



MOSAICS & MEDINAS

Prepare to be dazzled as you venture into this vibrant and colourful country full of grand imperial cities, spectacular landscapes, ancient ruins, bustling souks, beautiful handicrafts and a mouth-watering cuisine.

Tailor-Made Journeys, Suggested Itineraries



North Africa & Middle East,
Morocco



8 days from AU\$10,645 pp



Private

Journey Overview

Prepare to be dazzled as you venture into this vibrant and colourful country full of grand imperial cities, spectacular landscapes, ancient ruins, bustling souks, beautiful handicrafts and a mouth-watering cuisine. The fascinating history and rich culture will captivate as you uncover all that is exotic in this magical place. Discover five UNESCO World Heritage Sites on this introduction to irresistible Morocco.

Journey Highlights

- Explore charming Rabat and the hauntingly beautiful ruins of Sala Colonia
- Wander through Meknes and Volubilis, UNESCO World Heritage Sites
- Get lost in the narrow lanes and alleyways of the old medina in Fes
- Breathe in the aromas and soak up the colour of Marrakech's main square
- Stay in charming boutique hotels, infused with rich Moroccan character



Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive Casablanca - Rabat

Receive a warm Moroccan welcome in Casablanca where you are met and driven up the Atlantic coast to the country's charming capital, Rabat. Often overlooked, Rabat, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, has a modern diverse culinary scene, ancient and modern architecture and a thriving art culture. Spend a lazy afternoon in your luxury accommodation, or step outside and uncover more of this city.

Fairmont La Marina Rabat Salé

Day 2: Rabat

Head out and observe the many cultural influences and superbly preserved relics of Rabat's Moorish past. Start off at the 12th century Hassan Tower, an excellent example of the Moorish style with its incomplete minaret of the great mosque built by Yacoub al-Mansour. Next door is the mausoleum dedicated to Mohamed V, the founder of modern Morocco and the grandfather of the current king.

You also pay a visit to the Oudaya Kasbah which is built on a bluff overlooking the ocean. Its gate is one of the most beautiful surviving in the Moorish world and within its walls you'll explore a delightful craft museum housed in a former palace, as well as an Andalusian garden, complete with tinkling fountain and sweet-smelling orange trees. Beyond the city walls are the most hauntingly beautiful ruins in Morocco, the ancient Roman remains of Sala Colonia. Set amidst crumbling walls in a garden of tropical plants see the necropolis of the great Merenid leader, El Hassan and the tomb of the mighty "Black Sultan".

Finally, visit the Mohamed VI museum of Modern & Contemporary art, a great introduction to Moroccan history and contemporary Moroccan artists.

Fairmont La Marina Rabat Salé / Meals: B

Day 3: Rabat - Volubilis - Meknes - Fes

Your journey continues today with a drive to Fes via splendid Meknes, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the Imperial Cities of Morocco. The impressive monuments here are splendid and were built in the 17th century by the powerful sultan Moulay Ismail, to rival the court of his contemporary Louis XIV of France. Marvel at the monumental Bab Mansour gateway – considered one of the finest of the great gates of Morocco.

After lunch travel onwards to Volubilis, also a UNESCO World Heritage Site, home to the largest and most well-preserved Roman ruins in Morocco. With its triumphal arches, basilicas and capitols, the Volubilis skyline is peppered with examples of great Roman architecture. However, the greatest treasures of Volubilis are the superb mosaic floors, which have been excellently preserved and left in situ. Arrive in Fes this afternoon.

Riad Fes / Meals: BL

Day 4: Fes

Embark on your private city sightseeing tour starting in the UNESCO World Heritage medina including a visit to the famous Tanneries of Fes. See how the country's highly esteemed leather is dyed using all natural ingredients before continuing to Fes El Jedid (New Fes). Here you will see the Royal Palace, mosques, medersas (schools), bustling souks and the old city wall. Most notably, Fes El Jedid is home to the Mellah, the old Jewish quarter, where the wrought iron decorated windows and splendid carved wood balconies of the old mansions are particularly outstanding.

