



1. The deck at Lingka restaurant 2. Hand-carved pillars give a traditional touch

serves a chef's special three-course meal for lunch and dinner daily. You can also dine at the restaurant's outdoor wooden deck, which is where I head for breakfast the next morning. Tucking into sausages and eggs looking out at the mountain ranges sets the right note for the day. Unfortunately there isn't enough time to go and have a meal at Gawa, the traditional Bhutanese restaurant.

AT THE HOTEL

I had taken an early morning walk in the morning to explore more of the hotel. There is a meditation house, a spa and a charming tea house cottage, and all have an air of absolute tranquillity and serenity. I wish I had more time to sit in the tea house with a book or to simply relax with my eyes closed at the meditation centre.

The main hotel building has

a small temple on the second floor that has been built using pillars of the 17th century Gangtey Monastery that is located in central Bhutan. I walk in to get a glimpse. I am the first person to enter it that day and sit with the monk in silence for a few moments. It is one of the most serene moments of my trip to Paro.

Zhiwa Ling, Paro

I push open a heavy door to walk into the colourful lobby of Zhiwa Ling Hotel. With elaborate, hand-carved wooden pillars and panels, it looks more like a monastery than a hotel. I certainly need to explore this hotel, but it is late evening, and I head to my suite for a quick shower before dinner. The hotel has different blocks—each with a stone exterior that is in sync with the traditional architecture of Bhutan.

SUITES

Zhiwa Ling is an all-suite hotel and the Junior Suite is massive with two

queen-size beds, a sitting area with comfortable leather sofas and a balcony that looks straight out to the valley. Tempted to relax and take a hot shower after the journey, I take off my socks to realise the floor is heated and high up in the mountains, in this cold weather walking barefoot in the room is a luxury.

RESTAURANTS

I have a tenderloin steak at Lingka, the all-day dining restaurant serving a variety of cuisines. It

AT A GLANCE

WHAT: A five-star luxury hotel
WHERE: Satsam Chorten, Paro;
tel: +975 827 1277;
www.zhiwaling.com
COST: ₹11,250 onwards for a Junior Suite
VERDICT: A charming hotel to spend a few days

—PALLAVI PASRICHA