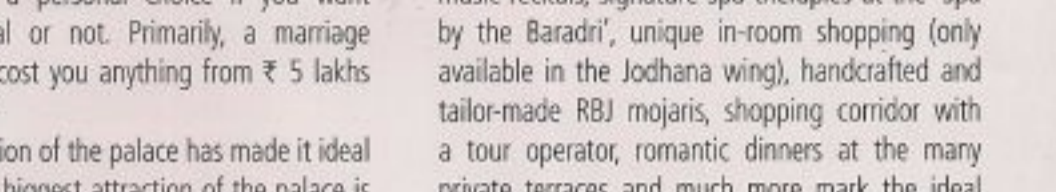
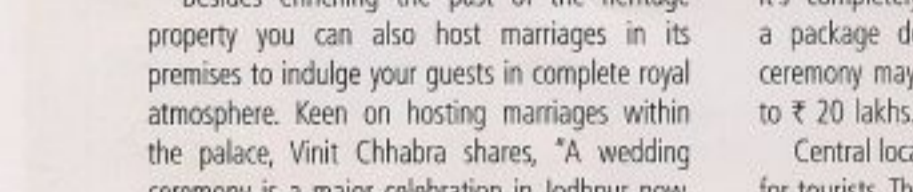


Royal Reservations

Situated in the city of Marwar amidst ultimate extravagance is the Ranbanka Palace, a heritage property owned by Raj Kumar Karan Vijay Singh and Kunwarini Shweta Rathore, is spread across an area of 1 acre approximately. Located at the Circuit House, the Palace is spread into two sections – a garden wing and the royal heritage wing. Bhawna S. took a trip to the royal voyage to explore the grandiosity of the bygone era.



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Ranbanka palatial hotel initially had only 37 rooms which have been extended and makes a total of 79 rooms now. Primarily, the place has a strong presence among German and French travelers. Vinit Chhabra, GM, Ranbanka Palace informs, "We have maximum occupancy of French, German and European travellers and of course now we are experiencing a lot of domestic influx as the domestic tourism is growing. Lots of Indians have been travelling, so we are getting a lot of Indian tourists also."

generating source as well as one of the main stay in Rajasthan." The palace organises 12-16 weddings a year and gives around 50-60 rooms during the wedding season. Ask him about the budget of a ceremony and he's quick to add, "The budget is completely a personal choice and we modify it according to a person's requirements. People can hold either some of the events or all the wedding events like mehndi, sehra bandi, sangeet, the wedding ceremony and the reception. So it's completely a personal choice if you want a package deal or not. Primarily, a marriage ceremony may cost you anything from ₹ 5 lakhs to ₹ 20 lakhs."

array of cuisines but is famous for its elaborate Rajasthani flavours too. From in-room dining to buffets, a la carte, private gatherings and theme dinners, the palace offers it all at - **The Ranbanka Bagh**, in the garden; **The Pancharanga**, overlooking the central courtyard; **The Polo Bar** housing an exhibit of the family's trophies won over generations and **The Baitakh**, an exemplary Rajasthani lounge complete with Bajots and Gaddi Massons.

