

Welcome to Morocco

Morocco is a gateway to Africa, and a country of dizzying diversity. Here you'll find epic mountain ranges, ancient cities, sweeping deserts – and warm hospitality.

Mountains & Desert

From Saharan dunes to the peaks of the High Atlas, Morocco could have been tailor-made for travellers. Lyrical landscapes carpet this slice of North Africa like the richly coloured and patterned rugs you'll lust after in local cooperatives. The mountains – not just the famous High Atlas but also the Rif and suntanned ranges leading to Saharan oases – offer simple, breathtaking pleasures: night skies glistening in the thin air, and views over a fluffy cloudbank from the Tizi n'Test pass. On lower ground, there are rugged coastlines, waterfalls and caves in forested hills, and the mighty desert.

Ancient Medinas

Morocco's cities are some of the most exciting on the continent. Join the centuries-old trail of nomads and traders to their ancient hearts, from the winding medina maze of Fez to the carnivalesque street-theatre of the Djemaa el-Fna in Marrakesh. In the rocky deserts medinas are protected by kasbahs, on the coast by thick sea walls. But it's not just a heritage trip, as Morocco's cities are forward-facing too, with glitzy new urban design in Casablanca, Rabat and Tangier looking to the future as well as paying homage to their roots.

Moroccan Activities

Enjoying Morocco starts with nothing more strenuous than its national pastime – people-watching in a street cafe with a coffee or a mint tea. Use the opportunity to plan your next moves – hiking up North Africa's highest peak, learning to roll couscous, camel trekking in the desert, shopping in the souqs or getting lost in the medina. Between the activities, you can sleep in boutique riads, relax on panoramic terraces and grand squares, and mop up delicately flavoured tajines – before sweating it all out in a restorative hammam.

Traditional Life

Morocco is a storied country, that has over the centuries woven its ties to Sub-Saharan Africa, Europe and the wider Middle East into whole cloth. Its mixed Arab and Berber population forms a strong national identity, but an increasingly youthful one, taking the best of its traditions and weaving the pattern anew – from the countryside to the city, from the call to prayer from the mosque to the beat of local hip hop. Morocco has a hundred faces and sounds, all ready to welcome the traveller looking for spice and adventure.



Why I Love Morocco

By Paul Clammer, Writer

In the 20-something years that I've been visiting Morocco – from a student backpacker through leading tour groups and writing travel guides to having my own front door key to a medina house – it's always the first mint tea that grounds me in the place. The ceremonial pouring and re-pouring from silver teapots. The tall glasses stuffed with viridescent leaves that scald to the touch. The impossible sweetness that would be cloying anywhere else in the world. Back then, mint tea was the taste of somewhere new. Now, it's the reassurance that I'm back in a country I love. For me, there's nothing more Moroccan.

For more about our writers, see p512