

Morocco Handcrafts Tour



USEFUL INFORMATION

retreat | recreate

GENERAL

- Morocco is a country of dizzying diversity. Over the centuries, Morocco has woven its ties to Sub-Saharan Africa, Europe and the wider Middle East into a whole cloth. Its mixed Arab and Amazigh population forms a strong national identity, taking the best of the country's traditions and weaving the pattern anew – from the countryside to the city, from the call to prayer from the mosque to the beat of local hip hop. You'll find epic mountain ranges, ancient cities, sweeping deserts and warm hospitality
- Our tour route covers approximately 2000 km
- The population of Morocco is 37.9 million
- Time zone is GMT/UTC + 1 hour
- Electricity plugs in Morocco are Type C (2-round-pins) and Type E (2-round pins with hole for earthing pin)
- The most common language in Morocco is Darija, a local dialect of Arabic, however French is widely spoken in the cities and tourist areas. In the south, Tamazight (Berber) is widely spoken especially in rural and mountainous areas
- The Muslim 'weekend' is Friday and Saturday. Many shops close at noon on Fridays
- The currency is the Moroccan dirham – MAD. We recommend using a mix of cash and card on this trip. ATMs are common in the cities but less so in rural areas. Download the XE Currency app to your smartphone for instant currency exchange. See the Trip Notes for more details regarding money matters. Try and withdraw cash from banks or ATMs attached to banks, during banking hours, so if you have difficulty you can get assistance. The BMCE group ATMs usually accept foreign debit/credit cards.

CURRENCY AT A GLANCE

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

TOUR ROUTE



EMERGENCY NUMBERS

- The retreat|recreate host is Susan Rees-Osborne. Susan's WhatsApp number is +61 423040887
- The tour guide is Khalid Ingrioui. Khalid's WhatsApp number is +212 662 439 694
- Experience Morocco (our in-country operator) – **emergency only** phone number is +212 671 305 248
- Police or ambulance dial 141

EMBASSIES & CONSULATES

- **Australian embassy:** 66 Avenue Mehdi Ben Barka, Souissi, Rabat. Ph +212 5375 43366
- **British embassy:** 28 Avenue A.A.R. Sidi Mohammed, Souissi, Rabat. Ph +212 5376 33333
- **Canadian embassy:** 66 Mehdi Ben Barka Ave, Rabat. Ph +212 5375 44949
- **US embassy:** Km 5.7, Avenue Mohamed VI, Souissi, Rabat. Ph +212 5226 42099

TOUR HOTELS

Starting point hotel

Riad Shanima
175 Derb Arset Aouzal, Bab Doukkala
Marrakech
Tel: +212 (0) 524 286 516

Finishing point hotel

Barcelo Anfa
44 Boulevard d'Anfa
Casablanca
Tel: +212 (0) 520 009 000

HEALTH & SAFETY

Please also refer to the Trip Notes

- In addition to influenza and COVID-19 vaccinations, please consult your GP or a travel doctor re other recommended vaccinations
- Take sensible precautions with foods you are unused to, to avoid travellers' diarrhoea. Be wary of ice, and unwashed salads
- Tap water in Morocco is not safe to drink. Please bring a reusable water bottle that can be filled at water stations. We will buy large water bottles for the bus. Consider investing in a self filtering bottle so you can safely use tap water and avoid plastic
- With so much to see and do while travelling, it's easy to forget to drink enough water. Carry electrolytes or rehydration tablets with you
- Wear sunscreen, a hat and sunglasses
- **Carry your own medical kit at all times** (refer to the [Packing List](#))
- If you suffer from motion sickness, please bring anti nausea medication/ginger tablets for travel days
- If you suffer from asthma, bring your inhaler in case the desert air/sand triggers an attack
- The use of a neck wallet or money belt is recommended. Take precautions against pick pockets when in crowded areas. Please leave your valuable jewellery at home
- Be aware of potential scams. If you're approached by 'helpful' locals who offer to take you to their favourite carpet/spice/leather shop a polite 'La shukran' (no thank you) will suffice.