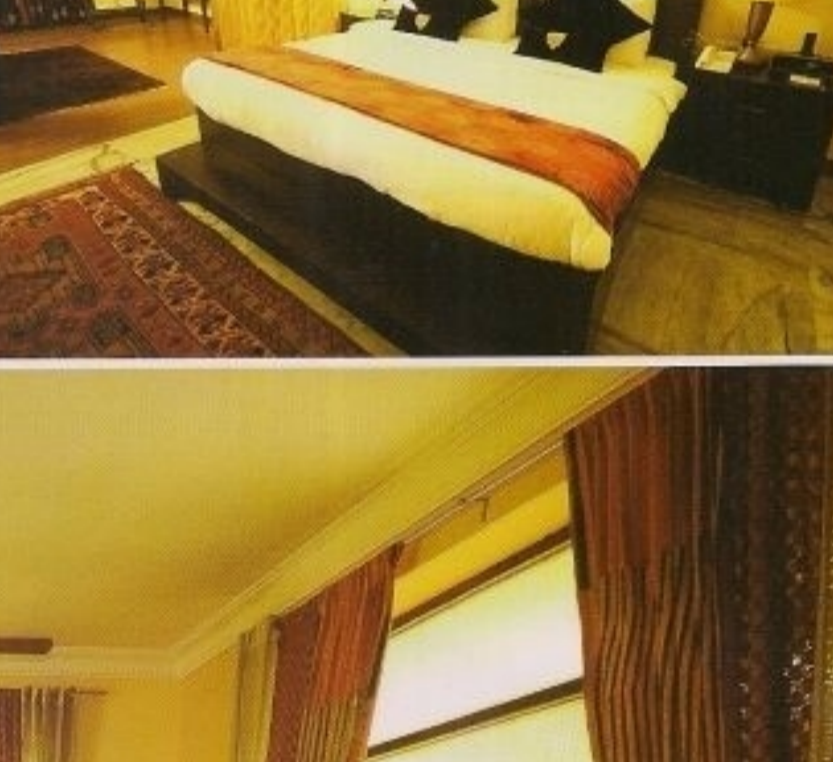
Besides enriching the past of the heritage property you can also host marriages in its premises to indulge your guests in complete royal atmosphere. Keen on hosting marriages within the palace, Vinit Chhabra shares, "A wedding ceremony is a major celebration in Jodhpur now. So basically wedding has become a good revenue

Central location of the palace has made it ideal for tourists. The biggest attraction of the palace is its history and the heritage. Not only it offers an

Kaabelia dancers, puppet shows, traditional music recitals, signature spa therapies at the 'Spa by the Baradari', unique in-room shopping (only available in the Jodhana wing), handcrafted and tailor-made RBJ mojars, shopping corridor with a tour operator, romantic dinners at the many private terraces and much more mark the ideal antithesis to today's fast paced life. ■

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As you enter the Ranbanka Palace, the history of the bygone era revolves around your eyes. The hotel staff greets you with a tilak and khamagan followed by a welcome drink. As I entered the palatial reception of the hotel I saw pictures of the royal family whispering the age-old tales of the era gone by.



I was escorted to room no. 409 by Chanchal to the garden wing, the green area of the palace. In front of my room was a swimming pool and the spa where you can enjoy and relax amidst luxury.

With the magnificent views of the "blue city", Ranbanka Palace preserves the old world charm and glory of the past. Its centralised location allows easy access to key leisure and business addresses in the city. Housing a range of accommodation from the deluxe pool and courtyard facing rooms to extravagant suites in the heritage wing and the luxurious Jodhana wing, the hotel-cum-palace is spread all across lavishly.



Deriving its name from the famous Rathore war cry, Ranbanka Palace was built for Maharajadhiraj Sir Ajit Singh ji. In 2000, a part of the erstwhile palace was converted into a 35 room hotel sowing the seeds of what has today become one of Rajasthan's foremost heritage experiences.

The grand rooms in the Jodhana wing are spread over an area of 600 sq. feet approximately and have all the essential amenities for a couple to spend a holiday in awe. The décor of the room revives the richness of those in command and makes you feel like a princess. The huge chandelier in the dining room of the royal room adds charm to its décor. To spend a night in luxury, you have to shell out ₹ 14,000 during season.



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rajasthani Delight

With royal food much in demand, the Rajasthani cuisine is one that keeps enticing people all across India. Rajasthani food being popular among food connoisseurs Bhawna S. bring some special recipes of Rajasthan from the heritage kitchen of Ranbanka Palace to indulge you in some lip smacking food. Take a pick!

Welcome to the heritage food of Rajasthan at the Ranbanka Palace restaurant, which is one of the reasons for the locals and the tourists to visit the heritage property and experience the mouth watering recipes prepared in house. Be it Rajasthani Thali, Jodhpuri gutta curry, Chittor curry, panchkuta subzi, ker sangri, jungle murgh (in-house specialty), laaf maas (red meat), ghevar and fried ice cream, the cuisine is famous for its elaborate Rajasthani flavours. Executive Chef Sayyad M.A. shares some exotic recipes from his kitchen for the vegetarians and non-vegetarians.

