



Greetings I-ADVENTURERS!

If we do say so ourselves, we love this trip that we have put together!

A little background. We were hoping that, like many other entities who offer high quality tours, we could do what they do and hire a tour operator. Although we've never done this in our 20 years of organizing tours, it sounded appealing. From Seattle, we worked with several operators over a few months spending countless hours having them put together a custom itinerary for us. However, nothing was satisfactory. Whatever they came up with, no matter how hard they tried to accommodate us, the results just didn't feel like an I-ADVENTURES trip. We bagged that idea and Jayson and I hopped on a plane for Morocco and spent three weeks traipsing around the country checking out cities, driving winding mountain roads with hairpin turns, and getting lost in ancient markets, always on the lookout for the experiences and accommodations that would delight our group.

Originally, we thought we would start in Casablanca as is typical, but we didn't find it to be interesting enough. We thought we would love Chefchaouen, the appealing blue city with clay flowerpots in many of the tourist photos of Morocco, but it was too crowded with tourists, so it dropped off the itinerary. Other places, we hadn't considered before became part of the trip.

We spent much of our time there checking out accommodations. Believe me when I say, we kissed some frogs -- places that looked great on the web, many with 5* reviews, that just wouldn't work for us. In Fez alone, we checked out over 20 places to stay, going to each one no matter how difficult it took to find in those windy, narrow, sometimes unmarked streets. It was all worth it, though, as we discovered exquisite converted riads and unique small hotels that we believe you will love.

Lastly, we chose activities with each of you in mind. There is something special for everyone -- city lovers and mountain lovers; designers who want to see their ideas realized in rugs, ceramics, leather and more (Patricia is planning on bringing a design for a wall mural that can be created with mosaics); geology and history buffs; cooks and lovers of street food; people who love to be pampered, people who want to hike, and people who want both on the same day. Because this trip is custom made for all of us by us, when doing the research, which we know you will do, if you come up with ideas that you would like to see included, let us know.

Big hugs,
Patricia and Jayson



I-ADVENTURES MOROCCO

Maintaining Traditions/Embracing Change

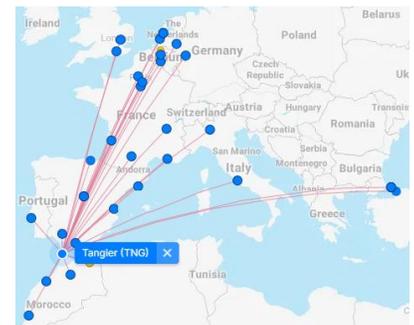
April 26 to May 8, 2023

Draft Itinerary

Why is the theme of this trip, “Maintaining Traditions/Embracing Change” For us, Morocco is fascinating because it is trying to balance both. The government supports traditional, labor-intensive craftsmanship by providing funding to cooperatives and training programs. The oldest parts of the cities, the medinas, are being maintained essentially in their ancient configurations. Extended family homes (riads) are not being torn down when dilapidated but instead are being renovated into small hotels, some simple, some elegant, all adorned with hand crafted mosaics and ornamentation. Though one foot is steeped in the past, the other is running full speed ahead into the future. There are significant investments in infrastructure – new highways and neighborhoods and a huge emphasis on renewable energy and connectivity (high speed trains/pervasive internet). The Moroccan parliament has even banned the production, import, sale and distribution of plastic bags, though it’s not universally enforced. Culturally, it is mostly progressive. A moderate Islamic state, Morocco has the only Jewish Museum in the Arab world, is refurbishing Jewish synagogues and cemeteries, has developed diplomatic ties with Israel, and provides extra security to visiting Jewish tour groups. Women wear anything from no head coverings to burkas. Still, Moroccans, though not foreigners, typically must show their marriage certificate to stay at hotels, and cafés are full of men drinking tea while the women are at home. Thus is the sometimes awkward attempt at “Maintaining Traditions/Embracing Change.”

Before Arriving in Tangier

We suggest that you arrive in Europe at least one day early, and then fly in the morning from Europe to Tangier. There are non-stop flights to Tangier from a number of European cities, including Amsterdam, Brussels, Barcelona, Madrid, Lisbon, Paris and London. See <https://www.flightconnections.com/flights-to-tangier-tng> for a complete list of options.



April 26, Tangier: Please arrive by 12:30 pm

i-SUSTAIN will arrange for you to be picked up at the airport and taken to our hotel, Saba’s House. <https://riadsabashouse.com> Our stay at Saba’s House will involve two properties that are a 6-minute walk apart -- an artistic luxury riad and a lovely villa, both in the most ancient part of the city, the kasbah.

