

# Hotel Salvation

Cert PG India 2016 102 mins

## Crew

Director	Shubhashish Bhutiani
Screenplay	Shubhashish Bhutiani & Asad Hussain
Cinematography	Michael McSweeney & David Huwiler
Film Editing	Manas Mittal
Original music	Tajdar Junaid

## Cast

Adil Hussain	Rajiv
Lalit Behl	Daya
Geetanjali Kulkarni	Lata
Palomi Ghosh	Sunita
Navnindra Behl	Vimla
Anil K Rastogi	Mishraji

## Synopsis

*India, the present. 77 year-old Daya wakes from a dream one morning and announces to his accountant son Rajiv: "I think I am ready to die now".*

*Daya seems hale and healthy, but Rajiv reluctantly complies with his father's wish to travel to the holy city of Varanasi where he wants to spend his final days.*

*The pair check into the Hotel Salvation, which has a strict stay limit of 15 days. With hotel residents checking out permanently on a regular basis, death has to be confronted - but the hotel also proves to be a place where life abounds and new friendships are forged.*



## Booking Information

**Distributor:** British Film Institute

**DVD bookings:**

BFI Film Distribution

020 7957 8938

Bookings.films@bfi.org.uk

www.bfi.org.uk/distribution

**Available:** now



## Reviews

Perched on the banks of the holy river Ganges, the Hotel Salvation has a unique selling point: it's where Hindu believers come to spend their final days. Not exactly 'The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel' then, yet somehow this Indian arthouse drama finds a universal emotional resonance in its particular theological context. Here's a story where faith and family become intertwined, as a slightly frayed 77-year-old suddenly senses his time is up and prevails on his hard-working son to drive him to Varanasi so he can peacefully pass on.

It might sound somewhat mournful, yet writer-director Shubhashish Bhutiani's first feature, developed from an award-winning short through a scheme run by the Venice Biennale, uses gentle humour and the quirky habits of the elderly to soften the tone as the father's hopes don't exactly pan out as planned.

Lalit Behl is equal parts lovable and exasperating as the old boy, but as the story proceeds, Adil Hussain's work-hassled son takes centre stage - getting to know his dad as a person rather than a burden makes him rethink his own priorities regarding work and family. A leisurely, wise and ultimately affecting meditation on the benefits of letting go.

*Trevor Johnston, Time Out, August 2017*

....The film's DIY spirit is reflected in a multitude of charming everyday scenes. Sometimes we see beautiful landscapes, sometimes boisterous streets or markets filled with people in kaleidoscopic saris and dresses, or families and friends sharing home cooked meals or admiring dazzling light shows over the Ganges. In other words, it is in the film's simplicity and authenticity that make it work so well.

Many of the substantial shifts occurring in Indian society are subtly touched upon: globalisation (through an iconic Pepsi bottle), digitalisation, generational gaps and female emancipation. Writer/director Bhutiani draws a poetic portrait of a modern India, gently unveiling the strain between technology and ... [and] always presenting its subject with humour and an infectious sense of optimism.

*Juliette Cottu, Little White Lies, August 2017*

## FILM FACTS...

- ☆ The film premiered at the Venice Film Festival 2016, where it received a 10 minute standing ovation and won the Biennale College Cinema Award
- ☆ Writer/director Shubhashish Bhutiani is only 26 years old. His film *Kush* won the Best Short Film prize at Venice in 2014, and was short-listed for an Academy Award.
- ☆ Lalit Behl (Daya) and Navindra Behl (Vimla) are husband and wife. They both have distinguished careers as writers, directors and actors on stage and screen.