though this part of the palace houses a museum, most of its part is still a royal residence), Maharani Palace, Mukut Mahal, Diwan-i-Khas, Diwan-i-Aam, Bhaggi Khana and Govind Dev Ji Temple. The palace complex consists of a huge inner courtyard known by the name of Pritam Niwas Chowk. This courtyard has four gates, representing the four seasons and Hindu Gods. The palace was constructed in between 1729-1732 by Sawai Jai Singh II and was designed with an amalgamation of Rajput, Mughal and European style architecture. It is open for tourist visits all days of the week throughout the year except for some particular holidays such as Holi, Diwali and a few more.

### **10. Umaid Bhawan Palace, Jodhpur**

When it comes to Palaces and Forts in Rajasthan, the Umaid Bhawan Palace is one of the largest and the most visited one. Constructed in 1929 by the Maharaja Umaid Singh, this palace was originally built in order to provide employment to the thousands of people of this region suffering from famine. Since then, the palace has served as the home to the royal family. The palace was initially known as the Chittar Palace as it was located on the Chittar Hill, the highest point in Jodhpur. It is divided into three parts of which one part is a luxury heritage Taj Palace Hotel that came into existence in 1972. Out of the other two parts, one serves as the residence to the current members of the royal family headed by Maharaja of Jodhpur Gaj Singh and the other part is a museum, which displays the belongings and the 20th century history of the Jodhpur Royal Family. The palace is counted as one of the world's largest private residences and has three hundred and twenty seven rooms. It also has a gallery that features the most exotic collection of automobiles owned by the royal family.

### **11. Bundi Palace, Bundi**

A prime attraction in the city of Bundi, Bundi Palace is known for being close to the hillside of Taragarh Fort. This stunningly attractive fort is popular for its lavish murals and frescoes, known for their traditional value. The palace, currently open to the public, showcases the lives and times of people living in Bundi. It is located in vicinity to a number of other palaces and forts, including the popular Star Fort, the SukhMahal and several artificial lakes that provide respite in the heat and deserts of Rajasthan. The stunningly attractive palace is also known for its stepwells that have made water accessible during the period of crises.

### **12. Amber Palace, Jaipur**

Amber Palace is one of the principal tourist destinations of the state of Rajasthan region especially for the people who are traveling to Jaipur. Situated on a high hill this beautiful palace is located in the Amer town which is approximately eleven kilometre from the city of Jaipur. This palace was built using red sandstone and

marble during the reign of Raja Man Singh I who was the Kacchwaha King of Amber. The Amber fort overlooks the beautiful Maota Lake and has large gates along with cobbled paths. The architectural marvel of the palace can be observed by looking at its four level layout, Diwan-i-Khas, Diwan-i-Aam, Sheesh Mahal and Sukh Niwas, with each of them having a courtyard. Now Sukh Niwas has special attraction that the climate around it is created artificially with the help of water cascades built around the palace. The palace complex also has a Sila Devi Temple, the idol of which was gifted to Raja Man Singh after he had defeated Raja of Jessore in 1604. Due to its strong cultural heritage and architectural beauty defining the artistic style of Hindu elements, this place witnesses an average footfall of five thousand visitors on daily basis (according to the reports from the Superintendent of Department of Archaeology and Museums).

### **13. Gorbandh Palace, Jaisalmer**

The Gorbandh Palace is located in a fort-inspired building amidst the sand dunes in the mesmerizing city of Jaisalmer. In this lavish resort, you can find all the modern amenities housed in the royal architectural building. From the spacious rooms and suites to spas, swimming pools and what not. Its world-class restaurants offer some of the most authentic and traditional Rajasthani cuisines to its guests. Moreover, some of the major tourist destinations like Jain Temple, Folklore Museum, etc. are just a walk away from the resort.

### **14. Sariska Palace, Alwar**

Built in the 19th century, the Sariska Palace in Alwar was the creation of Maharaja of Alwar. Nestled amidst the mesmerizing Arravalli Ranges, the Sariska Palace is sprawled across 100 acres. It gives the top notch services to its customers and has more than 80 royal rooms. Some of the major categories of rooms include Maharaja Jai Singh Superior Suite, Maharaja Jai Singh Suite, Royal Chambers Superior Suite, Royal Chambers Deluxe and many more. Apart from the royal rooms, there are myriads of facilities some of which include swimming pool, spa and fitness arrangements, multi-cuisine restaurants, tennis court and many more.

### **15. Deeg Palace, Bharatpur**

Once the capital of Jat Kings, the Deeg Palace is one of the major tourist destinations in Rajasthan. It is famously known as the site for a battle between the combined Mughal and Maratha Army and the Jats with the army of more than 80,000 men. The palaces of Delhi and Agra, depicting the magnificent Mughal architecture, inspired the design of Deeg Palace. Its gardens are the inspiration of Mughal Charbagh.

### **16. Udai Bilas Palace, Dungarpur**

The Udai Bilas Palace is located amidst the blue waters of Gaibsagar Lake in the city of Dungarpur, a city, which was founded around 13th century. The furnishing of Udai Bilas Palace highlights the art-deco style of 20th century, showcasing English fixtures inside the marble bathrooms, banquet hall that has crystal chandeliers and hunting trophies. The palace has turned into a lavish resort, which has some world-class

facilities like exotic swimming pool, boating, gymnasium, heated Jacuzzi, and many more. Talking about the rooms, the palace has around 20 spacious bedrooms, which include three single bedrooms and seven double bedrooms, and ten suites.

### **17. Samode Palace, Jaipur**

Built by the MahaSaheb of Amber, Samode Palace is a majestic monument attracting a number people every year. It has been made a hotel now and provides amazing services to its guests. One will love staying at the Samode Palace because along with the palace, the Samode Haveli and SamodeBagh are also there. The Samode Palace has an open dining area. It also has a swimming pool for its guests. One can relax near the pool and enjoy the scenic view of the surrounding from there. The Samode Palace is the perfect place to visit if one wants to experience the Rajasthani culture and tradition in its true sense.

### **18. Junagarh Palace, Bikaner**

The Junagarh Palace was built in the 15th century. It was originally called the Chintamani Fort and was later renamed in the early 20th century to the Junagarh Palace. This palace is the pride of Bikaner and is the main tourist attraction of the city. The city Bikaner, has been built around this palace. The architecture of the Junagarh Palace is marvellous and is lauded all over the country. Once one enters the palace, they feel the aura of royalty resonated by the palace. The Junagarh Palace is amongst the Rajasthan forts and palaces. It is the perfect place to visit if one wants to experience the culture of Bikaner.

## **Best Forts of Rajasthan**

### **1. Amber Fort, Jaipur**

A beautiful edifice that has enchanted people from all over the world, Amber Fort is one the Forts of Rajasthan that is known for its stunning structural beauty and aesthetic ambiance. Amber Fort was designed to have large ramparts, paths that are cobbled along with a series of gates and four level layout plans that has been built with red sandstone and marble. The fort has been designed in such a manner that it overlooks the Maota Lake, which gives it an attractive reflection. One of the prime Rajasthan Palaces and Forts, this edifice includes a hall for public audience, a hall for private audience, a mirror palace, and a cool living area. It features a controlled climate environment, with artificially created winds that coolly move above the water cascade. The palace was also called as the Hill of eagles as it is situated in the Aravalli range of Hills.

### **2. Mehrangarh Fort, Jodhpur**

Enclosed in thick walls, this is one the largest forts in India and was designed for keeping the army and king safe from attacks. Mehrangarh Fort in the city of Jodhpur has been designed to feature intricate detailing, because of its which it has carvings and expansive courtyards that create a cool environment in the otherwise hot deserts of Rajasthan. The imprints of canon ball hit by armies attacking Jodhpur can be still witnessed on the second gate. Overall, the place has seven gates, which are known for having their own, unique

historical significance. Currently, the fort houses one of the most well stocked museums in the country and features palanquins of the queens, including the popular domed gilt palanquin along costumes from the bygone era, arms and paintings, decorative embellishment in its period room. Popular movies such as The Dark Knight Rises have been shot here. In fact, Bruce Wayne was shown imprisoned in the prison of this palace and when he emerges out of the prison, the glimpse of Mehrangarh Fort can be seen in vicinity.

### **3. Jaigarh Fort, Jaipur**

Along with Amber Fort, this is one of the major Forts of Rajasthan, which is characterized by its stunning ramparts, edifices as well as rugged design. Similar to the Amber Fort, this fort features beautiful gardens nestled in red sandstone. Designed to protect Jai Singh II, the then ruler of Jaipur in 1726, the Rajasthan fort has a length of three kilometres and a width of one kilometre. It is known for its canon called Jaivana, which was then the largest canon on wheels.

The palace has well-tended gardens that control the overall temperature of the fort and is situated on the Hill of Eagles or the CheelKaTeela of the Aravalli Range. This stunningly attractive edifice is connected with Amber Fort through a series of subterranean passages. Currently, it has an armoury and a museum and is known for being the Victory Fort of Jai Singh.

### **4. Nahargarh Fort, Jaipur**

Overlooking the pink city of Jaipur lays a fort so beautiful that it can take your breath away. Created in 1734 by the Maharaja of Jaipur, Sawai Jai Singh II, this beautiful fort once served as the retreat for the royal family.

Known as one of the major Rajasthan Palaces and Forts, this is one of that Forts of Rajasthan that is endowed with architectural beauty and provides panoramic views of the city. The fort never came into attach during the course of history and saw several treaties, especially between the Maharaja of Jaipur and the Marathas.

