

# A 'Wild' Escape

The onset of summer is the best time to plan a holiday in the wild as this is the best season to spot wild animals.

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Erwin D'Rose, lodge manager, Reni Pani



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Parikshit Rathore, lodge manager, Aramnass

Come summer and the jungles of India are alive. If you are planning a holiday this season, we tell you where you must stay to experience a luxe wildlife getaway.

## WAYANAD WILD – CGH EARTH

Wayanad Wild is a haven for nature enthusiasts seeking an immersive experience in the heart of the Western Ghats. Surrounded by evergreen forests on all sides, the property offers a unique opportunity to live amidst the lush wilderness of Lakki-di, one of the rainiest places on earth. As the rains transform the landscape into a mystical forest, guests are serenaded by the enchanting sounds of the jungle.

"Home to numerous endemic species found exclusively in the Western Ghats, our place provides a glimpse into the rich tapestry of life thriving in this pristine ecosystem. From the iconic Malabar Giant Squirrel to the elusive Malabar Trogon, every encounter with our diverse flora and fauna is a testament to the importance of conservation. Whether witnessing the mesmerizing dance of Wayanad Dancing Frogs or marveling at the graceful flight of the Malabar Tree Nymph butterfly, every moment spent at Wayanad Wild is an opportunity to connect with nature on a profound level," says David Raju, General Manager, Wayanad Wild.

## RENI PANI JUNGLE LODGE, SATPURA

Located near the Satpura National Park about a three-hour drive from Bhopal lies the exquisitely designed Reni Pani Jungle Lodge. Spread across 30 acres of striking forest cover, the lodge mindfully blends into the magnificent surrounding wilderness featuring all modern comforts with luxury cottages and tents that come with private butlers and impeccable services, including a relaxing spa. The critically acclaimed lodge also offers the most remarkable experiences of Satpura's spectacularly diverse wildlife and its landscape. Besides riveting game drives



with their incredible naturalists, as a conservation and wildlife-focused lodge, Reni Pani has been pioneering non-motorable safaris in the region that are just as enthralling.

“Walking safaris, boat safaris, canoeing, and even camping under the Satpura stars as well as recently introduced, horseback safari are all activities that are unique to Satpura and cannot be experienced in any other Central Indian Park,” adds Erwin D’Rose, lodge manager and TOFT awarded best naturalist of the year 2024.

#### BORI SAFARI LODGE, DHAPADA

Satpura is home to one of the most diversified flora and fauna found in Central India – tigers, leopards, sloth bears, blackbuck, spotted deer, wild boar etc, and over 300 species of birds. A contemporary wildlife resort, the suave Bori Safari Lodge is the only lodge set in the emerging tiger homeland of Central India, Bori Wildlife Sanctuary that adjoins the Satpura National Park. Because of being a young sanctuary, a game drive here feels more like an exclusive private safari with no tourists around. The Lodge has an immensely knowledgeable team of wildlife experts that guide you to the wildlife encounters.

“Guests can also indulge in the resort’s therapeutic spa, enjoy the luxurious rooms, or savour the dips in the pool when not encountering the wild. We attempt to offer our guests a holistic insight into the spectacular wilderness that this region beholds,” remarks Aly Rashid, Director of Jehan Numa Wilderness.

#### ARAMNESS, GIR

The Gir forest is the only place in the world where the Asiatic lion can be found in its natural habitat. Inspired by a traditional Gujarati village, the lodge truly encapsulates the essence of Gujarat - from ultra-luxe kothis with traditional courtyards and private pools to its curated menu of traditional and international cuisine. “While we are essentially a wildlife lodge, we also encourage our guests who are interested in exploring culture to go further afield to visit Somnath temple or learn more about the Maldharis through our guided excursions,” says Parikshit Rathore, lodge manager at Aramness. Game drives in the Gir National Park are nothing short of thrilling with Aramness’ naturalists who take you through the success story of the lion conservation efforts of the forest department and more,” adds Parikshit.

#### SAMODE SAFARI LODGE, BANDHAVGARH

Beginning with the customary scrumptious breakfast in the park, the full-day safari also breaks for a delicious, freshly cooked lunch that comes straight from the Samode Safari Lodge, in an incredible setting of sal woods and bamboo thickets.

“The highly eco-sensitive team at Samode Safari Lodge sets up the surreal scene with the utmost respect for the forest environment and its inhabitants. Another spectacular drive follows the heels of your lunch in the wild. What’s more, the full-day safari can cover any zone in the Park - this means more flexibility with the tracking, avoiding crowds, and more exclusive sightings,” says Anshuman Shah, General Manager, Samode Safari Lodge.