Description of Tangier from NYT: “They all rushed to Tangier. From the 1920s to the 1950s, when the Moroccan port city was a freewheeling international zone governed (barely) by a consortium of mostly European powers, Tangier attracted expatriates and travelers seeking illicit substances and activities in a palm-fringed seaside crossroads where Africa almost touches Europe. Barbara Hutton, the Woolworth heiress, and the billionaire Malcolm Forbes built palaces and hosted celebrities. Beat

writers, from William S. Burroughs to Paul and Jane Bowles, wrote in a haze of drugs and booze. Reviled, the Moroccan monarchy let the city decay. By the 1970s Tangier was a seedy has-been, with the area around the Petit Socco renown for drugs and prostitution.” Recently the city has undergone a turnaround. Prized by King Mohammed VI, who assumed the throne in 1999, Tangier has built a huge new port and Africa’s first high-speed train line. Monuments and museums are getting face-lifts, and the streets of both the centuries-old Moorish medina and the colonial-era neighborhoods are sprouting boutique hotels, designer shops and Euro-Moroccan restaurants.

Some of the Activities in Tangier:

- The old walled city of Tangier, the medina, tumbles down the cliff towards the ocean in a labyrinth of narrow alleyways. It is surrounded by the walls of a 15th-century Portuguese fortress. Tangier’s medina is smaller than those in Fes and Marrakech, making it a more accessible introduction to Morocco. The city took advantage of the lack of tourists during the pandemic to fix it up, cleaning up the narrow alleyways, adding ramps for wheelchair access and replacing funky metal doors with more traditional wood.
- American Legation Museum, once the US consulate building and the oldest American diplomatic post in the world. Morocco was the first country to recognize the newly independent USA which established its legation in Tangier in 1821. The museum inside traces the history of the relationship between the US and Morocco, and the exhibits inside include George Washington's famous letter to Moulay Abdullah. The Museum also houses a wing devoted to Paul Bowles, author of “The Sheltering Sky” and collector of Moroccan music.



The Terrace of Saba’s House



Medina of Tangier



Be prepared to consume massive amounts of mint tea!

April 27/28/29, Fes

After lunch in Tangier, we'll travel by high speed (TGV) train to Kenitra, where we will catch our private transportation to the area of Meknes and then on to Fes. If you don't think the TGV in Morocco is amazing, contemplate that we do not have a high-speed train in the US yet.

Some of the Activities on the way from Tangier to Fes:

- A visit to Volubilis, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and some of the best-preserved Roman ruins in North Africa. With its triumphal arches, basilicas and capitals, the Volubilis skyline brims with iconic examples of Roman architecture. Among its greatest treasures are the mosaic floors of former family dwellings, which include depictions of Orpheus charming animals with his lyre, nine dolphins signifying good luck and a portrait of Amphitrite in a seahorse-drawn chariot.
- Dinner with wine pairing at L'Oliveraie set among 1,730 acres of vineyards. The restaurant is part of one of Morocco's top wineries, Château Roslane, perched in the Middle Atlas Mountains between the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea.

Description of Fes: The more life changes in a rapidly modernizing Morocco, the more it seems to stay the same in Fes, the country's ancient cultural capital and the most enduring medieval Islamic settlement in the world. The medina, a labyrinthine network of 9,000 narrow alleyways packed with craftspeople, street food vendors, and riads has no motorized vehicles – supposedly the largest non-motorized urban area in the world. The only way to get around is by walking; the only way to get deliveries is by cart or donkey.

A beautifully written NYT article about Fes: <https://www.nytimes.com/2007/04/08/travel/08Fez.html>

Some of the Activities in Fes:

- Enjoy a guided tour of the Fes medina, a UNESCO World Heritage site. Walk through ancient palaces and Islamic gardens, venture into the depths of the tanneries, observe weavers at their looms and discover hidden workshops where generations of artisans ply their individual trades and adapt century old techniques to a modern market. Fes still functions much as it did in the 13-14th centuries. The buildings, structure, design of the walkways, and types of goods being sold are historic but still in use today. Some 30,000 craftsmen ply their trades in small stores and back-alley workshops.
- Craftsmanship Tour: Fes is home to some of the finest craftspeople known in the modern world. So much is painstakingly created by hand from tiny mosaic pieces to detailed wood carvings. We will have the opportunity to visit ceramicists, tile makers, woodcarvers, makers of leather goods and shoes, jewelers and more. **UNIQUELY I-SUSTAIN:** Do you want to bring a design from home and have it made in Fes? What about a leather purse with all the features you want, a custom designed rug, a set of tiles, a piece of jewelry or shoes? We can try to arrange this for you.
- Tour of riads. **UNIQUELY I-SUSTAIN:** Fes is full of riads (historic extended family homes) that share a common design of rooms around a central courtyard, typically 3 or 4 stores tall with a rooftop terrace, but each one is unique and stunning. We will tour 5 or 6 former riads that have now been converted into hotels, each with their own charms and challenges. For example, a riad in the center of the medina not near any outside streets must have all materials brought in by carts either pushed by people or pulled by donkeys.
- A visit to the intricately detailed Karaouine. Built in 859 AD, it is the oldest still-functioning university in the world.

