

THE SPLENDID RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURE OF WALLED CITY OF JAIPUR- HAVELIS

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ABSTRACT

Jaipur, popularly referred to as Pink City, is a breathtaking destination that perfectly captures rich architectural influences of the Rajput, Mughal and British eras. This detailed account throws light on the architectural intricacies of the havelis that lie in the walled city of Jaipur and also chronicles their journey as revered landmarks, forgotten legacies, meticulously preserved marvels and transformed heritage hotels. It also touches on the aspects of the historical development of such structures and the ability of these structures to mimic the socio-economic standards as well as civilizational practices of contemporary society. Thus, using the approach of architectural and historical analysis, the present paper is designed to give the reader a clear understanding of the Havelis for Jaipur's historical legacy and analyze the main problems that havelis encounter nowadays, including the problems of conservation and urbanization.

Keywords: Architectural Influences, Heritage, Havelis, Heritage Hotels, Conservation, Urbanization.

Introduction

Sawai Jai Singh II, the 29th *Kacchawaha* ruler of Amber, felt the need for a new capital for *Dhundhar*. As Amber, which was built on a hill, with the passage of time was getting congested due to overpopulation and scarcity of water. Moreover, to build a strong political, trade and commercial centre against the Mughal cities, the establishment of a new capital was inevitable. And this new capital should be close enough to *Amber* to maintain the continuity of the rule. Sawai Jai Singh II had a great interest in *Shilpa Shastra* and he consulted several books on architecture and architects also while planning the layout of Jaipur.

Vidhyadhar Bhattacharya, a Bengali scholar was selected as the chief architect under whose architectural guidance Jaipur was planned following the principles of *Shilpa Shastra* and *Vaastu Shastra*. For his legendary contribution he was promoted to the post of *Des Diwan* in 1729 by the Maharaja and on building a seven-storied palace at Jai Niwas Garden he received a *Shiro-Pao*.

In *Ishwarvilas Mahakavya* written by Shri Krishna Bhatta, a panegyric in honor of Vidhyadhar in *shlokas*, "The famous Raja Sawai Jai Singh II founded the beautiful city of Jaipur by dint of his (Vidhyadhar) wisdom and knowledge the beautiful city of Jaipur gives pleasure to the inhabitants of all the three worlds".¹

Foundation of the City

The City of Jaipur was founded on 18 November 1727 A.D. *Paush Krishna* 1st Saturday 1784 *Vikrama Samwat*, Time 12:00 Noon by Sawai Jai Singh II. On February 18, 1733 A.D. Sawai Jai Singh requested the emperor, Muhammad Shah, that the new city should now be known as **Sawai Jaipur**. The request was accepted and to this effect an order was issued by *Parwana* dated 18 April 1733. The city since then till the reign of Sawai Man Singh II in the official records was known as Sawai Jaipur.²

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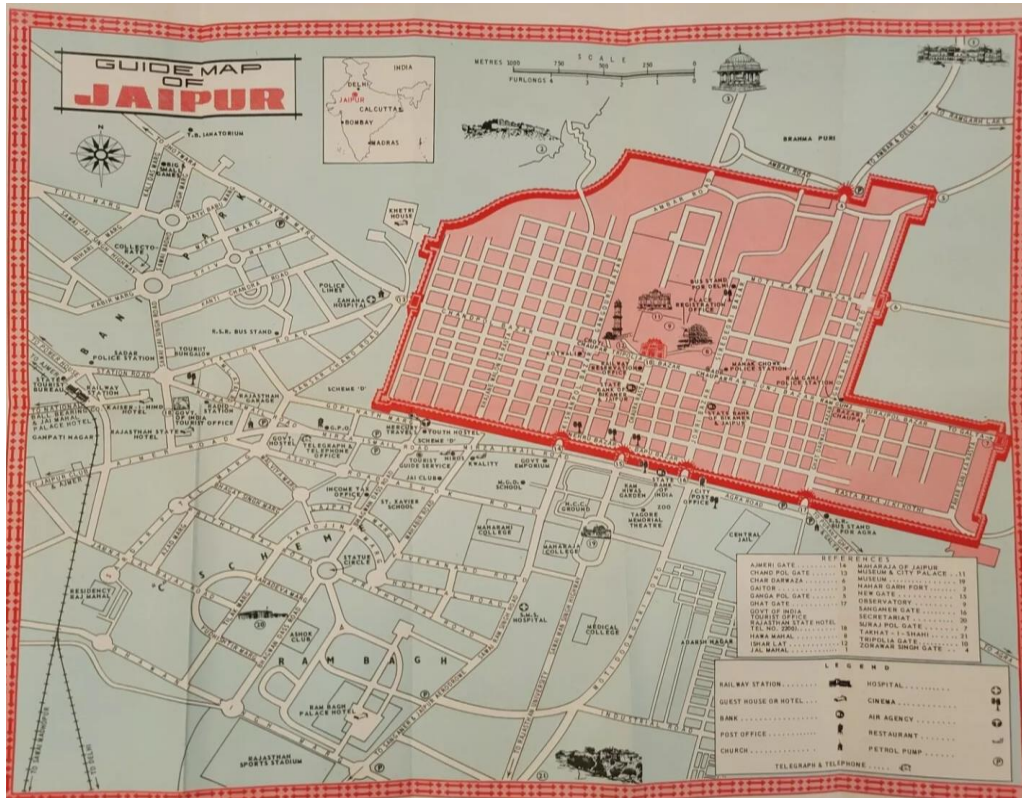
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British officially used the term '**Jaypur**' in 1897. After the integration of princely states of Rajputana in 1956, it was finally renamed as '**Jaipur**'.

