

MARRAKECH

FALL & WINTER GUIDE 2011 – 2012



The best places to eat, sleep and play
in Marrakech this fall and winter

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INTRODUCTION



TripAdvisor, the most trusted source for where to eat, sleep and play in thousands of destinations around the world, has collected the best insider tips from its 50 million monthly visitors to produce a unique series of travel guides. In addition to the best hotels, restaurants and attractions for every type of traveler, you'll get great advice about what to pack, how to get around and where to find the best views. Be sure to check out the guides at www.tripadvisor.com.



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PACKING TIPS

1. "For those who plan to stay in Morocco a bit longer, buy a **cheap mobile phone** (under 30 dollars) for local and national calls."—TripAdvisor Member, Morocco
2. "The daytime can be very hot and I would recommend bringing **something cool and light to use as a cover up** to stop your skin from blistering! For evenings out in Marrakech bring a **long (but light) pair of pants or skirt** in case it is cold. I would say a **smart jacket or cardigan** is also essential for warmth on cooler nights."—TripAdvisor Member, Liverpool, England
3. "Bring an **extra suitcase**, in case you decide to purchase a famous Moroccan room-size rug."—TripAdvisor Member

Inside MARRAKECH

Marrakech is Morocco's intoxicating city of duality. Streets are dotted with both ancient and modern buildings. Snake charmers sit outside refined palaces. Riotous marketplaces sell all kinds of wares, and the mysterious Medina (old town) contains nearly two miles of secret passages. Mopeds, mules and Mercedes dart around the city, yet time seems to have slowed down, and the locals pause to make connections with others. Musical events may not be formal and organized, but it's easy to find yourself swaying to the beat of an impromptu gathering of singers and musicians.

Marrakech has a sunny, Mediterranean climate. Average winter temperatures are near 70, though the nights can be cold. Spring and fall are the ideal months to visit, with pleasant temperatures and little rain. Summers are very hot, but dry.

There is a Tourist Brigade Police Force in place to keep you safe, yet your riskiest move may be crossing the street with mopeds charging around the city's tight corners at break-neck speeds. Luckily, you can hear them coming! You also have your choice of accommodations, from riads (urban houses) to luxury hotels. And, yes, there's even a McDonald's.

Top VIEWS



MARRAKECH'S BEST VIEWS



"A day trip south to Imlil, the highest point in the **Atlas Mountains**, is quite rewarding and awesome."—TripAdvisor Member, Morocco

Atlas Mountains, Outside Marrakech

"The **Moroccan House Hotel** has a terrace with breathtaking panoramic view over Marrakech."—TripAdvisor Member, England

Moroccan House Hotel, 3, Rue Loubnane, 5 24 42 03 05

"Take a relaxing flight up in the sky in a hot air balloon with **Ciel d'Afrique**, for breathtaking views of Marrakech."—TripAdvisor Member

Ciel d'Afrique, 15 Rue Mauritanie, Guéliz, 5 24 43 28 43

Where to PLAY

TOP 10 Attractions

1. Maison de la Photographie, 46 Rue Ahel Fes Medina, 5 24 38 57 21
2. Jemaa el Fna (Place of the Dead)
3. Bahia Palace, Beyond Place des Ferblantiers
4. Majorelle Garden (Jardin Majorelle), Safi Boulevard, 5 24 30 18 52
5. Ali Ben Youssef Medersa (Madrasa), Rue Souk el Khemis, 5 44 39 09 11
6. Medina of Marrakech
7. Marrakech Souk, Jemaa el Fna
8. Koutoubia Mosque and Minaret, Ave. Mohammed V
9. Marrakech Ramparts, Medina of Marrakech
10. Museum of Moroccan Arts (Dar Si Said), Derb El Bahia, Riad Zitoun el-Jedid, 0 24 44 24 64

FAMILIES



"The **Museum of Marrakech** is a restored 19th-century riad with stunning examples of zellij tile work. The museum houses art that you can buy, as well as historic artifacts. The centerpiece is the huge covered courtyard, which has traditional wrought iron and possibly the largest chandelier/lamp I've ever seen."—TripAdvisor Member, London, England

Museum of Marrakech, Place Ben Youssef, 5 24 44 18 93

"The **Museum of Moroccan Arts (Dar Si Said)** is a palace from the 19th century that serves as a good example of traditional Moroccan architecture. Inside, the museum displays artifacts from the private collections of former sultans and viziers."—TripAdvisor Member, Boston, Mass.

