



# Natural Landscapes & Gardens of Morocco 2023

14 MAR – 4 APR 2023

Code: 22305

Tour Leaders **Diane Perelsztejn**

Fitness Level 

**Level 1 - Active**

For people with active lives and good mobility

Explore Morocco's rich culture in gardening and landscape design, art, architecture & craft in medieval cities with old palaces and souqs, on high mountain ranges and in pre-Saharan desert fortresses.

## Overview

This tour, led by garden and travel writer [Paul Urquhart](#), is a feast of splendid gardens, great monuments and natural landscapes of Morocco. Paul will be assisted by [Diane Perelsztejn](#).

- In Tangier, with the assistance of [François Gilles](#), the UK's most respected importer of Moroccan carpets, spend two days visiting private gardens and learn about the world of Moroccan interiors.
- While based in the charming Dar al Hossoun in Taroudant for 5 days, view the work of French landscape designers Arnaud Maurières and Éric Ossart, exploring their garden projects designed for a dry climate.
- View [Rohuna](#), the stunning garden of Umberto Pasti, a well-known Italian novelist and horticulturalist, which preserves the botanical richness of the Tangier region.
- Visit the gardens of the late Christopher Gibbs, a British antique dealer and collector who was also an influential figure in men's fashion and interior design in 1960s London. His gorgeous cliff-side compound is set in 14 acres of plush gardens in Tangier.
- In Marrakesh, visit Yves Saint Laurent Museum, Jardin Majorelle, the Jardin Secret, the palmeraie Jnane Tamsna, André Heller's Anima and take afternoon tea in the gardens of La Mamounia – one of the most famous hotels in the world.
- Explore the work of American landscape architect, Madison Cox: visit Yves Saint Laurent and Pierre Bergé's gardens of the Villa Oasis and the gardens of the Yves Saint Laurent Museum in Marrakesh.
- Wander through the UNESCO World Heritage-listed medinas of Fes and Tetouan.
- Delight all your senses in Marrakesh's teeming, colourful souqs, with their textiles, jewellery, carpets, carved woodwork, acrobats, snake charmers, letter writers and fortune tellers.
- Journey across the pre-Sahara and through date palm plantations of verdant oasis river valleys.
- Encounter the rich urban architecture of Andalusian mosques and madrasas, and desert mud-brick *qasbas* and villages.
- Cross Morocco's majestic Middle, High and Anti Atlas mountain ranges and past small Berber mountain villages.
- Enjoy traditional food in old palaces whilst listening to exquisite Andalusian music.
- Stay in charming riads in Fes and in Marrakesh – lovingly restored by local artisans.

Overnight Taroudant (5 nights) • Marrakesh (5 nights) • Ouarzazate (1 night) • Tineghir (1 night) • Merzouga (1 night) • Fes (3 nights) • Chefchaouen (1 night) • Tangier (3 nights) • Rabat (1 night)

### Introduction

This 22-day cultural garden tour of Morocco is led by garden and travel writer Paul Urquhart. The tour explores the dynamic relationship between Morocco's unique and diverse environments and the country's gardening traditions. It focuses on five key themes: the tradition of the Andalusian courtyard garden; the cultivation of date plantations and palmeraies in the desert and in the south around Marrakesh; the creation of ecologically sustainable desert gardens; the cultivation of gardens and plantations in high mountain locations, and the innovations of expatriates in garden design.

We begin in Taroudant, with a five-day program to study landscape design projects by Arnaud Maurières and Éric Ossart and the ecology of the region, and then travel north from the arid pre-Sahara to the well-watered coastal plain across the Atlas mountains. In the grand, medieval Imperial cities of Marrakesh and Fes we will be introduced not only to traditional 'Andalusian' courtyard gardens but also to the latest in garden design. In cosmopolitan Tangiers, Morocco's equivalent of the Côte d'Azur, we explore the wonderful houses and gardens of international expatriates.

In the south we encounter powerful contrasts between lowland and mountain plantings, observing many of Morocco's unique flora as well as imported and acclimatised specimens. In Marrakesh, the red city of the south, we enjoy extraordinary gardens like that of Yves Saint Laurent and Pierre Bergé in which verdant plants contrast with vivid blue buildings. Beyond the Atlas Mountains we stay in a desert house and encounter rich palm oases that follow rivers as they snake through the empty desert. These extraordinary 'rivers of green' are complemented by luscious vegetable gardens in small villages. Here we learn how precious water is shared amongst the village farmers. We'll also come to understand how traditional architecture relates to its garden armature, and how contemporary architects, gardeners and plantsmen have adapted traditional relationships to create new, fascinating environments.

To complement this fascinating study of the relationship between diverse ecologies and garden design, we'll learn about the unique history of Morocco, its artistic and architectural traditions. Fes is arguably the least changed medieval city in the world, with lovely 15th-century *madrasas* and *funduks* (caravanserais). In exploring Morocco's vivid craft traditions, we'll learn how traditional plant dyes are used in carpets, textiles, the colouring of leather and in painting. We'll come to understand the vital influence of Iberia upon Morocco's development and how the countries six great dynasties, the Idrissi, Almoravids, Almohads, Merinids, Sa'adi and Alawi have interacted with Mediterranean Europe. We'll wander through souqs selling all manner of wares from fine copper to carved wood, textiles, ceramics and Morocco's ubiquitous carpets and also have ample opportunities to sample Morocco's fine cuisine in a number of carefully selected restaurants.

### Testimonials

*The private and public gardens in this tour were truly wonderful and exceeded my expectations. Marcia, NT.*

*The tour provided an authentic insight into the cultural life of Morocco, and the opportunity to view vast landscapes and magnificent private gardens behind high walls. Meredyth, SA.*

## Leaders



### Diane Perelsztejn

Educated in Brussels, Diane is a native French and Flemish speaker. A multi award-winning independent film-maker, she has travelled extensively throughout Europe, Asia and the US to produce documentaries about history, art and music.

Paul Urquhart is an accomplished garden and travel writer with several published books. These include a groundbreaking book that reignited interest in Australian plants in designed landscapes, *The New Native Garden – Designing with Australian Plants*, published in 1999. More recently, in *Small by Design*, he took a comprehensive look at design ideas for small garden spaces. His other books covered such diverse topics as bulbs, landscaping and fruit trees.

He has been gardening editor of many Australian home and lifestyle magazines including *Better Homes and Gardens* and *Australian House and Garden*, Garden Editor of *Australian Good Taste*, *Home Beautiful*, *Australian House and Garden* and *The Magazine* (Sydney). He is also a regular contributor to international magazines, including *English House and Garden* and *Gardens Illustrated*. He was editor of Australia's foremost garden magazine, *Your Garden* from 2005-2010, ensuring its survival after a period of declining fortunes and securing uninterrupted growth. His own garden is an experiment in blending Australian plants with exotics and growing tropical and rainforest trees in challenging conditions.

A passionate lover of travel and gardens, Paul has had many enjoyable journeys to the countries of western and eastern Europe, Southern Africa, Asia and the Pacific. Many of his photographic safaris have been featured in *Your Garden* and online garden blogs. In 2006, he participated in a plant hunting expedition to Brazil and revisited the major gardens of South America. He figures South Africa and Botswana and Machu Picchu as some of his favourite destinations because of its melding of humanity, history, archaeology and the natural world. He has previously led garden tours to France, England, South America and China.

Paul joined ASA as lecturer for *Landscapes, Art & Gardens of the Côte d'Azur, Provence & the Cévennes* in 2019. In 2023 he will lead *Natural Landscapes & Gardens of Morocco*.

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3 APR – 23 APR 2024



## Itinerary

The following itinerary describes a range of gardens and estates we plan to visit. Many are accessible to the public, but others require special permission which may only be confirmed closer to the tour's departure in 2023. The daily activities described in this itinerary may change or be rotated and/or modified in order to accommodate alterations in opening hours, flight schedules and confirmation of private visits. Participants will receive a final itinerary together with their tour documents prior to departure. Meals included in the tour price and are indicated in the itinerary where: B=breakfast, L=light lunch or picnic lunch and D=dinner.

### Taroudant - 5 nights

Day 1: Tuesday 14 March, Agadir – Taroudant

- Arrival transfer from Agadir to Taroudant
- [Dar Al Hossoun](#)
- Light dinner at the Hotel

**Meeting Point:** Please meet your group leaders at the Agadir Airport (time to be confirmed).

Our tour will officially commence with a transfer from Agadir Airport to Taroudant, known as the 'pearl of the Souss Valley'. Here we shall be based at [Dar Al Hossoun](#), designed by Arnaud Maurières and Éric Ossart.

For over 25 years, Maurières and Ossart have been designing gardens in France and throughout the Mediterranean region. When they moved to southern Morocco they realised the importance of designing low-maintenance gardens for a dry climate. Since 2002, they have been working to create gardens in the olive groves to the west of Taroudant. Their work focuses on preserving areas of unspoiled natural wilderness, designing and building gardens and rammed-earth houses that have by stages added an entirely new neighbourhood to the city.

Dar Al Hossoun was Ossart & Maurières' very first build, one of the most widely publicised examples of their work as landscape architects. Surrounded by a garden that served originally as a test bed to study plant performance in the arid, pre-Saharan environment of the Souss Valley, the property boasts hundreds of species of plants proved to be drought-tolerant, plus an impressive 500-metre-square sunken garden for fragile species not usually found in this region. Tonight we enjoy a light dinner at the hotel. (Overnight Taroudant) D

#### Day 2: Wednesday 15 March, Taroudant

- Dar Al Hossoun
- Tour of Taroudant's ramparts and secret gardens by horse & carriage
- Lunch and garden of the Catholic church
- Visit to the souq
- Dar Sidi Hussein
- Dar Ali
- Dar Sidi ou Sidi, the private home of Arnaud Maurières and Eric Ossart
- Welcome dinner at Palais Oumensour

Today we begin our discovery of Ossart & Maurières' finest gardens in the Hossoun olive grove and visit first the gardens of Dar Al Hossoun. Then we take a tour of Taroudant's ramparts and secret gardens by horse and carriage.

Taroudant, a walled Berber market town, lies just south of the High Atlas and to the north of the Anti Atlas. It gained commercial and political importance thanks to its position at the heart of the fertile Souss Valley. The Sa'adi made it their capital for a short time in the 16th century before moving on to Marrakesh. The 7.5 kilometres of ramparts surrounding Taroudant are among the best-preserved *pise* (reinforced mud) walls in Morocco. As the sun moves across the sky their colour changes from golden brown to the deepest red.

Built in the 16th and 17th century, a string of mighty defensive towers create the gates of the city. One of the most commonly used of these gates is the impressive, triple-arched Bab el-Kasbah, approached along an avenue of orange trees. Beyond and to the right past an olive press stands another gate, Bab Sedra that leads to the old qasba quarter – a fortress built by Moulay Ismail in the 17th century that is now the poorest part of town.

