

Two focused days in Jaipur: forts by day, old city and culture by evening

Jaipur, Rajasthan — The Pink City

This plan front-loads the hilltop forts on day one, when energy and morning light are best, then spends day two flat and central in the walled city before winding down with a folk-culture dinner at Chokhi Dhani. It's built for a family with a mix of ages who want the big sights covered properly in two days without sprinting.

Suits: Mid-range families or friend groups with a wide age range, including grandparents, who want the essential Jaipur sights done comfortably in a tight two-day window

What it costs, per person

Stay: Rs 2,800 · Food: Rs 1,300 · Local transport: Rs 1,000 · Tickets: Rs 1,350 · **Total: Rs 6,450**

Day 1 · Amer, Jaigarh and a Nahargarh sunset

Forts and hill views

08:00 Amer Fort

Arrive right at opening to beat both the heat and the tour-bus crowds. Cover the Diwan-i-Aam, the mirror-inlaid Sheesh Mahal and the Sukh Niwas courtyards; this is the single most impressive stop of the trip and deserves unhurried time.

Amer Fort, about 11 km from city centre · 150 min · Rs 100 · Car with driver picks up from hotel, approx 25-30 min, fare covered in the day's car hire

With family: Steady uphill walk with several flights of stairs; for anyone with knee trouble, take the jeep ride up to the gate rather than walking or riding the elephant (elephant queues are long and the practice is discouraged on animal-welfare grounds). Hold small children's hands on the stepped courtyards.

10:45 Jaigarh Fort

Continue up via the covered walkway connecting Amer to Jaigarh to see the Jaivana cannon, reputedly the world's largest wheeled cannon, and the ramparts overlooking Maota Lake. It's quieter than Amer and a good photo stop.

Jaigarh Fort, on the hill above Amer · 60 min · Rs 100 · Walk via the covered walkway, approx 15-20 min uphill, free (or a short 10-minute car ride if the walk feels like too much after Amer)

With family: This adds another uphill stretch right after Amer; if elderly members are already tired, it's fine to skip this stop and head straight back down.

13:00 Jal Mahal photo stop

A five-minute stop at the roadside viewpoint for the lake palace, which appears to float in the middle of Man Sagar Lake. There's no interior visit, so this is purely a photo break on the way back into the city.

Jal Mahal, Man Sagar Lake · 15 min · Rs 0 · Car, approx 15 min from the Amer/Jaigarh area, fare covered in the day's car hire

16:00 Nahargarh Fort sunset

Head up for Jaipur's best-known sunset viewpoint over the city; less crowded than Amer, with a couple of cafes inside for tea and snacks while waiting for the light to turn golden.

Nahargarh Fort, Aravalli hills · 90 min · Rs 50 · Car, approx 30 min from the Jal Mahal area, fare covered in the day's car hire

With family: Some uneven walking along the ramparts for the best views; keep small children close as parts of the edge are unguarded.

Where to eat

Breakfast: Included at the hotel — Hotel (Rs 0)

Lunch: Rajasthani thali or a la carte at a sit-down restaurant near Amer — Restaurant near Amer Fort (e.g. Anokhi Cafe or 1135 AD) (Rs 450)

Dinner: Rajasthani thali with dal-baati-churma and gatte ki sabzi — Sit-down restaurant near the hotel or MI Road (Rs 400)

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Where to stay

Umaid Bhawan Heritage Style Boutique Hotel, Bani Park — Rs 2,800 a night. Central, heritage-styled, and a comfortable mid-range base within easy reach of both Amer Fort and the old city; slightly above the target ceiling but the closest genuine mid-range option on file.

Save a little: Split the day's car hire (roughly 1500-2500 total) across the whole group to bring the per-person transport cost down, and consider skipping Jaigarh Fort to save the ticket cost and the extra climb if energy is running low.

Day total, per person: Rs 4,400

Day 2 · Old city landmarks, bazaars and an evening at Chokhi Dhani

Old city culture and food

08:30 Hawa Mahal

See the famous pink sandstone facade from the street outside first, when the light is best and traffic is thin, then step inside briefly; the interior is bare and can be seen in under an hour.

Hawa Mahal, old city · 45 min · Rs 50 · Auto or cab from hotel, approx 15 min, approx 100-150 fare

With family: Photograph the facade from the pavement across the road before crossing; the street fills with traffic quickly, so hold children's hands.

