

Why India's Lion Country is also an upcoming luxury wellness destination

Safaris or Spas- THE WOODS AT SASAN has both covered

To the world, the Sasan Gir forests in Gujarat, India are thick, thriving and home to the Asiatic lion. But there's a lot more going on here.

A pleasant drive through dense forests of teak, acacia and jamun trees interspersed with startling sunset orange flowers of the Flame-of-the-forest leads to an old, quiet mango orchard. Tucked away in this oasis of deep greens, and redolent with memories of warm summers, is the Woods At Sasan - a luxury resort offering a whole new outlook on rejuvenation.

The resort is about 350 kilometres from the city of Ahmedabad and 60 kilometres from the scenic town of Diu. Apart from the famed lions, the wilderness of Gir is also home to 300 species of birds - a bird watcher's paradise.

The eight-acre Woods At Sasan is a serene blend of contemporary spaces that blend into the surrounding greenery. The properties combine elegant wood interiors enhanced by unpolished stone, terracotta artefacts, traditional bead-work and hand-woven macramé rugs - the vision of an international design team expertly executed by over 30 local artisans. Cool, lime plastered walls washed with natural lighting through clear glass facades, offer an unparalleled view of the vivid scenery.

Woods At Sasan offers guests the option of a great nature + culture getaway.

Lion safaris in the heart of the Sasan Gir forest, personalised nature photography tours, guided visits to the ancient Somnath

temple or the teeming town of Junagadh may be interspersed with long, idyllic days of simply soaking up some sun, or sampling the top-of-the-line cuisine, both international and regional.

Culture seekers can participate in local weddings as honoured guests - an immersive experience guaranteed to generate some great memories and photographs. Visits to the local markets or a day trip to the quaint town of Diu, an erstwhile Portuguese colony are great ways to understand the pulse of the place and its people.

For large groups facilities for events, off-site corporate get-togethers as well as destination weddings are available on request. But for those travellers looking for a leisurely trip into reconnecting with the self and

