

## ILM LOCATIONS

The multifaceted land of Rajasthan has been a film maker's paradise. It has varied landscape, high hills alternating with deep valleys, verdant country side, vast expanse of windy desert of golden sand dotted with numerous shifting sand dunes-big and small -wetland interspersed with stretches of parched land, green fields, lush forests, the hallowed temples, awe inspiring forts, majestic mansions, whispering havelis of architectural splendour, heritage hotels, picturesque surroundings, wilderness of silence, diverse flora and fauna, simple, unassuming rural folk still immune from the onslaught of consumerism, presence of tribal people living close to nature, little melodies and mellifluous tunes of music coming down in an unbroken tradition through the ages, harmony of a multiplicity of musical instruments and above all, a long and chequered history replete with stories of heroism, patriotism and self sacrifice as also treason, treachery and deceit. All this not only makes a perfect setting for any form of creative activity but also provides an inexhaustible source of myriads of themes on various aspects of human life culture and tradition for film makers, script writers, lyricists and directors. This is the reason why film units not only from India but also from other parts of the world flock to Rajasthan as dream destination for film shooting.

Almost every film maker of **Bollywood** has at least one song/dance sequence shot in front of the monuments and forts of Rajasthan. Scenes requiring the royal flavour can never miss the city palace of Jaipur or Umaid Bhawan of Jodhpur. Classics like **Mughal-e-Azam** were shot in Deeg Palace, Bharatpur and in the famous **Sheeshmahal** of Amber Palace. Endless scenes of sand dunes, drying chillies and village locations are commonplace for films with rural setting. Even the blockbuster television serials like **Tipu-sultan** have Rajasthan as their backdrop.

**Hollywood** has not missed the exotic and the divine location of Rajasthan either. The James Bond thriller **Octopussy** was shot in Udaipur, apart from the films like **Far Pavilions, Heat and Dust** etc. in and around Lake Pichola, including the Lake Palace and other backdrops of Thar. M.M. Kaye's classic, **The Far Pavilions** was shot entirely in Rajasthan, with Samode Palace as its backdrop. Film star Kate Winslet's film '**Holy Smoke**' has been shot in Pushkar.

## Films Shot in Rajasthan

FILMS:	LOCATIONS
GANDHI	(DELHI & RAJASTHAN)
MUGHAL-E-AZAM	(BHARATPUR & JAIPUR)
LAMHE	RAJASTHAN
THE WARRIOR	RAJASTHAN
HEAT & DUST	(UDAIPUR & JAIPUR)
JEWEL IN THE CROWN	(UDAIPUR)
OCTOPUSSY	(UDAIPUR & AGRA)
THE FAR PAVILIONS	(JAIPUR & JODHPUR)
QUINNEE	(JAIPUR & DELHI)
THE BLACK SUN	(JAIPUR)
THE DECEIVERS	(JAIPUR)
KAMASUTRA	(JAIPUR)
MARDUNAYAKAM	(JAIPUR)
HOLY SMOKE	(PUSHKAR)

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Amongst the Bollywood blockbusters, the list begins with the classic "Mughal-e-Azam" to the contemporary "the Warrior" that has bagged wide appreciation. "Lamhe", the National award winning commercial movie, too was shot in and around Rajasthan. There are several others as shown on the

The Hollywood film makers, by far the best in the world have found Rajasthan's landscape, golden desert sand, ethnic locales, colorful rural background, simplicity of the inhabitants, indeed very exciting and irresistible. The film makers from prominent countries have access to resources and an assurance for safety and security. Many internationally renowned photographers have acknowledged the land too alluring for panoramic beauty. The world of advertisement, still photography and fashion shows has also been charmed with the aura of this colourful land. There are several reasons why film shooting in Rajasthan has increasingly become popular among film makers in India and abroad. The first, the liberal promotional policy of the State Government which has mandated the concerned department for prompt action on requests seeking permission for this purpose and providing necessary facilities. Another is easy connectivity. All important places in the state and some others outside the state can be reached by road. All important cities within and outside Rajasthan are reachable by railways from various stations. There is an air network connecting a few important cities of the state and many others outside the state including Mumbai (the world's largest film industry) and Delhi (for film studios in Noida). Another very important consideration is the safety and security of the personnel including the stars, their equipments and other belonging throughout the territory of Rajasthan. Then, on offer is the warm hospitality that distinguishes this state from others.

