



THE JUDGE'S COURT, PRAGPUR

BACK IN TIME

I had a four-day weekend on my hands around Holi and wanted to go to a quiet place away from the city's bustle and noise, but not too far away either. It happened to stumble upon The Judge's Court's website and immediately knew this was where I was going. It is a 100-year-old country manor built for Justice Sir Jai Lal and one can see family pictures and memorabilia strewn all over the property. It is located at Pragpur, a clean heritage village nestled in the Kangra valley.

It's like time travel to a place where people lead simple lives, smile a lot and stop you on the road for a

chat. Quaint little shops, a community pond for the villagers to bathe in, a small temple, cobbled stone paths leading up to some abandoned huts...this place has oodles of old-world charm. Come here with a book, sketchbook or camera. Or just amble about in the artisans' village, and buy spicy pickles or some weaves if you like. The hotel's home-style food is to die for. Outside of the hotel, you will only find *pakora* and *samosa* stalls. Or you could go for freshly squeezed sugarcane juice. You will fall in love with this sleepy little town, with a breathtaking view of snow-capped mountains all around.

The accommodation comprises 10 rooms and is favoured by expats looking for a taste of rural India. It is surrounded by an orchard with mango, lychee, plum, citrus and exotic trees like camphor, clove and sandalwood. The Kuthiala Sood family that runs The Judge's Court has been part of the heritage village of Pragpur since the time it was founded. They grow their own fruit, vegetables, wheat, maize and oil seeds. Even milk is from their own dairy and water is exclusively piped from a mountain spring.

One can also go here for nature walks and

birdwatching. Angling is possible in the Beas river if one gets a licence in advance. People also come to visit ancient temples like Jawalamukhi-Chintpurni. A trip to Norbulingka, the Tibetan institute for art and crafts or to Andretta (if you're interested in pottery) are highly recommended.

—Ritika Jain

NAVIGATOR

Go there for A leisurely stay at a 100-year-old family manor.

Address Jai Bhawan, Pragpur, Himachal Pradesh-177107

Reservations info@judgescourt.com

Website www.judgescourt.com

Tariff ₹6,000 for a double room including breakfast and taxes for two persons