



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

INDIAN HERITAGE PASSPORT PROGRAMME ON THE MERCHANTS TRAIL IN SHEKHAWATI (RAJASTHAN)

A Concept Paper



by
UNESCO New Delhi
Ar. Urvashi Srivastava
Srijan Sanrakshan

For
The Government of Rajasthan
Department of Culture & Tourism



*To
the creative spirit in all beings
the urge for expression of thought
the desire for excellence and
the will to stand against all odds . . .*



The printing of the publication was supported by LA MAISON DES INDES, FRANCE



Shekhawati : On The Merchants Trail . . .

Foreword

Narrating a History of India through Tourism

India's *Unity in Diversity* recounted through the wealth of its natural and cultural heritage, and their protection, conservation and enhancement through a concerted effort by not only government bodies but by the people at large, are the aims of the Indian Heritage Passport Programme. Launched with the support of the Union Ministry of Tourism in September 2006, the Programme aims to promote heritage-based regional development through sustainable tourism along a historic itinerary linking several sites to recount the wealth of India's lesser know destinations.

This publication presents another story of Rajasthan, not that of its grandiose forts and palaces, the elegance of the princely states and

A Warning for Unplanned Tourism Growth

As part of the golden tourism triangle linked to Delhi and Agra, Rajasthan is one of the major tourism destinations in India with its forts and palaces of Maharajas, musicians crafts and profusion of colors that have become part of a cliché of India portrayed in guidebooks and advertisements. While we may bless ourselves for this success in the popular ranking of tourist destinations, we need to be lucid about the consequences that unchecked exploitation of culture entails.

Unplanned tourism growth would not only threaten the conservation of various sites, undermine the quality of the visitors' experience, and create social gaps that can flare-up into conflict. After the frenzy



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their proud tradition of cavalry which are world renown, but a story of the merchants that linked the producers of goods to the markets across the country and beyond. The unique and diverse heritage of Shekhawati that the traders built - the beautiful havelis(mansions), grand temples, magnificent chattris (cenotaphs), the engineering of the water systems, the stepwells, marking the ingenious adaptation of technology to improve the quality of life in the towns and villages located in the semi desert terrain. The role of the merchants who transmitted to distant lands, the knowledge and the legends of their home, and imported from afar, the vibrant living tradition of folk dances, music, cuisine, costumes, fairs and festivals to evolve into their own, are still evident in Shekhawati's cultural landscape.

Knowledge-based tourism fosters mutual understanding between nations and cultures and

of tourism expansion over the past decades, there is a need for the State of Rajasthan to pause and take a realistic look at where we stand in terms of tourism, heritage conservation and the fundamental objectives of growth.

Concern for a more planned tourism in harmony with local heritage led the Government of Rajasthan to partner with UNESCO to experiment the new approach for heritage-sensitive tourism advocated under the Indian Heritage Passport Programme.

The present study not only reveals another facet of Rajasthan's rich heritage but also its rapid destruction, unwittingly as it may be. Pressure of urban growth, absence of conservation laws and regulation for the protection of urban heritage, inadequate waste management, traffic regulations, electricity and water management – factors



Foreword

promotes cultural diversity, exchange and pluralism. It can also be a catalyst of growth, contributing to local development.

The Programme is also meant to invite local authorities to expand the scope of heritage management from a single site to a regional scale, thereby addressing various vital issues including the connectivity between the places, well-being of the surrounding population, protection of environment and the beauty of the overall cultural landscape.

It is a great pleasure that the State of Rajasthan, one of the most popular tourism destinations in India has agreed to become one of the five pilot States to experiment the Programme with UNESCO. As one of the leading States in the area of culture and tourism, I hope Rajasthan will

undermining heritage conservation and the negative impact on the social fabric of our communities are numerous.

The task ahead is arduous but necessary. If we destroy our heritage which has guided the means of our livelihood for generations, on what can we base our future? And the tourism sector, which has most benefited from heritage should be the first to promote the protection of our cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible.

As Secretary for Arts and Culture, my efforts have been to try to balance our need for both growth and conservation, and to improve the regulatory and institutional framework to better manage the inevitable tide of change. In support of the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment towards responsible decentralization, I look upon the



Foreword

set another standard for heritage management and tourism.



Minja Yang
Director and UNESCO Representative for
Bhutan, India, Sri Lanka and Maldives

capacity-building of local authorities and the many actors of our society to benefit from the dynamics of tourism as one of the most important means for the just and sustainable management of our rich cultural resources.

Rajasthan looks forward to continued partnership with UNESCO to pursue our common goal for heritage-based development.



Salahuddin Ahmad,
Principal Secretary, Art, Literature and Culture,
Government of Rajasthan.



UNESCO Survey Team Members

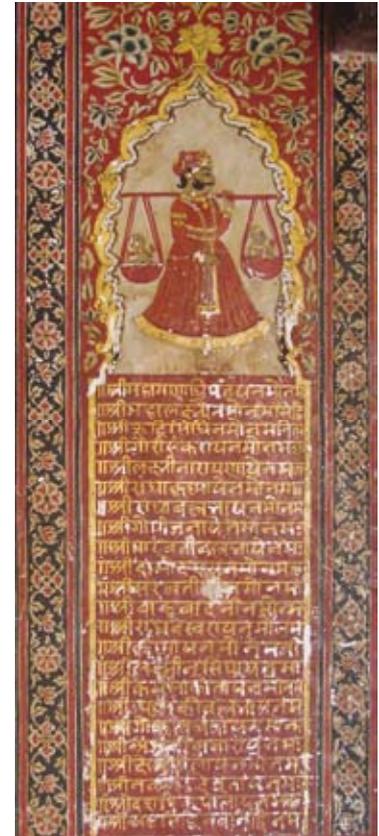
Ms. Urvashi Srivastava
Mr. Pradeep Kirodiwal
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Mr. B.L. Gupta, Director, Archaeology & Museums Department, Government of Rajasthan
Mr. A. K. Jain, Executive Engineer, Archaeology & Museums Department, Government of Rajasthan
Mr. Jitendra Joshi, Astt. Engineer, Archaeology & Museums Department, Government of Rajasthan
Mr. K.K. Kapoor, Chief Engineer, Technical Cell, RSMMDMS, Government of Rajasthan
Mr. S.M. Kalla, RSMMDMS, Government of Rajasthan
Mr. B. G. Sharma, Member RSMMDMS, Government of Rajasthan
Ms. Neelima Vashishta, Historian
Mr. B.N. Tandon, Jt Director General, Archaeological Survey of India (Retd.)
Mr. P.N. Bhargava, Chief Town Planner (Retd.), Rajasthan
Mr. Palash Srivastava, Infrastructure Specialist
Shri Mukesh Gupta, Executive Director, M. R. Morarka-GDC Rural Research Foundation
Shri Hot Chand, Director, Heritage Conservation institute, Nawalgarh

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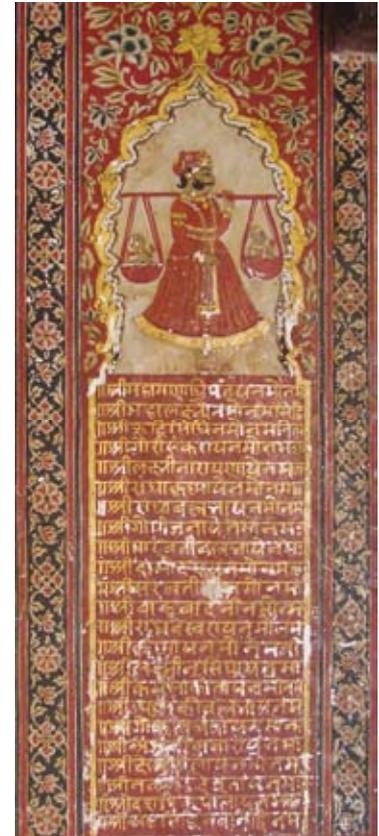
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The Indian Heritage Passport Programme . . .

Key Concepts

- Using heritage based tourism as a vehicle for local development
- Expanding the cultural value of heritage sites and extending tourism to lesser known sites
- The urban heritage sites would integrate:
 - Core historic monuments
 - Other historic structures
 - Settlement features and natural environment
 - Intangible cultural practices
- Includes the identification and promotion of intangible heritage such as:
 - Traditional skills for building and architecture
 - Crafts including wood, metal and textiles
 - Festivals
 - Performing arts
 - Cuisine
- Developing a “regional” heritage-based tourism beyond individual monuments
 - Requires identifying structures, landscape elements and cultural practices
 - Mobilizing all available cultural resources (beyond single monuments) to provide tourists with diverse experiences
 - Ensuring a conservation stake for local communities and local economic development
- Bring together UNESCO, State Government, private sector, NGOs, local artists and crafts people towards heritage based tourism



... on the Merchants Trail in Shekhawati

Contours of Heritage Based Development



The region identified for the Merchants Trail in Rajasthan covers the entire Shekhawati area comprising of several towns and villages in Jhunjhunu, Sikar and Churu districts. The main towns and villages covered as part of the trail are Nawalgarh, Mandawa, Ramgarh, Fatehpur, Lakshmangarh, Bissau, Jhunjhunu, Dundlod, Mahansar, Churu and Mukundgarh. The trail will also cover other places like Churi Ajitgarh, Alsisar, Malsisar, Gangiyasar, Khetri, Ratangarh and Sikar.

Shekhawati occupies a unique position not just within the much acclaimed royal heritage of Rajasthan but also in the entire world and can more aptly be referred to as the *open air art gallery*. The unique and diverse heritage of Shekhawati comprises of beautiful havelis (mansions), grand temples, magnificent chattris (cenotaphs), palaces, forts, wells, step wells and water tanks strewn all over in several towns and villages located in the semi desert terrain bestowed with a unique flora and fauna and a vibrant living tradition of folk dances, music, cuisine, costumes, fairs and festivals. All these elements make Shekhawati a unique cultural landscape.

The Indian Heritage Passport Program for the Shekhawati region entails:

- Identifying, safeguarding and managing the heritage resources of the region
- Charting a vision for heritage based development of the region
- Improved infrastructure for local communities
- Promoting responsible cultural tourism as a means for sustenance of heritage resources
- Developing innovative tourism related activities and improved support infrastructure both core and soft.
- Developing a framework for tourism oriented investment opportunities in the region
- Encouraging local level entrepreneurship and public participation in conservation, management and development of heritage resources





The Cultural Landscape . . .

Shekhawati Region

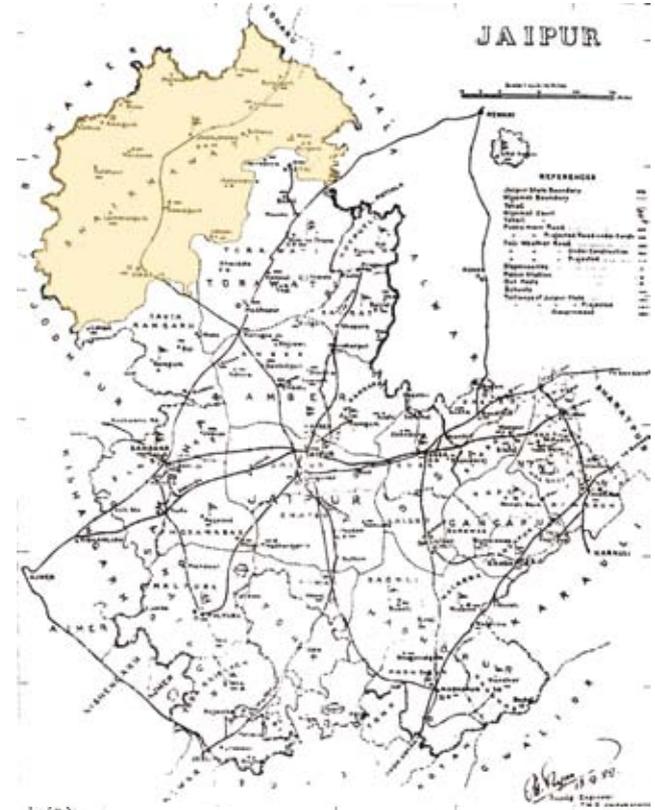
Introduction



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Defining the Extent

- Traditionally as an administrative entity, Shekhawati was comprised of the western part of Sikar district and all of Jhunjhunu district, bordered by Bikaner and Jaipur States.
- Cultural boundaries however extend beyond administrative borders bringing Churu within its fold as well.



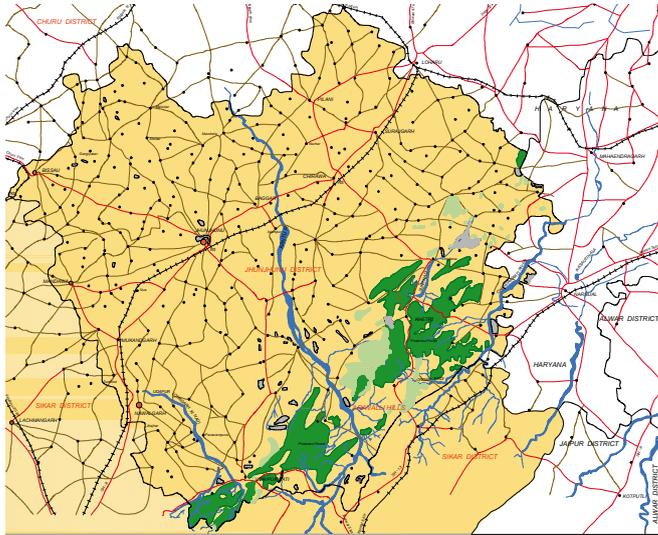
Map of Jaipur State in 1929 showing extent of Shekhawati



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Shekhawati Region

The Physical Landscape



Prominent Physical Features of the Landscape

Physical Context

- The semi arid region of Shekhawati is an extension of the Thar Desert' being watered by one seasonal river Kanti that gradually loses its way in the sandy terrain.
- The region faces acute arid summer and winter seasons with scant rainfall making it almost inhospitable.
- Aravalli hills cut across from south to north forming a natural boundary between the sandy desert and fertile plains to its east.
- Shifting sand dunes dominate the landscape. Sand laden winds blow during summers making it impossible to move around.
- Majority of the settlements in the region have developed on wasteland characterised by vast tracts of sand dunes with sparse vegetation.

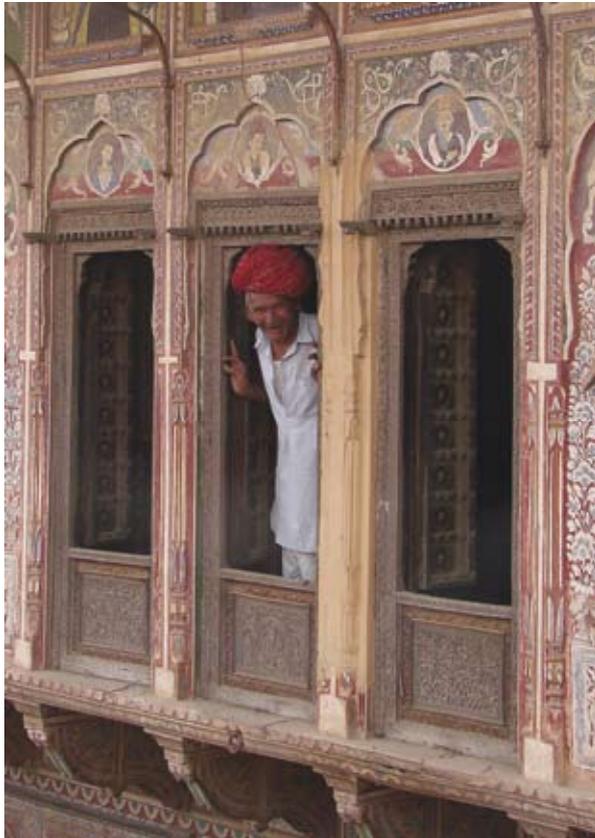


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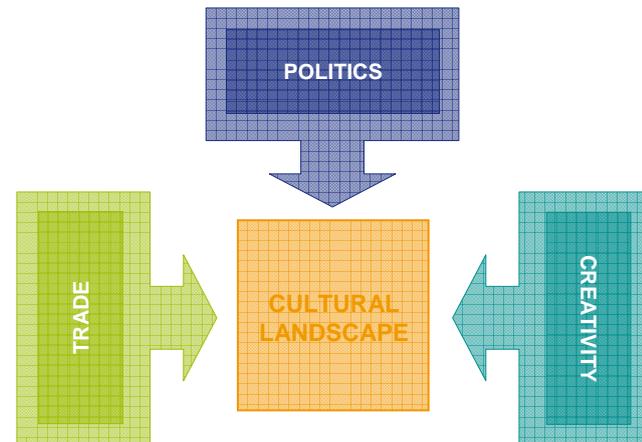
Shekhawati Region

Formative Forces



Politics, Trade and Creativity . . .

- The cultural landscape of Shekhawati was shaped by political, economic and creative forces.
- The prevailing political conditions, trade activity existing around the region and exposure to creative expression in the Rajput courts influenced by the Mughals, brought into existence a unique cultural heritage.
- The region has sustained a living cultural environment within its towns and villages amidst adverse political, economic and physical conditions.



Shekhawati Region

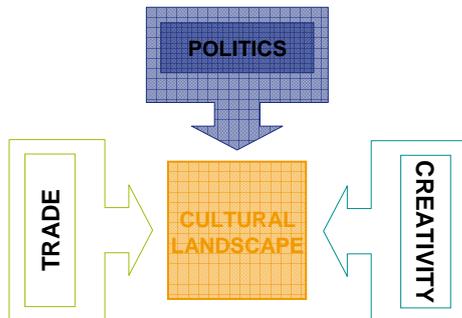
Realignment of Political Power & Reorganisation of Territories



RAO SHEKHA (1433-1488 A.D.)

Shift of Power from Kayamkhanis to Shekhawats

- Kayamkhanis occupied the area forming the core of Shekhawati and established themselves at Jhunjhunu and Fatehpur around 1415 A.D.
- Rao Shekha (1433-1488 A.D.) a Rajput related to Kachhwaha dynasty of Amber made several inroads into this area during the 15th century.
- Later on descendants of Rao Shekha known as Shekhawats, had an amicable relationship with Kachhwaha Rajputs of Amber and Mughals and received several *Jagirs* (grants of landed property) from the Mughal Emperors thereby continuing to be active in Shekhawati.
- However the region around Jhunjhunu and Fatehpur ruled by the Kayamkhanis was out of bounds for the Shekhawats.
- During the 18th century the Nawab of Fatehpur usurped the territory of Rohilla Khan, the last Nawab of Jhunjhunu. After regaining his territory Rohilla Khan welcomed Shardul Singh, a descendent of Rao Shekha.
- Shardul Singh not only became the Nawab's confidante but later succeeded him after his death. Having acquired areas covered by Jhunjhunu, Narhad and Udaipur in 1732 A.D. he made Jhunjhunu the capital of an extended Shekhawati kingdom.
- Shardul Singh allied himself with Sheo Singh of Sikar (who also belonged to a branch of Shekhawats) and together they evicted the Nawab of Fatehpur ending the long reign of Kayamkhanis lasting almost three centuries.



Emergence of Shekhawati as a Confederation of Principalities

- By the 18th century almost the entire Shekhawati region came under the control of the Shekhawats.
- After Shardul Singh's death in 1742 A.D., the area of about 1000 villages and *Kasbas* (small townships) under his rule was divided into *Panchpana* (five units) among his five sons Zorawar Singh, Kishan Singh, Nawal Singh, Keshri Singh and Akhey Singh.
- Division of Shardul Singh's estates amongst his five sons triggered the urbanisation of Shekhawati.
- Each of the Thakurs embarked on consolidating his territory and streamlining his administration by establishing *Thikanas* (centres of power) founding new towns and upgrading the existing ones.
- Initially the Shekhawat Thakurs paid tribute directly to the Mughal Emperor just like the Kayamkhanis.
- Later Sawai Jai Singh acquired the *ijara* for Ajmer from the Mughal Emperor and received the right to administration and revenue collection for Shekhawati.
- Subsequently Shekhawat Thakurs became tributaries of Jaipur State and accepted its suzerainty and administrative system.
- Reorganisation of territories by the Shekhawat Thakurs had a tremendous role in shaping the built environment of Shekhawati.

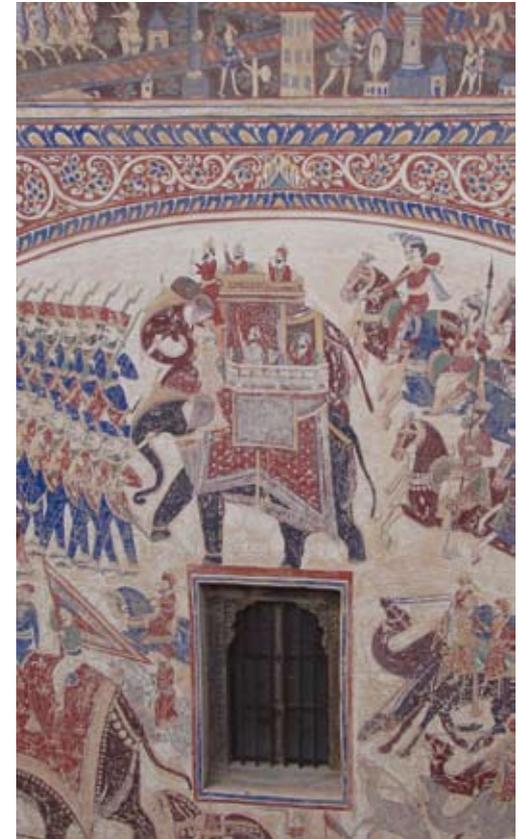


Shekhawati Region

Redefinition of Economic Conditions & Rise of the Marwari Merchants

Medieval Trade Scenario

- Important trade routes have passed through Rajasthan since ancient times.
- An important route connected Agra and Delhi with Surat in Gujarat via Ajmer and Pali while another connected them with Sindh through Bikaner and Jaisalmer.
- Centres like Pali, Nagaur, Phalodi, Bhinmal, Merta, Jaisalmer, Rajgarh, Reni, Chittor, Udaipur, Bhilwara, Ajmer, Pushkar, Sirohi, Kota, Sambhar, Amber and Sanganer were centres of business and trade in commodities from far and wide.
- In the later half of 18th century Jaipur emerged as an important trade centre. However political instability and a burdened treasury forced the later Jaipur rulers who had earlier promoted trade to impose heavy taxes in their territories. Rulers of Bikaner followed suit.
- Shekhawati, ruled by a number of Thakurs, was quick to take advantage of this situation providing a detour to caravans, facilitating access and greatly reducing taxes on trade through their territories.
- Thus trade was largely diverted from Jaipur and Bikaner States to routes falling in Shekhawati region. Thakurs encouraged merchants to settle in their newly established towns promising them economic benefits and security.
- Improved financial condition of the Thakurs treasury provided necessary economic impetus for a great era of building activity in Shekhawati. The years between 1740 A.D. till 1800 A.D. witnessed a proliferation of settlements.

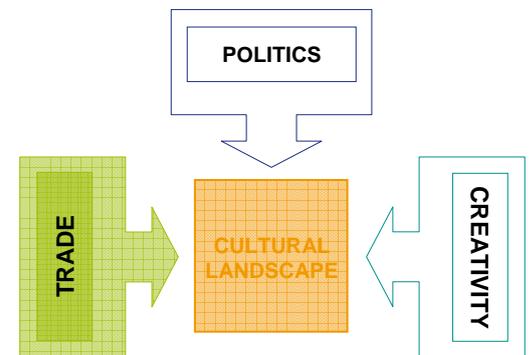


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Emergence of a New Economic Order

- Towards end of 18th century flourishing cross-desert commerce that supported the growth of Shekhawati started declining due to unstable political conditions created by the weakening Mughal Empire.
- States of Bikaner and Jaipur signed treaties accepting British suzerainty in 1818 A.D. reducing taxes on trade in 1822 A.D. This was a big blow to trade in Shekhawati.
- Changes in the modes of transportation from caravans to steamships in 1819 later to the railways in 1853 and coupled with setting up of ports by the British at Bombay and Calcutta altered the pattern of trade.
- Trade shifted from land to sea crushing the indigenous economy which had depended largely on traditional land routes and a network of towns that functioned as important trade centres.
- Marwaris, the local Shekhawati merchants suffered the impacts of these developments but quickly adapted themselves to changing conditions by migrating to ports on the Ganges to Calcutta, the capital of the rising British Empire, Bombay and beyond, playing an important role in trade activities taking place in these ports.
- These Marwari merchants attained a remarkable level of economic prosperity and were responsible for creating the bulk of the built heritage of Shekhawati during the mid 19th century till 1930s.



Shekhawati Region

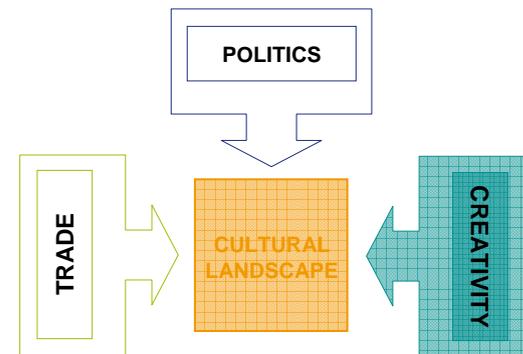
Refinement of Creative Expression

Town and the Edifices

- Prior to Shekhawat rule, between 15th and mid 18th century the character of the settlements was governed by the Kayamkhani rulers. Towns had a winding network of narrow streets with a hierarchy of spaces as per Muslim traditions.
- New towns planned by Shekhawat Thakurs in the later half of 18th Century were influenced by planning principles and the architectural vocabulary of Jaipur (1727 A.D.). The defining elements of Jaipur city, the palace, family deity, Govinddevji's temple, bazaars and the grid-iron layout of streets were adopted while planning the layout of a typical Shekhawati town.
- Earlier traditions as well as the concepts utilised in the planning of Jaipur were experimented with in the Shekhawati towns within constraints of topography, availability of building materials and skilled artisans.

