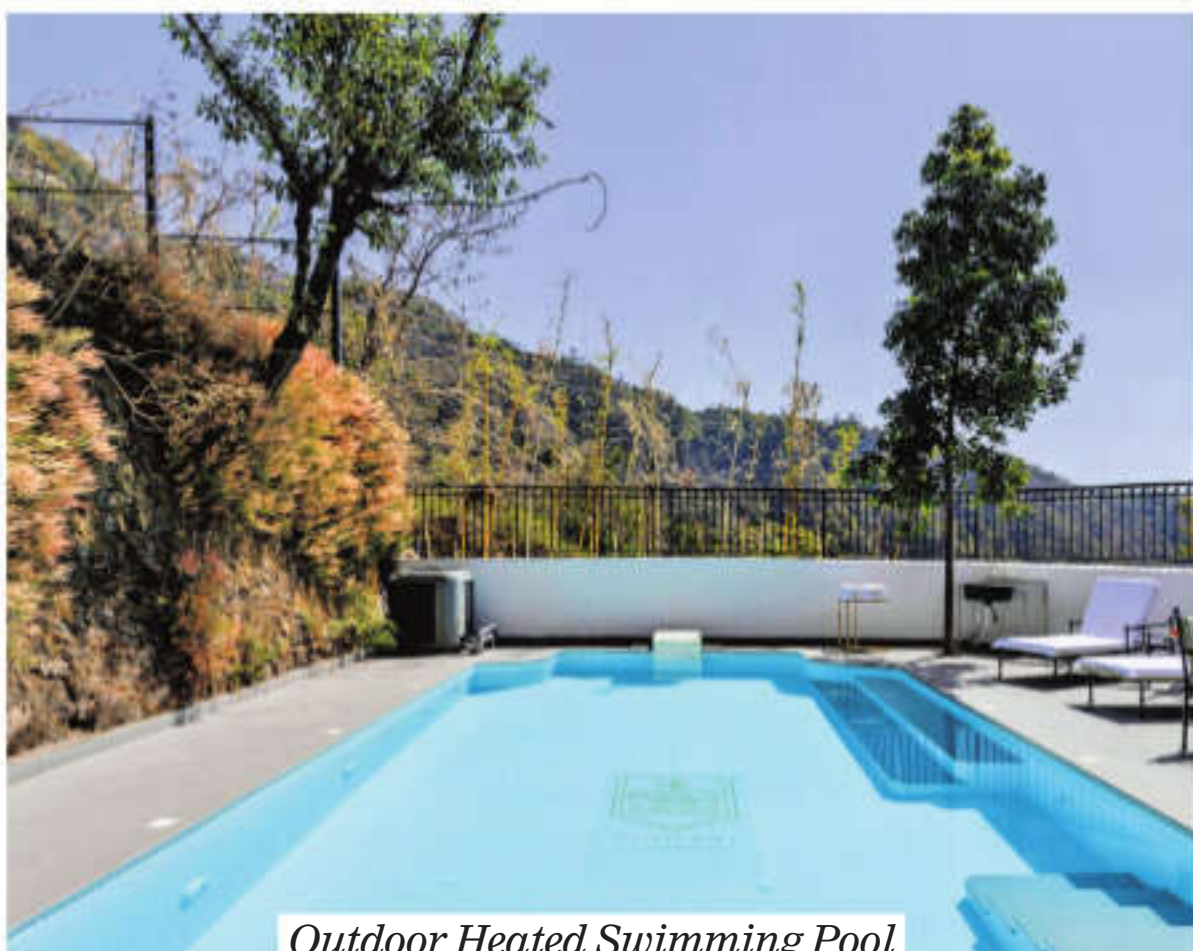


experiential

RENDEZVOUS WITH RISHIKESH!



Outdoor Heated Swimming Pool

Kinwani House by Aalia Collection in this Himalayan destination offers old charm paired with modern luxury...

RISHIKESH, NESTLED IN the foothills of the Himalayas along the banks of the Ganges River, is a city with a vibrant blend of spirituality, adventure and natural beauty. Known as the 'Yoga Capital of the World,' it attracts seekers from around the globe, drawn to its *ashrams*, meditation centres and peaceful surroundings. The town's iconic suspension bridges — Lakshman Jhula and Ram Jhula — offer stunning views of the river and surrounding temples. Beyond its spiritual attraction, Rishikesh is a hub for thrill-seekers, offering activities like white-water rafting, trekking and camping. Whether you seek inner peace or outdoor excitement, Rishikesh has something for everyone.

Amidst these serene landscapes and spiritual charm lies *Kinwani House by Aalia Collection*, a heritage retreat that beautifully complements the town's peaceful spirit. Overlooking the sacred Ganges and nestled in the Himalayan foothills, this boutique property blends time-

less elegance with modern comforts. Originally built in 1954 as the private residence of a member of the Tehri-Garhwal royal family, it combines classic art deco style with modern comforts. The two-storey estate has six large suites, each with its own bathroom, balcony and deck. The retreat also offers a conservatory, a heated swimming pool and a spa, making it the perfect place for relaxation and peace.

Following a late morning flight from Bengaluru, we reached Jolly Grant Airport in Dehradun around lunch time. Kinwani House is situated around 23 kms from the airport, in Narendra Nagar. Our ride to the property was scenic and surreal and the atmosphere we were surrounded by had an aura of spirituality, which was worth experiencing. After about 45 minutes, we reached the property and following a seamless check-in process, we were escorted to our room — Rajkumar Suite — which boasted a luxurious king-size bed with a dressing room, an attached

drawingroom and a private balcony which offered stunning valley vistas. The suite had a true royal charm that would certainly make you feel as a *rajkumar*. Following a tiresome journey, the comfy bed was calling out to us for some much-needed rest but when the gods call, you listen. Quite literally, because we were approaching sunset and being in Rishikesh, one can't miss the *Ganga aarti*. We quickly freshened up, had some much needed coffee and snacks and headed to *Triveni Ghat*. Being the most popular and the largest *aarti* in Rishikesh, it draws large crowds every evening. The *aarti* usually begins at around 6 pm, so if you are planning to attend one, make sure you reach by at least 5.30 pm, to get the best view and experience. We reached *Triveni Ghat* by 5.15 pm and were already surprised to see a large crowd gathering there. Now, you could choose to sit away from the *aarti* area or you could pay an amount and be seated at the front row; while also participating in the *aarti*. We chose to go with the latter and it was definitely worth it.

Priests in traditional attire performed the ritual with large brass lamps, chanting vedic hymns and *mantras*. The rhythmic sound of bells, the conch and devotional songs created a deeply immersive atmosphere, which every person should experience at least once in their lifetime. It was not just a visual spectacle but also a soulful experience and was a glimpse of India's rich cultural traditions.

Following this divine experience, we made our way back to the property, reaching there, just in time for dinner. But before that, we made our way to



Spa Room



Façade of the property