At the heart of this ancient city lies the medina, home to traditional Moroccan houses with interior gardens or courtyards, many of them built or restored by Ossart and Maurières. These are the riads for which Morocco is famous – havens of freshness usually exclusively reserved for their owners, and now ours to discover on this enchanting tour.

We have lunch in the garden of the Catholic church, in the medina. In 1929, a French Christian doctor, Doctor de Châtignières settled in Taroudant with his wife and founded the city's first hospital. Little by little, the Europeans, in large majority French and priests have settled. During the Protectorate, the Catholic church developed a traditional garden with long straight paths which intersect each other, dry plants, citrus fruits and ornaments trees such as jacaranda. Maintained by the priests, nuns and local gardeners, it served as training garden for young apprentices. When the last priest and, later on his gardener, passed on the garden was abandoned. The new priest, Marc Helfer, arrived from Alsace in 2018, decided to restore the garden. Major pruning was done with the help of the municipality, and repairs were made to the lower walls and the *sequias*, irrigation canals. Amongst the remarkable trees, there are a 100 years old ficus tree, a 60 years old rubber tree and very old euphorbias.

Today, Taroudant is an important hub in southern Morocco well known for its handicrafts, jewellery design, Berber crafts and woodwork. Within the walled inner city there are two main squares – Place Assarag (Place Alaouyine) and Place Talmoklate (Place en Nasr) – which mark the centre of town, with the main souq area between them. The pedestrian area of Place Assarag is the centre of activity, and comes alive in late afternoon as the sun’s heat eases off and people come out to promenade. Lately it has seen the return of performers such as storytellers, snake charmers and musicians – as in Marrakesh’s Jemaa el-Fnaa, but on a smaller scale.

After a short visit to the souqs, we visit Sidi Hussein, the house of five courtyards. This is one of Ossart and Maurières’ most ambitious projects in the medina. It is composed of several buildings, each one arranged around an amazing inner garden but all built in different styles to reflect the changing face of Taroudant architecture. The site was formerly occupied by badly dilapidated houses that were demolished to free up some 1000 square metres of building space. We visit Dar Ali’s courtyard where we enjoy afternoon tea, before visiting Dar Sidi ou Sidi, the private home of Arnaud Maurières and Eric Ossart which is tucked away deep in the souq, at the heart of the old town. The house, a fine example of Taroudant vernacular architecture, features a terrace-planted botanic garden housing Ossart and Maurières’ private plant collection. Close to the souq, we enjoy our dinner in the beautiful Palais Oumensour and its lush patio. (Overnight Taroudant) BLD

#### Day 3: Thursday 16 March, Taroudant

- Dar Igdad and L’Orange Bleue
- Dar Deboules
- Dar Carlhian
- Les Jardins de Andrew
- La Maison des 3 Paons
- La Tour des Faucons, garden and dinner

The Dar Al Hossoun build prompted the construction of the two adjoining properties, Dar Igdad and L’Orange Bleue, which marked Ossart & Maurières’ very first venture into steppe planning: with groups of grasses, drought-tolerant shrubs (grown mainly from seeds collected in Madagascar and Mexico) and succulents featuring a rich collection of opuntia (prickly pear).

Dar Igdad, meaning ‘the house of the birds’ in Berber, was begun in 2007 on the site of a former olive grove. Like Dar Al Hossoun, it is surrounded by high earthen walls in a rich mahogany colour, against which still stand many of the grove’s original multi-trunked trees. The garden, which featured in **Garden Illustrated by Louisa Jones**, is drought tolerant. The most spectacular part, a vast meadow, appears natural but is actually composed of species from similar biotopes from all over the world, like American agaves and African euphorbias that grow among the meadow’s Sahara grasses.

At Dar Deboules and Dar Carlhian, we see Ossart & Maurières’ most recent designs. Both gardens offer an unusually broad range of steppe plants, making it possible to track growth from planting to maturity. In the Dar Deboules, a range of new plants are used. Dar Carlhian is the very last house and garden designed by Ossart & Maurières in Morocco. This lighter and more economical garden display wild plants imported from the Mexican pampa.

Following a buffet lunch in the sunken garden of Dar Al Hossoun, we visit Les Jardins de Andrew, near the medina. Andrew is an eccentric British collector with a taste for whimsical constructions. Andrew’s garden, located outside the ramparts, is punctuated by fanciful creations that lend an air of mystery to their lush surroundings. Ossart and Maurières describe their work thus: “using the same plants as at Dar Igdad, we

laid out here a very formal garden corresponding exactly to the architecture of the house. Keeping in mind the advice of the great Brazilian designer Roberto Burle Marx, we used the right plant in the right place, whether rare or commonplace, native or exotic. We often use bold swaths of the same plant to get different moods even in this relatively small garden". We finish the afternoon with a visit to La Maison des 3 Paons, a riad renovated by Maurières and Ossart.

Late afternoon, we head for La Tour des Faucons (The Falcon's Villa). Welcomed by Karl Morsher, the owner and designer, we visit the renovated farmhouse and its extensive grounds of palm and olive trees (producing their own organic olive oil) and exotic flower-filled gardens. We also view his unique collection of Berber arts in his contemporary style villa. We enjoy dinner at La Tour des Faucons. (Overnight Taroudant) BLD

#### Day 4: Friday 17 March, Taroudant – Afensou and the upper valley of the Oued Ouaer – Taroudant

- Lunch in traditional Berber house
- Trek across high plateaux to study flora found at medium altitude around Imoulass
- High-altitude garden designed by Éric Ossart and Arnaud Maurières, Afra
- Claudio Bravo palace and gardens

Taroudant stands at the foot of the Western High Atlas Mountains, which reach a maximum elevation at Djebel Aoulim of 3445 metres. In the upper valleys are ancient mud brick and *pisé* villages nestling in high-altitude oases – traditional settlements planted with palm trees, olive groves and even walnut trees in the highest villages. The tracts of land in between them provide an ideal habitat for a wealth of native flora.

Following lunch in a traditional Berber house, we trek across the high plateau (nothing too demanding) through thickets of *thuja* (a tree of the coniferous family, close to cedar, which grows only in Morocco, specifically in the Atlas Mountains, used by artisans for making tables, boxes etc) and the flora found at medium altitude around Imoulass (*Callitris articulata*, *Polygala balansae*, *Thymus saturejoides*, *Salvia taraxifolia*, *Chamacytisus albidus*, etc).

In the village of Afra we visit Ossart & Maurières' high-altitude garden – the perfect location for hundreds of different plant species, including some rare specimens. T

On our way back to Taroudant, we visit the Claudio Bravo palace and gardens. Chilean painter Claudio Bravo spent his last years building an enormous palace in Taroudant in which to house his collections. The gardens surrounding the palace are equally enormous and are arranged around a large pond that provides water for citrus and banana trees; the interior gardens were designed by Ossart and Maurières. (Overnight Taroudant) BLD

#### Day 5: Saturday 18 March, Taroudant – Tiout Oasis – Taroudant

- Dar El Nour
- Dar El Ahbab
- Tiout Oasis and the Anti Atlas

This morning we visit Dar El Nour and Dar Ahbab in the Hossoun valley. These two houses and gardens were specifically designed by Ossart and Maurières for a relatively small plot of land, focusing on the affinity between rammed-earth buildings and natural swimming pools. The gardens appear wild, but do in fact contain at least 200 different species of carefully selected plants.

Then, we subdivide into two groups to take two small coaches on a scenic drive through the Souss Valley to the fertile oasis of Tiout, located on the northern edge of the Anti Atlas mountains.

In the Souss Valley we'll witness the tremendous contrast between commercially farmed irrigated cash crops (such as oranges, maize or bananas) and subsistence farming of arid land including the strange sight of goats grazing in the native *argania* (trees). *Argania spinosa*, endemic to the semi-desert Sous Valley and the Algerian region of Tindouf, is a source of argan oil used for dipping bread, on couscous, salads, and in natural cosmetics. In Morocco, *arganeraie* forests now cover some 8280 square kilometres, designated as a UNESCO biosphere reserve.

The Tiout Oasis, formed by a now dried-up ancient lake, is probably the westernmost of all the oases that have survived from antiquity. It provides a perfect demonstration of the traditional custom of sharing irrigation water and also reflects the diverse richness of sub-Saharan arable farming. Our excursion includes a guided tour led by a local farmer, a visit to women argan oil cooperative, with lunch under Berber canvas at the heart of the oasis.

We return to our riad for some time at leisure and a farewell meal at Dar Al Hossoun. (Overnight Taroudant) BLD

### Marrakesh - 5 nights

Day 6: Sunday 19 March, Taroudant – Ouirgane – Marrakesh

- Scenic drive to Ouirgane
- Lunch at Domaine de la Roseraie, Ouirgane

Today we journey north to Marrakesh, following one of the most spectacular routes in Morocco. It winds its way up and then down through the High Atlas, above the beautiful valleys and past isolated villages, eventually reaching the Tizi-n-Test pass, with its breathtaking views across the Souss Valley to the Anti Atlas.

We break for lunch in Ouirgane, a small village surrounded by stunning greenery, red-earth hills and pine forests. Lunch will be served in the Domaine de la Roseraie, which is set in the middle of 25 hectares of flower beds, olive trees, orchards and, as the name suggests, plenty of rose bushes. Winding paths through the estate offer unique views over the Toubkal range. (Mt Toubkal is the highest peak in the Atlas mountains, and in North Africa, at 4167 metres).

We continue north to reach our hotel in Marrakesh in the late afternoon. (Overnight Marrakesh) BLD

### Introduction to Marrakesh

Marrakesh is one of four imperial cities in Morocco, founded in 1070 by the Almoravid Abu Bakr. He chose the site because it was well watered and flat: perfect as a camping ground for the Almoravid army, composed of nomads from the Sahara. Marrakesh began as the perfect springboard for the Almoravid conquest of North Morocco, but it soon became the Almoravid capital by virtue of its location on the trans-Saharan trade route.

After the Almoravids had conquered much of Spain, a period of cultural and artistic exchange ensued bringing the sophisticated urban culture of al-Andalus (Iberia) to Marrakesh. All that remains of Almoravid Marrakesh is an exquisite *qubba*, (domed chamber), which may indicate the site of the lost Almoravid great mosque of Marrakesh.

In 1147 Marrakesh fell to the Almohads, who then captured North Morocco, Muslim Spain, and North Africa as far as Tunis. The most famous Almohad ruler, Ya'qub al-Mansur, builder of the Qasba of the Udaya and Hassan Tower in Rabat and the Giralda of Seville, constructed a spectacular Almohad great mosque (1190), sister to the great mosques of Rabat and Seville here. The mosque soon became known as the Kutubiyya, or Booksellers' Mosque, as a result of the book market which grew up in its shadow.

