



## Morocco: Gardens, Art, and Culture of Tangier and Marrakech

March 21 - 30, 2023

Post-tour Excursion to Ouarzazate, March 30 – April 2, 2023

In support of the UC Botanical Garden  
Escorted by Katherine Greenberg

Come with us to discover the fascinating culture and gardens of Morocco. Our tour begins in Tangier, Morocco's most northern city and home to an eccentric assortment of creative residents and travelers. From there we will fly to Marrakech, the centuries-old walled city that dazzles visitors with its colorful souks, exotic gardens, ornate palaces, and vast palm groves. An optional post-tour excursion is planned to Ouarzazate and Skoura oasis in a region south of the High Atlas Mountains that is known for its beautiful kasbahs. Along the way, we will enjoy visits to exceptional private homes and experience the best of Moroccan hospitality.

**Tuesday, March 21: USA to Tangier**

**Wednesday, March 22: Tangier (D)**

Independent arrivals in Tangier. Check into **Le Mirage Hotel** for four nights. The hotel is located on the coast just outside of Tangier.



Meet for a drink in the late afternoon with tour escort Katherine Greenberg and Sofia Barroso, tour leader and lecturer. Then visit **Vielle Montagne**, the home and garden of Umberto Pasti for a welcome dinner. Umberto is the author of *Eden Revisited: A Garden in Northern Morocco* (Rizzoli), which tells the fascinating story of his garden in Rohuna.



### Thursday, March 23: Tangier (B, L)

This morning we depart for the medina of Tangier and the **Tangier American Legation**, the only American historical landmark outside of the United States, for a guided visit by its curator, Mohamed Jadidi. The Legation is a museum and cultural center that represents the enduring friendship between Morocco and the United States.

Then we will visit the Weavers Market or **Foundouk Chejra**, where we will see artisans working at their looms. We will also visit **Galerie and Bazar Tindouf**, known for Moroccan antiques and contemporary Moroccan art.



*American Legation building Moorish façade, artisan working on his loom, Aux Trois Ports hotel and garden*

We depart by bus to the restaurant **Aux Trois Portes**, located in a lovely garden designed by French landscape architect Eugenie Denarnaud. The restaurant has a breathtaking view of Tarifa and the Strait of Gibraltar, where the Atlantic Ocean meets the Mediterranean Sea.

After lunch we will visit the charming **Kasbah Museum** and its **Andalusian Garden**. There will be free time to explore the Kasbah of Tangier and visit the boutique of Laure Welfing, designer of exquisite caftans.

Return to the hotel. This evening is free for dinner on your own.

### Friday, March 24: Tangier – Rohuna – Assilah (B,L)

This morning we drive south of Tangier to the village of **Rohuna** to visit **Umberto Pasti's garden**. Umberto and his head gardener Bernard Dogimont will welcome us. This exceptional garden features native and drought-tolerant plants and involves the local community.

Each section of Umberto's garden is named. One area is called "Now on the Ocean", where two men from the nearby village create beautiful and unique pieces of furniture in vivid colors. We will enjoy a delicious lunch prepared by women from the village.



*Umberto Pasti's garden and home at Rohuna*

On our way back to Tangier, we will explore **Assilah**, a charming blue and white village by the sea. This historic town on the northwest tip of the Atlantic coast of Morocco has well-preserved ramparts from the old Portuguese fortress. We will return to the hotel, with time to rest or pack. Independent dinners at the hotel or the nearby L'Ocean restaurant.

**Saturday, March 25: Tangier - Vielle & Nouvelle Montagne (B, L)**

Enjoy a morning walk on the beach or visit the Caves of Hercules next to the hotel. Then depart mid-morning toward Tangier to visit the private garden **Bab Essalam**, created by French landscape designers Eugenie Denarnaud and Louis Lazaroo. This project is described in a lovely small book, *Un Jardin sur le Detroit a Tanger*.

We will continue to the **Vielle & Nouvelle Montagne** quarter, where the city's most beautiful homes and gardens have been built for over a century. We will visit **Dar Sinclair**, the lovely home and garden of the late photographer Tessa Condrington Wheeler, now managed by her daughters.

Our lunch today will be on the terrace of **Villa Josephine**, overlooking the garden and the sea. Built in the early 1900s, the Villa has had several prestigious owners, including Walter Burton Harris, a British author whose life of adventure inspired the legend of Indiana Jones.