- A walk through the Jewish Mellah, a unique neighborhood with enclosed hanging balconies and a fascinating history of acceptance and rejection. This is where the best gold and jewelry shops are.
- For 6 to 8 people only: A very special cooking class with Morocco's most famous chef. Join Chef Najat of NUR, star of "La Cocina Marroqui" (on Canal Cocina and El Gourmet), to learn the basics of Moroccan cooking. Participants will prepare a full meal consisting of salads and sides, couscous, tagine, bastila, sweets and mint tea! Classes and tours span approximately 4 hours including lunch.



Fes Medina



Dying and drying yarn



Freshly dyed hides near the tanneries



Button maker

April 30: Fes, Erfoud

Today's private transportation from Fez to Erfoud in the Sahara is long, but our reward is the stunning scenery. We'll travel inland, cross the fertile plains beyond Fez, and continue up through the cooler Middle Atlas Mountain range and its cedar forests, where we may see the local Barbary apes. We'll cross the Ziz River, passing rows of tall palm trees and fortified villages. We're researching hiking opportunities for those who are interested. At the end of the day, we'll end up in Erfoud.

Description of Erfoud: While in and around Erfoud, we will be immersed in fossils. Morocco is one of the most geo-diverse countries on earth, dominated by the Atlas Mountains and, to the south, the Sahara Desert. The arid conditions mean that large areas of rock are exposed making it easy to understand its geology. Fascinating natural features such folded rocks, towering sand dunes, and numerous fossil deposits, dating from the pre-Cambrian to recent geological time, are here. Fossils of trilobites, ammonites, and other prehistoric life including dinosaurs, coral, and shark teeth can be found in eastern Morocco. Paleontologists have been able to significantly improve the geological record through excavations in Morocco.

Some of the Activities in and Around Erfoud:

- A visit to the region's fossil museum. Exhibits feature meteorite fossils, giant Trilobite, desert roses (petrified sand that has almost turned into glass), and fossils of dinosaur parts. In addition to housing these collections, the museum also focuses on preparing fossils and extracting them from rock. We will learn about this process and watch it in action, as professionals use a unique set of tools to collect, clean, and prepare the fossils for sale to the many collectors and museums worldwide.
- A visit to a manufacturer of fossil goods. Perhaps you have an idea for a tabletop, fountain, or something else. These factories can custom create your designs.
- A visit to a fossil quarry.
- Tea with a nomad family at their tent.
- We are researching hiking opportunities in and around Erfoud. Stay tuned.



Embedded fossils at Erfoud Quarry



Date palm oasis



Bicycle culture, Moroccan style

May 1: Desert Camping Erg Chebbi, Sahara Desert

Description of Erg Chebbi: Erg Chebbi is the name of the highest and largest sand dunes of the Sahara in Morocco. The landscape is strikingly strange. Coming from Erfoud, we'll pass through one of the flattest areas imaginable. For several miles there is nothing but small, black stones spread on the ground. Suddenly, a mountain of sand rises behind this desert of stone, an unreal landscape. Dunes are kinetic sculptures, constantly moving and changing. Watching the sun rise or sun set over them is an iconic experience. Changing constantly with the intensity of light is an ocean of mountains of sand as far as the eye can see.

Activities in Erg Chebbi:

- Camping in a luxury traditional Berber tent surrounded by the large dunes of Erg Chebbi. Each tent has a private bathroom and hot shower.
- Relaxing camel or motorized ride to the camp to enjoy sunset from the dunes
- Listening to Berber musicians around the fire and under the stars
- Sunrise in the desert
- Trekking with a local guide
- Sandboarding (extra cost)



Camel ride at sunset



Mountains and mountains of Saharan dunes



Glamping at our desert camp

May 2: Desert Camp/Drive to Ouarzazate

With a long travel day ahead, leave our desert camp for Ouarzazate in the snow-capped High Atlas Mountains, passing one scene of natural beauty after another. First pass through Tinghir, a stunning mountain oasis dominated by palm trees and ornate clay villages. Here we will see the 984-foot Todra Gorge, a spectacular natural chasm with sheer rock faces rising on either side, which is home to a variety of rare plant and bird species. We are researching hiking opportunities for those who are interested.

We'll continue through the Valley of Roses to Kelâat M'Gouna, Morocco's rose capital, before beginning the journey along the "Route of a Thousand Kasbahs," a region of fortresses with elaborately decorated façades. Arrive in Ouarzazate (the "door of the desert") late in the afternoon.