Junglee Murgh

Preparation Time: 25 Minutes

INGREDIENTS

- Condensed Milk, Chopped
- Refrigerated Chicken
- Desi Ghee
- Chopped Garlic
- Onion(chopped)
- Mathania Chilli Paste
- Bay Leaves
- Salt to taste

METHOD

Take a pan, place it over heat and add desi ghee. Then add chopped garlic, chopped onion and saute till it turns golden brown. Add Mathania chilli paste to it and add salt and the chicken chunks. Do not add water to it. Let the chicken cook in low heat and add 2-3 bay leaves for flavour. Strain it and the chicken is ready to serve. Garnish with freshly chopped coriander and serve hot with lacha parantha or naan.



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For Kunwarini Shweta Rathore of Jodhpur life has been full of surprises and learning at every step. From the time she was born in Delhi till date, the pretty princess has been imbibing the culture of Jodhpur in herself and has been a part of the royal family. The princess shuttles between Jodhpur and other countries with her better half Raj Kumar Karanvijai Singh for Polo encounters in various countries. In an exclusive tete-a-tete with Kunwarini Shweta Bhawna S. finds out about her way of living life, her family, children and more. Read on....

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LIFE'S A MOVIE

As a child Kunwarini Shweta Rathore has been born in a Rajput family and had always been inclined towards the family and education. Having done her schooling from Modern School and Graduation from Lady Shriam College in Delhi, for Kunwarini Shweta life has been series of learning experiences since then.

And now being a part of royalty what was that one thing you miss a lot as a princess? "Swimming to some extent that I still miss a lot but I continued playing tennis even I got married whenever I use to go to the DID and after that to the PBT. So these are really fond memories that I still cherish."

studied in Delhi and no partha system was there so everything was done in a very subtle way. We met at polo and then it was developed thereafter and before I knew we were engaged."

Not very much inclined to choose a career professionally Kunwarini Shweta informs, "I don't think career was a big option at that point. I grew up knowing that was a day I had to get married and be within the family. I went through school like any other girl so it was a very dominant factor that there was marriage so I guess that was a very major part. I did not really sought of a career because it was very uncertain where what next. Though I love riding, enjoy my studies and travel a lot to my parents' home and that's why I like the idea of travel, of being out of Delhi as well and that was the highlight."

Talking about her love life and her relationship with husband Raj Kumar Karanvijai Singh, Kunwarini Shweta chuckles, "My marriage was a semi arranged. My family members knew his family and as he knows that there was some connection to riding, I use to watch polo as well in Delhi and I kind of had heard of him but we met at the Polo game which wasn't very specific that we were to get married but I believe that it was a semi arranged not really as you know that I was

she keeps a sense of cultural and economic continuity for all the various artisans, musicians, dancers, who have had erstwhile royal patronage. It is not ordinary thing to keep the way it used to be for so many of Rajasthan's people, so that the local arts and crafts can flourish even in these times. ■

