

Three unhurried days in Udaipur: lakes, palaces and thalis

Udaipur, Rajasthan — The City of Lakes

A gentle, family-paced loop through Udaipur's palace, ghats and gardens with plenty of sit-down thali meals and a sunset boat ride thrown in. The plan avoids rushing between sights, keeps stairs and heat exposure to a minimum for elderly travellers, and leaves the evenings free for the lakefront promenade.

Suits: Multi-generational families and small friend groups wanting a relaxed, culture-and-food-focused 3 days without long walks or a packed itinerary

What it costs, per person

Stay: Rs 6,750 · Food: Rs 2,700 · Local transport: Rs 1,350 · Tickets: Rs 1,370 · **Total: Rs 12,170**

Day 1 · City Palace, the old city and a sunset on the lake

Palace, temple and lakefront culture

09:15 City Palace

Arrive close to opening to beat the mid-morning queues. Walk through the courtyards, mirrored Sheesh Mahal and museum wing at an easy pace; skip the separately-priced Crystal Gallery unless everyone in the group is keen since it's a steep add-on.

City Palace, eastern bank of Lake Pichola · 120 min · Rs 300

With family: Corridors zigzag with stairs and the marble gets slippery, especially after cleaning in the morning; hold small children's hands and go slow with elderly parents.

11:25 Jagdish Temple

A short walk from the palace to this three-storey Vishnu temple known for its carved spire. Shoes come off at the base of a marble staircase, so it's a quick but genuine climb.

Jagdish Chowk, old city · 30 min · Rs 0 · Walk, 5 min, free

With family: Marble steps can be tricky for anyone with knee problems; there's a handrail on one side but it's narrow.

16:00 Lake Pichola boat ride (sunset option)

Board near the City Palace ghats for the loop out to Jagmandir Island and back, timed so the return trip catches the palace lighting up at dusk. Buy tickets at the official counter to avoid touts pushing pricier "upgraded" packages.

City Palace jetty, Lake Pichola · 60 min · Rs 400 · Auto, 15 min, approx 50 INR

With family: Getting in and out of the boat involves a step down from the jetty; keep a hand on elderly parents and toddlers.

17:30 Bagore ki Haveli evening folk dance show

A short walk from the boat jetty to this 18th-century haveli on Gangori Ghat for the evening puppetry and folk dance performance, genuinely enjoyable across three generations.

Bagore ki Haveli, Gangori Ghat · 90 min · Rs 120 · Walk, 5 min, free

With family: Seating is first-come-first-served on the floor upstairs with no lift, so arrive 20 minutes early to get a spot near the wall if grandparents need to lean back.

Where to eat

Breakfast: Simple hotel breakfast before setting out early — Hotel (Rs 150)

Lunch: Unlimited Rajasthani thali with dal baati churma, Jain option available on request — Thali restaurant near Jagdish Chowk (Rs 350)

Dinner: Rooftop dinner overlooking the lit-up City Palace and lake — Rooftop restaurant near Gangori Ghat (Rs 400)

Where to stay

Hotel Hill Park Udaipur, Central Udaipur, near Fateh Sagar — Rs 2,250 a night. Straightforward mid-range rooms at roughly half the quoted rate when shared two to a room, central enough for short auto hops to both the old city and Fateh Sagar side

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Save a little. Agree the auto fare before getting in for each hop rather than after; ask the hotel reception what a fair rate

looks like for City Palace and the ghats specifically.

Day total, per person: Rs 4,270

Day 2 · Gardens, the quieter lake and an evening of shopping

Low-stress family sights and local bazaars

09:00 Saheliyon ki Bari (Garden of the Maidens)

A flat, easy garden with fountains and a lotus pool, built for the royal women of the court. There are no stairs to speak of, making it a genuinely relaxed start to the day for grandparents or toddlers.

Saheliyon ki Bari, near Fateh Sagar Lake · 60 min · Rs 20

With family: Shaded benches throughout make this a good spot for anyone who needs to sit and rest partway through.

10:15 Fateh Sagar Lake promenade and boat to Nehru Island

A short walk to the quieter, more local lake, with an optional boat ride out to the small island garden. It's less crowded than Lake Pichola and a nice, low-key activity for young kids.

Fateh Sagar Lake · 60 min · Rs 100 · Walk, 10 min, free

With family: The lakefront walk itself is free and flat; only the boat ride to the island costs extra.

14:00 Vintage and Classic Car Collection

A quick, air-conditioned break from walking at this small museum of the Mewar royal family's vintage cars, several of which appeared in old films. Good for car-loving kids and grandparents who want to sit indoors out of the heat for a while.

Near City Palace · 45 min · Rs 200 · Auto, 15 min, approx 100 INR

With family: Fully accessible with no stairs; a comfortable stop if anyone needs a break from the sun.

16:00 Hathi Pol and Bapu Bazaar shopping

Wander the main shopping lanes for miniature paintings, block-printed textiles, silver jewellery and leather mojaris. Bargaining is expected, so compare prices at two or three shops before settling.

