

Weight Loss Therapy

Those fiery hot spices in Indian curries are not burning just your tongue, but a few calories as well. When eaten in moderation, they make for an amazing weight loss tool. That's because the chillies, cayenne and paprika used to add spiciness to the curry contains a chemical called capsaicin. The pungency of the chemical kick starts a natural process Thermogenesis that immediately converts some of the food into heat. Moreover, spicy curry curbs hunger and prevents you from reaching out for second helpings.



What a Shot: The British Royals with the Jaipur Royals celebrating the killing of a tiger at Ranthambore in 1964

Prince Philip The Man Who Made Amends Royally



Prakash Bhandari
The writer is a senior journalist

In 1961, the Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip came to India and it was the first visit of the British royals after India became independent. Sawai Man Singh made sure that the British royals visit Jaipur. This was the time when Gayatri Devi had started dabbling in politics as she came under the influence of C Rajagopalachari, the last Governor General. Gayatri Devi had decided before the Queen's visit to join the Swatantra Party, but she had kept this as a secret even from her husband. Maharaja's concern was Gayatri Devi joining an opposition party would be an embarrassment to the Government as the Queen was coming to visit India as the guest. The press had got a hint about it, but then both Maharaja and the Maharani decided to keep it on hold. This remained a secret till the Queen left India after a long tour.

Well Known 'Secret'
John Zubrzycki, the Australian author in his best-seller House of Jaipur writes: "The official announcement that Ayesha (Gayatri Devi) had joined the Swatantra Party had to be delayed

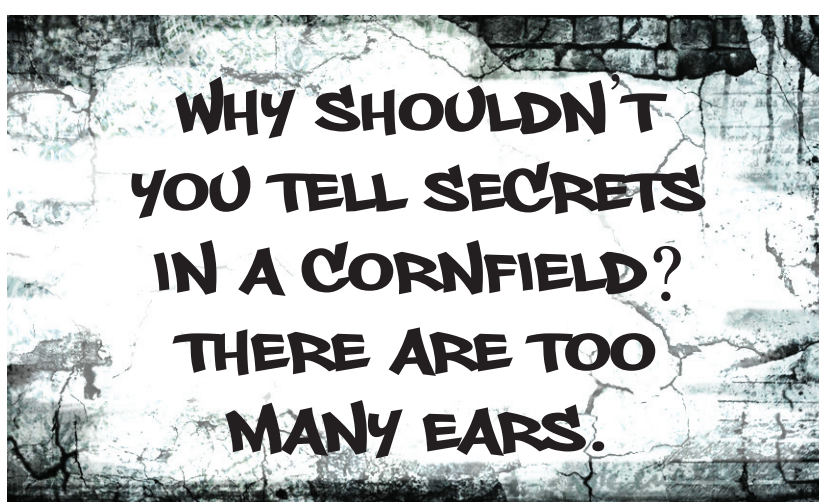
because of the impending visit by the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh to India in January 1961. The royal tour which included a stopover in Jaipur, was putting the government on an edge. India was an independent nation and the last thing it wanted was a former Maharaja entertaining an English monarch and her husband in a way that harked back to the colonial era." Prime Minister Jawahar Lal Nehru interpreted the wording of an invitation to a reception in honour of the British royal couple as an invitation, to a princely durbar, which Jai (Sawai Man Singh) vehemently denied. Nehru also demanded to come in full dress and wearing their turbans. Jai replied that that was the traditional costume in Jaipur. Nobles always attended any ceremonial occasion dressed in their achkan and turbans carrying their swords.