Riad Fes / Meals: B

Day 5: Fes - Marrakech

After a morning at leisure transfer to the airport for the flight to the thrilling city of Marrakech, also known as the 'Pearl of the South', 'Jewel of the South' and 'The Red City'. Private transfer to your luxury accommodation with the rest of the day at leisure. Step outside and explore at your own speed.

Towards day's end you wind up in Djemaa El-Fna, the city's main square and beating heart of Marrakech. Home to a multitude of street-artists, stalls of dried fruit and freshly-pressed orange juice, snake charmers, story-tellers, acrobats and musicians, cafés, restaurants and a rich aroma of barbecued meats and spicy tagines. Get a front row seat and sip a mint tea as you watch the spectacle from above.

La Villa Des Orangers / Meals: B

Day 6: Marrakech

Get a taste of exotic Marrakech today when you delve into the mysteries of the medina, the old walled section of the town, where most the city's architectural attractions lie. Explore the labyrinthine souks, looking for treasures and bartering hard. Souk Smarine is a maze of colourful alleys dominated by textiles, clothing and handicrafts – a shopper's paradise.

Visit the gardens and admire the Koutoubia mosque, an emblem of Marrakech. Koutoubia's minaret went on to inspire the architects of the Giralda of Seville and the Hassan Tower of Rabat. Built in the 12th century, the minaret is considered the most perfect Islamic religious structure in North Africa, and at 77 metres high, it dominates the local skyline.

In the afternoon, discover Marrakech's famous, beautiful gardens which are dotted around the city. Begin with a visit to the Menara gardens, which date back to the 12th century and are set among extensive orchards and olive groves. At the centre is a rectangular pool with a fabulous view of the Atlas Mountains. Continue onto the Jardin Majorelle (Majorelle Gardens), originally designed in 1924 by French artist Jacques Majorelle. After taking up residence in Marrakech, Majorelle transformed the property's existing garden into a tropical paradise. Take time to wander through this peaceful haven before visiting the Berber Museum, housed in Majorelle's former painting studio, nestled in the heart of the gardens. With more than 600 items collected from the Sahara desert all the way to the Rif Mountains, this beautiful panoramic display takes you through a discovery journey of the Amazigh (Berbers), the most ancient people in North Africa.

Afterwards, visit the Yves Saint Laurent Museum. The renowned fashion designer first visited Marrakech in 1966 and the museum is dedicated to his couture and the country that so inspired him. After careful selection by his partner Pierre Bergé the museum exhibits more than 5,000 of his designs and 15,000 accessories.

La Villa Des Orangers / Meals: BL**Day 7: Marrakech**

The day is yours to explore your way with a private guide and vehicle at your disposal.

La Villa Des Orangers / Meals: B**Day 8: Depart Marrakech**

Private transfer to the airport for your departure flights.

Meals: B

Map



Accommodation

La Villa Des Orangers, Marrakech



La Villa Des Orangers is a lovely, intimate hotel where everything has been carefully designed to ensure a completely relaxing stay. The deluxe rooms and suites are decorated in rich, warm hues, some with individual roof terraces looking out onto the open courtyards. White walls accented with beige and orange tones are complemented by wood furnishings.

The pretty central courtyard, shaded by orange trees, is a lovely spot for breakfast, whilst the rooftop terrace is a real sun trap and great for afternoon tea.

The hotel is a 400 metre walk from Jemaa El Fna Square and the Koutoubia mosque and, as such, is an ideal base from which to venture out in the noise and colour of ancient Marrakech.

Why we like it

- La Villa Des Orangers is in the heart of Marrakech with rooms and suites set in a large garden with patios and fountains
- The restaurant serves delightful Moroccan and Mediterranean cuisine
- A traditional Hamman offer traditional treatments with black soap, ghassoul wraps and rose water
- The hotel has three pools, one a large heated pool surrounded by gardens and sun decks

- Other facilities include a sun terrace, lounges and bars, a selection of lovely secluded courtyards and a boutique

Dates & Pricing

From \$10,645 per person twin share (low season) and from \$11,760 per person twin share (high season). Solo travellers on request.

As this Tailor Made Journey can be personalised to your specific requirements, it is not available for online booking. Depending on your preferred dates and arrangements, final pricing will vary.

Please call A&K on 1300 851 800, send us a **booking enquiry** to book this journey or contact your travel advisor.

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