ETIQUETTE

- When entering someone's home, it's considered polite to remove your shoes, especially before entering the carpeted area
- Using your index finger to motion a person to approach you is considered impolite. Moroccans beckon someone by placing the palm downward and sweeping the hand toward themselves
- Delicate subjects include the political situation in the Western Sahara and Algeria. It's also wise to be cautious when talking about Islam and Allah
- Always ask and receive permission before photographing people, particularly children
- Tipping – for when you're out and about on your own – a tip of around 10% is appreciated in restaurants and taxis etc
- Bargaining – you can barter for everything in Morocco, from taxis to goods in the souks. Only ask a price if you're genuinely interested in buying. To begin the haggling, smile and offer half the quoted price. You should end up somewhere in between. Stay calm, polite and friendly!
- Mosque etiquette - most mosques aren't open to non Muslims so this isn't an issue except if you visit the Hassan II mosque in Casablanca. Modest dress (shoulders & knees covered) is requested in the mosque. Headscarves are not required
- Use your right hand when giving or receiving money, food, gifts, business cards etc
- In Islamic and Arabic cultures, the left hand is considered unclean, as this is the hand with which a person performs sanitary tasks. If you are eating from a communal tagine, eat with your right hand only

Suggestions for pre and post tour days in Casablanca & Marrakech

Please note that the following list is the result of many, many hours of research and is a resource made available only to our tour participants. We would be grateful if you would refrain from sharing it.

CASABLANCA

The commercial and financial capital of Morocco, Casablanca is one of the four largest cities in Africa and its port is the busiest in Morocco. In the 20th century during and after the French Protectorate, Casablanca underwent a transformation – the port was massively expanded, futuristic buildings constructed and a colossal laser-topped mosque built.

THINGS TO DO

- Wander the new medina (the Quartier des Habous, built in the 1930s), the old medina, the beachfront (the Corniche), or the art deco boulevards.
- Villa des Arts – an art deco building housing an art gallery with rotating exhibitions. Free entry. 30, Boulevard Brahim Roudani. +212 5222 95094
- Galerie H – featuring young Moroccan designers. 181 Bd d’Anfa. +212 5223 94394
- Jewish Museum, 81 Rue Chasseur Jules Gros. 10am-5pm Mon-Fri
- Musee Fondation Abderrahman Slaoui – a private collection of paintings, jewellery and objets d’art, Rue du Parc. 10am-6pm Tues-Sat +212 5222 06217
- Food tour with Taste of Casablanca. 3 x hour tasting tour lunch/dinner. WhatsApp +212 630 847014
- Experience a traditional hammam at Hammam Ziani, Boulevard d’Alsace +212 5223 19695, or Association Solidarite Feminine at 10 Rue Bait Lahm, Palmier. +212 6191 11116

EATING

- The fresh food market is an interesting place to wander and good for lunch
- Al-Mounia – Moroccan fare, good vegetarian options. Indoor or al fresco dining in a pretty garden and courtyard. 95 Rue du Prince Moulay Abdellah. +21 5222 22669
- Au Petit Poucet – French/Moroccan restaurant in a 1920s building. 86 Blvd Mohammed V. +212 5222 75420
- Cafe Imperial – Rue Ibn Khaldoun, Habous district
- Chez Paul – French restaurant in the former villa of Edith Piaf. Villa Zevaco, cnr Blvd d’Anfa & Blvd Moulay Rachid. Light meals, afternoon tea and ice cream. +212 5223 66000
- Dar Dada, 31 Rue El Arsa, Casablanca +212 661 602602
- Etoile Centrale – 107 Rue Allal Ben Abdellah. Closed Fridays. Traditional Moroccan décor and cuisine
- La Sqala – traditional Moroccan cuisine in the old fort by the port. Blvd des Almohades. +212 5222 60960
- Le Bistronome – beautiful little French restaurant. 38 Boulevard Rachidi, Casablana. +212 5222 66160
- Petit Lapin Café, Cnr Boulevard Rachidi & Rue D’Alger
- Rick’s Café – bar and restaurant replicating the famous café from the film Casablanca. 248 Boulevard Sour Jdid. +212 5222 74207
- The James Rooftop – rooftop bar and restaurant with great views. Corner Boulevard Rachidi and Boulevard Moulay Youssef. +212 7666 47790