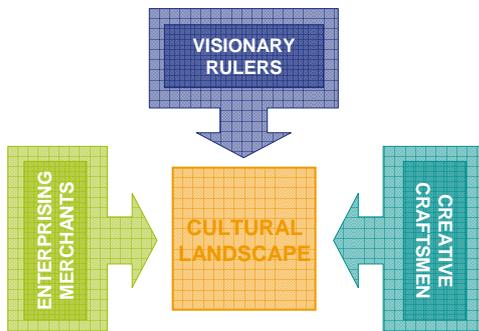
Paintings and Ornamentation

- Muslim Nawabs employed men to decorate their buildings but mural painting was very restrained during these times.
- Fresco painting developed under the Thakurs and was greatly influenced by the Rajput court at Amber which in turn was under influence of the Mughal court.
- Fresco painting finally blossomed under the patronage of Marwari merchants.
- Initially painters were mostly from Jaipur while later on, local men acquired skills to meet growing demand, bestowing Shekhawati towns with a unique character.



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A Unique Cultural Landscape



Visionary rulers, enterprising merchants and skilled craftsmen shaped the unique cultural landscape of Shekhawati. Thakurs founded towns, initiated major building projects and summoned painters to decorate their buildings. Later with trade flourishing in the region and the subsequent migration of local Marwari merchants to major British ports, building activity gained momentum. Marwari merchants amassed huge wealth and embarked on constructing large havelis, temples, cenotaphs, caravan sarais, wells and water tanks in their home town each competing with the other. They commissioned painters to decorate these structures with frescoes on an unprecedented scale. Local masons, sensing increased demand for frescoes, quickly learnt the art form thereby bestowing Shekhawati with a rich heritage.



A Unique Cultural Landscape

Historic Planning Contours



Earlier towns in Shekhawati ruled by the Kayamkhani Nawabs followed an organic pattern of growth with winding narrow streets punctuated by chowks and open spaces. There existed a distinct hierarchy of spaces in these towns.



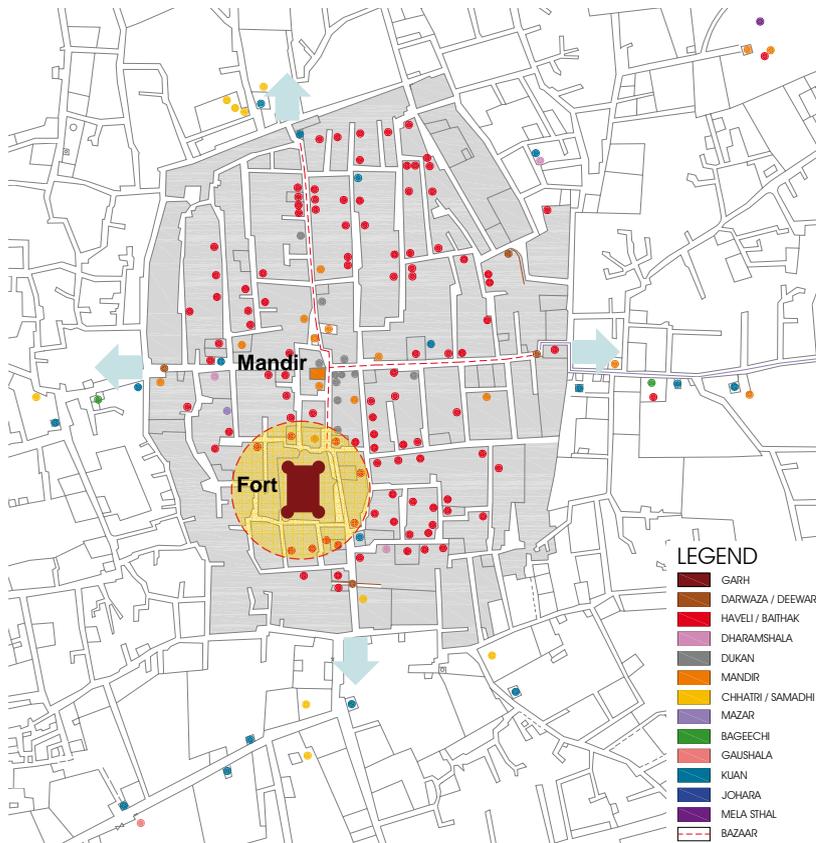
Towns formed under the rule of the Shekhawat rulers followed a more or less grid layout, being greatly influenced by the planning of Jaipur. Narrow streets lined with built to edge buildings followed a grid-iron pattern.

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A Unique Cultural Landscape

Morphology of a Typical Town

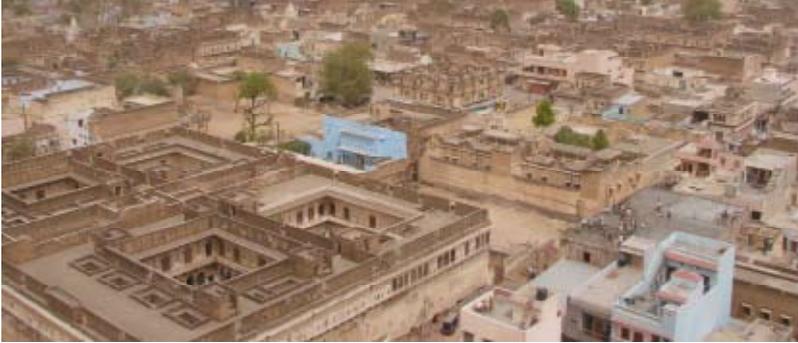


- Most towns had a *Garh* (fort) as the nucleus with habitation all around enclosed by fortification walls with bastions, crenellations and huge gateways.
- Close to the fort was built the temple of Gopinathji the principal deity of the Thakurs.
- Subsequent to setting up of the fort and temple, other parts were colonized. Merchants and other communities were invited to settle.
- Spatial organisation of various castes depended upon status and religion. People of similar caste stayed together as a close group giving rise to distinct neighbourhoods or *Mohallas*.
- Status of Marwari merchants influenced the size and location of the residence, shop, dharamshala, temple, cenotaph and water harvesting structures built by them.
- Narrow streets lined with built to edge buildings either followed a grid-iron pattern or developed organically.
- Main street leading to the fort functioned as the commercial spine while the others were residential.
- Special places for organising fairs were earmarked. Traders and merchants were invited from far and wide.
- Several social, religious and recreational institutions also formed an integral part of the town.
- Natural topography of the land was tapped to construct water harvesting structures.



A Unique Cultural Landscape

Typical Urban Elements



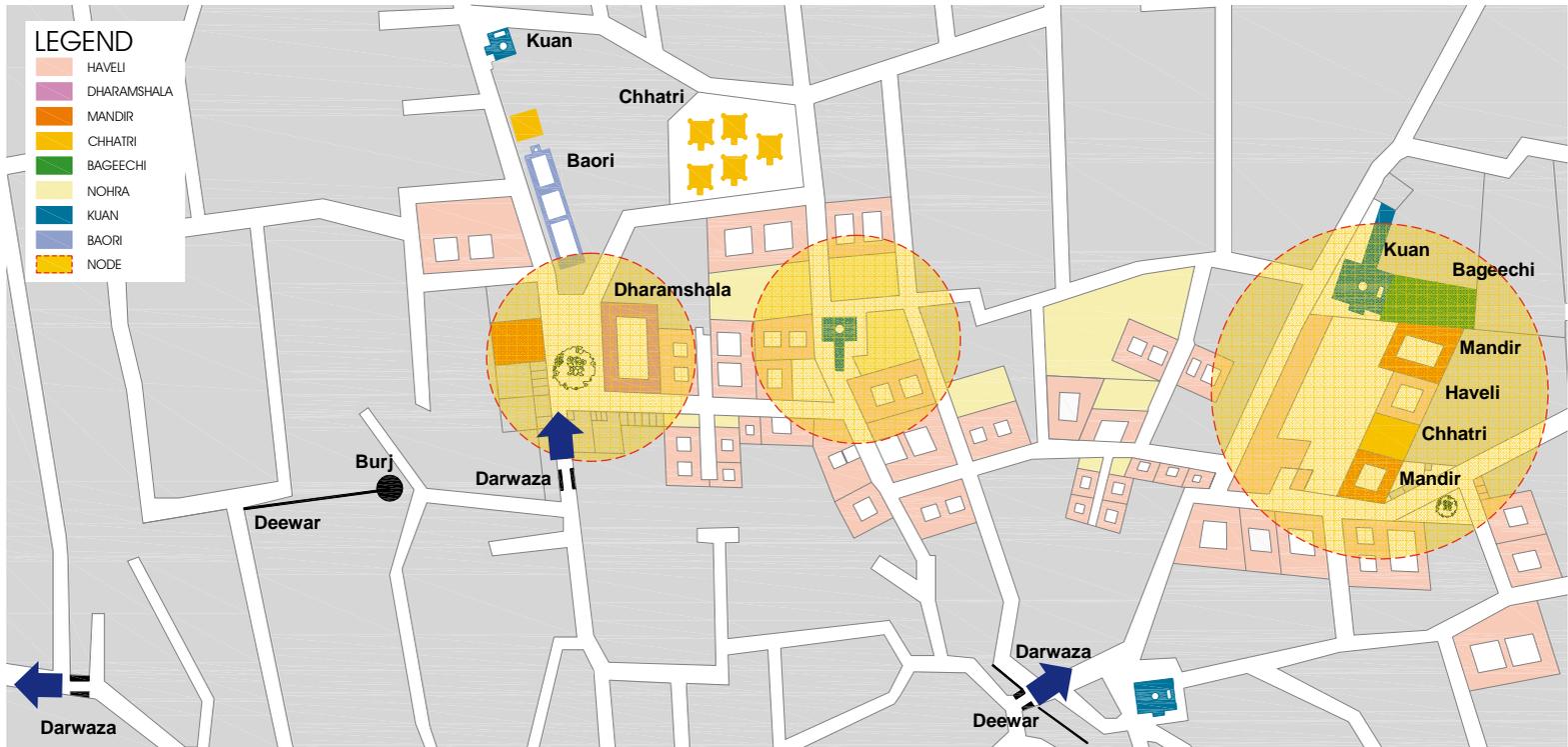
- *Garh*: A Garh or fort was built at a strategic location preferably at a higher level than the rest of the surrounding area forming the nucleus of the town.
- *Deewar & Burj*: The town was enclosed within fortification walls enforced with bastions (burj) and crenellations.
- *Darwaza*: Huge gateways were built in the cardinal directions
- *Mandir*: The temple of Gopinathji, the principal deity of the Thakurs was built close to the fort.
- *Bazaar*: Main street of the town leading to the fort, functioned as the commercial spine.

- *Gali*: Narrow streets lined with built to edge buildings.
- *Mohalla*: People of similar caste stayed together as a close group giving rise to neighbourhoods or Mohallas.
- *Havelis*: Merchant residences formed the bulk of the built environment.
- *Dukan* (shop), *dharamshala* (caravan sarai), *mandir* (temple), *chattri* (cenotaph), *baithak* (reception space for guests), *gaushala* (cattle shelter) and *bageechi* (pleasure garden) formed an integral part of the fabric of a typical Shekhawati town.
- *Kuan* (well), *johara* (tank), *baori* (stepped well) and other water harvesting structures constituted the lifeline of the town.
- *Mela Sthal*: Special places for organising fairs were earmarked in the town.
- *Beed*: Outside the limits of the town an open area was usually reserved for trees and vegetation, functioning as a forest.



A Unique Cultural Landscape

Spatial Organisation of Urban Elements



Spatial arrangement of various building types gave rise to *mohallas*, *galis*, open spaces and *chowks* that functioned as nodes for community interaction and social life.



A Unique Cultural Landscape

Hierarchy of Space



Node as public amenity space



Streets as interaction spaces



Interface with public domain



Semi private outer court or chowk of haveli



Private inner court or chowk of haveli



A Unique Cultural Landscape

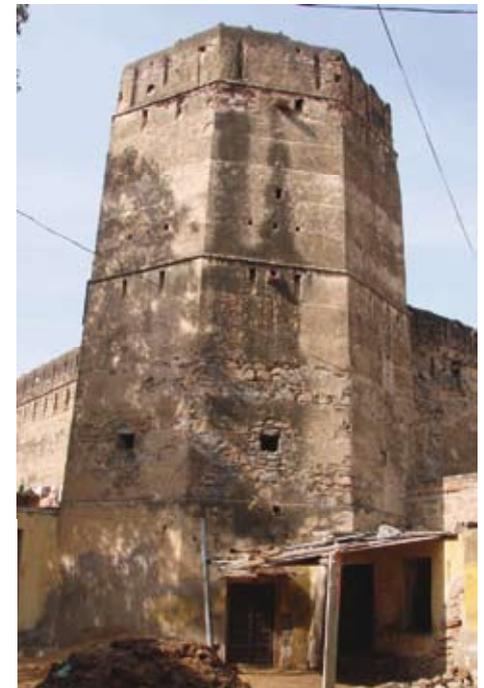
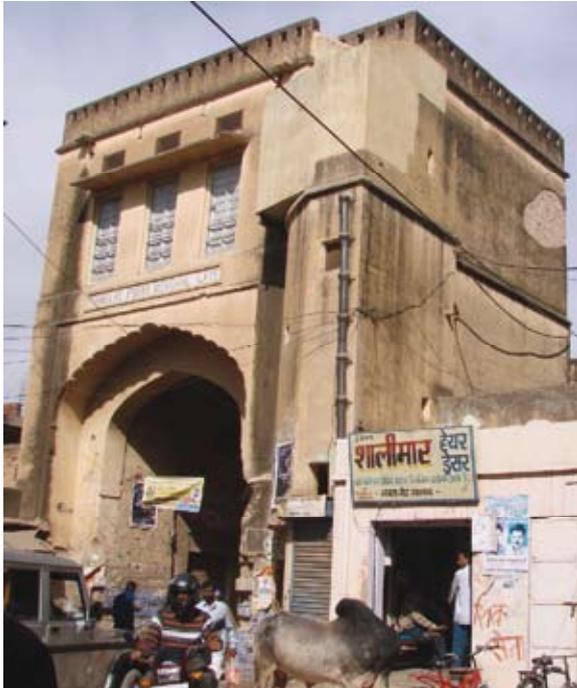
Icons

Garh or forts form the nucleus of Shekhawati towns. Strategic ones crown the Aravalli Hills in the region.



Mahals or palaces were the royal residences of the rulers. They had separate chambers for the royal ladies, a hall for the public audience along with other structures required to house the royal paraphernalia.





Darwaza (entrance gateway), *Deewar* (fortification wall) and *Burj* (bastion) constituted the elaborate defences of a Shekhawati town.



Haveli defined the private space of the people and dominated the landscape of Shekhawati towns. Its built form continuously evolved over the years.



Bazaars or traditional markets with their beautifully painted Dukan or shops were an important component of the Shekhawati towns and most of them owed their existence to these economic drivers.





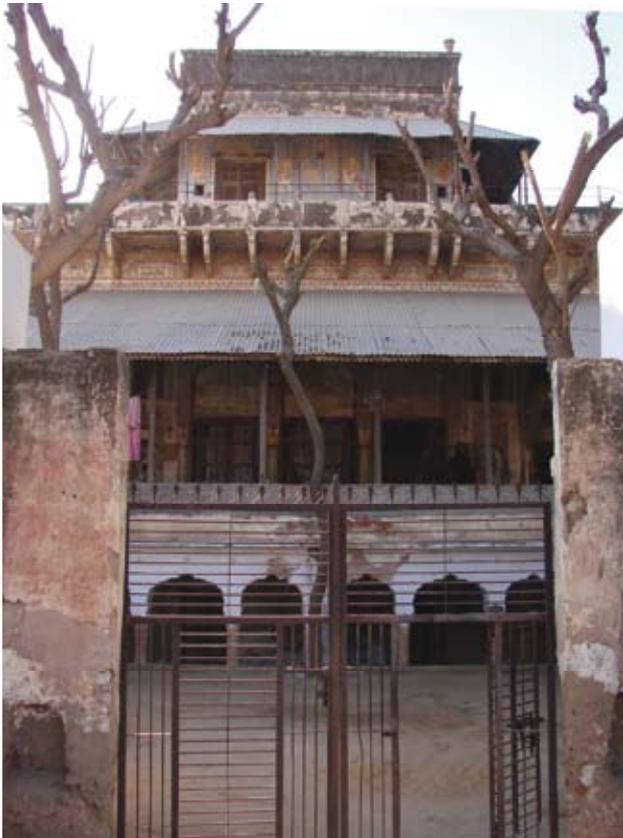
Chhatra or cenotaphs were mostly built by the Shekhawat rulers but the 19th Century turned out to be the era of chhatris built by the Marwari merchants.



Mandir or temples, places of worship of the Hindus dominate the skyline of most of the towns with their lofty spires and finials.



36 . . . *Shekhawati: On The Merchants Trail*



Baithak or *Kamra* was an innovation of the merchants of Shekhawati and served the purpose of reception space for guests. Rich merchants emulated the lifestyle of the Thakurs, with growing wealth and prosperity they created these rich architectural spaces.



Bagechi or pleasure gardens were one of the artistic conceptions of Shekhawati towns in terms of planning and space quality.



38 . . . *Shekhawati: On The Merchants Trail*



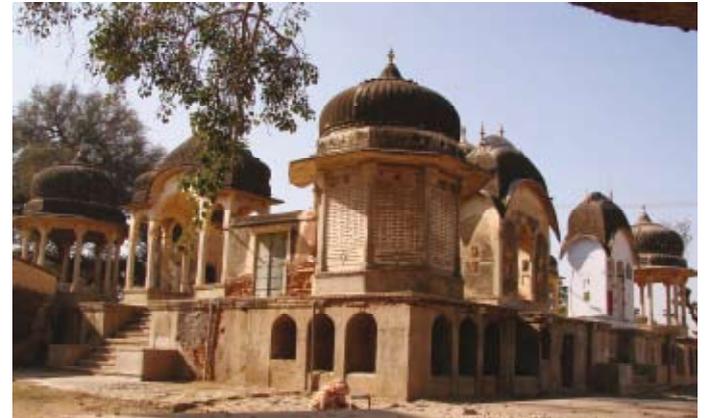
Gaushala or cattle shelter, a unique gesture of piety, were compounds with sheltered stalls and stored fodder for incapacitated or merely neglected cows.



Dharamshala or caravan sarai were places providing accommodation to travellers and had spaces for tethering camels and horses. They were built by individual rich merchants for the community at large.



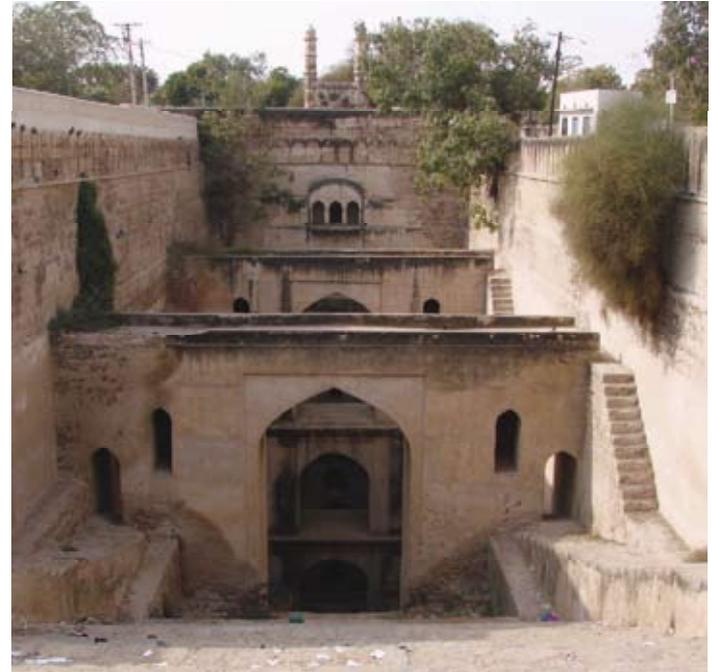
Kuan or well which symbolises the importance of water in the desert has been built, maintained and cherished through centuries in Shekhawati.



40 . . . *Shekhawati: On The Merchants Trail*



Johara or tank filled with monsoon rain acted as a significant community space for people giving them respite from intense heat.



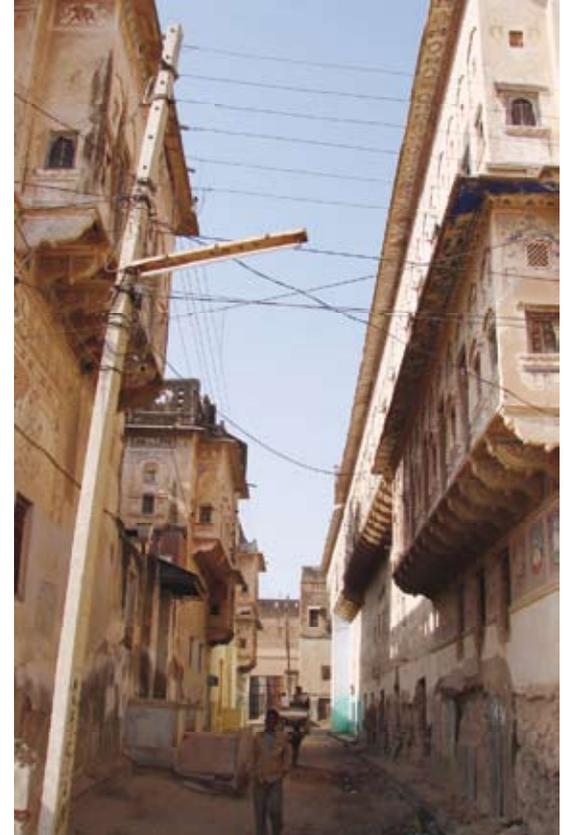
Baori or step well was a major feat of engineering with its vast masonry lined depression reaching down to the water table. Arched colonnades provided respite to the weary from the tortuous heat of the desert.



Microcosm of Shekhawati Heritage

Mandawa

Originally Mandawa town had fortification walls and bastions. Now few traces remain and only one gate survives. The town grew around the main bazaar street with the fort located close to it on raised ground forming the core. A dense network of meandering streets emerges from the main bazaar street. The town boasts of several beautiful havelis, shops and temples with a collection of some of the most exquisite frescoes.



Microcosm of Shekhawati Heritage

Nawalgarh

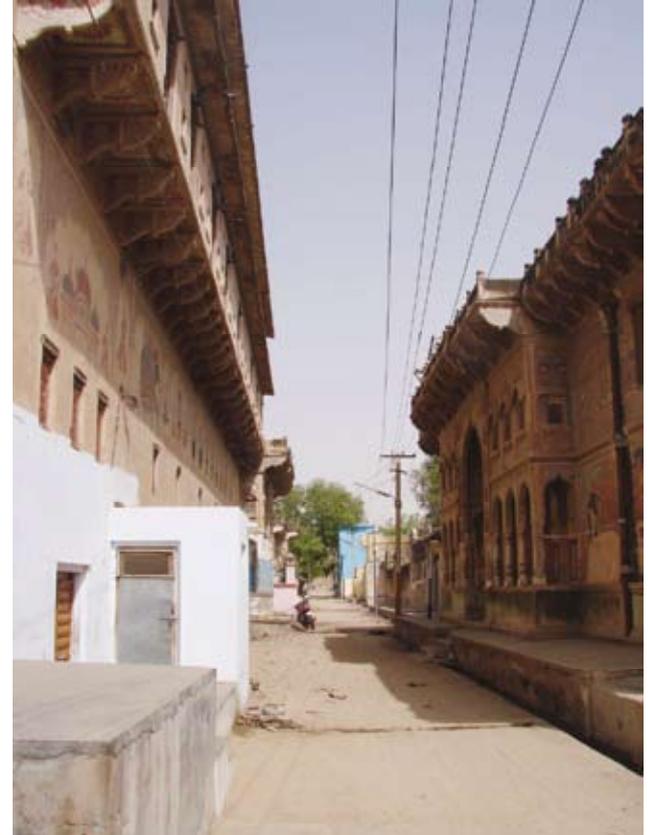
Nawalgarh, a well planned town, has a fort and the Gopinathji Mandir forming the core. The town has fortification walls, bastions, four gateways and boasts of beautifully painted havelis, temples, chhatris, dharamshalas and wells. Grand haveli complexes constructed beyond the town walls in the late 1900s have beautiful frescoes.



Microcosm of Shekhawati Heritage

Fatehpur

Fatehpur founded in 1451 A.D. by the Kayamkhani Nawabs retains few buildings constructed by them. The baori constructed in 1614 A.D. is located in the centre of the town. Fortification walls and gates no longer remain. The town has a huge wealth of havelis and contains the oldest frescoes in Shekhawati.