Museum of Moroccan Arts (Dar Si Said), Rue Riad Zitoun el-Jdid, 5 24 38 95 64

"**Marrakech By Air** was by far the best thing we did whilst staying in Marrakech. The balloon ride was fantastic, the view was beautiful and, according to our 11 year old daughter, the landing was the best bit. Very exciting!"—TripAdvisor Member, Geneva, Switzerland

Marrakech By Air, 113 Lot Yasmina, Ain Mezouar, 6 52 12 97 21

ROMANCE



"**Koutoubia Mosque and Minaret** is beautiful at night. Definitely worth taking pictures of the minaret and, if possible, to visit the mosque! The best in Marrakech, I'd say."—TripAdvisor Member, London, England

Koutoubia Mosque and Minaret, Avenue Mohammed V

"My husband absolutely loved **Les Bains de Marrakech!** One of the most luxurious spas we have visited. It seemed as though we had walked into a scene from *Arabian Nights*—billowing swaths of fabric on the high, sunlit courtyard, intimate rooms with soft, beautiful cushions everywhere."—TripAdvisor Member, London, England

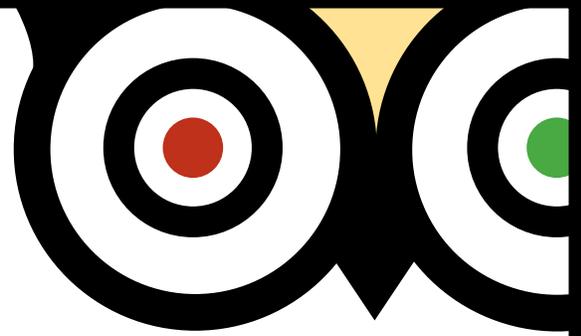
Les Bains de Marrakech, 2 Derb Sedra, Bab Agnaou, Kasbah, 5 24 38 14 28

"It seemed as though we had walked into a scene from *Arabian Nights*"

Take a romantic train ride from Marrakech to Tangiers and back on the **Marrakech Express**. "The view from the window when the sun is rising is breathtaking. I would do this journey again just for that."—TripAdvisor Member, Essex, U.K.

Marrakech Express, <http://www.oncf.ma>

Where to **PLAY**



BUDGET

"After dusk, **Jemaa el Fna** square comes alive with musicians playing drums, mandolins, flutes and a variety of other instruments. In particular, listen to a performance of *Gnaoua*, a Moroccan-bred genre of trance music that combines many African styles."—TripAdvisor Member

Jemaa el Fna (Place of the Dead), Central square at entrance to market

"Don't miss" **Arsat Moulay Abdeslam Cyber Park**, "eight hectares of ancient parkland that, despite its proximity to the bustle of the Medina, is quiet and refreshing! The park has had a 21st-century overhaul. Several internet booths were installed; they are very cheap, efficient and seemingly underused."—TripAdvisor Member, Birmingham, England

Arsat Moulay Abdeslam Cyber Park, Avenue Mohammed V

"**Bahia Palace** is wonderful, with lots of architectural and wall decoration details. Very nice gardens also. No furniture inside, but the walls, ceilings and gardens are more than beautiful."—TripAdvisor Member, Portugal

Bahia Palace, Beyond Place des Ferblantiers



ADVENTURE

Get lost in the maze of shops at the **Marrakech Souk**. "What a shopping experience! Be prepared to bargain, bargain hard and bargain with a smile. Take a handful of sweets to hand out to the children, and you will endear yourself to one and all."—TripAdvisor Member, Valencia, Spain

Marrakech Souk, Jemaa el Fna

Escape the bustle of the Medina and take a **camel trek** or a **4X4 excursion**. "The Berber Valleys of the High Atlas Mountains are only about one hour drive from the city. The concierge at your hotel can normally organize such trips for you if you let them know one or two days in advance."—TripAdvisor Member

High Atlas Mountains excursion, Various locations

"The **walk to the Marrakech Square** is an adventure in itself. When you come out of the riad, there is a road with no pavement and you have to watch for donkeys overtaking people, bikes overtaking donkeys, motorbikes overtaking bikes, then taxis overtaking all of them—all at the same time!"—TripAdvisor Member, Costa del Sol, Spain

Walk to the Marrakech Square

TripAdvisor members have posted more than 8,000,000 traveler photos on the site. The good, the bad and the very candid. It's almost like being there!



