

MARRAKESH - MOROCCO'S MOST APPEALING GEM



The North-African country of Morocco was once made famous by the classic movie Casablanca and, without doubt, this city is a very popular destination for tourists from all over the world. However, Morocco has another treasure up its sleeve; Marrakesh. It is a place of immense beauty, with breathtaking architectural attractions and rich history. Locals are very tourist-friendly and the amazingly relaxed atmosphere simply absorbs the visitors. Marrakesh is a true gem, equalling any of its rivals across the African continent.

It is located on the crossroads of the old caravan routes in the foothills of the High Atlas Mountains, close to the Sahara, and if tourists want a more adventurous trip, they can choose from a number of options that offer a few days trekking through the desert and/or visiting some attractive historical sites.

When they arrive in Marrakesh itself, visitors are unlikely to complain about anything. This is a city of about 1.5 million inhabitants, charming with regards to its old character, and modern, as it also functions as an important commercial centre in Morocco. The old part, called Medina, is a spectacular place where tourists can easily find their way around without guides. One famous local landmark is the Koutoubia mosque which is surrounded by rose gardens. Museum lovers are welcome to step into the Dar Si Said, a museum dedicated to the arts and folk crafts of Morocco, or the Dar Tiskiwin, which is a townhouse and museum full of Moroccan wonders collected by Bert Flint, a Dutch expatriate.

Marrakesh is also famous for its palaces, the two most famous and majestic being the Bahia Palace and the El Badi Palace. A great attraction for tourist are the Saadian Tombs dating back to the times of the great sultan Ahmad I al-Mansur (16th century). Truly magnificent are the souks, the typical traditional markets. Marrakesh has the largest one in Morocco. The souks are dedicated to specific crafts and visitors are welcome to observe the workmanship in progress or even join a late afternoon auction of the products. It is an amazing experience that should be sought out by anyone visiting Marrakesh.

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