09:30 City Palace & Jantar Mantar

Walk through the City Palace's courtyards, costume and armoury museums, then continue into the adjoining Jantar Mantar observatory to see the giant stone astronomical instruments, including the world's largest sundial. Combined ticket cost covers both stops; a guide at the gate helps make sense of the instruments for children.

City Palace complex, old city · 180 min · Rs 350 · Walk, approx 8-10 min from Hawa Mahal, free

With family: Mostly flat courtyards, manageable for grandparents; carry water as Jantar Mantar has limited shade.

13:30 Bazaar shopping at Johari & Babu Bazaar

Browse Johari Bazaar for jewellery and gemstones and Babu Bazaar for block-print textiles and juttis.

Bargaining is normal and expected; start at roughly half the quoted price and settle from there.

Johari Bazaar & Babu Bazaar · 120 min · Rs 0 · Walk, approx 10 min from City Palace, free

With family: Crowded lanes with scooters, hand-carts and cows; keep small children within arm's reach. Many shops close on Sundays, so plan this stop for a weekday if possible.

17:30 Chokhi Dhani evening

An evening of folk dances, puppet shows, camel and bullock cart rides, and an unlimited traditional thali dinner at this ethnic-village resort on the city's outskirts; a reliably enjoyable, low-effort wind-down for children after two full sightseeing days.

Chokhi Dhani, Tonk Road outskirts · 180 min · Rs 700 · Cab or auto, approx 30-40 min from the old city, approx 300-400 fare

With family: Dinner is included in the ticket, so there's no separate dinner cost tonight; most activities are seated or gentle walks, easy on tired legs and older knees.

Where to eat

Breakfast: Included at the hotel — Hotel (Rs 0)

Lunch: Kachori, mirchi bada and a light thali — Old city sweet/snack shop near Johari Bazaar (e.g. Rawat Mishthan Bhandar or Laxmi Mishthan Bhandar) (Rs 450)

Dinner: Unlimited traditional Rajasthani thali — Included with Chokhi Dhani entry (Rs 0)

Where to stay

Umaid Bhawan Heritage Style Boutique Hotel, Bani Park — Rs 0 a night. Same hotel as night one; this is a two-day, one-night trip, so no additional room night is booked for day two, only late check-out and luggage storage before departure.

Save a little: Stick to Babu Bazaar for textiles and juttis rather than gemstone shopping in Johari Bazaar if the budget is tight, since gold and gemstone purchases can add up fast and are hard to value-check quickly.

Day total, per person: Rs 2,050

Pack for this trip

- Comfortable, closed walking shoes for the fort climbs and uneven bazaar lanes
- A hat, sunglasses and reusable water bottle, especially for the Amer-Jaigarh-Nahargarh circuit which has long stretches without shade
- A light shawl or scarf for women entering City Palace or Birla Mandir-type sites out of courtesy
- Light layers if travelling in the cooler months (Oct-Mar), since early mornings and Nahargarh evenings can turn chilly
- A small first-aid kit and any regular medication for elderly members, given the walking and stair climbs involved

Stay safe

- Hold small children's hands at all times in old-city lanes and near Hawa Mahal, where scooters, hand-carts and cows share the road with no real separation
- Amer Fort involves a genuine uphill climb and several flights of stairs inside; budget extra time for elderly parents and consider the jeep ride up rather than walking or the elephant ride
- Insist on the meter or a fixed fare before boarding autos near monuments, since tourist-rate quoting around Hawa Mahal and Amer Fort is routine
- Ignore anyone claiming a monument is 'closed' and offering to redirect you elsewhere or claiming to represent a 'government emporium'; these are commission scams, not official arrangements
- Wind down street wandering in tourist areas by 9-10pm rather than later, as is sensible in any Indian city

Local courtesies

- Bargaining is expected in Johari and Bapu Bazaar; only fixed-price government emporiums don't expect haggling
- Dress modestly (shoulders and knees covered) when entering City Palace or any temple, and remove footwear before entering temple premises
- Ask before photographing individual shopkeepers, priests or performers, even though photographing monuments and crowds generally is fine
- Jain and onion-garlic-free food requests are completely normal here and easy to make at any restaurant

If it rains

- Swap an outdoor stop for Albert Hall Museum in Ram Niwas Garden, a good indoor option with miniature paintings, metalwork and an Egyptian mummy
- City Palace and Jantar Mantar have covered sections and courtyards that remain manageable in light rain
- Chokhi Dhani has covered seating areas for the folk performances and dining, so the evening plan generally still works in a drizzle
- Treat Amer and Jaigarh's stone courtyards and stairs as slippery in wet weather and go slow, especially with elderly members or small children