



retreat | recreate

Morocco Gardens Tour :: 22 March – 4 April 2026

Trip Notes (as at January 2026)

Salaam Aleikum! Welcome to our 2026 Morocco Gardens Tour. We hope you enjoy our socially responsible exploration of Morocco, its botanical traditions, and culture. Please see the itinerary for the daily activities, inclusions and price. These Trip Notes function as a kind of FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) and are an important adjunct to the itinerary.

This itinerary is offered by retreat|recreate as a private tour in conjunction with Experience Morocco, a licensed, registered tour operator based in Marrakech. The trip is fully escorted by two tour leaders: our excellent local English-French-Arabic-Amazigh-speaking guide and retreat|recreate host Susan Rees-Osborne. Locally based city guides will temporarily accompany the group on some city tours, adding further expertise and targeted local knowledge.

Itinerary disclaimer

Some changes to the itinerary may occur due to inclement weather, unexpected closure of venues or other circumstances beyond our control. While we do our best to prevent this happening, it may be unavoidable and we may make modifications to the itinerary.

Included activities

Included activities are those specifically listed in the itinerary. Activities not outlined in the itinerary are at your own expense and are undertaken at your own risk. If you deviate from the scheduled itinerary the cost of any missed activities can not be refunded. Of course we hope you will fully participate in the itinerary; we've researched and sourced some fabulous botanical experiences, lined up visits to private and public gardens, museums and galleries, and local experiences such as meals with locals. We'll take in important cultural sites, stroll medinas and kasbahs of breathtaking beauty, visit UNESCO World Heritage sites, enjoy sensational food and hospitality, and soak up the local culture. *This itinerary is a full one to ensure value for money* so if you would like extended time in Marrakech after the tour and/or Casablanca before the tour to pursue your own interests we strongly recommend you book additional days pre and post tour.

Is this trip suitable for you?

This trip is for active, adventurous, garden enthusiasts who have a curiosity to delve deep into the Moroccan Arabic and Amazigh (Berber) cultures, exploring them through the lens of their botanical traditions. You don't need to be an

accomplished or experienced gardener or horticulturalist. You should be a fit, active traveller (see requirements below) who understands the importance of being a generous and tolerant group member and who believes strongly in socially responsible travel.

Health, Fitness and Mobility

Please carefully and realistically consider your mobility and health when determining if this trip is right for you

This tour requires a good level of fitness and mobility, and applicants will be invited to describe their mobility and fitness levels on their booking application. For your own comfort and in order to not impact the rest of the group, please be realistic in your assessment. This trip is not suitable for those who use mobility aids due to the amount of walking and stairs involved.

Walking – we will be on our feet a lot, as we walk around gardens and parks. There are also city walking tours of varying length in each city, often over uneven ground or cobbled surfaces, sometimes in narrow crowded souks.

Stairs and steps – the majority of our rooms in our accommodations are on second, third or even fourth floors with no elevator access. Breakfast or dinner is often served on the rooftop terraces, again with no elevator access. You must be able to cope with multiple flights of stairs. Stairs in Morocco often have no handrails, and are frequently steep and uneven.

Toilets – you may encounter squat toilets occasionally at rest stops on travel days. All our accommodations have western style toilets.

Bathrooms – you must be comfortable using shower-over-bath facilities as we cannot guarantee walk-in showers at our accommodations.

Weather – in March and April it is expected to be cool to warm to hot with temperatures ranging anywhere from 15-30C during the day, and cool to cold at night. However temperatures vary greatly between the coastal towns and the desert, and from north to south. Be prepared for all kinds of weather; from quite cold and rainy to warm and sunny days. There is likely to be snow on the mountain passes.

Motion sickness - there are several long travel days by private air conditioned coach (punctuated by regular rest stops) including through winding mountain terrain. Please bring your own medication to alleviate motion sickness.

Luggage management - you will be required to negotiate your arrival and departure airports without personalised assistance and manage your own luggage for short distances.

