

Udaipur Luxury Escape: The Oberoi Udaivilas, Rajasthan, India — A Royal Retreat by Lake Pichola

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Introduction

Sometimes, the best travel experiences aren't about ticking off monuments — they're about surrendering to luxury, comfort, and breathtaking surroundings.

My four-night stay at The Oberoi Udaivilas was exactly that: a serene escape where every moment felt like a dream designed for indulgence and peace.

Day 1 Arrival – Where Royalty Meets Serenity

Flying from Delhi to Udaipur takes barely an hour, but as soon as you land, you feel the shift — from city bustle to calm, golden warmth. My journey to The Oberoi Udaivilas began with a private car waiting at the airport, followed by a tranquil boat ride gliding across the shimmering waters of Lake Pichola.

The first glimpse of the palace hotel felt unreal — ivory domes mirrored in the lake, fountains sparkling in the late afternoon light, and the gentle sound of classical music drifting through the courtyard. The staff welcomed us with garlands, rose petals, and cool drinks, setting the tone for what would be four days of sheer indulgence.

Our pool villa was breathtaking — marble interiors, intricate arches, and a private terrace overlooking the lake. The plunge pool caught the glow of the setting sun, and I remember standing there quietly, watching the City Palace float like a dream in the distance.

Dinner that evening was a royal Rajasthani spread — Laal Maas, Dal Baati Churma, Ker Sangri ki Subzi, and warm Tandoori Roti served with aromatic ghee. Dessert was Ghevar and Mawa Kachori, sweet, rich, and unforgettable.

After dinner, we sat by the lake, listening to faint folk tunes drifting from across the water — the city felt timeless, almost suspended in a golden haze.

Day 2 – Immersed in Comfort, Culture & Rajasthani Luxury

The morning began with soft sunlight streaming across the lake. Breakfast by the pool felt almost unreal — fresh fruits, flaky croissants, poha, parathas, and steaming masala chai served with the calm reflection of the domes dancing on the water.

After breakfast, I spent the late morning at The Oberoi Spa, where time seemed to slow down. The scent of jasmine and sandalwood filled the air as the therapist worked with warm aromatic oils — a perfect blend of Rajasthani herbs and essential oils. The experience was deeply soothing, almost meditative — a reminder that luxury here isn't loud, it's quiet, personal, and healing.

The spa was pure calm — white marble corridors leading to quiet domes, the fragrance of jasmine and lemongrass in the air. The therapist's rhythmic movements, warm oils, and the soft echo of sitar music made the entire experience feel like time itself slowed down.

Lunch at Suryamahal carried the same understated elegance. Highlights included:

- Gatte ki Sabzi – soft gram flour dumplings simmered in spiced yogurt curry
- Mirchi ka Salan – a bold, nutty chili curry
- Bajre ki Roti and smoked aubergine chutney
- Coconut panna cotta with rose syrup for dessert

By late afternoon, the mood shifted to leisure — lounging at the infinity pool with handcrafted cocktails and soft Rajasthani music playing in the background. As the sun dipped behind the Aravalli hills, the entire sky turned gold.

As the sun softened, we sipped cocktails by the pool, the lake glowing gold before the evening Rajasthani dance began...

Evening arrived with a private Rajasthani folk dance performance in the courtyard. Dancers in colorful ghagras spun under lantern-lit arches as the air filled with laughter, drums, and the aroma of grilled kebabs.

Dinner was set outdoors, under a starlit canopy by the lake — a scene straight out of a royal fantasy:

- Smoked Chicken Rajasthani with caramelized onions
- Paneer Rajasthani and Tandoori Broccoli
- Dal Baati Churma and Saffron-infused Rabri

It was a night that felt both timeless and intimate — where the essence of Rajasthan met the soul of true luxury.

Day 3 – Royal Flavors & Living Heritage

The morning began slow and serene. The sound of temple bells drifted softly from across Lake Pichola as I enjoyed breakfast on the terrace — freshly baked muffins, idlis with coconut chutney, and hot coffee served with a gentle breeze.

After breakfast, I joined a heritage walk arranged by the hotel. The staff led us through nearby ghats and hidden corners of Udaipur, sharing stories of the Maharanas, the City Palace, and the timeless artistry that still thrives in local workshops. We returned by boat — the lake glistening like silver beneath the late-morning sun.

Lunch was a culinary delight, a celebration of the region's earthy flavors:

- Jungli Maas – tender lamb slow-cooked with minimal spices, a recipe once favored by the royals on hunting trips
- Ker Sangri – a desert bean and berry dish unique to Rajasthan
- Missi Roti and Garlic-infused butter rice
- Mango Phirni for dessert — light, cool, and creamy

In the afternoon, I spent time wandering through Udaivilas' courtyards — marble corridors glowing with sunlight, fountains whispering gently. A short stop at the poolside bar led to an hour of quiet indulgence: fresh lime cocktails, cool towels, and the sight of peacocks strolling through the gardens as if they owned the palace.

