

**Moroccan Crossroads:
Mosques, Medinas and Mountains
Sep 10 to 26, 2021
Itinerary Subject to Change**

DAY 1 Friday, Sep 10 US-Morocco

Depart your home town, arriving Casablanca the next day.

DAY 2 Saturday, Sep 11 Casablanca

Sofitel

After passing through customs you will be met and transferred to the hotel for overnight. Enjoy the welcome dinner.

(D)

DAY 3 Sunday, Sep 12 Casablanca -Tangier

La Maison Blanche + Dar Chams

Begin by visiting **Hassan II Mosque**, situated at the edge of the Atlantic Ocean. Built by the late King Hassan II at the end of his 40-year reign, this building is larger than Saint Peter's in Rome and capable of holding 80,000 worshippers. Then visit the **Jewish Museum**.

(B, L, D)

Lecture: Introduction to Morocco

DAY 4 Monday, Sep 13 Tangier- Asilah- Tangier

In the morning drive to Asilah, enjoy sightseeing in the old town; the medina is enclosed by well-preserved 15th-century ramparts and gates, built by the Portuguese. It is an art hub known for its murals.

Return to Tangier and explore this vibrant city with its historic legacies from European and Arab rule. Tangier was also once a paradise for expats from around the world. First visit the old **Kasbah**, including **Jami' al Qasba** and the **Grand Mosque of Tangier**. Visit the 17th century **Sultan's palace**, currently a museum of antiquities including Roman artifacts. Enjoy the beautiful **Historical Museum** in Tangier. Visit the **Medina** and the Jewish Quarter with its many old **Synagogues** before ending at the port.

(B, L, D)

DAY 5 Tuesday, Sep 14 Tangier-Tetouan-Chefchouan

Casa Hassan + Dar Meziana

After breakfast, enjoy the drive to the nearby city of **Tetouan**. This city, founded in the 15th century by Jews and Muslims fleeing persecution in Spain, offers a splendid medina and fine Spanish architecture with features redolent of the Alhambra. Upon arrival, explore the highlights of this UNESCO heritage site. Visit the old **Medina**; the **Jewish quarter**, **the Artisanal School**, and the parade ground of the **Royal Palace**. Also, visit the souk which is exceptionally well preserved. Then cross the Rif Mountains to the city of **Chefchouan**.

(B, L, D)

Lecture: Introduction to the Rif Mountains, Chefchaouen, and Morocco's Jewish Heritage.

DAY 6 Wednesday, Sep 15 Chefchaouen

Discover the lovely blue city, Chefchaouen. Its blue-rinsed houses, winding streets and markets enjoy a stunning setting in the foothills of the **Rif Mountains**.

Visit the **medina of Chefchaouen**, the 17th century **Kasbah** and its **Grand Mosque**. Afternoon at leisure.

(B, L)

DAY 7 Thursday, Sep 16 Chefchaouen - Tanakoub Berber Village – Fez Dar Bensouda

Today we will visit Tanakoub, a Berber village, to explore the daily life of the Berbers who are native to the Rif Mountains. Participate in a Berber **cooking class** hosted by a local family. En route, observe a timeless lifestyle where shepherds live and seasonally move with their herds of goat and sheep between the mountains and the Mediterranean Sea.

After lunch, enjoy the panoramic views along the way to Fez. Upon arrival check into hotel for overnight and dinner.

(B, L, D)

Lecture: Introduction to Fez & to Zillij Tile Work.

DAY 8 Friday, Sep 17 Fez

Today, visit the 14th century **Fez el-Jedid** (New Fez). First, admire the beautiful gates of the **King's Palace**. Then, visit the **Ibn Danan Synagogue** - the oldest synagogue in Fez. Walk through the **Mellah**, the **old Jewish quarter** which provides an interesting insight into the Jewish architecture. Afterwards visit **Dar Batha Museum** (if re-opened). Then enjoy walking in the well restored **Jnan Sbil gardens**.

After lunch, admire the **Fes Water Clock**, then visit the 14th century **Bou Inania Mederssa**, (a Koranic college), a jewel of the Hispano-Moorish architecture. Stop near the 16th century northern Fort for panoramic views of Fes. Visit the famous **pottery cooperative** to learn about this old craft and the Fez **zillig tile**.

(B, L, D)

DAY 9 Saturday, Sep 18 Fez – Meknes - Fez

Travel to the Imperial city of **Meknes**. It was chosen by the Sultan Moulay Ismail to be the capital of his empire. Explore some of its 40 kilometers of ramparts and monumental gates such as its impressive 17th century **Bab Mansour**. Continue to the granary of **Heri Souani**, and royal stables; it's reported that once it housed some 12,000 horses! Then admire the **Agdal Basin**: house of water, once used to water the royal gardens and amuse the favorite concubines of the sultan.

Tour **Moulay Ismail Mausoleum** which is the spiritual resting place of the Sultan Moulay Ismail and one of the few holy sites open to non-Muslims in Morocco. Stop at a **Damascene metal workshop** to learn about this craft that Meknes is known for. Then, visit the **Dar Jami Museum** (if

re-opened). Enjoy this 19th century palace before continuing to the wineries of Meknes for wine tasting and lunch.

Return to Fez; afternoon at leisure.

(B, L, D)

DAY 10 Sunday, Sep 19 Fez

After breakfast, enjoy your full day exploring the medieval medina (Old city) of **Fez el-Bali**. Today, take a step back in time to the Middle Ages when you visit the World Heritage site Fez El-Bali, founded in the 8th century by Moulay Idriss I. It is the largest living medieval medina-city, the spiritual and cultural heart of Morocco.

Visit the 14th century **Attarine Mederssa** and **Cherratine Mederssa**. Visit the **Nejjarine complex** that houses a beautiful fountain and the nearby **Foundouk**, now converted into a woodwork museum. The tour of the medina includes the 9th century **Karaouine mosque and university** and **Mausoleum of Moulay Idriss II** (exterior).

Fez is an important center for Moroccan handmade crafts; visit the **medieval tanneries, brass workers** and the **weavers** including the silk **Bougueddach Collective**, and countless souks including the **Henna Souk**. Afternoon at leisure to explore the famous souk and to shop for pottery, leather, wood-work, antiques and the famous Berber rugs.

(B, L, D)

Lecture: Volubilis

DAY 11 Monday, Sep 20 Fez-Volubilis-Moulay Idriss Zerhoun-Rabat Villa Mandarine

Drive to **Volubilis**, the most important Roman site in Morocco – the end of the Roman road. After completing your tour of the ruins, explore nearby **Moulay Idriss town**, the holiest Muslim site in Morocco and one of Morocco's most important pilgrimage sites.

Continue driving to Rabat. Upon arrival dinner and overnight at the hotel.

(B, L, D)

DAY 12 Tuesday, Sep 21 Rabat

Visit the compound of the **Royal Palace**, including the **Gate of the winds; Chellah ruins and gardens; Andalusian Gardens of Kasbah of Oudaya; Medina; Mohamed V Mausoleum**, and the adjacent ruins of an old hypostyle mosque, **Hassan Tower**.

In nearby **Sale** visit the **Merinid Medersa, Bab al Mrissa, Seaman's cemetery** and the **pilgrimage saint's tomb**. Possible tour of **Grand Theatre of Rabat**, if construction is completed.

(B, L, D)

DAY 13 Wednesday, Sep 22 Rabat – Marrakech Maison Arabe

Visit the **Museum of History and Civilizations**.

Drive from Rabat to Marrakech. Upon arrival to Marrakech check into hotel for dinner and overnight.

(B, L, D)

Lecture: Introduction to Marrakech.

