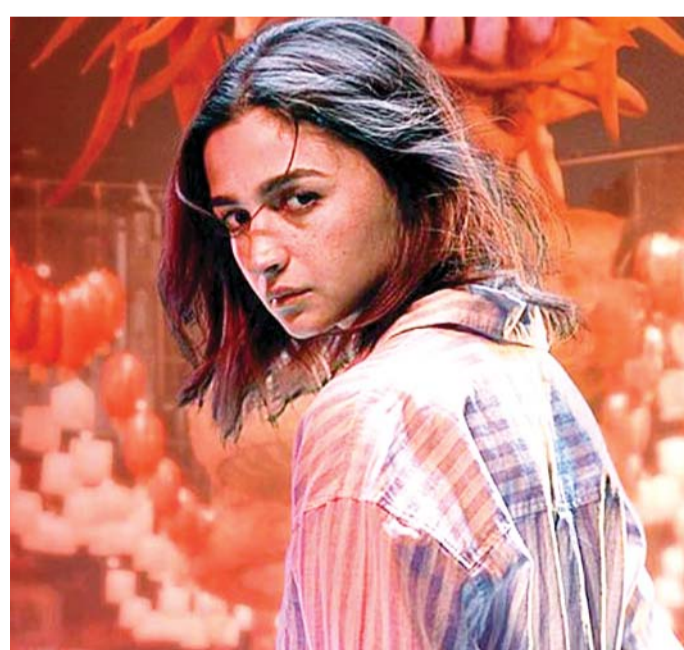
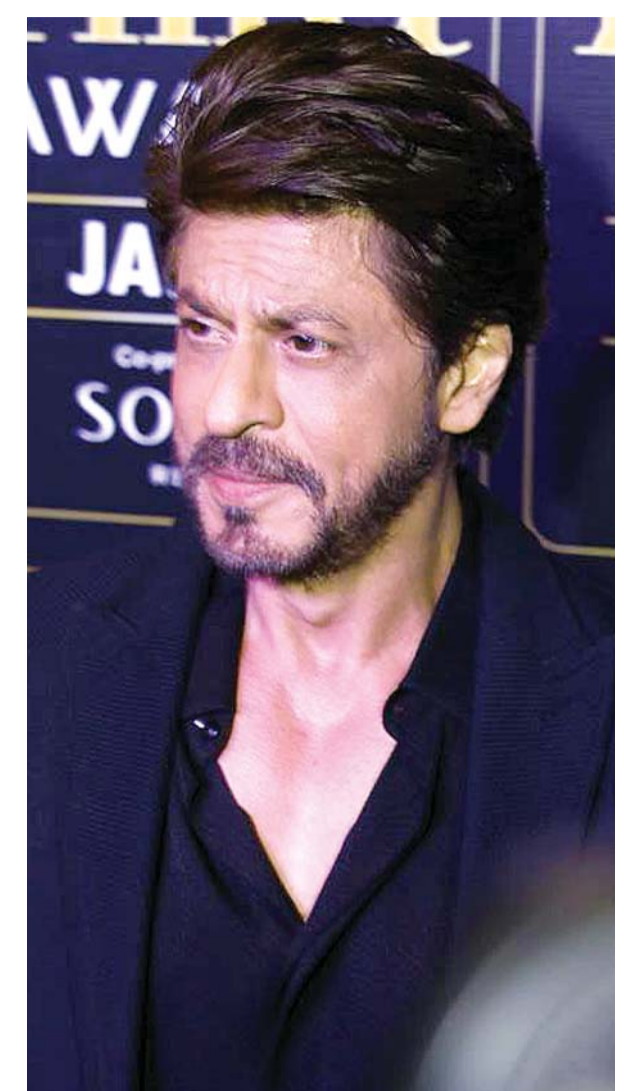


Who's The Lucky Guy?



It's IIFA in Jaipur

In the Pink City, where history whispers through sandstone corridors, Jaipur is no stranger to storytelling. Now, as IIFA 2025 arrives, the Pink City becomes more than a backdrop, it transforms into the grandest stage for Indian cinema, where royalty meets stardom, where heritage fuses with Bollywood glamour. Jaipur and IIFA are set to create a spectacle that will be remembered for years to come.



