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travel

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Some of India's most expensive getaways that money can buy

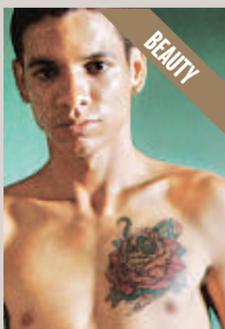


FUN PARADE

It is not just India that can boast of having large structures for Dussehra, Durga Puja and Ganesh Chaturthi. In Mexico City, last week, oversized Alebrije sculptures paraded the streets. They come in all sorts of shapes, sizes and colours. Alebrijes are fictional animal sculptures traditionally carved in wood and are native to Mexico's Oaxaca state. The residents dressed up to suit the occasion in as funky outfits and get-ups.

ROCK AND ROLL FOR ALL

A large number of men and women turned up for the Hipnosis Invita festival in Havana, Cuba, last week. This festival brings together rock fans for a day of concerts, a tattoo convention and photo exhibits. At the festival, the variety in tattoo designs bowled the visitors. There were quite many innovations in this body art.



BEAUTY



BACK TOGETHER

Stephen Stills, Richie Furay and Neil Young of Buffalo Springfield performed together during the Bridge School Benefit concert in Mountain View, Calif recently. The group last played in public in 1968 at the Long Beach Arena. The concert benefits the Bridge School, which assists children with severe physical impairments and complex communication needs.

GADETS



The Riverfront – serene villas on riverbank; Haridwar, Uttarakhand

Asking Price ₹2.9 crore

Located on the banks of the Ganges, the luxurious Riverfront is nestled on the foothills of the Chila and the Shivailk mountains ranges, and are surrounded by forests. On the outskirts of Haridwar, this property offers a peaceful getaway. A 20-minute drive from the Haridwar railway station, and 40-minutes drive from Jolly Grant Airport in Dehradun, this property has a helipad. The lower level will include a dining room and large living room with a fireplace, a TV room opening onto the largest outdoor deck, a common powder room, a guest bedroom with a walk-in wardrobe and bathroom en suite, a modular kitchen, and a utility room with an external entrance that leads to the staff quarters. The upper level of these villas include a master bedroom with a walk-in wardrobe and bathroom en suite, outdoor planters, an outdoor Jacuzzi, and two outdoor decks. In addition, the site will include a common riverside swimming pool, meditation pavilions and a steam room.



The Woodside – lavish mountain villas; Kasauli, Himachal Pradesh

Asking Price ₹2.3 crore

Under development on a mountainside plot of approximately 12 acres, the Woodside is a group of luxury villas located on the periphery of Kasauli in the Solan district, Himachal Pradesh. All the 35 villas in the Woodside will provide residents with generous living spaces, enhanced by full-length door shutters that open into the lawns, plunge pool decks, pergolas or balconies. The balconies offer stunning views of the valleys and the snow-capped peaks of the Himalayas. The Ashoka, the largest villa model, is placed on the higher contours of the site. These villas have three bedrooms and a study across two levels. Spacious balconies and a large pool deck ensure panoramic view of the mountains. The complex will include a pavilion, clubhouse, fully landscaped grounds, an outdoor swimming pool, gym and sauna, yoga room, billiards room and a lounge or reading room for residents and their guests, as well as a floodlit tennis court.



Le Bougainvillea – colonial-style bungalow; Salvador do Mundo, Goa

Asking Price ₹4.75 crore

This impressive colonial Renaissance bungalow, located in the village of Salvador do Mundo, was originally a Portuguese club, named Le Bougainvillea. Meticulously rebuilt from the ruins of the club, this elegant Portuguese-style bungalow with high ceilings, courtyards, verandahs and lots of natural light takes you back in time. The original space has been reconfigured into an elegant residence comprising three distinct wings. The newly added bedrooms accommodate larger groups of residents, while the expansive common areas are ideal for parties. The fully-furnished bungalow has been renovated and styled by designer Tarun Tahiliani. The property is available. It is located in a verdant three-villa enclave, with approximately 1,400 square yards reserved for private use. The main staircase is flanked by stepped gardens and leads to the central wing of the bungalow. In addition, the service wing houses two staff quarters and a staff bathroom.



Raj Bagh – a quiet chalet in the hills; Kodaikanal, Tamil Nadu

Asking Price ₹4.75 crore

This quiet bungalow, located in the picturesque hills of Tamil Nadu, offers residents the feeling of being far removed from the bustle of everyday life despite its proximity to Kodaikanal town. Just off Convent Road, it is in close proximity to many of the hill station's other scenic attractions. The main structure on this property, located in the heart of the quaint hill station, is an independent two-level bungalow. While the living spaces occupy the first floor level with the back gardens, the lower floor serves as a service wing. Located on a plot of nearly half an acre, the property also includes a terraced lawn in front of the bungalow and a landscaped back garden. In addition, there is a small fish pond and stone walkways. The back garden includes a spacious gazebo equipped with a fireplace. Another sit-out covered in rose creepers, offers a built-in swing seat. A sunny greenhouse, ideal for the amateur gardener, completes the garden's layout.

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Jungle treks

I have decided to go on a tour with my two brothers to Vizag and Araku Valley in October. Where can I put up between Tyda and Araku? How much will it cost to travel to Araku by bus or private car? Please guide me.

Kalyan Book your accommodation at the Andhra Pradesh Tourism guest house on the beach, located near the Appu Ghar. If you reach there in the morning, you can take the APTDC's Vizag tour. Carry a bottle of water along, since the weather

is very humid. The best places to visit are Haritha or Mayuri Hill. Tyda has only the Jungle Bells and you have no choice but to stay there. A round trip in a private car costs around ₹5,000. You could also take the morning train to Araku and then travel back in the RTC buses.

I would like to visit Rajabhatkhowa in Bengal in the second week of December. How's the weather there? What route does the train take from Howrah/Seal-

dah? Is there any wildlife sanctuary nearby?

AK Basu Rajabhatkhowa is in Dooars (North Bengal). To reach there, you have to board a train from Sealdah, New Jalpaiguri. You can cover Jaldapara, Rajabhatkhowa and enjoy the wildlife out there. You could also avail the jungle safari tour. The accommodation will be provided in forest bungalow (depending on availability).

(With inputs from HolidayIQ members)



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