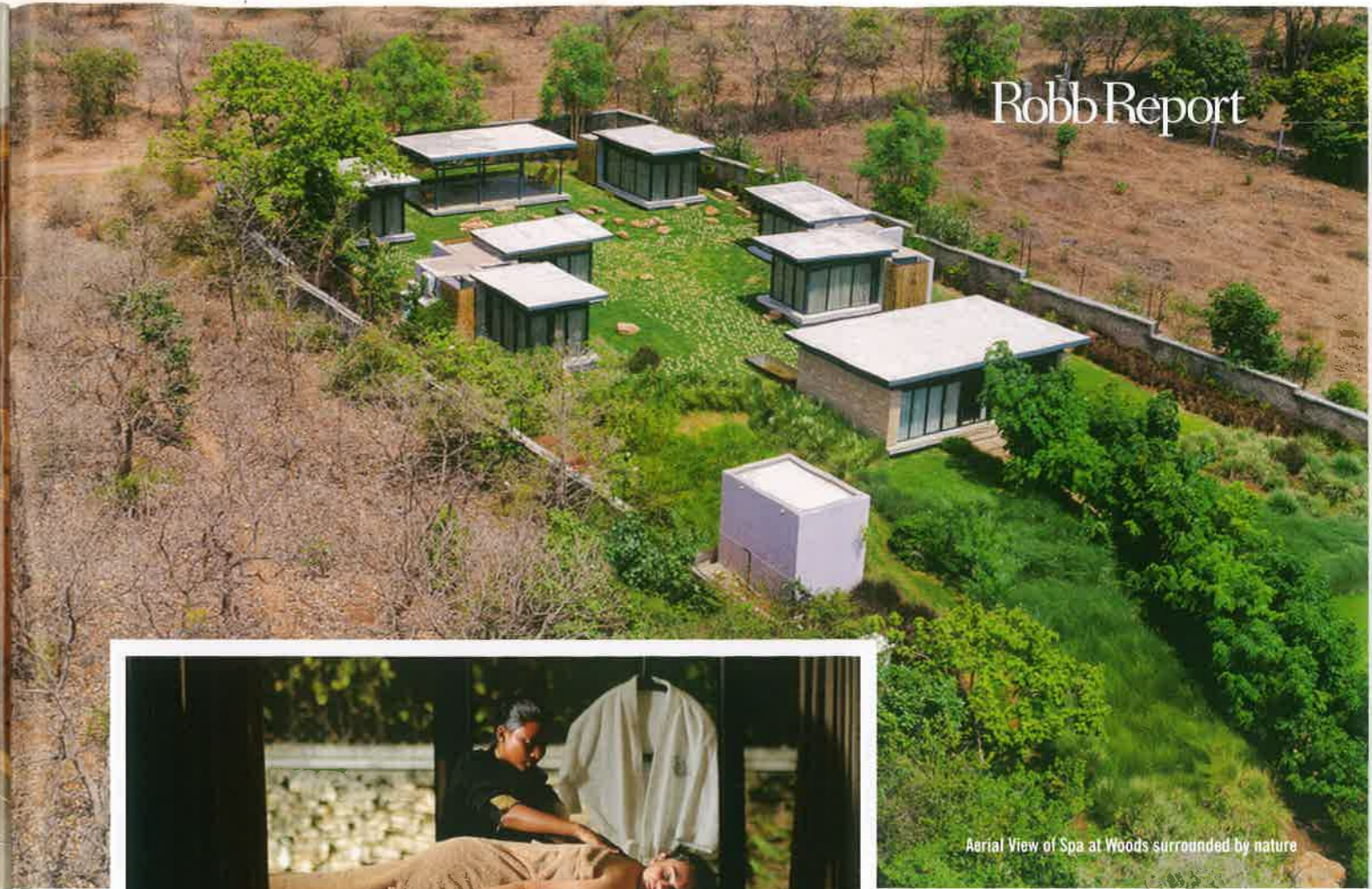


Lobby

LUXE HAVENS TO INDULGE IN



Interior of Woods Studio



Aerial View of Spa at Woods surrounded by nature

living in tune with the natural rhythms of the body, the Woods At Sasan resort is definitely one of India's upcoming luxury wellness destinations.

Founded on the ancient Indian principles of holistic living, the Woods At Sasan offers guests a way to harmonise mind, body and spirit the old-fashioned way - embrace nature, live well, eat right and exercise the body, calm the mind.

For dedicated wellness guests, the team at Woods At Sasan plans out a personalised wellness program involving intense spa and yoga sessions at the excellent Som Spa and the Yogshala. The Woods Wellness Team ensures that each guest receives individual attention and a health routine to suit their personal requirements.

Guests are whisked away by a team of attentive staff for a stay that combines a cleansing of body and mind - the effects of which continue long after the stay. Trained practitioners work on improving wellness from the inside out to enhance energy, vitality and overall well-being. The essence of the program is to realign the mind and body, and boost the immune system through a balance of wholesome food, Yoga, Som Spa Special Massage Therapy, swimming and exercise followed by sleep wellness.

'Som' refers to the purity and lustre of the moon, and the lambent view from the floor-to-ceiling windows in the spa is certainly

spectacular. Relaxation is assured in the simple, serene rooms scented with aromatic oils and spices, lit by the peaceful flickering of oil lamps. Aches, pains and any last dregs of tiredness are wiped right out by the in-house team of expert masseuses.

The outdoor yoga pavilion or Yogshala is the ideal place to start the day - amid early morning bird calls and cool crisp breezes swishing through the trees. The private yoga therapist makes sure that you're fresh and supple for the day, after an hour's yoga selected to suit your body type. For serious fitness enthusiasts, there's also the gym for a high energy workout.

A combination of fresh, organic food and beverages, meditation, followed by intense

yet relaxing sessions of Yoga or a good work-out in the gym, a cooling swim and deep massage therapies guarantee a glow of good health by the end of the stay.

On arrival, guests can opt for a non-vegetarian, vegetarian, vegan or a Paleolithic diet. The Chef is on-hand to help you make the best choice for your body and fitness type. The food is absolutely fresh, of organic source produce and free of gluten and refined sugars, and balanced with essential vitamins and minerals.

A typical day of wellness starts early in the morning with a detoxifying health beverage of fresh fruits and herbs to cleanse the palate, followed by a meditation session.



Spa Treatment

An hour of yoga in the open air Yogshala limbers up the body, working out all the stiffness. Organic breakfast offers savoury eggs, baked tagines and frittatas or granola, yoghurt, protein rich waffles and chia pots. A well-earned post-breakfast rest session can be followed by an activity of choice - a swim, a head massage or a foot massage.

Ethnic meals of lean proteins form the core of lunch as well as dinner. Choice meats and vegetarian protein sources such as

chickpeas, lentils, beans, dairy and tofu are concocted into dishes that are well-flavoured and nourishing.

Post-lunch activities on offer are hands-on making sessions such as pottery - the wonderfully tactile experience is intensely relaxing and helps to internalise and focus the mind. Excursions and external experiences include Aqua Yoga, cycling trails through the forest, visits to the Somnath temple, the Devaliya Safari Park or

an outing to the nearby villages. On returning to the resort, the best way to unwind is at the hour-long totally relaxing spa therapy sessions at the Som.

A quick break to freshen up is followed by a hearty yet healthful dinner in the private dining area or, in fine weather out in the open, under a canopy of twinkling stars.

For those with hunger pangs post sundown, healthy snacks with less than 200 calories are dished up by the kitchen. A leisurely pot of wellness tea post dinner makes one linger just a little bit longer to enjoy the soft breeze.

When that well-earned sleep comes for you, head straight for the luxurious rooms with the deep, comfortable beds and pillows, for the ultimate restorative - a good night's sleep.

Buoyed up by the well-balanced lifestyle, fresh air and the warmest of traditional Indian hospitality, all cares fall away and the mind soars up and beyond. Enjoy the best of wellness practices distilled from a culture going back over a thousand years.



Garden



Swimming pool



Private Dining Area surrounded by nature

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