

Jaisalmer

The Blue Book

VINAY Everywhere



City Guide Book

Things you need to know for your visit to
Jaisalmer (India)



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Jaisalmer
YouTube
Video Link
(English)

Jaisalmer
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(Hindi)

1.1 Jaisalmer (A Piece of History)

In the 12th century, the Maharaj of Lodurva overlooked his elder son Rawal Jaisal and passed on the throne to his younger son. Due to this Rawal Jaisal left the kingdom. Wandering in the desert he reached Trikuta Hill, where he met a sage called Eesul. Eesul told him that once Lord Krishna (who was from the Yaduvanshi clan) visited this place and predicted that someone from the Yaduvanshi clan will one day establish a kingdom and rule here. Eesul also showed him the small rock where Lord Krishna had carved this prophecy.



Maharaja Rawal Jaisal

Rawal Jaisal was a Yaduvanshi and on learning this he decided to build a fort here. He made it his capital and Jaisalmer was named after Maharaj Rawal Jaisal. It is believed that even to this day the Rock with Lord Krishna's carving is still somewhere in the fort.



1.2 Jaisalmer (Currently)

Rajasthan, the land of the kings, is at its exotic and colourful best with its battle-scarred forts, its palaces of breathtaking grandeur and its romantic sense of pride and honour. Popularly called as the "Golden City", Jaisalmer is situated in the western most region of Rajasthan. The narrow streets aren't designed for cars or even bikes but Jaisalmer is a great place to just simply walk around.

Yellow sandstone that is the main essence of the city gives it the golden feel as even newly built homes and hotels are given the similar signature look with uniformity in colour and breathtaking carving on the front wall and gates.

You will find plenty of amazing restaurants all around Jaisalmer, offering authentic international cuisines and many photogenic locations for your next Epic Instagram Picture.



2. Top Things to do in Jaisalmer

1. Jaisalmer Fort

2. Patwa Havelis

3. Gadisar Lake

4. Jain Temples

5. Sam Sand Dunes

6. Bada Bagh

7. Kuldhara Village

8. Moti Mahal

9. Tanot Temple

10. Nathmal Haveli

2.1 Jaisalmer Fort



Location: [Click Here](#)

Built in 1156, Jaisalmer Fort is also known as the “Sonar Killa” (The Golden Fort). For most part of its 800-year history, the fort was the entire city of Jaisalmer. Then in the 17th Century the city grew and people started settling outside the fort. The Fort has witnessed many battles and was under Mughal control at one time. Hence you will see shades of Rajasthani and Mughal architecture inside.

The fort features Temples, Museums, Shops, Home, Hotels, and Restaurants. The three main attractions inside the fort are ‘the Royal Palace’, a ‘600 Year Old Jain Temple’ and the ‘Laxminath Ji Temple’ which is the most sacred temple to local residents.

2.2 Patwa Haveli



Location: [Click Here](#)

Near the city centre are the 5 Patwa Havelis, built by 'Guman Chand ji Patwa' for his 5 sons. The 5 Havelis built between 1800 and 1860 are the showpiece of Jaisalmer's legendary architectural wealth. The balconies are so delicately chiselled and would mesmerise anyone.

2 of the 5 Havelis, are now under the Government, 3rd haveli is where descendants of the Patwa family reside. The other 2 are privately owned of which 1, The Kothari-Patwa Haveli is now turned into a multi-storied museum and is a must visit if you want to experience the grand lifestyle of the Patwa's in the 1800's.

2.3 Gadisar Lake



Location: [Click Here](#)

The Gadisar lake was built in 1367 by Maharawal Gadsi Singh, after whom it was named. The grand entrance gates were built by a dancer from the royal court named 'Tillon'. The gates are called 'Tillon Ki Pole' or the Tillon gateway after her.

The banks of the lake consist of shrines, temples, gardens and beautiful golden sandstone gazebos (like in the picture). One can indulge in boat riding, do bird watching or simply enjoy a leisure walk. The 'Gangaur festival' is celebrated by the Rajasthani women with full traditional fanfare at the Gadisar lake every year.

2.4 Jain Temples

Amarsagar Jain Temple: Built in 1928 by the Lodra Rajputs, Amar sagar jain temple is located adjacent to the Amar Sagar Lake roughly 7 Km from Jaisalmer city centre. Beautifully crafted and designed, the temple looks astonishing with its intricate hand carvings and small domes. One of its sections on outside looks unique with its white marble exterior. The temple is a must-visit site for its calm and peaceful feel



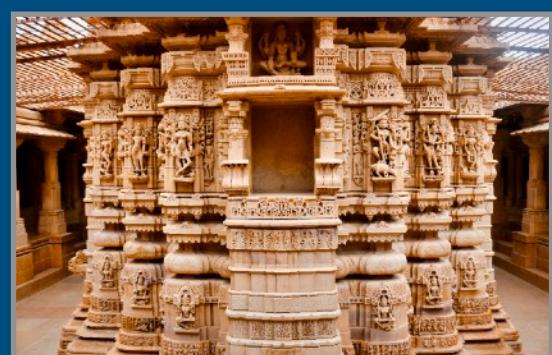
Location: [Click Here](#)



Location: [Click Here](#)

Lodurva Jain Temple: This Temple was built in the 9th century along with the city of Lodurva. Lodurva was attacked and plundered by Mughals many times. This Temple was also destroyed in the Mid 11th century. The structure stands but you can still see the broken Hindu idols. The temple features an arched gateway, and stone Kalpavriksh (the Divine Tree). The Temple also has a famed snake hole, a snake comes out every evening to drink milk offerings, the sighting of the snake is believed as a divine blessing here.

Fort Jain Temple: King Jaisal had land but not much wealth. On the other hand the Jains almost exclusively controlled the Silk Trade on a busy Silk Route, making them vastly wealthy. They struck a deal with the King. They financed the Fort and in return the King agreed to build grand Jain temples inside the fort. As the other temples were plundered by Mughals, this deal was of great significance for both parties as the fort was very secure and hard to breach, the Jain temples inside them stand as they did hundreds of years ago. They also stored one of the largest collections of the Jain literature in the world and thousands of statues as when the silk route shut down, the Jains left Jaisalmer in search of work and donated their religious belongings here.



Location: [Click Here](#)

The carvings, the ceiling, the art work, the idols in all parts of this ancient temple, the grand front to the artistic backside of this temple show just how wealthy the Jains from those times were. This place is a true historic architectural marvel.

2.5 Sam Sand Dunes

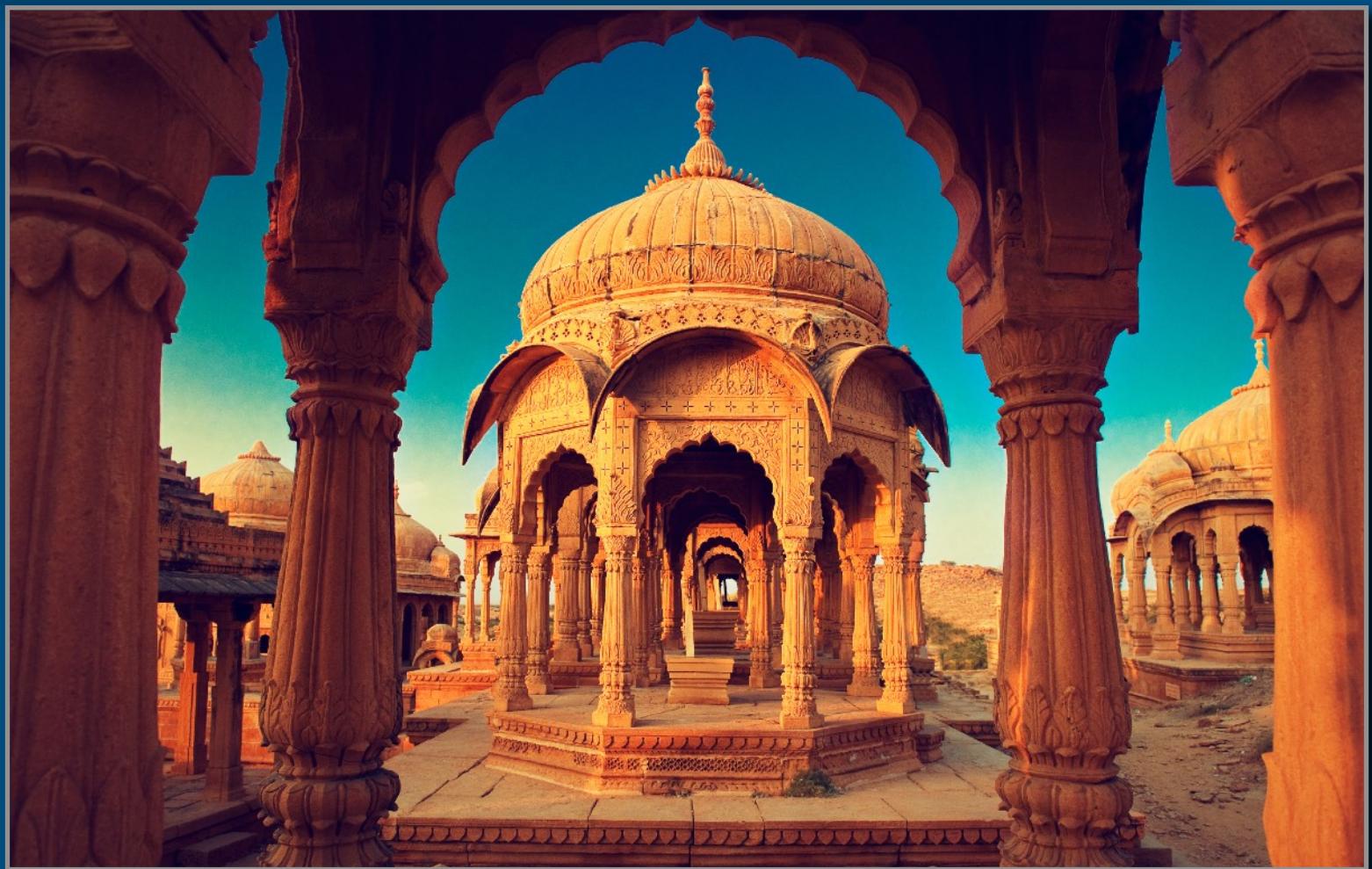


Location: [Click Here](#)

...in the busy city of Jaisalmer it's easy to forget that you're in the middle of a desert. The Sam Sand Dunes, roughly 40 Kms from the city reminds you of just where you are and adds a different flavour to your trip. You can also enjoy a Camel Ride and Jeep Safari here. The region around Sam holds a lot of cultural shows. Rajasthani folk dances are performed by professional artists from all over the state.

The ideal time to visit Sam Sand Dunes is from October to February, when the temperatures are soothing. This also becomes the venue of the famous 'Desert Festival' in February every year, showcasing the rich culture and heritage of Rajasthan.

2.6 Bada Bagh



Location: [Click Here](#)

Bada Bagh literally means Big Garden. Here 'Cenotaphs' (memory monument) and 'Chhatri's (gazebos) are dedicated to Kings and other members of the Royal family. Each Chhatri has a marble slab with inscriptions about the royal it is dedicated to. The first of these monuments was made in the 18th century for Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh by his son Lunkaran. Later many others cenotaphs were erected for Lunkaran and other Royals.

Bada Bagh is on a hill top making it an ideal place to view the sunset. It is one of the most photographed spot around Jaisalmer.

2.7 Kuldhara Village



Location: [Click Here](#)

Kuldhara village is believed to be one of the most haunted place in India. But its just a Myth! There is nothing paranormal here. It's just a deserted village.

According to popular belief, Kuldhara was home to 'Paliwal Brahmins'. Then once, despite his old age 'Salim Singh' (Minister of the Royal Court) wanted to marry a minor girl from Kuldhara. He asked the villagers to send the girl to him or face brutal consequences. The villagers decided to flee Kuldhara overnight. While leaving they cursed the village: No One will be able to settle on the lands they were forced to leave. The Paliwal's disappeared with no trace but the original ruins of the Kuldhara village still remain even today.

2.8 Moti Mahal



Location: [Click Here](#)

'Salim Singh ki Haveli' or 'Motí Mahal' is a magnificent 300 year old piece of architecture. The historical importance along with its architectural wonder makes it one of the most popular havelis in Jaisalmer. Locals claim there were originally 2 additional floors to the current 5. The Haveli went higher than the King's palace and thus he ordered to chop off 2 floors.

The architecture of this mansion is inspired by a dancing peacock. It constitutes 38 uniquely carved balconies. The entrance has Elephant statues. In those days only the most influential people or the 'Dewans' (Ministers) were allowed to build Elephant statues at their entrance. Salim Singh's ambition was to be more influential than the King and some believe, he was!