MARRAKECH

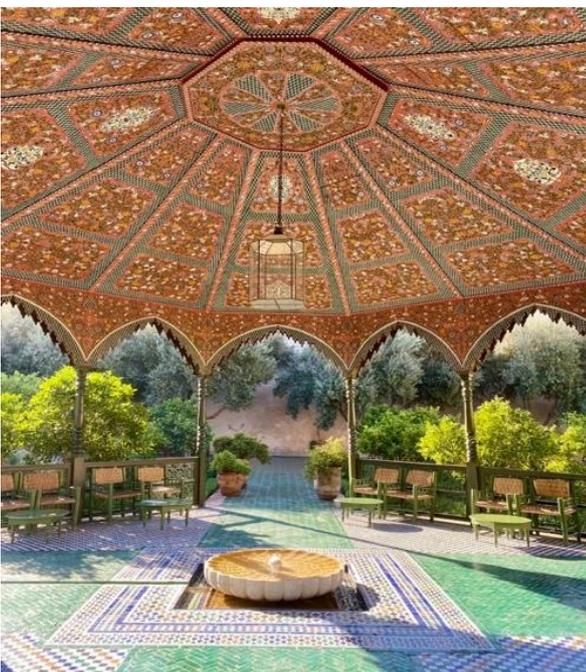
For more than two centuries Marrakech was the hub of a great empire. While it's now only Morocco's fourth largest city, its fabulous palaces and luxuriant palm groves continue to enthrall. Today Marrakech has embraced modernity and is home to a vibrant culture, global businesses and fabulously wealthy expats.

THINGS TO DO

- ANIMA Gardens – a whimsical sculpture park within beautiful gardens – a shuttle takes you there and back from Koutbouia mosque carpark, included in entry price
- Amal Non Profit Women's Training Centre Cooking Class. Book a class online at amalnonprofit.org or phone +212 5244 93776. Classes run 9am-1.30pm. Cook (and eat) traditional tagines, couscous or pastilla. Or do a baking class from 2-4pm and learn to make Moroccan pastries
- Bahia Palace – a 19th century palace decorated with stucco plaster, zellige mosaic tiles, carved wood, stained glass and traditional gardens. Built by a former slave who rose to become one of Sultan Hassan I's most important aides. 9-5 daily.
- Dar El Bacha museum, a 'Museum of Cultural Confluences' in the old house of the pacha of Marrakech. Beautiful architecture, exhibitions, and a fancy coffee shop. Rue Fatima Zahra. 10am-6pm, closed Mondays
- El Badi Palace – ruins of the place of the sultan. Late 1500s. Although a ruin, it's worth a look. Ksibat Nhass. Open daily 9am-5pm
- Guru Walk city walking tour – free walking tours of the city (pay what you like at the end). A great way to get an overview of the Pink City. guruwalk.com
- Mederssa Ben Youssef – recently renovated 12th century mosque and Koranic school. Stunning architecture. 9-8 daily
- Museum of African Contemporary Art Al Maaden (MACAAL) – exhibitions of modern African art, a sculpture garden and café. Open Wed-Sun. Sidi Youssef Ben Ali
- Museum of Moroccan Art and Culture MACMA – a private museum featuring objets d'art, photography, pottery, jewellery, painting, plus a bookshop. Closed Sundays. 61 Rue Yougoslavie. 10-7 daily.
- Museum of Culinary Arts – an immersive exploration of Morocco's culinary traditions. Interactive exhibits, cooking demos, cooking classes and a restaurant. Rue Riad Zitoun el Jdid. +212 5244 27177 Open 9-8 daily.
- Orientalist Museum - located within a beautiful riad filled with orientalist art. It's a peaceful museum with a lovely rooftop café. Rue Kaat Benahid, No 5 Derb El Khamsi
- Perfume Museum – a beautiful riad outlining the traditional fragrances (floral, incense etc) of Morocco. Interactive exhibits. Create your own perfume in a workshop. 2 Derb Cherif, Rue Diour Saboun. 9-5.30 daily.
- Photography Museum – a small museum featuring photos of old Marrakech, and rotating displays. Great for history and photography enthusiasts. The building is a 17th C Saadian townhouse. There's a rooftop café too. 46 Rue Bin Lafnadek. Open daily 9.30am-7pm

THINGS TO DO, cont.