The minaret of the Kutubiyya is one of the most important extant Almohad buildings as the only Almohad minaret which has survived intact. Like the Hassan Tower, the minaret's façades are decorated with intricate screenwork, punctuated on the upper levels with small windows. It is crowned with a small domed pavilion surmounted with a gold spike holding three gold balls and a crescent, and gives an impression of how the Hassan Tower would have looked. Ya'qub al-Mansur also enclosed the city in a new set of walls punctuated by gateways, of which the most important is the Bab Agnaou. The Almohads also constructed the suburban Menara Gardens with their huge central pool and olive groves as a place for recreation and physical training of the Almohad army.

The Marinids showed little interest in Marrakesh but nevertheless commissioned the Bin Yusuf or Yusufiyya Madrasa here. Like Morocco's other Marinid madrasas, the Yusufiyya has a central courtyard leading to a prayer hall flanked by students' cells.

The Sa'di dynasty added palaces, shrines and mosques to Marrakesh. The greatest Sa'di sultan, Ahmad al-Mansur al-Dhahabi, embellished the Sa'di tomb complex and renovated the Yusufiyya Madrasa. The Sa'di reproduced Andalusian stucco work in marble from Italy.

Fes, Meknes, Rabat and Marrakesh all became 'Alawi capitals when this dynasty supplanted the Sa'adi. Many 'Alawi sultans loved Marrakesh and built palaces and gardens here. Mawlay 'Abd al-Rahman (1822-1859) restored the Agdal gardens and his son, Sidi Muhammad sponsored agricultural projects in the area. His grandson's minister, Mawlay al-Hassan (1873-1894), built the Bahia and Dar Si Sa'id palaces.

#### Day 7: Monday 20 March, Marrakesh

- Bahia Palace & courtyard gardens
- Sa'di Tombs
- Bab Agnaou
- Kutubiyya Mosque
- [Le Jardin Secret \(See Youtube video\)](#)
- La Mamounia: historical gardens and afternoon tea

This morning we visit the 19th-century Bahia Palace, a fine example of Andalusian-style architecture. This was previously the home of Grand Vizier Si Moussa in the 1860s and embellished from 1894 to 1900 by slave-turned-vizier Abu 'Bou' Ahmed. The name 'Bahia' means 'palace of the beautiful.' There are 160 different rooms in the palace which sprawl out in an open, rambling fashion. Decorations take the form of subtle stucco panels, *zellij* decorations, tiled floors, smooth arches, carved cedar ceilings, shiny marble (*tadlakt*) finishes and *zouak* painted ceilings. It has three beautiful courtyard gardens, rich with intoxicating roses, jacaranda, jasmine, orange blossom and pomegranates.

We also see the Sa'di Tombs. Sultan Ahmed al Mansour constructed the Sa'di Tombs in Marrakech during his rule of Morocco (16th century) as a burial ground for himself and some 200 of his descendants. The most significant chamber in the tombs is the Hall of Twelve Columns. Here rests the Sultan Ahmed el Mansour and his entire family. This chamber has a vaulted roof, Italian marble columns, beautifully decorated cedar doors and carved wooden screens. Inside the inner mausoleum lies Mohammed esh Sheikh, founder of the

Sa'di dynasty, as well as the tomb of his mother. The tombs are surrounded by a small garden with richly coloured and scented roses.

We end the morning visiting the 12th-century, horseshoe-arched Bab Agnaou and the Kutubiyya Mosque. The Almohad Bab Agnaou is one of the 19 gates of Marrakesh. The Kutubiyya Mosque, Marrakesh's largest, is ornament with curved windows, a band of ceramic inlay, pointed merlons, and decorative arches. It was completed under the reign of the Almohad Caliph Yaqub al-Mansur (1184-1199).

Following lunch at the La Maison Arabe's renowned restaurant 'Les Trois Saveurs', we visit [Le Jardin Secret](#), a public garden designed by English landscape architect, Tom Stuart-Smith. The garden is located on the former site of the Riad of the Governor of the medina in the 19th century. Described by Tom Stuart-Smith: "Part of the garden is a faithful reconstruction of an Islamic garden that could have existed in Marrakech in the 19th century. The smaller garden has been largely reconfigured and is a more romantic interpretation of a Moroccan garden, full of the sorts of flowers and colour that would not be found in the more traditional garden. The west courtyard has a citrus grove with underplanting of *Stipa tenuissima*, California poppy, Lavender and Tulbaghia."

We end the day with a visit to the gardens of La Mamounia one of the most famous hotels in the world (1929) and beloved of Winston Churchill. Its vast gardens are cared for by 40 gardeners who twice a year plant 60,000 annuals to enhance its grounds. They garden has immaculately mown grass under citrus and olive orchards, a desert garden, a rose garden and a tropical garden as well as many fountains. At the back of the 15-hectare garden there is a herb and kitchen garden whose produce is used in the hotel's daily meals. We will be served Moroccan style afternoon tea in the garden. (Overnight Marrakesh) BL

#### Day 8: Tuesday 21 March, Marrakesh

- Jardin Majorelle and Musée d'Art Berbère
- Villa Oasis: the garden of Yves Saint Laurent and Pierre Bergé
- Yves Saint Laurent Museum
- Afternoon at leisure

Marrakesh, perhaps known best for its souqs (markets), squares and spices, also has many lush gardens. Green spaces have always been an integral part of life in Marrakesh. The city's gardens have also inspired many artists, fashion designers and writers over the years. The British writer Osbert Sitwell said Marrakesh "is the ideal African city of water-lawns, cool, pillared palaces and orange groves." Matisse, Delacroix, Yves Saint Laurent, The Beatles, The Rolling Stones and Jean-Paul Getty visited too, finding inspiration and spending long periods in the city.

Early this morning we visit the Jardin Majorelle, created by the French painter Jacques Majorelle (1886-1962) and later owned by Yves Saint Laurent. The garden presents a cacophony of pink bougainvillea, blush-coloured water lilies, and a vast array of cacti. The inner walls are painted a vibrant 'Majorelle' blue, named after the garden's founder. Majorelle's art-deco studio houses a Berber Art Museum which displays valuable ceramics, weapons and magnificent jewellery, textiles, carpets, woodwork and other treasures. We also will visit the gardens of Villa Oasis, Yves Saint Laurent's private home adjoining the Jardin Majorelle. The garden was designed by Madison Cox.

Located right next to the Jardin Majorelle is the Yves Saint Laurent Museum dedicated to the work of the French fashion designer. This new museum houses an important selection from the Fondation Pierre Bergé – Yves Saint Laurent's impressive collection, which comprises 5000 items of clothing, 15,000 haute couture accessories as well as tens of thousands of sketches and assorted objects. The museum's landscaped areas

are also designed by Madison Cox.

The remain of the day is at leisure. (Overnight Marrakesh) B

#### Day 9: Wednesday 22 March, Marrakesh

- Gardens of Jnane Tamsna with Gary Martin and Meryanne Loum-Martin
- Yusufiyya Madrasa
- Jama' al-Fana'

This morning we transfer to Jnane Tamsna. Owned by ethnobotanist Gary Martin and his wife Meryanne Loum-Martin, this beautifully designed boutique guesthouse boasts a magnificent botany collection. It is set in the Palmeraie area of Marrakesh where tens of thousands of palm trees create shade for other plants to prosper, providing the atmosphere of an oasis. The free-flow approach (there are no formal lawns), adds to the ambience with grounds that encourage aromatic herb gardens, olive groves, lemon trees, vegetable plots and flower beds. The organic gardens are spread over nearly 9 hectares, and are watered constantly by traditional groundwater flow (*khattara*) and drip irrigation, while the air is naturally scented by gardenia, jasmine and white bougainvillea. We enjoy a visit of the garden and the estate before sitting for lunch.

In the afternoon we visit the religious heart of old Marrakesh where the Almoravid Qubba, the Yusufiyya Madrasa and Yusufiyya Mosque stand, probably on the site of the original Almoravid great mosque of Marrakesh. We shall also walk through the old medina visiting the city's fascinating souqs. Marrakesh's souqs are renowned for their vast size and the quality and variety of crafted goods on sale there. As in other Moroccan cities, each different craft can be found in its own particular street or alley: we shall see streets dedicated to gold jewellery, silver, cedar wood carving, silk robes, textiles, leather slippers, copper utensils, ceramics, rugs and carpets. The market area is covered by reed lattices whose dappled shade shelters the alleys from the hot southern sun.

We walk through the old city to its commercial and recreational heart, the Jama' al-Fana', an extraordinary public arena lined with booths selling fresh orange and grapefruit juice, nuts and sweets. In the centre a number of stalls offer snacks and meals of infinite variety, and numerous people provide public services and entertainments. Dentists, preachers, acrobats, black musicians from the Gnawa religious brotherhood, letter writers, snake charmers and story tellers all mingle in the Jama' al-Fana' from dusk late into the night. This square is very dear to the people of Marrakesh, a place to meet and promenade. This evening is at leisure. You may wish to stay on in the Jama' al-Fana' to enjoy its extraordinary atmosphere. (Overnight Marrakesh) BL

#### Day 10: Thursday 23 March, Marrakesh – Ourika Valley – Marrakesh

- Anima Garden
- Private gardens of Dar Azaren, Tnine Ourika

Today we drive 30 kilometres south of Marrakesh to visit Anima, one of the most beautiful and imaginative gardens in Morocco. Austrian multi-media artist André Heller's opulent, two-hectare botanical garden is a magical place of sensuality and wonder. It combines unusual sculptures with flowers and plants, paying homage to local traditions and fauna, as well as incorporating modern Western elements.

We then visit the secluded retreat of Dar Azaren, owned by Liliane Fawcett. This *dar* (house), set in 6.5 hectares, is nestled within olive groves and walled gardens, and offers spectacular views of the High Atlas Mountains. The grounds and gardens, conceived by Arnaud Maurières and Éric Ossart, blend subtle

plantations of fragrant flowers and sculptural cacti with local crops. The colours of the landscape using the grey santolina, mauve lantana and enormous Kalanchoe set a dramatic scene. We will enjoy lunch there.

After the lunch and visit at Dar Azaren, we return to Marrakesh. The remainder of the day is at leisure. (Overnight Marrakesh) BL

### Ouarzazate - 1 night

Day 11: Friday 24 March, Marrakesh – Ait Ben Haddou – Ouarzazate

- Tiz n'Tishka Pass
- Ksar of Ait Ben Haddou

This morning we cross the High Atlas by way of the Tiz n'Tishka Pass, opening up on the landscapes of the pre-Sahara with its *pisé qasbas* and *qsars*, the verdant palm groves of the Ziz valleys, and the rocky drama of the gorges.

