

Two relaxed days in Udaipur: palaces, lakes and lantern-lit evenings

Udaipur, Rajasthan — The City of Lakes

A gentle two-day loop built around Udaipur's core sights - the City Palace, a boat ride on Lake Pichola, the folk dance show at Bagore ki Haveli, and the quieter Fateh Sagar side of town finishing with sunset at Sajjangarh. Paced for families with kids or grandparents, with short travel hops and time built in for proper sit-down thalis rather than rushed street meals.

Suits: Mid-range families and small groups who want the highlights of Udaipur done unhurried over two days, without long transfers or late nights

What it costs, per person

Stay: Rs 4,500 · Food: Rs 1,800 · Local transport: Rs 780 · Tickets: Rs 1,120 · **Total: Rs 8,200**

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

Royal Udaipur - palace, temple, boat ride and an evening of folk dance

09:30 City Palace

Rajasthan's largest palace complex, with courtyards, mirrored halls and a museum wing. Go straight at opening time since the ticket queue and the narrow zigzag corridors inside get crowded by mid-morning.

City Palace, eastern bank of Lake Pichola · 120 min · Rs 300 · Auto from Hotel Hill Park (near Fateh Sagar) to City Palace, approx 15 min, approx 100 INR

With family: Marble floors and stone steps get slippery, and there's genuine walking between courtyards - keep a hand free for elderly parents and don't let toddlers run ahead. The Crystal Gallery is a separate high-priced add-on and can be skipped with young kids.

11:40 Jagdish Temple

A large three-storey Vishnu temple right by the palace, known for its carved pillars and 79-foot spire. Entry is free and it's a quick, atmospheric stop rather than a long one.

Jagdish Temple, next to City Palace · 30 min · Rs 0 · Walk from City Palace exit, approx 5 min, free

With family: Shoes come off and there's a flight of marble steps - a bit tricky for anyone with knee problems, so take it slow.

14:30 Lake Pichola boat ride with Jagmandir Island stop

A boat out to Jagmandir Island and back, with time to walk around the marble gardens and elephant sculptures on the island before returning. Buy tickets at the official counter near the jetty rather than from touts pushing an 'upgraded' package.

Boat jetty near City Palace, out to Jagmandir Island · 90 min · Rs 400 · Walk from Jagdish Temple to the boat jetty, approx 10 min, free (after a lunch break in between)

With family: The jetty steps and getting in and out of the boat need a hand for elderly parents and small children - crew usually help, but stay close.

18:00 Bagore ki Haveli evening folk dance show

An 18th-century lakeside mansion turned cultural museum, with a well-loved hour-long evening show of Rajasthani folk dance and puppetry that works for every age in the family.

Bagore ki Haveli, Gangori Ghat · 90 min · Rs 120 · Walk along the ghat promenade from the boat jetty, approx 10 min, free

With family: Seating is first-come-first-served and the show hall is upstairs with no lift, so arrive at least 20-30 minutes early to get a seat with a clear view, especially if carrying a toddler.

Where to eat

Breakfast: Simple hotel breakfast or a nearby café before setting out — Near Hotel Hill Park, Fateh Sagar area (Rs 200)

Lunch: Unlimited Rajasthani thali with dal baati churma; ask for a Jain version if needed — A thali house in the old city near Jagdish Temple (Rs 300)

Dinner: Sit-down dinner at a ghat-side restaurant after the dance show - go for the setting but expect it's priced more for the view than the food — Near Gangori Ghat / Lake Pichola (Rs 400)

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Where to stay

Hotel Hill Park Udaipur, Central Udaipur, near Fateh Sagar Lake — Rs 4,500 a night. Straightforward business-standard rooms with space for connecting family rooms, centrally located for both the old city and Fateh Sagar side

Save a little: Skip the separate Crystal Gallery ticket inside City Palace and the Vintage Car Museum add-on if the budget is tight - the main palace ticket alone gives a full 2 hours and is enough for most families.

Day total, per person: Rs 4,170

Day 2 · Gardens, the quieter lake, and a sunset over the city

A gentler day around Fateh Sagar, craft village Shilpgram, and the Monsoon Palace at sunset

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

A flat, easy garden with fountains and a lotus pool built for the royal court's women - genuinely no stairs to worry about, making it a good first stop of the day.