- The Secret Garden, a calm oasis in the heart of the medina. The garden is a beautiful example of a classic Islamic quartered garden. There's a rooftop café on site. 121 Rue Mouassine
- Tiskiwin Museum – the vast collection of African artefacts, of Dutch anthropologist Bert Flint. Closed temporarily due to Flint's death. Worth googling in case it opens!
- Women's Museum, dedicated to the history and culture of the Moroccan woman, her daily life and creativity. 19 Rue Sidi Abdel Aziz, Souk Jeld, Marrakech. Open daily 9.30-6.30
- Yves Saint Laurent Museum features a permanent display of YSL couture collections plus works from up & coming Moroccan designers and artists. There's a café within. The modern building itself is beautiful – the rose-hued exterior brickwork is said to resemble the warp and weft of cloth. Next door to the Jardin Marjorelle. Closed Wednesdays.



SHOPPING

- Al Nour Textiles, beautiful clothing and household textiles, sewn by a co-op of disabled women. Rue Lanksour 57. Open daily, closed between 2-3pm
- El Fenn, famous upmarket boutique (bar and restaurant too). Derb Moulay Abdullah Ben Hezzian
- Hanout Boutique by Meriem Nour. Fashion boutique in two locations: 15 Riad Zitoun En Jdid, and 90 Route Sidi Abdelaziz
- Norya Ayron boutique, 32 Souk El Jeld, Route Sidi Abdelaziz, medina
- Valerie Barkowski homewares, jewellery, fashion. 142 ArsetZouzal Rd

EATING

- Cafe Arabe, 184 Rue Mouassine. Italian and Moroccan cuisine, vegetarian-friendly.
- Chez Chegrouni, 46 Jamaa El Fna. Cheap and cheerful, right on the square. Great views from the terrace
- Café Clock, 224 Derb Chtouka. Not just a café but a cultural hub, featuring art exhibitions, story telling, cooking classes and music.
- Café des Epices, 75 Derb Rahba Lakdima, Place des epices. A little bit of Europe overlooking the spices square in the medina.
- Chez Bismilah Sand Coffee, 193 Souk El Kebir, close to Ben Youssef Mederssa. Open daily until 9pm (7pm on weekends).
- Dar Dar, 4 Rue Riad Zitoun el Kdim. Close to our riad. Fabulous for sunset views.
- El Fenn, a very upmarket hotel. Its rooftop bar and restaurant are open to non guests. Derb Moulay Abdullah Ben Hezzian



- Pepe Nero, 17 Derb Cherkaoui, Douar Graoua. Italian and Moroccan cuisine. Candles, pools, fountains and plants!
- Sahbi Sahbi, fab women-run restaurant in the new town. Daily dinner except Mondays. 37 Boulevard el Mansour Eddahbi. Highly recommended!
- Terrace des Epices, 15 Souk Charifia, Sidi Abdel Aziz, Dar el Bacha. A lovely and slightly pricey restaurant. Next door to The Secret Garden.
- Un Dejeuner a Marrakech, Cnr Rue Kennaria & Rue Douar Graoua. Modern Moroccan cuisine. Sit on the rooftop terrace and enjoy the views.
- Le Foundouk, 55 Souk Hal Fassi Kaat Ben Nahid. Lovely riad restaurant with roof top terrace. International cuisine.
- Henna Art Café, 35 Derb Sqaya
- Kabana Rooftop Food & Cocktails, 1 Kissariat Ben Khaled R'Mila, Rue Fatima Zahra.
- Kosy Bar, Tinsmiths Square.
- La Famille, vegetarian restaurant in a garden setting. Open for lunch and dinner daily except Sundays. 34 Derb Jdid.
- L'Adresse, 5 Rue de la Koutoubia, Main square.
- L'Mida, 78 bis Derb Nkhel Rahba Kdim.
- Le Jardin, modern food in a stunning 16th century riad setting. Opposite the Womens Museum. 32 Souk Jeld Sidi Abdelaziz. 10-11 daily.
- Les Terrasses de L'Alhambra, Main square.
- Nomad, a lovely rooftop restaurant open for lunch and dinner. Modern Moroccan cuisine. 1 Derb Aarjane
- Petanque Social Club, 74. Boulevard El Mansour Eddahbi, Gueliz

AMAZIGH (BERBER) CARPETS AND RUGS

Historically, Moroccan carpets were made by Berber/Amazigh tribes, most of whom were semi nomadic. The carpets were typically used as bedding and blankets, and were made by the women for their own families. The weaving techniques and designs were passed on down through generations of women. The weaver draws from the vocabulary of designs particular to her tribe and works at her looms without a diagram or pattern to guide her. As a result, each rug is a unique combination of her artistry and her tribal identity.