Oasis of Tinghir



Todra Gorge



Rose Season in Morocco, April/May



Free range kids Morocco

May 3: Ouarzazate/Marrakech

We'll spend the morning in Ouarzazate, where you can choose to relax at the hotel or explore the many sights in the area. We'll be leaving our hotel in the early afternoon for our 3.5-hour drive, dropping down from the base of the Atlas Mountains into the Tensift River valley and the great plains of Marrakech. On the way we will drive winding roads over the 7,234 foot Tizi n'Tichka pass, the highest mountain pass in North Africa and a gateway to the Sahara Desert.

Description of Ouarzazate: Ouarzazate, pronounced "where's it at," is one of the most unexpected places in Morocco. It may look like a sleepy town, but under the surface, this dusty road stop has a few surprises up its sleeve. The first thing you notice as you approach the city is a massive shining beacon of light. Similar to a giant lighthouse, this is the world's largest solar power complex, towering above the desert. Another surprise, Atlas Studios has been churning out Hollywood blockbusters since 1983. Over 200 movies have been filmed in this landscape. It has served as everything from biblical scenes to ancient Egyptian fables.

Activities in and Around Ouarzazate: There are many activities in Ouarzazate. We won't have time to do them all so we will break into small groups. This is some of what Ouarzazate has to offer, or you might take advantage of the late checkout of the hotel (not the room) that we've arranged and go to the spa.

- *For film buffs, a visit to two film related sites:*
 - Atlas Film Studios: Egyptian temples, Tibetan monasteries, and Biblical cities reconstructed in the middle of the desert – this is Atlas Studios, the largest studio in the world by footprint at 322,000 sq ft. More than 200 world-renowned films and television series have been shot at Atlas Studios, including *Jewel of the Nile*, *Gladiator*, *Ben Hur*, *Kingdom of Heaven*, *The Mummy*, *The Passion of Christ*, and more recently, *Game of Thrones*. *Game of Thrones* turned a portion of the area into a part of Slaver's Bay, which saw a trio of dragons and their queen 'liberate' the people of Meereen.
 - Aït Benhaddou: With the help of some Hollywood touch-ups, this UNESCO-protected red mudbrick *ksar* (fortified village) seems frozen in time, still resembling its days in the 11th century as an Almoravid caravanserai. Movie buffs may recognize it from *Lawrence of Arabia*, *Jesus of Nazareth* (for which much of Aït Ben Haddou was rebuilt), *Jewel of the Nile* (note the Egyptian towers) and *Gladiator*.
- *For history buffs:*
 - Taourirt Kasbah: A restored citadel set against the backdrop of the Atlas Mountains and one of the most impressive of its kind. With almost 300 rooms and a maze of passageways, steps, and keylock doors, it's easy to feel lost within this immense structure that only connects to the outside world through a narrow entrance doorway. The rooms vary from reception rooms to harem rooms and palace kitchens giving you a chance to witness what life was like for a powerful Moroccan clan.
 - The Old Synagogue: The synagogue is a cultural and historical resource. It has a range of authentic items from the Jewish worship and everyday life that have been preserved in their original form and shares the common history of the region's Jewish and Amazigh people, who coexisted with Muslims for centuries.

- *For handicraft and women's empowerment buffs:*
 - A visit to two weaving collectives that are part of the Anou Cooperative, a collective of over 600 artisans from cooperatives, associations, and workshops across Morocco. Anou is owned and self-managed by Morocco's artisan community. Although Fair Trade has existed for decades, Moroccan artisans are fewer and poorer than ever. This is because real change in the artisan sector doesn't happen by paying artisans a little extra money as in the Fair-Trade model. For craft in Morocco to flourish, artisans need skills and empowerment. Anou selects the most motivated, bright artisans across Morocco to help run the operations of the cooperative. This ensures that artisans have access to gaining skills mostly reserved for middlemen and foreigners. Anou uses technology to reduce the complexity of global commerce so that artisans can easily connect with an individual customer throughout the world, ensuring the resulting profits stays in artisan hands.
 - Afous Ghoufous, or hand in hand, is a powerful saying in the Amazigh language that signifies the solidarity of the Amazigh people. Fadma Mohsine, a weaver, is a living example of Afous g Afous. At the age of 15, Fadma unexpectedly became partially disabled. Despite what many would consider a setback, she decided to continue learning how to weave from her mom. Fadma then combined what many villagers describe as her 'stunning intellect' with her weaving ability to create new and innovative designs using natural dyes -- the first in her village to do so. Despite Fadma's success as a weaver, she saw that many women in her village still struggled to develop their weaving craft and become financially independent. She began teaching a group of women in her village how to weave which, in 2009, became what is now known as Association Afous Gafous. Today, Fadma provides mentorship to 15 women of the association. Hand in hand, the women have overcome many barriers to successfully grow their cooperative and hope that their sales will enable them to make a wider impact on all the women in her village.
 - Association Timouzounin is located in Tadula Zanfi, a small village about 25 kilometers from Ouarzazate on the road to Marrakech. Most who live in the area of Tadula Zanfi work in agriculture or shepherding sheep. Tadula Zanfi was traditionally a Jewish village, and its name came from a famous Jewish leader in Morocco who was from the area. When the Jewish families left around the end of the French colonization of Morocco, the remaining villagers decided to keep the name. Today, the name reflects the rich cultural heritage of its people. After a series of successive droughts in the region, the women of Tadula Zanfi decided to create a female led association that would draw upon this cultural heritage via the weaving of rugs, to provide additional income to the villagers. In 2009, the women founded Association Timozonin which now provides meaningful income to over 20 women in the village. Over 50% of the women involved are single, widowed, or divorced, so their work in the association is their primary source of income.
- *For renewable energy buffs:*
 - Noor Solar Plant: Take a tour of the Noor solar plant which supplies 2 million Moroccans with electricity and prevents the emission of one million tons of greenhouse

gas per year. The power station is the largest concentrated solar plant on the planet and uses molten salt storage to produce electricity at night.



Ait Benhaddou



Pool and spa at our hotel, where we have all the rooms



Old Synagogue



Women's weaving collective



The road from Ouzarzazate to Marrakech. Bring your Dramamine! Patricia drove this road at night!



The largest solar plant in the world is where? ... Ouzarzazate?

May 3, 4, and 5: Marrakech

Description of Marrakech: Fabled Marrakech is the ancient intersection of Berber, African, Mediterranean, and Asian cultural and artistic influences. Considered Morocco's most cosmopolitan city, Marrakech boasts a spectacular location surrounded by rich farmlands and high mountains. Since becoming more popular as an international travel destination, Marrakech has evolved into a center where artists and designers are taking the traditional crafts of Morocco and introducing more modern interpretations.

Activities in Marrakech:

- Majorelle Gardens, a botanical garden in the heart of the city. French artist Jacques Majorelle created this masterpiece, known for its cobalt blue accents, in 1924 during Morocco's colonial period as a protectorate of France. Following the gardens, we will visit the adjacent Yves St. Laurent Museum.
- Le Jardin Secret which recently opened its door to the public for the first time in its history. The origins of the complex date back more than four hundred years ago. Rebuilt in the mid-nineteenth century, Le Jardin Secret has been the home of some of Morocco and Marrakech's most important political figures. It is part of the great tradition of stately Arab-Andalusian and Moroccan palaces representing outstanding examples of Islamic art and architecture.
- Tadelakt (plaster finish) workshop in the Marrakech medina to learn about the different materials used in its preparation, how the colors are prepared, and how the material is applied to buildings and crafts.
- Dar El Bacha, a former private palace full of fountains, riads and orange trees.
- Exploration of the medina's markets including seeing the yarn dyers, wrought iron and lantern makers, herbalists, wood carvers, painters and more.
- The village of Tameslouht. Tameslouht is a microcosm of artisan talent and Moroccan craft heritage. We will go to two different weaving cooperatives, Creation Tameslough and Art Tissage Tam. Art Tissage Tam was created in 2009 to preserve historic knowledge and traditions and apply them to contemporary tastes. We'll also go to Khadouj Boufi, a workshop that makes a range of vibrantly colored crafted carpets using upcycled fabrics rather than traditional sheep wool.
- Djemaa El Fna. At night this plaza is a never-ending party with acrobats, snake charmers, music, dance, meat grillers, juice sellers and people selling everything imaginable.
- Lunch at Amal Women's Training Center and Moroccan Restaurant. The goal of this nonprofit is to improve the quality of life for disadvantaged women by giving them the tools they need to start supporting themselves, beginning with cooking skills and literacy training.
- A second cooking class for those who are interested.

Scenes from Marrakech



May 6, 7: High Atlas Mountains

Description of Location: The three ranges of the Atlas Mountains create a striking, sometimes harsh barrier between the arid Sahara and Morocco's milder coastal climate. The High Atlas Mountains of central Morocco begin close to the Atlantic and run in a jagged line northeast through the country, encompassing some of the region's most authentic pockets of culture as well as offering some of its best opportunities for walking and hiking. The Berbers, also known as Amazigh, are the original inhabitants of these vast mountains, and their civilization reaches back more than eight millennia. Their traditional flat-roofed homes, made from packed stone and earth, seem to have grown from the mountains themselves. They make a living farming and herding livestock, using age-old techniques to live in the fertile valleys between the forbidding slopes. We'll see a way of life that's largely unchanged over thousands of years.