Jaipur – As a Beautiful City

Many legends are associated with the foundation of the city. Some of the most popular among them can be quoted. It was believed that near the alligator tank or *talkatora*, there was a garden and the regular plan of the garden was taken as a base for the planning of the city. Some say that the plan of the city of Constantinople was taken as a model, while some advocate *Chandni Chowk* of Delhi to be a layout guide of Jaipur. Although none of them has an authentic base.



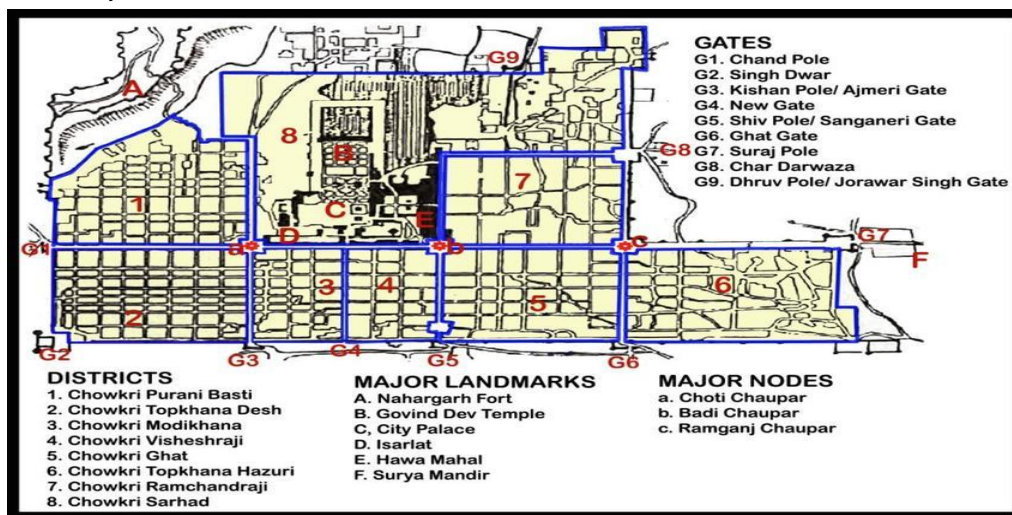
In the northwest of Jaipur, amber hills are located. The city was built in a square shape, following a grid pattern. This square is divided into nine *chowkries* and three *chaupars*, which are named as-

- **Purani Basti Chowkri,**
- **Topkhana Desh Chowkri,**
- **Topkhana Hazuri Chowkri,**
- **Modikhana Chowkri,**
- **Vishveshwarji Chowkri,**
- **Ghat Darwaza Chowkri**
- **Ramchandraji Chowkri**
- **Gangapol Chowkri**
- **Sarhad Chowkri**
- **Badi Chaupar**
- **Choti Chaupar**
- **Ramganj Chaupar.**

A powerful wall of solid masonry called '*Shahar Panaha*', 20ft. thick and 9 ft. thick runs around the city, with bastions and towers at intervals with holes for musket fire and large openings for artillery. There are seven fortified gateways.³

- On the south- ***Kishan Pol or Ajmeri Darwaza***
- On the south- ***Ram Pol or Sanganer Darwaza***
- On the south- ***Shiva Pol or Ghat Darwaza***
- On the west- ***Chand Pol Darwaza***
- On the east- ***Suraj Pol Darwaza***
- On the north- ***Ganga Pol Darwaza***
- On the north- ***Dhurwa Pol, Amber or Zorawar Singh's gate.***

In the *Brahmasthan* of the city **Govind Devji** temple is built. Adjacent to the temple is the **City Palace**, the royal residence.