The oldest method of constructing a carpet is on a vertical loom, where long vertical warp threads with fringed ends are intertwined with transversal weft threads to create the desired pattern.

Another technique known as ‘velvet’ involves knotting and then shaving the strands. The density and number of knots per square metre determines the quality of the carpet.

In the Atlas mountains carpets made from sheep’s wool are coloured and decorated often with diamond shapes. Carpets from the Middle Atlas are often white, thick and silky and are frequently used as mattresses and blankets. Goat hair is added to Marrakech carpets, while kilims typically comprise wool and silk.

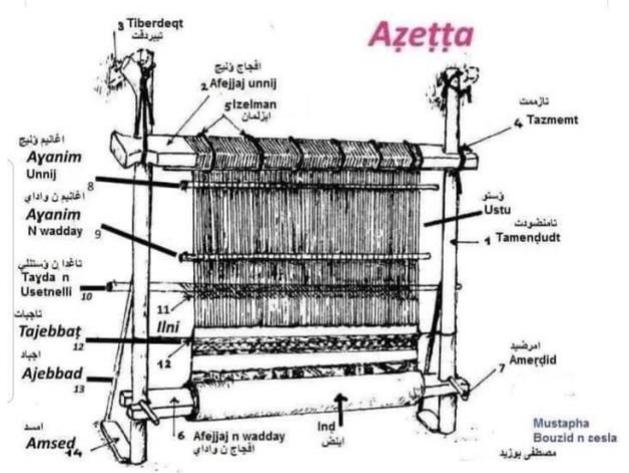
The main design concept of Middle Atlas carpets is based on a diamond grid. These carpets are woven to be adaptable to mountain climates. They typically have a high pile and are loosely knotted to mimic sheepskin and protect against the cold. In warmer climates where such insulation isn’t as necessary, a lower pile and finer weave is used. Weaving in Morocco has a very practical function, but it is also a source of cultural pride for Moroccans and personal pride for the weaver herself.

James Jereb, in his book *The Arts and Crafts of Morocco*, describes Amazigh designs as follows: “When one looks at the objects and textiles of the rural environment, one can trace a legacy of the popular, collective and sacred artistic traditions in Berber history; these are a testimony not only to the meditative and aesthetic power that decoration holds for them, but a faith in

supernatural power. Many pieces are valued not because of appearance alone – perhaps because of their form or the way in which they are decorated – but because they may contain a power known as *baraka*, a concept deeply embedded in Moroccan religious beliefs and crucial to the understanding of all artistic traditions in Morocco. *Baraka* has many meanings in Morocco, but it is principally the positive power of the saints and the sufi brotherhoods. It is a source of inspiration among most Moroccan artisans ... *baraka* permeates all things to varying degrees; not only can it exist in jewellery, talismans and other manufactured objects, such as ceramics and textiles, it is also thought to suffuse plants, such as henna and oleander, and incenses, such as sandalwood and myrrh. This power is transferred to objects and textiles by the use of a particular artistic vocabulary of symbols, designs, motifs, colors and techniques that protect the object, creator and consumer.”

The design vocabulary of the Amazigh includes magic numbers, magic squares, verses from the Koran, Arabic script, geometric shapes (triangles, squares, crosses, eight-pointed stars, six-pointed stars, spirals, circles and diamonds), as well as motifs representing plants, flowers, humans, eyes and hands. Odd numbers are also important to Amazigh motifs and often will be incorporated into the designs. Frequently used designs include:

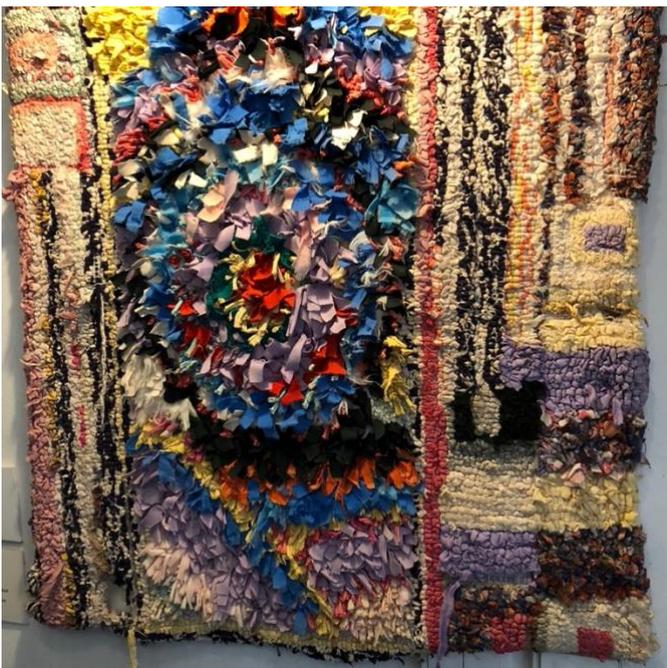
- Lions Paw (symbol of strength)
- Snake and fish skeletons (symbol of a holy person or medicinal properties)
- Spider (fertility rites)
- Eye (to protect from evil eye)



WOVEN CLOTH



Another type of carpet is the 'Boucherouite' or rag rug. Typically made of upcycled and/or recycled textile scraps such as cotton, wool, plastic and fabric strips, these carpets were previously ignored by serious collectors. However they enjoyed a surge in popularity in the 1990s with the rise of the boho or vintage aesthetic, and collectors and buyers came to appreciate their naïve, eco-friendly appeal. These rugs attract high prices now due to their exuberant and rustic nature. Because of their recycled origins, no two boucherouite rugs are ever the same.



Weaving is the process of creating cloth from a web of yarn and threads, and can be done on either vertical or horizontal looms. The lengthwise threads are the warp and the crosswise threads, which may be wool, cotton, silk, 'sabra' (cactus silk, which sadly is usually rayon these days) or synthetic fibre, are the weft.

The vertical loom is the traditional style that can be set up in private homes. While large, they take up little floor space within the home, and allow women to weave during the day in between other daily household tasks. The vertical loom allows for the inclusion of intricate designs painstakingly woven or knotted in, row by row.

Horizontal looms are more modern, and take up more room. While the weaver uses a shuttle to weave the weft across the warp, it is still done by hand. Traditionally the weaving of household cloth was done by women. Using wool or cotton, women weave 'haiks' – cloths that are several metres long and are used to cover their bodies – or 'handira' – smaller wraps to cover the shoulders. Blankets or throws are often given as bridal gifts. However the dimensions of these cloths are determined by the size of the horizontal loom within the domestic household.

The introduction of larger horizontal looms, which require more space and correspondingly more physical strength, brought weaving outside the home and introduced men to weaving, mostly in industrial and commercial settings.

Today weaving is also done in the large cities, where master craftsmen known as 'daraza' produce curtains, bedcovers and other fabrics.



EMBROIDERY

Embroidery, largely considered a woman's task in Morocco, has served as a way for women to generate income for their family. Traditionally most women learnt to embroider as part of the suite of housewifely skills, however more recently embroidery has brought some women a measure of independent income as they have marketed their products to the tourist market. Before the twentieth century, embroidery was generally only sold during times of economic need. However, during the twentieth century embroidery schools became more popular. After the 1980s, Moroccan embroidery began to flourish as it was recognized as a cultural art that could keep Moroccan tradition alive and help the country economically.

The designs of Moroccan hand embroidery are often similar to Berber tattoo or henna patterns. These designs feature on everyday cloths – tablecloths, napkins, pillowcases and clothing such as the *djellaba*.

Fes Embroidery

Named for the city of Fes, the spiritual capital of Morocco, Fessi embroidery is both beautiful and unique. The special aspect of Fessi embroidery is that the back of the fabric has the same design as the front. There are no knots or tangles hidden underneath the cloth, but the reversible pattern is perfectly displayed when you flip the fabric over. In fact, it might be hard to tell which side is the front and which is the back! The stitch is a mix between a cross stitch and straight stitches. Interestingly many women do not mark the cloth before they stitch, but place the stitches by eye. The pattern of Fessi embroidery is usually floral or geometric. Sometimes symbolic patterns are chosen, for example, the hand of Fatima or a symbol of the evil eye for protection. In Fes, the most common colour for the embroidery is blue or green (also found on Fes pottery). Maroon, red, and mixed colours are also commonly used.