Poke in the Eye
The Queen and the Duke's stay in Jaipur stole the limelight from the other stops on their India tour. The 'Tattler's correspondent described the sight of the queen riding an elephant with her husband in the Pink City as 'unforgettable'. The Queen looked as happy as she was leading in a Derby winner. The elephant, his face as a mass of bright tracery, with bracelets of brass tinkling on his feet, was Moghul splendour as only India can do it. This ancient pageantry has in no way suffered from the country's socialist philosophy photo of the Queen waving to the crowd from the elephant with the Maharaja



In 1961, a polo match was organised in Jaipur's Rambagh Polo Ground. Queen Elizabeth was the chief guest. Photo shows (from left to right) Lt Gen Duleet Singh (umpire), Hon. Lt Gaje Singh, Thakur Kishan Singh, Maharaja of Jaipur, Lt Gen MS Wadia, Queen Elizabeth, Prince Philip, Rao Raja Hanut Singh, Bijay Singh, Hari Singh and MRA Baig (umpire).

THE WALL



Prime Minister Jawahar Lal Nehru interpreted the wording of an invitation to a reception in honour of the British royal couple as an invitation, to a princely durbar, which Jai (Sawai Man Singh) vehemently denied. Nehru also demanded to know why guests had been asked to come in full dress and wearing their turbans. Jai replied that that was the traditional costume in Jaipur. Nobles always attended any ceremonial occasion dressed in their achkan and turbans carrying their swords.

tiger was taken with the group enjoying a glass of champagne. Daily Mirror, a prominent newspaper of Britain on a front page commentary blasted the hunt. Saying it was high time that those who advise the royals on these matters should take some heed of the public opinion. The royal family does not seem to have caught up with the modern enlightened views on the killing of the animals for pleasure.

Making Amends

Later, the issue also cropped up when Prince Philip took over as the chief of the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and the media raised the issue of the Ranthambore killing by the Duke that embarrassed him. But after taking over as the chief of WWF, he auctioned off all his guns and the funds thus raised was used for charity.

"When the late Rajmata was trying to establish the Sawai Man Singh Vidyalaya, she met Prince Philip and asked him to support her school project with funding. Prince Philip gave a part of the funds raised from the auction of the guns for the SMS School to Rajmata. Thus, the SMS School is indebted to the Duke of Edinburgh," remembers Jai Singh.

More Popular Events

When the Queen and the Duke visited India in the winters of 1961 a polo match was organized at the Rambagh Polo Ground. The polo event was the most interesting part of the royal's Indian sojourn and the British polo fraternity started talking about it even during the summers of 1961 and even the British media wrote in advance about the visit.

The preparation for the ground began much in advance and gardeners were put on the job for laying the grass at the Rambagh Polo Ground. Prince Philip was to play this match and two teams having high goal handicaps players like the Maharaja and Hanut Singh played. The Maharaja's team in this exhibition match had Hon Lt Gaje Singh, Maj Thakur Kishan Singh and Lt Gen MS Wadia besides the Maharaja. Prince Philip's team besides him had Hanut Singh and his two sons Bijay Singh and Hari Singh. Thus the royal team had three members of a family and besides the father; two of his sons were also playing.

Criticism Too

A British newspaper daily Herald wrote: The photo showed a beaming Prince Philip standing near the tiger's head along with the Maharaja and his two sons Jai Singh and Jagat Singh, and Gayatri Devi. Two hundred beaters (hankas) had lured the tiger to a position from where the prince was able to move it down from a twenty-five-foot-high machan. One newspaper derided that it was the most choreographed and stage-managed shoot ever staged. A second tiger was shot by Rear Admiral Christopher Douglas Bonham-Carter, an official attached to Prince Philip. But there was a rumour that the tiger was actually shot by the Queen.

The photograph with the dead



In 1982, on a private visit to Jaipur at the invitation of Rajmata Gayatri Devi attended a dinner in his honour at Lilypool.

ence of thousands of spectators that had made a beeline to the Rambagh Polo Ground. During the prize-giving ceremony, the people chanted, "Maharaja Sawai Man Singhji ki jai" and "Maharani Gayatri Devi ji jai", but there was no "Jai, Jai" for the British royals. "During this visit, the royal couple also visited Udaipur as the guest of the late Maharana Bhagwat Singh. The Mewar rulers were never on good terms with the British and they often defied the orders of the British and when all the Indian rulers were asked to build their houses in Lutyness Delhi, Udaipur defied that order, however later they built Udaipur House in old Delhi's Civil Lines.

