




# Uttar Pradesh set to transform historic forts and palaces into luxurious heritage hotels

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Chhatar Manzil, which served as a palace for the rulers of Awadh and their wives in Lucknow | Photo Credit: SANDEEP SAXENA

Uttar Pradesh is transforming its historic forts and palaces into luxurious heritage hotels to boost tourism. Notable properties, including the ancient Chunar Fort and Mastani Palace, will be repurposed. Renowned hotel chains like Leela Hotels, Taj Group, Neemrana Group, Mahindra Hotels and Resorts, Oberoi Hotels, Hyatt Regency and Lalit Hotels are interested in developing and managing these sites.

Mukesh Kumar Mesharam, Principal Secretary, Department of Tourism and Culture, Uttar Pradesh said that Uttar Pradesh tourism has been soaring to newer heights in recent times with a significant rise registered in both domestic and inbound tourism. To facilitate the tourists looking for experiential tourism we are developing infrastructure and facilities that will cater to tourists coming from all economic segments. For tourist seeking a luxurious and unparalleled experience, we have initiated dialogues with several prominent hotel groups that have expressed strong interest in revitalizing palaces and havelis in line with the new tourism policy on PPP mode.

The State's tourism policy requires a minimum investment ranging from ₹30 crore to ₹100 crore for transforming heritage properties into hotels. Based on the level of investment, heritage buildings will be categorised, and investors will be offered various incentives and concessions.

### Properties in Phase 1

In the initial phase, properties such as Chunar Fort in Mirzapur, Barua Sagar Fort in Jhansi, Jal Mahal in Barsana, Lucknow's Chhatar Manzil and Kothi Roshan-ud-Daula, and Shukla Talab Haveli in Kanpur will be transformed into hotels. Reports for these projects have been prepared and submitted to the State government for approval. Upon approval, the next phase will involve converting Mastani Mahal and Lake Palace in Mahoba, Tehroli in Jhansi, Tal Behat Fort in Lalitpur, and Rangarh Fort in Banda into hotels.

Additionally, plans are in place to transform a heritage building at Akbar's hunting ground in Kirawali, Agra, a city with the highest influx of tourists in the State, into a hotel. Other sites such as Baradari in Bithoor, Lucknow's Kothi Gulista-e-Iram, Kothi Darshan Vilas and Baradari in Wazirganj, Gonda will also be converted into heritage hotels.

These heritage hotels will feature wellness centers, museums, heritage restaurants and thematic parks, providing tourists with luxurious accommodations while simultaneously generating employment opportunities.