Shailaza Singh
Published Author,
Poet and a YouTuber

A Historic Union of Heritage and Bollywood Glamour

Jaipur is a city where the air itself carries the fragrance of poetry; history is carved into sandstone walls, and every narrow alleyway has a story to tell. This year, the Pink City is set to welcome an event as grand as its interesting past, the 25th edition of the International Indian Film Academy (IIFA) Weekend and Awards. On March 8th and 9th, 2025, Jaipur will don its most dazzling avatar as it transforms into Bollywood's most breathtaking stage yet.

For Jaipur, this is more than just a star-studded event. It is an extension of the city's eternal love affair with storytelling, one that predates cinema itself. And for Bollywood, Jaipur offers the perfect blend of regal splendour and cinematic grandeur. The Pink City, often considered the jewel of Rajasthan, is a fitting stage for an awards show that celebrates not just films but the very art of storytelling.

A Global Odyssey: IIFA Through the Years

The International Indian Film Academy (IIFA) Awards were conceived in 2000 with a singular vision, to take Indian cinema beyond borders. Since its inception, IIFA has painted its legacy on global landscapes, gracing iconic cities such as London, Singapore, New York, Madrid, Dubai, Bangkok, and now, Jaipur. What started as an ambitious attempt to take Bollywood to the world has now become an annual pilgrimage for cinephiles and industry stalwarts alike.

Film critic, Rajeev Masand, once remarked, "IIFA isn't just an awards night, it's a travelling festival that carries the spirit of Bollywood across continents." This year, the festival finds itself in a city that is itself a living, breathing film set, a city where history and art have always walked hand-in-hand.

#STORYTELLING SHOWCASED

Unforgettable IIFA Moments That Defined Bollywood's Global Journey

Over the years, IIFA has become synonymous with moments of unfiltered magic. Who can forget the uproarious camaraderie of Shah Rukh Khan and Saif Ali Khan at the 2004 Singapore IIFA, where they turned the ceremony into a night of hilarity and self-deprecating humour? Or the unforgettable sight of Kevin Spacey donning a *Jungli* and dancing with Deepika Padukone at IIFA 2014? The event has long been a canvas for Bollywood's biggest personalities to let loose, connect with international audi-

ences, and create viral, unscripted moments that fans cherish forever. In 2017, Amitabh Bachchan's moving acceptance speech for his Lifetime Achievement Award in New York left audiences spellbound. "From film reels to streaming platforms, Indian cinema has evolved, but the love for storytelling remains unchanged," he had said, receiving a standing ovation. Now, with Jaipur preparing to host IIFA's silver jubilee, one can only imagine the unforgettable moments that await.

What Jaipur Brings to IIFA

For Bollywood, Jaipur is more than just a host city, it is an experience, a statement. Jaipur embodies the grandeur and artistic magnificence that Bollywood thrives upon. The city's exquisite palaces, historic forts, and bustling bazaars make it an unrivaled backdrop for cinema's biggest celebration. Jaipur's regal architecture, from the honey-combed facade of *Hawa Mahal* to the sprawling expanse of *Amber Fort*, mirrors the splendour of Bollywood's most visually arresting films. It offers a sense of nostalgia and permanence, a reminder that great stories, like great cities, are timeless. Beyond its visual charm, Jaipur also brings its thriving arts and cultural scene to IIFA. The city has been home to the Jaipur Literature Festival, a global literary event,

and its performing arts scene is vibrant with traditional music, Rajasthani folk performances, and experimental theatre. Bollywood finds in Jaipur a partner that understands and respects the importance of storytelling, and so, it is the perfect setting for IIFA's 25th anniversary. Historically, Jaipur has been an artist's muse. The city's intricate Rajput architecture has inspired filmmakers, while its historic theatres like the Raj Mandir Cinema have long been a pilgrimage site for Bollywood lovers. *Raj Mandir*, known as the 'Pride of Asia,' has witnessed generations of movie-goers revel in the magic of Indian cinema. With IIFA, Jaipur now steps out of the frame and into the spotlight, reclaiming its position as a storyteller's paradise.



What IIFA Brings to Jaipur

While Jaipur lends its elegance and history to IIFA, the event reciprocates by offering the Pink City an unparalleled opportunity to showcase itself on a global platform. IIFA is more than just an awards show, it is an economic and cultural catalyst, igniting tourism, commerce, and the entertainment industry.

