- Morocco explored, Laterally -

laterallife

Because I've always wanted to...

Tetouan
تطوان
El Hoceima
الحسيمة
Melilla
Nador
الناظور
Saidia
السعيدية
Oujda
وجدة
Taza
تازة
Rabat
الرباط
Meknes
مكناس
Fes
Casablanca
Ifran
إفران
El Jadida
الجديدة
Khouribga
خريبگة
Khenifra
خنيفرة
Oualidia
الوالدية
Douar
Lambakra
Midelt
ميدلت
Fquih
Ben Salah
الفقيه
بن صالح
Safi
آسفي
Beni-Mellal
بني ملال
Bouarfa
بوعرفة
Figuig
Province
Errachidia
الرشيدية
Morocco
Marrakesh
Essaouira
Asni
أسني
Kasbah Bab Ourika
Ouarzazate
ورزازات
Boumalne
Dades
بومالن دادس
Erfoud
أرفود
Béchar
بشار
Kénadsa
القنادسة
Abadla
العبادلة
Taghit
تاغيت
Merzouga
مرزوكة
Agadir
أكادير
Agafay
Zagora
زاگورة
Igli
إقلي
Béni Abbès
بني عباس
Ait Melloul
آيت ملول
Mhamid
محاميد الغزلان
El Ouata
الوطى
Tiznit
تزنيت
Tafraoute
تافراوت
Tata
طاطا
Tabalbala
تبلبالة
Kerzaz
كرزاز
Sidi Ifni
سيدي إفني
Guelmim
كلميم
Icht
Ksabi
قصابي
Assa
آسا
Tantan
طانطان
Oum El Assel
أم العسل
A1
A2
A7

In a Nutshell…

Day 1, 16 Sep - Fly to Casablanca. Hotel Le Doge.
Day 2, 17 Sep - Travel to Fes, visit Hasan the 2nd Mosque, Meknes and Volubilis.
Day 3, 18 Sep - Explore Fes, relax at Riad Salama.
Day 4, 19 Sep - Travel to Marrakech. Les Deux Tours
Day 5, 20 Sep - Explore Marrakech, at leisure at Les Deux Tours
Day 6, 21 Sep - Horse carriage ride to the Majorelle Gardens in Marrakech, at leisure at Les Deux Tours
Day 7, 22 Sep - Travel to the Atlas Mountains. Kasbah Bab Ourika.
Day 8, 23 Sep - Explore the Atlas Mountains, at leisure at Kasbah Bab Ourika.
Day 9, 24 Sep - Enjoy the Atlas Mountains, at leisure at Kasbah Bab Ourika
Day 10, 25 Sep - Travel to Essouira. Villa de L'O
Day 11, 26 Sep - Explore Essouira, at leisure at Villa de L'O
Day 12, 27 Sep - Enjoy Essouira, at leisure at Villa de L'O.
Day 13, 28 Sep - Travel to Agafay. Scarabeo Stone Desert Camp
Day 14, 29 Sep - Travel to Marrakech, fly home

Flights…

Date	Airline & Flight Number	From	De-parts	To	Arrives	Class
TBC				CASABLAN-CA		
TBC		MARRAKECH				

Your Confirmed Itinerary...

Day 1, 16 Sep - Arrive in Casablanca, transfer to hotel.
Today make your way to the airport to catch your flight to Casablanca.

Land this evening in Casablanca where you will be welcomed by a lateral**life** representative who will be holding a banner with your names on it. He/she will accompany you during your transfer to Hotel Le Doge Casablanca for your one night stay.

Casablanca is Morocco's largest city and the country's main port. Casablanca is also the most cosmopolitan of Morocco's cities, with nightclubs, fast food chains and high end boutiques. There are more than 3 million residents in the city, and it's the largest port in North Africa. There's lots of money here and plenty of places to spend it, but there's also lots of poverty. Casablanca has an upcoming contemporary arts scene, beautifully restored French colonial buildings, good markets and an authentic old part of town.

Accommodation: Hotel Le Doge Casablanca, Standard room

Meals: Breakfast

Day 2, 17 Sep - Travel to Fes, visit Hasan the 2nd Mosque, Meknes and Volubilis
This morning you will be collected from your hotel at 8.30am for a private transfer from Casablanca to Fes (about 3 hours not including the excursion below) for your 2 night stay at Riad Salama.