This afternoon we drive to Ait Ben Haddou, one of the fortified villages under control of the Glawi family in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Located in the foothills of the High Atlas, Ait Ben Haddou is the most famous *qsar* in the Ounila Valley, and a striking example of southern Moroccan architecture. This fortified village in its dramatic landscape is regularly used as settings for films. (Overnight Ouarzazate) BLD

### Tineghir - 1 night

Day 12: Saturday 25 March, Ouarzazate – Taourirt – Tudgha Gorge – Tineghir

- Qasba de Taourirt
- Qsars of Tineghir
- Tudgha Gorge

This morning we travel west via the Route of the Qasbahs to visit the Qasba of Taourirt located in the town of Ouarzazate. Built late in the 19th century, the qasba became important in the 1930s when the local Glawi dynasty's powers were at their peak. The qasba was never actually resided in by the Glawi chiefs but rather by their second tier of command, including their sons and cousins and their massive entourages of extended family members, servants, builders, and craftsmen. The qasba has close to 300 rooms grouped in more than 20 riads (apartments).

We have lunch in Tineghir and then visit the *qsar* (fortified village). This afternoon we head up the spectacular Tudgha Gorge. En route we shall take a leisurely walk through one of the rich, cultivated areas nestling on the banks of the Wad Tudgha..

Near Tineghir the High Atlas meets the Jabal Saghru, a small massif which is part of the Anti Atlas range. The deep gorges of Tudgha and Dades mark the fault line between these two mountain ranges. Both gorges were carved out of the rock by torrents of melt water from the peaks above them. As they widen, small terraces of crops line each watercourse and villages cling to their sides, placed above the line of the torrential meltwaters which can close the gorges in spring. Here the mud-brick is the same brilliant red as the soil, creating a striking contrast to the rich green crops. (Overnight Tineghir) BLD

### Merzouga - 1 night

Day 13: Sunday 26 March, Tineghir – Erfoud – Rissani – Merzouga

- Moroccan *khattara*
- Rissani Market
- Tomb of Mawlay 'Ali al-Sharif, Rissani

This morning we take the Tinjdad road east to the town of Erfoud. This road marks the start of the Route of the Qasbas, so-called because of the many fortified houses, or *qasbas*, which line its edges. Along the way we stop to view part of the 300-kilometre network of *khattara* (qanat) – subsurface irrigation channels which were excavated in the Tafilalt basin beginning in the late 14th century. More than 75 of these chains provided perennial water following the breakup of the ancient city of Sijilmasa. *Khattara* continued to function for much of the northern oasis until the early 1970s, when new technologies and government policies forced changes.

After lunch in Erfoud, we depart for Rissani, the capital of the province of Tafilalt and ancestral home of the 'Alawi dynasty. Rissani lies alongside the ruins of the early Islamic town of Sijilmasa which controlled Moroccan trade with sub-Saharan Africa from the early 8th century until the 14th century. Sijilmasa's vast ruins reflect the wealth of this medieval city, but by the 16th century it was no more than one of a number of fortified mud-brick villages (*qsars*). These mud-brick villages are composed of many small houses wedged together whose outer walls form a continuous outer rampart through which a single ornate portal provides access to the village. The modern town of Rissani itself, constructed this century, grew out of the largest set of local *qsars*.

The 'Alawi dynasty's founder Mawlay 'Ali al-Sharif died a hero fighting the Portuguese in North Morocco. His tomb in Tafilalt became a local shrine, set amid date palms, irrigation canals and brilliant green *qsar* gardens. We shall visit the mausoleum of Mawlay 'Ali al-Sharif (gardens only) and the Ksar Oulad Abdelhalim, a restored 18th-century kasbah or fortified house. In Rissani's Sunday market, we may view wandering traders, nomads, Berbers and Arab desert dwellers who come to sell all kinds of clothing, wares, plants, spices and vegetables, and animals.

We continue to Merzouga, on the edge of the Sahara, where we will spend the night. (Overnight Merzouga) BLD

### Fes - 3 nights

Day 14: Monday 27 March, Merzouga – Midelt – Ifrane – Fes

- Dawn Camel Excursion (Optional)
- Midelt
- Ifrane

After an optional dawn excursion to the sand dunes of Merzouga to watch the sunrise, we travel to Fes through the Middle Atlas mountains.

Midelt, where we eat lunch, marks the start of one of the main routes through the eastern High Atlas mountains to the Sahara. This route was carved through the mountains by the Wad Ziz, a river which snakes south alongside the road. As we drive south the cedars and oaks of the north gradually give way to barren rock, clusters of date palms marking water sources, and finally the sand of the desert. We emerge from the mountains into the fertile Ziz Valley down which vast numbers of date palms stretch to the horizon like brilliant green rivers; dates are a Moroccan staple and one of the country's major exports. From Midelt we will drive to Ifrane through some of Morocco's most magnificent scenery in which broad high plains are framed everywhere by snow-capped mountains.

We shall pass through Ifrane, a small mountain town built by the French to escape the summer heat of the plains. The town is famous for its luscious gardens. Just outside Ifrane we drive through huge cedar forests, second only to those of Lebanon. These forests provided the wood to be carved into the magnificent decoration of Moroccan monuments. (Overnight Fes) BLD

## Introduction to Fes

Fes is the oldest of Morocco's imperial cities and is still its historic religious and cultural centre. Fes is actually composed of three discrete entities: Fes al-Bali (old Fes), wedged into the narrow valley of the Wad Fes (River Fes); Fes al-Jadid (New Fes), originally a royal complex; and the Ville Nouvelle (New Town), the modern French-built section of the city.

Fes al-Bali, was founded by Idris I around 799. His son, Idris II made Fes his capital in 809 and its population was swelled by immigrants from other Arabo-Islamic lands. Fes soon became an important centre for religious scholarship, commerce and artisanship. Fes benefited from its position at the juncture of land trade routes to and from al-Andalus (Islamic Spain), sub-Saharan Africa and the Islamic east.

The 11th-12th century Almoravid dynasty conquered North Morocco and incorporated Muslim Spain into its empire. Although the Almoravids founded Marrakesh as their capital in 1070, they also built mosques, baths, *funduqs* (multi-storey lodging houses for merchants and their wares), and fountains in Fes. Many Hispano-Muslim artisans moved to Fes to work on Almoravid buildings, which were renowned for their stuccowork decoration.

After 1154 the Almohads gave the city new walls which still define the limits of Fes al-Bali to the present day. The Qarawiyyin Mosque could now hold approximately 20,000 worshippers. The Qarawiyyin is quite different to Hispano-Muslim mosques and medieval European cathedral architecture for despite its vast size it hides within the narrow streets of the city and has no defined exterior or monumental façade.

In the 1240s the Marinid dynasty replaced the Almohads and fought against the Christians in Spain. Moroccan rulers henceforth dedicated themselves to holy war (*jihād*) against the aggressive Christians. Much of Fes' exquisite architecture dates from the Marinid period (13th-15th century). They amalgamated Moroccan and Hispanic elements in a style subsequently known as 'Andalusian', which remains dominant in Fes and other Moroccan cities to this day. The Marinids built the royal complex of Fes al-Jadid which included palaces, mosques and residential quarters for the sultan's troops. They commissioned a series of palaces and *funduqs* in Fes al-Bali and introduced the 'madrasa' or theological college to Morocco, constructing a series of wonderful madrasas in Fes. These *madrasas* have a central courtyard, a prayer hall, and several storeys of student rooms wrapped around the courtyard and prayer hall. They are all decorated in the distinctive registers of carved cedarwood, stuccowork, and mosaic tile, a hallmark of the Moroccan Andalusian style. The Marinids also created the shrine of Idris II.

In the 15th century Morocco broke up into small principalities ruled by strong men able to resist Spanish and Portuguese aggression. Fes' cultural and commercial life was nevertheless enriched by Jewish and Hispano-Muslim migrants fleeing Spain. Fes consequently maintained its religious and cultural importance despite the 16th-century Sa'di dynasty's choice of Marrakesh as their capital. The 'Alawi sultans also recognised the importance of Fes and added palaces, fortifications and the Jewish quarter (*mellah*).

## Day 15: Tuesday 28 March, Fes

- Burj al-Janub
- Al-Andalus Mosque

- Sahrij Madrasa (exterior)
- The Dyers' Street
- The Tanneries
- Souqs of Fes
- Lunch at Le Jardin des Biehn
- Dinner at La Maison Bleue

We start today with a visit to the Burj al-Janub, or South Tower, which gives a panoramic view of Fes from the alternate side to the North Tower. We then explore Fes al-Bali visiting the al-Andalus quarter; Marinid madrasas in the city; areas of artisanal production and the souqs, or markets.

The al-Andalus quarter lies on the eastern side of the Wad Fes, and has its own great mosque with a dramatic monumental gateway with a horseshoe arch. One of the most beautiful Marinid madrasas in Morocco, the Sahrij Madrasa, is located close by. The small, perfectly proportioned courtyard of the madrasa is tiled with turquoise-tinted tiles whose colour is picked up and reflected by the large central pool. This intimate space is enclosed by carved wood screens.

From the Sahrij we descend to the river and cross to the Qarawiyyin quarter of the city to see the street of the dyers and the tanneries. Every morning, when the tanneries are at their most active, cascades of water pour through holes that were once the windows of houses. Here, hundreds of skins lie spread out on the rooftops to dry, while amid the vats of dye and pigeon dung tanners treat the hides. The rotation of colours in the honeycombed vats follows a traditional sequence – yellow (supposedly 'saffron', in fact turmeric), red (poppy), blue (indigo), green (mint) and black (antimony) – although vegetable dyes have largely been replaced by chemicals, to the detriment of workers' health. This 'innovation' and the occasional rinsing machine aside, there can have been little change here since the sixteenth century, when Fes replaced Córdoba as the pre-eminent city of leather production.

During the day we break for lunch at Le Jardin des Biehn, a large Andalusian garden in the middle of the medina, scented by Isfahan roses, jasmine, orange blossom and bergamot. The gardens, surrounded by a former 20th-century summer palace, were redeveloped by Michel Biehn. Its quadrants are divided by mosaic paths, with tingling streams and fountains, and include flowers, aromatic herbs, fruits and vegetables.

Dinner tonight will be at La Maison Bleue restaurant, a traditional Moroccan residence built in 1915 by Sidi Mohammed El Abbadi, a judge and astronomer. (Overnight Fes) BLD

#### Day 16: Wednesday 29 March, Fes

- Palace and Andalusian Gardens of Fes, including the Jnane Sbil Garden (Bou Jeloud Garden)
- Lunch at Restaurant NUR
- Bu 'Inaniyya Madrasa
- Qarawiyyin Mosque (exterior)
- Shrine of Mawlay Idris II (exterior)
- 'Attarin Madrasa
- Fondouk el-Nejjarine
- Museum Dar Batha (*under renovation – subject to confirmation for 2023*)

Fes was one of the first cities in the world to build a water distribution network which enabled it to develop the art of gardening. This morning we return to Fes' medina for a walking tour which explores the city's palaces and Andalusian gardens.

