

QAYAAM GAH, SRINAGAR, CNT HOT LIST, BEST IN THE WORLD 2023.

Four villas stand on a ridge backed by the Zabarwan Hills, overlooking the shimmering crescent of the Dal Lake far below. This seven-key property, spread over three acres, is a nature retreat for those who want to experience mountain solitude with access to Srinagar's sights, a 40-minute drive away. Built of cedar wood, glass, and stone from Pandrethan and Manasbal, and made sumptuous with rugs, delicate deodar woodwork and freshly plucked flowers, the place exudes a mystical air. While each villa has its own secluded view, its three suites rest on a lower terrace that looks out on the lake, and they can be interconnected for a family or group travelling together. Its restaurant, Ruh (or "soul"), offers alfresco seating under fretwork eaves, while the indoor seating matches the windows with a khatamband ceiling, jali screens, bookshelves, and a bukhari wood-burning stove. Design lovers will appreciate the contemporary framing of Kashmiri craftsmanship—for instance, marrying the latticed pinjrakari wall panels that cast starry patterns of light on the floor with the solidness of stark black walls. The medley of sensibilities extends to the table, starting off with a basket of crisp Kashmiri breads, served with creamy walnut and sweet radish chutneys. You can also gorge on the famous traditional traami, or Kashmiri thali piled with rich preparations, including kebab, rogan josh, yakhni, rista, and goshtaba alongside homestyle, slow-cooked maaz ras (mutton soup) and haak saag (collard greens). An outdoor infinity pool, the deck Qalb (which means "spiritual heart") where live music is played by a local troupe at high tea, and a canopied pavilion for private dinners let you take in the 360° views. The panorama stretches from the Zabarwan Hills, Pir Panjal and Shamsabari Ranges to the middle Himalayas, and the Dal Lake, mesmerising at sunset"

THE 2023 HOT LIST

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