En route to Fes explore Hassan II Mosque and visit Meknes and Volubilis.

Begin with a visit to the Hassan II Mosque, one of the few mosques open to non-Muslim visitors. Built on a rocky outcrop, reclaimed from the sea, this religious monument is the result of more than five years' work by 10,000 devoted craftsmen. After Mecca, it is the largest mosque in the world and certainly one of the most impressive. It was finished in 1993, in time for the King Hassan II's 60th birthday. Designed by the French architect Michel Pinseau and his vast team of Moroccan craftsmen, the mosque can hold an astonishing 25,000 worshippers at prayer inside and 80,000 more can be accommodated in the esplanades around it. Although of traditional style, the structure takes every advantage of the benefits of technology, including a sliding roof and the use of a laser beam from the minaret, which beams toward Mecca every night.

Meknes is a medieval city rebuilt by the king, Moulay Ismail, in the 17th century to become his capital. Being one of the Imperial cities of Morocco, Meknes offers various monuments: El Heri Souani, the granary and the stables built by the soldiers of Moulay Ismail next to a huge reservoir; the mausoleum of Moulay Ismail

and its harmonious Moorish design; Bab El Mansour gate, the most beautiful in North Africa and an amazing combination of tile work.

Drive north towards the mountains of Zerhoun, where Moulay Idriss is situated, which is the holiest town for muslims in Morocco, where the first King is buried.
Volubilis is the Roman capital of Morocco built over two thousand years ago when this part of the country was a Roman province. Discovering the Roman part of Moroccan history, you will admire one of the most beautiful collections of mosaics. These have never been moved from their original site since their discovery in the early 20th century.

Accommodation: Ryad Salama, Standard room
Meals: Breakfast

Day 3, 18 Sep - Explore Fes, relax at Riad Salama
In the morning at 9.30am you will be collected from Riad Salama for a half day exploration of Fes.

Fes (or Fez) is Morocco's oldest Imperial city. Fes is the cultural and spiritual capital of Morocco and you'll certainly experience its vibrancy. The medina (old town) is called Fes el-Bali and behind its high walls is a magical, medieval city with 9000 narrow streets. The new part of Fes, called Ville Nouvelle, was built by the French and is totally different from the medina. The wide boulevards are lined with modern shops and traffic is hectic.

Start the day walking in the old town. Step back into the middle ages to visit the largest living medieval medina-city of Fez El Bali, the cultural heart of Morocco. Founded in the 8th Century AD by Moulay Idriss I, the imperial capital was a renowned centre of medieval learning. At its heart lies the Karaouine, one of the oldest still functioning universities. Next-door is the Attarine Medersa (Koranic college), a jewel of Hispano-Moorish architecture, built in the 14th century. You will also visit the Nejjarine Square and its beautiful fountain with elaborate tilework mosaics and the nearby Fondouq (Caravanserail), now converted to a museum of carpentry artefacts.

In the afternoon you are at leisure to relax at Ryad Salama.

Accommodation: Ryad Salama, Standard room
Meals: breakfast

Day 4, 19 Sep - Travel to Marrakech
This morning at 9.00am you will be collected from Ryad Salama for your private transfer from Fes to Marrakech (about 7 hours) to spend 3 nights at Les Deux Tours in the Palmeraie at Marrakech.

Marrakech enjoys a legendary status which conveys the ideas of mystery, sensuality, and exoticism. Its influence and fame has been so strong and intense in the history of Morocco, that as a matter of fact the country was named after the city.

Marrakech was founded in 1062 by one of the chieftains of the Almoravid King Youssuf Ibn Tashfin. The Almoravids were desert warriors, very much attached to their Islamic religion; the original garrison developed very quickly into a city where numerous mosques and madrasas (Koranic schools) were built. Andalousian craftsmen built and decorated several palaces, merging their style with the Saharan and African traditions, which gave the city a distinctive architectural flavour. The Almoravids also erected the city walls, and created a complex system of underground irrigation canals to bring water from the High Atlas, the khettara – a system still in use to water the several gardens of the city.

At its height, Marrakech was the capital of the Almoravid empire, which stretched as far as Senegal, most parts of Spain and Algiers. In 1147 the Almohads, tribesmen from the High Atlas mountains who practised orthodox Islam, sacked the city, replacing the Almoravids as rulers of the empire, and destroying many of the palaces and mosques of their predecessors. New ones were built soon, though, including the famous Koutoubia mosque, which dates from this period. Ever since, alternate ages of splendour and decline sculpted Marrakech's unique and charming character, at once decadent and full of life.

Nowadays, Marrakech is a vibrant city which exhibits a curious blend of the ancient and the modern, offering the chance to experience the genuine medieval atmosphere of the old medina, and visit the trendiest bars, art galleries and restaurants in the French Quarter, Guéliz, built at the beginning of the 20th Century, all in one day.

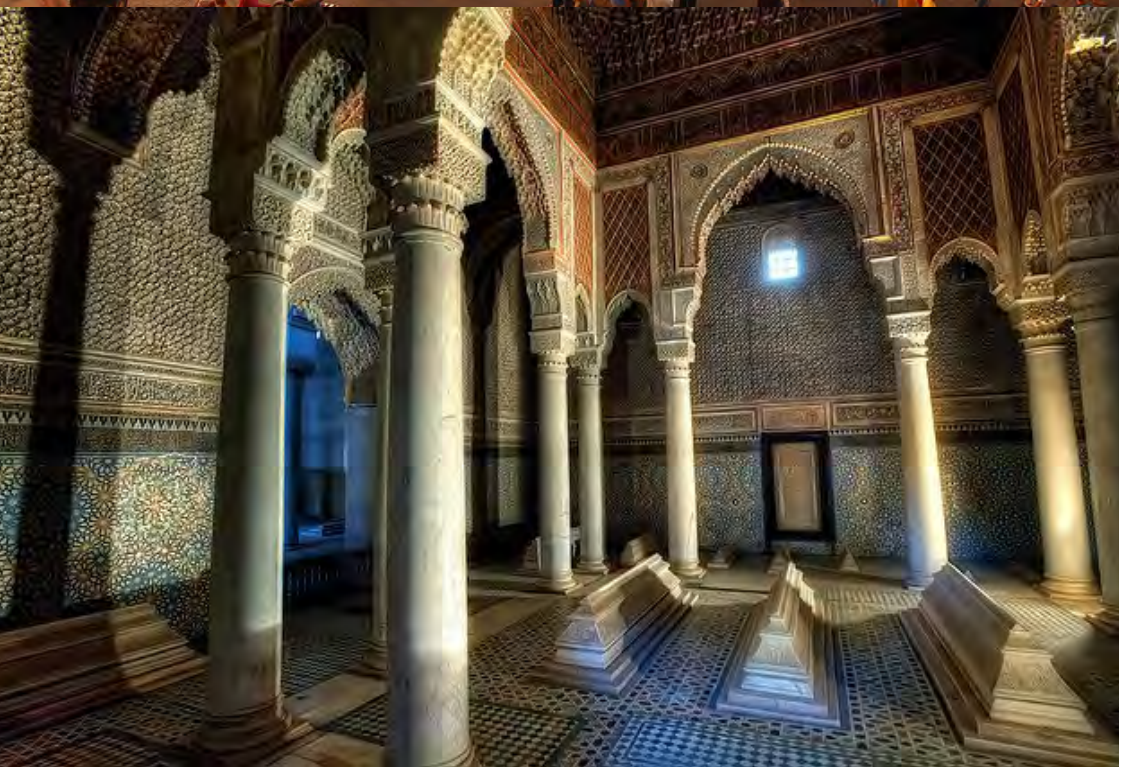
Accommodation: Les Deux Tours, Classic room
Meals: Breakfast

Day 5, 20 Sep - Explore Marrakech, at leisure at Les Deux Tours
In the morning at 9.30am you will be collected for an excursion into Marrakech.

Your guide will meet you at the hotel for half a day exploring Marrakech to see some of the more interesting monuments.

Highlights of your visit may include the following – please let your guide know if you wish to see any of these in particular:

Djemaa El Fna, the Square - Nobody knows for certain of the origin of this square, whose name evokes, in Arabic, the contradictory notions of assembly or gathering, and that of absence. Probably as old as the city itself, it was a place for public executions during the day, and the meeting point of musicians, mystics, food sellers, pickpockets, acrobats, snake charmers, storytellers, dancers, fortune tellers and other exotic characters at night (happily enough, nowadays it only retains its more playful aspect). Watching sunset from one of its terraces when the call to prayer from the Koutoubia minaret fills the air is one of those 'zen' moments that Morocco offers – do not miss it! Despite its lack of significant monuments, Djemaa el Fna became an UNESCO Heritage Site in 1985, as one of the last places in the world where old oral narratives are still enacted.



Saadian Tombs - Built in the 16th century as mausoleums for some Saadian rulers and their families, the Saadian Tombs were unknown until they were discovered by the French in 1917 thanks to aerial photographs. The site comprises more than one hundred graves, distributed in 3 mausoleums whose decoration exemplifies Islamic architecture with floral motifs, calligraphy, zellij and carrara marble, and finely worked cedar wood and stucco. Outside the buildings are a garden and the graves of soldiers and servants.

The Koutoubia Mosque - Built by the Almohads in the late years of 12th century, the Koutoubia Mosque, and especially its minaret, is the most important landmark of Marrakech, and a symbol of the city itself. The minaret served as model for the Giralda in Sevilla and the unfinished Tour Hassan in Rabat, all three being designed by the same architect. Koutoubia means 'booksellers', as the trade of books was concentrated in the neighbourhood during the Middle Ages. The minaret of the Koutoubia, 77 meters high, is visible from almost any point of the city – an old ordinance, still in force, forbids any building of Marrakech to surpass the Koutoubia minaret in height.

El Bahia Palace - Built in the late 19th century, and decorated by the best artisans of Morocco at the time, this palace – intended to be the most magnificent of its age – features an exquisite blend of Andalousian and Moorish styles. Especially interesting are the harem apartments, the trapezoidal garden, and a huge tiled courtyard with fountains.

The Souks - Filling the alleys north of Djmaa el Fna is the souk, or medina, the traditional market – the largest one in Morocco. It is, in turn, subdivided into some 18 souks, each one of them devoted to a specific trade or craftsmanship – from spices or ironwork, to the ingredients necessary for casting magic spells. The number of shops – often not much bigger in size than a closet - is overwhelming, and in them Moroccans can indulge in one of the activities that they enjoy most: bargaining. Cunning, patience, a sense of humour, and strategy are needed for the game. Try your skills at it!

In the afternoon you are at leisure to relax at Les Deux Tours.

Accommodation: Les Deux Tours, Classic room
Meals: Breakfast

Day 6, 21 Sep - Horse carriage ride to the Majorelle Gardens in Marrakech, at leisure at Les Deux Tours

In the morning at 10.00am you will be collected for a horse carriage ride to the Majorelle Gardens.

Majorelle Garden on a horse carriage. Marrakech has always been a culturally rich and a green garden city that attracted many nature lovers, artists and celebrities.

At the Menara Parc you will see the snow-covered Atlas rising over its 19th century pavilion reflected in the immense rectangular pool, and impressive olive groves.

The Gardens of Majorelle, a property acquired in 1922 by the painter of the same name and later bought and developed by Yves St Laurent.

This subtropical botanical park is one of the most delightful spots in Marrakech. The meticulously planned garden was created in the 1920s by the French painter Jacques Majorelle. It has a unique atmosphere enhanced by the verdant groves of bamboo, dwarf palm, multi-coloured bougainvillea, pink geraniums and various lily-covered pools. The garden hosts more than 15 bird species that are endemic to North Africa and has an amazing collection of cacti. Since 1980 the garden was owned by Yves Saint-Laurent. These gardens are an oasis in the heart of the city and rich with flora and fauna. Once inside the garden walls, you would never think you were in the heart of a busy city. There is an excellent café in the gardens where you can enjoy a drink or snack.

In the afternoon you are at leisure to relax at Les Deux Tours.