Havelis

The walled city of Jaipur is worldwide famous for its architectural beauty. There are massive fully decorated buildings commonly known as Havelis. A Haveli is a traditional residential mansion assigned to important and influential persons like businessmen, nobles, zamindars, etc., thus, signifying the political or economic status of a person in a society.

In the words of *Sunand Prasad*, quoted by Shikha Jain, the term haveli comes from the ancient Arabic word meaning "enclosure".⁴

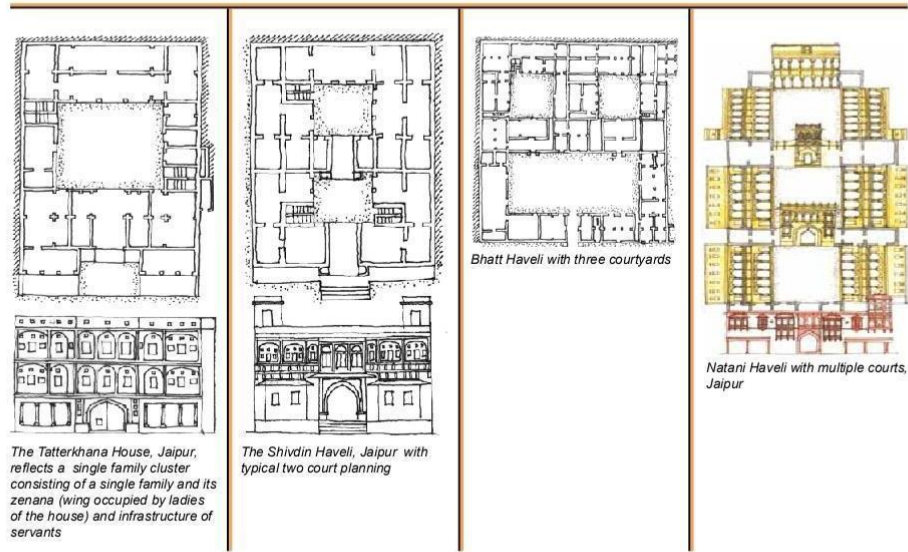
According to the layout plan described the city was divided into different sections depending on the occupation traditionally followed by some groups of people. Also, Havelis represented the rigid lifestyle of a society that segregated its men from its women. The architecture of the haveli was conceived around this social norm. The essence of this social structure served as the basis for the construction of the haveli.

The havelis provided the rudimentary structural framework for the town and one can observe many mansions erected in the path and bylanes of the bazaar in the traditional local architectural style.

Typology of Havelis

The city encloses several types of havelis - firstly, the temple haveli type which incorporates courtyard temples not having the shikhara and are located on the main business and residential lanes of Jaipur as well as inner city markets. Secondly, the garden haveli type, seen on the *Ghat Ki Guni* valley strip. The association of havelis with the temple, well and number of courtyards reflect the social and political status of a person. Havelis formed groups known as *mohallas* – a number of *mohallas* formed a *chowkri* (sector) which was a well defined geographical entity in the city. A *chowkri* in Jaipur may be made up of almost 400 *mohallas*.

Typology of Havelis in Jaipur



Architectural Elements of Havelis

Havelis consist of chambers with ventilated walls with openings and niches, ceilings and ornamental balconies involving structures where every part of it is to some extent unique and possesses an individual function.