EDUCATIONAL/HISTORICAL

A preserved theological college, "**Ali Ben Youssef Medersa** is for those interested in looking at old lifestyles. It's not a very big place, but you can see how small and uncomfortable the classrooms were in those days. The bedrooms were tiny too."—TripAdvisor Member, London, England

Ali Ben Youssef Medersa, Rue Souk el Khemis, 5 44 39 09 11

"The royal palace of Marrakech, **Dar el Makhzen**, is located on the Place de la Kasbah, and houses a large collection of Moroccan art dating from the 17th century. The ceiling frescos, plaster sculptures and detailed mosaics are definitely worth a look, as are the luxurious silks and carpets on display."—TripAdvisor Member

Dar el Makhzen, Place de la Kasbah

"A walk through the **Medina of Marrakesh** (old town) is a must. It's probably the only way to explore the true Moroccan culture. It's best to start at a fixed point in the Medina, such as one of the main gates, and head to one of the main sites, such as the Koutoubia, so that you can ask people for directions while also exploring."—TripAdvisor Member, London, England

Medina of Marrakesh



RELAXATION

Rejuvenate in the "calm location at **Atlas Medina & Spa**. The spa is absolutely magnificent—very professional."—TripAdvisor Member, Saint-Georges-sur-Eure, France

Atlas Medina & Spa, Ave Hassan Ier, 5 24 33 99 99

"While I love hustly, bustly Marrakech, there are some times when you want a bit more tranquility. You'll find it at the **Jardin Majorelle**. It has a huge cactus collection, as well as various other flowers. The blue villa is a gorgeous building. There are also streams and ponds. Nice way to spend a few hours!"—TripAdvisor Member, London, England

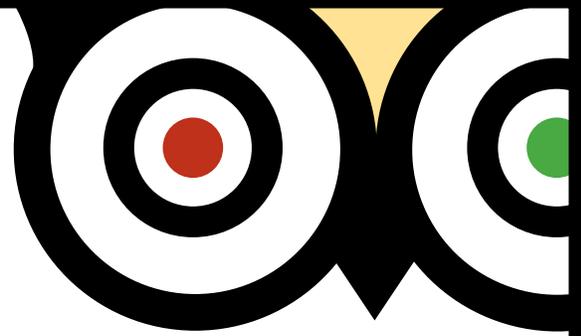
Jardin Majorelle (Majorelle Garden), Off Yakoub El Mansour, 5 24 30 18 52

Marvel at the colorful tiles and relax in the outdoor gardens of the **Saadian Tombs**, "hidden away down a tiny alley that opens out to a peaceful area with—yes, you guessed it—tombs."—TripAdvisor Member, Colchester, U.K.

Saadian Tombs, Next to Kasbah Mosque, Off Rue de la Kasbah

What's the **TOUR**

How to Get Around



"If you are on a very tight budget, you can get **local bus #11** from the main road (turn left when you have crossed the airport parking lot and good luck dodging the taxi drivers) for about 4 dirhams."—TripAdvisor Member

"The **Petit Taxis** have meters but the drivers tend to forget using them with tourists. It is always good to negotiate the price in advance, but keep in mind that at night, the prices are 50% more than during the day. (This rule applies even to locals.)"—TripAdvisor Member

"In Marrakech, you will also find about **300 caleches**, or small horse-drawn carriages. These provide a good way of seeing the city, and can be found most easily at the Square de Foucauld near the Jemaa El Fna. Again, it is a good idea to ask about the price of the ride beforehand."—TripAdvisor Member

Want more information on Marrakech? TripAdvisor.com offers free weekly e-mail updates filled with new deals, reviews and articles for Marrakech or any other destination you choose.

