



Textile Quest, Morocco

April 23rd – May 6th, 2024

Exploring Morocco, its' people and culture
through the traditional textile artisanship.

Preliminary Itinerary



Day 1

Convene at Tantalizing Tangiers

1 p.m. onwards - We rendezvous at the north-western tip of Morocco in the whitewashed 10th century city of Tangier with an incredibly rich history influenced by so many cultures for its elegant mix of Islamic, Moorish and French architecture and its ancient maze of alleyways in the kasbah and medina overlooking the Straits of Gibraltar. Check in at our charming riad and rest or start exploring.

5 p.m. Your Textile Quest leaders will meet you at the riad and where we will gather for an orientation, Q and A and start getting to know each other.

Evening. Join us to share a traditional Moroccan welcome meal where we can relax, discuss the itinerary and get to know your leaders and fellow adventurers. **M**

Day 2

Dialogue on Women in Moroccan society.

Set out on the Mountain Road to Tetouan.

a.m. The morning begins at 9 a.m. with a short walk around Tangier's ancient kasbah and medina and its abundant food market which is an important part of Moroccan life. Next, we visit DARNA an association and center that provides opportunities to develop employment skills for unschooled Moroccan women and we gather for a discussion with students about women and their role in Moroccan society.

Lunch at DARNA is recommended.

2.30 p.m. Our adventure continues on the road to Tetouan - a short one hours drive along the mountain road past farms, villages and roadside stalls. Check into our stylish accommodation and there is a free hour to explore this predominantly Andalusian/Spanish city with 2000-year-old origins where Moroccan, Islamic, and European architecture and culture merges.

eve. In collaboration with the Tetouan-based artist residency Green Olive Arts that hosts and provides inspiration for artists from around the world, we enjoy a short film screening and discussion focusing on Moroccan crafts.

Dine independently or at the hotel.

Day 3

Go astray in the Rif.

Chefchaoen / Ouezzane / Fez

a.m. An early morning start for a full day of travel and activities. Heading south we will first stop at Chefchaoen, the 15th century magical blue city built in a narrow valley as a fortified kasbah to protect from invaders then home to fleeing Muslims and Jews expelled from Spain. Its maze of pedestrian-only cobbled medina streets and houses jumbled together painted cornflower blue and surrounded by mountains is an experience you won't forget. You will have a few hours to roam on your own.

Lunch is recommended in Chefchaoen.

1 p.m. Back on the road to Ouezzane an Islamic and Jewish holy town and home of saints' tombs and place of pilgrimage. Here we discover the mountain textiles of a local crafts center, meet local wool spinners and visit a carpet workshop.

p.m. Late afternoon, we will depart for the imperial city of Fez, one of the main crafts capitals of Morocco and home to a UNESCO heritage ancient Imperial medina.

eve. Arrive in Fez, check into our traditional riad in the center of the old medina.

An evening meal can be provided by your riad or dine at a nearby recommended.



Day 4

Explore the Crafts of the Fascinating Imperial City of Fez

a.m. Fez will blow your mind and every one of your senses. On this inspiring morning, join us for an official tour of the textile artisans' workspaces in the ancient city and artisan quarter of Imperial Fez. Weavers, tanners, saddle makers, and dyers are just some of the artisan workshops we will encounter. A delicious lunch is recommended in the artisan quarter. Wander some of the 9000 winding alleyways, see donkeys carrying wares around the medina, see djellaba wearing residents, thousands of stalls, riots of colour, thronging crowds, delicious and confronting smells and sights and experience the famous Moroccan bartering and deal-making.

p.m. A continuation of exploring the crafts on our way back to a well-earned, mid-afternoon break at the hotel.

eve. We are treated to a presentation by Professor Rddad Sadik on Moroccan Culture at Café Clock - the famous multi-level medina cafe opposite an ancient horizontal wooden clock and Al-Attarine Madrasa (Islamic school) with intricate tiling, woodwork and glimpse in to the life of a 14th century scholar.

Dinner at Café Clock is recommended.

Day 5

The future of the crafts and getting hands on.

Imperial City of Fez

a.m. In the morning we'll visit the Crafts Training Center for Moroccan Youth with over 25 different workshops where young Moroccans (aged 16–30) are apprenticed in one of the many traditional crafts of Fez.

p.m. Roll up your sleeves for a crafts workshop to experience a traditional Fassi craft.

eve. In the late afternoon we make our way to Sefrou, a market town and our temporary home at the base of the Middle Atlas Mountains. Check into your comfortable lodging in this traditional Moroccan town.

Supper is recommended at the riad.



Day 6

Make deep connections with the local crafts

Sefrou is older than Fez, surrounded by castle-like, honey-coloured walls and is a hard-working market town on one of Morocco's caravan trading routes and is where we engage even deeper with an artisan community.

a.m. Orientation in Sefrou followed by an exploration around the heart of the old city to visit the artisans in their workshops including (but not solely) tailors, weavers, embroiderers, tassel and belt makers, and more.