DAY 14 Thursday, Sep 23 Marrakech

Enjoy a full day in Marrakech. Begin your journey into this magical city with a stop in front of the **Kotoubia mosque**, the landmark of Marrakech. The 12th century tiled minaret of the Kotoubia mosque inspired the architects of the Giralda of Seville and the Hassan Tower of Rabat. Visit to the 16th century **Mellah (Jewish Quarter)**, home of a thriving community of native and Spanish Jews famous for rabbinical schools and scholars. Visit the Rabbi Hanania Hacoheh **Jewish cemetery**, also the burial place of Rabbi Mordekhai Ben Attar and Rabbi Pinhas Hacoheh Azoug known as the "Patron of Marrakech". Then visit the **Lazama Synagogue** built in 1492. Tour along the **12th century ramparts** that surround the Medina.

Visit **Dar Si Said museum**, a wonderful example of a 19th century Arab-Andalusian home. This museum hosts important materials which demonstrate the diverse Moroccan culture since the 16th century. Visit **Maison Tiskiwin**, a 20th century house owned by a Dutch scholar, who was a collector of Saharan nomadic ornamentation.

After lunch, explore the colorful and aromatic **Souks** and the 11th century **Medina**. Visit **Maison de la Photographie**. Visit Ben Youssef Madrasa (if open) and Kouba Almoravid (if open).

Discover the famous **Jemma el Fana square**, a UNESCO World Heritage Cultural Space for its important role in transmitting oral heritage from one generation to another. It is a multitude of street-artists and stalls of dried fruit or orange juice freshly pressed in front of you. The multitude of small restaurants that take over its center from the early evening, contribute to the scent of its surroundings. The square was once the ultimate destination for traders from places as diverse as Venice, sub-Saharan Africa, and Asia.

Private Home Cocktail Party

(B, L)

DAY 15 Friday, Sep 24 Marrakech

After breakfast, visit **El Badi Palace**, the **Saadian Tombs**, and **Dar El Bacha Museum**, an aristocratic palace built by Thami El Glaoui, a former Pasha of Marrakech. This edifice is a noted aristocratic Riad museum consisting of many out-buildings; the traditional Hammam; the Douiria; a space for the servants of the palace, as well as a private harem quarter reserved for the Pasha family. Visit **Bab Agnou gate** (including Argan/herb store).

Lunch: Amal Women's Training Center and Restaurant, with a brief talk about the work of the High Atlas Foundation.

After lunch, proceed to the famous **Majorelle Gardens** of Yves Saint Laurent. The garden houses a collection of plants from around the world. Visit the **Berber Museum** inside the garden. This

museum exhibits Berber materials, part of the personal collection of Pierre Bergé and Yves Laurent. Then visit the recently opened **Museum of Yves Saint Laurent**. This beautiful building hosts a part of Pierre Bergé and Yves Saint Laurent's Foundation collection.

Visit **Musée de la Palmieraie**.

(B, L, D)

DAY 16 Saturday, Sep 25 Marrakech

Day in Atlas Mountains. Visit to a school and women's agricultural cooperative (flowers and medicinal plants). Visit **Ghmat Berber Village** – Berber house, mint tea ceremony and talk about local culture.

Leisure time in Marrakech.

(B, L, D)

DAY 17 Sunday, Sep 26 Marrakech-USA

Transfer to the airport for flight to US.

Tour cost 15-20+1 PAX = US\$ 5,995.00 per person on h/twin basis

Single room supplement: \$650 per person

Included:

- Arrival and departure transfers.
- AC transportation throughout the tour.
- Accommodation in double rooms in 4* hotels and authentic Moorish Riads with breakfast
- Tour leader
- Professional English-speaking guide throughout the tour.
- All meals in local restaurants as specified with the itinerary.
- All activities described in the tour and entrance fees to all sites mentioned in the itinerary
- Gratuities to guides, drivers and porters.
- Bottled water per person per day.

Not included:

- Roundtrip International air.
- Moroccan Visa - Currently Gratis to US citizens and obtainable upon arrival at Casablanca airport.
- Photography and video making fees.
- Dayrooms or extra hotel overnights if necessary.
- Activities and sites not described in the itinerary.
- Drinks during meals (soft or with alcohol) or meals not listed in the itinerary.
- Items of a personal nature (laundry, phone calls, emails, excess luggage charges, etc.)
- Travel protection insurance.