For Jaipur's hospitality sector, the influx of Bollywood celebrities, international guests, and film enthusiasts translates into booming business for hotels, restaurants, and local artisans. Luxury heritage properties, such as the Rambagh Palace and Samode Haveli, will host industry elites, while local craftspeople will see a surge in demand for Rajasthan's famed textiles, jewellery, and handicrafts. Moreover, IIFA puts Jaipur on the radar for future film productions. While Rajasthan has always been a sought-after location for historical and epic dramas, the event will highlight Jaipur's potential for contemporary cinema. Its vibrant street markets, neon-lit modernity juxtaposed with centuries-old architecture, and young, creative energy make it an ideal film setting beyond its traditional royal imagery. Jaipur's budding film industry also stands to benefit. Local talent, actors, musicians, designers, will have the opportunity to engage with industry giants, potentially paving the way for new collaborations and discoveries. The city's production houses and post-production facilities will receive much-needed visibility, bringing in investments that could transform Jaipur into a major filmmaking hub.

Jaipur Reacts: Excitement, Aspirations, and Starry Dreams

The arrival of IIFA has sent a ripple of excitement through Jaipur's streets. From business owners to aspiring actors, everyone is eagerly anticipating the spectacle. Local entrepreneur and heritage hotelier, Ramesh Bhardwaj, shares, "Jaipur has always been India's cultural jewel. Now, with IIFA coming here, we get to showcase our hospitality and heritage on a global stage." Aspiring actor, Nisha Verma, who dreams of making it big in Bollywood, believes that IIFA is a game-changer. "For artists like me, having IIFA in Jaipur means networking, exposure, and maybe, even a moment that changes our lives forever." Even Jaipur's small business owners see the event as a golden opportunity. "With all the celebrities and tourists pouring in, this is great for our markets and crafts," says Rajesh Sharma, a local vendor near Hawa Mahal. The city's film enthusiasts and students of cinema view this as a once-in-a-lifetime learning experience. Jaipur-based film student, Aarav Gupta, notes, "Being able to witness IIFA in Jaipur is like having a front-row seat to the biggest cinematic masterclass. The interactions, discussions, and just observing the stars will be invaluable."



Letter to an Elder Day

Letter to an Elder Day is a special time, set aside each year, to show love and respect to our elders. Celebrated annually, this day encourages us to reach out to seniors, who might feel lonely, with handwritten letters, full of love and encouragement. The idea is simple but powerful. A small gesture of sending a letter can significantly brighten an elder's day, making them feel valued and connected! So, gather your friends or family for a letter-writing bash. Deck out your space with colourful stationery and let the creative juices flow. Bonus points for themed snacks!

Best Picture Nominees

1. *Laapataa Ladies* - Amir Khan, Kiran Rao, Jyoti Deshpande
2. *Kill* - Hiroo Yash Johar, Karan Johar, Apoorva Mehta, Guneet Monga Kapoor, Achin Jain
3. *Article 370* - Jyoti Deshpande, Aditya Dhar, Lokesh Dhar
4. *Street 2: Sarkate Ka Aatank* - Dinesh Vijan, Jyoti Deshpande
5. *Shaitaan* - Jyoti Deshpande, Ajay Devgn, Abhishek Pathak, Kumar Mangat Pathak
6. *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3* - Bhushan Kumar, Krishan Kumar, Murad Khetani

Best Director Nominees

1. *Kiran Rao* - Laapataa Ladies
2. *Nikhil Nagesh Bhat* - Kill
3. *Amar Kaushik* - Street 2: Sarkate Ka Aatank
4. *Siddharth Anand* - Fighter
5. *Aditya Suhas Jhambale* - Article 370
6. *Anees Bazmee* - Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3

Best Supporting Performance (Female)

1. *Chhaya Kadam* - Laapataa Ladies
2. *Vidya Balan* - Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3
3. *Janki Bodiwala* - Shaitaan
4. *Priyamani* - Article 370
5. *Jyotika* - Srikanth

Best Performance in a Negative Role

1. *Raghav Juyal* - Kill
2. *R. Madhavan* - Shaitaan
3. *Gajraj Rao* - Maidaan
4. *Vivek Gomber* - Jigra
5. *Arjun Kapoor* - Singham Again

Best Playback Singer (Male)

1. *Arijit Singh* - Laapataa Ladies (Sajni)
2. *Karan Aujla* - Bad Newz (Taubta Tauba)
3. *Diljit Dosanjh, Baadshah* - Crew (Naina)
4. *Jubin Nautiyal* - Article 370 (Dua)
5. *Mitraz* - Teri Baaton Mein Aisa Uljha Jiya (Akhyaan Gulaab)