2.9 Tanot Temple

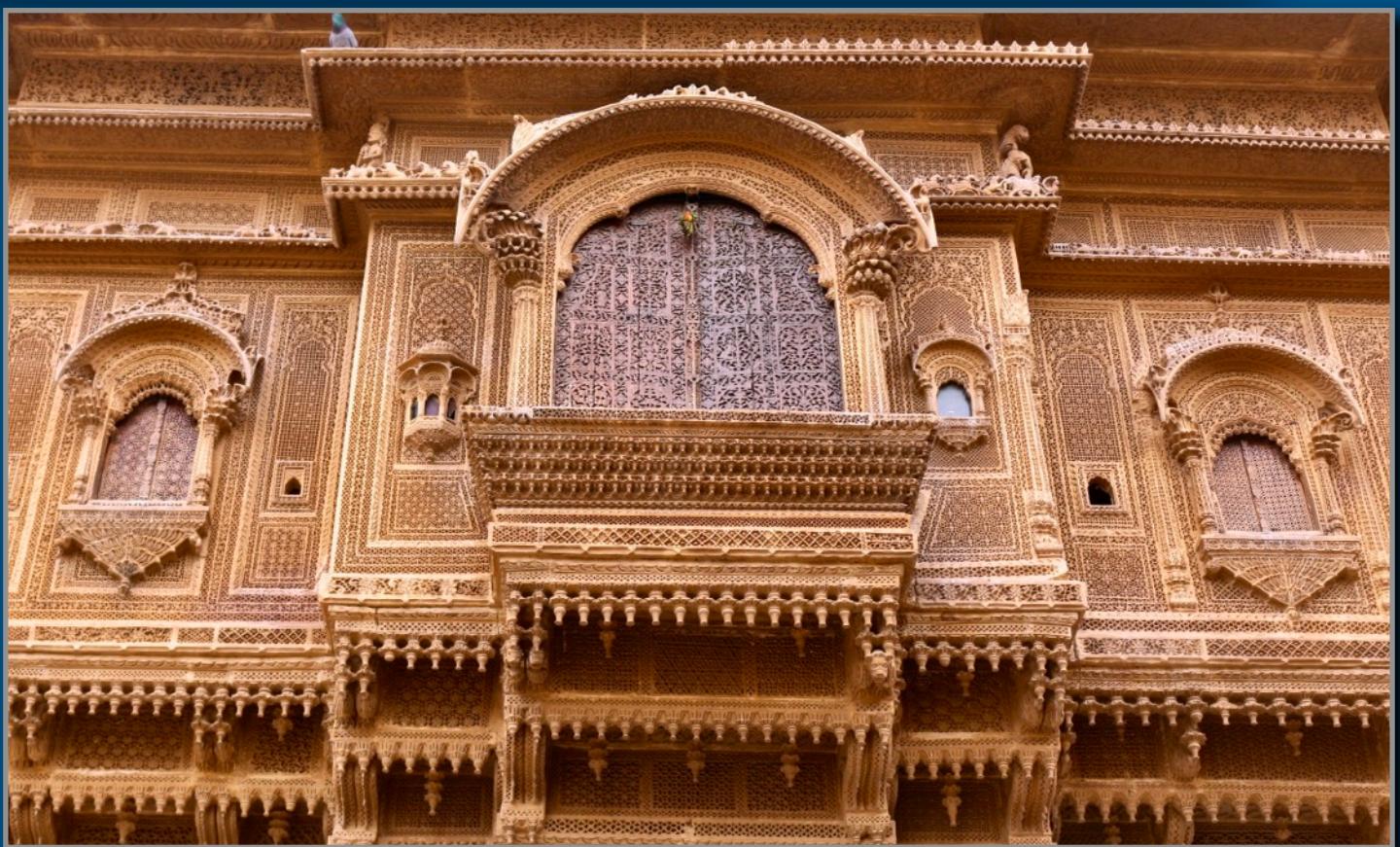


Location: [Click Here](#)

Built in 847 AD, This Temple is dedicated to 'Awad Mata' also known as 'Tanot Mata'. The Tanot mata mandir is under The Border Security Force of India.

