



Regal Charm

Take a walk through the past in Jaipur

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9am

Jaipur is the very definition of living history, a city chock-a-block with monuments and palaces. After breakfast, start your tour at **Hawa Mahal**, or 'Palace of Winds', an ornate pink sandstone structure constructed in 1799. The façade is the most interesting part, with a series of carved, arched windows rising up five floors. It is said there are 953 of these windows, which once provided a space for the women of the royal household to watch the world go by unseen.

10am

From here, head to **Jantar Mantar**, located around the corner. At first sight, it seems like a mishmash of odd structures. The Jantar Mantar

however is an astronomical observatory dating back to the early 18th century. Even today, some of the instruments are regarded as precise and sophisticated, including the massive sundial called the Brihat Samrat Yantra. To get the best of this experience, hire a guide who will explain how these instruments work.

11am

To escape the heat, step into the magnificent City Palace, a huge complex of courtyards, smaller palaces and gardens. Look out for the four exquisite gates in the inner courtyard, representing the seasons. The **Mubarak Mahal**, or the palace once used to welcome visitors, is now a museum (msmuseum.com) featuring

a collection of royal artefacts, including costumes, weaponry and jewellery. The museum is a testament to the wealth of the royal family of Jaipur and their patronage of the arts.

12:30pm

It's time to head out of town to the **Amber** (pronounced Ah-mer) fort palace, just 11 kilometres away. Hire a cab to get to the erstwhile capital of the royal family of Jaipur, built in the late 16th century. It can be a steep hike up to the entrance, so take a ride on an elephant's back instead. For a meal fit for a king, lunch at the palace restaurant, **1135 AD** (mshospitality.in/location/1135AD). The **Thaal-e-Amber**, a platter of the best meat dishes from the region, is highly recommended.

2pm

Wander around this jumble of palaces, pavilions and halls, entering through **Suraj Pol**, or the 'Sun Gate'. The buildings are of a muted yellow and pink sandstone and seem to change colours with the intensity of the sun. Make sure to spend time at the **Sheesh Mahal**, with its stunning mirror work studded on walls and ceilings in various shapes and sizes.

3:30pm

You might have a tough time finding this small museum in the narrow lanes around the base of the fort. But the **Anokhi Museum of Hand Printing** (anokhi.com/museum), housed in an old mansion, is totally worth the effort. It is the only one of its kind to

document the fading art of hand block printing. There are many excellent displays and exhibitions within the museum, as well as demonstrations on the rooftop terrace.

5pm

Back in Jaipur city, explore the crowded shopping lanes around the **Hawa Mahal**, which form its throbbing heart. Polish your bargaining skills in advance because everything from blue pottery to embroidered leather shoes to silver jewellery is up for a discount for the crafty negotiator.

7pm

End your day with a relaxed dinner at **Steam**, the restaurant set inside a vintage locomotive at the Taj Rambagh

Jaipur is popularly known as the **Pink City**, thanks to the colour of its buildings

Palace hotel (tajhotels.com/luxury/grand-palaces-and-iconic-hotels/rambagh-palace-jaipur/fine-dining.html). Although Steam is known for Italian cuisine, you can begin with a local motif in the form of Jaipore Martini, which comes with a floating rose petal.