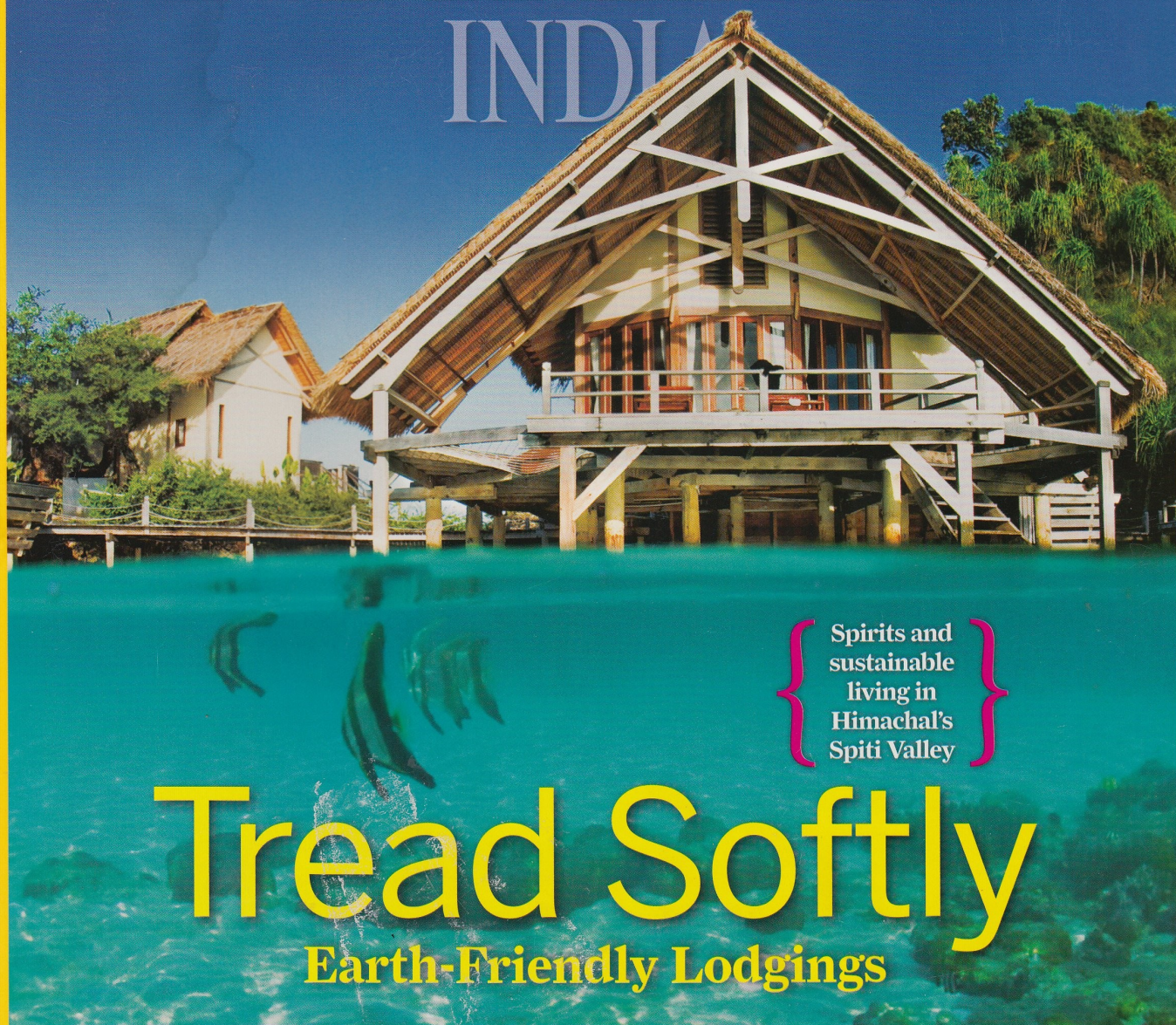


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Khem Villas

Khem Villas

Ranthambore, Rajasthan

KHEM VILLAS DESCRIBES itself as a “luxury jungle camp”. Its eight cottages and seven tents, modern adaptations of traditional dwellings, are a picture of understated elegance. But if you had surveyed the area a few years ago, you’d only have seen barren land with almost no vegetation. Today, through years of regeneration, the 30-acre property is one of the greenest patches in the area. It appears like an extension of Ranthambore National Park and is an example of the resort’s commitment to conservation.

The resort harnesses solar energy and has battery banks that store power helping keep generator use to a minimum. The food comes from vegetable patches within the resort. Rainwater harvesting measures have made Khem Villas almost self-sufficient for its water needs, and has raised the water table by almost 25 feet. Prakratik Society, an NGO run by owners Usha and Goverdhan Singh Rathore—son of Fateh Singh Rathore, who was one of India’s leading tiger conservationists—has donated over 30,000 saplings to farmers, helped them set up biogas systems, and offers affordable healthcare through its hospital. The resort’s guests can go on customised safaris, acquaint themselves with the local arts and

crafts, or enjoy a picnic lunch by the River Chambal (94140 30262; khemvillas.com; doubles from ₹11,000 including all meals).

—Tushar Abhichandani



Wilderness

Chorla Ghats, Goa

MY ECO-COTTAGE at Wilderness had an enchanting view of the Vazra Falls, flowing gloriously over the green gradients of the Swapnagandha Valley. Located at the intersection of Goa, Maharashtra, and Karnataka, the Chorla Ghats are the residence of tigers, leopards, sloth bears, and an important nesting site for critically endangered vultures. A few years ago, however, this misty forest was well on the path to destruction when it was opened up for mining.

Captain Nitin Dhond, now Wilderness’s managing director, and his eclectic band of nature-lovers acquired the forest approach road and gradually managed to secure 450 acres of this crucial wildlife corridor connecting Mhadei and Bhimgad Wildlife Sanctuaries. Now, the resort relies largely on solar electricity, employs residents of nearby villages who serve the most delicious local fare, and its 16 cottages are fashioned from acacia wood.

When not lounging in the spectacular infinity pool,