Activities from our hotel:

- Half and full day hikes
- Mule trek
- Half and full day excursions by car to Berber villages



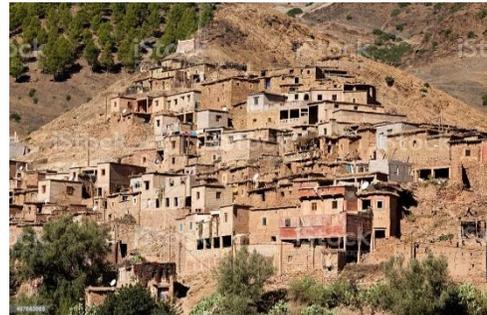
View toward the High Atlas range



Our hotel in the Atlas Mountains



Berber family



Berber village in the High Atlas Mountains

May 8: After breakfast, the program will be over

- We'll arrange for you to get to the Marrakech airport or back to Marrakech if you are planning on staying longer.

MOROCCO QUICK ITINERARY

Day	Date	Activities	Overnight
Day 1	4/26	People arrive; spend the night in Tangier	Tangier
Day 2	4/27	Tour Tangier, tour Volubilis and have dinner at vineyard en route to Fes	Fes
Day 3	4/28	Explore Fes	Fes
Day 4	4/29	Explore Fes	Fes
Day 5	4/30	Drive to Erfoud via Ifrane National Park and Middle Atlas Mountains	Erfoud
Day 6	5/1	Desert camping	Sahara Desert Camp
Day 7	5/2	Drive to Ouarzazate via Todra Gorge, Valley of Roses, and the "Route of a Thousand Kasbahs"	Ouarzazate
Day 8	5/3	Explore Ouarzazate in the morning, then drive to Marrakech over the Tizi n'Tichka pass	Marrakech
Day 9	5/4	Explore Marrakech	Marrakech
Day 10	5/5	Explore Marrakech	Marrakech
Day 11	5/6	Drive to Ouirgane Valley and explore the area by bus or hiking.	Ouirgane Valley
Day 12	5/7	Explore the area in the foothills of the Atlas Mountains	Ouirgane Valley
Day 13	5/8	Program is over. We will arrange transportation to Marrakech Airport for those flying out today or to Marrakech for those staying on their own.	



TIPS FOR TRAVELING IN MOROCCO

Tips for Travelling in Morocco has been created for you by Patricia and Jayson.... or what 3 weeks in Morocco putting this program together taught us.

1. No visas needed for American citizens, and no shots needed.
2. The common languages are Arabic and French, though Patricia speaks neither and Jayson only speaks a little high school French. We didn't have any problems communicating because there is almost always an English speaker nearby ready to help out, and of course, there is Google Translate.
3. We will be on some extremely winding roads with hairpin turns. If you get carsick, you may want to bring some anti-nausea medication.
4. Moroccan food uses many spices, but not chilis. If you're used to heat, it can taste a bit bland. You might want to bring a packet of your favorite dried chilis.
5. Morocco is the place to bring your design ideas and get something made, whether it's a leather purse, a carpet, tiles or jewelry. We are making connections that will allow you to have your designs and ideas turned into something beautiful and very memorable so...get creative!
6. When getting mint tea, which you will be offered multiple times per day, ask for no sugar or sugar on the side. You will notice that many Moroccans lack some of the basics, such as teeth. The amount of sugar consumed is truly astounding. Many Moroccans will crack themselves up when referring to mint tea as "Moroccan whiskey."
7. Morocco seemed very safe to us. There are plenty of police around and stealing or hurting a tourist will get you in a lot of trouble. We are an important part of the economy. Still be careful about pickpockets, particularly in the medinas. Try to keep your valuables in an internal pocket.
8. If you want to wander the medinas on our own, we found that Google Maps works well most of the time. If you lose your signal, find a spot that is a bit more open so you can get a GPS signal.
9. In the medinas, there are a lot of pesky young men and even boys who hang out at every twist and turn to "help you" get to where you have no interest in going. Don't fall into their many traps -- there will be no festivals near the tannery, for example. Just ignore them, shoo them away, or say, "maybe tomorrow." If you do need directions, ask a shop keeper or someone who can't leave where they are to escort you. We say this keeping in mind that, in general, the Moroccan people are very sweet and helpful. Many will bend over backwards, insisting on showing you the way, without any expectation of anything.
10. We suggest drinking bottled water, but we had no problem brushing our teeth with sink water. The tap water is sanitary, but they use more chlorine than we do which can be hard on the tummy if you're not used to it.
11. Haggling over price is part of the Moroccan culture. If you don't like to do it (like Patricia), have someone in the group do it for you (in my case, Jayson). There are also shops with set fees,

particularly finer shops and cooperatives. In general, pricing is based on what a seller thinks you will be willing to pay. While we believe in generosity, particularly when people have so much less than we do, as a matter of tradition vendors will often start at prices 2 to 5 times higher than they hope to get. Don't haggle to get the cheapest price, but don't be a sucker either.