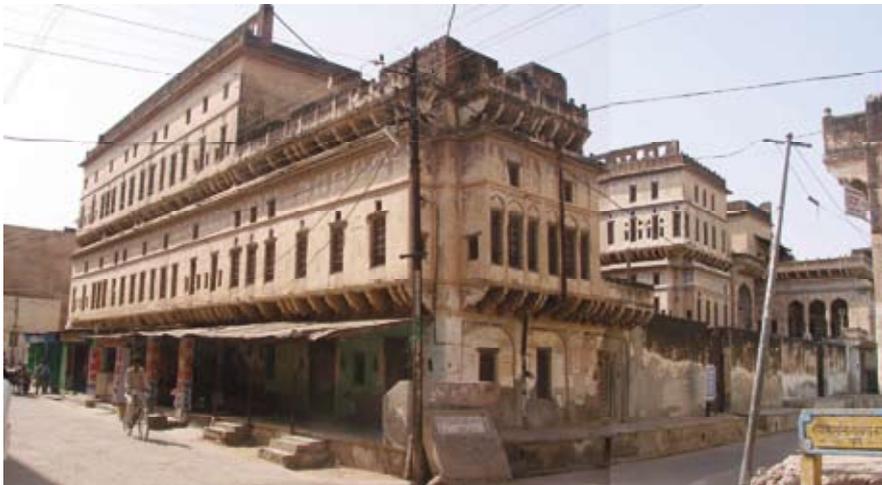
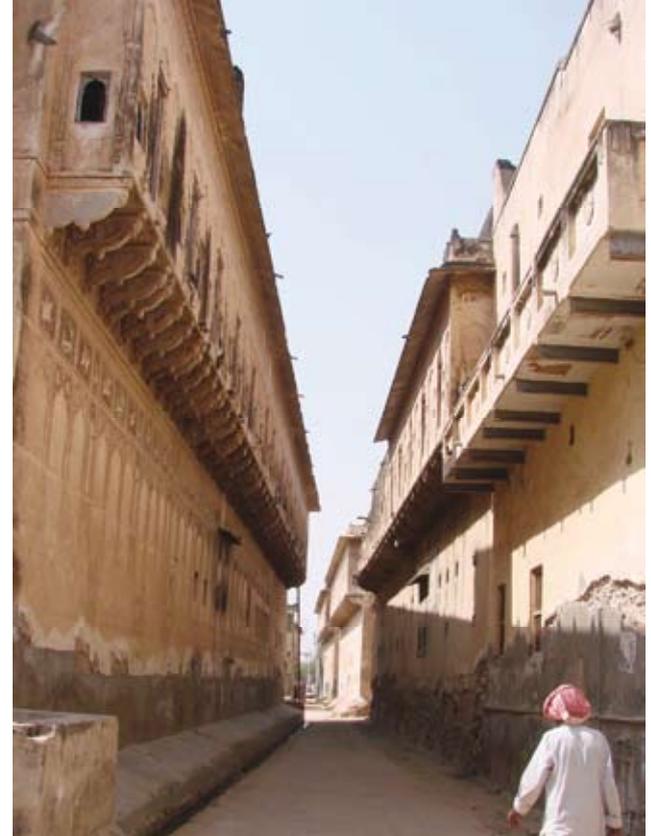
44 . . . Shekhawati: On The Merchants Trail



Microcosm of Shekhawati Heritage

Ramgarh

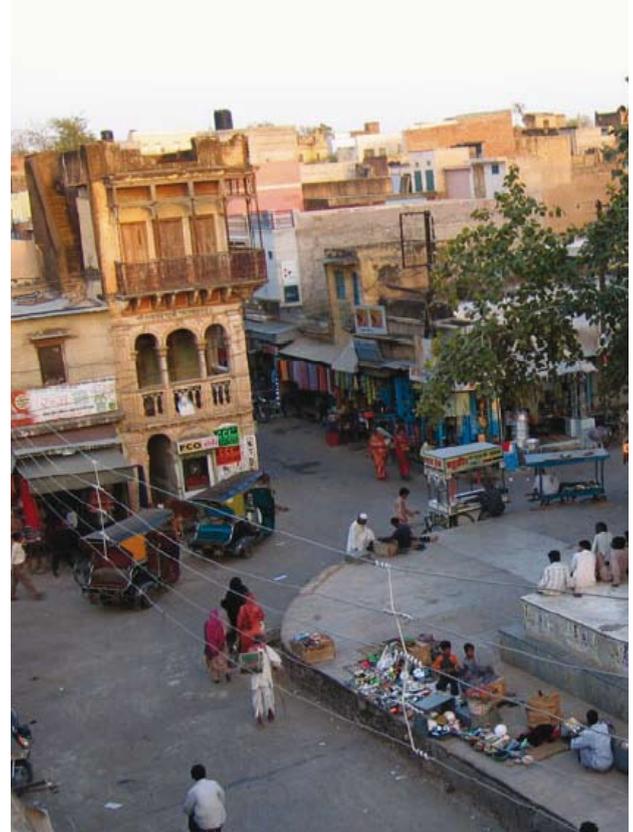
Ramgarh was conceived, built and promoted by the Poddar merchant family with consent of the Raja of Sikar who built a fort in the town. The town has a grid-iron layout with a regular street network. The bazaar is the most grand in the entire Shekhawati region. Several large havelis and the Poddar chhatris have exquisite frescoes.



Microcosm of Shekhawati Heritage

Churu

Churu was founded in 1563 A.D. by a Jat who gave his name to the place. The town was part of Bikaner State. It was an important centre for 18th Century caravan trade and supported several rich merchants. Enclosed by impressive sand dunes at its southern and western fringes, the town has a fort and several beautiful havelis, dharamshalas, temples, wells and water tanks. The axis connecting the fort with the clock tower square is the main bazaar or commercial spine of the town which is the most vibrant area. The most significant havelis were built immediately behind this spine.

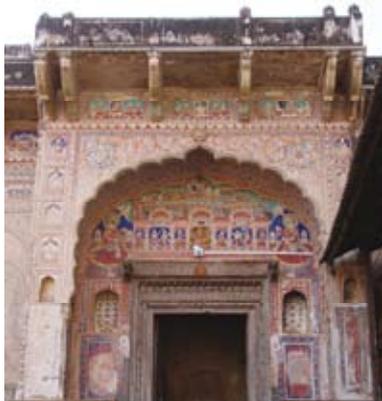
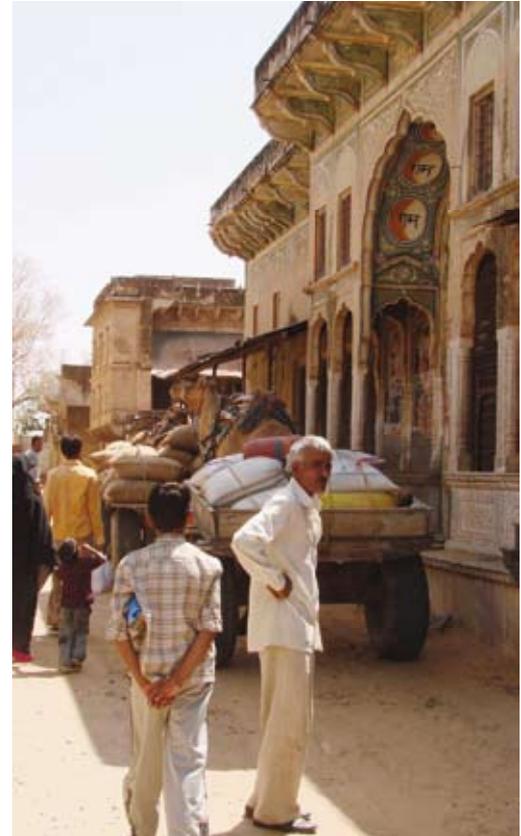


46 . . . Shekhawati: On The Merchants Trail

Microcosm of Shekhawati Heritage

Bissau

Originally Bissau had fortification walls with four entrance gateways. Only the western gate remains now. The town follows a grid-iron layout. Streets running north-south and east-west divide the town in four quadrants. The east-west spine is the main bazaar with impressive traditional shops. The fort forms the core of the town. The fabled havelis with beautiful frescoes are scattered all over the town.



Microcosm of Shekhawati Heritage

Jhunjhunu

Jhunjhunu being the seat of the Kayamkhanis developed morphological features like a winding street network dominated by a hierarchical organisation of public and private spaces. Later Shekhawat rulers modified the original structure of the town by constructing forts and palaces. Large residential enclaves have havelis clustered around cul-de-sacs marked by gateways. Painted havelis, temples, wells, chhatris, and baoris are scattered all over the town.



Microcosm of Shekhawati Heritage

Lakshmangarh

Lakshmangarh was founded by the Raja of Sikar in 1806 A.D. as a new merchant centre to benefit from the boom in caravan trade. Originally the town had fortification walls and nine gates, no traces of which now survive. The planning of the town is influenced by Jaipur having a grid plan. The main bazaar opens out into three squares. The fort to the west of the bazaar dominates the landscape. The Char Chowk haveli is the largest in the town.



Microcosm of Shekhawati Heritage

Mahansar

A huge fort founded in 1768 A.D. forms the nucleus of this small town. The charm of this little town far exceeds its size. Between 1836 A.D. and 1851 A.D., the Poddar merchant family built six structures which boast of having the most accomplished mural works in Shekhawati. The Sone ki Dukan built by the Poddars as the baithak and head office of their business is the most impressive with intricate fresco work in gold adorning its interiors.



Microcosm of Shekhawati Heritage

Dundlod

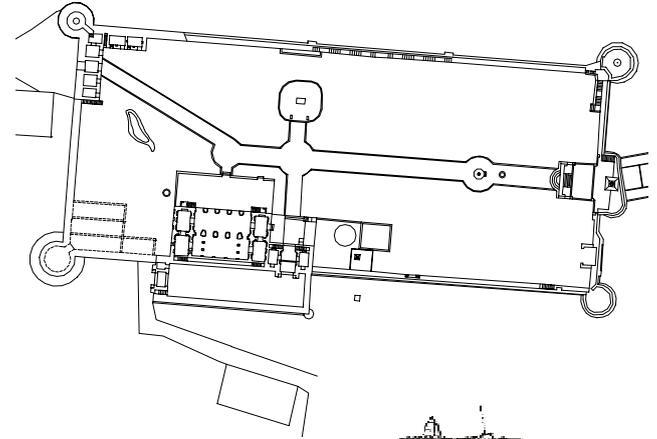
The entire village of Dundlod developed around the fort that dominated the landscape. The main bazaar street is the main spine of the village culminating in a large open space in front of the fort. The layout of the streets broadly follows a grid-iron pattern. The richly painted havelis are situated around the main bazaar street. Apart from this chhatris, dharamshalas, temples and wells are scattered throughout the village that has a rustic and quiet ambience.



Regional Architectural Identity

Forts and Fortifications (Garh, Darwaza, Deewar, Burj)

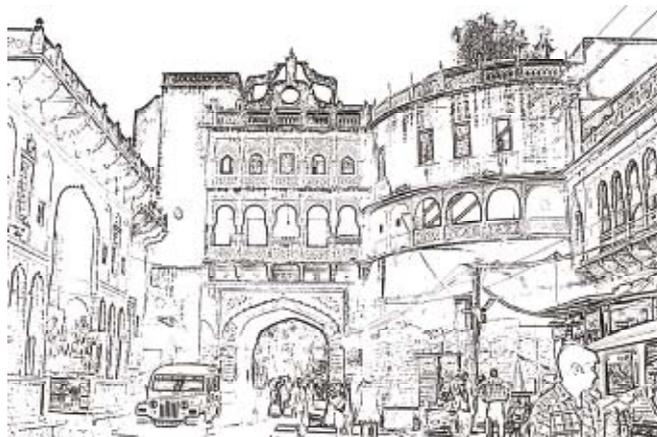
Most of the Shekhawati towns have a fort or *garh* in the centre of the town with habitation all around. The majority of the forts in Shekhawati came into existence after the Shekhawats gained control over Jhunjhunu and Fatehpur in the 1730s. Each was built by Thakurs or barons as his administrative and residential base to protect his holdings. Several forts were destroyed by the Shekhawati Brigade in 1830s to end the prevalent banditry in the region.



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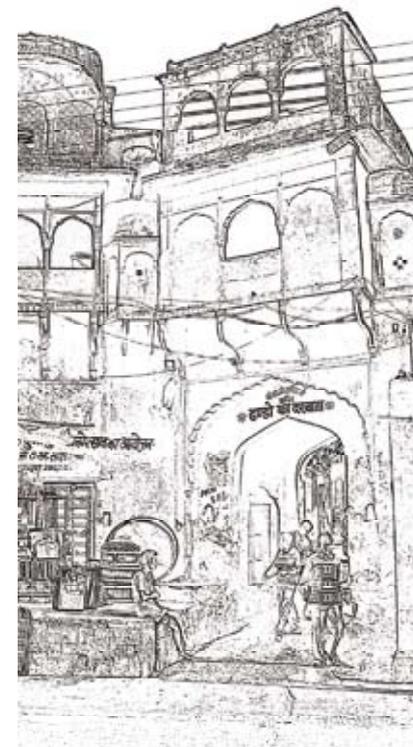
The towns were enclosed within strong fortification walls enforced with bastions crenellations and huge gateways in four cardinal directions, marking the entry to the towns. In some towns like Jhunjhunu which was under Muslim rule of the Kayamkhani Nawabs, neighbourhoods or mohallas also had gateways for safety. In the 19th century large residential wards came up having a cluster of four or more havelis around a cul-de-sac with the entry being regulated by a gateway. The gateway can comprise of a simple archway or can be a imposing structure with rooms being provided inside it. The entry is regulated with the help of massive wooden doors reinforced with metal nails and spikes.



Entrance Gateway to the town



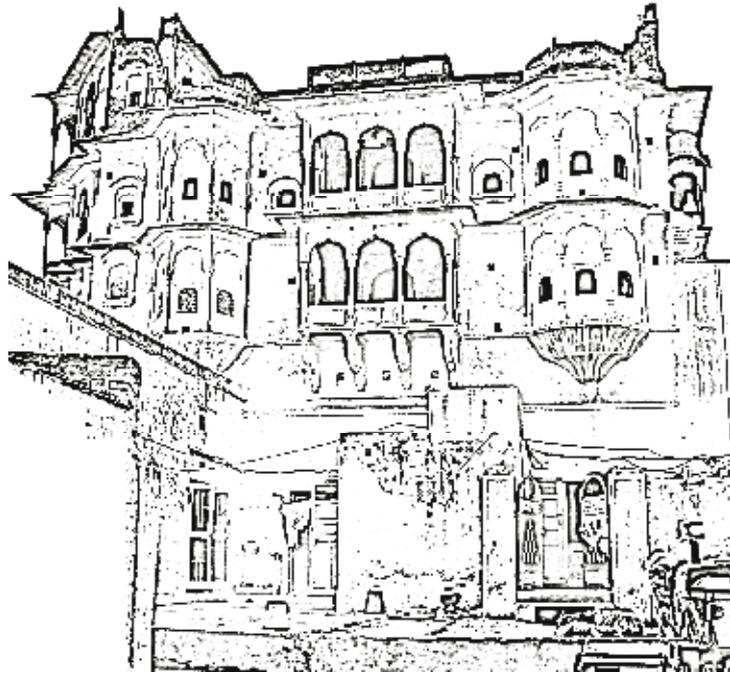
Entrance Gateway to a cluster of havelis



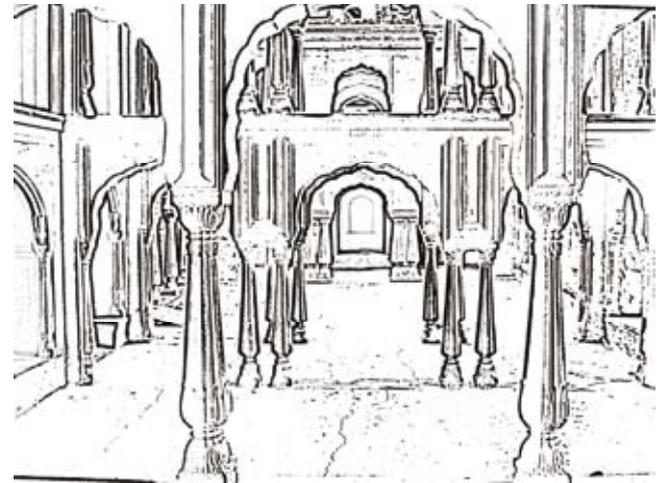
Entrance Gateway to a mohalla

Regional Architectural Identity

Royal Enclave (Mahal)



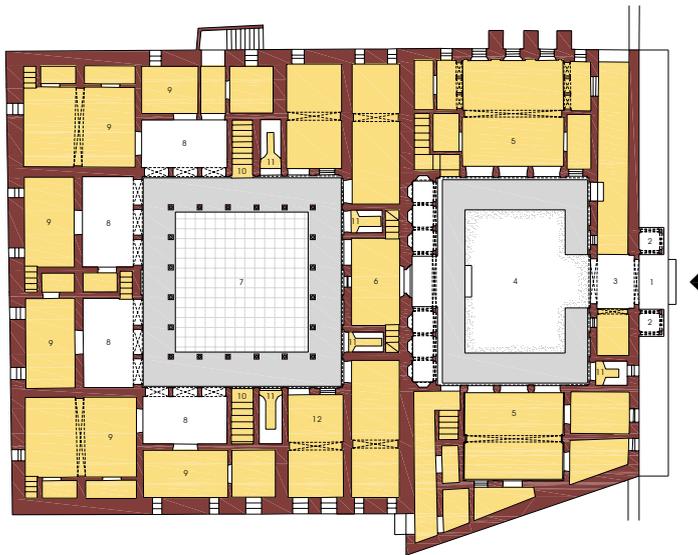
The *mahal* or palace was the seat of royal residence of the Thakur. They were mostly constructed as part of the fort but sometimes could be independent structures as in the case of Jhunjhunu. They formed a distinct landmark on the skyline of the town. Mahansar, Mandawa, Jhunjhunu, Khetri and Sikar boast of some fine palaces. Jhunjhunu once boasted of nine palaces and even today a mohalla in the town is known as Nau Mahal (Nine Palaces). Later Palaces show colonial influence both in terms of planning and architectural vocabulary as in the case of Roop Niwas Kothi at Nawalgarh.



Regional Architectural Identity

Merchants Domain (Haveli)

The *haveli* or residence defined the private space of the people and formed the bulk of properties in a town. Havelis have a common architectural pattern which serves the purpose of utility, durability, safety and beauty. In its simplest form a haveli comprises of a central courtyard with a high building mass all around. Most of the havelis have an outer and an inner chowk (court). Havelis can have more than two courtyards also.



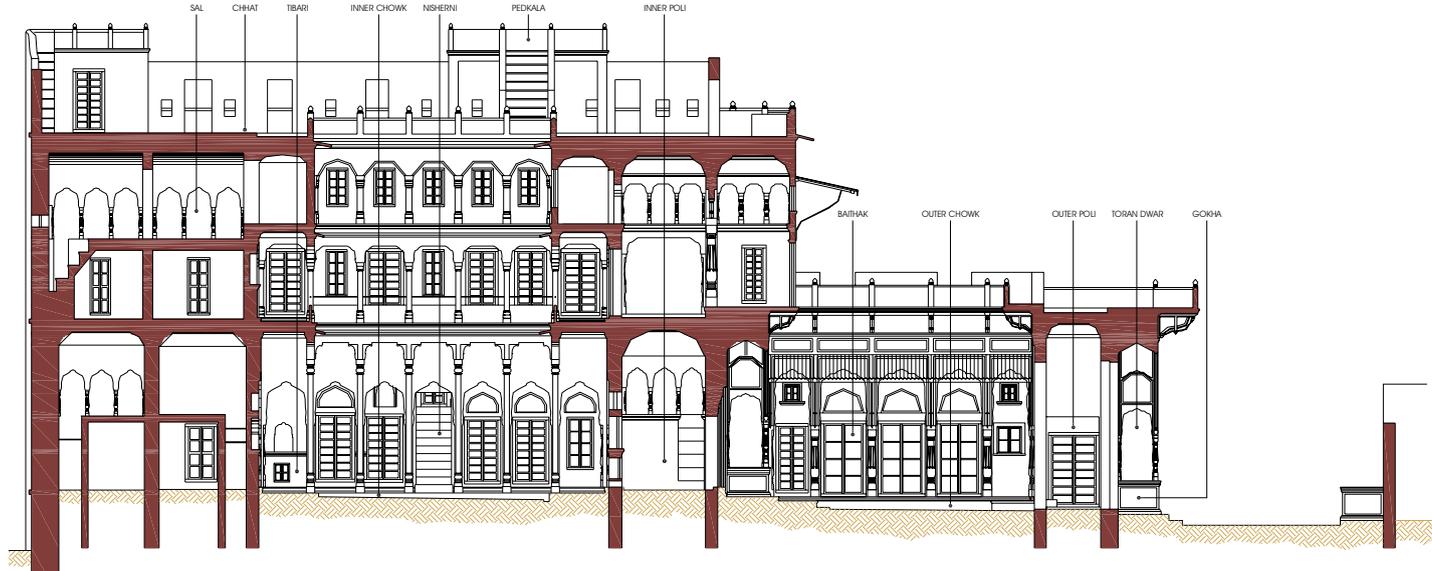
Plan of a typical haveli

LEGEND

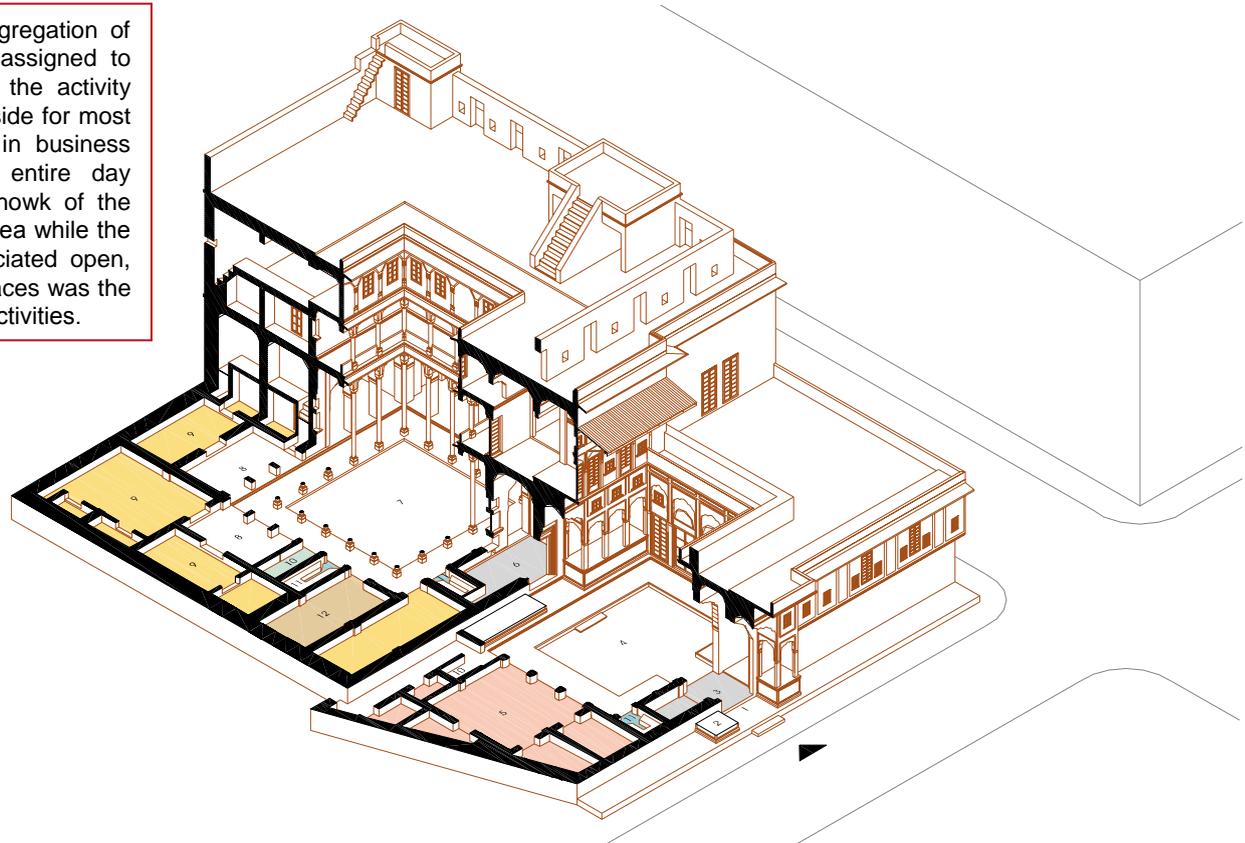
- 1 TORAN DWAR (MAIN ENTRANCE)
- 2 GOKHA (SEATING SPACE)
- 3 OUTER POLI (OUTER TRANSITIONAL SPACE)
- 4 OUTER CHOWK (OUTER COURT)
- 5 BAIHAK (RECEPTION SPACE)
- 6 INNER POLI (INNER TRANSITIONAL SPACE)
- 7 INNER CHOWK (INNER COURT)
- 8 TIBARI (SEMI COVERED SPACE)
- 9 SAL (ROOM)
- 10 NISHERNI (STAIRCASE)
- 11 PARINDA (WATER STORAGE SPACE)
- 12 RASODO (KITCHEN)



The main entrance or *toran dwar* on a raised plinth defined by a huge gateway with two *gokhas* (arched space with pillars) provided access to the *haveli*. The outer *poli* (transitional space) leads to the outer chowk having a *baithak* on either side used as a reception and sitting room. The inner *poli* leads to the inner chowk having several sets of rooms known as *sal* attached to a semi covered space known as *tibari*. *Raso*i or kitchen and a *parinda* or water room are arranged around the chowk. There was a separate room where images of family deities were kept for daily worship. The centre of the courtyard had a small square which was kept *kachcha* for draining the water and at times had the *Tulasi Chaura* (sacred basil). *Nisherni* or stairs provided access to the upper floors. The upper storey consisted of bigger rooms which were sometimes beautifully painted. Small storage spaces called *Duchhati* were included in the rooms. *Chhat* or terrace had structures for storing bedding for sleeping on the terrace. A separate *nohra* or space for facilities like keeping domestic animals and rooms for servants or guests was also part of the *haveli*.



A haveli has a distinct segregation of activity. The type of role assigned to family members governed the activity pattern. Men remained outside for most part of the day engaged in business while women spent the entire day indoors. Thus the outer chowk of the haveli was men's activity area while the inner chowk with its associated open, semi-open and covered spaces was the centre of all the women's activities.