This fort was also known for housing Sawai Ram Singh, the then king of Jaipur during the Indian uprising of 1857. The fort is also known for the filming of Rang De Basanti, a popular Indian movie. In Nahargarh Fort, several Bhawans, rooms and suites were built for the queens, each one of them linked through a way of corridors that still feature delicate frescos.

### **5. Kumbhalgarh Fort near Udaipur**

The birthplace of Indian hero, Maharana Pratap, Kumbhalgarh is the Fort known for being one of the most important Rajasthan Palaces and Forts after the Fort of Chittorgarh. Open for public, the fort is known for its beautiful light show which is lit for a while every evening. Situated on a hilltop 1100 meters above the sea level, this fort has seven fortified gateways and over three hundred and sixty temples within. While three hundred of these temples are of Jain lineage, the other sixty are for Hindus. This place appears stunningly attractive because of the sand dunes of the Thar Desert. Built by the Kumbha dynasty, the fort feature extensively beautiful gates, with one of them called Hanuman Pol, which enshrines the image of Lord

Hanumana. It also features three palaces known as the Kumbha Palace, The Birth place of Maharana Pratap and BadalMahal.

## **6. Chittor Fort, Chittorgarh**

This is one of the major Forts of Rajasthan and is known to be one of the grandest in the country. The largest fort in India, Chittorgarh Fort is popular for its architecture, ramparts and ramifications that represent the quintessence of rulers and their patriotism, courage and chivalry. Built in the capital of Mewar, called Chittaur, this fort exemplifies the level of loyalty and valiance that rulers of Sisodia kingdom and their women and children had for Mewar. The fort is known for its history of bloodshed, especially when rulers, soldiers and their wife considered death as a more viable option than facing dishonour and surrendering themselves to the foreign rulers. Situated above the plains of valley drained by the river Berach, this fort is known for its historical palaces, stunning gates and major towers. The structure has been one of the pivotal backdrops of several painters, writers and poets who have drawn imagination through the series of activities that the fort had seen over a period of time. The fort was sacked three times, is known for the valiancy of 13000 ladies and children who ended their lives at the battle of Chittorgarh fort, wherein the queen of Rana Rattan Singh, Rani Padmini first laid her life after her husband was killed in 1303 battle. The fort has eighty four water bodies (only twenty two now) and features four palaces.

## **7. Jaisalmer Fort, Jaisalmer**

Known as one of the largest forts in the world, Jaisalmer Fort is famous for its history that includes trades with countries like Egypt, Africa, Arabia and Persia. Situated in the Jaisalmer City of Rajasthan, the fort was built in 1156 AD by RaoJaisal, who was a Bhati Rajput ruler. The fort was a scene of many battles in the great Thar desert and is perhaps most popular for its massive yellow sandstone walls that appear to be complimenting the golden stretches of sands in Thar Desert. It fades to honey gold and camouflages in the desert, which gave it an edge over the other forts when Jaisalmer went on war. The fort, known as Sonar Quila or the fort of gold is certainly one of the most breath-taking monuments in the city. Major attractive here include popular Jain Temples, Laxminath temple, its four stunning gateways as well as the Raj Mahal or the Royal Palace. The fort also houses merchant havelis or the homes where merchants could stay. Here wealthy merchants, who came to the country for purposes of trade lived and built these houses for their convenience.

## **8. Ranthambore Fort, Sawai Madhopur**

A World Heritage Site, Ranthambore Fort is nestled in the jungle of Ranthambore National Park and currently, it is one of the prime bastions of wild Indian Tigers. During the course of history, this is one of those Rajasthan Palaces and Forts which was known for being a pivotal part of Indian developments. The formidable fort is known for the valiant hero, HammirDev, who was one of the kings of the Chauhan Dynasty. The fort, which once served as one of the famous hunting grounds for the Maharajas of Jaipur now narrates the tale of royals in Rajasthan. This is one of the Forts of Rajasthan that features classic cobbled paths, large walls and ramparts, ditches as well as strong ramifications. Three large lakes are situated here,

which are visible through the fortification. The fort is also known for its three Hindu temples dedicated to Ganesha, Shiva and Ramlalji. These temples are constructed from the red Karauli Stone and dates back to the 12th and 13th century AD.

### **9. Rohet Fort, Jodhpur**

Situated on the Udaipur-Jodhpur highway, one among the famous palaces and forts in Rajasthan is the Rohetgarh Fort that has now been converted into a heritage hotel offering luxurious accommodation to its visitors to let them enjoy the opulence, vibrance and the vividness of the true Rajasthani culture and tradition.

Before being converted into a hotel this palace served as the residence of the royal family of the 16th century Rathores' of the Champawat clan. In current times the heritage hotels has twenty five air conditioned rooms out which two are super luxury suites. All the rooms are equipped with modern day facilities that one can think of. Other than this, the other add-ons include amenities such as swimming pool, doctor on call, amazing restaurant serving Indian and regional food tour etc.

### **10. Jag Mandir, Udaipur**

Udaipur houses some of the best Rajasthan forts and palaces. The Jag Mandir Palace is one of the most renowned palaces of Udaipur. It is built on an island 800m south of Jagniwas, on the Lake Pichola. It would be an understatement to call the palace pretty, such is the beauty of the palace. Surrounded by water from all sides, one has to reach the palace by boat. One is sure to be enchanted by the surrounding beauty of the palace. Such is the beauty of the Jag Mandir Palace that it inspired Shah Jahan to build the TajMahal. Jag Mandir Palace is one of the best palaces of Rajasthan. It is a traveller's dream and a builder's delight.

### **11. Khimsar Fort**

Located between Nagaur-Jodhpur, the Khimsar Fort is a great tourist attraction and is beautiful beyond words, the Royal family converted half the palace into a hotel and lives in the other half. This fort is one of the most magnificent palaces present in Rajasthan. It covers over 11 acres of land and is marvellously designed to use the space in the best manner. One can easily visit this fort and get lost amidst its beauty and grandeur for days. There is so much present here that one can take up to four days to explore this palace entirely.

### **12. Bhangarh Fort**

Located between Alwar and Jaipur, this beautiful fort is said to be the most haunted palace in India. It was built decades ago by a king named Madho Singh who named it after his grandfather Bhan Singh. This fort is one of the most majestic and interesting places to visit. The beautiful carvings on the wall and the architecture present here can leave you speechless. Although in ruins, this fort is still worth visiting as its beauty has not been destroyed completely. The paranormal activities that have been said to occur here happen at night and so tourists are not allowed to visit this place after the sunset. Since it is situated beside the Sariska Tiger Reserve, one can also indulge in the beauty of nature by visiting the waterfalls and temples beside the fort.



### **13. Junagarh Fort, Bikaner**

Originally called as Chintamani, this fort is now known as the Junagarh Fort or the Old Fort. It is one of those few forts that have not been built on a hilltop and is located in the modern city of Bikaner. Built from 1571 to 1611 AD, this fort is made from the remnant of the old fort, with some of the remnants now seen in the closely located Lakshmi Narayan Temple. The fort has seen several attacks and attempts for its capture, but it was not taken by a foreign ruler except for a single day. Studded with palaces, pavilions as well as temples, the buildings of this fort are an example of composite culture and feature intermix of Persian and Rajasthan architectural styles. The fort features a quadrangular layout, with fort walls as long as 4.4 meters. It is fortified with thirty seven bastions along with seven gates that were designed to counter army attacks.

The old fort parts were demolished in just a century after it was built, but the current fort still remains strong and is most popular for its main courtyard that been built with the Carrara Marble from Italy. The fort featured seven palaces and currently has a fort museum that displays artifacts from Sanskrit language and Persian language.

### **14. Taragarh Fort, Bundi**

The Star Fort of India is an impressive structure in the Indian State of Rajasthan, which is perhaps known for its stunning architecture. Although, the state of this fort is in ramshackle, it still manages to convey the glory for which it was once known for. The impressive gateways of its fort were known for housing the crisscrossing tunnels on the hillside which are now an adventure area for history lovers and travellers. Currently, these tunnels are accessible through proper maps. The bastion for Chauhan dynasty was known for housing a large number of huge water reservoirs, which stored and supplied this vital product for residents and farmers during the times of crises. It also features a Rani Mahal that was built for the wives of rulers. The spectacular murals and stained glass windows have now faded, but it still manages to offer a panoramic view of the city of Bundi where it is located.

### **15. Lohagarh Fort**

Situated in Bharatpur, the Lohagarh Fort was built by Maharaja Suraj Mal at the beginning of the 19th century. The Lohagarh Fort is very close to Jaipur and has therefore helped a lot in the defence of the kingdoms who reigned here. The fort was later converted into a heritage resort and has been going strong ever since. Visiting The Lohagarh Fort is a different experience altogether. One gets to witness the architectural brilliance of the people living in the 19th century. The fort is surrounded by water, giving the perfect experience of forts to the tourists. Lohagarh Fort is a must for every person as it has the perfect blend of modern day culture and the old days' tradition.

### **16. ChhattarMahal or Palace of Towers, Bundi**

ChhattarMahal is one of the rare palaces Bundi. The palace was built in the 17th century by Rao Raja ChhatraSabji. The palace is magnificently built. While touring the palace one gets to witness the small nuances with which the palaces were built. Every tiny detail of the ChhattarMahal signifies something about the king who built it. The top of the Palace of Towers offers a panoramic view of the whole city. Located on

a hill, the ChhattarMahal also allows its visitors to enjoy the scenic beauty of the surrounding on their way to the palace as well as from the palace.