In the war of 1965, Pakistan Airforce dropped around 3000 Bombs around this temple. Miraculously none of those bombs exploded. The shells of the Live Bombs are kept inside the temple even today. Pakistani Brigadier Shanavaz Khan was so amazed by this incident that he visited the temple after the war was over. There is a victory pillar at the main entrance and many believe that if you tie a white handkerchief here and wish for something, it comes true!

2.10 Nathmal Haveli



Location: [Click Here](#)

This Haveli was built by two muslim architect brothers in the 19th century to serve as the residence of Minister Diwan Nathmal Singh. They started construction from opposite ends. Notice, this building has similar placements but non identical left and right facades. This choreographed asymmetry is what makes this Haveli unique. This Haveli is perfect fusion of Rajput and Islamic architecture.

The most interesting aspect of this Haveli is the drawings of modern amenities in the interiors such as cars, fans etc. It is believed that the architect brothers dint see these things ever in their life and engraved it with mere help of the descriptions given by people who had seen it.

3. Special Events throughout the Year



The Desert Festival of Jaisalmer

For 3 Days in February every year, Jaisalmer adds every colour known to us to its traditional gold. The Desert festival is vibrant, its energetic, its exotic and its extremely colourful. The event is conducted by Rajasthan State Tourism Corporation.

The main attractions include folk songs performed by famous musicians and dancers from all over Rajasthan. Acrobatics, Camel Parades, Puppet Shows, Competitions like Longest Moustache, Turban Tying, Camel Race, Camel Polo, Camel Decoration and even Camel Dance light up the event.

The Festival takes place at Sam Sand Dunes. Guests are accommodated in Luxury tents, built specifically for this festival. Book your accommodation well in advance as this is a very popular event.

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Official Website

[Click Here](#)

4. Signature Food: Dal Pakwan



Dal Pakwan is the closest Indian cuisine gets to Pizza. It's actually a Sindhi breakfast dish. It is very popular and widely available street food all over Jaisalmer. You will find plenty of stalls at streets just outside the fort walls.

Dal Pakwan is crisp fried maida flatbread, served with chanadal, garnished with chutney and chopped onion. Chilly and spice are added according to taste. This can be as bland or as spicy as you want it to be.

This is the version you're likely to find on streets. Chutney and all ingredients poured on the base. Its as cheap as 30 - 40 INR per dish. But don't be deceived by their humble stalls, The most popular ones boast pictures of famous Bollywood celebrities having visited them. They are almost always crowded.

Apart from Street Food, there are plenty of multi cuisine restaurants that serve local and international delicacies. One such restaurant you must visit for its delicious food and wonderful vibe is... D Desi Aroma. They have open air garden seating, gazebos, private huts and Indian style floor sofas. Located just outside the city near the Bada Bagh.



D Desi Aroma

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Location: [Click Here](#)

5. Weather

April - June

Avoid Jaisalmer during summer, unless you love getting roasted. The months from April to June will see Jaisalmer facing hot and harsh sun, and this is more so because of the proximity of the city with the Thar Desert. There isn't much sightseeing or other tourist activities that you can enjoy because everything stops during the summer. You can't step out of your air-conditioned hotel room, so it is not advisable to visit Jaisalmer around this time.

July - September

July to September is technically Monsoon in Jaisalmer cause occasionally it rains. They don't give much respite from the heat, it can actually make things worse cause of the added humidity. Most top attractions are open roof and the city is best experienced on foot, therefore monsoon is not the ideal time to visit Jaisalmer. But if the weather is not an issue then you can score some great deals during these months.

October - March

The time to visit Jaisalmer is in the winter. This is when the temperatures are pleasant and its soothing to wander outside on foot. Towards the peak of winters (December to January) nights can get really cold. In February the Desert Festival takes place which is the City's signature event. Expect everywhere to be crowded as domestic and foreign tourists head to Jaisalmer during the peak season in good numbers. The prices are at all time high during this period but the warm and welcoming locals make it worth every penny spent.