12. With few exceptions, taxi drivers are generally jerks. They will try to overcharge you. Insist that they use a meter. When they refuse, which they will generally do, make them tell you the price upfront and pay them before you go, so they can't try to charge you more later as many do. Because we are planning all our transportation, you shouldn't need a taxi unless you want to do something separately from the group.
13. We ate street food such as grilled meats, fresh juices, even salad and had no issues. Fresh fruit juices such as pomegranate and orange juice are inexpensive, widely available, and delicious.
14. When it comes to dress, pack casual, comfortable clothes and shoes, and bring a bathing suit. There is a pool at every place we will be staying (some indoors and some outdoors).
15. ATMS are common and generally work. The easiest thing to do is get some money at the airport and then gauge how much you will need. Most of your expenses are covered by your trip fee, but you'll want to buy some beautiful things in the medinas, so some cash is good. Many stores take credit card.
16. If you want to take a photo of a local person, it is important to ask for their permission. We found that getting approval happens about half the time due to "aniconism in Islam." Aniconism is a proscription against the creation of images of sentient beings (humans and animals).

READING LIST

A Year in Marrakesh

By: Peter Mayne

Peter Mayne (1908-1979) is to Morocco what Peter Mayle is to Provence or Lawrence Durrell to Greece. This 1953 classic in a new edition captures the very essence of the people and place. Having already learned to appreciate Muslim life when he was in Pakistan, Mayne bought a house in the labyrinthine back streets of Marrakesh. He wanted to settle there, not as a privileged visitor in a hotel or grand villa, but as one of the inhabitants. He learned their language, made friends, took part in their festivals, and wrote their letters. This is not a travel book in the accepted sense of the word—it is a record of personal experience in a region of foreign life well beyond the tourist's eye. Mayne contrives in a deceptively simple prose to disseminate in the air of an English November the spicy odors of North Africa; he has turned, for an hour, from smog to shimmering sunlight and woven a texture of extraordinary charm.

Dreams of Trespass: Tales of a Harem Girlhood

By: Fatima Mernissi

"I was born in a harem in 1940 in Fez, Morocco..." So begins Fatima Mernissi in this exotic and rich narrative of a childhood behind the iron gates of a domestic harem. In *Dreams of Trespass*, Mernissi weaves her own memories with the dreams and memories of the women who surrounded her in the courtyard of her youth who, deprived of access to the world outside, recreated it from sheer imagination. *Dreams of Trespass* is the provocative story of a girl confronting the mysteries of time and place, gender and sex in the recent Muslim world.

A History of Modern Morocco

By: Susan Gilson Miller

Morocco is notable for its stable and durable monarchy, its close ties with the West, its vibrant cultural life, and its centrality to regional politics. This book, by distinguished historian, Susan Gilson Miller, offers a richly documented survey of modern Moroccan history. The author's original and astute interpretations of the events, ideas, and personalities that inform contemporary political life are testimony to her scholarship and long association with the country. Arguing that pragmatism rather than ideology has shaped the monarchy's response to crisis, the book begins with the French invasion of Algeria in 1830 and Morocco's abortive efforts at reform, the duel with colonial powers and the loss of independence in 1912, the burdens and benefits of France's forty-four year dominion, and the stunning success of the nationalist movement leading to independence in 1956. In the post-independence era, the book traces the monarchy's gradual monopolization of power and the resulting political paralysis, ending with the last years of Hassan II's reign, when Moroccan society experienced a sudden and radical opening. A postscript brings events up to 2012, covering topics such as Morocco's "war on terror," the détente between the monarchy and the Islamists, and the impact of the Arab Spring. This concise, readable book will inform and enthrall students coming to the history of North Africa for the first time, and also those in other disciplines searching for the background to present-day events in the region.

The Food of Morocco

By: Paula Wolfert

Winner of the James Beard Foundation's Lifetime Achievement Award "A cookbook by Paula Wolfert is cause for celebration. Ms. Wolfert may be America's most knowledgeable food person and her books are full of insight, passion and brilliance." —Anthony Dias Blue, CBS Radio, NY "I think she's one of the

finest and most influential food writers in this country...one of the leading lights in contemporary gastronomy.”—Craig Claiborne. Paula Wolfert, the undisputed queen of Mediterranean cooking, provides food lovers with the definitive guide to The Food of Morocco. Lavishly photographed and packed with tantalizing recipes to please the modern palate, The Food of Morocco provides helpful preparation techniques for chefs, home cooks, and any serious student of the culinary arts and culture. This is the perfect companion to Wolfert’s classic, *Couscous and Other Good Food from Morocco*—a 2008 inductee into the James Beard Cookbook Hall of Fame—and fans of Claudia Roden, Elizabeth David, Martha Rose Schulman, and Poopa Dweck will be delighted by this extraordinary culinary journey across this colorful and exhilarating land.