But, under a free India all old ideas and thoughts were buried and, the Maharana hosted them well; like Jaipur, they had another elephant ride in Udaipur. But they enjoyed heartily the boat journey on Pichhola and were stunned to see the beauty of the Lake Palace. Mohan Lal Sukhadia was the Chief Minister then and he hailed from Udaipur. Rubirosa made his mark as an international playboy for his jet-setting lifestyle and his legendary sexual prowess with women. His five spouses included two of the richest women in the world. Rubirosa was linked romantically to too many women including Marilyn Monroe, Ava Gardner, Joan Crawford and many Hollywood actresses; the rich British and American women. He was a friend of the Maharaja and had come to play at Jaipur in his invitation. Rubirosa was married five times, but never had any children. He married a French film actress and also Barbara Hutton and Doris Duke, the two famous American

Enormous Popularity

Prince Philip was thrilled to see the large crowd and promised to come again to play and he did come back in 1966. This 1966 visit was a private visit at the invitation of the Maharaja and he stayed at the Rajmahal where the Maharaja resided. It was a three-match event and the teams changed the players. Apart from the Prince Philip, there was another attraction; Porfirio Rubirosa Ariza, who was a Dominican Republic diplomat, race car driver, soldier and a polo player." said Col (Retd) Billy Sodhi, who was one of the players in this three-match series played at Jaipur. Rubirosa was a supporter of the dictator Rafael Trujillo and was rumoured to be a political assassin under his political regime.

Later, Ahuja was the secretary of the Polo Club when Prince Charles had come to play at the Rambagh polo ground. It was a grand event and Prince Charles had come with his wife Diana amidst the dispute between the two. The royal couple stayed at the Rajmahal. "We made an elaborate arrangement for the match. The clubhouse was decked up and we placed pictures of the Queen's visit to the polo ground and also pictures of Prince Philip playing polo. A special trophy was instituted and it was presented by late Shikhar Chand Poonglia. The trophy was named Seth Sobhagnull Gokal Chand Poonglia Trophy. The trophy was presented after the match to Prince Charles by Diana" remembers Ahuja.



Rubirosa



Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip, seen in the boat on their way to Jagmandir with members of The Mewar Family and others at Udaipur.



In 1982, on a private visit Prince Philip partied, sitting on Lilypool's drawing room floor. Here the Duke is talking to Priyanandana Rangsit, wife of Jagat Singh, son of Gayatri Devi.

heresses and for divorcing them, he received millions of dollars, fishing fleet, aircraft, polo ponies, jewellery and monthly alimony and houses in Paris. His playboy lifestyle was matched by stories of his sexual prowess. His reputedly larger than average penis size inspired Parisian waiters at the famous Paris restaurant maxims to name gigantic pepper mills 'Rubirosas'. The name stuck and has been in use all over the world.

Friends with the more ordinary of birth
Thus during the 1966 visit after Prince Philip, it was Rubirosa, who received the royal treatment. The three-match series was wonderful and besides Philip, Billy Sodhi, Pradeep Mehra, Bijay Singh, Jai Singh played the three-match series. Ved Ahuja, who later became the honorary secretary of the Rajasthan Polo Club, remembers the visit of Prince Philip when Pradeep Mehra, a great polo player, who later became country's top horse breeder, knew Prince Philip intimately. He used to play in England but he also played for and against Prince Philip.

Mehra was a young officer in the 61st Cavalry and when Prince Philip came to Jaipur, he sent him an invitation for a dinner at his res-



Queen Elizabeth on arrival at Udaipur driving in the old city and cheered by people.

By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman



#GLIMPSE

Exquisite Equine Escape

Tusharika Singh
Freelance writer and city blogger

Housing over 50 Marwari horses, Roop Niwas is run by an enthusiastic & enterprising father-daughter duo, Rawal Devendra Singh & Jogeshwari Singh.