6. Where to Stay

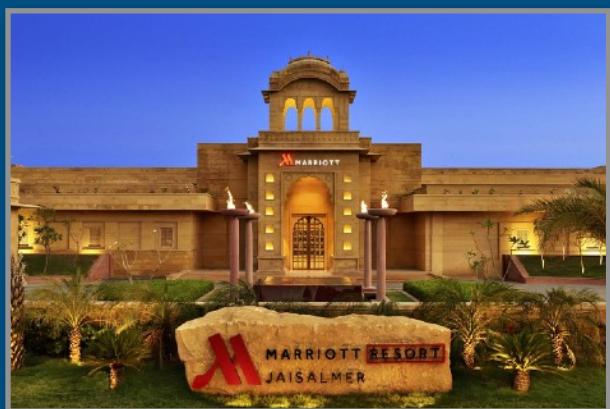
This is a city where you're spoilt for choice. There is something for every taste and every budget. You can go as low as \$8 a night guest houses & basic hotels to the uber luxurious palace like accommodations to the modern Sand Dune tents.

There is a Hotel almost every other street in Jaisalmer. But during peak season you will still struggle to find accommodations. It's best to book well in advance. The most convenient place to stay within budget is inside the fort itself. It's the number 1 attraction plus its in the centre of the city so everything is accessible. Just a little outside the main city you will find 3 Star hotel that offer a premium stay within a reasonable price. If you really want to live like Kings in the Land of the Kings, you have to go to the outskirts of the city where the 5 star hotels are located.

The top Luxury Hotels (Click on the names to visit Official Website and Booking Rooms) to Stay in Jaisalmer are...



[Suryagarh](#)



[Marriott Resort](#)



[Jaisalkot](#)



[Rang Mahal](#)

7. Transportation

Jaisalmer Airport is 17 Kms southeast of the city. To get from the Airport to the city you have to hire a cab or have your hotel pick you up if they offer Airport pick up service.



Jaisalmer is a small city so travel is not too complicated. There are no trams or metros within the city. However there are plenty of options to rent, where u can hire a cab or self drive. You can comfortably cover half of the top 10 attractions on foot if your stay close to the fort.



Tuk-Tuks are called Auto Rickshaws in India. They are cheap, they are easily available, they are more open than cars and you don't find these in the west so its fun to hire an Auto rickshaw if your going somewhere close-by.

But for attractions outside the city like the Bada Bagh or the Jain Temples in Lodurva, Kuldhara Village, Tanot Temple you cant go there by Auto Rickshaw. The best option there is to hire a car. They charge on Per/Km basis. Comes with a local driver who should be able to help you plan your itinerary. Your hotel reception should be able to help you with car hire. Fix and understand all terms and conditions in advance.



Another option is to hire bikes, but it's not advisable. Jaisalmer roads are not meant for cars or bikes. Locals have years of practise but anyone new would take some getting used to. These won't go too far and the close ones are walkable.



8. Currency

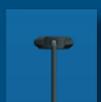


In Jaisalmer (and all of India) the Indian Rupee is the currency. There are 6 Coins in circulation.... 50 Paisa, 1, 2, 5, 10, 20 Rupees. There are 8 Notes with Mahatma Gandhi's picture on all of them... 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200, 500, 2000 Rupees in use.



9. Power Plugs

For India there are two associated plug types, types C and D. Plug type C is the plug which has two round pins, plug type D is the plug which has three round pins in a triangular pattern. India operates on a 230V supply voltage and 50Hz.



Type C

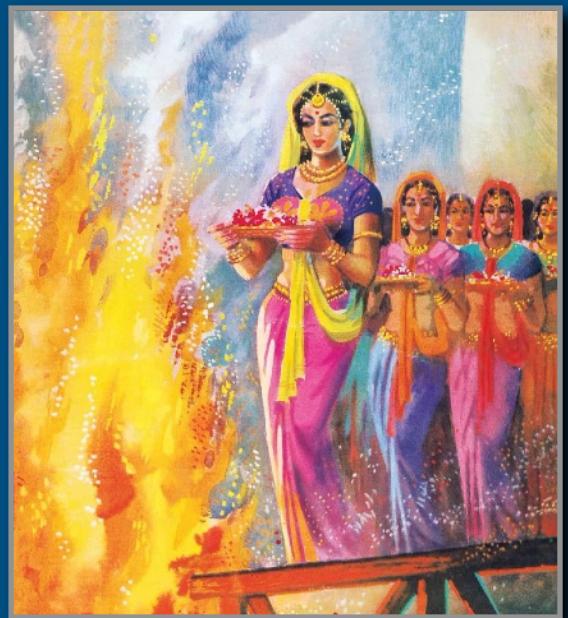
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Type D

10. Fun Facts

1. It is said that in the basement of the main Jain temple at the fort, there is a tunnel which is said to be 15 kms long which is connected to the old capital city of Lodurva.
2. Like in the movie Padmavat, Jaisalmer has witnessed 'Jauhar' (mass self immolation by the women) just like Chittor. What more, it was because of the same person Allaudin Khilji.
3. There is no event as tragic as the "half Jauhar" that happened under the reign of Rawal Lunkarn in 1530-51.

