



IMPERIAL CITIES OF MOROCCO
GARDEN, ART, CULTURE AND CUISINE
In support of the UC Botanical Garden
With Katherine Greenberg
APRIL 7-20, 2025

Come with us to discover Morocco's fascinating Imperial Cities: Rabat, Meknes, Fes and Marrakech. These cities preserve centuries-old traditions and hidden treasures behind high walls, and all are UNESCO World Heritage sites. From Rabat on the Atlantic coast, we will enjoy a scenic drive to Meknes, Volubilis, and Fes, and continue over the Middle Atlas Mountains to the enchanting palm groves of Marrakech. Along the way, we will enjoy the best of Moroccan hospitality and regional cuisine.

MONDAY, APRIL 7: USA-MOROCCO Travel day.

TUESDAY, APRIL 8: RABAT (D)

Independent arrivals to Rabat, Morocco's capital. Check into Sofitel Jardin de Roses Hotel in Rabat for 3 nights.

Meet for a welcome drink in the late afternoon with Tour Escort Katherine Greenberg and Sofia Barroso, Tour Leader and Lecturer. Welcome dinner in the hotel.

Hotel Sofitel Jardin de Rose
Bp 450 Quartier Aviation
Rabat 10000. Morocco.
Tel. +212 5376-75656

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9: RABAT (B,L)

This morning we will enjoy a tour of Rabat, including the Hassan Tower, one of the three great minarets built by the Almohads in the 12th century (the others are in Marrakech and Seville). Nearby we will see the Mohammed V Mausoleum and the Great Mosque of Rabat.

After lunch in a local restaurant, we will visit the Kasbah des Oudaias, the charming medieval quarter of blue-painted houses and an Andalusian Garden. We will also visit the Decorative Arts Museum to see its collection of traditional textiles and jewelry. Our day concludes with a visit to the medina of Rabat, which preserves several of its original gates and adjoins the modern city.

Return to hotel for a free evening. There are two restaurants in the hotel and several restaurants nearby.



THURSDAY, APRIL 10: RABAT- SALE-RABAT (B,L)

This morning we will visit the necropolis of **Chellah**, an impressive Marinid fortress. The complex includes a Roman forum, Arab monuments, a hammam, madrasa, and exotic garden. The site is also a refuge for storks.

After lunch at a local restaurant, we will drive to the **Exotic Garden of Buknadel**. With plant collections from around the world, the garden also promotes biodiversity, conservation, and ecological gardening.

Later we will visit the studio of the artist **Hasnae El Ouarga**. Born in Sale, she began her career as a cinematographer, and photography remains the foundation of her work. This evening we are invited for drinks at the U.S. Embassy of Rabat. Independent dinners.



FRIDAY, APRIL 11: RABAT- FES (B,L,)

Our last visit in Rabat this morning will be the **Botanical Garden**. Created by Jean Claude Nicolas Forestier in 1914, the collection includes over 600 species and 1000 varieties of plants on 17 hectares.

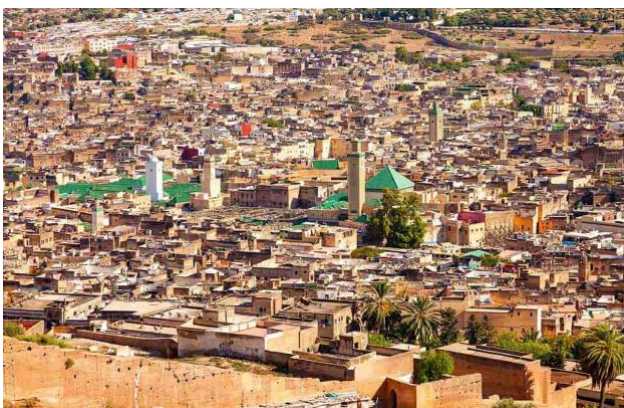
After lunch in a local restaurant, we will drive to Fes. On arrival in Fes, check into Palais Faraj Hotel for 3 nights.



SATURDAY, APRIL 12: FES (B,L)

Our tour of the fascinating city of Fes begins with the impressive golden gates of the Royal Palace. The cultural richness of Fes makes it unique in the world. Walking through the medina, we will see the **Medersa Bou Anania**, the lovely Nejjarine fountain, the **Karaouyin Mosque**, and the famous tanners' quarter.

After lunch in a local restaurant, we will continue our guided walk through the narrow streets of Fes. Along the way, we will see examples of local handicrafts and artisans working as they have for centuries. The evening is free for independent dinners.