WHERE to eat



FAMILIES

At **Al Fassia**, "the lamb shoulder was truly fantastic. My daughter had a tajine, and she was enthusiastic as well. The Moroccan wine was good, the atmosphere fine and the people were nice."—TripAdvisor Member, The Hague, Netherlands

Al Fassia, 232 Avenue Mohammed V, 5 24 43 40 60

Kasbah La Rotonda boasts "spectacular decoration, with very good live music and amiable, attentive service. Great quality and quantity for a good price."—TripAdvisor Member, Madrid

Kasbah La Rotonda, 39 Derb Imnabha, 5 24 38 55 49

The food at **Flower Power Cafe** is "all organic and really tasty. The staff are very helpful and the setting soothing. If you have young children, it's a nice break from the noise of the city."—TripAdvisor Member, London, U.K.

Flower Power Cafe, Route de Sidi Abdellah Ghiat, 5 24 48 40 87

ROMANCE

"The atmosphere and layout of **La Trattoria De Giancarlo** are fantastic. This is a beautiful, romantic place to eat. The food was extremely tasty, and our bill was very reasonable."—TripAdvisor Member, Moscow, Russia

La Trattoria De Giancarlo, 179 El Beqal Gueliz, 5 24 43 26 41

"...utterly romantic"

"We had a superb dining experience" at **Le Restaurant du Riad Monceau**. "The house is absolutely beautiful, and the ambiance is utterly romantic. Definitely the perfect place to celebrate an elegant night."—TripAdvisor Member, London, England

Le Restaurant du Riad Monceau, 7/8 derb Chaabane, Riad Zitoun Lakdim, 5 24 42 96 46

"Every meal we had at the **Riad Kniza** was a delightful dining experience, especially the dinner, which was both a visual and delicious feast. I couldn't think of a better way to end the day than the quiet and tranquility of this beautiful riad."—TripAdvisor Member, Hong Kong

Riad Kniza Restaurant, 34, Derb L'Hotel, Bab Doukala Medina, 5 24 37 69 42

BUDGET

"We came to **Mona's** three times during our stay and really enjoyed the food. The best value we found was the lunch set menu: 70 Dirhams for vegetarian mezze and 90 for the meat mezze."—TripAdvisor Member

La Table de Mona, 6 Rue Capitaine Arrighi, 6 18 13 79 59

"**Catanzaro** is a great cheap Italian restaurant. Nothing special to look at on the outside, but full of locals either eating or ordering takeaway!"—TripAdvisor Member, Durham, U.K.

Catanzaro, Rue Tarik Ibn Zayad, 5 24 43 37 31

"**Chez Chegrouni** is not the smartest of places, but you can get a good view of the comings and goings of the square and eat fairly cheaply. I ate there twice last week and enjoyed the experience."—TripAdvisor Member, Morocco

Chez Chegrouni, Jemaa el Fna, 0 65 47 46 15

WHERE to eat



HEALTH-CONSCIOUS

At **Riad Des Mers**, enjoy fresh seafood and only seafood, including “the best oysters we have tasted in a long time.”—TripAdvisor Member, London, England

Riad Des Mers, 411 Derb Sidi Messaoud, 5 24 37 53 04

“**Kaowa** is the place to be, a gourmet gem. We were so happy to find a place that serves healthy choices, full of freshness and flavor.”—TripAdvisor Member, Paris, France

Kaowa, 34 rue Yves St. Laurent, 5 24 33 00 72

Enjoy “delicious vegetarian and vegan organic delights at **Earth Café**. It’s more than just a cafe. It is a comfortable place for guests to relax and enjoy. Chilled music. Good menu. Reasonable prices. Generosity. And a warm welcome.”—TripAdvisor Member, Herefordshire, U.K.

Earth Café, No2 Derb Zwak, Riad Zitoun El Kdim, 6 60 54 49 92

“We ate there three times!”

