

## **Tourist Destination**

### **Jaipur**

#### **Geography and History**

Today, the Festive India Team is visiting the capital city of Rajasthan, Jaipur. Harboring the royal heritage in its well-preserved historical monuments, Jaipur welcomes its visitors to explore its regal palaces, towering forts, and bustling bazaars. The city presents a conglomeration of tradition and rich culture with its magnificent *mahals* and sacred temples.

This surreal city was founded by the Kachhwaha Rajput and the ruler of Amer, Jai Singh II, aka Sawai Jai Singh, in the eighteenth century. Due to the acute scarcity of water and increasing population in Amer, Maharaja Jai Singh decided to shift his capital to Jaipur, which was only 11 kms away from Amer. Once, the Prince of Wales was visiting India on a tour. Before his arrival, Maharaja Jai Singh decided to replan the city. The king referred to several architectural books to plan the layout of Jaipur. Finally, he consulted a Bengali architect, Vidyadhar Bhattacharya, who was a Junior Auditor at Amer state. Vidyadhar became the chief architect and the city planner of the city of Jaipur. He prepared the layout according to *Shilpa shastra* and *Vastu shastra*. The color pink was believed to be symbolic of hospitality. So, the entire city was painted pink to welcome the Prince hospitably. Since then, Jaipur has been fondly known as “The Pink City.”

Surrounded by the Aravalli Hills and bounded by Alwar, Jaipur offers its tourists many trekking opportunities at Bhuteshwar Nath and Chouri Ghat. The city is 268 kms away from New Delhi, which partakes the city along with Agra in the Golden Triangle tourist circuit. The city is located at 26.92 °N Latitude and 75.82 °E Longitude. The Jaipur district spans 11,152 sq. kms., with 16 tehsils including Amber, Jamwa Ramgarh, Sambhar, Kotputli, Viratnagar, Sanganer, Ramgarh, Chaksu, and Dudu.

Jaipur is the tenth most populous city in the country. It witnesses a hot, semi-arid climate with extended summers and mild-to-warm winters. It receives heavy rainfall during the monsoon season, which is the months of July and August.

#### **Places to Visit – The Pink City’s Treasure!**

##### **1. The City Palace**

Erected in the heart of the old Jaipur city, the City Palace became the abode of Sawai Jai Singh II after he relocated from his court at Amber. Its landscaped courtyards overlook the Lake Palace and provide a breathtaking view of Jaipur from atop.

##### **2. Hawa Mahal**

Hawa Mahal, or the Palace of Breeze, is a salmon-pink facade modeled to resemble Lord Krishna’s crown with its 953 tiny windows, honeycombed tunnels, and geometric accents. The ceremonial armor collection displayed at Hawa Mahal’s small museum is intriguing.

##### **3. Jantar Mantar**

Jantar Mantar houses the *Samrat Yantra*, a massive sundial, which is 27 m tall and casts a shadow that helps in measuring time accurately.

##### **4. Amber Fort**

The marble and sandstone monolith, the Amber Fort, is India’s most-visited fort. Decked with intricate marble patterns, Amber Fort truly exemplifies the beauty of Rajasthan’s architecture. Getting to the fort requires a short hike uphill.

### 5. Albert Hall Museum

Rudyard Kipling called Albert Hall Museum “a rebuke to all other museums in India from Calcutta downwards.” The museum depicts a massive collection of historical artifacts and Egyptian antiquities.

### 6. Nahargarh Fort

The 300-year-old Nahargarh Fort provides its visitors a bird’s eye view of the entire Jaipur city from atop the Aravalli Hills. The Fort, along with its corridors filled with murals, also features a sculpture park and a wax museum.

### 7. Galtaji

A Hindu temple surrounding a natural fountain amid the Aravalli Hills, Galtaji features sacred water tanks with frescoes narrating tales of Lord Krishna. The temple is fondly known as Monkey Temple.

### 8. Jal Mahal

Displaying the pristine beauty of Rajasthani architecture, floating over the Man Sagar Lake, Jal Mahal casts its bright reflection on the lake and is accessible to tourists only from afar.

### 9. Jaigarh Fort

Nestled on a hill overlooking Amber Fort, Jaigarh Fort is known as the abode of the Jaivana Cannon, which is the world’s biggest cannon. The Fort offers the best sightseeing views to the tourists.

### 10. Akshardham Temple

Akshardham Temple is a 23-acre pink sandstone complex showcasing Hindu sceneries and deities. Massive gold statues inside and gorgeous garden courtyards outside adorn the temple.

## Food

Jaipur is known for its delectable and authentic Rajasthani cuisine. Delicacies ranging from *dal baati churma*, *mirchi vada*, and *besan ke gatte* make it impossible for one to resist the city’s special treats. Folks in Jaipur sure know how to live and eat grand.

Its *ghee*-dripping, spicy street food further tickles the taste buds and gives one a taste of Rajasthani culture. Savor *pyaaz kachori* at Rawat Mishthan Bhandar, or let your mouth water while watching your *golgappas* in the making at Chawla’s and Nand’s. You can head to Masala Chowk in Ram Niwas Garden for the best street food. Masala Chowk is famous for its *mishri mawa*, *jalebis*, *chhole bhature*, and *samosa*. If you can’t let go of your love for South Indian food, you can enjoy Rajasthani-style *uttapam* and *masala dosa*. Calm your senses with a *masala chai* at Gulab Ji Chaiwala next. Have a *bun maska* or *bun samosa*, another specialty of the city, while sipping chai.

For your sweet tooth, the city has lip-smacking *ghevar*, best quality found at Laxmi Mishthan Bhandar. If you’re traveling to Jaipur during the winter season, don’t miss out on the delicious *gajak* from Narayanji Gajak.

When in Jaipur, dedicate one of your evenings to visiting Chowki Dhani, situated on the Ajmer-Jaipur highway. Amidst the ambiance of a Rajasthani village, experience a regal dining experience at Chowki Dhani. Vibe to the folk music of Rajasthan while enjoying a multi-cuisine platter served in a royal *thaali*.

## Culture

Jaipur was ruled by the royal family of Rajputs, which contributed a great deal to maintaining the city’s culture of *Atithi Devo bhava*. Jaipur’s rich legacy is depicted in its day-to-day conventions,

artistry, handicraft, majestic monuments, and traditions. Architectural marvels, glorious earthenware, the art of block printing, folk dances and music, bandhani print, and square painting are some examples of Jaipur's cultural heritage.

The city keeps its vibrant legacy alive by merging its cosmopolitanism with tradition. By not bidding goodbye to its long heritage, Jaipur attracts even more excursionists and tourists from all over India and abroad. The bustling bazaars of Jaipur are flooded with finely carved handicrafts, exclusive meenakari and Kundan jewelry, and ivory sculptures. That said, the real glue holding up the city's culture is the immense talent that resides here. Singers from *gharanas* singing folk songs in the backdrop, folk dancers performing *ghoomar* on the beats of *sarangi*, *ektara*, and *jhalar* exhibiting their flamboyant fashion in *ghagras* is a sight to behold for hours.

Festivals such as *Diwali*, *Teej*, *Gangaur*, *Camel Festival*, and *Kite Festival* are celebrated in Jaipur with much vigor. The city also holds many informative fairs and festivals, the most prominent being the Jaipur Literary Fest (held usually in January). Being a land of vibrant culture, Jaipur houses joyful people who welcome their visitors with great warmth and hospitality. People here speak Marwari, Hindi, and English, but the local language of Jaipur remains Dhundhadi. Literary works from the city of Jaipur are compiled in Brajbhasha.