



TATLER[®]

TRAVEL GUIDE 2024

THE NEWT IN SOMERSET

Hadspen, UK

This haven is ruled by Koos Bekker and Karen Roos, a South African power duo who, despite their lofty social status – they sponsor the Chelsea Flower Show – are actually very low-key; and, like their hotel, simply don't flaunt themselves. Living off the land comes easily here – as it does at The Newt's sister-establishment, Babylonstoren in South Africa. Karen Roos was previously editor of South African *Elle Decoration*, so she has overseen the interiors: from the Georgian mansion of Hadspen House to its stableyard, farmyard and outlying cottages, as well as the whimsical two-bedroom Gate Lodge. And everywhere there are colourful walls hung with contemporary prints, potted plants and shady spaces tricked out

with hessian rugs. Nothing here is stuffy and certainly not the ultra-high-spec grounds, with their parabola-shaped walled garden. But a stay here is not just about a luxury English weekend getaway; you're part of a visionary project to shine a spotlight on ancient Somerset crafts, maintain the land and support local produce. It's all about the butcher, baker and cyder-maker; and the apple-press – supported by the most impressive orchards, cellars and technology – is a destination in its own right. But the real draw here is Avalon, an extraordinary farm that is home to the largest herd of British Whites in the country. Its divine shop (and butcher's) is a sort-of pumped-up Daylesford... and also delivers to London. *Doubles from £520, including breakfast (thenewtinsomerset.com).*

More than 350 types of fruit, vegetables and herbs are grown in the kitchen garden at The Newt in Somerset



A sweeping pool deck makes the Imperial Raj Bagh Suite the crown jewel of SUJÁN Sher Bagh

SUJÁN SHER BAGH

Rajasthan, India

Something special happens at SUJÁN Sher Bagh, the maharaja of safari experiences and brainchild of conservationist-aesthetes Jaisal and Anjali Singh. Katy Perry came up with her hit song 'Roar' around its campfire. Former PM Boris Johnson rattled off a *Spectator* diary on tiger conservation during one of its wildlife drives. And it starts on arrival at this Rajasthani jungle retreat: a path between long, wild grasses leads to an elegant bar, where a Jaisal's Tigertini (gin shaken with sweet and dry vermouth) can be knocked up to suit. Here, they take the comfort of their guests as seriously as they do tiger conservation, and everything is done with elegance. Safaris are in customised Jeeps equipped with Swarovski binoculars; and the tents in which you stay are 1920s-themed wonderlands, decorated with oil-on-canvas tiger portraits by Violet Astor and provided with all the luxuries you could ever think of. Other attractions include the lagoon-like pool and the canvas spa. Listening to birdsong while lashings of herb oil are applied, you can banish any muscular knots incurred on bumpy drives. Then pray that, on the next one, you will witness a tiger in the wild: it's one of life's rarest pleasures. *Scott Dunn (scottdunn.com) offers nine nights in India, including a stay at SUJÁN Sher Bagh from £6,349, full board, including flights, transfers and game drives.* □