The 19th-century Jnane Sbil Park (formerly Bou Jeloud Gardens), covering an area of 7.5 hectares, underwent 4 years of extensive renovations and was reopened in 2012. Renovations works included the rehabilitation of its old and ingenious hydraulic systems (including fountains, *seguias*, channels and *norias*), restoration of the central boulevard and bamboo garden, as well as the creation of the Garden of Scents. The Oued Fes (Fes river) and the Oued Jawahir (river of pearls) flowed through the garden; a water wheel remains as a reminder of how the medieval city provided power to its craftsmen and their workshops.

From Jnane Sbil Gardens we proceed through the vividly decorated Bab Bou Jeloud Gate to Fes al-Bali, unique in its maintenance of an urban plan dating to the ninth century. The narrowness of its steep, winding streets means that motor vehicles may not enter and donkeys, mules and handcarts still transport food and merchandise around the city. Many of the religious, domestic and commercial structures lining the streets date to the fourteenth century, providing a unique insight into the physical experience of living in a medieval city.

Midday we dine at Restaurant NUR which operates as a venue for an intriguing new visiting-chef-in-residence project. Each visiting chef is invited to create a daily menu based on seasonal produce sourced from Fes's central market or nearby farms. The restaurant is owned by Stephen di Renza, a former fashion director for Neiman Marcus and Bergdorf Goodman, who divides his time between Fes and Marrakesh where he is the creative director for the Jardin Majorelle.

Following lunch we visit the 14th-century Bu 'Inaniyya Madrasa and the 'Attarin Madrasa, built around 1325. The 'Attarin is a relatively small and intimate madrasa decorated with rich tile work. Both madrasas served as residences for students at the great mosques of Fes rather than as teaching centres.

We also visit the Qarawiyyin Mosque and the shrine of Mawlay Idris II. The two buildings form the sacred core of the city, and the prestigious markets for perfumes, spices and silk garments are located nearby adding pungency and fragrance to the air. Although non-Muslims may not enter these buildings, we can view their interiors through their gateways.

Finally we visit the Fondouk el-Nejjarine, home to the Museum of Wooden Arts and Crafts which showcases the skill of woodcarvers and artists both in the embellishments of the building and the intricately decorated items on display. Various types of timber are used in Moroccan woodcarving, including oak, mahogany, acacia and cedar, with the latter being one of the most popular, most likely due to its availability in Morocco, particularly in the Middle Atlas regions, but also because of its durability, warm shades of color and its texture which is particularly suited to carving. Declared a national monument in 1916, the *funduq* was originally built in the 18th century as a *caravanserai* (roadside inn) where travellers could rest before continuing their, sometimes arduous, journey. These buildings, which are found throughout Morocco, were typically built in a square or rectangular shape around an inner courtyard, usually with a fountain in the middle creating an oasis from the Moroccan heat.

In Fes al-Bali we visit the Dar Batha Museum, a collection of antique Moroccan woodwork, marblwork and other craftwork housed in a converted 'Alawi palace. This museum contains the original carved wood doors of some of Fes' madrasas and a marble doorway from the Sa'di palace in Marrakesh, along with many other artefacts which demonstrate Moroccan adaptation of Hispano-Muslim styles. The palace's garden shaded with citrus trees and perfumed with orange blossom, red roses and sweet-scented jasmine, provided a serene escape from the bustling medina. Its layout is based on the principles of *charbagh* – a Persian-style garden where the quadrilateral layout is divided by walkways or flowing water that intersect at the garden's centre. In Persian, *char* means 'four' and *bagh* means 'garden'. This highly structured geometrical scheme, became a powerful metaphor for the organisation and domestication of the landscape, itself a symbol of political territory. The gardens were restored by landscape architect, Carey Duncan in 2005. Duncan worked

with Cotecno and Architect Raffael Gorjux from Italy recreating the Andalusian Garden while keeping existing large trees, but replanting the undergrowth which was either bare or overtaken by weeds, and revitalising the existing planting. (Overnight Fes) BL

### Chefchaouen - 1 night

Day 17: Thursday 30 March, Fes – Volubilis – Chefchaouen

- Roman Site of Volubilis

Today we travel north from Fes to Chefchaouen via Volubilis. The Roman city of Volubilis was built in the 1st century BC on the site of earlier Prehistoric and Phoenician settlements when Morocco and Algeria were incorporated into the Roman Empire as the client kingdom of Mauretania. The kingdom was ruled by Juba II, the Roman-educated son of its vanquished Berber ruler. Juba II was a classmate of both Octavian and Cleopatra Selene, daughter of Antony and Cleopatra. When Octavian became Augustus, he married Juba II to Cleopatra Selene, and made them client rulers of Mauretania. They founded two capitals: Iol Caesarea in Eastern Algeria and Volubilis in Morocco. The wealth of Volubilis was based on local production of grain, olive oil and copper which were exported to the rest of the empire.

In 40 AD Caligula had Juba's son, Ptolemy, assassinated. Mauretania went into revolt only to be formally annexed to Rome and made into the directly-governed province of Mauretania Tingitania. The wealth of Volubilis' agricultural hinterland ensured its ongoing importance to the Romans. Despite the shrinking Roman presence in Morocco from the 3rd century onwards, Volubilis probably remained partly Romanised until the 7th century.

We visit the ruins of Volubilis, which is set in broad wheat bearing plains as it was in the Roman period. Its monuments include the well-preserved Basilica and Arch of Caracalla and there is a fine collection of very important Roman mosaic floors. We also explore the House of Orpheus, the Baths of Gallienus, the Forum, the Temple of Saturn and a number of houses. From Volubilis we travel north to Chefchaouen, a small town nestling in a deep, narrow valley at the western end of the Rif mountains, where we spend the night. (Overnight Chefchaouen) BLD

### Tangier - 3 nights

Day 18: Friday 31 March, Chefchaouen – Tetouan – Tangier

- Old Town of Chefchaouen
- The Royal Artisan School, Tetouan (Dar Sanaa)
- Medina of Tetouan
- Welcome Drinks with interior designer François Gilles, Tangier

Today we travel along the picturesque mountain road from Chefchaouen to Tangier. 'Chefchaouen' is a Berber name, meaning 'two horns', which refers to two rocky peaks that dominate the town. The town was founded in the 15th century by a descendant of the Prophet, called Mawlay 'Ali ibn Rashid, and refugees from Spain who sought to create a mountain stronghold where they would be safe at last from the Christians. Around 1760 Sultan Mohammed Ben Abdallah (Mohammed III) ordered the Jewish families to move into the medina, their *mellah* (walled Jewish quarter of a city) taking in the area that today encompasses the southern quarter between the *qasba* and Bab el Ain. Until this century, Chefchaouen was completely closed to Europeans, who risked their lives if they tried to enter its gates.

The Hispanic origin of Chefchaouen's inhabitants is clearly evident in the architecture of this little town

which has much in common with villages of southern Spain. Small, whitewashed ochre houses with balconies, windows covered by ornate metal grilles, tiled roofs and Andalusian-style courtyards, pile up upon one another. Chefchaouen's famous shades of blue arose when the Jews added indigo into the whitewash to contrast the *mellah* against the traditional green of Islam. The town's stone-built Friday mosque resembles rural Spanish churches. The focus of town life is the central plaza where the inhabitants promenade in the balmy dusk air. In the early evening there will be an optional walk to explore the old town of Chefchaouen.

We break our journey in the city of Tetouan, situated on the slopes of the fertile Martil Valley. Tetouan, from the Berber word *tit'ta'ouin* means 'springs', which explains the greenery of the town, its many fountains, its flowering gardens and its surrounding fertile plains. The city was of particular importance from the 8th century onwards as it served as the main point of contact between Morocco and Andalusia. After the Spanish Reconquest, the town was rebuilt by Andalusian refugees who had been expelled by Isabella and Ferdinand (1492). This is reflected in its art and architecture, which reveal clear Andalusian influences.

Tetouan's ancient walled medina is a UNESCO World Heritage site whose houses reflect a rich aristocratic tradition. Their tiled lintels, wrought-iron balconies, courtyard gardens and extravagant interiors have a lot in common with the old Muslim quarters of Córdoba or Seville. Despite subsequent conquests, the medina has remained largely intact and one of the most complete in Morocco. Inside the medina proper are most of Tetouan's food and crafts souqs, including the Souk el-Hots where Berber rugs and *foutas* (woven cotton cloth) are sold. Throughout Morocco we will find carpets, textiles and leather that are dyed with natural pigments that are derived from indigenous plants. Deftly woven carpets, expertly crafted leatherwork, intricately carved woodwork, superbly tooled metal work, colourful tiles and exquisite ceramics are all to be found in Tetouan. We visit Dar Sanaa, the Royal Artisan School where local children are apprenticed to masters for 4 years of intense training in traditional artisan work.

We continue our journey north to reach Tangier. Tangier is one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in Morocco. Founded by the Phoenicians (c.1100 BC) it was subsequently incorporated into the Roman Empire as Tingis, capital of the province of Mauretania Tingitania. With Rome's decline (4th century AD) it became the only surviving Roman town of any consequence in Morocco. Temporarily lost during the Vandal invasions, Tingis was recaptured by the Byzantines in the 6th century.

In the late 7th century, Tingis was captured by Muslim armies and transformed into the garrison and port of Tangier. It served as a stepping-stone for Muslim attacks on the Iberian peninsula (Spain & Portugal). When the Castilians and Portuguese eventually reconquered Iberia and began attacking north Africa, Tangier became a regular victim of Portuguese raids and was finally captured late in the 15th century. The Portuguese monarchy ceded it to Britain in the 17th century as part of the dowry of Catharine of Braganza, wife of Charles II. But the expense of retaining Tangier against constant Muslim attacks persuaded the British to withdraw in 1684 and Tangier again became a Muslim city. Morocco's 'Alawi dynasty added new defences and a *qasba* and Tangier became a small port trading with Cadiz and other Spanish ports. In the 19th century, Tangier became the 'City of the Consuls', the residence of European diplomats and it became an 'international zone' in the early 20th century during the French Protectorate. Tangier gained a shady reputation for espionage, prostitution and drug-smuggling. Since Independence in 1956 the city has been gradually re-integrated into the Moroccan cultural mainstream, although it still has a large expatriate community, especially of writers, artists and gardeners.

This evening we enjoy welcome drinks with François Gilles. For over 30 years, François was a London-based interior designer who sourced Moroccan textiles. He will be our guide for the next two days. We meet François at The Caid's Bar of the El Minzah hotel. The film *Casablanca* continues to draw people to Tangier, but it wasn't filmed in Morocco at all. Rick's Café was fictional, but there's a popular belief that Caid's bar

served as the inspiration. The “Caid” in question was Sir Harry MacLean, trainer of the Moroccan Army for Sultan Moulay Hassan. We enjoy our dinner at the hotel. (Overnight Tangier) BLD

#### Day 19: Saturday 1 April, Tangier

- Cape Malabata
- American Legation
- Palace Moulay Hafid, Mersha
- Lunch at the Hôtel Nord-Pinus
- Dar Al Makhzan Museum
- Private gardens of Jean-Louis Riccardi

When, in 1923, Tangier was declared an international zone the city began to attract artists, poets, and philosophers, much as the Côte d’Azur did on the other side of the Mediterranean. Henri Matisse, William S. Burroughs, Jean Genet, Paul and Jane Bowles, Tennessee Williams, Patricia Highsmith and Allen Ginsberg were all inspired by Tangier. Foreign residents, many of them artists, today own some of its most stylish homes. Foreign residents include the American painter Elena Prentice, the Italian interior designer Roberto Perregalli and the American garden designer Madison Cox. “It is alarming,” Truman Capote wrote, “the number of travellers who have landed here on a brief holiday, then settled down and let the years go by”.

In the company of François Gilles, we begin the day at Cape Malabata, located 6 miles east of Tangier, for a morning view (with the sun behind us) of the Strait of Gibraltar.

Returning to the heart of Tangier, we take a short tour through the old town where traces of Tangier’s intimate relations with Europe abound. Many consular buildings, such as the American Legation, dot its narrow streets and its architectural styles bear witness to ongoing northern Mediterranean influence.

The American legation is an elaborate Moorish-style building of stuccoed masonry. This complex structure contains the two storey mud and stone building presented to the United States in 1821 by Sultan Moulay Suliman. The first property acquired abroad by the United States government, it housed the United States Legation and Consulate for 140 years, the longest period any building abroad has been occupied as a United States diplomatic post.

Today it is the Tangier American Institute for Moroccan Studies, a museum and cultural centre for the study of Morocco and Morocco-United States relations. The museum holds an impressive display of paintings that give a view of the Tangerine past through the eyes of its artists, most notably Scotsman James McBey, whose hypnotic painting of his servant girl, Zohra, has been called the Moroccan Mona Lisa. There is also a wing dedicated to the expatriate writer and composer Paul Bowles.

We then visit the renovated Palace Moulay Hafid, considered the most beautiful historical monument in Tangier. Also known as the ‘Palace of Italian institutions’, Moulay Hafid’s palace is today admired for its beautiful garden with old trees, its large patio with a gorgeous marble fountain and stucco salons.

This palace was built in the late 19th and early 20th centuries by Sultan Moulay Hafid. He wanted his palace to be a masterpiece of Moorish architecture also known for its beautiful gardens. The namesake of the palace, the sultan, never lived in his grand palace as he was forced into exile in France upon signing the treaty of Fez on 30 March 1912. This treaty would see Morocco become a French protectorate, and Moulay Hafid’s abdication and forced exile to France. The sultan did however demand the completion of this palace as a condition of his signing the deed of protectorate and construction was completed in late 1912.

Following lunch at Hôtel Nord-Pinus, a renovated pasha's palace overlooking Tangier's old port, we visit the Dar Al Makhzan Museum of Moroccan Arts located in the 'Alawi governor's residence and its Andalusian garden. Then we visit the garden of French interior designer Jean-Louis Riccardi. Located on the cliffs facing the Strait of Gibraltar, the garden is home to a myriad trees and plants creating an incredible natural setting. The owner wanted to pay tribute to his good friend Madeleine Castaing through the garden. He worked with the great interior designer for 5 years and she even helped him plant the first flowers here. Most of the plants in the garden are wild and grow on their own. (Overnight Tangier) BL

#### Day 20: Sunday 2 April, Tangier – Rohuna – Tangier

- Rohuna, country garden of Umberto Pasti and lunch
- Cape Spartel Lighthouse
- Private gardens of the late Christopher Gibbs
- Donabo Botanical Gardens
- Afternoon tea at the private residence of Daniel Aron

We spend another day with François Gilles. This morning we drive south to visit Rohuna, the stunning residence and garden of Umberto Pasti, a well-known Italian novelist and horticulturalist. Pasti's passion for the wild flora of Tangier and its surrounding region led him to create this garden where he has transplanted thousands of plants rescued from construction sites with the aid of men from the village. After decades of painstaking work, Rohuna has become a living museum. Planted between two small houses is the Garden of Consolation, a series of rooms and terraces with lush vegetation, some rendering homage to the paintings of Rousseau le Douanier, others inspired by invented characters. Surrounding the Garden of Consolation are the Wild Garden and a hillside devoted to the wild flowering bulbs of northern Morocco, where indigenous species and others bloom. With its stunning vistas and verdant fields, Rohuna is a true arcadia, a garden of incomparable beauty with the mission to preserve the botanical richness of the region.

We then drive to the Vieille-Montagne ('old mountain') via Cape Spartel, which lies 14 kilometres west of Tangier. This is the northwestern extremity of Africa's Atlantic Coast. A dramatic drive from the Cape Spartel Lighthouse and over the pine-covered headland takes us to la Montagne.

Next we visit the private gardens of the late Christopher Gibbs, a British antique dealer and collector who was also an influential figure in men's fashion and interior design in 1960s London. Tangier is a landscaper's paradise because just about any plant will thrive here. His gorgeous cliff-side compound, which is set in 14 acres of plush gardens, includes a century-old water garden. Garden designer Sabrina Hahn describes the garden as: "A lovely free flowing garden with lots of greenery, palms, murraya and iceberg roses hedging and spring flowering perennials. Pots are filled with geranium Maderense, hollyhocks and gaura."

Then we visit the recently opened Donabo Botanical Gardens, which offers sweeping views across the sea to Spain. It is the very first Botanical Gardens in Tangier. Its name Donabo comes from the Latin verb *donare* which means to give. Conceived by Malika El Alaoui, granddaughter of Tangier Princess Lalla Fatima Zahra, and designed together with British artist Paul Belvoir, Donabo takes the visitors through the tradition of the art of the garden in a journey through ten successive gardens – each with its own distinctive personality, purpose and scent – housed within the broader garden. We are gradually introduced to the plants, from the Moroccan garden that celebrates the tradition of tea to the labyrinth of mints where multiple varieties blend their fragrances along the alleys, from the delicate rose garden thriving in the cool shade to the Chinese garden revealing its ancestral symbols, from the pollinator garden whose flowers attract bees to the garden of peppers to the the vegetable garden.

We finish the day with a visit to the garden of award-winning French photographer Daniel Aron, known for

his visuals of the Hermes brand and work for *Harper's Bazaar* (USA), *Vogue* (France), *House and Garden* (USA) and *Elle* (France). (Overnight Tangier) BL

## Rabat - 1 night

Day 21: Monday 3 April, Tangier – Rabat

- Royal Palace (exterior)
- Hassan Tower
- Marinid Necropolis of Chellah
- Farewell dinner at La Maison Arabe

This morning we drive west from Tangier to the imperial city of Rabat, capital of Morocco today. Rabat is situated on the southern bank of the Bu Regreg River, across from the town of Salé. A Roman town existed in the vicinity but modern Rabat is a Muslim foundation. The name 'Rabat' comes from the Arabic word *ribat*, which means a fort on the Islamic frontier, usually manned by Muslims as a religious duty. Such a fort existed on the site of modern Rabat by the 10th century. Rabat's earliest monuments built after the Romans, however, date from the Almohad period (1147-1248). The Almohads expanded the settlement by building a *qasba* (kasbah), or fortress, during the reign of 'Abd al-Mu'min, the second leader of the Almohad movement. 'Abd al-Mu'min's grandson, Ya'qub al-Mansur, transformed Rabat into his capital by constructing a six-kilometre defensive wall around the town, and initiating the construction of the huge Hassan Mosque.

Following lunch at a local seafood restaurant we begin with a visit to the Hassan Mosque and view the exterior of the Royal Palace. The official residence of King Mohammed VI of Morocco, this sumptuous building is constructed upon the ruins of an 18th-century palace. It is surrounded by vast lawns with various trees and brilliantly coloured flower beds.

All that remains of the Hassan Mosque is a series of huge columns from its hypostyle prayer hall and the huge Hassan Tower, originally the mosque's minaret. The vast size of the Hassan Mosque gives a measure of the ambition of its founder, the Almohad Caliph Abu Yusuf Yaqub al-Mansur; when he died, the mosque, which would have been the largest in the world, was never completed. The minaret (1195-1196), stands to the north of the mosque's forecourt on an axis with its mihrab in order to emphasise the mosque's orientation. It was meant to be one of the highest minarets in the world, although its upper section was never built. The Hassan Tower, with the beautiful decorative screen-work on its upper façade, provided the model for the Giralda of Seville and the minaret of the Kutubiyya Mosque in Marrakesh. The mausoleum of Muhammad V, an example of modern Moroccan architecture, is located at the south end of the Hassan Mosque site.

We then visit the Chellah, a medieval fortified necropolis built on the ruins of the Roman town. Inside are beautifully landscaped gardens with hundreds of flowers that come into bloom during springtime. The result is an amazing variety of scents. We may also view Roman ruins and the remains of a small mosque and madrasa.

Tonight we enjoy our farewell dinner at La Maison Arabe Restaurant. (Overnight Rabat) BLD

Day 22: Tuesday 4 April, Rabat – Casablanca, Tour Ends.

- Transfer from Rabat to Casablanca Airport

After breakfast we transfer to Casablanca airport where our tour officially ends at approximately 10.30am. B

## Accommodation

All hotels are rated 3-5 star locally and are comfortable and conveniently situated. All rooms have en suite bathroom. Several hotels have swimming pools. Further information on hotels will be provided in the 'Tour Hotel List' given to tour members prior to their departure.