SUNDAY, APRIL 13: FES- MEKNEZ -VOLUBILIS-FES (B,L)

After breakfast we will drive to **Meknes**. The city has many attractions, including several majestic gates that represent the grandeur of its past. The **Sultan Gardens** are a green oasis that delights visitors with its lush plantings, fountains, and decorative pavilions.

After lunch at a local restaurant, we will continue to **Volubilis**, an ancient Roman archaeological site. The mosaics, arches, and ancient streets of Volubilis are living moments of this important city. This region also produces some of the best Moroccan wines.

Return to the hotel in Fes for a free evening.



MONDAY, APRIL 14: FES-MARRAKECH (B,L,D)

This morning we depart Fes for a scenic drive over the **Middle Atlas Mountains** to the oasis city of Marrakech. Our route will take us through **Ifrane**, an alpine ski resort, and **Azrou**, an important handicraft center. There will be stops along the way and lunch in a local restaurant. We will also see the **Cascade of Ain Aserdoune**.

In the late afternoon we will arrive at Jnane Tamsna, a lovely Boutique Hotel in the palm groves (La Palmerie) of Marrakech. Created by ethnobotanist Gary Mary and designer Meryanne Loum-Martin, Jnane Tamsna is a 9-acre property that preserves its existing date palms within a lovely, enclosed garden. This tranquil place will be our home in Marrakech for the next 6 nights. Drinks and dinner this evening at Jnane Tamsna.



TUESDAY, APRIL 15: MARRAKECH (B,L,D)

This morning we will enter the medina of Marrakech to visit the amazing **Saadian Tombs**. Dating from the reign of Ahmad al-Mansur in the 16th century, they are outstanding examples of the architecture of this period. Then we will visit the impressive 16th century **Badi Palace**.

Our lunch today will be on the roof terrace of **Le MAP**, Musee de la Parure (Jewelry Museum). The focus of the museum is the private collection of Marlene and Paolo Gallone. The museum's roof garden was designed by **Marius Boulesteix**, a young Moroccan landscape architect, and has views over the medina. After lunch, the museum's curator will give us a guided tour of the collections.

Our afternoon ends with a visit to **Le Jardin Secret**, a large 16th century residence and garden located inside the medina. Rebuilt in the 19th century by an influential kaid from the Atlas Mountains, it has been the home of several of Morocco's most important political figures. Recently, the garden was restored by Tom Stuart-Smith, a British landscape architect responsible for the Windsor Palace gardens.

Return to Jnane Tamsna for drinks and a talk by Meryanne Loum-Martin on Moroccan lifestyle and presentation of her book, *Inside Marrakech*, followed by dinner at Jnane Tamsna.



WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16: MARRAKECH (B,L,D)

This morning we depart for a visit to **MACAAL**, the Museum of African Art, located in Al-Maaden residential complex, with gardens designed by Spanish landscape architect **Fernando Caruncho**. The gardens have wonderful views of the High Atlas Mountains, and we will enjoy a drink at the Al Maaden Golf Club.

We will continue to the Oberoi Hotel for lunch, followed by a visit to the hotel's impressive gardens designed by Madison Cox.

Later this afternoon we return to Jnane Tamsna for a cooking class. and tasting of Moroccan wines, and dinner.



Artwork by Hassan Hajjal



THURSDAY, APRIL 17: MARRAKECH (B,L,D)

This morning we will enjoy a visit to the **Majorelle Garden**. Yves Saint Laurent and Pierre Berge bought the property in the 1960s and restored the garden, which was designed by the French artist and plant collector Jacques Majorelle in the 1920s. The garden has been meticulously restored by Madison Cox, Director of the Majorelle Garden and the Yves Saint Laurent Museum. We will also visit the **Berber Museum**, formerly Jaques Majorelle's studio.

It was in Marrakech that Yves Saint Laurent found his source of inspiration and refuge. The **Yves Saint Laurent Museum**, located adjacent to the Majorelle Garden and designed by Studio KO, opened in 2017. The Museum holds more than forty years of Yves designs by Yves Saint Laurent and hosts special programs and exhibits.

We will continue to **La Mamounia Hotel** for lunch. The most iconic hotel of Marrakech since its opening in 1929, La Mamounia also has beautiful gardens enclosed by the wall of the medina.

After lunch we will visit the recently restored **Medersa Ben Youssef**, the largest medersa (Islamic college) in Morocco. It was built during the reign of Sultan Abdallah al-Ghalib, Morocco's second Saadian king in the 16th century.