Saheliyon ki Bari, near Fateh Sagar Lake · 60 min · Rs 20 · Auto from Hotel Hill Park to Saheliyon ki Bari, approx 10 min, approx 80 INR

With family: The easiest, lowest-stress stop on the whole trip - good choice if grandparents need a breather from yesterday's walking.

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

A quieter, more local lake than Pichola, with a lakefront promenade and an optional short boat ride out to the island garden - a nice low-key activity for younger kids.

Fateh Sagar Lake · 90 min · Rs 150 · Walk from Saheliyon ki Bari to the Fateh Sagar promenade, approx 10 min, free

With family: Less crowded and touty than Lake Pichola, but the boat jetty steps still need a hand for elderly parents.

13:30 Shilpgram craft village

A rural arts-and-crafts village with folk architecture, craft stalls and occasional performances from across Rajasthan and nearby states - mostly flat and spread out, easy on tired legs.

Shilpgram, edge of the city · 90 min · Rs 50 · Auto from Fateh Sagar Lake to Shilpgram, approx 20 min, approx 150 INR

With family: Check ahead if there's a craft fair or performance on the day you visit - it makes the stop much more lively for kids.

16:00 Sajjangarh (Monsoon Palace) sunset viewpoint

A white marble hilltop palace with sweeping views over both of Udaipur's lakes, best timed for the hour before sunset. It sits inside a Forest Department wildlife sanctuary and there's usually a small extra vehicle charge at the gate on top of the entry ticket.

Sajjangarh hilltop, above the city · 90 min · Rs 80 · Auto or taxi from Shilpgram up the winding hill road to Sajjangarh, approx 25 min, approx 200 INR (includes the gate vehicle charge)

With family: The road up winds a fair bit, which can unsettle young children prone to motion sickness - keep snacks and water handy for the ride.

Where to eat

Breakfast: Hotel breakfast before the early start — Hotel Hill Park (Rs 200)

Lunch: Thali or a simple vegetarian sit-down meal near Fateh Sagar before heading to Shilpgram — Near Fateh Sagar Lake (Rs 300)

Dinner: Relaxed dinner back near the hotel after returning from Sajjangarh, kachori or mirchi bada as a starter from a busy stall if anyone wants street snacks — Near Hotel Hill Park, Fateh Sagar area (Rs 400)

Where to stay

Hotel Hill Park Udaipur, Central Udaipur, near Fateh Sagar Lake — Rs 4,500 a night. Same central base for both nights avoids re-packing and keeps transfers short given the second day loops around Fateh Sagar

Save a little: Skip the Nehru Island boat ride at Fateh Sagar if the group is content with just the lakefront walk - it's an easy 150 INR per person to trim without losing much of the experience.

Day total, per person: Rs 4,030

Pack for this trip

- Comfortable closed shoes for palace stairs and uneven ghat steps - flip-flops are risky on the marble
- A light shawl or scarf for temple visits where shoulders should be covered
- Sunscreen, caps and water bottles regardless of season, since a lot of the day is outdoors
- A small first-aid kit with motion sickness tablets for the winding Sajjangarh road if anyone in the group is prone to it

Stay safe

- City Palace and several havelis have stairs and marble floors that turn slippery - go slow with toddlers and elderly parents, and use handrails where available
- Old city lanes are narrow and shared with autos, bikes and cows - hold small children's hands rather than letting them walk ahead
- Buy boat and attraction tickets only at the official counters near the ghats - touts routinely push 'upgraded' packages or unnecessary guides
- Getting in and out of boats at the jetty needs a steady hand for elderly travellers - let the crew assist rather than rushing

Local courtesies

- Remove shoes before entering Jagdish Temple and other temples, and cover shoulders and knees
- Agree the auto fare before getting in rather than after - ask the hotel what a fair price looks like for a specific hop
- Bargaining is normal in Bapu Bazaar and similar markets - comparing two or three shops before buying is standard practice, not rude
- Jain versions of thalis (no onion, no garlic) are easy to ask for almost anywhere in Udaipur if needed

If it rains

- City Palace and its museum sections are mostly covered and still worth visiting in light rain, though watch for wet marble underfoot
- The Lake Pichola boat ride may be paused in heavier rain or high winds - check at the jetty before buying tickets
- Bagore ki Haveli's evening show is indoors and runs regardless of rain, making it a good rainy-evening plan
- Shilpgram and Sajjangarh are the two stops most affected by rain since they involve open-air walking and a hill road - consider swapping them for an indoor day at City Palace or the Vintage Car Museum if the forecast looks bad