*From left to right: Villa Josephine and Veere Grenney's Gazebo home and garden*



After lunch we will visit the **home and garden of Madison Cox**, American garden designer and who has worked in the United States, Europe and North Africa. Responsible for the Majorelle Garden in Marrakech, he is director of the Saint Laurent Museums in Paris and in Marrakech, and president of the Pierre Bergé – Yves Saint Laurent Foundation (PBYSL) since the death of Pierre Bergé in September 2017.

Then we will visit **Gazebo**, the beautiful home and garden of interior designer Veere Greeney, designed by landscape architect John Mason. Tea will be hosted.

There will be free time later in the afternoon to visit the souk of Tangier or return to the hotel. Independent dinners at the hotel or in Tangier.

### **Sunday, March 26: Tangier – Casablanca- Marrakech (B, L)**

Early morning departure by train for Casablanca where we take the high-speed train to Marrakech.

On arrival in Marrakech, we drive to Beldi **Country Club**, where we will enjoy a lunch of regional specialties and discover a charming blend of Moroccan tradition and French chic. *Beldi* is an Arabic expression meaning “traditional” or “the one who is from here”. Maintaining the harmony between the natural environment and human activity is essential to the Beldi experience. The property has a beautiful rose garden and its own souk, in addition to Morocco’s last team of glass blowers.

In the afternoon we will drive to the nearby village of **Tahnout** to visit the studio and garden designed by Moroccan artists **Yamou and Fatiha Zemmouri**. Their paintings and sculptures are informed by organic forms related to nature. Tea and Moroccan pastries will be served.



*Beldi Country Club garden*

This afternoon we check into our hotel, **Les Jardins de la Koutoubia**, for four nights. The hotel is centrally located in the medina near the 12<sup>th</sup> century **Koutoubia Mosque**, the city’s landmark, and the lively **Jemaa el Fna** square, where snake charmers and storytellers delight visitors every evening.

Independent dinners. We suggest dinner at Le Jardin Restaurant at Royal Mansour hotel, with garden designed by Spanish landscape architect Luis Vallejo.



**Monday, March 27: Marrakech: Majorelle Garden and Yves Saint Laurent Museum (B, L, D)**

This morning we depart for a private visit to the **Yves Saint Laurent Museum** and **Majorelle Garden**. It was in Marrakech that Yves Saint Laurent found his source of inspiration and refuge. In the 1960s, he and his partner Pierre Berge bought the Majorelle Garden and the magnificent home they named Villa Oasis. After restoring the Majorelle Garden, they opened it to the public, keeping their adjacent villa as a private retreat.

The **Yves Saint Laurent Museum**, designed by Studio KO, opened in 2017. It holds more than forty years of Yves Saint Laurent's work and hosts special exhibits and programs. After the visit we will visit the amazing **Majorelle Garden**, designed in the 1920s by the French artist and plant collector Jacques Majorelle. He captured the light and exotic colors of Morocco in his paintings and created a private paradise in his home, studio, and garden. The original garden was meticulously restored by Yves Saint Laurent and garden designer Madison Cox, now Director of the Majorelle Garden and the Yves Saint Laurent Museum.

We will have lunch at the spectacular **Villa Oasis**, private home and garden of Yves Saint Laurent and Pierre Berge, with time after to visit the **Berber Museum** in the former studio of Jacques Majorelle. There will be free time to explore the boutiques in the area or return to the hotel.



*Jardin Majorelle and Villa Oasis interior*

Visit **Sidi Ghanem industrial quarter**, where many artisans, artists and gallerists have placed their workshops and galleries.

This evening we will enjoy dinner at **La Maison Árabe**, restaurant in the medina.



## Tuesday, March 28: Marrakech – Al Maaden- Medina (B,L)

This morning our first visit will be to the **Menara**, the city's oldest garden dating from the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Our next visit will be the historic gardens of Agdal, established by the Almoravid dynasty in the 12<sup>th</sup> century to provide food for the city. *Agdal* is a Berber term meaning "enclosed meadow on the banks of a wadi". The orchards were irrigated by water brought through an ancient system of underground channels called *kettara*, which are still in use in Morocco.

Guided visit to the **MACAAL**, the Museum of African Art, and the golf course and gardens. Lunch in the **golf club at Al Maaden** with views over the impressive gardens designed by **Fernando Caruncho** and his sculpture park. After lunch we will have a tour of the gardens. On our return to Marrakech, we will enjoy a private visit to **MC Pots**, Madison Cox artisanal pots workshop.



*From left to right: Le Jardin Secret and Al Maaden Golf Club*

Return to the Medina, where we will visit **Le Jardin Secret**, dating from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, when the Saadian Sultan began the urbanization of what is now the Mouassine district. Rebuilt in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by an influential kaid from the Atlas Mountains, the Secret Garden has been home to some of the most important political figures in Morocco. The garden of this amazing palace has been recently restored by Tom Stuart-Smith, a British landscape architect responsible for the Windsor Palace gardens. The owner and director Lauro Milan will welcome us.

Later in the afternoon we will visit **Maison de la Photographie**, a private foundation created in 2009 to exhibit photographs that illustrate the exceptional diversity of Morocco from 1870 to 1960. The collection also contains journals, maps, and prints. On our guided walk through the narrow alleys of the medina, we will discover the work of local artisans.

Late afternoon visit to the legendary **La Mamounia Hotel**. Its famous gardens were created by Sultan Mohammed Ben Abdallah in the 18<sup>th</sup> century on several acres enclosed by the centuries-old wall surrounding the medina. Gravel paths lined with palm trees and flowering perennials lead through an orchard of olive trees and orange trees to a garden of herbs, fruits, and vegetables that supply the hotel's restaurants. We will enjoy drinks in the hotel terrace. Independent dinners.



### Wednesday, March 29: Marrakech - Ourika Valley (B,L,D)

This morning we depart for the **Ourika Valley** on the lower slopes of the High Atlas Mountains to the south of Marrakech (50min). We will first visit **Anima Garden**, the project of Austrian artist and writer Andre Heller. This magical garden features many outdoor rooms, each with its own character and art installations. There is also an art gallery on the property. Enjoy an early lunch at its Restaurant "Paul Bowles".

After lunch we will head towards the outskirts of Marrakech to visit **Montresso\* Foundation** and its artist residence project **Jardin Rouge**. Settled in Morocco in 2009, this foundation is a hybrid place that supports the creation and promotes the diversity of fields of artistic research.

Six studios allow space for thirty artists per cultural season to work in an environment conducive to experimentation and dialogue. We will enjoy a welcome coffee and guided visit to the garden and studios.



*Anima Garden, Jardin Rouge and Jnane Tamsna*

Later this afternoon we will visit **Jnane Tamsna**, the impressive 9-acre private estate in the **Palmeraie** created by ethnobotanist Gary Martin and his wife Meryanne Loum-Martin. Gary designed the garden in the traditional *arsat* model, combining existing date palms with fruit trees and a profusion of aromatic and flowering perennials. The houses and many of their furnishings were designed by Meryanne in a contemporary Moroccan style. We will celebrate our Moroccan adventure this evening with a farewell dinner at Jnane Tamsna.

### Thursday, March 30: Marrakech – USA

Independent transfers to the airport for return flights to the USA.



## March 30 – April 2, Optional Post-tour: Marrakech to Ouarzazate and Skoura Oasis

An optional post-tour to the region of Ouarzazate is planned for a small group of 10. From Marrakech, we will drive over the High Atlas Mountains through Berber villages and spectacular landscapes to Ouarzazate, where the Sahara begins. This region is known for its well-preserved kasbahs and oasis villages featuring traditional gardens and agriculture. We will be staying in Skoura, one of these small oasis villages, to experience life in this special region of Morocco.

### Thursday, March 30: Marrakech – Ouarzazate (B, L,D)

After breakfast, we depart Marrakech for a scenic drive over the **High Atlas Mountains** through remote Berber villages and ever-changing landscapes to the region of **Ouarzazate**. We will stop for lunch and a visit to the fortified Berber **Ksar Ait Benhaddu**, a Unesco World Heritage site.

The ksar is an enclosed village of earthen buildings surrounded by high defensive walls and crenelated towers, a striking example of the architecture of southern Morocco. We will also visit the local artisans working in the village.



*Ksar Ait Benhaddu and Skoura and its Palmeraie*

We continue through the town of Ouarzazate to arrive at **Skoura**, an oasis village, where old kasbahs still exist in the groves of towering date palms. We will spend two nights at **Dar al Garnati**, the lovely home of Jeronimo Paez in Skoura. The home has five guest rooms with private baths. This evening we will have dinner at Dar al Garnati and meet our local expert, Lola Coronel.

### Friday, March 31: Skoura (B,L,D)

This morning we will enjoy a walk through the **Palmeraie of Skoura** with the head gardener of Dar el Garnati to see traditional gardens and learn about village life.

Depart for lunch on the terrace of **Ait ben Moro Kasbah**.