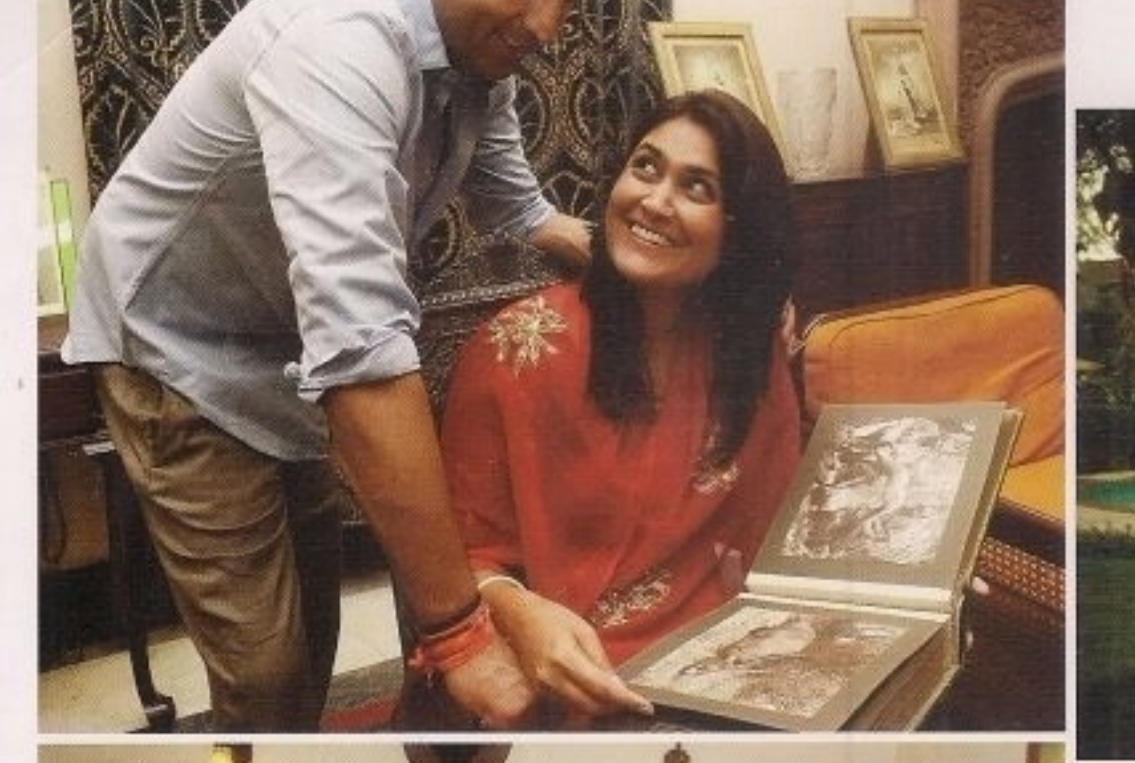
Having been inclined towards family the couple spends a good part of their time travelling the international Polo Circuit in England, Brazil, Holland, Egypt, Portugal, and Germany etc. They also own Ranbanka Palace, a heritage hotel in Jodhpur.

For Kunwarini Shweta life as a princess has been a series of the watching others and learning the rules of the game. She works closely with family's Ranbanka hotel in Jodhpur, a part of which is called Aji Bhawan Palace, and is her house. Currently she has her hands full shuttling between Jaipur where her two boys study and Jodhpur, where the family lives and works.

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very expressive but most of the things it must be said through eyes. She is beautiful. It's not something that draws me and I do not want to admit it openly and marriage is a strange institution where you never know what makes the two holds together. I think there must be something that binds us together."

"My kids are very well behaved and as others I am proud to be their mother when they praise for my kids." For Kunwarini Shweta life took complete change overnight after marriage. "I kind of woke up wondering, a night reading or is this real. Because I guess the girl in our society is very different from what a Bahur (Daughter-in-Law) is. And I was like the only girl in my house and having been brought up in Delhi I was very open to people. In your head you still like that and I guess this is a story of every girl going to in-laws house. She is not very expressive, demanding, or give her opinion to others unless her husband, you are not supposed to speak loudly but I am not saying that it's a wrong thing, it is our culture and we need to respect it. It's a very traditional, to some extent where there is hierarchy. At the end of it all my in-laws are good friends now."

was the language as I could not understand the language they talk in and I could only understand and just not talk with the same fluency as other people talk to each other. I use to feel very alien as I can't speak. My father-in-law has been very kind, soft and can say that I have had got some kind of love as my own father gave to me. I can take the liberty of saying him little more today than that time. The gap is gone and we all are one family," she answers.

Talking about her interests Kunwarini was always wanted to do psychology, however, princess completed her graduation in philosophy honors from Delhi University. Ask about the idea of doing Philosophy honors and pat comes the reply, "It is interesting subject for me. Our spiritual, religious culture was there that I wanted to know about. The culture, essence of our roots

was another interesting part for me to choose the subject. There was Psychology as well I wanted to do. It was basically the Indian culture that I wanted to study."

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