Personal health – you must carry with you at all times a personal first aid kit (pain relief, bandaids, anti-nausea/diarrhoea meds, etc) in addition to any personal medications or other requirements such as spare spectacles. Ensure you have sufficient supplies of personal medications, ie. do not assume you can get prescriptions easily filled in Morocco. For legal reasons our leaders are prohibited from dispensing *any* type of drugs including antibiotics and pain relief tablets. Please ensure that you are personally and adequately prepared as flights, bus trips, walking and unfamiliar food can take their toll. Consult your doctor for any personal recommended medications and vaccinations in addition to ensuring regular vaccinations such as tetanus, flu, whooping cough, Covid-19 etc are up to date.

COVID-19 - in 2026 there is no longer a requirement for our travellers in Morocco to be vaccinated against Covid-19, however we strongly recommend all our travellers are up to date with both Covid and flu vaccination schedules.

If you exhibit flu-like or Covid-like symptoms while on tour, you will be required to take precautionary measures to reduce the risk of transmission, including wearing a mask when around others.

Accommodation

Accommodation on this trip is on a twin share basis with a limited number of single rooms (single supplement applies) available at the time of booking, if you would prefer your own room.

Room Sharing - solo travellers can also elect to share a twin room for the duration of the tour and we will do our best to pair you up with another solo traveler of the same gender. However if an uneven number of solo guests book in, the last to book will need to pay the single supplement. If you are considering requesting to share a twin room with another solo guest, please consider whether you will be able to cope with another person's potential snoring or different understanding of personal space and quiet. Please be honest with yourself about your capacity to share with a stranger. Similarly, if you know you snore, or you sleep with a CPAP machine which may disturb a room mate, please reconsider your request to share a room. Unless twin share travellers book together, we'll rotate our twin share solo guests each time we move hotels so that they each have the opportunity to share with each other. See our room sharing tips [HERE](#).

The accommodations on this trip range from 3 to 5 stars. We'll stay at:

- traditional *riads* (Moroccan houses featuring rooms arranged around a central open air courtyard, ie rooms do not have external windows)
- western style hotels;
- a couple of comfortable accommodations in rural towns where choice is limited.

On rare occasions, alternative accommodation may need to be made due to circumstances beyond our control. Alternative accommodation will be arranged at a similar standard.

Note: In many riads, twin rooms feature one double bed and one single sized bed, rather than two large beds.

Note: Riads do not have multiple identical rooms as hotels do, but instead have some rooms that are small while others are more palatial.

Some, but not all of our accommodations have swimming pools.

Transport

Private air-conditioned coach (with more seats than guests), the occasional taxi, four wheel drive jeep.

Meals

While travelling with us you'll experience an array of wonderful foods. Some dinners are included, particularly in the rural parts of the trip where dinner is often included as part of our accommodations. At other times meals are not included, giving guests flexibility to set their own budget. However we will frequently eat together as a group particularly at lunch, as we move from a morning activity to an afternoon activity.

In Morocco you can eat well on a modest budget, or dine as finely as you wish in the major cities. Food is typically flavoured with fragrant spices, dried fruits and nuts, and tangy lemons. The cuisine is gently spiced rather than spicy hot. Vegetarians are catered for in Morocco but choices are limited, particularly in the rural parts of the itinerary. Vegan and gluten-free travellers will find dining in Morocco challenging and we recommend these guests supplement meals with their own supplies. As Morocco is an Islamic country, many of the restaurants we visit will not offer alcohol. Please be aware of local laws and beliefs and be extra sensitive and respectful when consuming alcohol, particularly on Fridays. Ramadan will have finished by the time our tour begins.

Water

Tap water in Morocco is not safe to drink; use filtered or bottled water only for drinking and brushing your teeth. Please keep a refillable drink bottle with you. You may wish to bring water purification tablets or invest in a self filtering bottle so you can use tap water and further reduce your plastic consumption. Big containers of bottled water will be provided in the bus on travel days.

Pre-tour and post-tour accommodation

The itinerary is a full one to ensure value for money; you may wish to consider booking additional days pre/post tour. If you wish to book a couple of days before the tour in Casablanca or Marrakech after the tour in, we can assist you with this, *subject to availability*.

If you prefer to book your own accommodation you are welcome to do so.