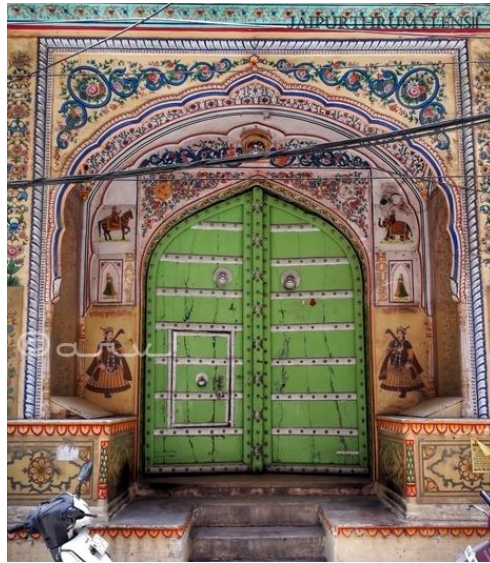
- Courtyard:** The conventional Indian courtyard consists of an architectural plan derived from *Vastu Shastra* where all the functions of a house begin from the central courtyard and happen to radiate in all directions throughout the house. Some havelis in this regard do have several; one for the men and the other for the women. It is an empty place built to be occupied for important activities- celebrations, rituals, a place of playing for children, and family get-together.



- **Parsal (Tibara):** It is a partially shaded settlement between the courtyard and the 'Choubara/ Khadki'. This place receives little light.
- **Osari:** Parsal is provided with a wall on three of its sides while Osari has a wall on all sides. A place partly exposed to sunlight recourse to the courtyard side and to an uncovered or shaded side. It is similar to Parsal.
- **Khadki/Choubara:** Refers to a fully shaded place, or rooms with Osari (a partly shaded place, either all round or on one side) and on the other side *Ota/a* an open or partly shaded place.



- **Jharokha:** It is a place located on the roof of a haveli generally. It facilitates shade in sun, rain and a good amount of breeze. Additionally, it provides a beautiful gaze to the activities happening in the street.
- **Chhatris:** These ornamental windows were installed on the top floors of the building and were designed with stone carved pillars and an architrave. Other beautifications that were incorporated includes minakari, stone carving, woodwork, glazed tiles and painting on walls, mirrors among others.
- **Jaalis:** They are latticed screens incorporated in the havelis for decreasing heat ingress, cooling effect and undoubtedly for enhancing beauty as well.
- **Otala (or Otta):** It is the outermost part of a residence. Possibly a place in the open or a half-sheltered one and it functions as more or less a meeting and 'play' ground for families.⁵
- **Pavilions:** are four-columned and have a roof. Mandapa is the designing concept that arises in a bid to create well-defined shelters. These act as rest houses commonly known as baradaris and provide immense pleasure.
- **Doorway:** The havelis are closed from all sides and have only big or small but only one finely carved main gate made of wood or metal brass. It is always in the forefront of the haveli or may bear the name of owner.



Other prominent characteristics of typical havelis are- plinth of the house, the main entrance is generally kept high at some places, each door in the house is beautifully crafted and usually less in height to control entry. In the staircase, the height of the risers is high while width is very small. Brackets are used to support the roof while niches in the wall with the recesses are used to keep oil lamps. "Parinda" for drinking water storage made of stone slabs.

In the words of Ilay Cooper, author of 'The Painted Towns of Shekhawati', "the haveli was to the bania what the fort was to the Rajput – his home, his status, his headquarters and his defense."

Some Prominent Havelis

- **Pandit Shivdin ki Haveli or Madarsa E Hunar:** This Haveli was built by Sawai Ram Singh II in 1866 AD for his Prime Minister Pandit Shivdin. It is located at Kishan Pol. Later it was renamed Madarsa E Hunar (school of arts and skills) and Rajasthan School of Arts and Crafts respectively. Currently, this building is known as the Museum of Legacies.



- **Natani Ki Haveli** –Till 1866 it was the residence of Bhikaridas and Loonkaran Natani¹ who were the wealthiest salt dealers in the city at those times. This *Haveli* is located in the South-western corner of *Amber Chaupar*. It now houses Maharaja's Girls High School and the City *Kotwali* (Police).



- **Nana ki Haveli** – It was originally a garden house (Nana Ji Ka Bagh) was gifted by Maharaja Madho Singh II of Jaipur to his Nana (maternal grandfather) Thakur Kalyan Singh Ji of Dangarthal. Haveli was built in 1898 AD by his son Thakur Debi Singh Jodha of Dangarthal, a leading noble of Jaipur State. Thakur Ripu Daman Singh, great-grandson of Thakur Debi Singh Jodha transformed this heritage building into a hotel in August 1998. This is managed by his wife currently. ⁶



- **Sankotra Haveli** –Built in the 17th century during the foundation of Jaipur and granted to the Sankotra Family. It has a popular Kaanch ka Darwaza incorporating magnificent glasswork. It is one of the oldest havelis of Jaipur and is now transformed into a heritage hotel.



