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Posted by Siddhartha Joshi · 05 January

### HILL FORT KESROLI BY NEEMRANA - A STAY FIT FOR A ROYAL!

Late last year before Diwali I had a long weekend in Delhi with almost no plans at all. Actually, it's often these unplanned weekends that create the best memories and this one was no different. Not only did I spend my time at one of the oldest heritage hotels in India that one can live in, I also discovered a lesser known gem of Rajasthan - Alwar!



Hill Fort Kesroli



Trying to pose with a camera on a tripod :)

In case you are still wondering what I did, I spent my weekend at **Neemrana's Hill Fort Kesroli** - a fort whose history can be traced back to seven centuries! For someone like me who's always on a lookout for old and historical places, this was like living a dream.

As always let's start with where it all began in the 14th century. The fort is believed to have been built by the Yaduvanshi Rajputs, who claim descent from Lord Krishna. A few decades later they converted to Islam and came to be known as Khanzadas. Later Mughals also ruled here, and eventually the fort came back under the Rajputs and saw it's golden period. It fell into disarray again after independence, and was eventually taken up for restoration by the Neemrana group and opened to everyone in 1998. What was once the abode of the royals, can now be home for us commoners too :)

## My stay at Hill Fort Kesroli

If there is one word to describe my stay at Hill Fort Kesroli, I would call it relaxing. I had some absolutely insanely busy days leading up to this weekend, and I needed some downtime to recover.



My little home in the fort :)



View of the village from my room :)

Over the three days I spend there, I ate and drank to my heart's fulfillment, swam in one of the most beautiful swimming pools that I've ever seen, got a lovely massage in the spa and made some beautiful photos too.

My room was the only one on my side of the roof with complete privacy. It still wasn't so cold, and I

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## Hill Fort Kesroli by Neemrana - a stay fit for a royal!

often sat on the roof after dinner and saw some stars after all the guests were sleeping snugly in their beds.

Here's how the property looks like :)



My favorite spot - the swimming pool!



Poolside during the day!





A dance performance in the evening

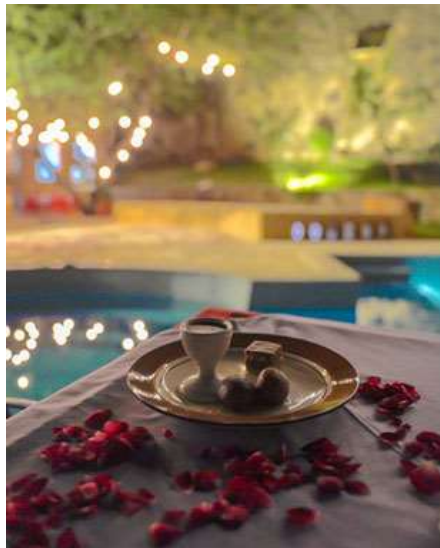


Where's my food :)



A young couple enjoying their romantic evening!





Food time!



My massage table!

## Alwar explorations

This would come out as an embarrassment, but I knew absolutely nothing about Alwar but it's name. I never even imagined the city to be full of architectural marvels and it's own unique cultural heritage. In that sense, I came back a far more learned man after this trip - Alwar took my heart :)



The pond near Moosi Maharani Chhatri

Though most recent history of the city dates back to the 15th century, it's origins are believed to be much older - in fact, it's one of the oldest cities of Rajasthan. The city has lots to see - all the way from history and architecture to wildlife!

I had only limited time there and spent it walking around the city area around City Palace. My day started at the **Moosi Maharani Chhatri** which built in a perfect blend of Indo-Islamic architecture. Interestingly I met someone from my design school as well there along with his talented wife. In fact, I met another junior from NID on another day up on top of a hill.



Meeting friends and making new ones too :)

Right next to the Chhatri is also the **City Palace** and the the **Palace Museum**. The museum is how most Indian museums are - great collection, but poor information about just about everything. I do wish someday our museum curators create world-class museums here in India - no one quite has the kind of museum-wealth that India has.

I also went to the **Fateh Jung gumbad** and actually quite liked the place. The access door to the inner chambers was locked, so could only see it from outside. The experience was lovely nevertheless.



Fateh Jung gumbad

However, my biggest surprise there was the **Alwar Quila** - located on top of a hill with a fantastic view of the town below. The Qila was built on the foundations of a 10th century mud fort and is a must-visit destination here. The guards there are a little bit difficult and it takes a bit of convincing for them to allow you access to the entire complex. Do whatever it takes because the walk in the fort is delightful.



Alwar Fort





That's me jumping at Alwar fort!



Another shot at Alwar fort

## Booking a room at Hill Fort Kesroli

I would recommend booking it through their website - [Neemrana Hotels](#). However, for same day bookings, you can call up directly at the hotel to check and make the booking.

## To reach Hill Fort Kesroli

You can use this map to drive to Hill Fort Kesroli. It takes about 4 hours from Delhi - but time really depends on the traffic on the highway. The road to the hotel is excellent though.



I visited the hotel on invitation of Neemrana Hotels. Needless to mention, all views expressed are my own and based on my personal experiences.

COMMENTS