Actual shooting apart, even the pre-production work can be easily carried out without hassles. The shooting locations have been found to be too numerous and too exciting. As for stay, there is wide range of accommodation from simple, less expensive guest houses to heritage resorts havelis and palaces and five star hotels. And above all, there are the incredible possibilities offered by the state, which make it the film maker's delight.

### Locations

The cultural heritage and lifestyles of people change every twenty kilometers in Rajasthan. The following locales provide specific requirements:

**Forests :** Ranthambore, Bharatpur , Sitamata, Kumbhalgarh, Darrah, Ramgarh, Tal Chhapar (Churu), Desert National Park (Jaisalmer).

**Hills :** Udaipur, Mount Abu, Alwar, Pushkar, Kota, Jhalawar, Chittaurgarh, Dholpur, Karauli, Kumbhalgarh and Ranakpur.

**Lakes :** Udaipur, Alwar, Rajsamand, Mount Abu, Jhalawar, Jodhpur, Sawai Madhopur, Bansna Dam, Suratgarh, Anupgarh, Bharatpur and Bundi.

**Desert :** Sam, Khuri, Dangri, Kuldhara at Jaisalmer, Karnisar Bhatrain, Motha, Katariasar at Bikaner, Fatehpur, Churu, Ramgarh in Shekhawati, Osian, Pushkar and Kiradu (Barmer).

**Architectural Sites :** Palaces, Temples, Museums, Forts, Havelis and cenotaphs in every town and city of Rajasthan.

For incredible backgrounds with an exotic touch, there is Sisodia Rani ka Bagh and Vidyadharji ka Bagh in Jaipur; Saheliyon ki Bari in Udaipur; the resorts of Balsamand in Jodhpur and Sardarsam in Pali. The well paintings and frescos of Shekhawati's are dream presentations. There are elephants, camels and peacocks in Rajasthan. There are streets full of flamboyantly dressed people and villages where homes are brightly painted.

For the perfect sands as background for their scenes (ad makers seem to particularly love them), there is Jaisalmer, with its sand-dunes and intricately carved Havelis. Not to forget the splendour and mesmerizing effect of the Sam desert. The sand dunes between Bikaner and Nokha, around Deshnok are ideal. The Bhil villages are also apt as some of the Bishnoi villages are full of colour.

When an European ambience is required, places such as Mount Abu with their period bungalows and furniture more than fits the bill. This hill station is charming too for its lake views, sunset points, walks and trails, and the Jain temples close by. In fact, some of the country's finest temples where worship is still offered can also be found in Rajasthan, making them ideal for social and religious films. The various festivals that are celebrated can also be included within this ambit.

### Aim & Shoot

In Rajasthan, one has to aim and shoot. Certain professional photographers tend to the following advice:-

- Best times for photography are between 8 am and 10 am and from 4 pm to 6 pm, when the quality of the light is mellow yet rich.
- Carry the films and memory cards of your choice, since these are not always available, especially in smaller towns.
- There may be a small fee levied at some historic sites for the use of cameras.
- In case of commercial assignments involving models, please take permission in advance.
- Please respect people's sentiments so that they reciprocate in similar fashion.
- Do not photograph women without their permission.
- On religious festivals and family celebrations, use the camera only after specific consent and do not consider yourself as part of the community or family guests even when invited - please conduct yourselves discreetly.
- Finally, don't be afraid to over-shoot (shoot as many pictures as you can). As your results will show, your camera cannot capture enough of Rajasthan.