At a distance of less than 150 kms from Jaipur lies the small town of Nawalgarh in the world-renowned Shekhawati region of Rajasthan. With a plethora of havelis, temples and monuments adorning the beautiful fresco art, Nawalgarh is aptly known as an Open Air Art Gallery. For horse lovers, however, the bigger attraction is the one-of-its-kind equestrian experience that a family-run boutique hotel Roop Niwas Kothi offers here for its guests from across the globe.

Housing over 50 Marwari horses, the hotel is run by an enthusiastic and enterprising father-daughter duo, Rawal Devendra Singh and Jogeshwari Singh. Hailing from the erstwhile royal lineage of Nawalgarh, they are the descendants of the great Rajput warrior chieftain - Nawal Singh Ji Bahadur who established the Thikana (kingdom) of Nawalgarh in 1737 CE.



Chai & samosas served for breakfast.

After over a year of staying at home, I finally decided to take a short weekend getaway at Roop Niwas Kothi recently. As I entered the Kothi, the pastel yellow tones of the elegantly designed building and the serenity of the sprawling lawns caught my fancy. The warm hospitality of their staff as I checked in, especially the Manager - Surendra instantly made me feel 'at home'. En-suite with all modern amenities, the spacious rooms and bathrooms had the vintage appeal of a quintessential heritage haveli of Rajasthan. In addition to the usual tea, coffee and cookies, the coffee table in the room also had two huge glass jars filled with freshly made Shakarpara and Matri. A bowl with bright and colourful bougainvillea flowers awaited us at the console near the mirror alongside a sanitizer and two N95 masks.

As we headed for lunch to their in-house restaurant, Badshah Pasand (named after one of their oldest horses), a delectable spread of local Rajasthan delicacies like kadhi, aloo methi, bajra soita, lehsun chutney, gatte ki sabzi, chakki ki mithai lay beautifully on a table

To give the guests a glimpse



'Jai Niwas', the swimming pool at Roop Niwas Kothi.



A splendid sight of horses running to their feeding areas each evening at Roop Niwas Kothi.

covered with a crimson red table cloth. The preparation of the food was authentic to its roots. Flavourful and had just the right amount of spices.

As the evening approached, we headed to the stables to take the one-of-its-kind sight of over 50 magnificent and free-spirited Marwari horses running to the feeding area from the paddocks for their evening meal. The thunderous sound of the galloping horses which keeps getting louder as they come closer with each passing second is sure to give one goose bumps! A wave of freedom, energy and power engulfed the air. As we settled with our cups of masala chai in the stable-facing garden, the horse aficionado - Rawal Devendra Singh - who is also known as the pioneer of Equine Tourism in Rajasthan narrated the history of the three-decade-old stables along with some memorable equestrian anecdotes for the guests. The intimate passion with which he introduced some of their choicest horses left us with no choice but to be blown away by these majestic beings.

The next morning we decided to take the Shekhawati safari which started with a visit to the Seth Arjun Das Goenka Haveli museum that houses stunning fresco paintings as well as sculptures depicting scenes from everyday life in the past - the accountant and his assistants, women working in the kitchen, among others. This was followed by a visit to the Dundlod and Mahansar forts. Though in need of upkeep, these forts had a rustic and laidback charm and gave the tourists a glimpse into the yesteryears. Just like Roop Niwas Kothi, the welcoming nature of the owners as well as the sumptuous food at Mahansar made it a worthwhile experience. The safari concluded with a visit to an ancient step well. While opulent in design, architecture and built, it sadly lacked cleanliness and maintenance.

Finally, it was time to bid adieu to Roop Niwas Kothi but not without yet another delectable meal - also matar samosas, omelettes and freshly squeezed orange juice. The hotel will soon have a museum with a display of the beautiful paintings, photographs and sculptures painstakingly collected by Rawal Devendra Singh and his forefathers. All in all, the tranquility, warmth and the exquisite equine escape that Roop Niwas Kothi offers make it a must-visit place in Rajasthan.