Evening brought a new highlight — a private cooking session with the hotel's chef. We learned how to balance spices for dishes like Baajre ki Roti and Kadhi Rajasthani, using traditional stone grinders. The chef's stories about royal recipes made it more than a lesson — it was an insight into a centuries-old culinary legacy.

Dinner that night was candle-lit and elegant — a perfect reflection of Udaivilas' understated grandeur:

- White Maas – a rich yogurt-based chicken curry with cardamom and almonds
- Stuffed tandoori mushrooms and Saffron rice pulao
- Gulab Jamun Cheesecake for dessert — East meets West in the most indulgent way

The night ended with soft live flute music echoing across the water. Luxury, at that moment, felt eternal.

Day 4 – Serenity, Sunset & Farewell Evenings

The final full day was all about stillness — the art of slowing down. Breakfast was served in the garden: papaya, watermelon, freshly squeezed orange juice, and masala omelette made just right. The morning light sparkled off the domes of Udaivilas, turning them gold.

Late morning was devoted to the Signature Oberoi Spa Ritual — a 90-minute journey of relaxation using warm oils, rose petals, and herbal compresses. The therapy room overlooked the lake, and as the massage began, I could hear faint ripples of water against the walls — a sound so soothing, I almost fell asleep.

Lunch was light yet exquisite:

- Paneer Jodhpuri – paneer cooked with cashew and chili in a creamy saffron sauce
- Lentil stew with cumin rice
- Papad ki Churi, a crunchy local favorite
- Rose Falooda to finish — chilled and fragrant

The afternoon faded into an easy rhythm — swimming in the infinity pool, sipping chilled mocktails, and simply soaking in the stillness. Time didn't move at Udaivilas — it glided.

Evening brought a grand finale — an outdoor dinner by the lakeside, arranged privately. The setting was breathtaking: floating candles, white drapes, and the reflection of City Palace shimmering across the water.

Dinner was a royal feast, curated to perfection:

- Laal Maas – fiery red mutton curry cooked in traditional Mathania chili

- Bhindi Masala and Tandoori Malai Broccoli
- Jeera rice, Dal Panchmel, and warm Indian breads
- Rabri with saffron and pistachio for dessert — a perfect, silky goodbye

As I looked across the lake one last time, I realized — The Oberoi Udaivilas isn't just luxury; it's emotion crafted into architecture, cuisine, and hospitality. Every moment feels intentional — every glance, poetic.

Day 5 – Departure & Return

A farewell breakfast of stuffed parathas, fresh fruits, and masala chai. A final boat ride across Lake Pichola carried us away—but with hearts full of memories. The Oberoi Udaivilas isn't simply a stay; it's an experience — timeless elegance, royal charm and culture intertwined.

Final Thoughts

Sometimes the perfect trip isn't measured by how many sights you tick off, but by how deeply a place makes you feel. Udaivilas is where luxury meets the soul: ideal for travellers seeking privacy, culture and quiet indulgence. Whether you're on a romantic escape or pausing from the world — this palace by the lake reminds you what true elegance feels like.

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Quick Travel Tips

Getting There:

- By Air: Udaipur's Maharana Pratap Airport is well-connected with daily flights from Delhi, Mumbai, Jaipur, and Ahmedabad. Flight time from Delhi is ~1 hour, and from Mumbai ~1.5 hours.
- By Train/Car: Udaipur is connected by rail and highways; private car transfers from the airport or train station can be arranged by the hotel.

Best Time to Visit:

- October to March — pleasant weather, perfect for lake views, outdoor dining, and cultural experiences.

Recommended Stay:

- 4 nights minimum to fully enjoy the luxury, spa, pool villa experience, and cultural shows.
- Pool villas or lake-view suites offer the best views and privacy.

Cultural Experiences:

- The hotel hosts Rajasthani folk dance, music performances, and puppet shows every evening.
- Some days, you can also enjoy cooking sessions to learn traditional Rajasthani recipes.

Cuisine Highlights:

- Don't miss classic Rajasthani dishes: Laal Maas, Dal Baati Churma, Gatte ki Sabzi, Ker Sangri, and desserts like Ghevar and Mawa Kachori.
- Meals are often served by the pool, in private courtyards, or with candlelit lake views — making dining an experience in itself.

What to Pack:

- Comfortable yet stylish clothing for daytime sightseeing and casual luxury wear for evenings.
- Sunglasses, sunscreen, and a hat for daytime outings.
- Light sweaters or shawls for winter evenings (Oct–Mar).

Tip: Book well in advance, especially for lake-view suites or during peak season, to secure the best experience.

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