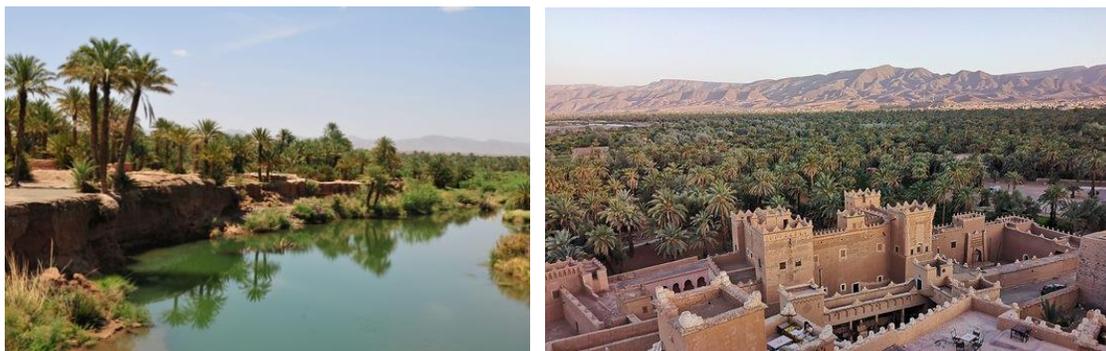
In the afternoon we will visit **Amridil Kasbah**, an impressive complex built in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. It is a living museum that demonstrates the traditional kasbah way of life, with an old olive oil press, original bread ovens, and stalls where animals were kept. Dinner at Dar al Garnati.



*Amridil Kasbah, Skoura Palmeraie and Kasbah Ait Ben Moro*

### **Saturday, April 1: Skoura – DRAA VALLEY (B, L,D)**

We will devote our day to discover the **Draa Valley and its landscapes**. The Draa is Morocco's longest river and we will drive the parallel road that leads to Tamegroute.



Visit **Agdz**, a classic caravanserai oasis with a still pristine palmeraie, ancient mudbrick kasbahs and a secret desert prison. Lunch at Kasbah Azul in Agdz. Return to Skoura. Dinner at Dar al Garnati.

### **Sunday, April 2: Skoura – Ouarzazate – Marrakech (B, L)**

Check out with luggage. Departure to visit the town of **Ouarzazate** and its **Taurirt Kasbah**, one of the largest and most interesting kasbahs in Morocco. Walk through the fascinating **souk of Ouarzazate**. We continue for lunch in a local restaurant, Dimitri.

Depart Ouarzazate after lunch for our return drive to Marrakech.

Check-in at **Les Jardins de la Koutoubia** for one night. Independent dinners.

### **Monday, April 5: Marrakech - USA (B)**

Check-out. Independent transfers to the airport for return flights to the USA.



**Tour Escort Katherine Greenberg**, a garden designer and author, has been fascinated with Moroccan gardens and culture since her first visit to the country thirty years ago, when her father was working in Morocco. She studied at the University of Madrid and the University of California. Katherine is currently chair of the UC Botanical Garden Advisory Board. She was a speaker at the Majorelle Garden Symposium in Marrakech in 2015 and has escorted several tours to Morocco in support of the UC Botanical Garden. Katherine is also a past president of the Mediterranean Garden Society.

**Tour Leader and Lecturer Sofia Barroso** is an art collector and president of Around Art in Madrid, and an advisor to several Spanish art foundations. She also oversees the care of her family's historic Moorish palace and garden in Toledo. Sofia has led many tours to Morocco with a focus on contemporary and traditional art and gardens. She was the leader and lecturer for recent UC Botanical Garden tours to the Balearic Islands, Portugal, and Galicia.

**TOUR PRICE: Main Tour \$6798.00 members    single supplement \$1798  
\$6848 non-members    based on a minimum of 16 guests**

**INCLUDES:**

- 8 night's accommodation, all rooms with private bathrooms
- All hotel taxes and service charges
- Breakfast daily- lunches and dinners as noted in the itinerary
- Deluxe private transportation
- Special English-speaking escort and local guides
- All sightseeing and entrances as per the itinerary
- Escorted by Katherine Greenberg
- Tax-deductible donation of \$500.00 to UCBG

**TOUR PRICE Extension \$3950 with 10 guests    single supplement \$658**

**COSTS DO NOT INCLUDE:**

- Airfare
- Tips to your guide
- Travel Insurance

**For reservations and further information contact: Sterling Garden Tours  
2907 Shelter Island Dr. Ste. 105-262 San Diego, CA Tel: 619 299-3010 x 10.  
[cheryl@sterlingtoursltd.com](mailto:cheryl@sterlingtoursltd.com)    [www.sterlinggardentours.com](http://www.sterlinggardentours.com)**