Accommodation: Les Deux Tours, Classic room
Meals: Breakfast

Day 7, 22 Sep - Atlas mountains
Today at 10.00am you will be collected for your private transfer from Marrakech to the foothills of the Atlas Mountains (about 1 hour) for 2 nights at Kasbah Bab Ourika.

Upon arrival, relax at Kasbah Bab Ourika.

Accommodation: Kasbah Bab Ourika, Deluxe room
Meals: Breakfast

Day 8, 23 Sep - Explore the Atlas Mountains
In the morning at 9.00am you will be collected to go walking in the Atlas Mountains.

Travellers to Morocco find it hard to resist the lure of the distant Atlas Mountains, which arc southwards from the Mediterranean coast for 1,000 miles (1,609km), providing a trekker's paradise. Numerous guided hikes and treks are on offer, destined for the spectacular High Atlas to hike beneath forbidding peaks, through deep canyons, and past remote and ancient Berber villages.

Do-it-yourself trekkers will find locals willing to act as porters and guides, and hikers can also hire mules to carry equipment. The adventure opportunities in the Atlas are varied, and range from challenging to very accessible.

In the afternoon you are at leisure to relax at Kasbah Bab Ourika.

Day 9, 24 Sep - Enjoy the Atlas Mountains

Today you can simply relax at Kasbah Bab Ourika or arrange to see more of the Atlas Mountains.

You could explore the Ourika Valley and the waterfalls. The Ourika valley is the most accessible valley in the High Atlas from Marrakech and is famous for the 7 waterfalls at Setti Fatma and the ski resort of Oukaimeden at its head, and is a lush valley with green terraced fields beside the river that contrast strongly with the rocky valley sides of the foothills of the mountains.

Accommodation: Kasbah Bab Ourika, Deluxe room
Meals: Breakfast

Day 10, 25 Sep - Travel to Essouira

Today at 10.00am you will be collected for your private transfer from the Atlas Mountains to Essouira (about 3 hours) for your 3 night stay at Villa de L'O.

This white-walled town with its long sandy beach is a great place to relax and enjoy the sun, sand and sea. Essaouira is often known as the 'windy city' and is the centre of windsurfing in Morocco. There are plenty of activities on offer at the beach, including camel rides along the shore to see ancient forts and palaces buried in the sands. You can also go shopping for souvenirs or watch the activities in the colourful fishing port where fresh seafood abounds.

Accommodation: Villa de L'O, Standard room
Meals: Breakfast

Day 11, 26 Sep - Explore Essouira

In the morning at 10.00am you will be collected from Villa de L'O to explore Essaouira on foot with a guide.

A half day walk to explore Essaouira

Start your walk around this old Portuguese fort from the harbour. This is a charming old fortified fishing port on the Atlantic coast that the Portuguese named Mogador. Founded and occupied by the Portuguese in the 16th century to take advantage of the Trans-Saharan trade routes, the city was rebuilt in 1760 and named Essaouira before it attracted a great number of foreigners as well as a big part of the Jewish community in Morocco as it became Morocco's international port and trading centre.

See the impressive town fortifications consisting of an amazing mixture of Portuguese and Moroccan military architecture. Explore the spice souks, the jewellery market, different artisan markets and the carpentry workshops devoted to cedar and thuya cabinet making. Essaouira has attracted artists and musicians from different parts of the world and you will see some of their works in the different art galleries of the city. End your walk in the harbour with its stalls of freshly caught barbecued fish. You may want to stop here and stay for lunch.

In the afternoon you are at leisure to relax at Villa de L'O or explore Essouira further yourselves.

Accommodation: Villa de L'O, Standard room
Meals: Breakfast

Day 12, 27 Sep - Enjoy Essouira, at leisure at Villa de L'O.
Today you can simply relax at Villa de L'O or arrange to see more of Essouira.

Accommodation: Villa de L'O, Standard room
Meals: Breakfast

Day 13, 28 Sep - Travel to Agafay
This morning at 10.00am you will be collected from Villa de L'O for your private transfer from Essouira to Agafay (about 4 hours) to spend your final night at Scarabeo Stone Desert Camp.

Accommodation: Scarabeo Stone Desert Camp, Classic tent
Meals: Breakfast, lunch

Day 14, 29 Sep - Travel to Marrakech airport for your flight home
Today at 10.00am you will be collected from Scarabeo Stone Desert Camp for your private transfer to Marrakech airport (about 1 hour) for your flight home.

Welcome home!

- - - - - - -

Laterally sleeping...

Hotel Le Doge Casablanca
The Doge Hotel & Spa is a former mansion of the 1930s, located downtown in a quiet street in the Art Deco district of Casablanca. Each of the 16 rooms and suites is unique, with different decoration. The bathrooms, nice and spacious, are matched to the room.

The restaurant offers superb food and the library lounge with fireplace welcomes you to the sound of a pianist in a warm and cosy space. The hotel also offers an elegant spa with a hammam, a pool, a fitness and massage room. On the roof you can find a garden, a veritable oasis of greenery and quiet, overlooking the Parc de Casablanca.

hotelledoge.com

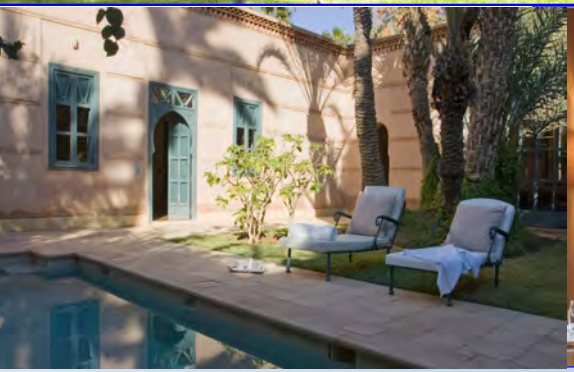
Ryad Salama Fes
This Ryad was built at the beginning of the last century by Mohammed Chergui, aristocrat of that period. This Ryad is fairly unique because every room and suite overlooks the garden, either by private balcony or simply at garden's level. Due to its location, in between the two mains street of the Médina, the Ryad Salama is really a small enchanting oasis.

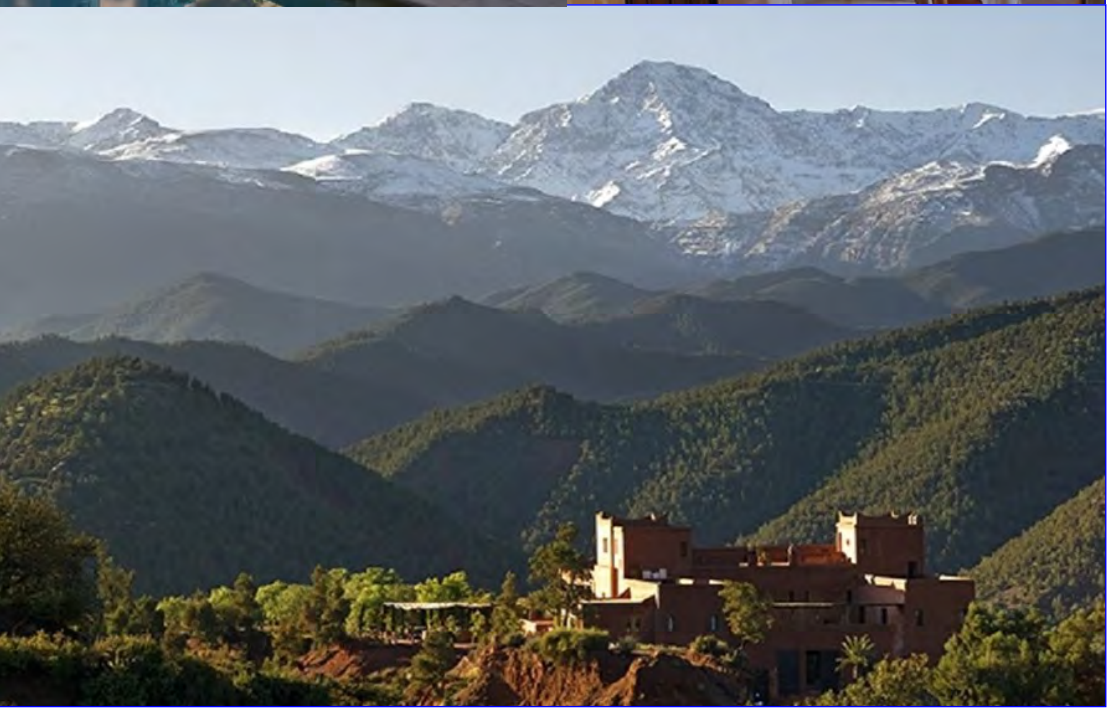
The ryad was restored in the traditional way, using craft men from the Medina, and is arranged in order to make the Ryad Salama a peaceful place to stay.