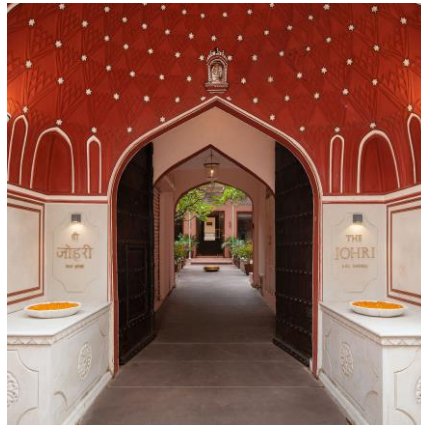
- **Khatu Haveli**: It was built by Thakur Sobhag Singh in the 19th century. During pre-independence times, his son Thakur Hari Singh was Commander-in-Chief and Chief of Police in Jaipur. It is located in Chandpole and lies very close to Hawa Mahal, Jantar Mantar and City Palace within a range of 2.5 km. Presently, it is converted into a Heritage Haveli and maintained by Brigadier Amar Singh and his wife Sushma Singh.⁷



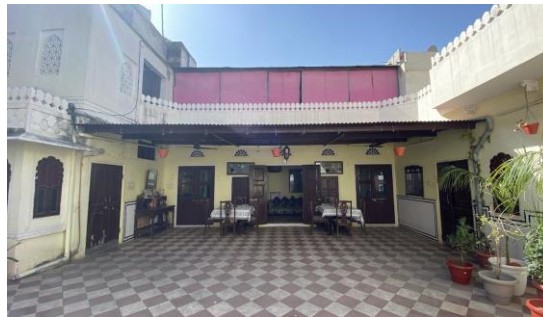
- **Paundrakji ki Haveli:** Sawai Jai Singh had the habit of honouring his courtiers and that was why he arranged a settlement for his Brahmin courtiers. This Haveli was granted to Ratnakar Paundrik and Pandit Jagannath Samraat. It was established in the eighteenth century A. D. at Brahmपुरi. Ratnakar Pundrikji was a royal priest of Maharaja Sawai Jai Singh. His birth name was Ratnakar Bhatt. He had migrated from Maharashtra to Kashi (Varanasi) originally for studying and specializing in astrology and tantra. *Sawai Jai Singh* met him and was deeply impressed and thus appointed him as a royal priest in Jaipur, and gave him the title of '*Pundrik*'. *Pundrikji-ki-Haveli* is specifically renowned for having mural paintings belonging to the Jaipur school of art. On the walls and ceiling, fascinating scenes of the royal court, celebrating festivals such as *Holi*, *Gangaur*, royal processions, and movement of armies have been painted. To protect these remains this *Haveli* is now a Nationally Protected Monument declared by the Archaeological Survey of India.⁸



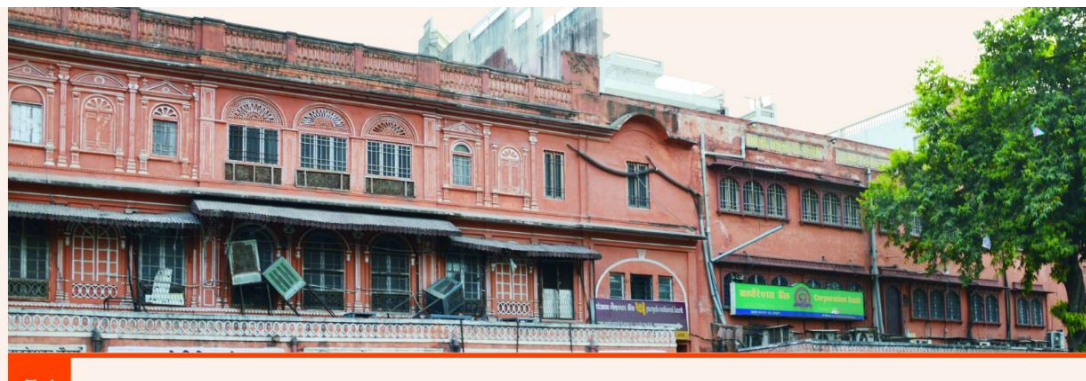
- **Lal Haveli:** It is located in Madho Singh Bhomia ka Rasta of Johri Bazaar. It was purchased by Late Shri Dhannalal Ji Kasliwal Faujdar, in 1871. The Lal Haveli is currently owned by Senior Advocate Shri Sudhanshu Kasliwal and his wife Ritu Kasliwal. It is now transformed into a luxurious boutique hotel. It is presently known as 'The Johri'.⁹



- Kishore Niwas Haveli:** This heritage structure was originally a Haveli built in 1860. This haveli was owned by Bahadur Singhji who was the guardian of Maharaja Sawai Man Singh of Jaipur. His sister Sisodinji Roop Kanwarji was married to Maharaja Ram Singh of Jaipur. Kishore Niwas Haveli was renamed after Bahadur Singh ji's son *Kishore Singh ji* of *Karansar*. Followed by the next successor *Thakur Suraj Bhan Singh Ji* of *Karansar*.



- Nawab Sahab ki Haveli:** This Haveli was built by the architect of Jaipur, Vidhyadhar Bhattacharya for himself in 1772. It is located in Tripolia bazar. The haveli passed on from Maharaja Jai Singh to Maharaja Jagat Singh and from him to Maharaja Ram Singh II. Then he presented it to his Prime Minister Nawab Sir Faiz Ali Khan. Khan beautified the Haveli with big halls and gold paintings. The Haveli passed on to his descendants and the last one Mohammad Mukarram did not have any son, it was again acquired by the Jaipur dynasty. Its location allows you to see this city's important landmarks, including Hawa Mahal, Jantar Mantar, Nahargarh, Isarlath, Ganesh Pol, Birla Mandir, Janani Deori, etc. The roof has some mirrors fixed at calculated angles, allowing you to experience panoramic views of the city. These facts have been shared by *Triloki Das Khandelwal*, the owner of a major portion of this Haveli.



- **Kalwara Haveli:** Originally it was built as a Rajput courthouse but later in the 19th century it was transformed into a beautiful colonial mentioned under a nobleman Jai Singh Ji. In the 21st century, the Kalwara Family decided to host foreign tourists and since then the Kalwara Mansion has served family lunches and dinners to foreigners. It is located in Chandpole Bazar.¹⁰



- **Jaipur Haveli:** It is located in Tarachand Nayab ka Rasta, Johri Bazaar, Jaipur. Seth Ramji Malji Khatri from Patna, lost his family because of the Plague. He adopted his youngest brother Bittan Lalji Seth as his son. They left the village of Patna to go to Jaipur. These two brothers bought the haveli in 1921. The house was already 170 years old. They both renovated the Haveli. It is also known as *Patnawalo ki Haveli*. *Bittan Lalji* was a personal jeweller to his Highness *Sawai Mansingh*. Generations of Late *Bittan Lalji* reside in the *Haveli*, and part of the *Haveli* has been converted as a homestay.



- **Surana Bhawan:** It is approximately 200 years old haveli which was owned by Hazarimal Milap Chand, a famous jeweler of the time. His successors Manna Lalji and Mohan Lalji renovated the haveli and continued the profession of gems and jewelry. It is a four-storeyed haveli and also has a temple of God Hanuman. It initially had paintings of Ram Darbar as well.
- **Khawas Ji ki Haveli:** It is located on Khawas ji ka rasta, a lane into the Hawa Mahal Road. Khawas Lekhraj Ji who was an adviser to the king was gifted this haveli for his contributions at the court. In recent years it has been converted into a decent hotel.



- **Dhabai ji ki Haveli:** It is located in Sireh Deori bazaar of Hawa Mahal Road. It is presently functioning as an Ayurvedic hospital and Mahila police station.



- **Tholia Haveli:** It was constructed by Banji Lal Tholia in 1925. He started the family business of jewellery at the age of 13 and was the first from Jaipur to trade in emeralds. By the age of 40, he became one of the most prominent jewellers of his time. It is situated in Ghee walon ka Rasta , Johari Bazar, Jaipur presently known as Seth Banji Lal Tholia Dharamshala.



- **Mir munshi Ji ki Haveli / Saba Ki Haveli:** This historical haveli is in the Johari Bazaar region, and it dates back to the early nineteenth century. It was constructed by a wealthy merchant Mir Munshi and therefore portrays aesthetics of the time it was constructed. The haveli has paintings, detailed carving work and large main courtyard hall and other special features of Rajasthani architecture. In the course of time, Saba Ki Haveli continues to stand as the historical heritage of the city illustrating the prowess in elegance and art in Jaipur. It is situated in Gangapol, Jaipur.