HIDDEN GEMS

With delicious food, live music and elaborate dancing, **Comptoir Darna** “is a must do in Marrakech.”—TripAdvisor Member, Marrakech

Comptoir Darna, Avenue Echchouada, 5 24 43 77 02

Dar Belkabir is “a real gem. Almost hidden but well worth finding. Very classy with super Moroccan food, lovely decor and a charming owner. We ate there three times!”—TripAdvisor Member

Dar Belkabir, 2 Souk Des Roseaux, Jemaa El Fna, 5 24 37 56 08

“Try the fantastic **Yacout**, a Moroccan restaurant deep in the Medina. The roads are only the width of the car, so don’t get worried and wonder where the taxi is taking you.” It is a popular place, so “book as soon as you arrive in Morocco.”—TripAdvisor Member, Morocco

Yacout, 79, 69 Sidi Ahmed Soussi, near Bab Doukkala, 5 24 43 77 02

SPECIAL EVENTS



The **Marrakech International Film Festival** features a week of movies screened in the open air of the Place Jemaa el Fna. This year is the 11th edition of the festival and will include a special tribute to Mexican cinema. (December 2 – 10)

Festival International du Film de Marrakech (FIFM), Place Jemaa el Fna, 5 24 43 24 93/94, <http://www.festivalmarrakech.info>

Join over 5,000 runners on a route that crosses the ancient ramparts of the city and heads through groves of olive trees at the world famous **Marrakech International Marathon and Half-Marathon**. (January 29)

Marrakech International Marathon, 5 24 44 68 22, <http://www.marathon-marrakech.com>

Every February, Marrakech fills with traditional music during the **Dakka Marrakchia**, a festival in which local shopkeepers and artisans join together in drumming rhythms in honor of the Sabaatou Rijal, the seven patron saints of Marrakech. (February)

Dakka Marrakchia, Various venues, 5 42 60 63 50, <http://www.visitmorocco.com>

International illusionists and local magicians wow spectators with performances all over the city, from gala shows at the Royal Theatre to free street exhibitions, during **Morocco’s Magical Arts Festival**. (March)

Magical Arts Festival, Marrakech Royal Theatre, Avenue de France, 5 24 43 78 94

Cadi Ayyad University hosts the annual **International University Music Festival**, as students perform the latest in pop, jazz, classical, and contemporary Arab music in a series of free concerts. (April)

International University Music Festival, Cadi Ayyad University, <http://www.ucam.ac.ma>

Where to STAY



FAMILIES

"I wonder how I can express the authentic Moroccan decor, charming staff, amazing food and incredible attention to every small detail? A jump in a lost paradise is the only way to describe **Riyad Al Moussika**."—TripAdvisor Member, Radda, Italy

Riyad Al Moussika, 62 Derb Boutouil, Kennaria, 5 24 38 90 67

"A lost paradise is the only way to describe it."

"We were very pleased with our stay at **Riad Dar Dialkoum**. Our room was very comfortable, clean and nice in every imaginable way. Our children were taken into consideration well, both in the sleeping arrangements and the meals. A perfect place to return after a day of chaotic sightseeing."—TripAdvisor Member, Helsinki, Finland

Riad Dar Dialkoum, 317, Derb Jdid, Derb Nakhla, Bab Doukkala, 6 65 40 72 06

Dar Ayniwen Villa Hotel is "an address we'll never forget! It is a quiet and delightful place, and we felt we were at our home."—TripAdvisor Member, Paris, France

Dar Ayniwen Villa Hotel, Tafrata, La Palmeraie, 5 24 32 96 84

Have questions about Marrakech? Get insider advice from local experts in our forums. The majority of questions are answered within 24 hours.

ROMANCE

"**Riad Les Trois Palmiers** is a haven in the midst of the medina. The bedrooms and lounge spaces are beautiful, the food wonderful and the service exceptional. The location is ideal—extremely quiet, but easy to find with excellent access to numerous attractions."—TripAdvisor Member, Melbourne, Australia

Riad Les Trois Palmiers, 36 Derb Tizougarine, Dar El Bacha, 6 78 96 01 84

"I've traveled all over the world and stayed in a great many hotels/guest houses, and I must sing the praises of **Dar Silsila**. This riad is the epitome of peace and tranquility amid the noise and the haste of the Medina. The perfect spot!"—TripAdvisor Member

Dar Silsila, 11 Derb Jdid Laksour, 6 67 35 20 05

"A haven in the midst of the medina."