Wayanad Wild cottage



Gulshan Jhurani, WelcomHeritage Cheetahgarh Resort & Spa promoter



Amith Bangre, Chief Naturalist and General Manager, Jaagir Manor, Dudhwa

#### WELCOMHERITAGE CHEETAH-GARH RESORT & SPA, BERA

A luxurious property in Bera, Jawai - ‘the Land of the Leopard and the Shepherd’, WelcomHeritage Cheetahgarh Resort & Spa is the only resort that features a lake within its premises. Set against the dramatic backdrop of Aravalli boulders and greens beyond, leopard safaris and birding adventures begin within the property’s 20 acres of wilderness. “At times, our guests even sight the spotted cats from the windows and balconies of rooms. Comprising 20 lavish rooms and chalets, some that come with private pools, an indulgent spa with rejuvenating treatments and therapies, and a popular kitchen, WelcomHeritage Cheetahgarh Resort & Spa is one among the world-class five-star resorts. Also known for their guided walks and Rabari village visits, the resort is perfect for those looking at a relaxing yet enthralling break from the mundane, or for those interested in exploring Bera’s fascinating wilderness and culture whilst immersed in ultimate luxury,” says Gulshan Jhurani, one of the resort’s promoters.

#### SAWAI SHIVIR RANTHAMBORE BYTUTC

Inspired by renowned eco-luxury



Wayanad Wild poolside

camping masters in South Africa, Sawai Shivar by TUTC tents are made of 100% canvas, setting them apart from other tented experiences in the region. Each private and intimate suite tent features ensuite bathrooms, private wooden decks, and the exclusive Presidential Suite Tent boasts a private plunge pool.

“A highlight of Sawai Shivar is its water body, which has induced a whole new ecosystem within the property. Guests can also enjoy guided village walks, live cooking demonstrations, and traditional pottery. The camp’s farm-to-fork restaurant sources ingredients from its organic garden, and the kitchens are known for their ravishing multi-cuisine offerings,” says Piyush Chauhan, Camp Manager.

#### JAAGIR MANOR, DUDHWA - IHCL SELECTIONS

Nestled in the lush embrace of the Terai, Jaagir Manor, Dudhwa - IHCL SeleQtions offers a symphony of luxury and untamed nature. Within the shadows of Dudhwa National Park, it stands as an unrivalled wildlife retreat in India, where the wild roars and whispers right at your doorstep. At Jaagir Manor, the journey into opulence begins with exquisite accommodations, where each room is a testament to refined elegance and serene comfort. With the finest amenities and bespoke services, Jaagir’s suites and villas are designed to pamper the discerning traveller after a day in the wild.

Amith Bangre, Chief Naturalist and General Manager, says, “Jaagir Manor is more than a retreat; it’s a gateway to witness, learn, and participate in the dance of nature’s delicate balance.” This philosophy cements Jaagir Manor as a pinnacle of wildlife luxury, where experiences go beyond the ordinary, enveloping guests in the heart of India’s vibrant ecosystem.

#### NAMASTE DWAAR

Located in Mansurpur, Uttar Pradesh, and a mere two-hour drive from New Delhi on the Delhi-Haridwar highway, Namaste Dwaar is a family retreat. The property combines eco-conscious living with the healing qualities of ancient Indian practices such as yoga and



Erika Farina, Director, Namaste Dwaar



Bhavik Sheth, COO, Evoke Experiences

Ayurveda, alongside immersive rural experiences. Namaste Dwaar is not just a haven for wellness and relaxation but also offers a window to the rich wildlife of the country. Guests staying in the property can explore Haiderpur Wetland, a paradise for the bird watchers. Haiderpur Wetland is regarded as one of the largest man-made wetlands. “Haiderpur Wetland is the best getaway, being home to over 320 species of birds, including many globally endangered species. The wetland located within Hastinapur Wildlife Sanctuary is distinguished as a UNESCO Ramsar site. It lies in the strategic ‘Central Asian Flyway’ which is an important stopover region for the winter migratory birds. Also, it takes approximately 40 minutes to reach Haiderpur Wetland from Namaste Dwaar, offering a convenient option for our guests to explore unique wildlife. The fact that we are the only quality retreat in the vicinity of Haiderpur Wetland gives us an edge too,” said Erika Farina, Director of Namaste Dwaar.

#### GANDHISAGAR FOREST RETREAT

Located in Mandsaur (Madhya Pradesh) surrounded by lush forests, along the Chambal River, Gandhisagar Forest Retreat provides a luxurious escape with unmatched scenic views. There is never a dull moment when you are staying at Gandhisagar Forest Retreat. “This sanctuary is home to vibrant biodiversity, offering ample opportunities for wildlife sightings. Some of the animal species that inhabit the sanctuary include leopard, sambar, langur monkeys, Indian wild dogs, peacocks, otters, and Mugger crocodiles, Nilgai, Chinkara (Indian gazelle), among others. One of the good things about Gandhi Sagar Sanctuary is that unlike some other wild life sanctuaries it is open throughout the year. Apart from sighting rare wildlife species like Wild Dogs, Chinkaras and Leopards, visitors can also explore some important archaeological and religious sites present within the forest,” says Bhavik Sheth, COO, Evoke Experiences. ■