

Neemrana Hotels Partners with the Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh State Governments for Two Heritage Restoration Projects under PPP Model

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HOTELS



For nearly four decades, **Neemrana Hotels** has pioneered the art of reviving India's forgotten architectural treasures, turning historical ruins into revenue-generating heritage '**non-hotels**'. These have breathed new life into 5000 years of India's past frozen in forgotten ruins. This unique model – conservation through hospitality – has created a new ecosystem of jobs, tourism, and pride in regional identity across the current 18 Neemrana destinations spanning 7 states – now

growing to 20 with these two new heritage destinations under the pioneering leadership of Aman Nath, Director and Sonavi Kaicker, CEO, Neemrana Hotels Pvt. Ltd who has played a key role in taking Aman Nath's visionary work forward since 2010.



Neemrana Hotels is reshaping more of India's heritage at Jhansi's Baruasagar Fort and Chanderi's Raja-Rani Mahal. Look out for 2027

Now, in a significant move that marks the power of PPP public-private partnerships to conserve India's architectural wealth, Neemrana Hotels has joined hands with the Governments of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh to restore and revitalize two ruins and create new destinations (under the PPP model). These collaborations are more than hotel projects – they are a shared national vision to preserve and present India's cultural and architectural inheritance to both the domestic and global travellers.

Neemrana Hotels will bring its signature “non-hotel” experience to:

- **Baruasagar Fort, in Jhansi, Uttar Pradesh, and**
- **Raja Rani Mahal, in Chanderi, Madhya Pradesh**

The restoration work at both properties is now underway, with an official opening expected by **2027 for Baruasagar Fort and 2028 for Raja Rani Mahal.**

Relive the history of Baruasagar Fort, Jhansi

Sitting right above the Baruasagar Lake, with commanding views of the surrounding Bundelkhand plains, the sprawling Baruasagar Fort spread across 7 acres is one of Jhansi's most enduring and significant historic structures. Believed to have been constructed in the 18th century by the Bundela kings, the

fort carries layers of historical association, particularly with the era of Rani Lakshmi Bai. According to several regional accounts and historical references, the fort was a strategic stronghold in the region, offering tactical advantages due to its elevation and proximity to Jhansi – the very land that played a defining role in India's First War of Independence in 1857.

The architecture of Baruasagar Fort is marked by massive stone ramparts, bastions, and the rugged defensive style characteristic of Bundela architecture. While nature has weathered its stones over time, the structure remains largely intact, providing a strong base for Neemrana's sensitive (historically accurate restoration) revitalisation.

When completed in 2027, this fort will be re-born as a one-of-a-kind experiential waterside property, allowing guests to stay in rooms that once hosted royals and warriors, overlooking the same landscapes that inspired legends. The first phase of restoration will include 25 guest rooms, a restaurant, a swimming pool, spa and various spaces for cultural activities, giving both Indian and international visitors an immersive journey into Bundelkhand's lesser-known but powerful historical narrative. The destination will also be launched for intimate destination weddings.

Raja Rani Mahal, Chanderi: Where heritage tourism meets the infamous Chanderi Silk

Further south in Madhya Pradesh, in the timeless warp-and-weft town of Chanderi, Neemrana's latest project sits like a forgotten jewel waiting to shine again. The Raja Rani Mahal, located in the Inner Town (*Andar Sheher*) of Chanderi near the historic Musa Bawdi, is a historical palace complex that reflects the legacy of medieval India's architectural splendour. Built possibly during the 15th century and dating back further to the Khilji dynasty, the intimate palace consists of two architecturally distinct structures for

Maharajas and Maharanis – the seven-storey Raja Mahal and the four-storey Rani Mahal – connected by a bridge and a secret passage- a unique design rarely found elsewhere in India.

Chanderi is no stranger to heritage. Known widely for its handwoven silk and cotton textiles, Chanderi sarees, and fine architectural remains, the town has long been on the cultural tourism map. However, Neemrana's restoration of Raja Rani Mahal promises to elevate Chanderi's status even further – from a weaving town to a global heritage destination.

This architectural marvel showcases intricate carvings, large courtyards, open pavilions, and gracefully designed stairways, all crafted in grey and white sandstone. The Raja Mahal is known for its elaborate detailing, while the Rani Mahal features a more delicate and intimate style, differing from its counterpart.

The historical property will be restored into a boutique heritage experience with phase one comprising 10-12 guest rooms, each designed in harmony with the palace's original materials and regional style. The property has also served as the backdrop for numerous Bollywood productions including *Stree 2* and *Sui Dhaga*, giving it a visual familiarity and cinematic aura that guests will now be able to recognize and physically step into. The best time to visit is between October and March, when the weather is pleasant for exploration. Chanderi is well connected via NH 52 to Bhopal, Indore, and Gwalior – perfect for road trips by car or bus – and is also easily accessible through the rail network.

Guests can expect to immerse themselves in an experience that blends Chanderi's heritage with basic modern comforts – from a restaurant serving authentic regional cuisines like *Bhutte Ka Kees*, to an Ayurvedic wellness spa, experiences that help you stay active even on vacation, and vintage rooms adorned with local textiles that shall tell the story of the region. The project will also include collaborations with local artisans

and weavers, helping bring sustainable livelihood to Chanderi's communities and preserving its intangible heritage alongside the tangible.

A New Route Through History

Neemrana already operates Deo Bagh, a garden hotel of Gwalior housing Maratha temples and pavilions. With Raja Rani Mahal in Chanderi, Madhya Pradesh will now offer a dual-destination in Neemrana itinerary, ideal for travellers who wish to experience two different stories of India's bygone era in one trip – one rooted in the Marathas era, the other in medieval Sultanate period.

As with all the Neemrana restorations so far, both Baruasagar and Chanderi will offer authentic travel experiences that go beyond history and architecture. With multiple authentic experiences rooted in Indian heritage, along with indoor and outdoor dining spaces to savour local cuisines, these destinations are ideal for travellers of all age groups.

State Governments and Neemrana Hotels: A Shared Vision for Heritage India

This twin partnership of Neemrana Hotels with the Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh State Governments signals the proactive efforts of the governments that have been working to ensure that India's architectural ruins of cultural and national significance are not just to be left abandoned, but preserved and restored in responsible heritage experiences of that region which will simultaneously generate local employment. With Neemrana leading the heritage restoration movement from the forefront, these sites become economic engines, cultural classrooms, and soulful sanctuaries – all at once.

"In Neemrana's hands, ruins are never ruined by adding luxury, they are restored with minimum modern intervention and maximum authenticity," said a senior official associated with the

project.

By involving local artisans, reviving traditional skills, and promoting slow, meaningful travel, this model has proven both sustainable and scalable.

About Neemrana Hotels

Established in 1991, Neemrana Hotels has been a pioneer of the 'non-hotel' Hotel concept in India. Now with 20 Neemrana destinations across 8 states – by the sea, beside a serene lake, atop two-billion-year-old hills, along the Ganges, and deep in the Garhwal Himalayas – Neemrana is celebrated for blending restoration with hospitality, making India's heritage not just accessible, but experiential and sustainable. With these new additions, Neemrana continues its noble mission: to preserve India, with Indians.

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