Best Playback Singer (Female)

1. *Madhubanti Bagchi* - Street 2: Sarkate Ka Aatank (Aaj Ki Raat)
2. *Shreya Ghoshal* - Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3 (Ami Je Tomar 3.0)
3. *Shreya Ghoshal* - Laapataa Ladies (Dheeme Dheeme)
4. *Rohka Bhardwaj* - Kill (Nikat)
5. *Shilpa Rao* - Fighter (Ishq Jaisa Kuch)

Best Performance in a Leading Role (Female)

1. *Nitanshi Goel* - Laapataa Ladies
2. *Alla Bhatt* - Jigra
3. *Yami Gautam* - Article 370
4. *Katrina Kaif* - Merry Christmas
5. *Shradha Kapoor* - Street 2: Sarkate Ka Aatank

Best Performance in a Leading Role (Male)

1. *Spash Shrivastava* - Laapataa Ladies
2. *Rajkumar Rao* - Srikanth
3. *Fardeen Khan* - Kheh Khel Mein
4. *Abhishek Bachchan* - I Want To Talk
5. *Ajay Devgn* - Maidaan

Best Supporting Performance (Male)

1. *Ravi Kishan* - Laapataa Ladies
2. *Abhishek Banerjee* - Street 2: Sarkate Ka Aatank
3. *Fardeen Khan* - Kheh Khel Mein
4. *Rajpal Yadav* - Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3
5. *Manoj Pahwa* - Jigra

Best Music Direction

1. *Ram Sampath* - Laapataa Ladies
2. *Sachin - Jigar* - Street 2: Sarkate Ka Aatank
3. *Sachin - Jigar, Tanishk Bagchi, Mitraz, Raghav, Talwinder, Nds, Mc Square* - Teri Baaton Mein Aisa Uljha Jiya
4. *A.R. Rahman* - Maidaan
5. *Pritam, Lijo George, Sachet - Parampara, DJ Chetas, Adiya Rikhhari, Tanishk Bagchi, Amaal Malik* - Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3

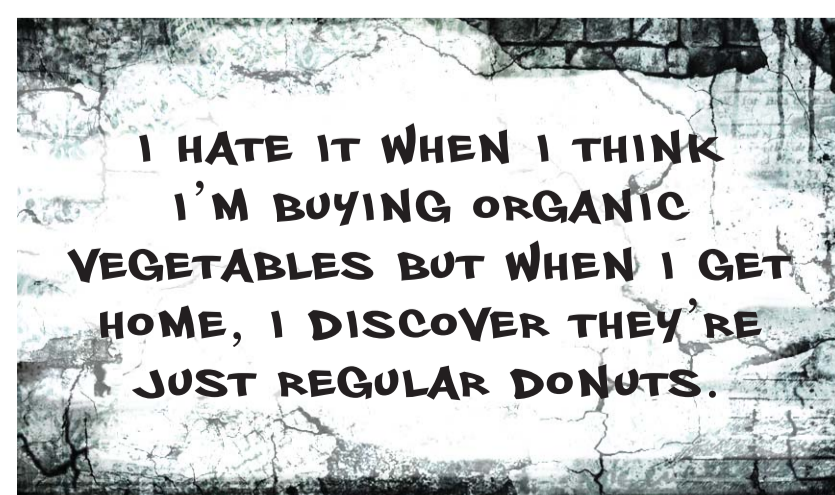
The Race for Glory: IIFA 2025 Nominations

As the excitement builds and Bollywood's biggest names prepare to gather in Jaipur, the competition for the most coveted awards is fiercer than ever. The nominations for the IIFA 2025 have set the stage for a thrilling showdown, celebrating performances that have defined the year in cinema. Leading the nominations this year is Kiran Rao's *Laapataa Ladies* with a staggering nine nods, followed closely by Kartik Aaryan's *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3* with seven nominations. The much-anticipated horror-comedy sequel *Street 2: Sarkate Ka Aatank* has also secured its place among the frontrunners with six nominations, while the action-packed *Kill* impresses with four nominations. Meanwhile, *Shaitaan* has bagged three nominations, making the competition all the more intense.

With these nominations, the stage is set for a spectacular night in Jaipur where the best of Bollywood will be honoured. As fans eagerly await the winners, one thing is certain, this year's IIFA will be remembered for its grandeur, legacy, and celebration of Indian cinema.

rajeshsharma1049@gmail.com

THE WALL



BABY BLUES



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman