

Caravan Tripping in RAJASTHAN

Hit the road to explore the great outdoors, ensconced in the comfort of your own luxury mini house on wheels.

By PALLAVI PASRICHA

Watching Netflix on the go, tucking in cosily under a goose down duvet, with an electric blanket for that extra warmth, reaching for a chilled can of Coca Cola from the mini fridge and lounging around playing board games while driving past charming landscape. This may conjure up visions of a caravan trip through New Zealand or Europe, but this journey was happening closer home—from dusty Delhi to sandy Jodhpur.

At the crack of dawn on a chilly winter morning, I stepped into an RV (recreational vehicle) and over the next eight hours, as the colours changed from the glowing mustard fields of Haryana to the undulating sand dunes of Rajasthan, the hours slipped by easily and comfortably in my exclusive



freewheeling chariot.

That is not a surprise in itself. After all, modern day caravans pack in many conveniences and this one is no different. In its swanky beige and wooden interiors, two large sofas easily seat four people, a smart TV and a miniature kitchen cabinet is stacked with impressive cutlery, glassware, and stemware. On one side is a queen size bed with a sliding door that converts comfortably into a mini-bedroom with yet another smart TV and it comes with mood lighting to match the changing light outside. The compact, airline-style bathroom is spic and span with a hand shower and a small geyser, which obviates the most basic necessity of finding clean restrooms on a road trip.



ROLLING RESIDENCE

Modern day caravans come with many conveniences (Opposite page); Two large sofas and a smart TV in the caravan make road trips comfortable and enjoyable



Two hours into the journey, as hunger pangs strike, chicken sandwiches and juices from the well-stocked mini fridge serve well. But don't feel the pressure of whipping up any Martha Stewart home tips as there is a helper on board, who will happily brew a cup of coffee or tea and, most importantly, clean up afterwards.

The passing flash of blooming fields straddling the highway help to unplug from the city. But while killing time on the road and cramped limbs can become a bit challenging on a long journey, this is where the mini-home on wheels unfolds its magic. I convert the sofa into a full flatbed and retire for a rom-com sink with outstretched legs. The two TVs are preloaded with an Amazon fire-stick with all the popular OTT channels. Further, there are ample charging points in the RV and Wi-Fi as well.

Milestones

As lunchtime approaches, choices open up between the comfort of having a meal in the caravan, which has an electric kettle and an induction plate,



After breakfast, we hit the road for the final leg of our journey to Jodhpur. The road is smooth and apart from catching up on some work and watching Netflix, I also manage to catch a snooze for a while on the comfortable bed.

The caravan rolls in around 2pm at our next destination – Mharokhet, a sprawling farm on the outskirts of Jodhpur where one can stroll around guava orchards and have meals rustled up with freshly plucked produce. Growing exotic vegetables and herbs from jalapenos to broccoli and oyster mushrooms, it offers a farm to table experience with a choice of regional Indian and international cuisine. But the Indian also comes with a twist. For instance, the famous Rajasthani dish of dal, bati, churma is re-



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PIT STOPS

Mharokhet near Jodhpur offers a farm to table experience (Above left); Camping equipment and cycles come with the caravan (Bottom far left); The airline-style bathroom comes with a small geyser (Above)

placed by bati stuffed with ricotta cheese, baked bell peppers are served with pudina chutney and a fire-burnt slice of jalapeno.

After spending the night in Jodhpur and exploring the city the next day, it's time to journey back to Delhi. This time, however, we do it at night. Snuggling into the duvet, adjusting the mood lighting above the bed and drawing down the window blinds as the RV makes its way along the highway, is a wrap for the holiday and the rip. It's a novel experience because it's rare for road trippers to travel at night. The journey must have been without jerks because I wake up only when I am close to Delhi, spoil for life for road trips.



or stepping out for piping hot food at a highway dhaba to soak up the outdoors. The latter is more appealing so we stop at Mandawa and tuck into Rajasthani delicacies for good measure and local flavours.

The first halt at dusk is at a campsite in Bikaner that sets the tone for the outdoor experience that is an intrinsic part of a caravan holiday. "RV On", the company with which I am travelling, has tie-ups with accredited hotels so that parking and safety is not a concern. Tea around the bonfire is followed by a meal of lal maas, kersangri and dal. This caravan also comes with camping gear and cycles, in case you want to wander far.

FACTFILE

Caravan companies in India

RV On

<https://rvon.in/>
Contact +91-9958065600

Cost For a couple or a family of 3-4 the price ranges from ₹1.25 lakh to 1.50 lakh (the itinerary for different destinations can be customised so call for details)

Carawander

www.carawander.com
Contact +91 6006795522

Cost The caravan needs to be hired for minimum of two days and it starts from ₹18,000 per day (pan-India)

Caravaa Travelers

<https://www.caravaaindia.com/>
Contact +91 8448261230

Cost: Five-person caravan costs ₹7500 per day and a seven-person caravan for ₹9500 per day (does not include fuel cost).

LuxeCamper

<https://luxecamper.com/>
Contact +91 7666577777

Cost: Starts from ₹15,000 per day for 4 people

Green Dot Expeditions

Contact +91 6280595008
<https://greendotexpeditions.com/>

Cost: Starts from ₹1500 and goes up to ₹15,000 per person per night depending on the package and facilities chosen.