Tour starting point

Our Rabat joining point accommodation is Riad Al Miraaj, 7 rue Jirari, Rabat medina, Rabat 10030.

Tel: +212 (0) 537 738263 WhatsApp: +212 (0) 662689339

Tour finishing point

Our Marrakech finishing point accommodation is Kenzi Rose Garden, Avenue du President Kennedy, Marrakech 40000.

Tel: +212 (0) 524 447400

Flights and Transfers

Flights to and from Morocco are not included in the trip price. Please ensure you book flights that ensure you will be in time to attend the briefing meeting at 6pm on 22 March.

Arrival airport transfers A transfer from Casablanca or Rabat Airport to our joining point Rabat accommodation **is included** in your tour price.

Please note missed or unused arrival transfers cannot be refunded.

Departure airport transfers from our Marrakech hotel to either Marrakech or other airports **are not included** in your tour price but can be booked through us at additional cost.

If you are not comfortable booking your own flights or buying travel insurance online, you may seek the advice of your preferred local travel agent. Please don't book flights until you've received confirmation we have our minimum number and the tour is confirmed to proceed.

Travel insurance

Travel insurance is not included in the trip price and is mandatory in order to participate in our tours. We require that, at a minimum, you are covered for medical expenses including emergency repatriation. We strongly recommend that the policy also covers personal liability, cancellation, curtailment, COVID-19 related scenarios as far as possible, and loss of luggage and personal effects. You will not be able to join the tour until evidence of travel insurance and the insurance company's 24 hour emergency contact number have been provided. If you have credit card insurance, we need details of the underwriter, policy number and a 24 hour emergency contact number rather than just the bank's name and credit card details. You are strongly encouraged to take out travel insurance at the time of booking.

Safety

Many national governments provide a regularly updated advice service on safety issues involved with international travel. We recommended that you check your government's advice for their latest travel information prior to your departure. Our guide has the authority to amend or cancel any part of the itinerary if it is deemed necessary due to safety concerns.

Your guide and/or host will accompany you on all included activities, however please note any activities that you undertake that are not part of the itinerary are at your own risk and we are not responsible for the safety or the standard of the operators running them.

Petty theft and personal safety

We recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt for the safekeeping of your money, passport and airline tickets. Please leave all valuable jewellery at home. Not all our hotels will have safety deposit boxes for storage of valuables; a lock for your suitcase is essential. Maintain the same vigilance you would at home and take sensible precautions to avoid petty theft or pick pocketing, especially in crowded souks and medinas.

Always take a hotel card with you when going out, so you have the address and contact numbers and can get back.

When walking through touristy areas of cities you may be approached by 'helpful' locals who want to give you directions or take you to a local spice/carpet/leather shop. At the destination you will be expected to pay. Please note these people are not registered guides and it's not recommended you avail yourself of their services. A firm friendly 'La shukran' (no thank you) will suffice.

Transport and seat belts

Depending on where you come from, note that drivers in this part of the world may drive on the opposite side of the road to what you are used to. Take extra caution crossing roads. Traffic may be more chaotic than in your home country. Be aware that local laws governing transportation safety may differ from those in your home country. Some of the transport we use may not provide seat belts.

Fire Precautions

Please be aware that local laws governing tourism facilities differ from those in your home country and not all the accommodations we use may have fire exits, fire extinguishers or smoke alarms.

Stairs and handrails

Building standards may differ to those in your home country. Many stairs are steep and uneven, without hand rails.

Swimming pools

You may stay at hotels with unfenced pools and no life guard on duty.

Passports and Visas

Your passport must be valid for at least six months beyond the duration of your trip and have at least one blank page. Please ensure the name on your passport matches the name on your booking form and airline tickets. Citizens of most countries including Australia, Europe, UK, USA, Canada and New Zealand do not need to apply for a visa for visits to Morocco that are less than 90 days. South African citizens will need a visa. All nationalities should check entry requirements on the Moroccan consulate or embassy website in their home country. It is the responsibility of each traveller to ensure they are in possession of the required travel documents/visas/permits according to their nationality.