Hathi Pol and Bapu Bazaar, old city · 90 min · Rs 0 · Auto, 10 min, approx 80 INR

With family: Lanes are narrow and shared with autos, bikes and the odd cow; keep small children's hands held rather than letting them walk ahead.

Where to eat

Breakfast: Hotel breakfast — Hotel (Rs 150)

Lunch: Thali or millet-based Rajasthani lunch, Jain options easy to find — Local thali house near Fateh Sagar (Rs 350)

Dinner: Street snacks like kachori and mirchi bada from a busy stall, followed by a light sit-down dinner — Old city market area (Rs 400)

Where to stay

Hotel Hill Park Udaipur, Central Udaipur, near Fateh Sagar — Rs 2,250 a night. Same central base as day 1, avoiding the hassle of switching hotels mid-trip.

Save a little: Buy any silver jewellery or textiles at Bapu Bazaar rather than at hotel or airport shops, and always ask for a second and third quote before agreeing a price.

Day total, per person: Rs 3,820

Day 3 · Ahar, Shilpgram and a hilltop sunset

History, crafts and a wide view over both lakes

09:30 Ahar Cenotaphs

A quiet, uncrowded cluster of centuries-old royal cremation memorials, a good stop for anyone with a specific interest in Mewar history. There isn't much shade, so keep it brief if the day is warm.

Ahar, just outside the old city · 45 min · Rs 50

With family: Not much shade and can feel repetitive to young children, so treat it as an optional add rather than a must-see if the group is tired.

11:00 Shilpgram

A spread-out, mostly flat rural arts-and-crafts village showcasing folk architecture and crafts from Rajasthan and neighbouring states. Check in advance if there's a craft demonstration or performance on that day.

Shilpgram, edge of the city near the Aravalli hills · 90 min · Rs 50 · Auto or car, 25 min, approx 150 INR

With family: Flat and comfortable for a slower-paced visit; good option for anyone who wants a break from stairs and crowds.

15:30 Sajjangarh (Monsoon Palace) sunset viewpoint

A winding drive up to the white marble hilltop palace for sweeping views over both of Udaipur's lakes as the sun goes down. It's run by the Forest Department as part of a wildlife sanctuary, and there's usually a small extra vehicle charge on top of the entry fee.

Sajjangarh hill, above the city · 90 min · Rs 130 · Car with driver, 30 min, approx 200 INR (includes the hill road)

With family: The road up is winding and can feel long for young kids or anyone prone to motion sickness; go with a private car rather than shared transport for comfort.

Where to eat

Breakfast: Hotel breakfast — Hotel (Rs 150)

Lunch: Simple local thali near Shilpgram before heading to Sajjangarh — Local dhaba near Shilpgram (Rs 300)

Dinner: Farewell dinner with lake and palace views to close out the trip — Rooftop restaurant near Lake Pichola (Rs 450)

Where to stay

Hotel Hill Park Udaipur, Central Udaipur, near Fateh Sagar — Rs 2,250 a night. Final night at the same base keeps logistics simple for an early departure the next morning.

Save a little: Hire one car with driver for the whole afternoon covering Shilpgram and Sajjangarh rather than booking separate autos for each hop; it's usually cheaper per person when the cost is split across the group.

Day total, per person: Rs 4,080

Pack for this trip

- Comfortable, closed walking shoes for uneven stone lanes and marble floors
- A light shawl or stole for temple visits where shoulders should be covered
- Sunscreen, sunglasses and a hat given how much time is spent outdoors on ghats and hilltops
- A small first-aid kit with rehydration salts if travelling with elderly parents
- A printed or offline map of the old city, since data coverage can be patchy in the narrow lanes

Stay safe

- City Palace and several havelis involve stairs and slippery marble; go slow with elderly parents or carry toddlers rather than letting them navigate steps
- Old city lanes mix autos, bikes and cows in tight spaces, so keep small children's hands held rather than letting them walk ahead
- Buy boat and attraction tickets only at official counters; touts near the ghats routinely push unnecessary "upgraded" packages or guides
- Book early morning airport or station cars through the hotel rather than relying on app cabs, which have patchy coverage and occasional cancellations outside the tourist belt
- Avoid the peak April-June heat with young kids or older travellers, as walking between monuments can bring on heat exhaustion quickly

Local courtesies

- Remove shoes before entering temples like Jagdish Temple and be prepared for the marble floor to be warm or cold underfoot
- Dress modestly at temples and the City Palace complex; shoulders and knees covered is appreciated
- Bargaining is expected in Bapu Bazaar and similar markets, but keep it good-natured rather than aggressive
- Ask before photographing individual performers at the Bagore ki Haveli dance show or local vendors at Shilpgram

If it rains

- City Palace and Bagore ki Haveli both have covered indoor sections and work well as rainy-day options
- The Vintage and Classic Car Collection is fully indoors and a good filler stop if outdoor plans get washed out
- Lake Pichola boat rides may be suspended in heavy rain or high winds; check with the ticket counter before heading to the jetty
- Sajjangarh's winding hill road is best skipped in heavy rain given visibility and slippery surfaces; reschedule for a clearer evening if possible