- Taroudant (5 nights): Dar Al Hossoun – an eco-friendly guesthouse surrounded by 100 acres of olive groves. Rooms are spread over three areas of Dar Al Hossoun: Al Hossoun, around the main courtyard, in the citrus orchard and Al Borj, around the dry garden courtyard. Each suite or room is individually designed and decorated with local authentic rugs, cushions, tapestries, terracotta earthenware and has direct access and views to the gardens designed by Ossart & Maurières. [www.alhossoun.com](http://www.alhossoun.com)
- Marrakesh (5 nights): 5-star Les Jardins de la Koutoubia – located near Jema' al-Fana', this 13th-century *riad* has been transformed into a luxury hotel. [www.lesjardinsdelakoutoubia.com](http://www.lesjardinsdelakoutoubia.com)
- Ouarzazate (1 night): 5-star Berbère Palace Hotel – a Berber-style hotel located in the centre of Ouarzazate. [le-berbere-palace.hotel](http://le-berbere-palace.hotel)
- Tineghir (1 night): 3-star Hotel Tomboctou – located in the town centre, this charming hotel is housed in an old *qasba*. [www.hoteltomboctou.com](http://www.hoteltomboctou.com)
- Merzouga (1 night): 3-star Kasbah Le Touareg – surrounded by palm trees, and situated at the foot of the Merzouga dunes. [www.hotelkasbahletouareg.com](http://www.hotelkasbahletouareg.com)
- Fes (3 nights): 4-star Riad El Yacout – located in the medina close to the main entrance Bab Boujeloud, this charming *riad* features ceramic (*zelliges*), plaster and sculpted wood. [www.riadelyacout.com](http://www.riadelyacout.com)
- Chefchaouen (1 night): 4-star Riad Dar Echchaouen – a traditional guest house featuring a terrace with views over the old medina of Chefchaouen, the mountains and river of Ras El Mar. [www.darechchaouen.com](http://www.darechchaouen.com)
- Tangier (3 nights): 5-star El Minzah Hotel – located in the city centre, build in a pure Hispano-Moorish style, with views of the Straits of Gibraltar. [www.hotelelminzah.com](http://www.hotelelminzah.com)
- Rabat (1 night): 5-star La Tour Hassan Palace – located in Rabat city centre, this prestigious hotel is built in a typical Moorish-Andalusian style combining traditional materials with modern comforts. [www.tourhassanpalace.com](http://www.tourhassanpalace.com)

Note: *Hotels are subject to change. In this instance a hotel of similar standard will be provided.*

### Single Supplement

Payment of this supplement will ensure accommodation in a double room for single occupancy throughout the tour, except in Tineghir, where accommodation will be in a twin-share room for 1 night. Some participants who take the Single Supplement may be required to share a suite at Dar Al Hossoun. This is a luxury suite with two sleeping areas and a shared living room. The bathroom is shared but there is a separate toilet. The number of rooms available for single occupancy is extremely limited. People wishing to take this supplement are therefore advised to book well in advance.

## Tour Map



## Tour Price & Inclusions

AUD \$13,390.00 Land Content Only – Early-Bird Special: Book before 31 March 2022

AUD \$13,590.00 Land Content Only

AUD \$2990.00 Single Supplement (excluding Tineghir, which is twin-share for 1 night)

### Tour Price (Land Content Only) includes:

- Accommodation in twin-share rooms with en suite bathroom in 3-5 star hotels.
- All meals indicated in the tour itinerary, where: B=breakfast, L=lunch & D=dinner
- Drinks at welcome and farewell meals. Other meals include mineral water & tea/coffee
- 2 x 500ml bottle mineral water per person per day for excursions
- Transportation by air-conditioned coach
- Airport-hotel transfers according to the times outlined in the tour itinerary
- Porterage at hotels and Agadir Airport
- Lecture and site-visit program
- Entrance fees to museums and monuments
- Local guide in Morocco
- Tips for the coach driver, local guides and restaurants for included meals.

### Tour Price (Land Content Only) does not include:

- Airfare: Australia-Agadir, Casablanca-Australia
- Personal spending money
- Luggage in excess of 20kg (44lbs)
- Costs for taking photographs (a supplement at some sites may be required in Morocco)
- Travel insurance
- Visas (if applicable)



## Fitness Criteria & Practical Information

Fitness Level 

### Level 1 - Active

For people with active lives and good mobility

The number of flags is a guide to the degree of difficulty of ASA tours relative to each other (not to those of other tour companies). It is neither absolute nor literal. One flag is given to the least taxing tours, seven to the most. Flags are allocated, above all, according to the amount of walking and standing each tour involves. Nevertheless, all ASA tours require that participants have a good degree of fitness enabling 2-3 hours walking or 1-1.5 hours standing still on any given site visit or excursion. Many sites are accessed by climbing slopes or steps and have uneven terrain.

[This 22-day Cultural Garden Tour of Morocco involves:](#)

- Extensive walking through narrow streets and busy markets, and some walking on uneven ground during garden and other site visits.
- Travelling long distances by coach through steep and winding mountain roads and deserts.
- Regular early-morning starts (8.00 or 8.30am).
- 3- to 5-star hotels with eight hotel changes.
- You must be able to carry your own hand luggage. Hotel portage includes 1 piece of luggage per person.
- Risk of gastric ailments (you should consult your doctor about medication before departure).

It is important to remember that ASA programs are group tours, and slow walkers affect everyone in the group. As the group must move at the speed of the slowest member, the amount of time spent at a site may be reduced if group members cannot maintain a moderate walking pace. ASA tours should not present any problem for active people who can manage day-to-day walking and stair-climbing. However, if you have any doubts about your ability to manage on a program, please ask your ASA travel consultant whether

this is a suitable tour for you.

Please note it is a condition of travel that all participants agree to accept ASA's directions in relation to their suitability to participate in activities undertaken on the tour, and that ASA retains the sole discretion to direct a tour participant to refrain from a particular activity on part of the tour. For further information please refer to the Booking Conditions on the last page of this tour itinerary.

Tour members will receive prior to departure practical notes which include information on visa requirements, health, photography, weather, clothing and what to pack, custom regulations, bank hours, currency regulations, electrical appliances and food. The Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade website has advice for travellers: [www.smartraveller.gov.au](http://www.smartraveller.gov.au)

## Clothing

It is important that women dress modestly, for example long skirts or dresses (below the knee) with long sleeves. Tight-fitting clothes must be avoided and although this is not strictly followed by Westerners, it is far better to adopt this practice and avoid causing offence. Shorts should never be worn in public and beachwear is prohibited for anywhere except the beach and hotel facilities (note: please do remember to bring your swimsuit as there will be a number of occasions where you will have the opportunity to swim). During visits to mosques women will also be required to wear a headscarf.

## Visa Requirements

A visa is not required for travel into Morocco if you hold an Australian or New Zealand passport and it has a least 6 months validity from the date you depart Morocco. If you plan to travel on another passport please contact your ASA Travel Consultant for advice as to your visa requirements.

## Visiting Mosques

Morocco is one of the most politically stable countries in the Arabo-Islamic world. Nonetheless, it is a very devout country that wishes to protect its religious places from the ravages of tourism in order to preserve the quality of its religious life. We shall, therefore, have little access to the mosques of Morocco which are living religious spaces. However, we will visit a few mosques which have been opened to the non-Muslim public, in addition to a rich array of other monuments, including madrasas (theological colleges), palaces, *qasbas* (fortresses), *qsars* (fortified villages), and the traditional souqs, or markets, of Morocco's imperial cities.

# Booking Conditions

## ASA RESERVATION APPLICATION FORM

Please complete the ASA RESERVATION APPLICATION and send it to Australians Studying Abroad together with your non-refundable deposit of AUD \$500.00 per person payable to Australians Studying Abroad.

## Covid-19 Vaccination Certificate

Commencing from November 2021 it will be a condition of travel that all group leaders and ASA travellers are fully vaccinated against Covid-19. All participants must send ASA a copy of their vaccination certificate

at the time of submitting their Reservation Application Form. For information on how to obtain either a Covid-19 digital certificate or a certificate in PDF format please view the [Australian Government Services Australia "What types of proof there are"](#) web page.



# Reservation Application

TOUR NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
TOUR DATES \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete **one application, per person in block letters and sign**. Parental signature is required for participants under 18 years of age. Please mail this form with the appropriate deposit to: **P.O. Box 8285, ARMADALE, VICTORIA, 3143**. On receipt of this Reservation Application and deposit, ASA will process your booking and if approved, send you a tour confirmation.

## Applicant Details (as in passport)

TITLE Mr  Mrs  Ms  Miss  Dr  Other \_\_\_\_\_  
FIRST NAME \_\_\_\_\_ Preferred FIRST NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
MIDDLE NAME \_\_\_\_\_ SURNAME \_\_\_\_\_  
POSTAL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTRY \_\_\_\_\_ POSTCODE \_\_\_\_\_  
TEL. (AH) ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ TEL. (BH) ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile Tel: \_\_\_\_\_  
EMAIL address \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of birth / / \_\_\_\_\_ GENDER Male  Female

**Passport** Number \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry date / / \_\_\_\_\_ Nationality \_\_\_\_\_  
 Colour copy of my current valid passport enclosed  I'm renewing my passport  ASA has a colour copy of my current passport

## Travel Plans

I wish ASA to book my airfare, please contact me to discuss my options.  Business Class  Economy Class  
 I plan to leave Australia before the tour commences. Planned departure date / / \_\_\_\_\_  
 I will be arranging my airfare independently and taking the Land Content Only option.  
Frequent Flyer \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Airline \_\_\_\_\_ Airline Seat preference \_\_\_\_\_  
Membership # \_\_\_\_\_ (please note request only)

## Tour Accommodation (rooming preferences)

I/we would like:  a twin-bedded room  a double-bedded room  a room for sole occupancy  
I am travelling:  on my own  with a friend/family member Travel Companion \_\_\_\_\_

## Meals

I do not have any specific dietary requests

Please **X** the box if you **CAN NOT** eat any of the following:

fish  poultry  red meat  dairy products  
 eggs  pork  nuts  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

Allergies: Refer to the Medical Information

## Correspondence

Your preferred method of correspondence  Postal Mail  Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

## Emergency Contact Details

Note: this person **MUST** be available by telephone and be present in Australia for the duration of your tour with ASA

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to Traveller \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
TEL. (AH) ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ TEL. (BH) ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile Tel: \_\_\_\_\_  
EMAIL address \_\_\_\_\_

The purpose of seeking this information is to assist ASA to determine, where necessary, whether ASA is able to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate your specific needs and whether your health and safety (or that of your fellow travellers) is likely to be compromised given your choice of tour. It will also assist you and ASA if you fall ill or have an accident whilst travelling.

- ASA reserves the right to decline your Reservation Application if this Medical Information section is not completed properly and may reject or cancel your reservation, or terminate your participation on any tour, if ASA subsequently learns that you have failed to make full and proper disclosure.
- ASA is committed to protecting the privacy of your personal information. ASA's privacy policy is available for viewing at [www.asatours.com.au](http://www.asatours.com.au)
- If ASA has any concerns about the information you have provided, it will contact you to request clarification before considering your Application.
- ASA requires you to consider carefully your limitations in light of ASA's Physical Endurance Star Rating System in ASA's Brochure and Itinerary when choosing your tour.
- If you are not likely to satisfy ASA's Participation Criteria (see below), ASA, in its sole discretion, may reject your Reservation Application.
- It is a condition of your tour that you agree to accept the directions of ASA's Tour Leaders in relation to your suitability to participate in activities planned on tour.
- ASA reserves the right to cancel your participation on a tour if your behaviour is in ASA's opinion causing undue distress or damage to any person or their property.
- If your participation is discontinued during a tour, ASA will assist by arranging your onward travel (if required) at your own cost, but you will not be refunded for forfeited parts of the tour.
- ASA tour groups are not accompanied by a medical practitioner. ASA recommends that you see your doctor for advice about your specific needs while overseas. You may also wish to contact a travel and vaccination clinic for advice. [www.traveldoctor.com.au](http://www.traveldoctor.com.au) tel: 1300 658 444; [www.travelvax.com.au](http://www.travelvax.com.au) tel: 1300 360 164.
- Travel insurers require you to declare all existing medical conditions.
- Please carry a complete list of medications with you during the ASA tour. Include **generic names** of each medication (consult your local pharmacy for information).

Please mark **X** in the YES or NO box to every question below and provide details where necessary:

## Participation Criteria

To participate in an ASA tour, you must be reasonably fit, in good health and able to participate in all activities without assistance from Tour Leaders or other tour members. If you require assistance, a fit and able travel companion must undertake to accompany and assist you with all tasks for the duration of the whole tour. The responsibility of the Tour Leader is to ensure that the larger group enjoys a relaxing and informative journey, and he or she cannot be relied upon to provide ongoing individual assistance to any one guest.

- |                                                                                                       | YES                   | NO                    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Can you walk and stand unassisted for at least 2-3 hours a day in hot, humid conditions?           | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. Can you walk unassisted on and over uneven surfaces?                                               | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. Can you climb at least 3 flights of stairs and/or walk up and down steep slopes unassisted?        | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. Can you walk at a steady pace and no less than 1km every 15 - 20 minutes unassisted?               | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. Can you organise, manage and carry your own luggage?                                               | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 6. Can you follow and remember tour instructions and meet punctually at designated times and places?  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 7. Can you administer your own medication?                                                            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 8. Do you have impaired vision or hearing which may impact your capacity to participate on this tour? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

## Mobility and Fitness

As many of ASA's international sites do not provide access to wheelchairs or similar mobility aids, we regret that ASA tours are not suitable for people who require the use of a walking frame, wheeled walker, wheelchair or motorised scooter.

1. Do you suffer from any medical conditions that may compromise your mobility and/or fitness to participate on this program?  YES  NO  
 If yes, please specify

\_\_\_\_\_

If yes, how will you manage this on tour?

\_\_\_\_\_

## Allergies and/or Food Intolerances

ASA will make reasonable endeavours to organise meals to suit you, provided that you give ASA adequate notice of your specific dietary requirements or allergies. You may be required to research dietary alternatives, as not all destinations may be able to offer suitable food substitutes.

1. Do you have any food allergies or intolerances?  YES  NO  
 If yes, please specify

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Have you ever had an anaphylactic reaction to anything?  YES  NO  
 If yes, please specify

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you carry an epipen?  YES  NO

3. Do you have any other allergies or reactions to anything, including medical drugs?  YES  NO  
 If yes, please specify

\_\_\_\_\_

## Existing Medical Conditions

You alone are responsible for managing any existing medical conditions, your medication and any medical equipment that you may need when on your tour. Please plan for contingencies and take extra medication, dietary supplements and/or fully charged batteries for medical equipment if your health and safety depends on these. You should take into consideration that power sources at some destinations may be unavailable, inadequate, inconvenient or unreliable.

1. Have you any significant medical conditions that may impact your capacity to complete this tour?  YES  NO  
 If yes, please specify

\_\_\_\_\_

If yes, how will you manage this on tour?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Do you require some form of powered medical aid, such as a CPAP machine?  YES  NO

These machines may not be operable on certain international flights, modes of transport, in remote or other areas with inadequate or unreliable power sources without a fully charged independent long life battery or batteries.

**Diabetics:** You may be travelling and sightseeing for many hours at a time. Insulin dependent diabetics must carry extra supplies of insulin (as this medication cannot be obtained in some destinations), regulators, applicators, storage and refrigeration equipment, as well as any necessary supplements. Accommodation may not provide refrigerators in rooms.

3. Are you diabetic?  YES  NO

Are you insulin dependent?  YES  NO

4. Do you suffer from travel sickness?  YES  NO  
 Remember to use an appropriate medication while on tour.

## Declaration

I declare that: I have read and understood the ASA Tour Itinerary, Reservation Application and Booking Conditions. I am aware of ASA's terms as relating to refunds, cancellations, responsibility and liability. I understand that ASA relies upon this declaration when considering this Application. I accept the inherent dangers, risks and uncertainties in travel and those beyond ASA's control and understand they may occur before or during any tour. I have made full and complete disclosure and have not knowingly withheld any medical information about myself from ASA. I have completed this Reservation Application honestly and accurately. I warrant that I am able to participate independently in all activities described by ASA in the itinerary without assistance from any person.

I will advise ASA in writing if any aspect of my fitness and or health conditions change materially at any time before my departure date. I understand and accept that the itinerary, accommodation and lecturers scheduled for this tour may change.

I agree and consent that ASA may give my personal information in this Reservation Application to tour service providers and relevant authorities as required by law, but only for the purpose of making bookings with and engaging services associated with the tour. I understand that if I do not consent to the use of my personal information for this purpose, ASA will decline my Reservation Application.

In consideration of ASA's acceptance of my Reservation Application, I irrevocably release and indemnify ASA from all claims that I, or any other party, may have against ASA its employees, invitees, agents and contractors, however arising in respect of any loss, damage, injury, death or expense incurred in the course of booking, preparing for, travelling to, on and from or cancelling any tour.

I release and indemnify ASA with respect to:

1. Every general risk to which I or my personal belongings may be exposed in the course of preparing for, travelling to, on or from any ASA tour;
2. Every special risk, in particular medical risks, to which I may be exposed in the course of preparing for, travelling to, on or from any ASA tour arising from, including, but not limited to:
  - a. intermittent power cycles and/or the temporary or permanent loss of power (beware CPAP or any other medical machine users);
  - b. dietary, food or other allergies (ASA cannot guarantee that traces of items to which you are allergic are not present in food or drink you are served, medication you are administered or other substances with which you may come into contact);
  - c. any event or situation that may compromise the administration of necessary medication or my health, safety and wellbeing generally; and
  - d. any event or happening beyond ASA's control
3. All claims arising as a result of my or ASA's cancellation or termination of any tour, part of a tour or of my continued participation on a tour for any reason (subject to ASA's refund conditions below).

## Limitation of Liability

ASA is not a carrier, event or tourist attraction host, accommodation or dining service provider. All bookings made and tickets or coupons issued by ASA for transport, event, accommodation, dining and the like are issued as an agent for various service providers and are subject to the terms and conditions and limitations of liability imposed by each service provider. ASA is not responsible for their products, services, terms and conditions. If a service provider cancels or does not deliver the product or service for which you have contracted, and does not give a refund, your remedy lies with the service provider, not ASA.

ASA will not be liable for any claim (e.g. sickness, injury, death, damage or loss) arising from any change, delay, detention, breakdown, border closures, cancellation, failure, accident, act, omission or negligence of any tour service provider or authority however caused (contingencies). You must take out such travel insurance as is available against such contingencies.

ASA's liability in respect of any tour cancelled or changed will be limited to the partial refund of amounts you have paid, less an administration fee of \$500 and other costs and charges of third party service providers. No compensation will be payable to you by ASA where ASA cancels or changes a tour, or any part of a tour.

ASA reserves the sole discretion to cancel any tour or to modify itineraries in any way it considers appropriate and in the best interests of health, safety and wellbeing of tour participants. Tour costs may be revised, subject to unexpected price increases or exchange rate fluctuations.

## Booking Conditions

### DEPOSITS

A deposit of \$500.00 AUD per person is required to reserve a place on an ASA tour.

### CANCELLATION FEES

If you cancel your booking the following charges apply:

- More than 75 days before departure: \$500\*
- 75-46 days prior 25% of total amount due
- 45-31 days prior 50% of total amount due
- 30-15 days prior 75% of total amount due
- 14-0 days prior 100% of total amount due

\*This amount may be **credited** to another ASA tour departing within 12 months of the original tour you booked. We regret, in this case early-bird discounts will not apply.

**We take the day on which you cancel as being that on which we receive written confirmation of cancellation.**

### UNUSED PORTIONS OF THE TOUR

We regret that refunds will not be given for any unused portions or services of the tour, such as meals, entry fees, accommodation, flights or transfers.

### WILL THE TOUR PRICE OR ITINERARY CHANGE?

If the number of participants on a tour is significantly less than budgeted, or if there is a significant change in exchange rates ASA reserves the right to amend the advertised price. We shall, however, do all in our power to maintain the published price. Occasionally circumstances beyond the control of ASA make it necessary to change airline, hotel or to make amendments to itineraries. We will inform you of any changes in due course.

### TRAVEL INSURANCE

ASA requires all participants to obtain comprehensive travel insurance. A copy of your travel insurance certificate and the **reverse charge** emergency contact phone number must be received by ASA no later than 75 days prior to the commencement of the tour.

### FINAL PAYMENT

The balance of the tour price will be due 75 days prior to the tour commencement date.

## PLEASE READ THE ABOVE CAREFULLY, PRINT AND SIGN BELOW

- I accept the conditions on this booking form  I have read the information about the physical requirements of the tour in the detailed itinerary and confirm that I am able to meet these requirements

Applicant's Signature

Print Full Name

Dated

## Tour / Course Name

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Name of Traveller 1 

---

Name of Traveller 2 

---

I have enclosed a payment to the value of \$ 

---

 (including CC or bank fee if applicable) for this tour

The above amount is payable for:

- Intention to Travel     Tour Deposit
- Balance of Payment     Upgrade from Intention to Travel to a Deposit
- Travel Insurance     Other (eg. Airfares, Accommodation) 

---

## International Payments

Welcome to our international travellers! If you are making a payment and do not have an Australian bank account/credit card, we can only accept payment as follows:

- via credit card with the applicable fee - the credit card company/bank will set the exchange rate
- via bank transfer; please give your surname and tour code (eg. Smith 21705) as a reference and ask your bank to allow for all charges.

Bank cheques or personal cheques will not be accepted.

## By Cheque (accept Australian cheques only)

Please make cheques payable to *Australians Studying Abroad*

## Direct Deposit or Internet Banking

You will need to:

1. Provide your bank with ASA's bank details (see below) and the amount you wish to transfer OR make a direct deposit through any ANZ branch
2. Include any fees levied by the banks
3. Provide a reference number (Mobile or last name recommended).
4. Complete section below, including confirmation no. (given when transaction completed).

### Australians Studying Abroad bank details

Bank ANZ  
Branch 420 St Kilda Road, Melbourne Vic  
Swift Code ANZBAU3M  
BSB 013-423  
Account No 3472-32759

Bank confirmation No. 

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Reference used: Mobile or last name recommended

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Date Money Transferred 

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## Credit Card Payment

Credit card fees apply: Mastercard, Visa & American Express 2%

Please debit my:  Mastercard  Visa  American Express

I authorise ASA to debit my credit card for the amount due plus the applicable fee as above

Credit Card Number 

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Expiry Date 

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 Security Code (CVC) 

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Bank the Card is linked to (eg. NAB or ANZ) 

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Cardholders Name 

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Cardholders Billing Address 

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Postcode 

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State 

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 Country 

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Phone 

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Email 

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Cardholders Signature 

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