Money Matters

The official currency of Morocco is the Moroccan Dirham (MAD). Download the XE app to your smart phone (before leaving your home country) for up to the minute currency exchange rates. Exchange rates below are as at January 2026.

MAD	GBP	EURO	USD	AUD
200	16.00	18.50	21.50	32.00
100	8.00	9.50	11.00	16.00
50	4.00	4.70	5.40	8.00
20	1.60	1.90	2.15	3.25
10	0.80	0.95	1.10	1.60



Changing money is easy at banks and money exchanges. If you bring cash to exchange, bring GBP, Euros or USD only (Australian, NZ, Canadian notes etc are not accepted at exchanges or banks). Use official money exchange offices or banks only. It's illegal to exchange money with street touts. Note that the dirham is a closed currency and you are unlikely to be able to pre-purchase banknotes outside Morocco.

An even easier option for obtaining cash is to use ATMs and just withdraw MAD when you arrive, using your debit card, credit card or a travel card such as Wise, or Revolut, or Latitude28, etc. The benefit of a travel card is that it's isolated from your bank account so in the event of loss or theft, your main bank account is not at risk of compromise.

Be sure to advise your bank of your travel dates so your credit/debit card isn't frozen the first time you use it.

Note that ATMs are commonly found in cities but there are fewer in rural areas. It may take several ATMs before you find one that works with your brand of card. For this reason it can be helpful to have a mix of cash and card on you, and to have access to two cards such as your usual credit/debit card and a travel card.

Debit/credit/travel cards can be used in large shops but many local restaurants, markets, and shops will only accept cash.

Bargaining is standard practice in Morocco. Don't begin bargaining unless you are seriously interested in the item. Haggles in a friendly manner, beginning by offering half the asked price and you should end up somewhere in the middle, often with a mint tea thrown in for good measure. Be respectful, polite, smile and have fun.

Spending money - every traveller is different and spending money requirements will vary. Please consider your own spending habits when allowing for shopping, and remember

to allow for drinks, optional activities, gifts and souvenirs, laundry, and tipping. Note that the itinerary includes all breakfasts, one lunch and several dinners – you will need to buy the remainder of the lunches and dinners. As a rough estimate, an amount of MAD 250 per day should cover meals.

Tipping - hotels, restaurants, taxis etc

Tipping is standard practice in Morocco, at restaurants and for other service providers. Morocco is not a wealthy country and a small tip can make a big difference to the recipient. As part of your tour price, we will *include* tips for hotel staff, porters, taxi drivers, city guides, waiters etc; our guide will tip these staff on behalf of the group. This takes away any stress and uncertainty over inappropriate tipping amounts. Note that when meals are *not included* in the tour price, or when you're out and about dining on your own before/after the tour or in your free time, a tip of around 10% is usual.

Tipping – guide and driver

The general (included) tipping kitty does not include tips for our own guide and driver. If you are happy with their services, a tip for each is appropriate at the conclusion of the tour. As a guideline, our Morocco travellers often choose to contribute an amount of around 100-150 MAD (US\$10 - \$15) per person per day for our guide, and a little less for our driver.

Phone and internet

Internet access is available at all our hotels although it is often patchy. However we request that you don't just rely on wifi in the evenings at the hotel. You must arrange to have internet access during the day when we're out and about in case you get separated from the group, so we can call you.

Options include:

- RECOMMENDED: an e-SIM (eg HolaFly, Airalto). Purchase and install before you depart your home country then activate upon arrival at the airport. If you opt for an Airalto e-SIM, use code SUSAN7066 for a small discount;
- a global roaming package from your usual provider;
- a portable wifi device (eg SkyRoam or Wilh-ma). Allow plenty of time to arrange for hire or purchase of this, preferably several weeks before departure;
- a local SIM purchased on arrival in Morocco – please ensure you have arranged this before the briefing meeting on Day 1.

Note that if you need to download or update any smartphone apps you should do so before you leave home as your local App Store often will not work in another country. We use a WhatsApp group chat for communication during the tour. Please arrive having already downloaded the app and joined the group chat. We'll send the link to the group chat a few days prior to Day 1 of the tour.