LEGEND

- 1 TORAN DWAR (MAIN ENTERANCE)
- 2 GOKHA (SEATING SPACE)
- 3 OUTER POLI (OUTER TRANSITIONAL SPACE)
- 4 OUTER CHOWK (OUTER COURT)
- 5 BAITHAK (RECEPTION SPACE)
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- 9 SAL (ROOM)
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- 11 PARINDA (WATER STORAGE SPACE)
- 12 RASODO (KITCHEN)



Toran Dwar



Outer Poli



Outer Chowk



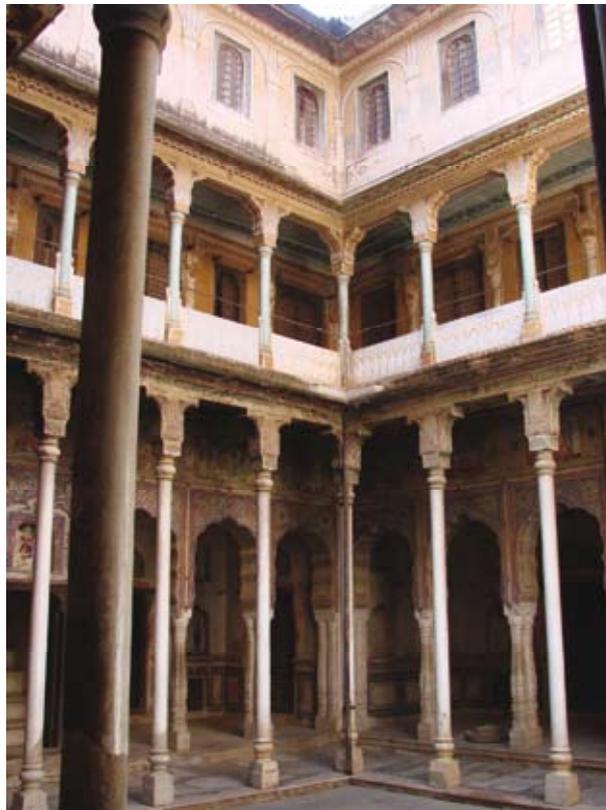
Baithak



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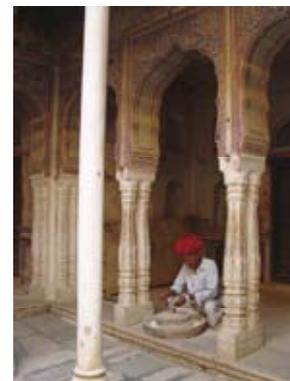
Inner Poli



Inner Chowk



Verandah



Tibari

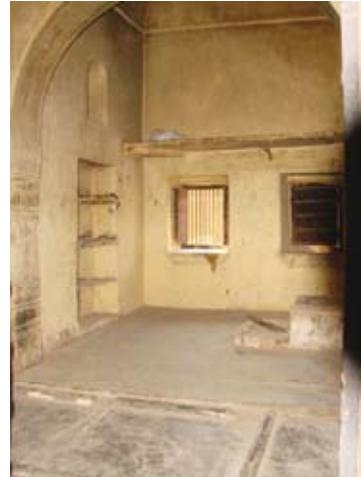




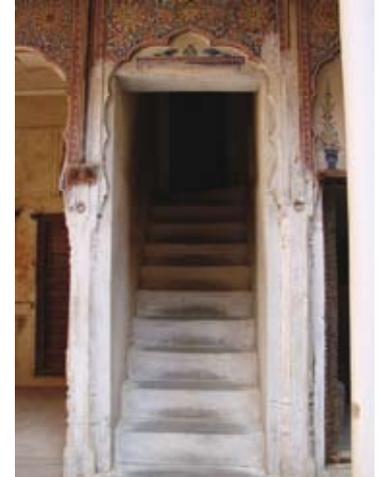
Sal



Parinda



Rasodo



Nisherni



Duchhati



Ghubaria



Pedkala



Storm water spouts



60 . . . Shekshawati : On The Merchants Trail



Carved wooden windows



Carved wooden beam



Cusped arches and fluted columns



Carved stone bracket



Sunshade



Coloured glass window



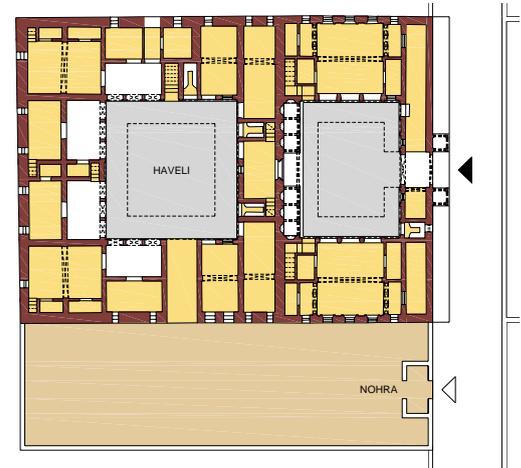
Stone jali and niches



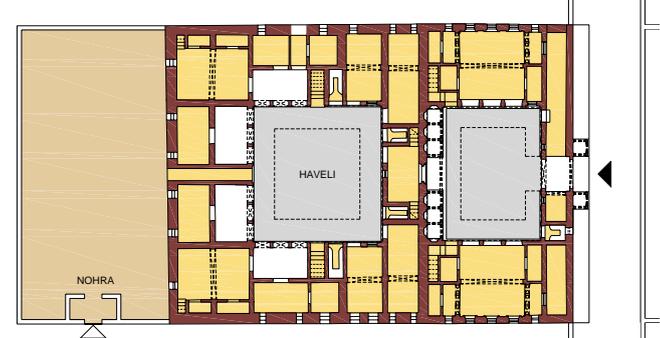
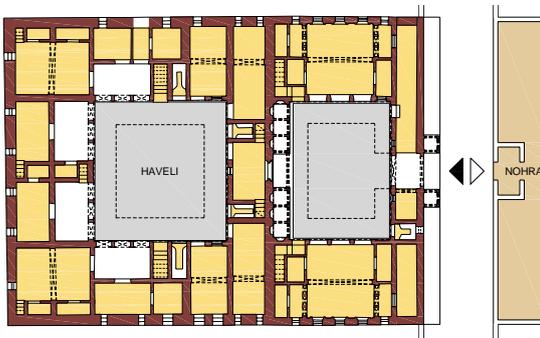
Stone bracket and circular column



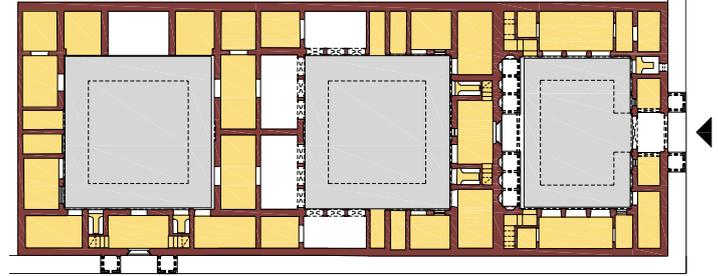
The *nohra* or service area was an integral part of the lives of the people. Most of the time it formed a part of the haveli as an attached open space with a separate entry gate near the main entrance gateway of the haveli, equally decorated with frescoes. It had space for camels and cattle and storing fodder. Some more elaborate ones had a few rooms. Other than the attached ones, there also existed separate ones.



Conceptual Layout of different combinations of Haveli and Nohra

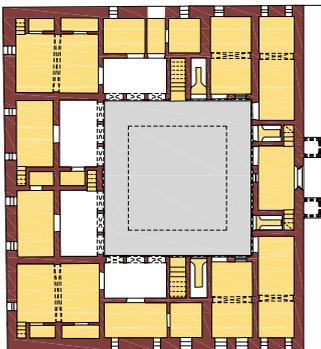


The built form of the haveli continuously evolved. Depending upon affluence and size of the family the number of chowks or courts in the havelis varied. There exist havelis with one, two, three and four courts. However one and two chowk havelis are most common.

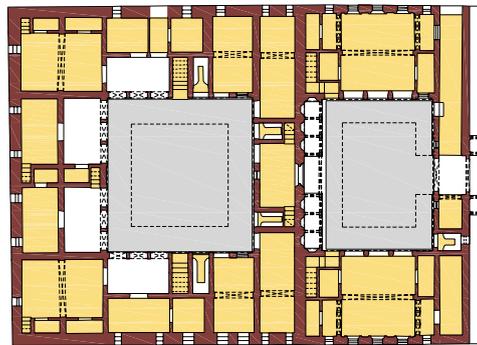


Three Chowk Haveli

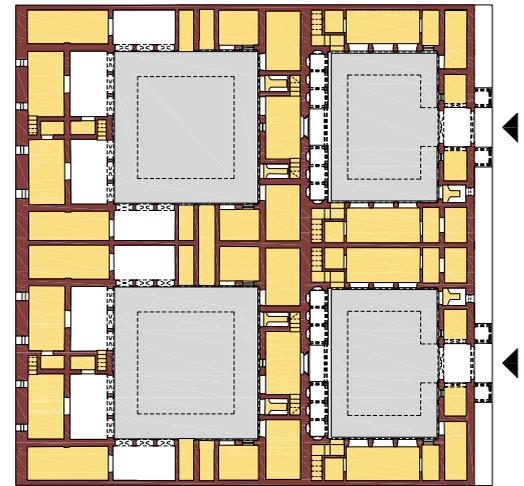
Conceptual Layout of different configurations of chowks in a Haveli



One Chowk Haveli



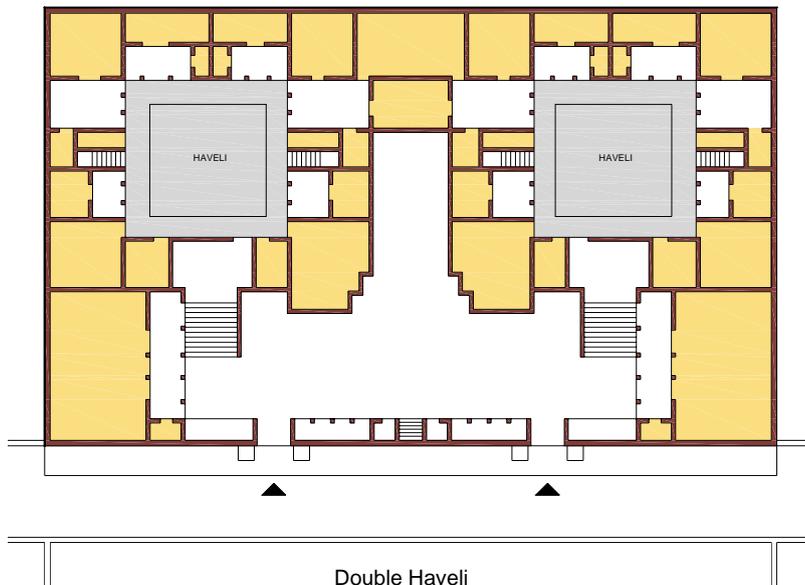
Two Chowk Haveli



Four Chowk Haveli



In later times experimentation led to a new concept of double havelis where two identical havelis were built together. The two havelis shared a common forecourt with separate Baithaks and had independent inner courts. Not only were the architectural features mirrored, sometimes even the paintings on one side were mirrored on the other side as well. The double haveli forms a very unique residential typology.



Builders not only experimented with the form of individual havelis but also worked out different ways of grouping them, as per the requirements of the time. This led to planning of a complex of four, six and eight havelis around a cul-de-sac. Locally these complexes came to be known as *Char Haveli*, *Cheh Haveli* and *Aath Haveli*.



Char Haveli Complex



Cheh Haveli Complex



Aath Haveli Complex



Beginning with a palatial character, havelis were transformed into functional buildings. Later ones assimilated western features into their design. Towards the end of 19th Century, elements like rounded arches replaced the traditional cusped form. Wrought iron, cast iron railings and round pillars were frequently used. An elaborate verandah was added in front of the haveli in place of the traditional *toran dwar* and *gokhas*. To the older havelis, porticos and ramps were added in place of steps. The interface of the haveli with the street completely changed with addition of a boundary wall completely alienating occupants from the passer-by.



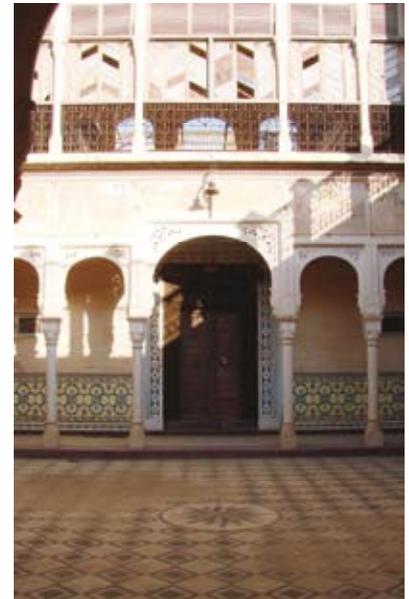
Portico added in front of an old Haveli



An elaborate verandah on the facade



A high boundary wall defining the limits



Round arches, pillars and ceramic tiles



Sculptures replaced the frescoes



Stucco as a new form of ornamentation



Cast iron features



Regional Architectural Identity

Religious Structures (Mandir and Chhatri)

The *mandir* in Shekhawati varies both in size and style. In size it can range from a tiny shrine to a massive one with lofty spires. In terms of style, broadly there are two types, one with a *shikhar* and *mandap* as in the earlier North Indian temple while the other one resembles a *haveli* being planned around a courtyard without a spire. Combinations of the two styles also exist.



Mandir style with Shikhar and mandap

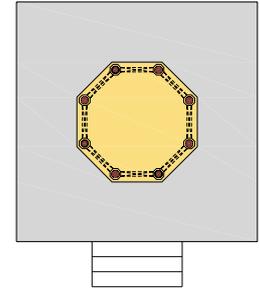


A combination of the two styles

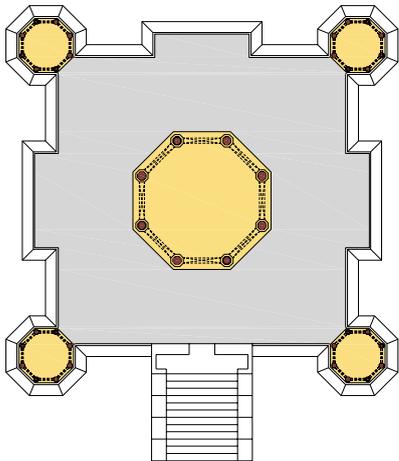


Mandir style with courtyard planning

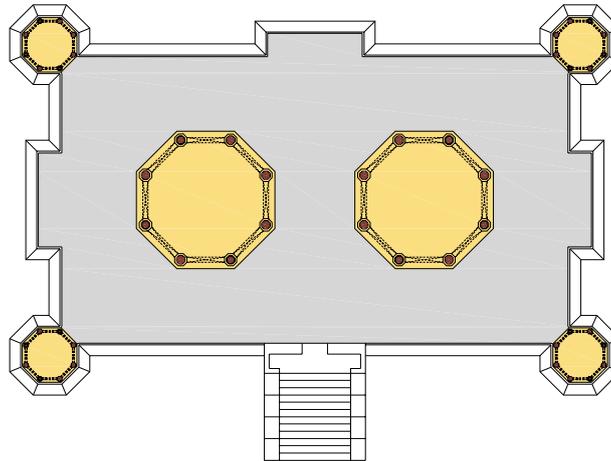
The *chhatri* or cenotaph has its origins in the Islamic tomb. As a Hindu edifice it became very popular in Shekhawati after the Shekhawat takeover of the region, being first monopolised by the Shekhawat Thakurs and later by the Marwari merchants. In its simplest form it comprises of a dome supported on four or eight pillars standing on a plinth. More elaborate ones are built over a high plinth with rooms and a Shivji shrine under the central dome. The corners have octagonal turrets and a flight of steps leads to the upper level. Some of the elaborate ones can have two or even five domes. Chhatris built by rich merchants have beautifully painted interiors. Many chhatris have dated inscriptions. Apart from being memorials elaborate chhatris acquired an important social function for the locals as a space for rest and recreation.



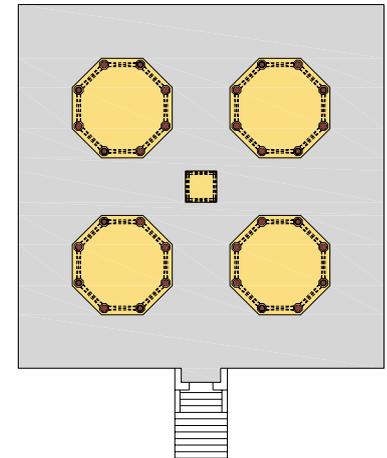
Single Chhatri



Single Chhatri with rooms below



Double Chhatri with rooms below

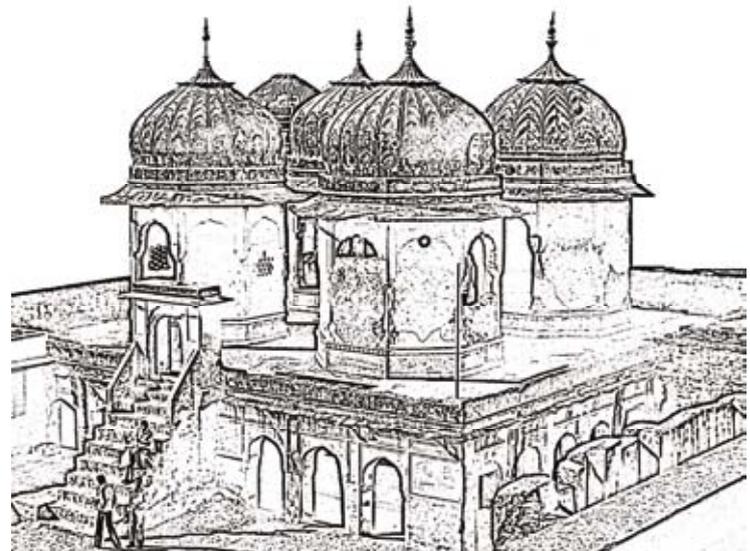


Four Chhatris with rooms below





Single Chhatra with rooms below



Four Chhatras with rooms below



Regional Architectural Identity

Commercial Streets and Shops (Bazaar and Dukan)

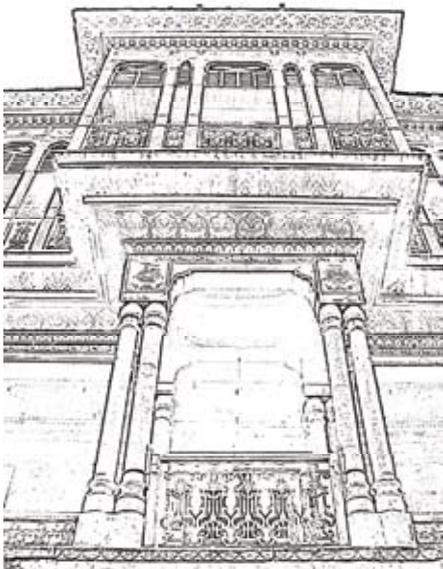
Bazaars or traditional markets were an important component of Shekhawati towns as most of the towns owed their existence to these economic drivers. The main streets had beautifully painted dukans or shops. The traditional market in Ramgarh can claim the best collection of shops. There are broadly two types of shops. One type comprises of rooms on the ground floor with a shaded verandah in front and a *tibari* with two or three narrow vertical structures on the main façade at the first floor. The other type has similar configuration at the ground floor level except the first floor which has a *haveli*-like façade.



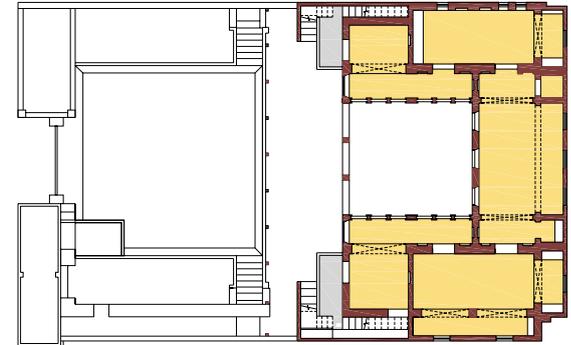
Regional Architectural Identity

Leisure Spaces (Baithak and Bageechi)

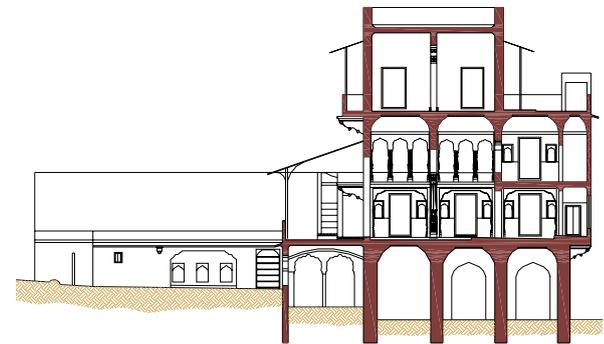
Baithak an innovation of the merchants of Shekhawati housed spaces meant for entertaining private guests and also organising social functions and gatherings. They were locally also known as Kamra. The innovative design and layout of spaces along with the unique built form of the building aroused a sense of curiosity in the onlooker. The spaces inside were very creatively decorated with beautiful frescoes and *araish* (ornamental) work.



Curious architecture and creative spaces make the Baithak a unique concept



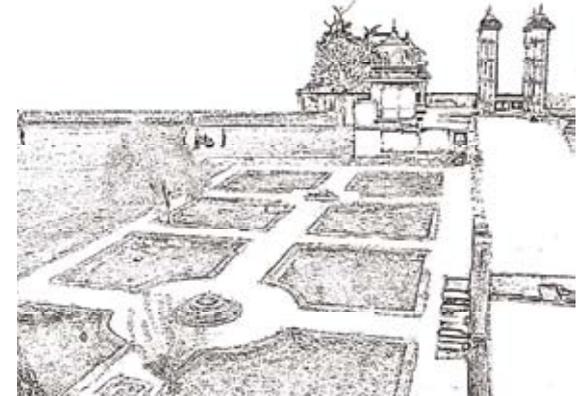
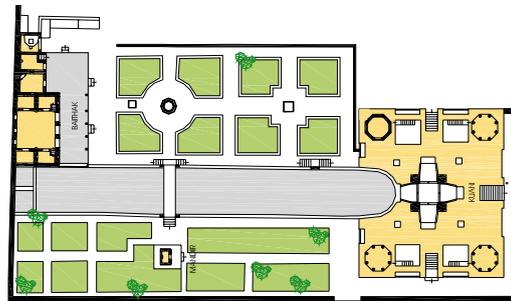
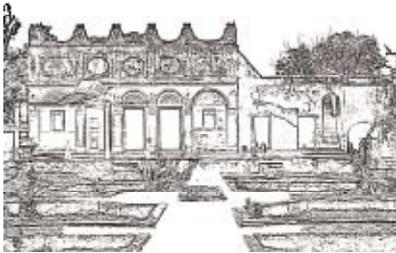
Plan



Section

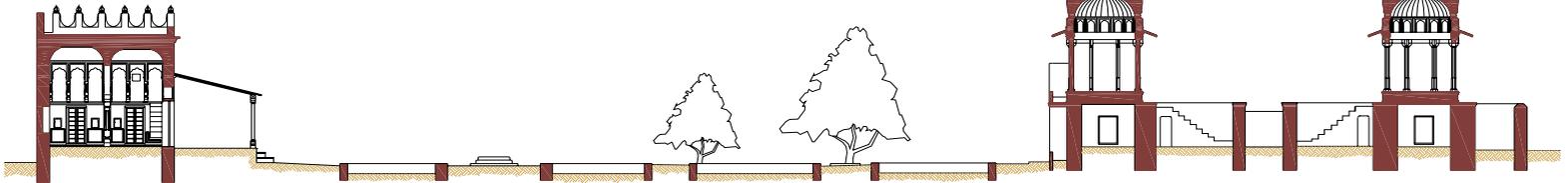


Bageechis are a unique typology now witnessed only rarely in Shekhawati. They seem to have drawn inspiration from the royal pleasure gardens and were also greatly influenced by the western style of leisure spaces which were common in the late 19th Century. However the design and architectural vocabulary is true to Shekhawati.



A well is an integral part of the Bageechi

A variety of spaces and plant cover lends a richness to the landscape



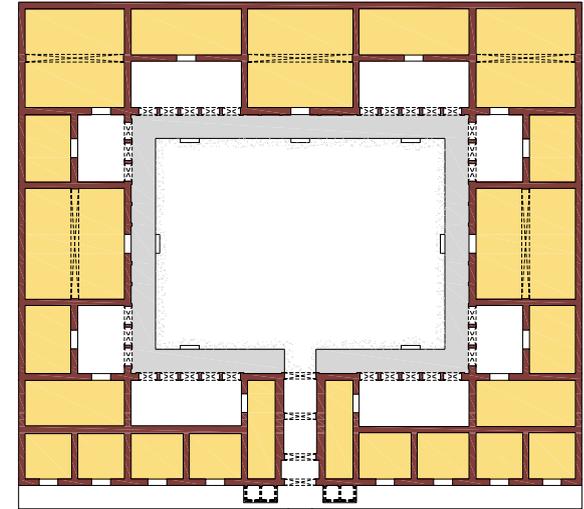
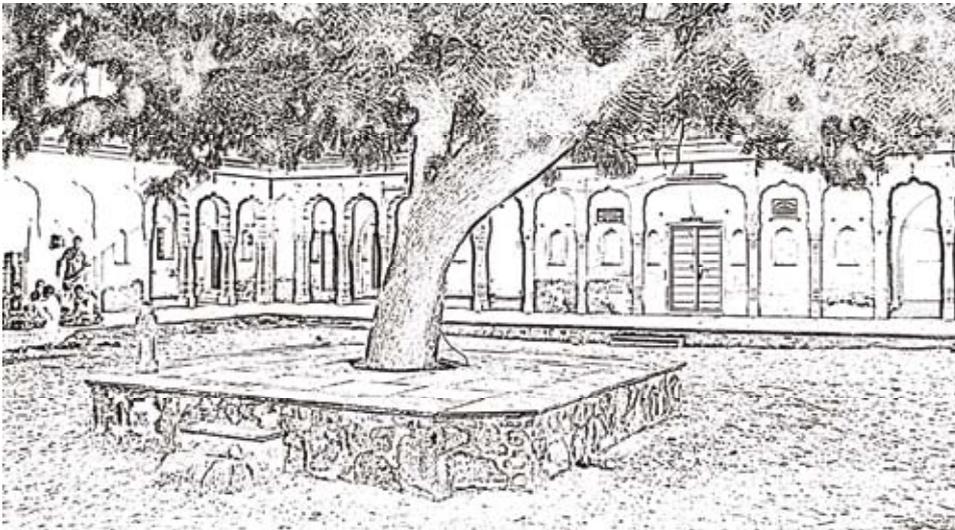
Section showing baithak, garden and well



Regional Architectural Identity

Community Spaces (Dharamshala, Gaushala, Kuan, Johara and Baori)

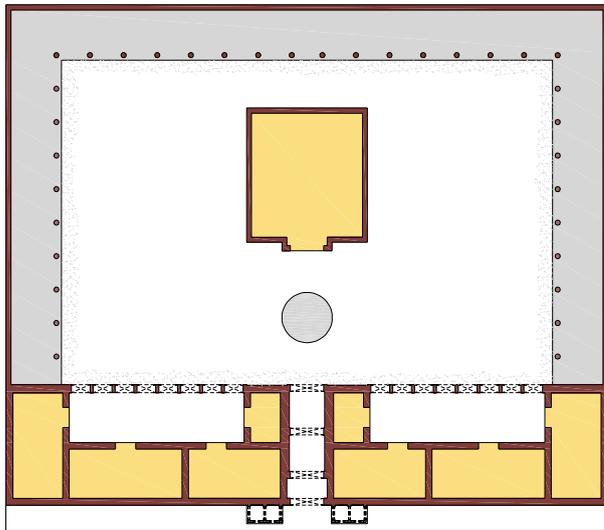
In the days before metalled roads or railways, long caravans of camels came laden with merchandise. *Dharamshala* was a staging post for such caravans. It provided accommodation to travellers varying however in quality and service. They were built by rich merchants for the community at large. In later times these have come to be used for social functions. The dharamshala comprised of a large structure entered through a double height entrance gateway with rooms all around a central courtyard. The facades had few frescoes while the interior were mostly plain.



