

Shekhawati Utsav – Momasar **Rajasthan Folk Festival**



Momasar Festival Overview

JVF (Jaipur Virasat Foundation) is a not for profit organisation which was registered as a trust in the year 2002. The Foundation, since its inception, has been working primarily with the performing folk arts, artists and communities of Rajasthan. The folk arts of Rajasthan are depleting fast as the younger generation is not very keen in taking up the knowledge from their elders as they see no sustainability and feel no pride in their work.

Round the year, the JVF team visits the different parts (Shekhawati, Hadoti, Marwar, Braj, Mewat, Mewar, Dhundhaar and Wagad) of Rajasthan to meet and identify new artists. JVF, then tries to create a platform where these artists can be presented to showcase their artforms.

One such initiative of the Foundation is the regional festivals which are organised with the help from the local community, Panchayats and other institutions and organisations, in the villages of Rajasthan. Shekhawati Utsav - Momasar Festival is one of the regional festivals. It is a platform where we present folk artists from all over the Rajasthan with a focus on the Shekhawati region artforms. The focus here is on Shekhawati as Momasar is a part of the Shekhawati region. The festival is attended by 10,000 - 15,000 people (as per the statistics of 2012) from as many as 22 - 25 villages and towns of Bikaner, Sridungargarh, Ratangarh, Sardarshahar, Sujangarh, Rajaldesar, etc.

Over the past few years, we have also realized that the festival acts as a catalyst to bring together the various communities of the village. When the festival is organized, all the villagers work collectively without discriminating among their religion, caste and creed. It is a team effort and gives them a sense of ownership and pride.

As you would understand, the festival is a not for profit venture and a platform for artists to show their talent and for villagers to come together and celebrate their traditions and culture, the festival requires financial assistance. For this purpose, we welcome support, in any form, from Corporate, individuals, institutions and others.

For further queries, please feel free to contact Mr. Vinod Joshi, Community Director, Jaipur Virasat Foundation – vinodvirasat@gmail.com, Cell No. 9414075175.

For details about the Foundation, please visit the website www.jaipurvirasatfoundation.org

Motive behind the festival

The Festival is organised by The Jaipur Virasat foundation in collaboration with the residents of Momasar. Our aim is to provide a platform to over 250 local folk artists from across Rajasthan to showcase their talent and skills. We also wish to create a platform to connect the local performing artists with the gamut of performing arts in the state of Rajasthan. The intent is to celebrate the richness and diversity of the performing art forms, so that the coming generations are inspired to adhere to their traditions and are also inspired to carry them forward.

When is the festival held?

The Shekhawati Utsav - Momasar takes place in late September or the first week of October each year usually coinciding with the Navratra festival, which is celebrated with lot of song and dance. This year the festival is scheduled to take place on Wednesday the 24th September.

Where is the festival held?

The festival is held at the Taal Maidan in Momasar, a five hundred year old village 250 kms North-West of Jaipur with a population of about 12,000. The village is also home to a 200 year old step well and some beautiful havelis and temples. Momasar is famous for its holi celebrations and its Ramdevra Village fair.

Places to see around

In Momasar, there is a 250 yr old temple of folk deity Ramdevji in an area of 200acre. 20yrs back a doctor visited the village and started a drive in the village to plant trees. Approx. 20,000 trees were planted in the temple vicinity.

Within Momasar, people can witness many crafts like blacksmith work, silver jewellery, carpentry, pottery, traditional rope and hut weaving and paintings.

Toliyasar village – A religious place popular for a 500 year old Bhaironji ka Mandir. It is at a distance of approx. 20kms from Momasar.

Sardarshahar – A 700 year old historical town famous for its havelis with frescoes, mangodi & papad, sweet dish 'feeni' and wooden artifacts which are exported all over the world. A local family runs a 300yrs old museum which houses items of original sandalwood. Recently a new temple has been constructed there, 'Chintaharan Hanuman' mandir. The temple is spread in an area of 100acres and has become very popular. Sardarshahar is at a distance of approx. 36kms from Momasar.

Bikaner – Bikaner is also a historical town well known for its palaces and havelis. The famous 'Bikaneri bhujia' also comes from here. Bikaner is also the district headquarter. Two crafts – Wood carving and painting on leather – are also very popular. Bikaner is at a distance of approx. 100kms from Momasar.

How to get there?

From Delhi – 350kms – The route will be Delhi -> Rohtak -> Bhiwani -> Sardarshahar -> Momasar

From Jaipur – 250kms – The route will be Jaipur -> Sikar -> Fatehpur -> Ratangarh -> Rajaldesar -> Momasar.