### **17. Gajner Palace, Bikaner**

The Gajner Palace is considered to be one of the best Rajasthan forts and palaces. It was built by the Maharaja Sir Ganga Singh and was converted into a hotel in the late 20th century. The palace is like heaven on earth. The Gajner Palace has the Gajner Lake on one side and a sanctuary on the other. One feels very close to nature when in this palace as they get to delve into the beauty of nature. The breathtaking scenic beauty one gets to enjoy from the palace is outstanding. Apart from the stunning views the palace offers, one also gets to experience the services of one of the best hotels in the city of Bikaner in the Gajner Palace.

### **18. Mandawa Fort, Shekhawati**

The Mandawa fort is the main tourist attraction in Shekhawati. Built amidst the Aravalli Hills, the Mandawa fort offers a spectacular view of the surroundings. The fort reveals a lot about the rich history and cultures of not only Shekhawati but also of Rajasthan. The Mandawa Fort is arguably among the top forts of Rajasthan. The walls of the fort have several paintings of Lord Krishna on it which conveys a lot about the culture of the people there. The Mandawa Fort has been converted into a heritage hotel and is the best hotel in its vicinity. One feels as if they are a part of a royal family, getting the services a guest gets when they visit a king.

## **Handcrafts of Rajasthan**

Handicrafts of Rajasthan are heirlooms representing the culture and tradition of Rajasthan. Some of the famous handicrafts of Rajasthan are blue pottery, carpet and Meenakari. Besides these rugs, marble works and leatherware like mojaris are also famous.

### **Importance of Handicrafts in Rajasthan**

**Handicrafts in Rajasthan play a significant role in increasing the economy of Rajasthan.**

- They employ many people, including crafts persons, retailers, wholesalers, etc.
- They are a part of the rich culture and heritage of Rajasthan.
- They also tell us about the history of Rajasthan.
- It informs us about the people who have made their efforts in developing and promoting the craft.
- The art of creating these handicrafts is passed on from generation to generation.
- It has also played a key role in promoting many small businesses.
- Handicrafts have become a centre of attraction for people across states and countries.

### **Popular Handicrafts of Rajasthan**

## **Blue Pottery**

Blue pottery is a traditional handicraft famous throughout the world. Here intricate details are painted over white glazed pottery with blue colour. It is a beautiful technique of adding vibrance and a vibrance of blue hues. Beautiful designs are created on pottery, which resonates with the soul.

## **Meenakari**

This craft involves a process of jewellery moulding. In Meenakari, different colours are infused with gold in the designed jewel. Red, blue, and green are popular colours used by artisans. Raja Mansingh of Jaipur was the one who promoted this craft. He brought specialized craftsmen from Lahore and settled them at Jaipur. He made Jaipur a centre for Meenakari.

## **Lac Bangles**

Bangles have been a big part of an Indian girl ensemble ever since. Rajasthan promotes ways to enhance one's look. That's where Lac Bangles comes into the picture. It is made out of natural material extracted from the tree by insects. Artisans give it the form of bangles after moulding it into different designs. Jaipur and Jodhpur are other major centres promoting this craft. Lac work is not limited to ornaments; for example, lac work is done on wooden toys. Other regions where this intricate art flourished are SawaiMadhopur, Indargarh, and Sikar.

## **Rajasthani Rajai**

This form of textile is known worldwide for its feather-light features. It is light as compared to normal bulky quilts. Its beauty lies in its prints, which are used to give it a royal look. Popular prints include Bagru prints and Malir prints, to name a few.

## **Mojari**

Mojaris has always been a major part of the Rajasthani Lifestyle. Owing to the climate conditions, Mojaris are comfortable as compared to other footwear. Mojari is designed to provide proper ventilation and comfort. Jaipur, Jodhpur, and Udaipur are some major centres of production. HawaMahal in Jaipur is among the biggest markets dedicated to this craft.

## **Kagzi Pottery**

This famous handicraft of Rajasthan is born in the Alwar district of Rajasthan. This pottery is paper thin and, thus, referred to as Kagzi pottery. Kagzi pottery can be classified into three types: Thin biscuit colour pottery, polished and painted with white and red slips, and highly polished pottery decorated with strong, deeply incised, stylized patterns of arabesques. It is polished pottery decorated with strong motifs. It has incised stylized patterns.

## **Bikaner Pottery**

This pottery is found in the Nohar region of Bikaner. This pottery is created in distinctive colours with the help of lac colours. The yellow colour represents the glory of Rajasthan. A good fusion of all the colours, such as red, green, and blue, is also used. Bright colours are used to create beautiful masterpieces of Bikaneri pottery.

### **Glazed Pottery**

It is an intricate art of creating pottery. Glazed pottery is shiny and bright. It is painted with bright colours to give them a refreshing look. It is famous worldwide.

### **Kundan Work**

This is the art of creating handcrafted jewellery. In Kundan's work, jewellery stones are set on a lacy material. This art was developed during the Mughal era.

### **Marble Work**

Rajasthan is famous for its reserves of marble. The craftsmen here mould the marble into beautiful pieces like vases and showpieces. Marble carvings of Jaipur are very popular. Jaipur is also home to Meenakari marble work. It involves infusing Meena into the marble by carving it. Pichkari work on marble has also gained popularity.

### **Thewa Kala**

It involves infusing 23 karats gold jewellery with multi-colour glasses. It enhances the look of gold and gives it a unique beauty. It evolved in the Pratapgarh district of Rajasthan. It was identified as art by MaharawalSawant Singh in the year 1775.

### **Terracotta**

When soil is transformed into a product that can be used daily, it is called terracotta. While creating terracotta, the soil is baked and given the desired shape and size. This handicraft is developed in Molela village of Rajsamand district. The terracotta figurines of the Aihore region are very popular. The terracotta figurine found in Rajasthan has a special characteristic. It is lightweight and hollow from the inner side. The clay used includes elements such as silica and lime infused with soil. Terracotta toys are also a centre of attraction among the masses.

Terracotta toys have been a trend since the Harappan civilization and Kalibangan civilizations. Toy figures such as camels, rabbits, and others are made for recreational purposes.

### **Carpets and Mats**

This famous handicraft of Rajasthan began to be manufactured in the 17th century. It started when weavers from Afghanistan started to settle in Rajasthan. This hand-knotted craft developed in modern times. It is a centre of attraction among the masses. The colours used in this handicraft pattern are blue, green, yellow, purple, etc. Designs available on this handicraft are beautiful mesmerizing bits of nature, such. Cotton and wool are the prime fabrics used in developing these Carpets. The weavers of this craft ensure that thread and knots tied during the carpet creation are thin. This ensures its durability. Malpura, Tonk, Bhilwara, Shahpura, and Kekari are the major areas. Another major place where this craft is created is Salvas village in Jodhpur city. This handicraft of Rajasthan is playing a key role in reforming the society over the years. The jail inmates in Bikaner and Jaipur jails also manufacture carpets.

### **Tarakashi Work**

This beautiful handicraft is created after embedding silver wire in wooden items. Silver wire is embedded in the wood. It is then used to create different patterns and designs. Different categories of items are created through this. Wires of silver and copper are used in this craft. Shri Ramdayal Sharma was awarded the National Handicrafts Award in 2009. He made an exemplary contribution by taking this craft to a new height.

## **Fairs of Rajasthan**

Fairs of Rajasthan reflect the richness of culture that has lived in Rajasthan over centuries and they act as a medium of expression and help in expressing and reflecting the varied emotions felt by the people. They also act as a medium for reflecting their faith in their own traditions and beliefs. The organization of fairs not only helps in conserving the rich culture of the state but also contributes to the community at large, adding value to locations, which is crucial for boosting tourism in a location. Special events are planned during the celebrations. Fairs and festivals thereby boost the economy, enhance community life, and enhance the reputation of travel destinations.

## **Important Fairs of Rajasthan**

### **1. Beneshwar Fair**

Beneshwar fair is held at Dungarpur in Rajasthan, in the month of January and February, it is the most popular fair and is like a festival for tribals. It has become so popular that nowadays even people from other countries come and visit it. There is a very interesting story about the nomenclature of the Beneshwar fair. It is believed that this fair got its name after the temple of Shiva, located at Dungarpur, and in Hindi, Beneshwar means, one who owns the delta. Indicating Shiva at this place in the Dungarpur delta was formed due to the confluence of the rivers Son and Mahi. This fair is a centre of attraction for the tribal community residing in those areas like Sagrada, Dhole, Mali, etc. It is also known as the Kumbh of tribals.

### **2. Cattle Fair of Nagaur**

Rajasthan is an arid region, and the resources for survival are scarce, but they are needed in order to meet the needs of livelihood and survival. Many people used to do livestock trade, and this place called Nagaur became a centre of attraction for livestock traders and tourists. It is an annual fair of Rajasthan held mostly in the month of January and February. This fair is a surreal experience for animal lovers.

### **3. Ramdevra Fair**

Ramdevra fair is held at a place called Ramdevra, in Jaisalmer, where the famous saint Ramdev existed. People sing and dance in his honour and worship him for protection and prosperity. There is a story regarding saint Ramdev. It is believed that one of the rulers ruling in that region asked him to visit this place

due to his mystical powers. Later on, he became popular among the masses due to his divine connection with the almighty and he came to be known as Ramdevra Peer.