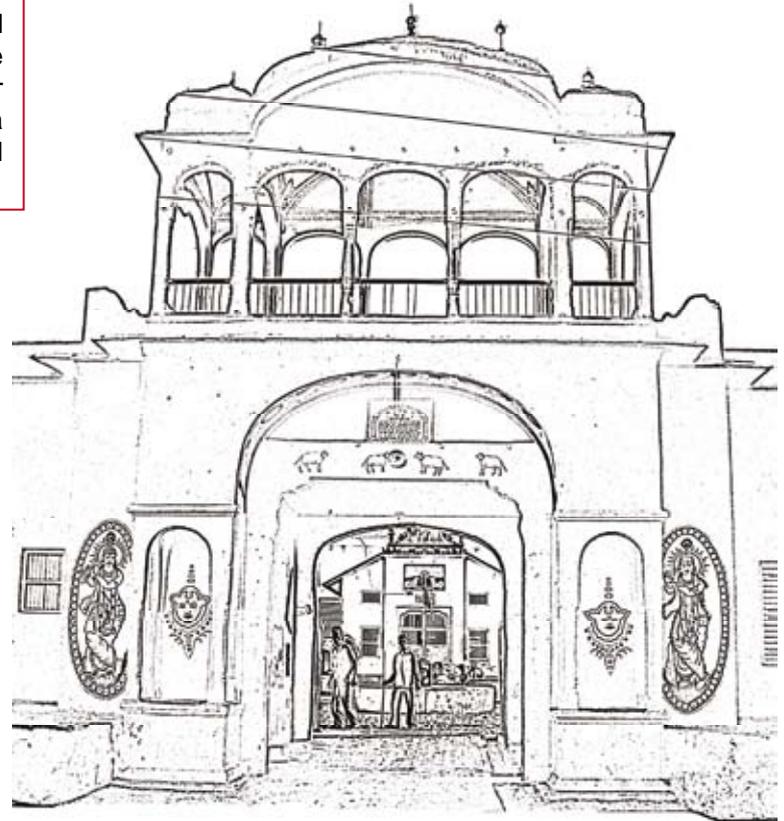
Plan of a typical Dharamshala



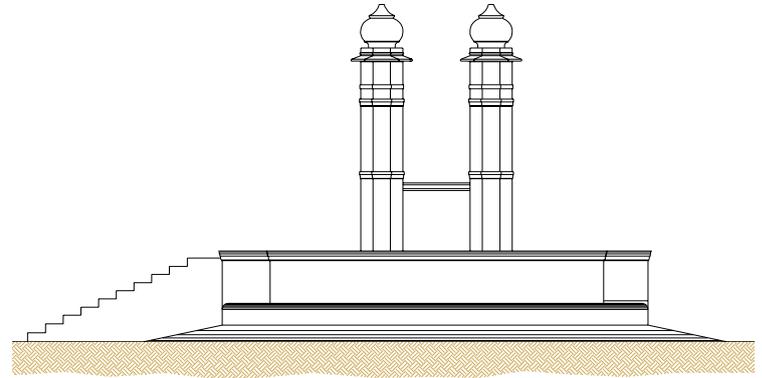
Gaushala, a unique gesture of Hindu piety, is a sheltered compound for incapacitated or merely neglected cows. The structure comprises of a large walled enclosure with sheds for cows. The facade is plain except for a few pictures of Krishna and cows. Regular staff and volunteers help in the upkeep and running of the *gaushala*.



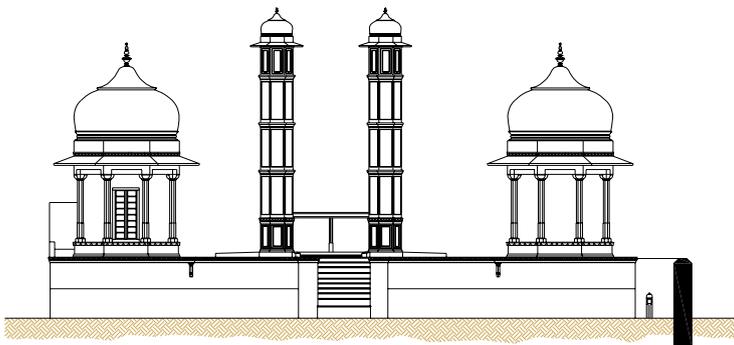
Plan of a typical Gaushala



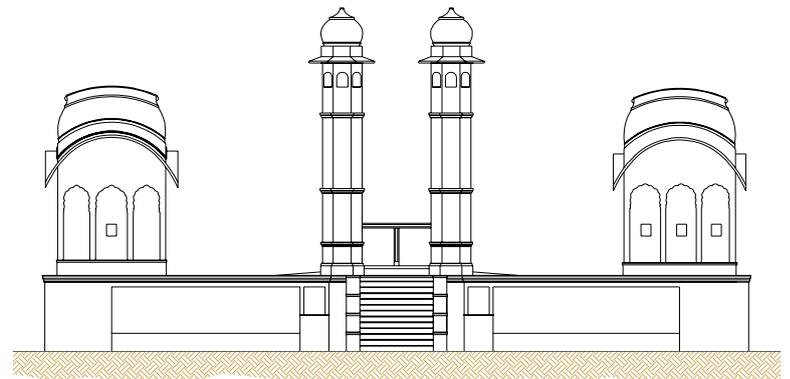
A *kuan* or well was the most essential life-sustaining feature in the semi desert region being financed by the local merchants. The size and scale varies throughout the region. In its simplest form it comprises of a central circular shaft on a raised platform with a stone beam for drawing water. The well in Shekhawati has a socio-cultural value apart from the functional. Many religious and social customs are associated with them. A small shrine dedicated to Hanumanji is often part of the well. More elaborate ones have octagonal chhatris and minarets that at times are decorated with frescoes. Water management was surely a remarkable feat attained by the people and the well functioned as a community node.



Well with two minarets

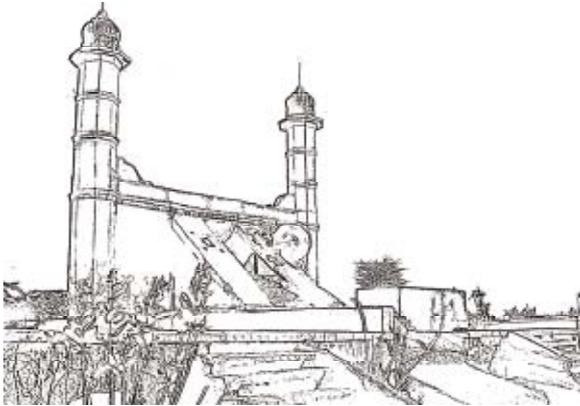


Well with four minarets and octagonal chhatris

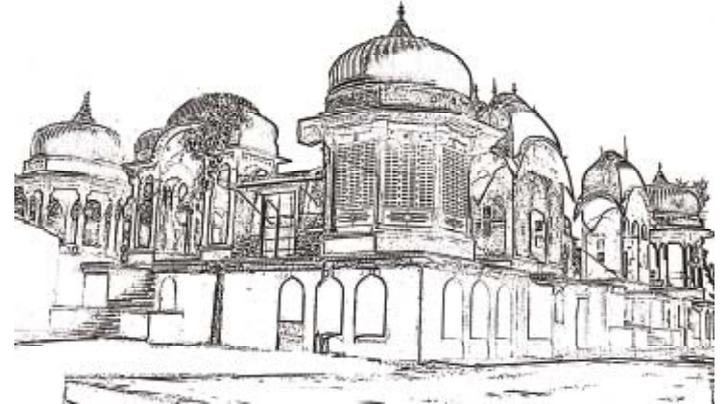


Well with four minarets and bangaldar chhatris





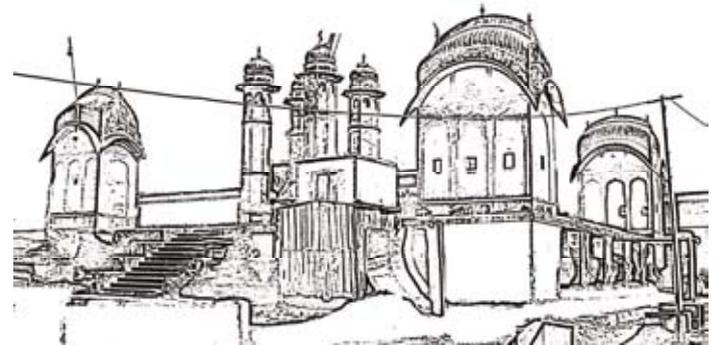
Well with two minarets



Well with four minarets and octagonal chhatris



Well with four minarets and a temple



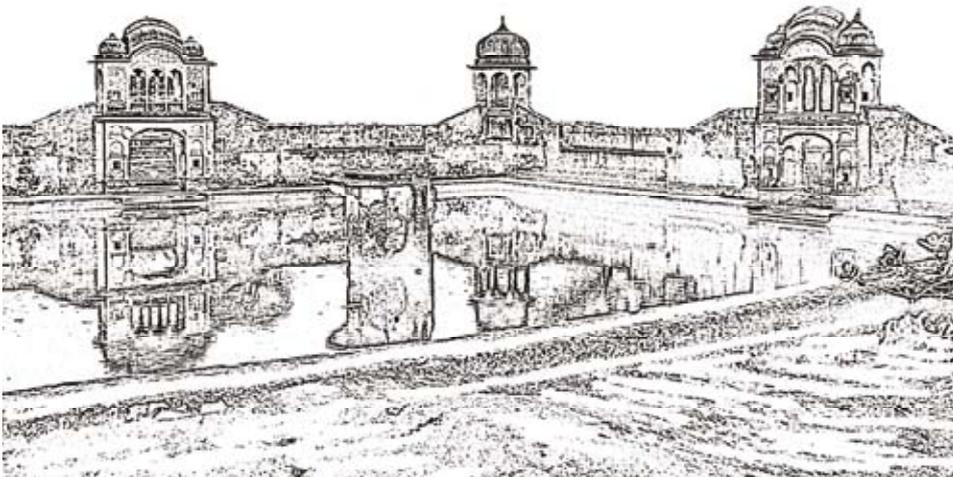
Well with four minarets and bangaldar chhatris



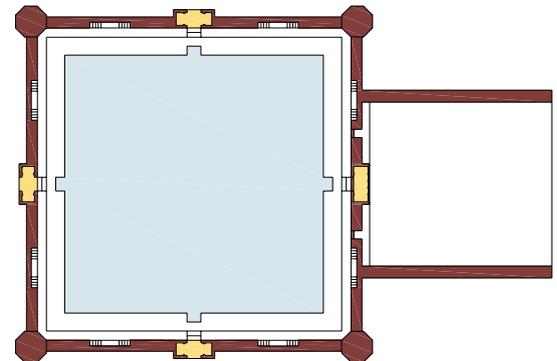
A *johara* is another beautiful feature in the dry landscape of the region. It was a community asset financed by the local merchants. The structure comprised of a central square pit with descending steps leading down to the water level. A large open space was left all around it that acted as the recharge surface. When filled with monsoon rain it looked beautiful and acted as a significant community space for the people, giving respite from the tortuous heat. Elaborate ones have ornamental chhatris at the corners and arched gateways.



Johara and its catchment area



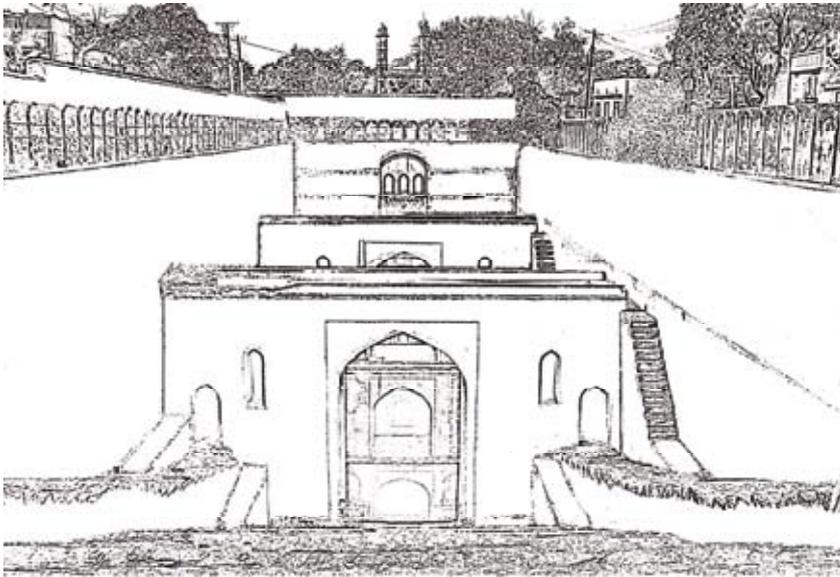
Johara provided respite to people as well as cattle



Plan of a typical Johara



A *baori* or step well was a major feat of engineering with its vast masonry lined depression reaching down to the water table and a normal well shaft. They were built by a ruler or rich merchant. Elaborate ones had an entrance gateway. Steps on one side lead down to the water. Enclosed arched colonnades and passageways functioned as resting places for the weary traveller.

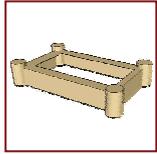


Baori is a major feat of engineering in the semi desert region

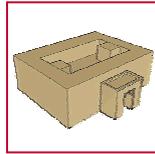
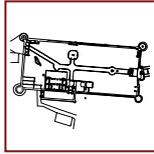


Regional Architectural Identity

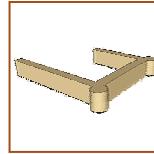
Diversity of Heritage Components



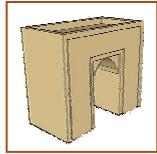
Garh



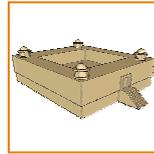
Mahal



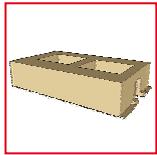
Deewar & Burj



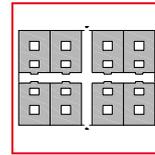
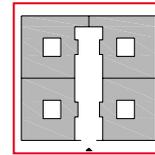
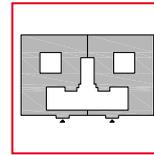
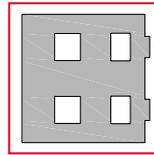
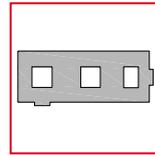
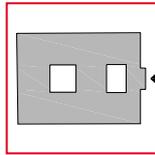
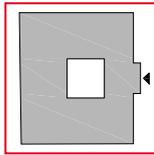
Darwaza



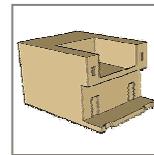
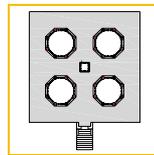
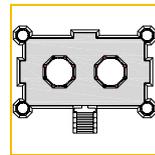
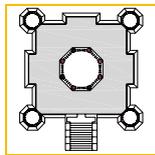
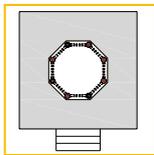
Mandir



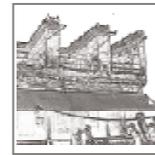
Haveli

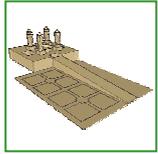


Chhatri

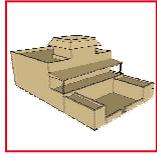


Dukan





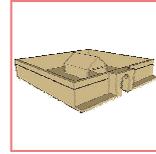
Bageechi



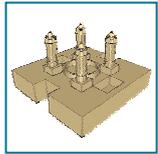
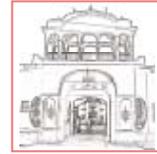
Baithak



Dharamshala



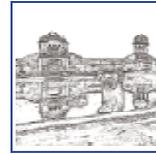
Gaushala



Kuan



Johara



Baori

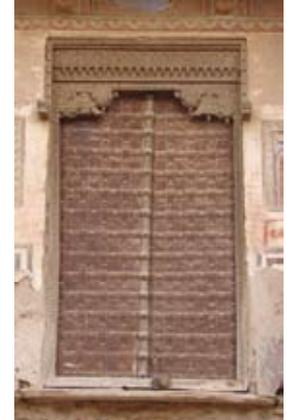
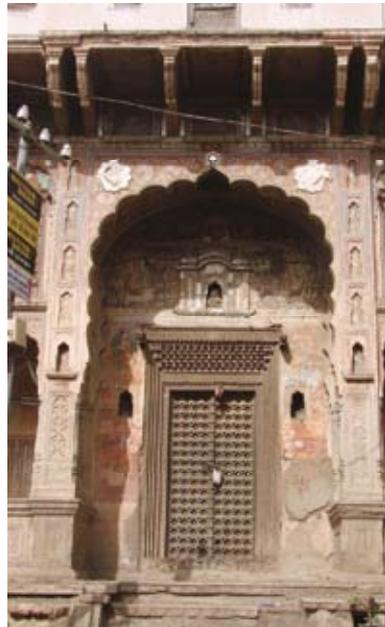
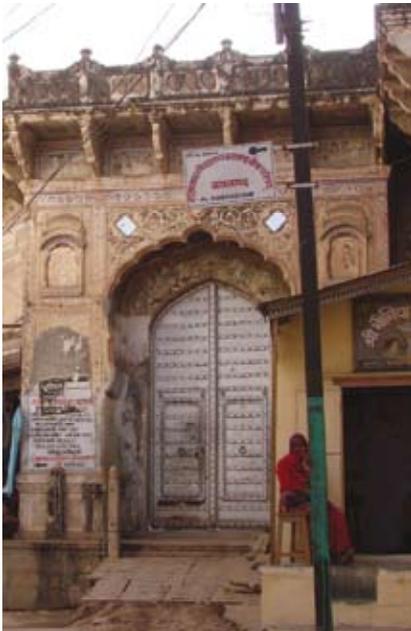


80 . . . Shekhawati : On The Merchants Trail

Regional Cultural Identity

Intricately Carved Doors

Wood carving is a highly developed art form in Shekhawati which is famous for its intricately carved wooden doors and windows. Door frames and shutters are carved with geometrical and floral patterns and plated with brass. Designs of doors vary across towns. The main doors of forts and of some of the havelis are massive with a small wicket gate and strengthened with metal plates, nails and spikes for security. The door leading to the inner court of a haveli is usually the most beautiful.



Regional Cultural Identity

Ornate Windows

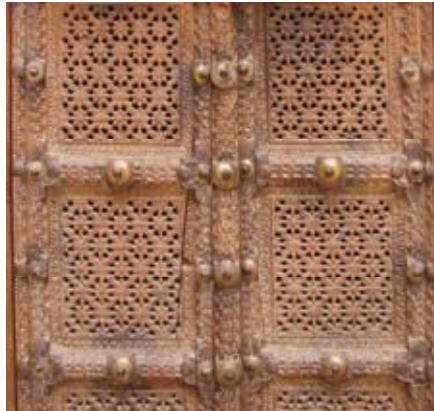
Carved wooden windows are also an ornamental feature of havelis in Shekhawati. They adorn the façade of the haveli and vary in size ranging from big ones to small peep holes. Elaborate ones are skilfully decorated with beautifully engraved brass sheets.



Regional Cultural Identity

Decorative Beams and Jalis

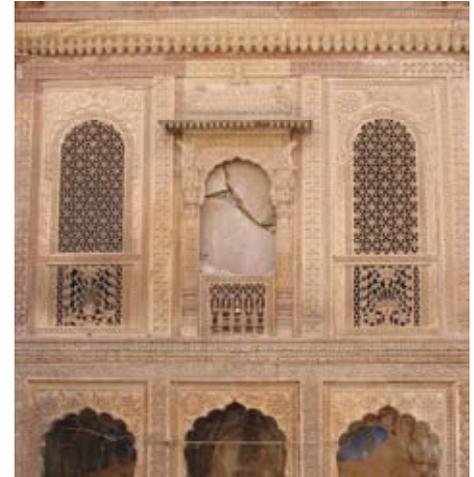
Apart from intricately carved doors and windows, beams and jalis are also beautifully carved and painted with floral motifs.



Regional Cultural Identity

Stone Carving

Intricate stone carving is observed especially in structures dating from the Muslim rule of Kayamkhanis. Stone jalis are carved from stone slabs for use in windows. Geometrical and floral patterns generate beautiful patterns with light filtering through it. Other than the jalis, columns, arches, brackets and cornices are also carved out of stone. Relief work on stone panels especially the gokhas is also common.



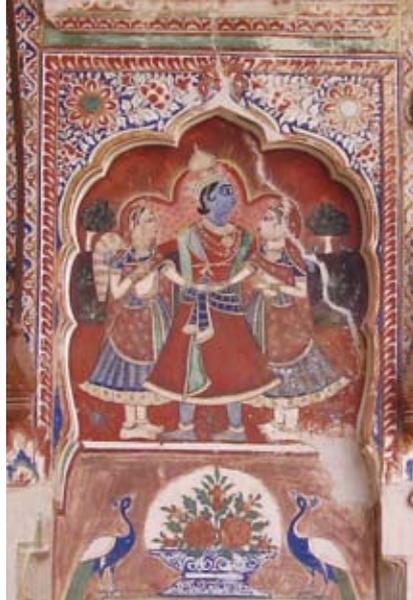
84 . . . Shekshawati : On The Merchants Trail



Regional Cultural Identity

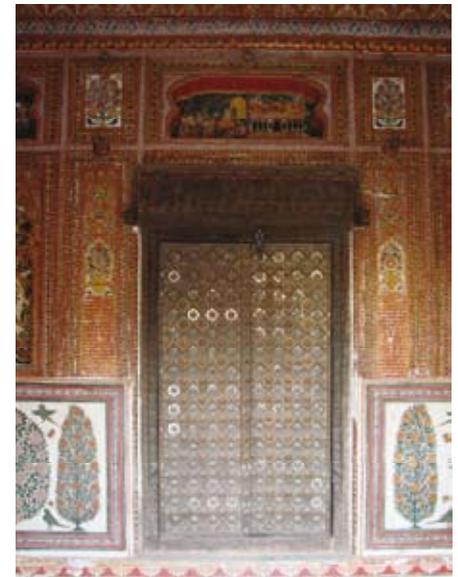
Exquisite Frescoes

With time the Shekhawati region transformed into an oasis of fine arts and architecture with its world renowned painted havelis. The most exquisite form of ornamentation on the buildings is in the form of paintings. The frescoed architectural masterpieces were initially patronised by Rajput rulers, but it was the rich Marwari merchants who set the region apart from the rest of India for its frescoed treasures. Frescoes adorn the entire façade as well as interior spaces.





Havelis were profusely painted, representing religious themes and contemporary life. Fresco buno and fresco secco techniques were used to make the paintings. Colours were traditionally derived from minerals and vegetables. At the turn of the 19th century artificial pigments imported from Germany were also put into use. Figurative murals extended all over the wall surfaces of a haveli with the profusion of decoration from the 1830s lasting nearly a century.

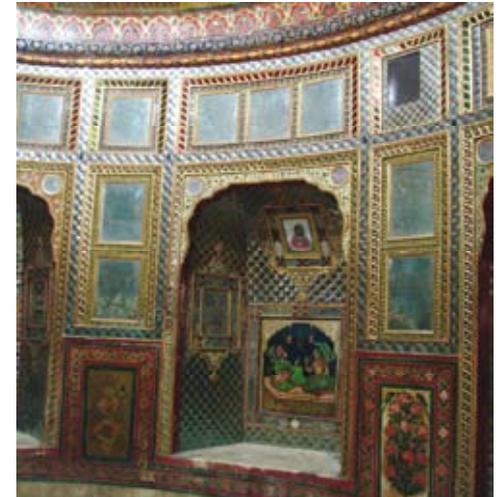
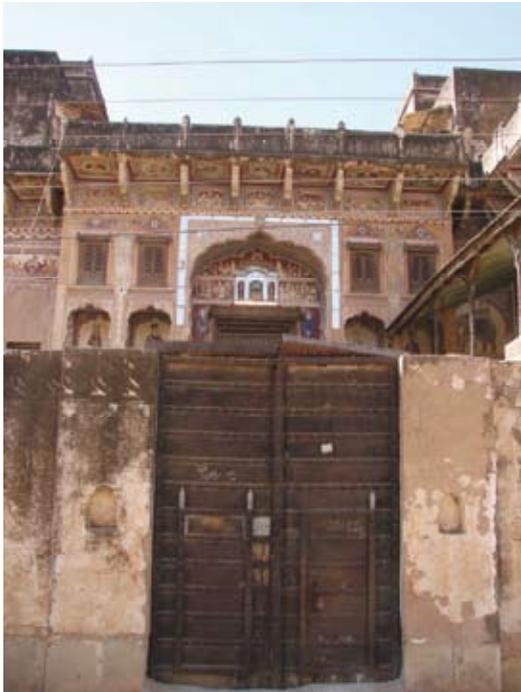


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Regional Cultural Identity

Delicate Mirror Work

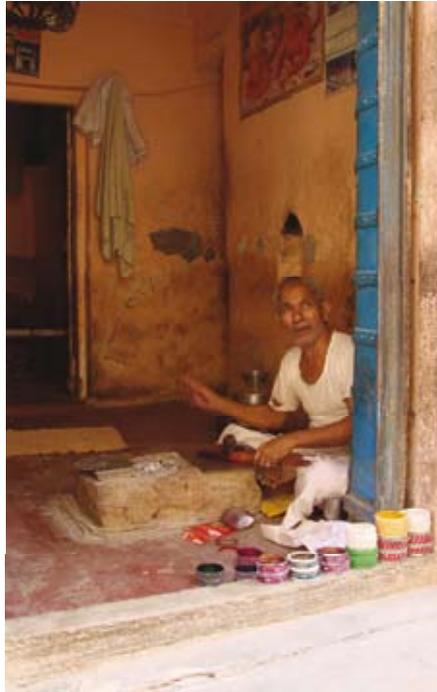
Mirror work in combination with paintings added to the richness of both the exteriors and the interiors.