How to Read Islamic Carpets (The Metropolitan Museum of Art - How to Read)

By: Walter Denny

Carpets made in the “Rug Belt” —an area that includes Morocco, North Africa, the Middle East, Central Asia, and northern India—have been a source of fascination and collecting since the 13th century. This engaging and accessible book explores the history, design techniques, materials, craftsmanship, and socioeconomic contexts of these works, promoting a better understanding and appreciation of these frequently misunderstood pieces. Fifty-five examples of Islamic carpets are illustrated with new photographs and revealing details. The lively texts guide readers, teaching them “how to read” clues present in the carpets. Walter B. Denny situates these carpets within the cultural and social realm of their production, be it a nomadic encampment, a rural village, or an urban workshop. This is an essential guide for students, collectors, and professionals who want to understand the art of the Islamic carpet.

A House in Fez: Building a Life in the Ancient Heart of Morocco

By: Suzanna Clarke

The Medina -- the Old City -- of Fez is the best-preserved, medieval walled city in the world. Inside this vibrant Moroccan community, internet cafes and mobile phones coexist with a maze of donkey-trod alleyways, thousand-year-old sewer systems, and Arab-style houses, gorgeous with intricate, if often shabby, mosaic work. While vacationing in Morocco, Suzanna Clarke and her husband, Sandy, are inspired to buy a dilapidated, centuries-old riad in Fez with the aim of restoring it to its original splendor, using only traditional craftsmen and handmade materials. So begins a remarkable adventure that is bewildering, at times hilarious, and ultimately immensely rewarding. *A House in Fez* chronicles their meticulous restoration, but it is also a journey into Moroccan customs and lore and a window into the lives of its people as friendships blossom. When the riad is finally returned to its former glory, Suzanna finds she has not just restored an old house, but also her soul.

Sahara Unveiled: A Journey Across the Desert (Vintage Departures)

By: William Langewiesche

It is as vast as the United States and so arid that most bacteria cannot survive there. Its loneliness is so extreme it is said that migratory birds will land beside travelers, just for the company. William Langewiesche came to the Sahara to see it as its inhabitants do, riding its public transport, braving its natural and human dangers, depending on its sparse sustenance and suspect hospitality. From his journey, which took him across the desert’s hyperarid core from Algiers to Dakar, he has crafted a contemporary classic of travel writing. In a narrative studded with gemlike discourses on subjects that range from the physics of sand dunes to the history of the Tuareg nomads, Langewiesche introduces us to the Sahara’s merchants, smugglers, fixers, and expatriates. Eloquent and precise, *Sahara Unveiled* blends history and reportage, anthropology and anecdote, into an unforgettable portrait of the world’s most romanticized yet most forbidding desert.

In Arabian Nights: A Caravan of Moroccan Dreams

By: Tahir Shah

Named one of Time magazine's Ten Best Books of the Year, Tahir Shah's *The Caliph's House* was hailed by critics and compared to such travel classics as *A Year in Provence* and *Under the Tuscan Sun*. Now Shah takes us deeper into the real Casablanca to uncover mysteries hidden for centuries from Western eyes. In this entertaining jewel of a book, Tahir Shah sets off across Morocco on a bold new adventure worthy of the mythical Arabian Nights. As he wends his way through the labyrinthine medinas of Fez and Marrakech, traverses the Sahara sands, and samples the hospitality of ordinary Moroccans, Tahir collects a dazzling treasury of traditional wisdom stories, gleaned from the heritage of *A Thousand and One Nights*, which open the doors to layers of culture most visitors hardly realize exist. From master masons who labor only at night to Sufi wise men who write for soap operas, "*In Arabian Nights*" takes us on an unforgettable, offbeat, and utterly enchanted journey.

Spider's House: A Novel

By: Paul Bowles

Set in Fez, Morocco, during that country's 1954 nationalist uprising, *The Spider's House* is perhaps Paul Bowles's most beautifully subtle novel, richly descriptive of its setting and uncompromising in its characterizations. Exploring once again the dilemma of the outsider in an alien society, and the gap in understanding between cultures—recurrent themes of Paul Bowles's writings—*The Spider's House* is dramatic, brutally honest, and shockingly relevant to today's political situation in the Middle East and elsewhere.

Sheltering Sky

By: Paul Bowles

A beautiful 65th anniversary paperback edition of the landmark literary work by acclaimed author Paul Bowles. In this classic work of psychological terror, Paul Bowles examines the ways in which Americans apprehend an alien culture—and the ways in which their incomprehension destroys them. The story of three American travelers adrift in the cities and deserts of North Africa after World War II, *The Sheltering Sky* is at once merciless and heartbreaking in its compassion. It etches the limits of human reason and intelligence—perhaps even the limits of human life—when they touch the unfathomable emptiness and impassive cruelty of the desert.

Women Artisans of Morocco: Their Stories, Their Lives

By: Davis, Susan Schaefer

Arts and Crafts of Morocco (Arts & Crafts)

By: Jereb, James F.