#### **4. Gogaji Fair**

Gogaji fair is held at a place called Gogamedi, in honour of Gogaji a popular folk deity who is believed to protect those affected by snake bites and cure the masses.

#### **5. Kaila Devi Fair**

Kaila Devi fair is held at the banks of rivers kaisil, in Kaila village. It is held in the month of March and April when devotees from all walks of life gather to take the divine blessings of the goddess.

#### **6. Camel Fair**

The camel fair of Rajasthan is also known as the Pushkar Camel Fair, the Kartik Mela, or Pushkar ka mela locally. It is an annual, multi-day animal fair and cultural event held in the town of Pushkar near the city of Ajmer in the Ajmer district in the Indian state of Rajasthan. The fair is held from the first of the Hindu month of Kartik to the end of Kartik Purnima, which on the gregorian calendar typically, falls between the end of October and the start of November. Over the course of the year 1998, one million visitors visited Pushkar. More than 200,000 people attended Pushkar fair. Its craze is increasing day by day among the masses.

#### **7. Khejadli Fair**

This is the most unique kind of fair held in Rajasthan as this is the only fair specifically for trees. Also, this is only fair which is related to trees in the whole world.

#### **8. Kolayat Fair**

This fair has been organized in a place called kolayat in Bikaner. It is among the most popular attractions of Bikaner. During the fair, a lot of trading happens as livestock breeders and farmers gather here for commercial purposes. The Kolayat fair is one of the main draws of the Rajasthani town of Kolayat, which is situated in the district of Bikaner. Beginning at the Kapil Muni Ghat, this fair spreads to the other 51 ghats encircling the Kolayat lake. Local lore claims that a great sage by the name of Kapil Muni meditated near the revered Kolayat Lake. On this ghat, Kapil Muni is said to have pondered on humanity redemption. Because of this, the ghat was of utmost significance to the residents of this town. According to the Hindu calendar the Kolayat fair is observed in the month of Kartik. The fair opens on the fortunate day of Kartik Purnima. In the water of Kolayat lake, devotees bathe in holy water. To float, earthen lanterns are lighted and dropped into the water.

#### **9. Desert Fair**

This fair is organized at Jaisalmer and is counted among the most popular tourist attraction concerning Rajasthan. In this fair different kinds of activities are organized to keep the attendees entertained. Activities involve desert camping, dance performances, camel rides, races, competitions etc.

#### **10. Urs Fair**

Among the many other religious affairs taking place in Rajasthan, we have one more religious fair which places in Rajasthan, at a place called Ajmer in memory of Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti on his death anniversary .One of the major attractions of the festival is the famous artists who sing in the honor of the divine saint.

### **11. Mahavir Jain Fair**

This fair is organized in memory of the 24th Tirthankar, of the Jain community Shri Mahavir swami ji. Every year a large no of people attend this event. It also serves the purpose of boosting the economy as it acts as the medium of opportunity for a lot of traders and vendors who get in the opportunity to exhibit their collections and reach out to a bigger audience with minimal effort.

### **12. Elephant Fair**

Elephant fair is held annually in the capital city of Rajasthan in the month of Falgun on the occasion of Holi. During the fair, elephants participate in various activities. Elephant owners celebrate by accessorising their elephants beautifully with specially designed accessories.

### **13. Tejaji Fair**

Tejaji Fair is organized in the honour of folk deity Tejaji in a village named Parbatsar in the Nagaur district of Rajasthan. It is organized on the occasion of, Teja dashmi (the 10th day of Bhadrapad Shukla paksha) and continues till Poornima.

## **Festivals of Rajasthan**

One cannot underestimate the importance of **Rajasthan festivals** as it is the best way to immerse in the beautiful culture of Rajasthan. The world-renowned Pushkar Camel Fair, where thousands of camels and cattle are traded, attracts travelers from across the globe. The vibrant colors of Holi, the graceful movements of traditional dances during the Teej festival, and the pulsating rhythms of folk music during the Mewar Festival are just a few examples.

The **festivals of Rajasthan** are grand and colorful enough to captivate tourists while offering them a glimpse into the state's rich cultural heritage. These festivals not only provide a platform to showcase the state's art, music, and dance forms but also create a vibrant atmosphere. They offer a unique opportunity to witness the traditions and rituals of Rajasthan up close, fostering a deeper appreciation for the state's cultural heritage.

### **1. Bikaner Camel Festival (January)**

Amongst the list of Rajasthan Festivals, The Bikaner Camel Festival serves as a platform to appreciate and showcase the rich cultural heritage associated with camels, which have long been an integral part of Rajasthan's desert lifestyle. Held annually in the vibrant city of Bikaner, this festival in Rajasthan is a two-day extravaganza, that brings together the local communities, camel breeders, and enthusiasts to honor the "Ship of the Desert" in a grand manner. During the festival, the beautifully adorned camels become the center of attention. The event kicks off with a vibrant procession where these majestic creatures are paraded through the city streets, adorned with colorful bridles, necklaces, and other embellishments. This captivating

sight serves as a visual feast, allowing visitors to witness the regal beauty of these magnificent animals up close. One of the major highlights of the Bikaner Camel Festival is the camel race. This thrilling competition showcases the agility and speed of these desert creatures, as skilled riders guide them through the sandy tracks. The crowd cheers with excitement as the camels gallop toward the finish line, creating a pulsating atmosphere. The festival also features various cultural performances, including folk music and dance, which provide a glimpse into Rajasthan's vibrant traditions. Visitors are treated to mesmerizing performances by local artists, showcasing the rich cultural heritage of the region. Traditional competitions like tug-of-war, camel dances, and even a beauty pageant for camels further add to the festivities. The Bikaner Camel Festival holds great importance in tourism as it offers a unique and immersive experience for travelers. It provides an opportunity to witness the deep-rooted connection between the people of Rajasthan and their beloved camels. Tourists can interact with the local camel breeders, learn about camel husbandry practices, and even take camel rides to explore the desert landscapes.

## **2. Makar Sankranti (January)**

Do you remember the last scene from Disney's Rapunzel movie, when the people all together release the sky lanterns with some fireworks that illuminate the night sky? That's exactly what Jaipur looks like on the evening of Makar Sankranti and thus is one of the most popular festivals of Rajasthan. Makar Sankranti, a significant festival celebrated throughout India, holds a special place in the heart of Rajasthan. The festival of Makar Sankranti, often referred to as "Sankrant" or "Sankranti," is celebrated on the 14th of January every year. It is a time when the people of Rajasthan come together to bid farewell to the chilly winter season and welcome the arrival of longer days and the warmth of the sun. One of the most fascinating aspects of the Makar Sankranti **Festival in Rajasthan** is the ritual of kite flying. The sky comes alive with a multitude of colorful kites as families and friends gather on rooftops and open spaces to engage in friendly kite-flying competitions. The sight of countless kites soaring high against the backdrop of majestic forts and palaces creates a mesmerizing atmosphere. People of all ages participate, displaying their skill and dexterity in maneuvering the kites. The sky becomes a canvas for showcasing the artistry and creativity of the kite makers, with intricate designs and vibrant colors adorning the kites.

Apart from kite flying, Makar Sankranti in Rajasthan is also a time for indulging in delectable traditional sweets and delicacies. Til ke ladoo (sesame seed sweets), gajak (a sweet made from sesame and jaggery), and feeni (a crispy sweet made from wheat) are among the popular treats enjoyed during the festival. Families and friends come together to prepare these special dishes and exchange them as a token of love and goodwill.

In addition to kite-flying and culinary delights, Makar Sankranti is also associated with various cultural events and performances. Folk music and dance performances, showcasing the vibrant Rajasthani culture, add to the festive spirit. Camel races, traditional games, and cattle fairs are organized in different parts of the state, adding to the overall festive ambiance.

## **3. Jaipur Literature Festival (January – February)**



The Jaipur Literature Festival, fondly known as JLF, is a renowned literary extravaganza from the list of other **Rajasthan Festivals**. Held annually in the capital city of Jaipur, Rajasthan, JLF brings together renowned authors, poets, thinkers, and avid readers from around the world to engage in stimulating discussions, intellectual conversations, and literary explorations.

From a tourism perspective, the Jaipur Literature Festival plays a vital role in drawing visitors to Rajasthan. The festival not only showcases the rich literary heritage of the region but also provides a platform for cultural exchange and intellectual discussion.

The festival's location in the culturally rich city of Jaipur adds to its appeal. Jaipur, often referred to as the "Pink City," is known for its magnificent palaces, vibrant bazaars, and architectural marvels. The festival serves as a gateway for tourists to explore the city's historical landmarks, such as the Amber Fort, Hawa Mahal, and City Palace while immersing themselves in the literary atmosphere.

Moreover, the Jaipur Literature Festival promotes cultural tourism by showcasing Rajasthan's rich heritage. The event embraces the local Rajasthani culture, featuring traditional music and dance performances, art exhibitions, and handicraft displays. Visitors can witness the vibrant colours, intricate artwork, and cultural traditions of Rajasthan, creating a holistic experience that goes beyond literature.

The festival's inclusive nature, with free entry for all, encourages a diverse audience, attracting not only literature enthusiasts but also students, aspiring writers, and curious travellers. The lively atmosphere, intellectual discussions, and the opportunity to engage with renowned personalities make JLF a dynamic and enriching event.