Rabat Embroidery

The embroidery of the capital of Morocco differs from that of Fes. Mostly done on white cotton, Rabat embroidery tends to focus on one colour embroidered in a silk floss. Often pieces will feature bright colours used in contrast to each

other. The stitches are usually close together, as in satin stitch, making a solid pattern. Again, floral or geometric patterns are the most commonly used.



Gold Thread

Another type of embroidery that is popular in Morocco and particularly well-known in Fes is gold thread embroidery. This decorative, fancy embroidery is often used for celebration such as a wedding or on festive clothes. This embroidery is often done on heavier materials such as leather, velvet or silk clothing. This style is found on cushions, kaftans, wall hangings and even slippers. The technique used for the gold thread embroidery is couching, where traditionally a strong thread held the gold threads in their positions. Often, it was the male artisans who drew and cut out the patterns before the women embroidered them. There are many different designs in gold thread embroidery, but some of the more common ones are teardrops, circles and floral patterns.

Amazigh (Berber) Embroidery

It's said that the embroidery on Amazigh women's headscarves is based on the tattooing that they used to practice. When tattooing was no longer customary, more women began embroidering their headscarves. They often embroider bright colours onto a dark background, using the natural world as inspiration for the design.

NEEDLE WOVEN BUTTONS

The tiny woven buttons that feature on the fronts and sometimes the sleeves of men and women's caftans and djellabas all over Morocco are mostly made by various women's stitching cooperatives in Sefrou, a small town outside Fes. Originally the buttons were made by Sefrou's Jewish population, supplying tailors in Fes until the 1960s when the majority of the community emigrated to Israel. Before leaving, the Jewish women taught their button making skills to their Muslim neighbours who have continued the trade ever since. The women twist together two to four single strands of artificial silk or rayon, and using a long needle, weave complex patterns around a central core of rolled paper or plastic tubing. Made in every colour of the rainbow, there are also several styles – the traditional *semma* style, and then the fancy styles known as jacquard, jasmine, flower, chain, biscuit, sun, and more, often named after the object they supposedly resemble. In addition to decorating traditional clothing, the women have branched out and use the buttons as jewellery including necklaces and earrings.



POTTERY

Pottery is colourful and frequently in a naïve style; the multi-coloured pots and dishes are very attractive. Morocco's major pottery centres are located in Safi, Fes and Tamagrout, and boast many studios filled with colourful plates, tajines and garden pots. Safi tajines are generally more decorative. The best for cooking are produced by the Oulja pottery at Sale, near

Rabat, in plain red-brown earthenware. These earthenware tajines can also be found any major city souks in Marrakech, Fes, Casablanca, Meknes, Ouarzazate or Tangier.

ZELLIGE MOSAIC

Zelliges are clay tiles covered with an enameled surface, seen everywhere in Morocco. First appearing in the 10th century in white and browns, the technique evolved in the 12th, 13th and 14th centuries when entire buildings were constructed and decorated with zelliges in green, blue and yellow. Red zelliges didn't appear until the 17th century.

Clay is soaked in water for a day, then kneaded and cleaned before being pressed into metal or wooden square moulds. The squares are dried in the sun before being fired in an oven or kiln. Coloured glaze is then applied and the tiles are fired again at 900C, using olive wood and the residue left after olives have been pressed for oil. When cool, a mastercraftsman known as a 'zlaygi' creates the final geometric shapes using a sharpened hammer. The shapes are then combined in geometric or floral mosaic patterns. Zellige work can be seen covering walls and floors, fountains, palaces and medersas (madrassas).



JEWELLERY

Silver jewellery is worked in rural villages, particularly in the mountains. Silver is a precious metal valued in the rural areas while gold is very sought after in cities. Silver, used by itself or combined with coral and amber, features in jewellery items including amulets, fibulae, necklaces, forehead diadems, bracelets and anklets. The silver jewels worn by the nomads are sold in souks and the markets of the south.