Regional Cultural Identity

Crafts and Craftsmen

There exist in Shekhawati several craftsmen still pursuing the age old arts and crafts traditions.



Regional Cultural Identity

Folk Traditions, Fairs, Festivals and Cuisine

Shekhawati has a rich tradition of fairs and festivals that form the fulcrum of the cultural life of the people. The visual and performing arts like music, dance and drama thrived through the fairs and festivals promoted by the rich and the nobility. The region also has exquisite local cuisine. All these together constitute the intangible heritage of the region.



Regional Cultural Identity

Flora and Fauna



Landscape of Shekhawati is dotted with sand dunes and hills, which are part of the Aravalli range. The sparse vegetation has some very useful trees used in making doors, windows, beams, furniture and craft products. Traditional forests help in ground water recharge.



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Challenges to Built Heritage . . .

Challenges to Built Heritage

Changing Milieu in the Cultural Landscape

Key drivers

Development aspirations of local people

Governance and management

Tourism and its demands



Challenges to Built Heritage

Development Aspirations of Local People

Urban Growth

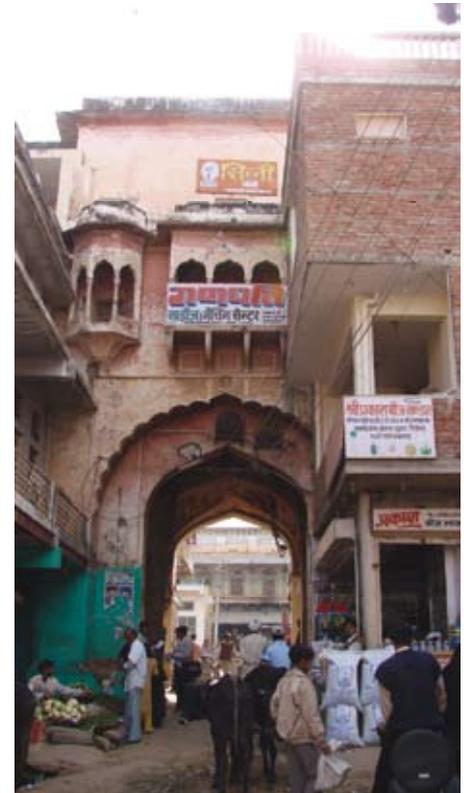
- Change from residential to commercial usage: Most of the spaces on the front façade of the haveli are being converted into shops; addition of unsightly shutters on the façade has damaged the beautiful frescoes
- Going high-rise: Insensitive addition of new floors and construction of high rise buildings mars the aesthetics of built form.
- Sub-division of properties frequently leads to damage to building integrity.



Damage due to sub-division of property



Change from residential to commercial land use



Insensitive addition of new floors



Real Estate Pressure

Increasing value of real-estate often leads to the undermining of heritage properties. Heritage properties in Shekhawati face similar pressures. With age the functionality of heritage properties has declined in terms of the usage of traditional spaces and the increasing cost of maintenance. This has led to obsolescence and disuse of heritage buildings. Also new demands and usages (space and features) have emerged that have resulted in deliberate neglect of property further aggravating the decay and disintegration processes. Heritage properties are deliberately demolished to make land available for new construction. The reclaimed land is being used to construct new commercial complexes and residential flats that not only wipe out an important link with the past but also are totally out of context and mar the visual appeal of the historic area.



Deliberate neglect making the property unsafe



Forced demolition to reclaim land



Site for new construction: Haveli breathing its last



Changing Ownership Pattern

- Absentee owners with locked and vacant properties: occasional visits by these owners is decreasing and makes the issue of maintenance and reuse meaningless
- Caretaker owners without resources to undertake maintenance
- Multiple ownership leading to lack of interest and consensus on issues
- Subletting of property to multiple tenants leads to subdivision of spaces resulting in loss of integrity and maintenance
- Disputed ownership with none of the embattled parties investing in the maintenance and upkeep of the property



Disputed ownership



Inadequately maintained locked and vacant heritage properties



Subdivision leads to loss of integrity





Renewal of Heritage Properties

- Unaware residents trust spurious techniques and skills and undertake consolidation activities without due sensitivity to conservation.
- Entrepreneurs have taken to remodelling heritage properties oblivious of the damage that they are causing.
- Non-availability of traditional building materials, skills and techniques is a constraint.
- Lack of institutionalized support for property owners
- Demands of the market mechanism have forced artisans to jettison their traditional skills in favour of modern skills. Ancient building art forms are now on the verge of extinction.
- Pressures of commercialization are leading to quick-fix solutions for repair. Fake fresco techniques are being used in the name of traditional art form.



Modern Infrastructure in Heritage Properties

- Puncturing of frescoed facades for inserting water supply pipes and addition of elevated water storage tanks is eating away the vitals of the heritage properties.
- Water closets and wash rooms constructed in front of the main façade of the haveli has completely marred beautiful frescoes.
- Leaking water and storm water drainage pipes have resulted in plaster flaking and damage to the masonry.
- Air conditioners have been insensitively inserted blocking beautiful fenestrations and puncturing the walls.
- Insensitive electric wiring including fixing of switchboards, lights and fan fittings on frescoed wall surfaces.
- Electric/ water meters have been un-aesthetically inserted.



Water closet constructed on the facade



Insensitive insertion of electric wires, pipes and storm drains



Leaking pipes and water tanks eating away the vitals of the building



Desire for Modern Architecture

- Changes in lifestyle have resulted in the transformation of space usage and therefore space planning and has also led to an inclination towards use of modern architectural features, materials and finishes.
- Potential open spaces especially traditional nohras are giving way to new construction that is totally alienated from its historic context oblivious of the traditional morphology and architectural vocabulary.



Potential infill space



Incongruent addition



Modern architecture replacing traditional heritage

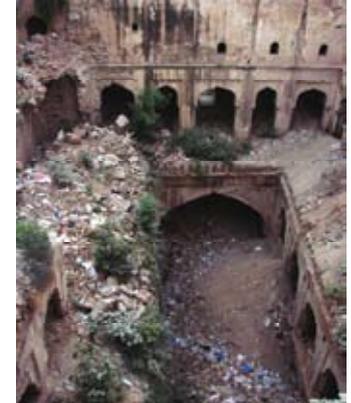


Change in Value Perception

- Changes in value systems have led to the misuse of public spaces and traditional buildings in the historic core of a town.
- Water structures once considered sacred are now being abused. Wells, baoris and johars are being encroached upon and misused as dumping grounds.
- Gangaur kuan has lost its connection with the residents who only visit on ceremonial occasions.
- Private buildings and unorganised markets have encroached upon open spaces.
- There is a general lack of social consciousness and sense of ownership of traditional areas.



Water tank installed over minarets



Baori used as dump



Sewage water of the is being diverted into the Johara



Damaged ramp of well is used for dumping garbage



Misused open space



Consumption Oriented Expression

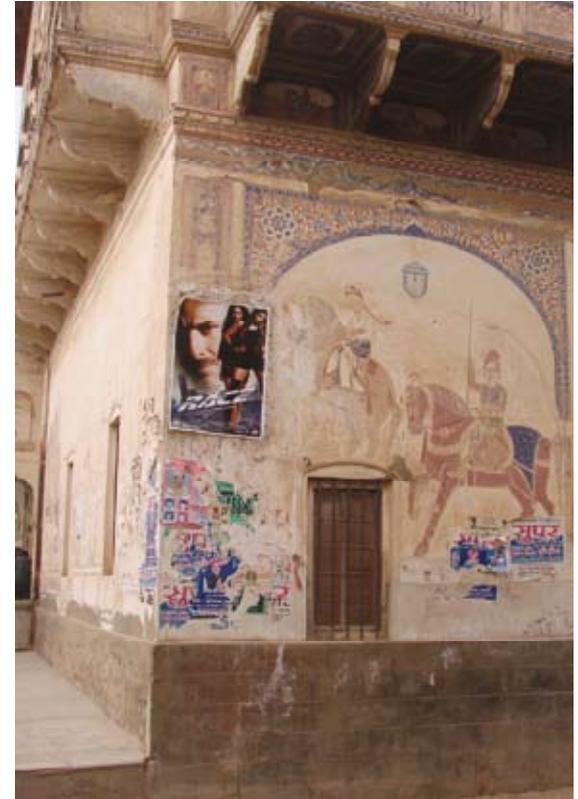
- The urge for creative expression that led to the flourishing of the fresco tradition in the entire Shekhawati region has now been monopolised by market forces.
- Advertisements have been ruthlessly painted on the frescoed walls of havelis, temples, dharamshalas and chhatris.
- Hoardings in these towns do not respect the urban morphology
- Indiscriminate pasting of posters, writing of social and political messages and casual graffiti is common.



Advertisements painted over frescoes



Callous graffiti



Posters pasted on to the frescoed facade



Demand for Antique Items

- Vested interest groups are monopolizing heritage.
- Heritage properties are being pulled down for their antique fixtures like ornamentally carved doors, windows, jharokhas, beams, pillars, arches, brackets and furniture and are traded by antique dealers.
- Vacant and locked properties are allowed to degenerate and are bought up at salvage value



An average haveli would yield

- At least 1 beautifully carved main door, 20 other doors, about 35 carved windows, minimal furniture, 8 wooden beams at the minimum, more than 150 stone brackets, not less than 60 stone columns and arches
- Antique value of this yield would anywhere be in the range of 40-50 lac rupees.



Challenges to built heritage

Governance and Management Issues

Lack of regulatory protection

- Conservation laws and regulation are not in place
- Absence of heritage sensitive Town & Country Planning norms
- Non-existent enforcement of basic regulations

Vacant and locked properties

- On account of ownership issues: mostly privately owned
- On account of misuse by caretakers

Centralised governance structures leading to

- Reduced roles of traditional peer groups
- Distancing of community from development decision making

Inadequate means of conservation

- Lack of professional and locally relevant information on how best to preserve, protect and ensure the continuity of heritage resources
- Unavailability of traditional building materials
- Declining availability of skilled craftsmen
- Paucity of financial resources for conservation initiatives

Lack of integrated management

- with little care for sustainability of precious resources
- with conservation requirements



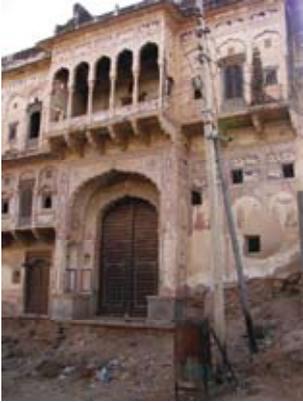


Water Supply

Lack of appreciation of local issues in formulating and implementing interventions, a piped water supply without an accompanying sewerage system has led to surface drainage issues, resulting in the loss of frescoes on havelis. Traditional water harvesting structures including Baoris and Joharas are being neglected.



104. . . Shekḥawati : On The Merchants Trail



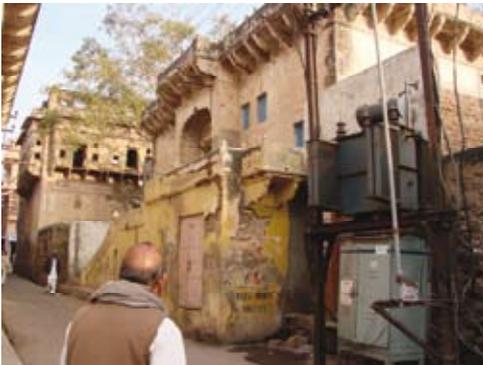
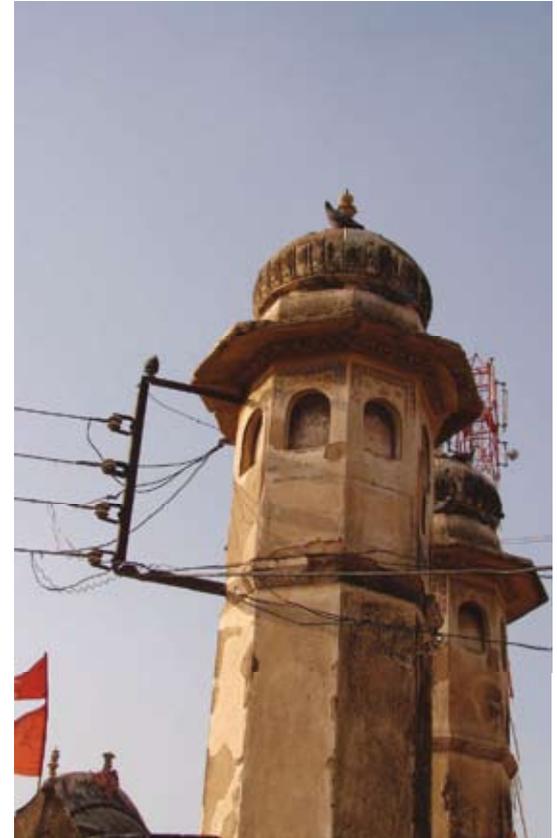
Solid Waste Management

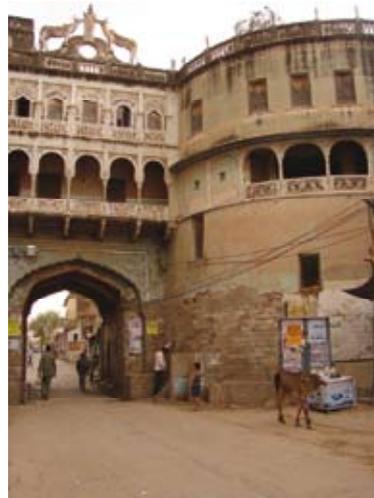
Solid waste management is inadequate and at times is in total disregard of traditional water harvesting structures. Garbage and debris is being dumped in baoris and joharas or is being collected in traditional open spaces. As a result of the excessive pressure of mismanaged waste, traditional structures are getting damaged.



Provision of Electricity

The jumble of overhead electric wires and iron poles in heritage areas has marred the visual quality of spaces. Transformers have been insensitively placed next to heritage structures. Traditional well turrets are at times being used as electric poles for fixing electric supply lines.





Provision of Utilities

Public utilities and facilities in historic areas have been insensitively constructed next to heritage properties and in traditional open areas in total disregard of morphology and aesthetic quality of the space.





Transportation Facility

There is a lack of hierarchy of public transportation and management leading to frequent traffic congestion. This causes inconvenience and is a hazard for visitors as well as locals. The lack of parking and stopping facilities has led to encroachment of traditional open spaces, especially chowks. Unregulated bus operations through the narrow and winding streets of the historic areas has proved detrimental to heritage.





Exploitation of Natural Resources

There is a lack of concern for the natural resources of the region. Forest land is being diverted for mining. Quarrying and stone crushing near the heritage buildings has spoilt the pleasant ambience of these places. Blasting and overmining to reveal deeper resources is leading to structural impacts on heritage properties. The ambient air quality is also very bad preventing any use of these properties for tourism activities.

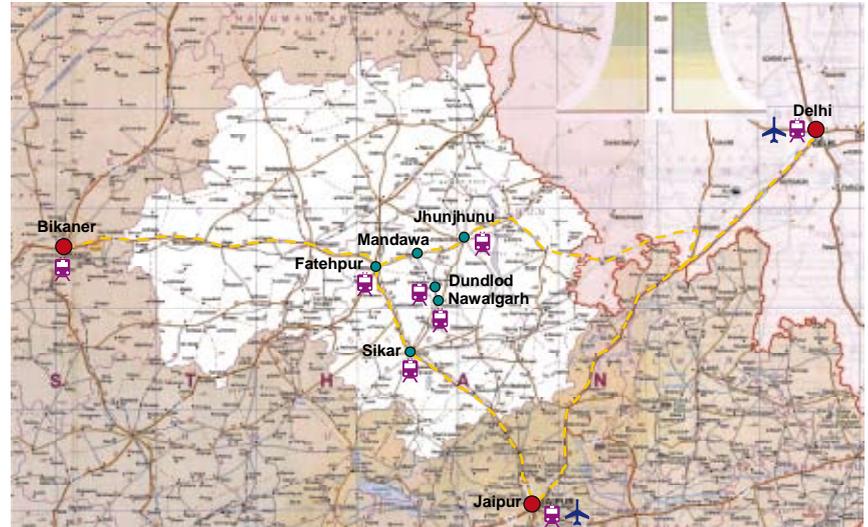


Challenges to Built Heritage

Tourism and its Demands

Existing Tourism Infrastructure

- Towns in Shekhawati are used more as a stopover on the way to Bikaner
 - Lies on NH 11 from Jaipur to Bikaner with Fatehpur, Ramgarh & Mandawa only a short way off the highway
 - Also, lies on way from Delhi to Bikaner with Jhunjhunu, Bissau, Churu, on the way; Nawalgarh and Mandawa in close proximity
- Connectivity falls short of that desired
 - Access via Jaipur along NH11 is well maintained
 - Access from Delhi via Narnaul is poor
 - Internal connectivity between towns and attractions in the region is mostly single lane
 - Road alignments are also poor for this rolling terrain
 - No luxury bus services ply from Jaipur or Delhi
 - Pilgrim access to Salasar from Delhi is also poor
- Incentives available for tourism industry in terms of
 - Land Bank Scheme
 - 7 years Luxury tax holiday
 - Entertainment tax, Stamp duty, Conversion charges, Mandi tax and Electricity concessions



Approach to the Region

Rail: Connected by meter gauge railway line on Sawai Madhopur, Jaipur, Sikar-Loharu section of the North Western railway

Road: Connected by bus services conducted by RSRTC

Air: International airport - Delhi
National airport - Jaipur

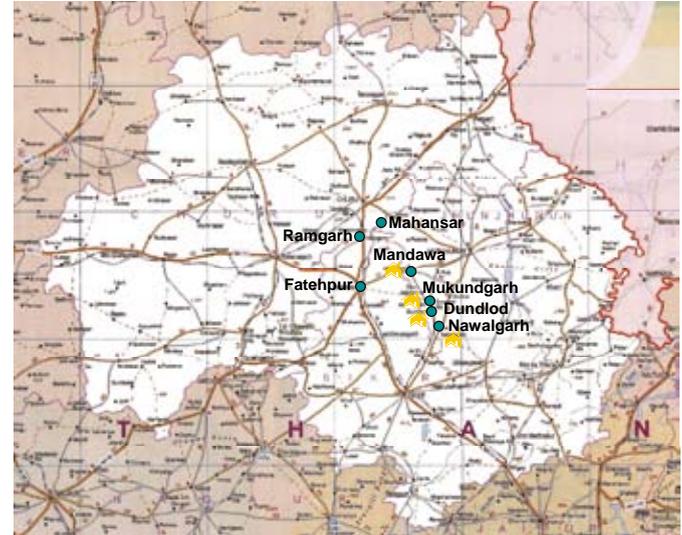
Distances: 145 km from Jaipur, 255 km from Delhi

110. . . Shekhawati: On The Merchants Trail



Tourist Circuits and Itineraries promoted by Rajasthan Tourism

- Heritage on Wheels: a 3 day tour covering Bikaner & Shekhawati (includes just a day trip to Tal Chhapar, Sanctuary, Ramgarh, Mahansar, Mandawa and Nawalgarh)
- Exploring Havelis in the Shekhawati Package (6 days): Delhi-Mandawa-Fatehpur-Mukundgarh-Dundlod-Nawalgarh-Samode-Delhi
- Shekhawati Safari Package: Option 2 includes Nawalgarh and Mandawa
- Few villages and towns of Shekhawati are included in the following:
 - Shekhawati Safari (3 days safari)
 - Desert Triangle (Day 2 of 6days tour)
 - Quintessential Rajasthan (Day 6 of 6days tour)
 - Exotic Rajputana (Day 5 of 15days tour)
 - Artistic Journey (Day 7 of 7 days tour)
 - Shop Till You Drop (Day 6 of 8 days tour)



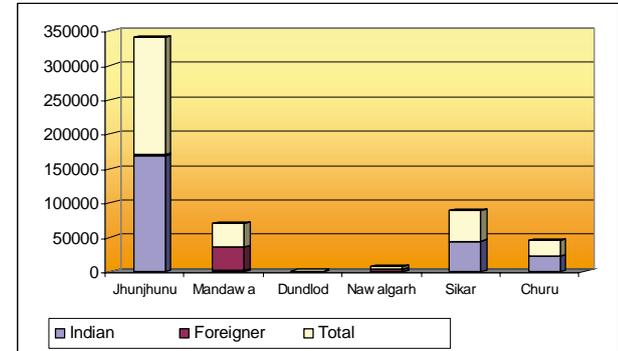
Some of the most popular towns are promoted with the *Exploring the Shekhawati Package* by Rajasthan Tourism. Several other painted towns and villages offering a wider diversity of experiences get overlooked, therefore remain unknown to visitors.

Other circuits mention few Shekhawati villages and towns but only as stopovers and not as destinations.



Scenario for Tourist Arrivals

- Dominance of Foreign visitors mostly from West Europe
- Pronounced seasonality of arrivals between October to March
- Excursions limited mostly to Mandawa, Nawalgarh and Fatehpur



Visitor Arrivals 2006

Average Duration of the Stay (ALOS) of the Tourists

- While the average duration of stay is limited to a day in Mandawa it is limited to only a few hours in other towns covered
- ALOS goes up during weekends / new years on account of the Indian holiday season

Current Engagements of the Tourists

- Formal interpretation is available in a few museums which display traditional lifestyles
- There are a few havelis that are open for sightseeing, experience is at best passive

112... Shekhawati: On The Merchants Trail

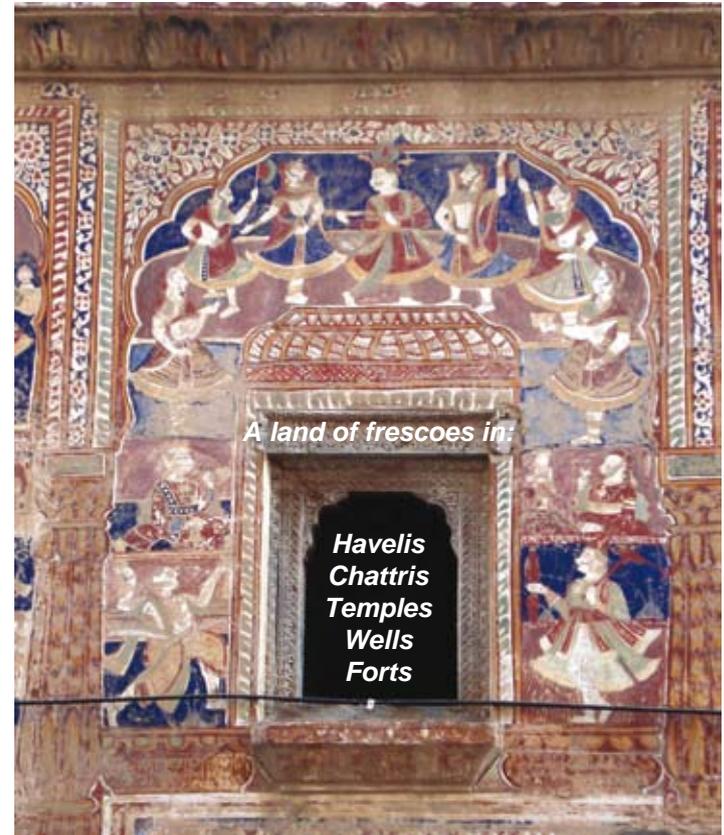


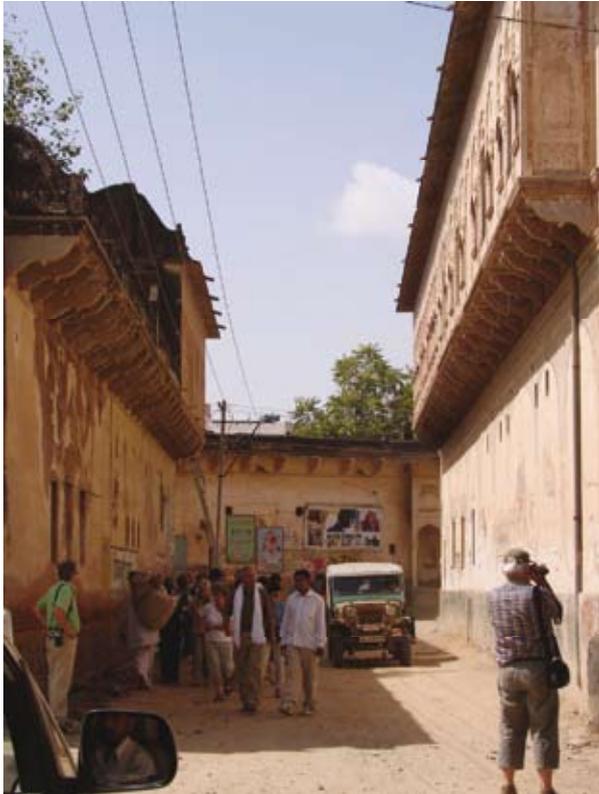
Rajasthan is one of the few states which have successfully developed tourism. However, Shekhawati with its rare profusion of art (unique in the world) has languished. The State has promoted the *Royal* theme with its monumental attractions in Jaipur, Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, Bikaner and Udaipur. However the life and times of the people of small principalities of Shekhawati which patronized a unique display of creative expression rarely seen in human history have been neglected.

While a few of the villages and towns of Shekhawati feature as artistic attractions in some of the itineraries being promoted by Rajasthan Tourism, most tours have only a day stop-over.

The promotion of Shekhawati as the land of frescoes and havelis has led to a passive sight-seeing experience. Haveli-centric tours become repetitive and do not provide a diversity of experience to keep the visitors engaged. Inadequate interpretation and lack of visitor information make all frescoes and all havelis look alike.