#### **4. Jaisalmer Desert Festival (February)**

The Jaisalmer Desert Festival is a vibrant celebration that brings the desert to life with its cultural performances, camel races, and traditional art showcases. The Jaisalmer Desert Festival, is held annually in the enchanting city of Jaisalmer. This three-day extravaganza, usually taking place in February, is a significant tourism attraction, drawing both domestic and international visitors who are eager to immerse themselves in the magic of the desert.

With its historical significance, colorful festivities, and tourism appeal, the festival has become a key attraction amongst the other **festivals of Rajasthan**, offering a unique opportunity to witness the rich cultural heritage in the mesmerizing setting of the Thar Desert.

The history of the Jaisalmer Desert Festival can be traced back to the early 20th century when it was first initiated as a way to promote the cultural heritage and traditions of Jaisalmer. The festival aims to provide a platform for the local communities to display their talents, preserve their cultural roots, and attract tourism to the region.

The festival begins with a grand procession, where beautifully adorned camels, horses, and folk artists traverse the streets of Jaisalmer, led by the regal Jaisalmer Fort as a backdrop. Colorfully dressed locals, musicians, and dancers accompany the procession, setting the tone for the festive atmosphere that follows.

One of the highlights of this festival is that the visitors are treated to spellbinding folk music and dance performances, showcasing the vibrant Rajasthani traditions. Kalbeliya dance, Ghoomar, and puppet shows are among the captivating performances that captivate the audience.

The festival also features a range of competitions and activities that offer tourists an immersive experience. The turban tying competition, where participants showcase their skill in tying traditional Rajasthani turbans, is a popular event. Visitors can also witness camel races, camel polo matches, and even participate in tug-of-war competitions, adding to the thrill and excitement of the festival.

The Jaisalmer Desert Festival is a treasure trove for art and craft enthusiasts. The festival hosts numerous stalls where local artisans display their intricate handicrafts, embroidery, and mirror work. Visitors have the opportunity to purchase unique souvenirs and witness the craftsmanship of the talented artisans. The festival also attracts adventure seekers who can indulge in desert activities like camel safaris, dune bashing, and camping under the starlit sky.

## **5. Holi (March)**

One of the most **colorful festivals of Rajasthan**, the Holi celebrations in this state are a spectacle of colors, music, and cultural traditions. The state's various cities and towns offer unique Holi experiences, allowing tourists to immerse themselves in the festive spirit and witness the rich heritage of Rajasthan.

Whether seeking a modern twist or a traditional celebration, Rajasthan's Holi festivities promise an unforgettable and culturally enriching experience for visitors.

One of the most popular destinations to enjoy Holi in Rajasthan is the holy town of Pushkar. Pushkar is known for hosting a unique and modern twist to Holi celebrations with its Techno Holi parties. Here, tourists can immerse themselves in the festivities while grooving to live music played by renowned DJs.

The vibrant atmosphere, coupled with the mesmerizing surroundings of Pushkar Lake and the surrounding Aravali hills, creates an extraordinary blend of tradition and modernity.

For those seeking a more traditional way of celebrating Holi, Bharatpur is a prominent destination. This city, famous for its avian diversity and the renowned Keoladeo National Park, hosts Holi celebrations in a more authentic and traditional manner.

Visitors can witness the age-old rituals, such as the Holika Dahan (bonfire) ceremony, which symbolizes the victory of good over evil. The streets of Bharatpur come alive with locals and tourists playing with colors, singing folk songs, and dancing to traditional tunes.

Apart from Pushkar and Bharatpur, several other cities and towns in Rajasthan offer unique Holi experiences. Jaipur, the Pink City, showcases a grand celebration with processions, cultural performances, and the iconic Elephant Festival held a day before Holi. Udaipur, the City of Lakes, hosts a royal Holi celebration at the magnificent City Palace, where the royal family and guests participate in traditional customs.

Jodhpur, known for its majestic Mehrangarh Fort, witnesses a grand Holi procession called the “Matki Phod” in which participants break earthen pots filled with colored water and buttermilk. Bikaner, famous for its rich cultural heritage, also hosts lively Holi celebrations with folk music and dance performances.

From a tourism point of view, the Holi celebrations in Rajasthan provide a fantastic opportunity for travelers to experience the state’s vibrant culture, interact with locals, and capture the essence of the joyous **Rajasthan festivals**. Whether it’s the techno-infused Holi in Pushkar or the traditional rituals in Bharatpur, Rajasthan provides a range of options for tourists to choose their preferred style of celebration.

## **6. Gangaur (March – April)**

The Gangaur Festival holds immense importance in Rajasthan, representing the essence of love, marriage and fertility. Celebrated with great enthusiasm, the festival offers a great insight into the rich local traditions and devotion, making it one of the **popular festivals of Rajasthan**.

The history of the Gangaur Festival dates back centuries and is associated with the goddess Gauri, an incarnation of Goddess Parvati. According to mythology, Gauri is believed to have returned to her parental home during this time to bless her devotees with marital harmony and happiness. The festival is primarily celebrated by married women who pray for the well-being and longevity of their husbands.

From a tourism perspective, the Gangaur Festival offers a fascinating insight into Rajasthan’s cultural heritage. The festivities usually begin in the month of Chaitra (March-April) and last for around 18 days. The festival kicks off with a grand procession of idols of Gauri and Isar (Lord Shiva), which are adorned with beautiful traditional clothing and jewelry. The processions are accompanied by traditional music, dance performances, and an array of colorful cultural activities.

Jaipur, the capital city of Rajasthan, is one of the best places to experience the grandeur of the Gangaur Festival. The city comes alive with a series of processions and cultural events. Locals and tourists gather on the streets to witness the beautifully decorated idols being carried in ornate palanquins. Folk musicians, dancers, and performers add to the vibrant atmosphere, showcasing the rich cultural heritage of the state.

Udaipur, the City of Lakes, is another significant destination for experiencing the Gangaur Festival. The royal family of Mewar actively participates in the celebrations, making it an even more enchanting experience. The idols of Gauri and Isar are carried in a magnificent boat procession on the serene waters of Lake Pichola, accompanied by traditional music and dance performances.

## **7. Teej (July – August)**

The Teej Festival holds significant importance in Rajasthan, marking the arrival of the monsoon season and celebrating the union of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati. This vibrant festival is celebrated with great zeal and enthusiasm by married and unmarried women, who come together to seek blessings for conjugal happiness, prosperity, and well-being.

The Teej Festival is typically celebrated in the month of Shravan (July-August), during which women adorn themselves in colorful traditional attire and jewelry. The festivities include singing folk songs, performing traditional dances like the famous Ghoomar, and engaging in various cultural activities.

One of the best places to enjoy the festivities of Teej in Rajasthan is Jaipur, the capital city. The entire city comes alive with cultural performances, processions, and events dedicated to Teej. The Teej procession in Jaipur makes it one of the best-celebrated **festivals of Rajasthan** from a tourism perspective.

Locals and tourists gather to witness the royal palanquins carrying the idols of Goddess Parvati, which are adorned with exquisite jewelry and clothing. The procession is accompanied by decorated elephants, horses, folk musicians, dancers, and performers. The lively atmosphere, traditional music, and the enthusiasm of the participants create a captivating experience for visitors.

Apart from Jaipur, Udaipur is another city where tourists can enjoy the festivities of Teej in Rajasthan. The idols of Goddess Parvati are taken on a beautifully decorated boat procession on Lake Pichola, creating a mesmerizing sight. Both cities are adorned with vibrant decorations, and the markets are filled with stalls selling traditional Rajasthani handicrafts and delicacies.

During the Teej Festival, tourists can immerse themselves in the vibrant atmosphere, enjoy the lively cultural performances, witness the devotion and enthusiasm of the locals, taste traditional Rajasthani cuisine, and even try their hand at applying henna designs.

## **8. Mewar Festival**

The Mewar Festival is a vibrant celebration that takes place annually in the region of Mewar, Rajasthan. This is one of the most **colorful festivals of Rajasthan** that offers a delightful experience to the tourist with its cultural richness and colorful traditions.

The festival is celebrated to welcome the arrival of spring and to honor Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati. The festival typically takes place in the city of Udaipur, which serves as a magnificent backdrop for the grand celebrations.

During the Mewar Festival, the streets of Udaipur come alive with colorful processions, folk performances, and traditional music and dance forms. Locals and tourists gather to witness the beautifully decorated idols of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati being carried in palanquins. The festival also features cultural competitions, including singing, dancing, and a showcase of traditional arts and crafts.

One of the highlights of the Mewar Festival is the Gangaur procession, where women dressed in vibrant attire carry earthen pots on their heads. The pots are adorned with intricate designs and contain an oil lamp, symbolizing prosperity and marital bliss.

The procession moves through the city, accompanied by music, dance, and traditional instruments, creating a lively and festive atmosphere. Udaipur, with its magnificent palaces, lakes, and historical sites, serves as a captivating backdrop for the festival, adding to the overall charm and allure of the celebrations.

## **9. Diwali (October – November)**

Diwali, also known as Deepavali, is one of the most widely celebrated festivals in India. Each region in Rajasthan adds its own cultural flavors to the Diwali celebrations, thus making it one of the top **Rajasthan Festivals** to witness.