Amir Ali, the chief of a local Afghan clan, was said to have attacked the fort with the pretext of sending his wife to visit Jaisalmer's queen, Amir Ali sent his warriors disguised as her entourage to infiltrate the fort. In the ensuing battle, Rawal Lunkarn lost his soldiers and felt that the fort would be lost to the invaders. He forced the women of the fort to commit Jauhar (Mass Self Immolation by jumping on Live Fire). In a cruel twist of fate however, reinforcements arrived soon, thwarting the invaders and leading to a victory for Rawal Lunkarn. The tragic incident is referred to as the half-Jauhar of Jaisalmer Fort.



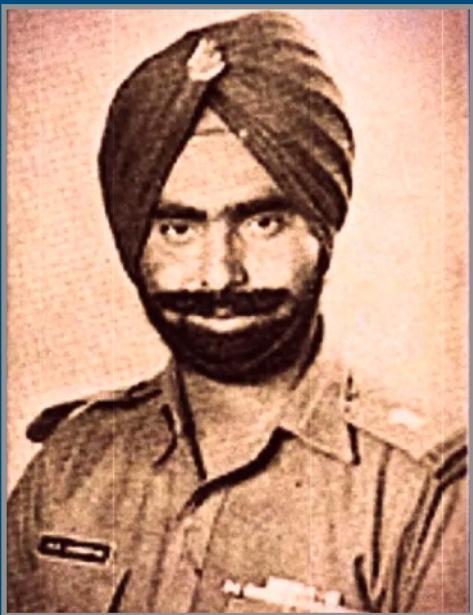
4. In Mid 1970's when the Patwa family business faded, they sold 2 of the 5 Havelis. The other 3 were rumoured to be bought by Foreigner Investors soon. The then Prime Minister of India Mrs. Indira Gandhi got to know about this and she interfered. She made an unscheduled stop in Jaisalmer, gave Patwa Haveli's national heritage status and

forbid the sale of these Havelis. Even today there is Ban on the Sale of these Havelis.

5. Once upon a time, Jaisalmer served as a trade centre due to its location of being situated on the trade route connecting the west to China.

6. Jaisalmer lies near to Indo-Pak border, and there are several cultural exchanges between the borders. The tales of 'Merasi' community is a great example of such a cultural and religious exchange. Merasi is a Muslim community of musicians who sing songs on Hindu Gods! Yeah, they are said to be Muslim converts who were Hindus. Merasi musicians are very much part of Jaisalmer culture

7. Unlike what is portrayed in the Movie Border, in the 1965 'Battle of Longewala' near Jaisalmer, India lost only 2 Soldiers. Pakistan However, lost 200+ Soldiers, 34 Tanks (destroyed or captured), 500+ Vehicles. Indian Major Kuldip Singh Chandpuri was awarded the second highest Gallantry Award: The Mahavir Chakra while Pakistan's Major Gen. Mustafa was tried in court in Pakistan for his negligence in the war.



Major Kuldip Singh Chandpuri

Primary Language In Jaisalmer is Marwari / Hindi

BASIC PHRASES

ENGLISH	HINDI TRANSLATION
Hello	Namaste
How are you?	Aap kaise hain?
What is your name?	Aapka naam kya hai?
My name is Vinay	Mera naam Vinay hai
Thank you	Dhanyavad
Sorry	Maaf kijiye
Excuse me	Suniye
See you	Phir milenge
Let's go	Chalo
Yes	Haan
No	Nahi
Good	Accha
Great	Bahut accha
Bad	Bura
Okay	Theek hai
How much does this cost?	Ye kitne ka hai?
Hurry up!	Jaldi karo
I don't like this	Mujhe pasand nahi hai
I like this	Mujhe pasand hai

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