It is important to be cognizant of the cultural essence of the region for delineating a comprehensive and authentic Shekhawati experience.





Photographic Delight : in the way of harm

Inadequate Infrastructure and Visitor Amenities

- Conflict with fast moving traffic and large format buses, particularly in walking between attractions
- Lack of adequate and appropriately located signages and visitor directions
- Lack of accommodation and quality food service options
- Absence of transportation facilities for tourists who are dependent on their tour operators for exploration
- Absence of a single point tourism interface providing authentic visitor information



Sewage divide between the visitor & the attraction



Signages: lacking a sense of direction



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Limited Visitor experience, attractions and engagements

- Lack of well delineated heritage trails
- Inadequate interpretation and opportunity to understand and appreciate the heritage, including the frescoes; limited numbers of trained tourist guides
- Lack of diversity of experience for the visitors
- Locked havelis and poorly maintained attractions



Absence of formal facilitation gives way to contraptions



Under the signage until the last breath



Gateway to nowhere



Attractions locked when you reach



Fallouts of Unplanned Tourism

- Menace of touts
- Excessive commercialization in Mandawa; essence and authenticity of the Shekhawati experience is being replaced by a standardized *Royal Rajasthan* fare
- Pushing for heritage properties to be converted into hotels without adequate knowledge of conservation values resulting in renovation rather than restoration



Plenty to help but not knowing whom to trust



New converts steeped in Royal flavour



Ugly in-fills in the heritage landscapes



Souvenirs aplenty

116. . . Shekhawati : On The Merchants Trail

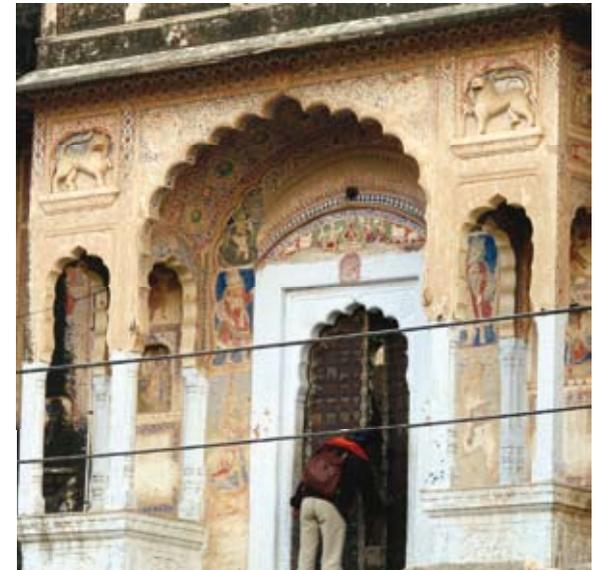


While,

- Tourists are perceived less as responsible visitors and more like intruders on account of
 - A lack of awareness amongst tourists about local sensibilities
 - No delineation of heritage trails and attractions which leads to informal peep-ins into residential quarters
- Lack of local stake in the development of tourism
 - Local economy is far removed from the benefits of tourism. The fleeing of visitors is considered acceptable in the context where locals are not involved formally in tourism
 - Hooliganism is not uncommon leading to harassment of visitors
 - Excessive commercialisation and loss of tradition
- Seasonal peaks in the floating population
 - Reduce the availability of local wares pushing up prices for locals
- Reduced service levels
 - Lead to clogging of infrastructure
 - Raises issues of Sustainability
- Tourism activity is promoting non-authentic practices and the commercialization of art forms as quick and ready materials are being used to restore the frescoes
- Visitors are perceived to be inconsiderate to local people and their needs.

However,

- The positives of heritage tourism are evident in the following aspects in Shekhawati:
 - Visitors contribute to a sense of pride among locals in their cultural heritage.
 - Tourism revenues have become the *raison d'être* for heritage conservation.



- Unique built heritage, a charming natural context and proximity to one of the largest tourism hubs, namely Delhi as well as belonging to the most successful tourism state in India, Rajasthan, has not been enough to bring the Shekhawati region to the centre-stage of tourism development.
- Once the land of enterprise, it has let down the rich repository bequeathed to it by failing to develop innovative mechanisms to promote its preservation and upkeep.
- A key concern is that the tourism development in the region appears to be directionless and the key question that arises therefore is,

“If you don’t know where you are going, how can you ever get there?”



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Challenges to Built Heritage

Growth without Planning and Stake Holder Participation



The streetscape of a traditional Bazaar showing insensitive additions and alteration to heritage properties. However much of the traditional built fabric is still intact



A visualization of the worst scenario of what the streetscape might look like in the future if stakeholder partnerships are not formalised immediately and there is no strategy to guide future growth



Traditional open spaces in the historic core are increasingly being encroached upon in the absence of planned growth



Traditional chowk is being misused as a bus stop



Traditional well is being abused



Traditional chowk encroached upon by vehicles



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Looking to the Future . . .

Looking to the Future: Heritage in Shekhawati

Outlining a Comprehensive Vision

Valorising Heritage Assets	Key Facets	Responsible Cultural Tourism
	Heritage Based Development	



Vision

Regenerating the living environment of towns and villages in Shekhawati by conserving their unique qualities and the significance of traditional neighbourhoods, medieval street patterns, historic forts and palaces, magnificent havelis, temples, chhatris, mosques, dargahs, water harvesting structures, fairs, festivals, picturesque hills, sand-dunes and trees; promoting heritage based development that creates synergy between conservation, infrastructure and tourism objectives for enriching the quality of life.



Looking to the Future: Heritage in Shekhawati

Valorising Heritage Assets: Strategic Elements

With a view to achieving the vision in the context of the present state of heritage conservation in the Shekhawati region, the following strategic elements are envisaged:

- Delineation of heritage conservation and protection boundary in each town of the Shekhawati region
- Establishment of development controls and regulatory mechanisms
- Institutional framework for conservation
- Research and documentation of cultural heritage assets
- Integrating conservation with the planning process
- Integrating conservation with people's lives
- Tourism as an economic driver for heritage conservation
- Incentives and concessions for heritage conservation
- Reviving traditional materials, technology and skills: Guild of Craftsmen
- Adaptive reuse as a strategic option for continued existence of heritage properties



Looking to the Future: Heritage in Shekhawati

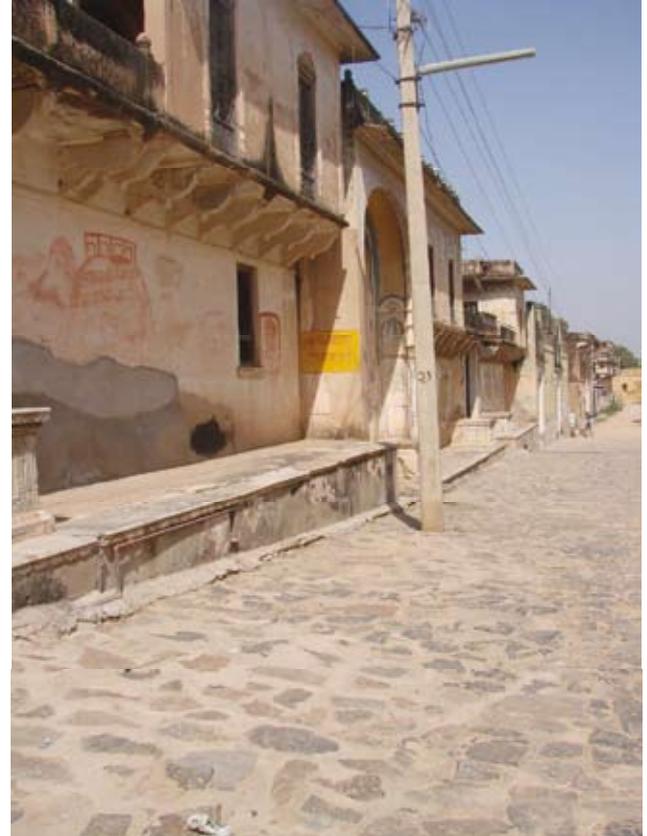
Heritage Based Development: Strategic Elements

All the development forces active at the macro and the micro levels in the towns and villages of Shekhawati impact on heritage. Issues of infrastructure and urban development are deeply linked to issues of heritage conservation. With a view to continuing the legacy of planned development in the region, the following strategic elements are envisaged:

- Provision of an adequate sewerage system for the towns: The absence of sewerage system in the five towns has wrecked havoc with the living environment in general and built heritage in particular.
- Provision of a traffic management system: Since conservation of built fabric gains priority over road widening, measures for better traffic management should be undertaken.
- Provision for paved roads against kuccha (unpaved) roads: Unpaved roads, mostly the norm in the past, spell doom to heritage properties and impact on the hygiene of the towns.
- Provision of lined drains for sullage and storm water drainage: Leaking water from unlined makeshift drains rises in the walls of heritage properties eating away the vitals.
- Focused provision for solid waste management: In the absence of a proper system, garbage can be seen littered all over the streets and in open spaces.



- Provision for water harvesting and conservation measures: Measures for recharging ground water, rehabilitation of traditional water harvesting structures like Kuan, Johara, and Baori needs to be undertaken.
- Provision for underground cabling for electricity connections and streetlights and shifting of transformers: The resulting jumble of wires, rusted iron poles and huge transformers placed right next to beautifully painted havelis, have spoiled the aesthetic quality.
- Provision for streamlining public transport facilities: A detailed routing plan and schedule optimization needs to be prepared.
- Provisions for proper bus stands: Most of the bus stands are informal ones encroaching upon historic chowks and open spaces.
- Provisions for auto and car parking at important nodes: With the advent of modern means of transportation in these towns the streets, chowks and open spaces are under stress. Inadequate parking of vehicles has led to conflict situations.
- Special provision for infrastructure in Mela grounds: Fairs are an integral part of the living heritage of Shekhawati. Special measures including rest facilities, public utilities, emergency lighting, public address system and parking facilities need to be provided for.

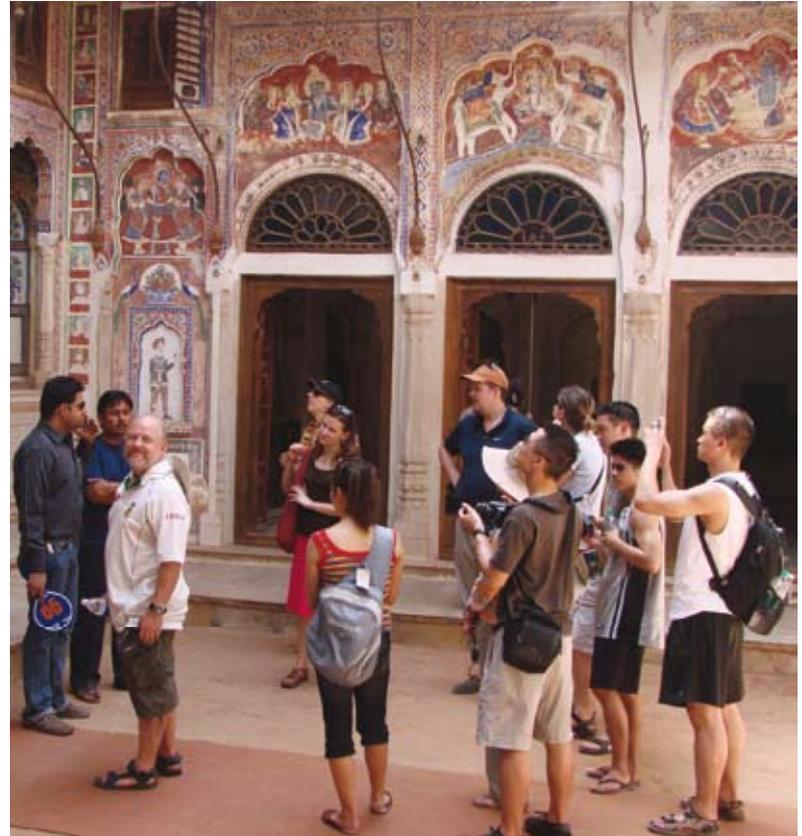


Looking to the Future: Heritage in Shekhawati

Responsible Cultural Tourism: Strategic Elements

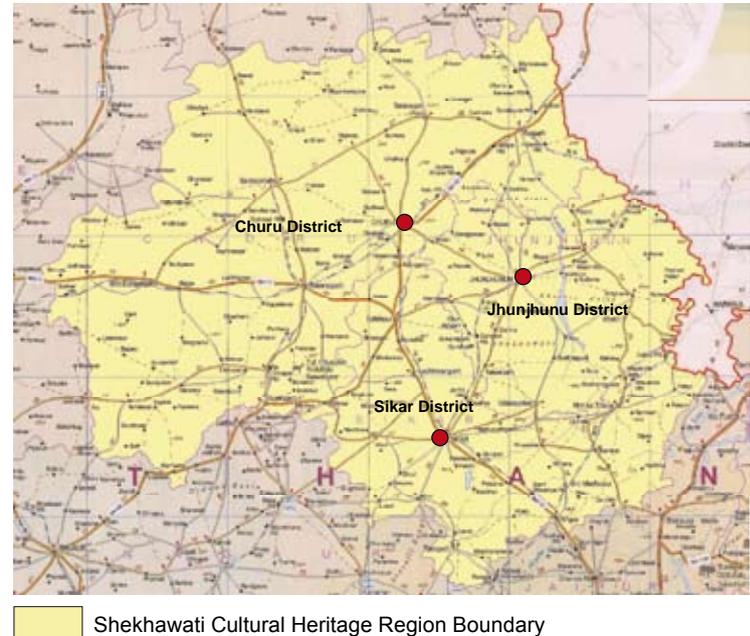
To emerge as an authentic heritage tourism destination providing visitor experiences steeped in the richness of the culture while enhancing the quality of life of residents and sustaining the preservation of the rich cultural fabric, the following strategic elements need to be detailed:

- **Integrated Tourism Development:** Focusing on tourism development of Shekhawati as a *Cultural Heritage Region*.
- **Infrastructure:** Providing an engaging and hassle free visitor experience and outreach.
- **Interpretation:** Heritage interpretation and presentation for New Tourism Product Development, beyond the presently accessed attractions through community participation.
- **Tourism Promotion:** Developing attractions today into destinations for the future. Promotional strategy focusing on the region with specific destinations providing distinctive themes for visitor engagement.
- **Sustainable Tourism:** Tourism but not at the cost of heritage preservation.



Integrated Development as Cultural Heritage Region

- Shekhawati needs to be promoted as a 'Special Tourism Area' covering the districts of Jhunjhunu, Sikar and Churu.
- Integrated conservation, infrastructure and tourism development to be undertaken by a regional authority.
- Regulation, planning and development controls for towns in the region to be vested in the regional authority.
- Coordination of the activities of various districts and government departments to be facilitated by the authority.
- Regional promotion authority could undertake all tourism related developments and promotion.
- Balanced visitor promotion and guidance can be initiated.
- Local outreach and awareness generation about tourism and its impacts needs to be undertaken.
- Coordination of regional destination programme in Delhi and focused improvement of linkages to nearest tourism hub, Delhi.



128. . . Shekhawati : On The Merchants Trail



Tourist Infrastructure

The connectivity of Shekhawati with other established tourism destinations like Jaipur, Delhi and Agra as well as within the Shekhawati region needs to be improved to tap into the potential of the surrounding context.

- Need to improve connectivity to Delhi
 - via Kotputli – Neem Ka Thana
 - via Narnaul – Rewari
- Improve internal connectivity within Shekhawati,
 - widening of roads to standard two lane configuration
 - between Jhunjhunu and Mandawa
 - between Bissau and Mandawa
 - between Ramgarh and Mandawa
 - between Fatehpur and Mandawa
 - between Mahansar and Bissau
 - between Jhunjhunu and Churu
 - between Jhunjhunu and Alsisar
 - strengthening of pavement and improvement of road geometrics
 - between Nawalgarh to Dundlod
 - between Dundlod and Mukundgarh
 - between Mukundgarh and Mandawa
 - between Mukundgarh and Jhunjhunu
- Entry points to towns are proposed to be developed in a manner to provide a sense of place. This would be achieved by the use of interpretive features, displays and signages.



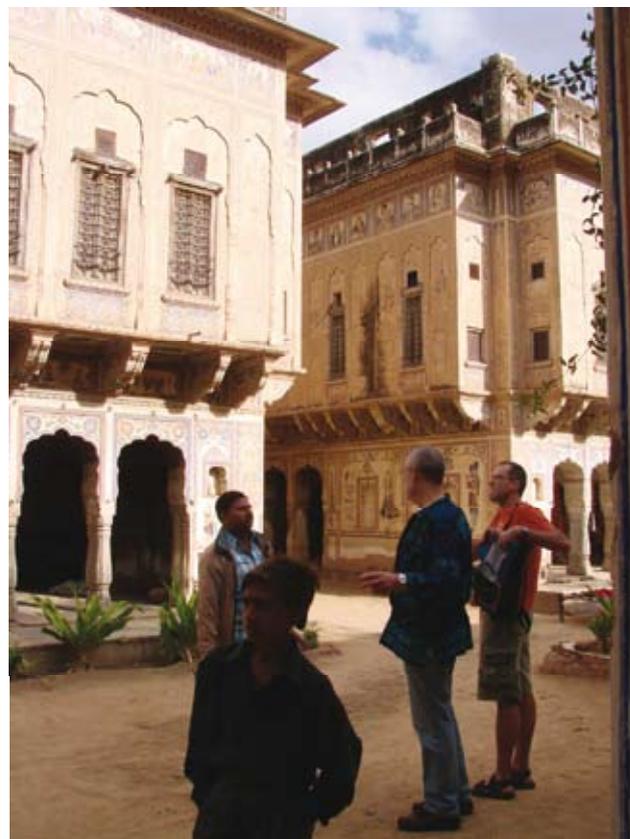
- Lack of information in general and directional information in particular is a hassle for visitors. Road markings and graphical signages are proposed to be installed in the towns locating key attractions, trail markers, landmarks, visitor facilities and public facilities.



Heritage Interpretation

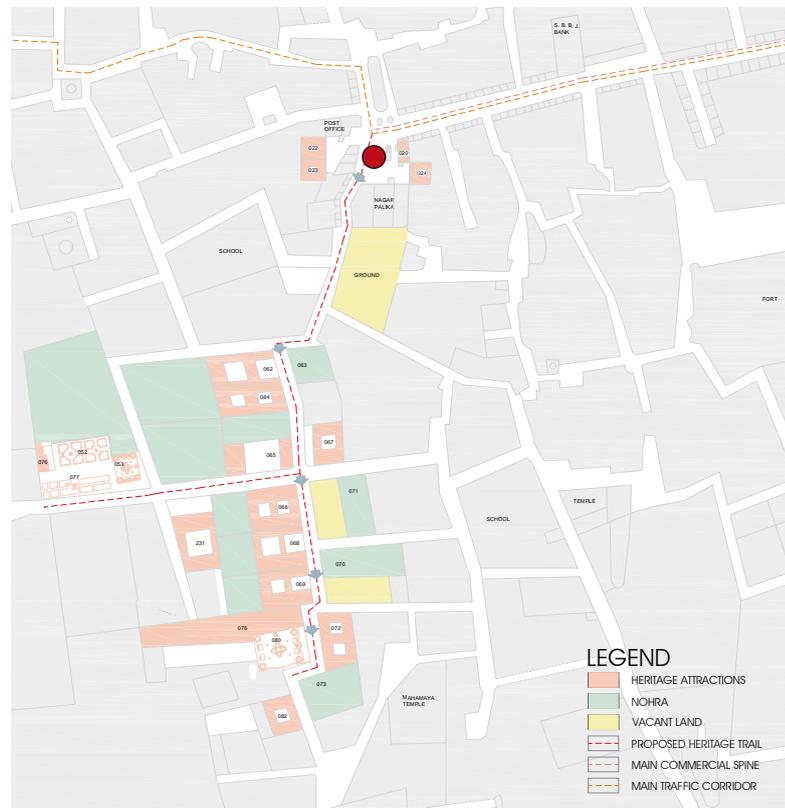
With a view to providing visitor experiences steeped in the life and culture of Shekhawati, it is essential that new product development captures the essence of this life and culture. This makes heritage interpretation an important aspect that is often overlooked. A focused approach to heritage interpretation is proposed to be undertaken, to create a distinctive tourism experience for visitors with the participation of local community. This would include the following:

- Preparation of visitor information and guidance kits including heritage maps and brochures with community involvement
- Multi-tiered designed locally managed signage system
- Delineation of heritage trails: Walking is the best option for exploring the rich heritage of Shekhawati, therefore pedestrian trails linking significant attractions guided by local volunteers are proposed to be developed in the towns.
- Designated hierarchy of nodes: Along the proposed trail the creation of a hierarchy of nodes around heritage properties for facilitating visitor experience is proposed
 - Interpretation Node: Detailed information and guidance on the entry
 - Orientation Node: Basic visitor amenities and directions
 - Buffer Node: Intermediate rest spaces for visitors
 - Thematic Node: Interface with local culture based on themes
- Identification and preservation of heritage streetscapes: Along the trail it is proposed to preserve, interpret and present vistas in each town.



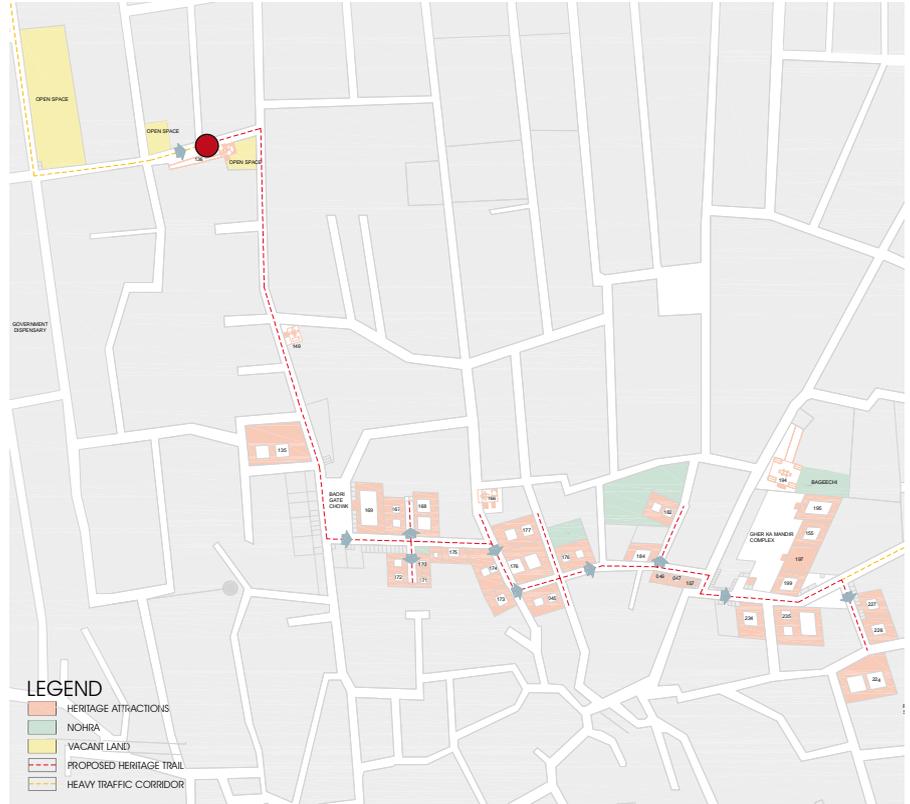
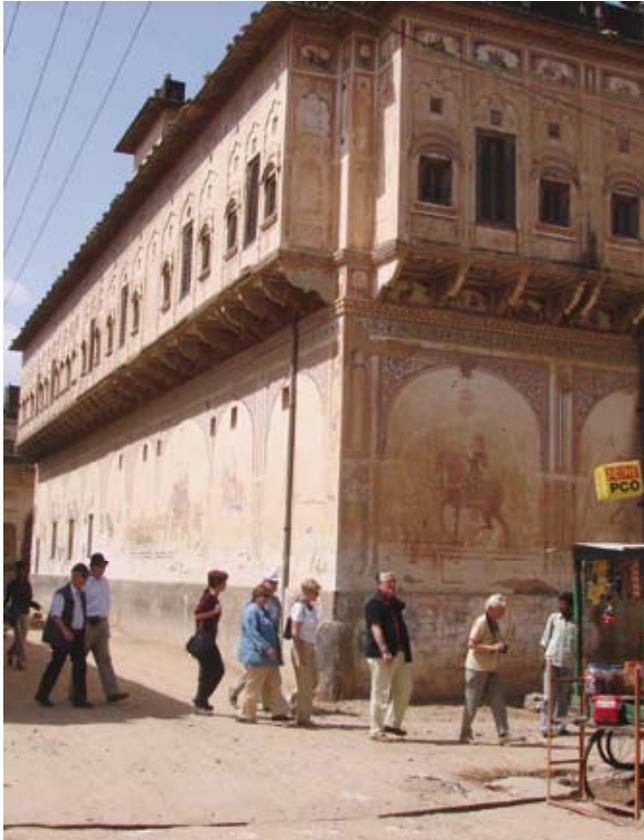
130. . . Shekhawati : On The Merchants Trail





Proposed Heritage Trail at Mandawa





Proposed Heritage Trail at Nawalgarh



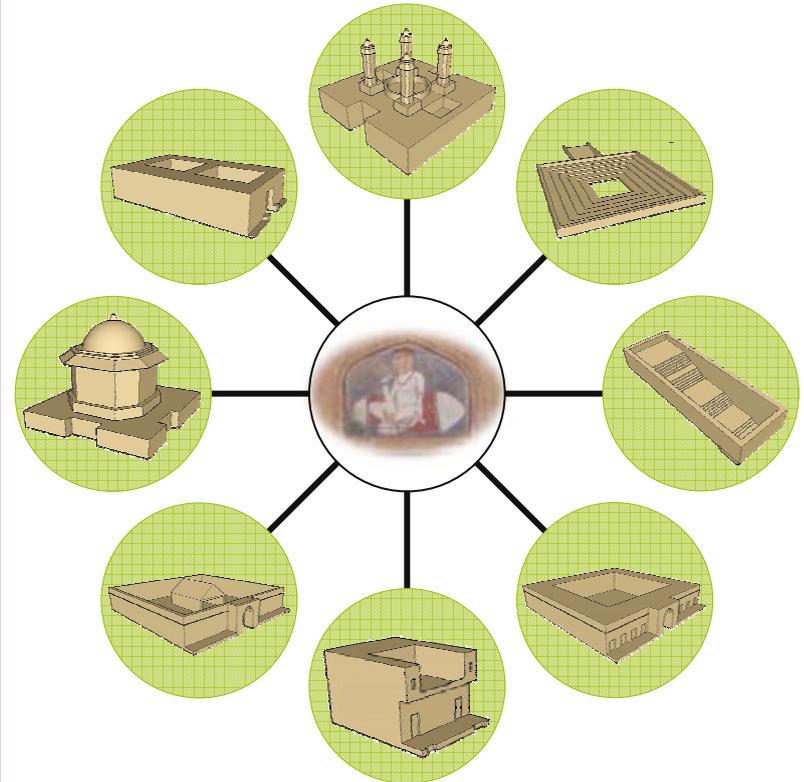
Promoting Diversity of Experiences

More to Shekhawati than just Frescoes

Shekhawati is a microcosm of built heritage, religion and folk traditions. It has a unique living cultural identity through its towns with their unique urban morphology, different building typologies, customs, traditions and natural landscape.

