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EKTA MARWAHA APRIL 25, 2013 | UPDATED 19:05 IST

Fields of Gold

TAGS: Punjabiyat | Gurdaspur



An expanse of golden fields, mud huts, and someone waving at you from the centre of the farm-this may seem straight out of a Yash Chopra movie, but it isn't. And if this picture interests you, we suggest you pull out your car, buckle up and head straight to Punjabiyat by Itmenaar Lodges in Gurdaspur.

An approximate three-hour drive from all major cities of Punjab, this resort is worth a visit if you want a break from the hectic urbania. As Gurdaspur town nears, a number of brick kilns appear on both sides of the road, the farmlands begin about five kilometers ahead. The road gets narrower and the cityscape starts fading. Located in the middle of 300 acres of farmland (of which 10 acres belong to Itmenaar) are five cottages that grab attention. The staff waits to welcome you and wave out joyfully when they see your car approach.

Inhale peace as you step foot on this land, the buzzing bees and your footsteps are all that you will hear. Don't expect a tall lassi da glass as your welcome drink like we did. What they served was even better, a Mango-Mint Smoothie, with its farm fresh flavours. We sat down ready for a hearty Punjabi meal, but were amazed when a bowl of salad reached our table.

What followed was a scrumptious six course Continental meal, which ended with a delicious Banoffee pie. Done up in earthy tones, the cottages may look rustic but are airconditioned. These cottages are simple yet stylish and comfortable. The rooms here have bay windows, which allow you to gaze at the beautiful fields outside. There is no television or radio, but we assure you, those won't be missed even for a minute.

The meal we hogged on, had to be digested so we took a walk around the place, and landed up at Gurudwara Ghallughara Saheb, a historic Sikh temple that was set up in 1746 AD. We walked back to our cottage and were greeted with the lassi that we missed out on in the afternoon. Our dinner was a delicious North Indian meal, which tasted like home cooked food with oodles of ghee and flavour.

We head back to our cottage and decided to sleep early as we were advised to wake up early to see the sunrise, which happens by 4:30 am. The mornings are cool here, wake up early to spot some migratory birds. Our tour guide-manager-tractor driver Jagdeep Singh showed us around the fields, and he even let us drive the tractor! Our breakfast table was set in the middle of the fields and was quite an experience.



The food and hospitality at Punjabiyat is commendable and there is always a butler who stands by your side, serving up endless refills. If day one was about resting and exploring, day two was all about learning. We started with the farmers, then the tractor, followed by the chef who taught us a few dishes in his kitchen.

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Well, here's a hint.

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For those interested in learning about Sikh history and culture, there are a few elderly scholars in the vicinity who are more than happy to share their knowledge. We were interested to explore the actual Pind, so we got onto the tractor and drove to a nearby village. The locals smiled and waved at us, while kids ran alongside. We went to the nearby cow shed and well, 'almost' tried our hand at milking a cow.

A half hour ride got us back to the resort where we spent an evening playing board games under the starry sky. It's a lovely place to reconnect with your roots, spend sometime in the quiet and do things that you wouldn't otherwise. Getting there Take the NH1 from Chandigarh/Jalandhar and drive down to Beas, get off the Highway and drive towards Gurdaspur.

Take the NH 15 from Amritsar.

Cost ₹7,000 per couple, per room; all meals included

At Gurdaspur District, Near Gurudwara Ghallughara Saheb Tel 9818705508; itmenaanlodges.com

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she has got rave reviews from everyone for her latest film and is a daughter of a yesteryear superstar.



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