BASKETRY

Originally basketwork was undertaken only by men, however these days women practitioners are more common. A variety of plant fibres are used in traditional Moroccan basketry. Raffia, a type of coastal palm from Essaouira and surrounds, is easily dyed and is used to make simple slippers, bags and baskets. The doum palm (Mediterranean Dwarf Palm) which grows in dry rocky regions, is used to make mats, rope, harnesses and bucket bags for donkeys. Esparto grass, also known as halfah grass, is primarily used to make baby baskets and lampshades. Wall coverings or floor mats are made with bulrushes and elephant grass (a giant reed that looks like bamboo) is robust enough to make furniture such as chairs and stools. Various basketry techniques are employed, including spiraling, braiding and weaving.

WOODWORK

In the Marinid Dynasty of the 13th and 14th centuries, madrasas and mosques began to be decorated with open worked wood and enhanced with paint, sparking the tradition of decorated woodwork which continues today in everything from architecture to furniture.

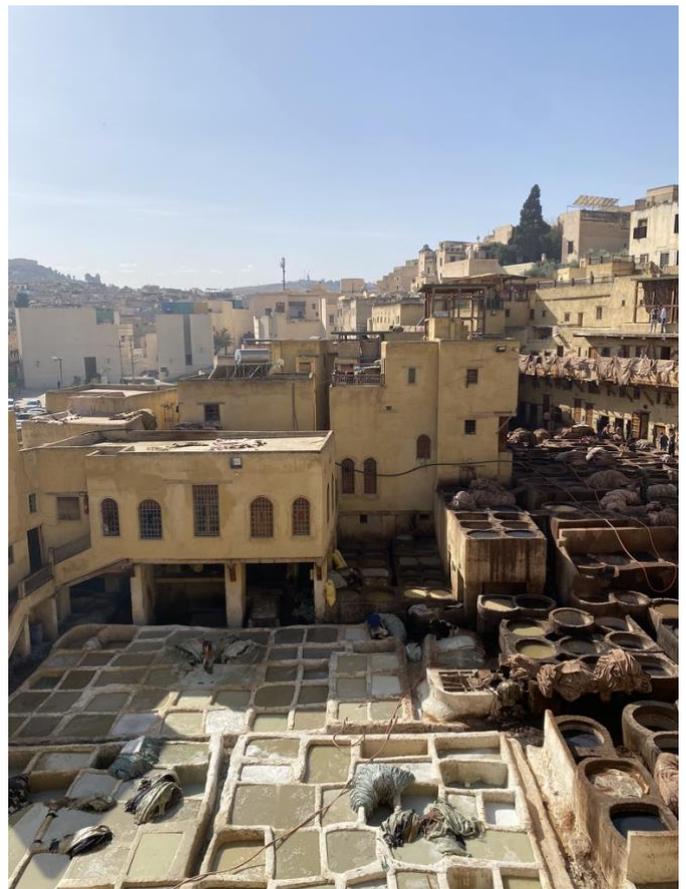
Woods used include thuya for furniture such as chairs, tables and desks, while kitchen utensils are made from olive or lemon wood. Cedarwood with its delicate fragrance and insect repelling qualities is preferred for furniture such as storage chests and also elaborately sculpted ceilings.

Geometric or floral designs are traced onto the surface of the wood, then the negative space around the motif is removed by relief carving.

Wax or oil is rubbed into the surface, followed by paint. This step, like the lattice carving before it, requires the experience of a master craftsman.

LEATHER

Leather goods are of excellent quality in Morocco. Skins are scoured, tanned and dyed, mostly with natural vegetable dyes, and sold in souks across the country in various shades of brown as well as hot pink, lime green, turquoise, reds, canary yellow and magenta. The classic Moroccan leather item to purchase is the babouche - shoes that are open at the heel, and produced in traditional yellow, white, red (for women) grey and black. Bags, jackets, belts and footstools are also popular. The best selection of leather goods can be found in Fes and Marrakesh. The city of Fes is home to an ancient 11th century expansive tannery, one of North Africa's most photographed sites.



Sources:

James Jereb, *The Arts and Crafts of Morocco*

Susan Schaefer, *Women Artisans of Morocco*

Adwal Co-operative, <https://adwal.wordpress.com/about-adwal/>