Emergencies or other issues

While we endeavour to provide the best experience possible, due to the nature of travel, occasionally things go awry. Should any issue occur during the trip, please discuss this with your retreat|recreate host and/or our guide in the first instance so we can do our best to rectify the problem.

Emergency funds

Please make sure you have access to an additional ~\$1000 for emergencies or in case unforeseen circumstances (eg natural disaster, civil unrest etc) necessitate a change to our route.

What to pack

A **Suggested Packing List** is available at the tour page. Please pack lightly as luggage space in our coach is limited. Bring one suitcase only and try to keep it to no larger than 80cm x 60cm. A medium (or small!) sized suitcase with wheels or a similar sized backpack is recommended. Pack clothes you can layer to accommodate both sunny days and cold nights. Warm socks, a scarf and a puffer jacket take up little room and while you *may* not need them, you probably will at least once. Morocco experiences extreme weather at both ends of the spectrum.

While there is no official dress code in Morocco, please dress respectfully – no shorts or skirts above the knee, no plunging necklines. See the 'Clothing' section below, under the 'Responsible Travel' information.

You'll also need a small soft backpack/daypack for daily use to carry your water bottle, camera, medical kit etc.

Please ensure all luggage is clearly labelled ON THE OUTSIDE and lockable.

Responsible travel

At retreat|recreate we believe strongly in low impact, or rather positive impact, travel. Broadly speaking this means we try to minimise the negative aspects of tourism on the local culture and environments that we visit and highlight the positive aspects.

Animals - Refrain from supporting businesses that exploit animals such as snakes or monkeys. Note too that if you photograph snake charmers in the public square you will be expected to pay.

Clothing - While Moroccans are used to tourists and Western dress, particularly in the cities, they themselves dress modestly. We will spend time in palaces, ancient gardens, private homes & workspaces, and rural areas; wearing clothing that covers your shoulders and knees is preferred. *No shorts or skirts above the knee, and no shoestring straps or revealing tops.*

Environment - Please bring your own refillable water bottle to fill at water stations at some of our hotels and from the large bottles we provide on the bus. When this isn't possible, it's a good idea to buy the biggest water bottle possible and decant it into your smaller refillable bottle. To further reduce your plastic consumption, consider investing in a self filtering water bottle, or buying water purification tablets so you can use tap water.

We encourage you to say no to plastic bags, and will provide a cloth tote bag in your welcome pack on Day 1.

Photography - Please ask and receive permission before taking photographs of people, especially children.

Begging - Morocco has little in the way of a social security system. If you wish to give a few dirhams to beggars, note that most Moroccans give 1-10 dirhams, however this is entirely optional and you should not feel obliged to give money. We recommend you ignore aggressive begging requests. Please refrain from giving money (or sweets/candy) to children as this encourages them to continue begging and skip school.

Etiquette - You will find most people are unfailingly polite, helpful and courteous. The most useful, and most oft-used word to learn is thank you – shukran! Simple courtesy goes a long way when travelling even if you don't speak the language. Closer to departure we'll provide you with a short list of useful words and phrases to learn as a courtesy to the locals.

A couple of rules

Any illegal activity including the use of illegal drugs will not be tolerated. Possession or use of these substances is not only against the law but puts the rest of the group at risk. If you feel any member of the group is behaving inappropriately in this or any other way, please let us know. See the Booking Conditions section 'Authority on Tour' for further details regarding the right of the guide and host to remove any group member who is threatening the wellbeing of the group or communities we visit.

Travelling on a group trip

As you travel on a group trip you will be exposed to all the pleasures and maybe some of the frustrations of travelling in a group. We ask you to be understanding of the various needs and preferences of your group – patience with your fellow travellers is sometimes required for the benefit of everyone's travel experience. Remember too that you have responsibilities to the group. If you are requested to be at a place at a certain time, please ensure that you don't keep the rest of the group waiting. We have found time and again that the very best trips we operate are those where the dynamics within the group work well - this takes just a little effort on everyone's part.

Bring a sense of humour and a sense of adventure! We're going to have a wonderful trip 😊

Any other questions? Just ask!
Email us at retreatrecreate@gmail.com