Our afternoon tour concludes with a visit to the recently restored **Dar el Basha**, Musee de Confluences. Built in 2010, the Dar el Basha (House of the Pasha) was the residence of Thami El Glaoui, a powerful political figure of the Moroccan south under French rule.

Dinner this evening at Jnane Tamsna.



FRIDAY, APRIL 18: MARRAKECH (B,L)

This morning we drive to the village of **Ourika** in the foothills of the High Atlas Mountains with Gary Martin to visit **Dar Taliba**, a boarding school for girls. The school's ethnobotanical program and garden is one of Gary's Global Diversity Foundation (GDF) projects. The GDF supports biodiversity conservation in the High Atlas Mountains, while maintaining cultural landscapes and conserving biocultural heritage. We will continue to the Olinto Atlas Mountain Retreat for lunch.

On our way back to Jnane Tamsna, we will visit the beautiful garden and studio of Moroccan artist **Yamou**.

This evening is free for independent dinners. Transportation will be provided for those who would like to have dinner in Marrakech and a list of recommended restaurants will be provided for advance reservations.

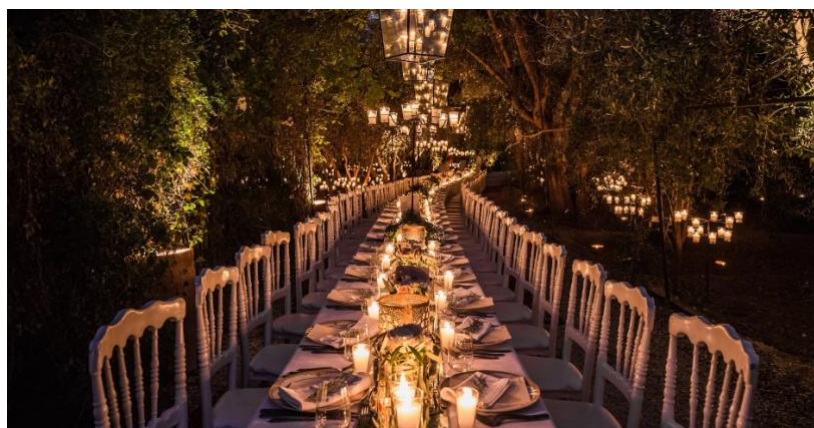


SATURDAY, APRIL 19: MARRAKECH-ATLAS MOUNTAINS (B,L,D)

This morning Gary Martin will give a lecture about waterwise and sustainable gardens.

Then we will depart to **Beldi Country Club** for a visit to its beautiful garden and lunch. The complex has its own souk, with artisans working on various crafts and shops. In the afternoon, we will have a guided walking tour of the **medina**, with time for shopping. Vans will be available for those who wish to return to Jnane Tamsna for a relaxing afternoon.

A special evening is planned at Jnane Tamsna with Moroccan music and drinks on the roof terrace and a farewell candlelight dinner.



SUNDAY, APRIL 20: MARRAKECH- USA (B)

Transfers by vans to the airport for your return flight.

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 has escorted several tours to Morocco in support of the UC Botanical Garden and was a speaker at the 2015 Majorelle Garden Symposium in Marrakech. Currently on the Advisory Board of the UC Botanical Garden, Katherine is a past president of the Mediterranean Garden Society and Pacific Horticulture Society.

**TOUR PRICE: \$8998.00 members single supplement \$1250.
\$9098.00 non-members based on a minimum of 16 guests**

INCLUDES:

- 12 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

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 www.sterlinggardentours.com**

Tour Leader and Lecturer Sofia Barroso is an art collector and president of Around Art in Madrid as well as an advisor to several Spanish art foundations. She oversees the care of her family's historic Moorish palace and garden in Toledo. Sofia has organized many tours to Morocco with a focus on art and gardens. She was the leader and lecturer for recent UC Botanical Garden tours to the Balearic Islands, Portugal, Morocco, and the Basque Country (2024).

Gary Martin and Meryanne Loum-Martin, our hosts in Marrakech, created Jnane Tamsna, their boutique hotel and garden about 25 years ago. Gary is an ethnobotanist with a PhD from UC Berkeley and Director of the Global Diversity Foundation. He is also an Honorary Board Member of the UC Botanical Garden. Meryanne is a talented designer and author of Inside Marrakech: Enchanting Homes and Gardens (Rozzoli, 2020). The book is beautifully written, with descriptions and photos of some of the places that we'll be visiting in Marrakech.