



Morocco

Includes »

Mediterranean Coast & the Rif.....	637
Atlantic Coast.....	648
Imperial Cities & the Middle Atlas.....	660
Central Morocco & the High Atlas.....	670
Understand Morocco.....	684
Survival Guide.....	686
Getting There & Away.....	690
Getting Around.....	691

Best Places to Eat

- » Auberge Dardara Restaurant (p646)
- » Outdoor fish grills (p659)
- » Café Clock (p666)
- » Earth Café (p674)

Best Places to Stay

- » Dar Nour (p640)
- » Jnane Mogador (p673)
- » Dar Raha (p680)

Why Go?

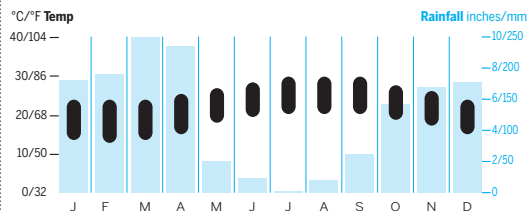
For many travellers, Morocco might just be a short hop away by ferry or by one of the countless budget airlines from Spain, but it's a much further distance to travel culturally. The regular certainties of Europe are suddenly swept away by the arrival in full technicolour of Africa and Islam. It's a complete sensory overload.

Atlantic winds blow through cosmopolitan Tangier and Casablanca and the whitewashed coastal gems of Asileh and Essaouira. The great imperial cities of Marrakesh and Fez have enough surprises hidden in their winding streets to fill a dozen visits.

The High Atlas Mountains seem custom-made for hiking boots, with trails between Berber villages, and North Africa's highest peak to conquer. Or if you prefer someone else to do the walking, saddle up your camel and ride into the Sahara, to watch the sun setting over an ocean of sand.

When to Go

Marrakesh



March–June
Spring blooms; it's hot but fresh with a chance of rain. Morocco's at its greenest.

July–August
It's Ramadan; many restaurants closed in the day and reduced business hours.

November–January
Warm days of winter sun that are perfect for Marrakesh and the south.

AT A GLANCE

- » **Currency** Moroccan dirham (Dh)
- » **Languages** Moroccan Arabic (Darija), French, Berber
- » **Money** ATMs widespread; credit cards widely accepted
- » **Visas** Schengen rules apply

Fast Facts

- » **Area** 446,550 sq km
- » **Capital** Rabat
- » **Country code** 212
- » **Emergency** 190 Police

Exchange Rates

Australia	A\$1	Dh8.45
Canada	C\$1	Dh8.22
euro	€1	Dh11.28
Japan	¥100	Dh9.81
New Zealand	NZ\$1	Dh6.35
UK	UK£1	Dh12.95
USA	US\$1	Dh8.04

Set Your Budget

- » **Budget hotel room** from Dh250
- » **Two-course evening meal** Dh70–150
- » **Museum entrance** Dh10–50
- » **Beer** Dh20
- » **Local taxi ride** Dh10

Resources

- » **The View from Fez** (<http://riadzany.blogspot.com>)
- » **Visit Morocco** (www.visitmorocco.com)

Connections

The cheap flight revolution has well and truly arrived in Morocco, and budget airlines link Casablanca, Marrakesh, Fez and Tangier to the major European air hubs. If you have time, a more enjoyable way of connecting to mainland Europe is by ferry, either zipping across the Straits of Gibraltar from Tangier to Algeciras or Tarifa in Spain, or from Spain's enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla to connect with the Spanish rail network.

ITINERARIES

One week

From Tangier, make a beeline for Fez and Marrakesh, imperial cities in the Moroccan interior that deserve as much time as you can spare. After that, a detour to artsy Essaouira is a wonderful way to step down a gear after the onslaught of Morocco's most clamorous cities.

Two weeks

Follow the itinerary above, but en route south head via chilled-out Chefchaouen. Meknès is a great detour from Fez, but once into the south past Marrakesh, make time either to head into the High Atlas for hiking, or the Saharan sand at Merzouga or M'Hamid.

Essential Food & Drink

- » **Tajine** Slow-cooked stew in conical-topped earthenware dish. Classic varieties include chicken with olives and lemon, *kefta* (meatballs), lamb with vegetables and beef with prunes and almonds.
- » **Couscous** Slow steamed hand-rolled semolina, served with a light broth and either meat or vegetables. Usually the centrepiece of a meal.
- » **B'stilla** Parcel of layered filo pastry, stuffed with pigeon or chicken, nuts and cinnamon.
- » **Khoobz** Traditional Moroccan bread, baked in communal wood-fired ovens.
- » **Harira** Classic thick soup with onion, lentil, chickpeas, tomato and lamb.