The Ryad Salama offers a swimming pool as well as traditional hammam and massage.

ryadsalama.com

RED PEPPER
GREEN PEPPER
INDIAN SAFFRON
HOT PAPRICA
GROUND CUMIN
MINT
HOT CURY
TURKISH SAFFRON
HOT CHILLY PEPPER
CINNAMON SPICE
SPECIAL FISH SPICE
SWEET CHILLY PEPPER
OREGANO
MUSCAT
SPECIAL CHICKEN SPICE
KEBAB & MEATBALL SPICE
SPECIAL SALAD SPICE
LOVE TEA
TURKISH BLACK TEA
NATURAL APPLE TEA
HIBISCUS TEA
MIX FRUIT TEA
ROSEHIP TEA
APPLE TEA
KIWI TEA





...sleeping Laterally

Les Deux Tours, Marrakech
Les Deux Tours is a peaceful and secluded hotel, located in the Palmeraie, an area of arid scrub, 6 km from the bustling centre of Marrakech. Two impressive mud towers (Les Deux tours) guard the entrance. Beyond the massive wooden doors lies a 3-hectare oasis of date palms, rose gardens, olive and orange groves.

Designed and owned by Morocco's most famous architect, Charles Boccara, it is a visual and sensual dream, inspired by Moorish, Turkish and Egyptian tradition with a contemporary twist. Originally built as 6 villas, Les Deux Tours was then turned into a hotel. Each room is connected by a series of pretty gardens and courtyards filled with small pools and a profusion of exotic flora. Inside, the walls are coated with tadelakt (polished plaster), floors are made of colourful zelige (tiles) and domes and columns are created from sun-baked mud bricks. Serene, scented, lush, luxurious but definitely chilled.

Les Deux Tours creates an atmosphere imbued with the Orientalism of the best of times in Marrakech. Les Deux Tours restores this past to the present combining the best elements of modern style, simplicity and good taste.

As well as a swimming pool, Les Deux Tours offers Spa "Les Bains" - traditional hammam with a hot bath and two steam rooms offering massages and treatments by a team of trained professionals.

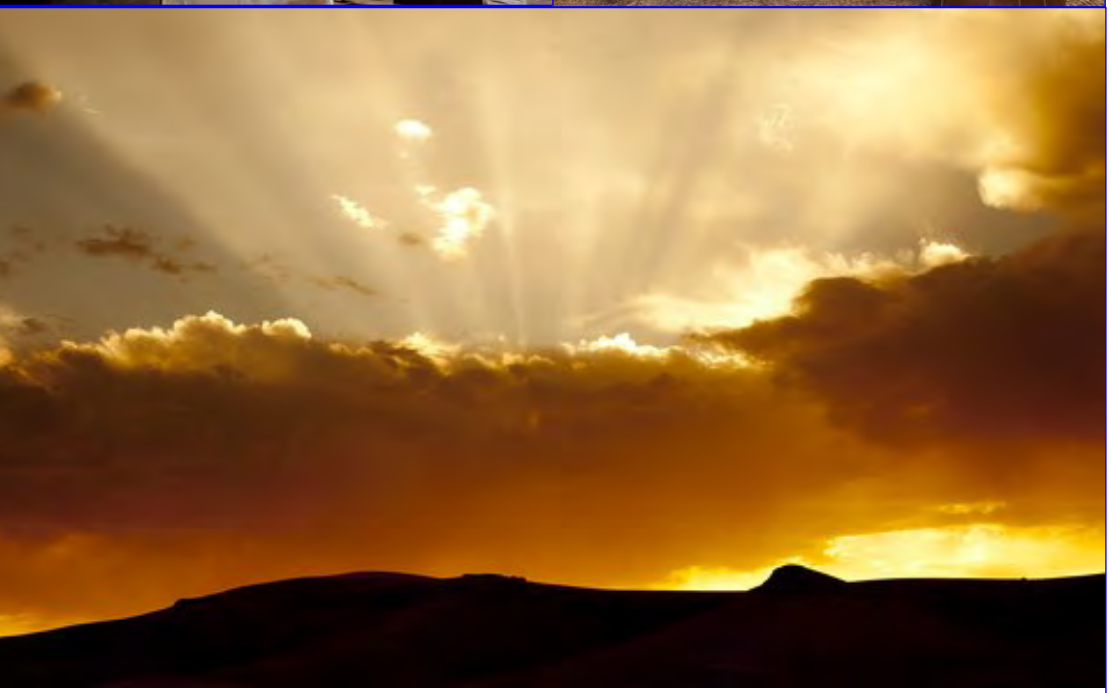
les-deux-tours.com

Kasbah Bab Ourika
Bab Ourika perches majestically on a hilltop at the apex of the Ourika Valley, guarding the gateway to the snow-capped Atlas Mountains – yet it is only 35 minutes from Marrakech's International airport. With 360 degree panoramic views, this innovative hotel receives warm sunlight all day, ending in spectacular sunsets. From its unique eyrie-like position it offers a birds eye view of the Atlas, of traditional Berber villages and of the lush river valley below.

Guests can relax in individually decorated rooms with their own terraces or unwind by the secluded swimming pool. Kasbah Bab Ourika also has a hammam for massages and other treatments. Meals are served in the gardens or in the colonnaded restaurant or can be taken privately in the rooms or suites. The restaurant serves food that is supplied freshly daily from the surrounding villages. The chef specialises in traditional Berber recipes as well as international cuisine.

Those curious to see more of Morocco can visit the large Monday Berber market at the nearby town of Tnine Ourika or call at some of the farms that grow herbs and flowers in the valley for the perfumers' and herbalists who sell a wide variety of exotic perfumes in the Medina.

kasbahbabourika.com



...sleeping Laterally

Villa de L'O Essouira

Villa de l'Ô is located at the entry of the medina of Essaouira Bab Sbaa. Protected by the walls of the medina, Villa de l'Ô is an 18th century riad. The period structure has been preserved but the interior has been completely revisited.

The twelve rooms and suites all have different names, starting with Ô and combining comfort, luxury and intimacy on various themes: Safari, Berber, marine, golf, colonial .... here the noble materials reign supreme, whether stone, wood, copper or silky fabrics. The central patio called Ôasis is a setting of light, water and vegetation that serves two lounges, the Ôrale and Ôbène.

The hotel also has a spa and a solarium terrace, Oxygen, conducive to the contemplation of the sunset over the Atlantic Ocean. An ode to the water spelled Ô for a warm and convivial stay in a place with a vagabond soul that makes you travel far beyond the ramparts of the town.

villadelo.com

Scarabeo Stone Desert Camp

Situated 35 km from Marrakech, in the small stone desert of Agafay, the camp affords stunning 360° views of the Agafay's barren grandeur and beyond to the snow-capped Atlas mountains.

The camp has various "glamping" tents dotted throughout a vast terrain, lit by flickering lanterns. Each private sleeping area consists of a nomad tent of thick white cotton with regular and comfortable beds. Guests can recline in a traditional Moroccan lounge strewn with ethnic cushions or put pen to paper as Papa Hemingway did at a wooden writing desk. A stretched cotton panel screens the entrance to each tent, for you to silently savour this mystical desert landscape still untouched by tourism.

Feasting on traditional Moroccan cuisine around a candlelit communal table is one of the pleasures of the desert camp. As evening envelops the camp in inky blackness, the dining tent is aglow on the hillside, inviting guests with the sounds of conversation and clinking glasses. Fresh bread is baked daily in a small traditional earthen oven and seasonal vegetables are cooked simply to bring out the natural flavour of the fresh produce.

scarabeocamp.com/en/stone-camp