"Imagine this: twinkle of sparkling tea lights, smell of amber and orange, luxurious cream and white linens richly embroidered in deep purple, exquisite carving of lanterns and tables by the plunge pool. Open the door into a little heaven—your every wish anticipated. **Dar Charkia** will leave you wanting to come back again and again."—TripAdvisor Member, Hampshire, U.K.

Dar Charkia, 49-50 Derb Halfaoui, Bab Doukkala, 5 24 37 64 77

BUDGET

"We enjoyed returning to the **Riad Jonan**, a lovely haven after a hectic day out in the souks. We always found our hosts interested in what we had been up to and then suggesting a good place for us to eat for the night."—TripAdvisor Member, Bristol, U.K.

Riad Jonan, 35 Derb Bzou, 5 24 38 64 48

The 2010 Travelers' Choice winner for Best Bargain, **Riad Assakina**, "is absolutely beautiful. But what makes this place really special is the service. As soon as you arrive, you are made to feel part of the family."—TripAdvisor Member, Madrid, Spain

Riad Assakina, Derb Alaati Allah, 14, Hay Salam, 5 24 38 05 52

"If you want a place to stay where you can escape the madness and heat by stepping into a cool, peaceful paradise, then stay at **Riad Dar One**. The rooms are amazing, the breakfasts delicious and the staff are very friendly and helpful."—TripAdvisor Member, London, England

Riad Dar One, 19, Derb Jemaa el Kabir, Hay Salam, 6 61 30 63 28

LUXURY

"It's really hard to put your finger on just what makes **Maison MK** so special. Beautiful design, exceptional service and stunning food can be found in lots of five star hotels but there is something quite unique about the way it's all put together here."—TripAdvisor Member, London, England

Maison MK, 14 Derb Lafkih Sbaai, Quartier Ksour, Medina, 14 28 68 22 62

"The perfect balance in a vacation is the ability to see new sights but also have time to relax. High atop a cliff outside the city, **Kasbah Tamadot** is a peaceful oasis. At night, without the noise or light pollution, all you could hear was the rushing of the water in the creek, and all you could see in the sky was the most amazing blanket of stars."—TripAdvisor Member

Kasbah Tamadot, Asni, 5 24 36 82 00

"**Dar Ilham** is a beautifully designed Moroccan villa. The rooms are authentically designed with candle lit mood lighting throughout, providing a more intimate feel for the evenings. The staff are incredibly welcoming - nothing seemed too much to ask for."—TripAdvisor Member, Paris, France

Hotel Kasbah Dar Ilham, Km. 13, Route de Fes, 6 61 78 75 16

Where to **STAY**



HIDDEN GEMS

“The **Riad de L’Orangeriaie** is a subtle combination of modern comfort, refined decoration and a vivid feeling of being where you are: in a North African city, with a different culture, different language, architecture, food and influences. We were treated with extreme care and attention by the staff and especially the owner.”—TripAdvisor Member, Antibes, France

Riad de L’Orangeriaie, 61, Rue Sidi El Yamani, 6 61 23 87 89

“I have struggled to find a negative because it’s so hard to believe that perfection exists in this mad world, but it does and it’s called **Kniza**. Without exception, the owners and staff were wonderfully helpful, always there to sort out anything that we wanted to do.”—TripAdvisor Member, Tunbridge Wells, England

Riad Kniza, 34 Derb l’Hotel, 5 24 37 69 42

Riad Zolah, a 2008 Travelers’ Choice winner for best Hidden Gem, provides “the greatest experience in Marrakech! It’s a beautifully restored riad, quiet, peaceful, so beautiful. The courtyards are gorgeous and perfect for spending some time reading, chatting or just relaxing. Location is great, just in the middle of the souks.”—TripAdvisor Member, Madrid, Spain

Riad Zolah, 114-116 Derb El Hammam, 5 24 38 75 35

“...it’s so hard to believe that perfection exists in this mad world”

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