The Shekhawati experience needs to be promoted as distinct from the Royal Rajasthan experience. The rulers and the local Marwari merchants endowed Shekhawati with a cultural heritage which is **UNIQUE IN THE WORLD**. Therefore the Shekhawati experience needs to be promoted as a *Celebration of the life of the common man, craftsmen and traders*. Each town in Shekhawati has much to offer. A diversity of product development in each of the towns needs to be undertaken to attract, engage and beckon back visitors

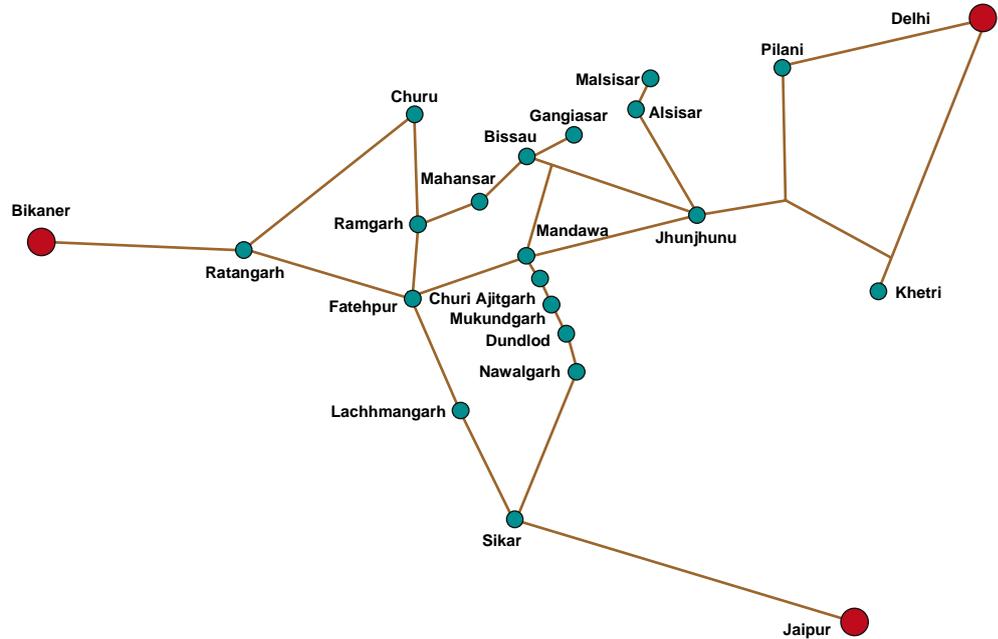
- Nawalgarh: The very heart of the Marwari Merchants Haven
- Mandawa: The Great Shekhawati Shopping Vista
- Dundlod: A Shekhawati Village with a Fort
- Bissau: At the Pinnacle of Shekhawati Art
- Jhunjhunu: Panchpana: The Shekhawati Cultural Cauldron
- Fatehpur: Confluence of Trade and Culture
- Ramgarh: A Truly Shekhawati Merchants' Wonder Creation
- Mahansar: Worth a Visit Weighed in Gold
- Churu: So Far Yet So Close to Shekhawati Spirit
- Ratangarh: A Jewel in the Shekhawati Trail



Proposed Itinerary

Diversity of experiences to be promoted by focusing on the more informed and sensitive tourists. While shorter itineraries have been planned to introduce the visitors to the region, longer itineraries focus on the more involved and inquisitive ones. Based on the above itineraries are being proposed:

- Delhi – Pilani – Jhunjhunu – Nawalgarh – Lachhmangarh – Fatehpur – Bikaner: 3 Days
- Delhi – Jhunjhunu – Alsisar – Malsisar – Bissau - Gangiasar – Churu – Ratangarh – Bikaner: 3 Days
- Jaipur – Nawalgarh – Dundlod – Mukundgarh – Churi Ajitgarh- Mandawa – Fatehpur – Ramgarh – Bikaner: 5 Days
- Delhi – Jhunjhunu – Mandawa – Fatehpur – Ramgarh – Mahansar – Bissau – Jhunjhunu – Khetri – Delhi: 7 Days



- Jaipur – Nawalgarh - Jhunjhunu – Bissau – Churu – Ramgarh – Fatehpur – Lachhmangarh – Sikar – Jaipur: 10 Days
- Jaipur – Lachhmangarh – Fatehpur – Ramgarh – Mahansar – Bissau – Mandawa – Dundlod – Nawalgarh – Jaipur: 14 Days



Towards Sustainable Development

Visitors exert a strong influence on the area visited because of the demand for facilities and the effects of heavy use of popular areas. Most controversial development pressures in recent years have related to tourist use of heritage properties and areas.

Tourism is the fastest growing industry in the world, and the implications of this for Shekhawati must be anticipated and planned for. Improving access, enjoyment, and understanding of heritage properties and areas is desirable but must be carefully managed. Over-visiting causes damage to sites and the landscape in the form of erosion and insensitive development of visitor facilities.

Whilst improving public access and understanding, heritage properties and the interests of people who work and live in the area must be properly protected in accordance with the principles of sustainable tourism.

Measures for the development of Sustainable Tourism:

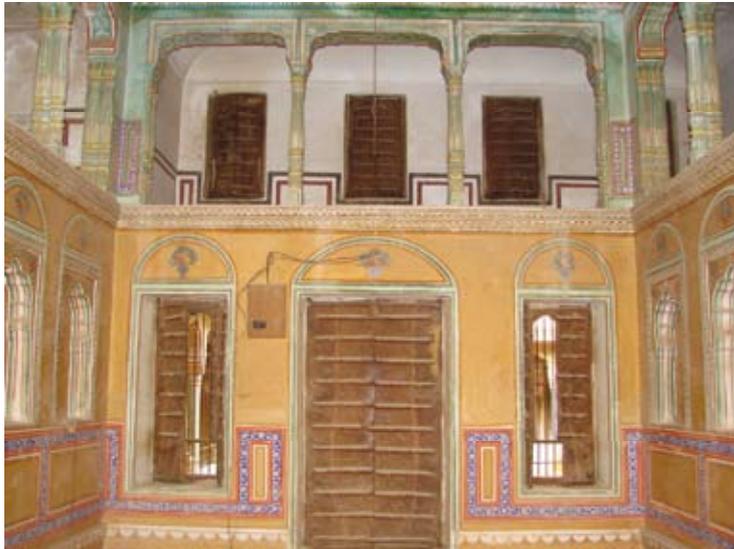
- Carrying capacity assessment at settlement level
- Delineation of impacting factors for monitoring
- Formulate a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
- Prepare guidelines for business operations
- Communication and awareness generation: Prepare do's and don'ts list for visitors and residents
- Local Guides Programme
- Promoting Home Stays



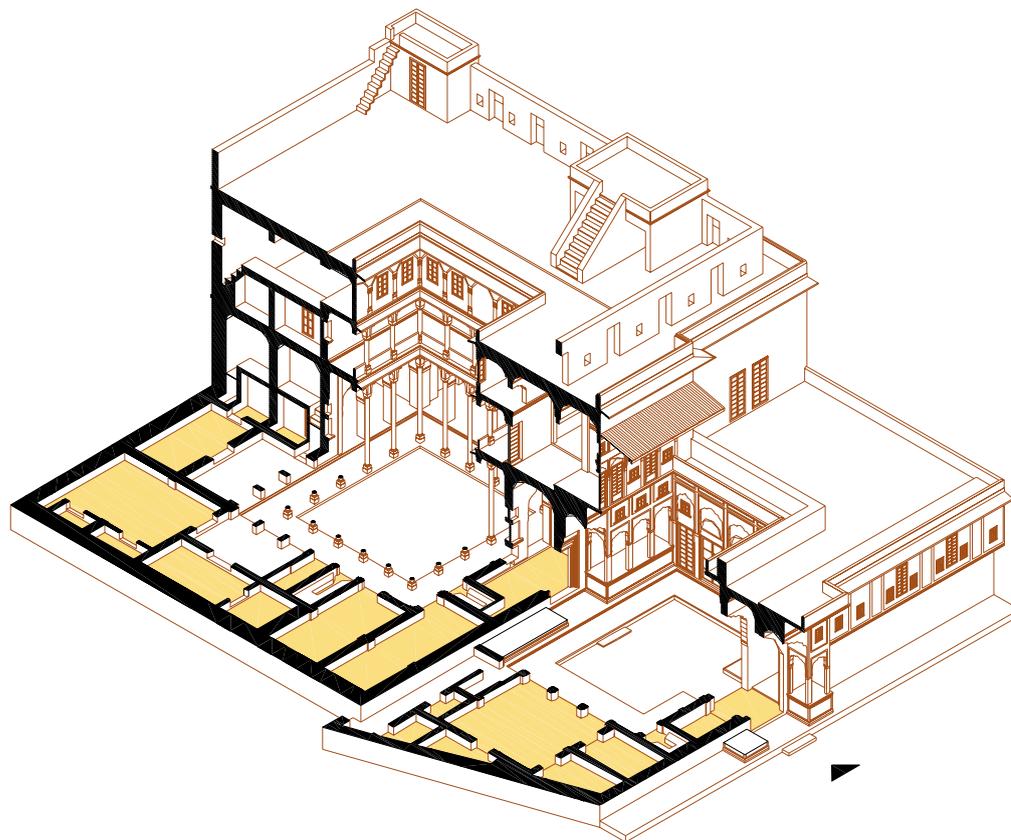
Looking to the Future: Heritage in Shekhawati

Investment Opportunities in Heritage Accommodation: Promoting Home Stays

Built heritage, especially havelis are an important asset of the towns and villages in Shekhawati. The future of these assets lies not just in protection but also in regeneration and reuse. It is envisioned that sensitive development and reuse of these resources would help derive benefit from the considerable resources already invested and prevent their decay.



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Havelis lend a unique identity to Shekhawati with their rich spaces, architectural features and beautiful frescoes. With a variety of spaces that can be easily adapted for use as accommodation for visitors—havelis have immense potential for re-use.

Offering Home Stay accommodation to tourists might be one way of protecting a significant heritage property so that the properties can be put to sensitive use and become self sustaining, generating funds for conservation and maintenance.

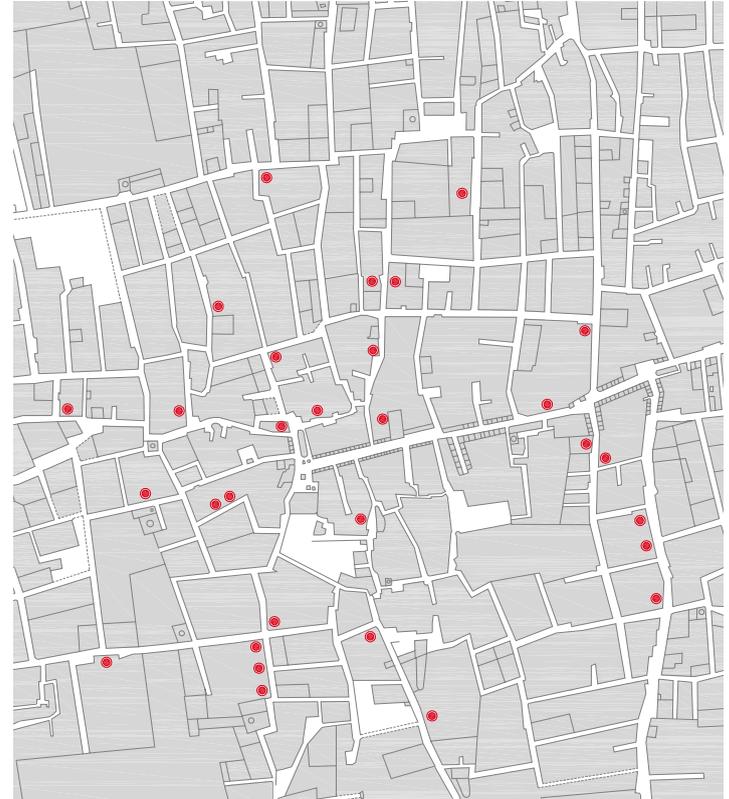


In a typical Shekhawati town havelis form the bulk of heritage properties. They are scattered throughout the town. Their sizes vary ranging from a single court haveli to two, three and even four courts having two or even three floors at times, offering a variety of spaces for reuse. Double havelis are another typology that can be easily utilised. Most of the havelis also have attached open spaces in the form of nohras that can be utilised to accommodate new functions.

Looking at the presence of a significant number of vacant havelis in most of the Shekhawati towns it is recommended that some of these haveli be reused as Home Stays instead of constructing large new hotel complexes.

Providing for dispersed accommodation makes sense having the following advantages:

- Utilisation of the existing building stock of havelis
- Providing a rationale for conservation
- Perceived value of the heritage resource increases
- Promotes a new wave of entrepreneurship
- Consonant with the carrying capacity of the region



Potential Heritage Properties for reuse in Mandawa



Several parameters impact on the cost for conservation and reuse of havelis. The size, the age and the building materials used and the physical condition of the structure are the most significant ones. Havelis in Shekhawati vary in size in terms of the number of courts and the number of floors. Although building material used in most of the havelis is the same the fresco work may vary in terms of intricacy and extent of painted themes and occasional embellishment with gold. All these parameters would considerably influence the cost for conservation and reuse. However, the rule of thumb regarding incremental costs that could generally apply for an average haveli of two courts having two floors and in a fair state of preservation with no major damage to the structure:

Cost of Consolidation: Rs. 270/ sqft

Cost of Restoration: Rs. 300/ sqft

Cost of Reuse as Home Stay: Rs. 250/ sqft

Cost of reuse as Heritage Hotel: Rs. 2,050/ sqft



Looking to the Future: Heritage in Shekhawati

Recommendations for Government

In the proposed conservation and development of the Shekhawati region, some activities would be primarily government responsibility while some others could be a fruitful partnership between public and private and some others entirely private.

Identifying, safeguarding and managing heritage resources of the region:

- Heritage protection boundaries need to be clearly defined for ensuring effective conservation and management of cultural heritage in each of the towns in the region. A hierarchy of boundaries and zoning can be adopted.
- A conservation policy for the 'Shekhawati Cultural Region' needs to be framed for outlining the legal and regulatory framework.
- An institutional framework needs to be put in place at the regional level to integrate conservation, infrastructure and tourism activities. A Shekhawati Cultural Region Authority for regulating all developmental activities in the region could be established.
- Undertake an intensive research and study of the historic area in the towns.
- Integrate conservation with planning process. Setting up of heritage cells in local bodies.
- Promote community participation by integrating conservation with people's lives.
- Incentives and concessions for heritage conservation.
- Revival of traditional crafts and skills

Improved infrastructure for local communities:

- It has been noted that the rate of decay of heritage structures has been hastened by the single, mindless intervention of a piped water supply without an accompanying waste water collection system. Provision of a sewerage system in these towns is therefore a must.
- Focused provision of solid waste management is urgently needed for these towns with little municipal provision.
- Provision for underground cabling for electricity connections and streetlights including relocation of transformers placed insensitively next to heritage properties.
- Provisions for streamlining public transport facilities including detailed routing plan and schedule optimization, are required in view of the conflicts that visitors and locals are exposed to in the absence of such facilities.

140. . . *Shekhawati: On The Merchants Trail*



Promote responsible cultural tourism as a means of sustenance of heritage resources:

- Expand visitor engagements across the entire region from Jhunjhunu district to Sikar and Churu districts.
- Manage tourism growth in a way so as to ensure long-term sustainability. Tourism not at the cost of heritage preservation.
- Manage conflicts between increasing growth of tourism and environmental, social and cultural values which are important to residents and visitors.
- Provide an appropriate structure within which ongoing industry investment and profitability can be both facilitated and maximized.
- Reduce overlaps and gaps within the sector.
- Secure commitment and funding to tourism from union government and other multilateral aid sources.
- Provide facilities for the easier operation of businesses in the sector.
- Generate awareness about the value of tourism to the economy and the role that all residents need to play.

Developing innovative tourism related activities and improved support infrastructure:

- Instituting innovation and creativity in interpreting and presenting new experiences to refresh and engage visitors in keeping with international benchmarks. Heritage interpretation and presentation for New Tourism Product Development through community participation.
- Develop an enabling infrastructure to provide engaging and hassle free visitor experience and outreach beyond the presently accessed attractions.
- Focus on integrated tourism development of 'Shekhawati Cultural Heritage Region'.
- Developing attractions today into destinations for the future.
- Promotional strategy on the region with specific destinations providing distinctive themes for visitor engagement.
- Provide for community ownership of tourism at the grass-roots and informing development interventions with local initiatives.

Looking to the Future: Heritage in Shekhawati

Enabling Public Private Partnerships

Developing a framework for tourism oriented investment promotion:

- Formulation of management plans for delineated heritage areas within towns
- Preparation of detailed project profiles identifying specific conservation, infrastructure and tourism development opportunities
- Policy for Public Private Partnerships in management of water supply and sewerage system
- Guidelines for public and private investments into heritage areas and properties
- Unambiguous regulatory framework for tourism trade and infrastructure
- Special incentives for investments into Shekhawati: 5 year tax holiday for promoting conservation of built heritage of the region
- Model documentation and concession structures for development and management of tourism related common infrastructure facilities
- Formulation of investment promotion and marketing strategy with outreach to non-resident Rajasthanis especially from Shekhawati

Encourage local level entrepreneurship and public participation in conservation, management and development of heritage:

- Community wide awareness campaign for heritage conservation and tourism promotion
 - Interaction platform for owners of heritage properties
 - Caretakers' orientation programme
 - Local industry and trade association for infrastructure
- Identification of specific aspects of tourism and infrastructure that can be managed with participation from local community
- Creation of credit extension services in these towns. Small loans for tourism / heritage conservation initiatives could be notified as priority sector lending
- Entrepreneurship development training courses could be organized at regional level
- Food craft, catering technology and hospitality management course could be introduced at local management institutes
- Special incentives for promoting local unskilled / semi-skilled employment in tourism / heritage conservation activities

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Opportunities for Public Private Partnerships

Developing tourism in the Shekhawati Region offers several opportunities for Public Private Partnership apart from providing accommodation for tourists

- Design, implementation and maintenance of heritage trails
- Design and manufacturing of local crafts
- Design, installation and management of signages
- Setting up tourist information kiosks including designing & publishing of information brochures, facilitation (utilities & parking) and communication
- Restaurants and other food service options
- Food craft design, training and management centre
- Bicycle hire facilities
- Rain-water harvesting
- Street and profile lighting
- Water supply and sanitation services
- Development and management of environment friendly tourist transport services

Looking to the Future: Heritage in Shekhawati

Phasing of Action Plan

Immediate Measures

- Delineation of Historic Areas within identified towns
- Formulation of detailed management plan for historic areas including infrastructure and tourism facilities
- Streamlining & coordination amongst stakeholders' including relevant government agencies
- Constitution of Shekhawati Cultural Region Authority including capacity building of key functionaries and stakeholders
- Notification of heritage conservation and protection boundaries detailing protection accorded and incentives / facilities to be provided

Medium Term Measures

- Development of guidelines for public and private investments into historic areas
- Kick-starting implementation of conservation, infrastructure and tourism development projects and initiatives
- Model documentation and concession structures for development and management of tourism related common infrastructure facilities
- Revive traditional crafts & skills

Short Term Measures

- Preparation of project profiles
- Training on entrepreneurship
- Outreach to community and awareness generation on heritage conservation and tourism
- Formulating policy for investment promotion and marketing
- Interaction platform for owners of heritage properties
- Caretakers' orientation programme

Long Term Measures

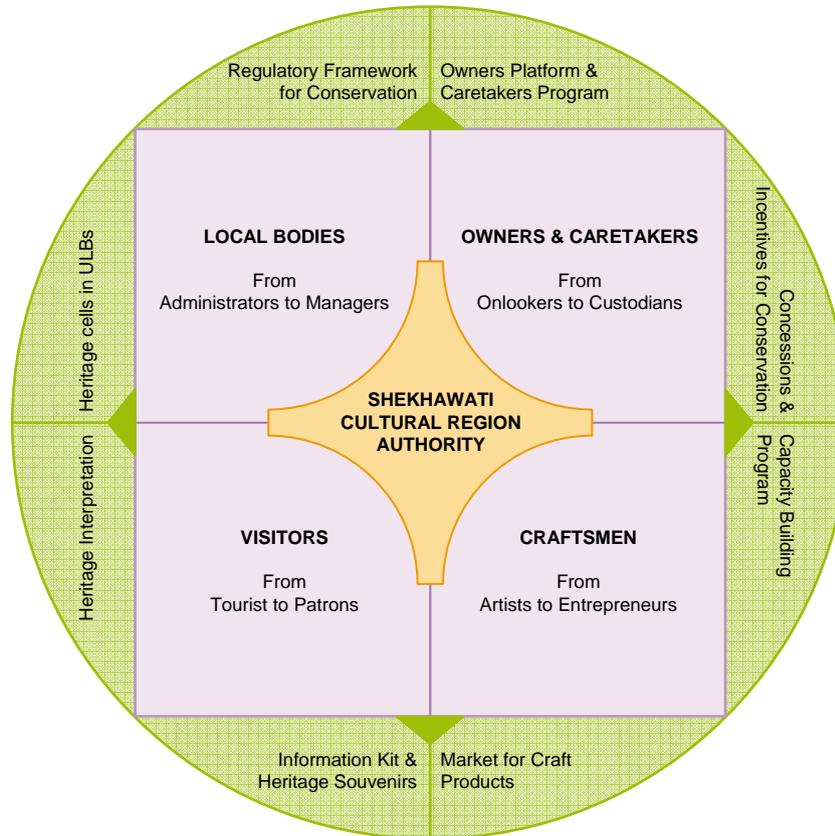
- Enabling framework for involvement of local trade and industry associations in day to day management of infrastructure
- Entrepreneurship development training courses could be organized at a regional level
- Food craft, catering technology and hospitality management courses could be introduced at local management institutes
- New product development

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Looking to the Future: Heritage in Shekhawati

Ecology of New Enterprise: Stakeholders and their Changing Roles



The Indian Heritage Passport Programme

. . . on the Merchants Trail in Shekhawati



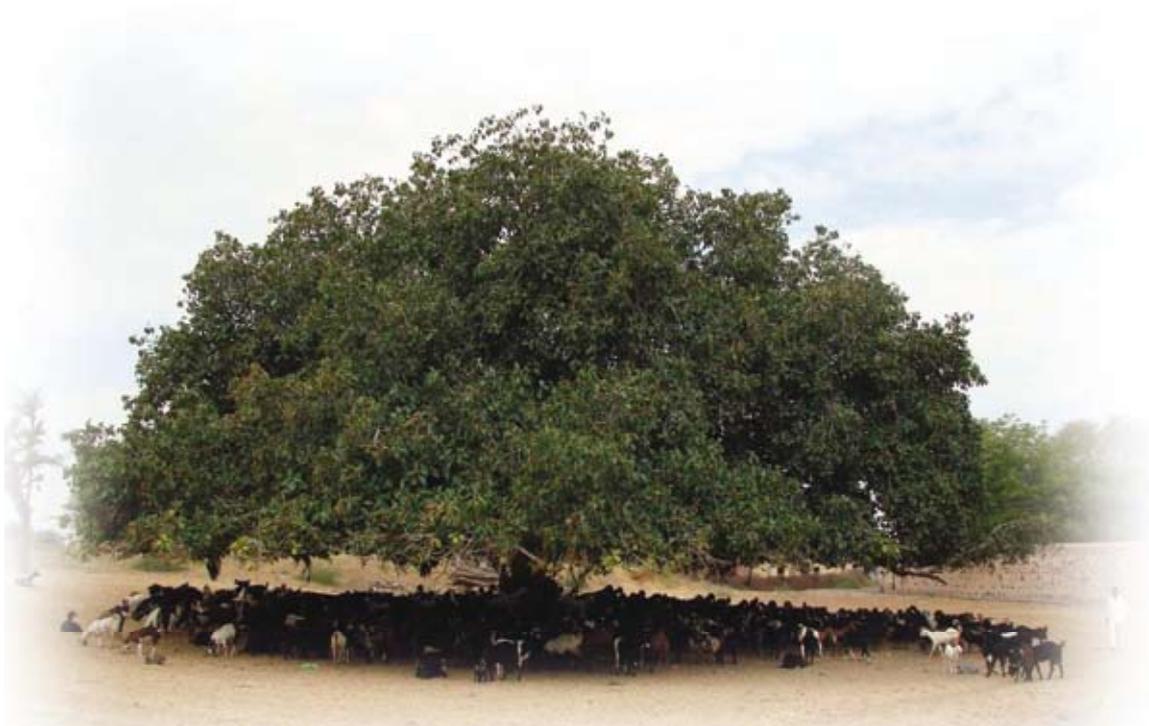
Reinstating the link between people and heritage . . .



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The Indian Heritage Passport Programme

... on the Merchants Trail in Shekhawati



A partnership of UNESCO, Government of Rajasthan, Private Investors, NGOs, and the Community



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United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



B5/29 Safdarjung Enclave
New Delhi 110 029
India
Phone: +91-11-2671 3000
email: newdelhi@unesco.org
website: www.unesco.org/newdelhi

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