- **Dera Mandawa Haveli:** It stands as a testament to the opulent heritage of Rajasthan. The word 'dera' has been used for many centuries with the root derived from the Persian language though modified in the Urdu context which means a dwelling place. This historic haveli, built in 1885 by Thakur Jait Singh Ji of Mandawa of Shekhawati, was constructed to serve as a dwelling place (outhouse) for the Thakur while he transacted official business in the court of Maharaja of

Jaipur. It also served as an army camp several times. Today, *Dera Mandawa Haveli* has been meticulously restored, serving as a charming heritage hotel that blends historical grandeur with modern comforts today managed by his great grandson *Thakur Durga Singh Ji* and the Mandawa family.



- **Alsisar Haveli:** Dating back to the 18th century located on Sansar Chandra Road. This elegant haveli was built by Rajputs Kacchawa clan in 1826. The traditional walls incorporate painting with use of vivid color and patterns. The haveli used to be a residence of the Alsisar ruling family. Alsisar Haveli has developed into a quality heritage hotel. The ground floor is a large elevated platform which is now used for puppet shows and folk dance while previously it served as a place of get together for the males of the family.



- **Mathurawala ki Haveli:** It is a typical vintage home located in the business area of Johari Bazaar. The haveli was constructed in the 19th century. The construction was undertaken by the Mathurawala family who were well-to-do merchants in Jaipur and the haveli was a part of the living and working premises of the Mathurawala family. It has a carved frontage, elaborate wooden work, and bright murals on walls depicting the royal taste of that time. Originally, but in the subsequent years, it has emerged as a prominent historical monument for anybody who wants to unravel the archaeological beauty of Jaipur.
- **Samode Haveli:** This haveli was built by Jaipur's former Prime Minister Rawal Sheo Singh Ji of Samode family about 225 years ago. This flamboyant haveli is accentuated with courtyard, garden and terraces along with incredible frescoes and murals. It is situated on *Jorawar Singh gate, Gangapole*. On visiting Samode haveli the tourist can have glimpses of hand block printed textile and blue pottery from the local market.



Other Havelis

Though the rich traders and business communities were given havelis in main bazaars of walled city, businessmen who were in nascent phase settled down in small lanes of the city. In due course of time they grew richer and built havelis in their name and community. Few of such havelis are listed below.

- **Havelis of Kishanpole Bazar:** Sokhia Bhawan, Udai Singh Ji ki Haveli, Jhalani Bhawan
- **Havelis of Hawa Mahal Road:** Bhatt Raja ki Haveli, Nazim Panna Haveli Chandi ki Taksal
- **Havelis of Johari Bazar:** Guda Haveli, Salim Manzil, Daroga ji ki Haveli, Haldia Haveli, Tati Walon ki Haveli, Partanio ki Haveli,
- **Havelis of Khazane Walon ka Rasta:** Ghadisazon ki Haveli, Pokhar ji ki Haveli, Uchi Haveli
- **Havelis of Chandpol:** Modiyon ki Haveli, Jailal Haveli
- **Havelis of Gangauri Bazar:** Ramnath ji ki Haveli, Jahaz Ghadi ki Haveli, Jaipuria Bhawan, Lal Hathiyo ki Haveli, Kothari Bhawan, Pehli Badi Maharani ki Haveli, Doosri Choti Maharani ki Haveli, Chote Lal Yadav ki Haveli
- **Havelis of Ramganj:** Thakur and Thakkarwad ki Haveli, Koliyon ki Kothi, Raigaron ki Kothi

All the details regarding the havelis mentioned above have been gathered from primary field surveys and oral interviews. However, to this end, further comprehensive information is still limited.

Conclusion

This paper explores the interplay between heritage, culture and tourism of Jaipur with special emphasis on its havelis. Through a detailed methodology that involved field survey, historical analysis and interviews with local informants, we examined the role of these Havelis that are blended with cultural heritage and tourism, to study and emphasize on the fact that it is not only the mansions that are in need to be saved but also the traditions that they reflect. However, as tourism develops, there emerges conflicts between commercial and conservation perspectives to ensure that these sites continue to reflect Jaipur's heritage authentically. Hence on the one hand, tourism filters economic advantages and international acknowledgement on the other hand, it calls for effective management of various problems that threaten the cultural character and historical identity of these havelis for the benefit of future generations.

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