It is a time of joy, lights, and festivities, and different parts of Rajasthan have their unique ways of celebrating this auspicious occasion. Let's explore the Diwali celebrations in various parts of Rajasthan:

**Jaipur:** The Pink City of Jaipur transforms into a dazzling spectacle during Diwali. The entire city is adorned with vibrant lights, decorative rangolis, and traditional decorations. The markets of Jaipur, such as Johari Bazaar and Bapu Bazaar, are bustling with shoppers looking for new clothes, jewelry, and sweets. The city's iconic landmarks, including the Hawa Mahal and City Palace, are beautifully lit up, creating a magical atmosphere.

**Udaipur:** Diwali celebrations in Udaipur are known for their grandeur. The city's beautiful lakes, including Lake Pichola and Fateh Sagar Lake, are illuminated with floating diyas, creating a stunning reflection. The majestic City Palace and the Lake Palace are adorned with lights and decorations, offering a mesmerizing sight. The locals engage in cultural performances, fireworks, and traditional rituals, adding to the festive spirit.

**Jodhpur:** In Jodhpur, Diwali celebrations are marked by the lighting of earthen lamps and the bursting of firecrackers. The famous Mehrangarh Fort is illuminated, showcasing the architectural splendor against the night sky. The markets of Jodhpur, such as Sardar Market and Clock Tower Market, are bustling with activity as people shop for festive essentials and delicious sweets.

**Pushkar:** Diwali in Pushkar has a unique spiritual significance. Devotees gather at the sacred Pushkar Lake to offer prayers and participate in religious ceremonies. The Brahma Temple attracts pilgrims from far and wide, who come to seek blessings on this auspicious day. The atmosphere is filled with devotion, hymns, and the aroma of incense.

**Bikaner:** Bikaner celebrates Diwali with great enthusiasm. The city's streets are beautifully decorated with lights, and the markets are abuzz with activity. The famous Junagarh Fort and Karni Mata Temple are illuminated, providing a breathtaking view of the city. Locals engage in traditional music and dance performances, making it a joyous affair.

Whether it's the illuminated forts, the bustling markets, or the spiritual fervor, Diwali in Rajasthan is a time of celebration, togetherness, and spreading the light of happiness. The spirit of Diwali combined with colorful culture makes it one of the most attractive **festivals of Rajasthan**.

#### **10. Pushkar Camel Fair (October – November)**

The Pushkar Camel Fair, also known as Pushkar Mela, is one of the most significant and vibrant festivals in Rajasthan, India. It holds immense importance from a tourism perspective, attracting thousands of domestic and international tourists every year. Its unique blend of traditional festivities and techno parties makes it one of the most happening **festivals in Rajasthan**.

The Pushkar Camel Fair is primarily a livestock fair, where thousands of camels, horses, and cattle are traded. It is a fascinating sight to witness as the desert comes alive with a sea of camels, beautifully adorned and showcased by their owners.

Apart from the trading activities, the Pushkar Camel Fair is also known for its cultural extravaganza. The fairground becomes a hub of traditional festivities, including folk music and dance performances, puppet shows, camel races, and competitions like the “longest mustache” contest, attracting participants from all over the world. The tourists can also participate in a number of activities to experience the rural lifestyle like – Camel/ camel cart rides, making sand art, dressing up in traditional attire and much more.

In recent years, the Pushkar Camel Fair has witnessed the addition of techno parties, which have further enhanced its appeal to a younger audience. These techno parties are organized during the evenings and nights, featuring renowned DJs and electronic music performances. It brings a contemporary twist to the traditional fair and offers a unique fusion of traditional festivities and modern entertainment.

The Pushkar Camel Fair, with its blend of traditional festivities and techno parties, offers a unique and captivating experience for tourists. It not only showcases the cultural heritage of Rajasthan but also caters to the evolving tastes and preferences of modern travelers.

The fair provides a platform for cultural exchange, adventure, and entertainment, making it a must-visit amongst the other **Rajasthan Festivals** for those seeking an immersive and memorable Rajasthani experience.

## **11. The Festival of Urs**

The festival of Urs is an annual Islamic pilgrimage and cultural festival held in honor of Sufi saint Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti in the city of Ajmer, Rajasthan. It commemorates the death anniversary of the revered saint, attracting a large number of devotees and tourists from different parts of the world.

The festival showcases the harmonious blend of Islamic customs and Rajasthani cultural heritage, making it one of the most popular **festivals of Rajasthan**.

One of the primary reasons why tourists should attend the festival of Urs is to witness the deep-rooted religious traditions and rituals associated with Sufism. It offers a glimpse into the spiritual fervor and devotion of the followers of Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti, known as Dargah Sharif.

The shrine is beautifully decorated with lights, flowers, and offerings, creating a serene and enchanting atmosphere. Tourists can witness the devout pilgrims paying their respects, offering prayers, and seeking blessings at the shrine. streets surrounding the Dargah Sharif are adorned with food stalls offering a wide range of authentic Rajasthani delicacies. From mouth-watering kebabs to flavorful biryanis and sweet treats, visitors can indulge in a culinary feast that delights their taste buds.

The festival of Urs also features qawwali performances, which are soulful Sufi devotional songs. These musical performances, held in the courtyard of the Dargah Sharif, create a mesmerizing ambiance, captivating the hearts of the audience. The qawwali sessions are filled with spirituality, and tourists can join in the melodious renditions or simply immerse themselves in the enchanting melodies.

Another significant aspect of the festival is the grand procession known as the “Jannati Darwaza.” The procession involves a ceremonial gate being opened, symbolizing the gateway to heaven. This procession is

a colorful spectacle, with devotees, musicians, and performers parading through the streets of Ajmer. It is a captivating sight that showcases the festive spirit and cultural vibrancy of the region.

### **National Parks and Sanctuaries in Rajasthan**

Rajasthan has always been the crown gem of Indian tourism. Pictures of its palaces and forts have captivated millions of people not just from outside but even from here in our nation. Rajasthan has something for everyone, from the opulent suite of Rambagh Palace at Jaipur to the deserted Havelis of Shekhawati and, of course, the ancient maharajas' hunting grounds, which has now been transformed into national parks as well as wildlife sanctuaries in Rajasthan. National parks and Wildlife sanctuaries in Rajasthan attract tourists and wildlife photographers from all over the world.

### **National Parks of Rajasthan**

Rajasthan is home to several national parks and wildlife sanctuaries, each offering unique experiences and opportunities to observe diverse flora and fauna in their natural habitats. Here are some of the notable national parks in Rajasthan:

- Ranthambore National Park – Sawai Madhopur
- Keoladeo Ghana National Park – Bharatpur
- Sariska National Park – Alwar
- Mukundhara Hills (Dharra) National Park – Kota
- Desert National Park – Jaisalmer, Barmer

#### **Ranthambore National Park:**

Located in the Sawai Madhopur district, Ranthambore is one of the most famous national parks in India, renowned for its population of Bengal tigers. It also houses a variety of other wildlife species such as leopards, sloth bears, sambar deer, and a rich avian population. The park is dotted with ancient ruins, including the imposing Ranthambore Fort.

#### **Keoladeo National Park (Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary):**

A UNESCO World Heritage Site, Keoladeo National Park is situated in Bharatpur and is a haven for birdwatchers. It is home to over 370 bird species, including migratory birds like Siberian cranes, herons, egrets, and ducks. The park also supports a diverse range of aquatic species and mammals.

#### **Sariska Tiger Reserve:**

Located in the Alwar district, Sariska Tiger Reserve is known for its population of Bengal tigers, along with other wildlife such as leopards, jungle cats, hyenas, and various species of deer. The park also features historical landmarks like the Sariska Palace and the ancient Kankwari Fort.

### **Mukundhara Hills (Dharra) National Park – Kota**

Situated in the Kota district, Darrah National Park is characterized by rugged terrain, dense forests, and a variety of wildlife including leopards, striped hyenas, sloth bears, and numerous bird species. It offers opportunities for wildlife safaris and trekking amidst scenic surroundings.

### **Desert National Park:**

**Location:** Desert National Park is situated in the western part of Rajasthan, spanning across Jaisalmer and Barmer districts. It covers an extensive area of approximately 3,162 square kilometers.

**Terrain and Landscape:** The park primarily consists of arid desert terrain, characterized by sand dunes, rocky outcrops, and sparse vegetation. The landscape is typical of the Thar Desert ecosystem, with shifting sand dunes being a prominent feature.

**Flora and Fauna:** Despite the harsh desert conditions, Desert National Park supports a surprising variety of flora and fauna adapted to the arid environment. Vegetation includes hardy desert plants such as cacti, thorny bushes, and acacia trees. The park is home to diverse wildlife, including desert-adapted species such as the Great Indian Bustard, Indian gazelle (Chinkara), desert fox, desert cat, blackbuck, and various reptiles and bird species.

**Great Indian Bustard Sanctuary:** One of the main attractions within Desert National Park is the Great Indian Bustard Sanctuary, established to protect the critically endangered Great Indian Bustard (locally known as Godawan). This majestic bird, with its distinctive appearance and behavior, is a flagship species for conservation efforts in the region.

**Activities:** Visitors to Desert National Park can engage in various activities such as wildlife safaris, camel rides, and nature walks to explore the desert landscape and observe its unique flora and fauna. Birdwatching is particularly popular, offering opportunities to spot resident and migratory bird species.

**Conservation:** Desert National Park is vital for the conservation of desert ecosystems and the protection of endangered wildlife species. Efforts are ongoing to manage and preserve the park's biodiversity, including habitat restoration initiatives and community-based conservation programs.

These national parks and wildlife sanctuaries contribute significantly to the conservation of biodiversity in Rajasthan and provide opportunities for ecotourism and nature-based activities for visitors.

### **Sanctuaries in Rajasthan**

In addition to the national parks, Rajasthan is also home to several wildlife sanctuaries that offer unique experiences and opportunities for wildlife viewing. Rajasthan has more than 20 wildlife sanctuaries that are abode to its unique and diversified plant and animal life. Here are some notable sanctuaries in Rajasthan:

**Sariska Wildlife Sanctuary:** Located in the Alwar district, Sariska Wildlife Sanctuary is known for its diverse flora and fauna, including Bengal tigers, leopards, sambar deer, spotted deer, and numerous bird species. The sanctuary also features historical ruins like the Sariska Palace and the ancient Kankwari Fort.



**Sita Mata Wildlife Sanctuary:** Situated in the Pratapgarh district, Sita Mata Wildlife Sanctuary is known for its dense forests, hilly terrain, and diverse wildlife. Species found here include leopards, jungle cats, sloth bears, Indian pangolins, and a variety of bird species.

**Jawai Bandh Leopard Conservation Reserve:** Situated near Jawai Dam in the Pali district, this reserve is known for its thriving population of leopards. Visitors can embark on safaris to observe these elusive big cats in their natural habitat amidst the rocky landscape.

**Bassi Wildlife Sanctuary:** Located near the town of Bassi in the Chittorgarh district, this sanctuary is known for its picturesque landscape, rocky hills, and diverse wildlife. Species found here include leopards, hyenas, jackals, antelope, and various bird species.

**Mount Abu Wildlife Sanctuary:** Situated near the hill station of Mount Abu, this sanctuary is known for its lush greenery, scenic landscapes, and diverse wildlife. Species found here include Indian leopard, sloth bear, wild boar, langur, and numerous bird species.

#### **Kailadevi Wildlife Sanctuary - Karauli**

The Kailadevi Nature Reserve is one of Rajasthan's most prominent wildlife sanctuaries. The sanctuary is part of the Ranthambore National Park. When the Ranthambore National Park was established in 1980, the nearby grasslands were automatically designated as sanctuaries. This sanctuary serves as a basis for forest conservation resolutions among environmentalists.

#### **National Chambal Sanctuary- Kota**

This National Sanctuary in Chambal was established to conserve the endangered red-crowned roof turtle, Ganges river dolphins, and gharials. The picturesque Chambal river passes through the sanctuary, connecting the three states of Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Rajasthan. The sanctuary is restricted to the waterways and flora, and animals. Mugger crocodiles, tortoises, fish, and other aquatic animals make up the bulk.

#### **Chittorgarh's Bassi Wildlife Sanctuary**

The Bassi Nature Reserve runs along the western edge of the Vindhyachal hills. Because of its stunning meadows and vibrant surroundings, the reserve is a joy for wildlife enthusiasts. Rarely viewed animals, such as panthers, jackals, hyenas, cheetahs, antelopes, and wild boars can be found here. The Bassi, as well as Orai dams, are additional notable features of the sanctuary. This one of the wildlife sanctuaries in Rajasthan is easily accessible from Chittorgarh.

#### **Churu's Tal Chhapar Sanctuary**

The Tal Chhapar Sanctuary is situated in the Churu district's Shekhawati area. The sanctuary is tiny in area, but it is rich in biodiversity, with creatures such as chinkara, desert cats, and Siberian migrating birds. Having Jaipur as the closest city, this is one of the greatest vacation trips from Jaipur, located only 200 km away; a bus or rented cab would be the ideal means of reaching the sanctuary.

### **Bikaner's Gajner Wildlife Sanctuary**

Bikaner is well-known for its tradition and culture. The city serves as a vital link in the Golden Triangle. However, the area is rich in vegetation and animals. Gajner Wildlife Sanctuary has been one of the numerous attractions in Bikaner. Previously, the sanctuary was used as a hunting place for the Rajas of Bikaner. The reserve draws nature lovers who wish to learn about the desert's biodiversity.

### **Udaipur's Jaisamand Sanctuary**

For its hills, lakes and valleys, Jaisamand Sanctuary is among Rajasthan's top wildlife sanctuaries. The sanctuary is situated on the shores of Dhebar as well as Jaisamand Lake, Asia's second-largest man-made lake. Teak woods surround the beaches, and the wildlife is diverse, comprising langur, chital, crocodiles, fishes and turtles.

### **Bundi's Ramgarh Vishdhari Wildlife Reserve**

The Ramgarh Vishdhari Nature Reserve is home to various vegetation and animal species. The Ranthambore Conservation Sanctuary is approximately 15 km from Bundi and serves as a buffer state for the sanctuary. Many natural predators live in the refuge, including tigers, hyenas, panthers, and antelopes. The sanctuary also features a lot of greenery, including mango and khair trees.

### **Kumbhalgarh Wildlife Sanctuary**

One of the greatest locations to visit in Kumbhalgarh is the Kumbhalgarh Wildlife Sanctuary. It is situated in the Rajasthan district of Rajsamand. It encircles the Kumbhalgarh Fort and encompasses an area of approximately 578 sq km. Four- horned antelopes, chinkaras, hares, sambhar, nilgai, jungle cats, wolves, sloth bears, hyenas, and leopards are among the creatures you will encounter in plenty in the sanctuary. A wide variety of birds live at the sanctuary, including grey jungle fowl, bulbuls, golden oriole, pigeons, doves, peacocks, white-breasted kingfisher, and parakeets.

These wildlife sanctuaries in Rajasthan provide visitors with opportunities to explore natural habitats, observe wildlife, and appreciate the region's rich biodiversity. They play a crucial role in conservation efforts and ecotourism development in the state.

### **Transport facilities for tourists**

Transport facilities for tourists can vary widely depending on the destination and the level of infrastructure development in that area. However, common transport options available for tourists include:

- **Public Transport:** Many cities and tourist destinations have well-developed public transportation systems such as buses, trams, subways, and trains. These are often cost-effective and convenient for getting around within a city or region.
- **Taxis and Ridesharing:** Taxis are readily available in most urban areas and can be hailed on the street or booked through a taxi company or app. Ridesharing services like Uber and Lyft are also popular in many places and can be more convenient and sometimes cheaper than traditional taxis.

- **Rental Cars:** Renting a car can provide tourists with flexibility and independence to explore a destination at their own pace. Rental car agencies are usually available at airports and in city centers.
- **Bicycles and Scooters:** Many cities offer bike-sharing or scooter-sharing programs, allowing tourists to easily rent bicycles or electric scooters for short-term use. This can be a fun and eco-friendly way to explore a city.
- **Tourist Shuttles and Hop-On Hop-Off Buses:** In tourist-heavy areas, there may be special shuttle services or hop-on hop-off buses that visit popular attractions and provide commentary or guided tours along the way.
- **Boats and Ferries:** In coastal cities or destinations with waterways, tourists may have the option to travel by boat or ferry to nearby islands, beaches, or other points of interest.
- **Domestic Flights:** For longer distances within a country, domestic flights can be a fast and convenient option, especially in large countries with well-developed air travel networks.
- **Guided Tours and Excursions:** Many tour operators offer guided tours and excursions that include transportation as part of the package. These can range from walking tours to multi-day bus or train tours with transportation, accommodation, and activities included.
- **Specialty Transportation:** Depending on the destination, tourists may have access to unique forms of transportation such as cable cars, funiculars, horse-drawn carriages, or even camel rides in desert areas.

It's essential for tourists to research and plan their transportation options in advance to ensure a smooth and enjoyable travel experience. Factors to consider include cost, convenience, safety, and environmental impact.

### **Hotel facilities for tourists in Rajasthan**

In Rajasthan, as a popular tourist destination, you can find a wide range of hotels and accommodations catering to various budgets and preferences. Here are some common hotel facilities you can expect to find in Rajasthan:

**Luxury Hotels and Resorts:** Rajasthan is known for its luxury heritage hotels and resorts, many of which are converted palaces, forts, and havelis (traditional mansions). These properties offer top-notch facilities such as spacious rooms, fine dining restaurants, spa and wellness centers, swimming pools, and personalized services.

**Mid-Range Hotels:** There are numerous mid-range hotels and boutique accommodations available in Rajasthan offering comfortable rooms, restaurants serving local and international cuisine, swimming pools, and sometimes spa facilities.

**Budget Hotels and Guesthouses:** For budget-conscious travellers, Rajasthan has plenty of budget hotels, guesthouses, and hostels providing basic amenities such as clean rooms, attached bathrooms, and sometimes complimentary breakfast. These accommodations are often centrally located and offer good value for money.

**Heritage Hotels:** Rajasthan's rich cultural heritage is reflected in its heritage hotels, which are often historic properties that have been renovated and converted into hotels. These hotels offer a blend of traditional architecture, modern amenities, and a glimpse into the state's royal past.

**Camp and Tent Accommodations:** In desert regions like Jaisalmer, tourists can opt for unique accommodations such as desert camps and tented resorts. These accommodations offer a chance to experience desert life, with facilities such as luxury tents, cultural performances, camel safaris, and traditional Rajasthani cuisine.

**Facilities for Cultural Activities:** Many hotels in Rajasthan organize cultural activities and performances such as folk dances, music concerts, and puppet shows to showcase the state's vibrant culture to guests.

**Conference and Banquet Facilities:** Larger hotels and resorts in major cities like Jaipur, Udaipur, and Jodhpur often offer conference rooms, banquet halls, and event spaces for business meetings, conferences, weddings, and other social gatherings.

**Travel Desk and Tour Assistance:** Most hotels in Rajasthan have travel desks or concierge services to assist guests with travel arrangements, sightseeing tours, transportation, and other travel-related services.

**Wi-Fi and Connectivity:** In today's digital age, most hotels in Rajasthan offer Wi-Fi connectivity and other modern amenities to ensure guests stay connected during their stay.

Overall, tourists visiting Rajasthan can expect a wide range of hotel facilities catering to different tastes, preferences, and budgets, ensuring a comfortable and memorable stay in the Land of Kings.

### **Hotels for tourists in Rajasthan**

Rajasthan, known for its rich history, vibrant culture, and stunning architecture, offers a plethora of accommodation options for tourists. Here's a list of some popular hotels across different categories in Rajasthan:

#### **Luxury Hotels and Palaces:**

- **Taj Lake Palace, Udaipur:** Located on Lake Pichola, this luxurious hotel offers stunning views and opulent accommodations.
- **The Oberoi Udaivilas, Udaipur:** Set on the banks of Lake Pichola, this luxurious property features lavish suites and impeccable service.
- **Rambagh Palace, Jaipur:** A former royal residence, now transformed into a luxury hotel, offering grand rooms, exquisite dining, and royal experiences.
- **Umaid Bhawan Palace, Jodhpur:** A majestic palace-turned-hotel offering luxurious suites, fine dining, and royal hospitality.
- **Samode Palace, Jaipur:** A heritage hotel known for its regal ambiance, beautiful gardens, and elegant rooms.

### **Heritage Hotels and Havelis:**

- **Narain Niwas Palace, Jaipur:** A heritage hotel offering a blend of traditional Rajasthani architecture and modern amenities.
- **Mandawa Haveli, Mandawa:** A charming heritage property known for its intricately decorated rooms and courtyards.
- **Castle Mandawa, Mandawa:** A heritage hotel housed in a centuries-old fortress, featuring well-appointed rooms and cultural evenings.
- **Fort Rajwada, Jaisalmer:** A heritage hotel located near Jaisalmer Fort, offering comfortable rooms and cultural performances.
- **Shahpura Haveli, Shahpura:** A restored haveli offering a glimpse into Rajasthan's rich heritage, with traditional decor and warm hospitality.

### **Boutique and Mid-Range Hotels:**

- **Alsisar Haveli, Jaipur:** A boutique hotel offering comfortable rooms, traditional Rajasthani cuisine, and cultural performances.
- **Treebo Trend The Anchorage, Udaipur:** A mid-range hotel offering modern amenities, comfortable rooms, and a convenient location.
- **Rawla Narlai, Narlai:** A boutique hotel set in a charming village, offering rustic yet comfortable accommodations and personalized service.
- **Narayan Niwas Palace, Bundi:** A heritage hotel known for its beautiful architecture, tranquil surroundings, and warm hospitality.

### **Budget Hotels and Guesthouses:**

- **Zostel, Various Locations:** A chain of backpacker hostels offering budget accommodation, social atmosphere, and organized activities.
- **Hotel Pearl Palace, Jaipur:** A budget-friendly hotel offering clean rooms, a rooftop restaurant, and travel assistance.
- **Ganesh Guest House, Pushkar:** A family-run guesthouse offering affordable rooms, a peaceful atmosphere, and views of Pushkar Lake.
- **Mystic Jaisalmer Hotel:** A budget hotel located in the heart of Jaisalmer, offering comfortable rooms and a rooftop restaurant with views of the fort.

These are just a few examples of the diverse range of accommodation options available for tourists in Rajasthan. Whether you're looking for luxury, heritage, boutique, or budget accommodations, Rajasthan has something to offer for every type of traveller.

## **Tourism encouragement programmes in Rajasthan**

Rajasthan, known for its rich cultural heritage, majestic palaces, vibrant festivals, and stunning landscapes, has implemented several tourism encouragement programs to promote tourism and attract more visitors to the state. Some of these initiatives include:

- **Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation (RTDC):**

RTDC plays a significant role in promoting tourism in Rajasthan by developing and maintaining tourism infrastructure, including hotels, resorts, and tourist complexes.

It organizes various cultural and promotional events to showcase Rajasthan's heritage, cuisine, and traditions to both domestic and international tourists.

- **Destination Marketing Campaigns:**

Rajasthan Tourism organizes destination marketing campaigns to highlight the state's key tourist attractions and promote them through various mediums such as print, electronic media, social media, and participation in travel fairs and exhibitions.

These campaigns aim to create awareness about Rajasthan's tourism offerings and attract tourists from around the world.

- **Heritage Conservation and Restoration:**

Rajasthan government undertakes initiatives for the conservation and restoration of heritage sites, forts, palaces, and monuments to preserve the state's rich cultural legacy.

Projects like restoration of historic buildings, improvement of infrastructure around heritage sites, and promotion of responsible tourism practices contribute to sustainable tourism development.

- **Tourism Infrastructure Development:**

The government invests in the development of tourism infrastructure such as roads, airports, railway stations, and tourist facilities to enhance accessibility and convenience for tourists.

Development of tourist circuits, theme parks, interpretation centers, and tourist information centers are also undertaken to improve the overall tourist experience.

- **Promotion of Rural Tourism:**

Rajasthan promotes rural tourism initiatives to showcase the authentic rural life, traditions, and crafts of the state.

Programs like homestays, village tours, and cultural experiences offer tourists an opportunity to interact with local communities, learn about their way of life, and contribute to rural livelihoods.

- **Adventure Tourism Promotion:**

Rajasthan offers various adventure tourism activities such as hot air ballooning, desert safaris, camel treks, trekking, and wildlife safaris.

The government encourages adventure tourism operators to offer safe and sustainable adventure experiences while preserving the natural and cultural heritage of the state.

- **Incentives for Tourism Investments:**

Rajasthan government provides incentives and subsidies to encourage private sector investments in tourism infrastructure development, hospitality industry, and related sectors. Initiatives like single-window clearance for tourism projects, tax benefits, and land allotment schemes attract investors and promote tourism-related businesses.

These tourism encouragement programs aim to promote Rajasthan as a preferred tourist destination, stimulate economic growth, create employment opportunities, and contribute to the overall socio-economic development of the state.

### **Protection of tourist sites in Rajasthan**

Protection of tourist sites in Rajasthan is of utmost importance to preserve the state's rich cultural heritage, historical significance, and natural beauty. Several measures are in place to ensure the conservation and safeguarding of these sites:

- **Heritage Conservation Laws and Regulations:**

Rajasthan has laws and regulations in place to protect its heritage sites, monuments, and historic buildings. These include the Rajasthan Monuments, Archaeological Sites, and Antiquities Act, which prohibits unauthorized alterations, excavation, or damage to protected monuments.

- **Heritage Conservation Authorities:**

The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and the Rajasthan State Archaeology and Museums Department are responsible for the conservation, preservation, and maintenance of heritage sites, monuments, and archaeological remains in the state.

These authorities conduct regular inspections, conservation works, and restoration efforts to safeguard the integrity of tourist sites.

- **Monitoring and Surveillance:**

Many tourist sites in Rajasthan are monitored through surveillance systems, security personnel, and CCTV cameras to prevent vandalism, theft, and unauthorized activities.

Security measures are often enhanced during peak tourist seasons and festivals to ensure the safety and security of visitors and the preservation of heritage sites.

- **Conservation and Restoration Projects:**

Conservation and restoration projects are undertaken to repair, maintain, and restore historical structures, monuments, and cultural sites in Rajasthan.

These projects involve scientific conservation techniques, structural stabilization, restoration of artwork, and landscaping to revitalize and preserve the cultural heritage of the state.

- **Community Participation and Awareness:**

Engaging local communities in heritage conservation efforts fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility towards preserving tourist sites.

Awareness campaigns, workshops, and educational programs are conducted to educate locals and tourists about the importance of heritage conservation, sustainable tourism practices, and the need to protect historical sites for future generations.

- **Environmental Protection:**

Rajasthan's natural tourist attractions, including wildlife sanctuaries, national parks, and scenic landscapes, are protected through environmental conservation measures.

Wildlife conservation efforts, forest protection programs, and eco-tourism initiatives promote responsible tourism practices and environmental sustainability.

- **Partnerships and Collaborations:**

Collaborations between government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), conservation experts, and private stakeholders play a crucial role in protecting tourist sites in Rajasthan.

Public-private partnerships (PPPs) are formed to mobilize resources, expertise, and technology for heritage conservation projects and tourism development initiatives.

By implementing these measures, Rajasthan endeavors to safeguard its cultural heritage, historical treasures, and natural wonders, ensuring that they remain accessible and enjoyable for present and future generations of tourists.

For more detail -

पर्यटन भूगोल एवं यात्रा प्रबंधन,

एस.सी. बंसल, मीनाक्षी प्रकाशन, मेरठ

राजस्थान में पर्यटन उद्भव विकास एवं वर्तमान स्थिति , डॉ. मोहन लाल गुप्ता शुभदा प्रकाशन, दिल्ली

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Tourism Geography

Dr. Manoj Trivedi