Lunch in the square centered in the heart of the artisan quarter is recommended.

p.m. We will spend an afternoon with a few female members of the artisan community with an introduction and practice of some of the local crafts.



Day 7

Explore Sefrou's Souk

Engage with mountain women at a Carpet Cooperative

a.m. Free time in Sefrou. Sefrou has a steep-sided river that runs through its medina center with mosque, hammam and daily market and we encourage you to explore Sefrou's Thursday secondhand market and take our Costume Challenge. Some fabulous vintage djellabas can be found here.

a.m. We depart mid-morning for an hour's drive into the Middle Atlas Mountains and join a remote carpet cooperative. Over tea, refreshments, and lunch we engage in an informal discussion and get to know their lives and what goes into the creation and running of a carpet and weaving co-operative.

Lunch at the cooperative. **M**

p.m. After lunch at one of the villager's houses, we will visit their working spaces and see their wares, further learning about their skills and craft.

eve. Return to Sefrou. Independent time and dinner.

Day 8

Traverse the Middle Atlas Mountains and along Ziz Valley

a.m. Heading out in the morning we will make our way through the Middle Atlas Mountains stopping for lunch at a recommended spot. We travel along the Ziz Valley with its green ribbon of lush oases and mudbrick kasbahs like ancient sandcastles lining the route. We travel through breath-taking and vast landscapes, past farms and busy roadside stalls where tajines bubble for truckies and travellers lunchtime breaks and we see busy Moroccans as they go about their daily lives as we traverse this ancient route.

p.m. After our longest day of travel, we will arrive late afternoon at the desert town of Tinjedad where the clay coloured kasbah and surrounding hills blend into one. Settle into the ecotourist hotel inside the ancient mudbrick walls of the fortified village amongst local Amazigh (Berber) families. Time to freshen up.

To understand this desert region, crafts and culture, we can join a lecture presented to the group via a video call from an academic expert in this field. TBC

eve. Dine independently at the hotel. **M**



Day 9

Taharuit creations, creators and culture at the Oasis

a.m. Meet a local women's textile cooperative over tea and take a workshop on the embroidery of the local shawl of the region, called Taharuit. We later invite members of our group to present their work to the women of the association, as a source of interest and inspiration. (Optional)

p.m. Visit the fascinating 18-room Amazigh Museum to further understand the local customs, crafts and culture.

p.m. Late afternoon we will take a walk into the oasis and explore the Kasbah.

Eve. Meal at the hotel **M**

Day 10

Sunday Souk, Boucherouite (rag) rugs and the local architecture

a.m. (Early) Peruse the local market and take our Souk Challenge. Today we cross another of Morocco's mountain ranges - the Anti Atlas to the fascinating oasis village of Nkob with its 45 kasbahs and visit a carpet cooperative looking at Boucherouite (rag) rug making and its new-found popularity. These fabulously coloured rag rugs are loved by international designers and are made using recycled fabrics and feature strong Moroccan design motifs.

a.m. Mid-morning, we drive through the lush Draa Valley then head west a few hours to Tamnougalt and the 17th century Kasbah des Caids

Check into our lodgings in the 16th century Kasbah built from mud and rammed earth and one of the oldest in Morocco and gradually being restored. It was built for the caïd of the region who was the equivalent of a judge and we shall sleep in these ancient rooms filled with history and atmosphere.

p.m. We will take a short tour of the Ksar and a talk on the local architecture.

Eve. Dinner is recommended at the hotel. **M**



Day 11

Grasping regional governing, national networking and grassroots basketry.

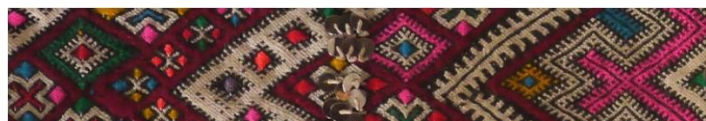
a.m. Continuing on our desert route we stop at Ouarzazate, capital of the region, home to Morocco's thriving film industry and visit a local artisan complex to explore the local crafts and meet the makers, learning how the government supports the artisanship both regionally and nationally.

Lunch of your choice in Ouazazate.

p.m. Continue on the road to Demnate visiting a basketry workshop along the way.

Eve. Arrive at Demnate, at the foot of the mighty High Atlas Mountains and check in at our beautiful eco-lodge. Most people in Demnate speak Tamazight - the language of the indigenous Amazigh people and there are many Amazigh villages in this region where the women produce beautiful rugs. This area is surrounded by exquisite mountains, waterfalls and even dinosaur traces.

You are invited to dinner at the hotel. **M**





Day 12

Sustainable wool production, safe dyeing and meaningful impact

Aït Bouguemez

a.m. Today we visit a project deeply rooted in the nations' artisanship and its sustainability socially, economically, and environmentally to marvel at this newly completed and rather architecturally dramatic woollen mill to learn about the incredible impact this project is having as artisans take control of their own work instead of middlemen. The region is incredibly beautiful with towering orche-painted mountains with a river running through the valley at their base lined with walnut trees and homes where people live a very basic but picturesque rural lifestyle. We take a walk in this stunning rural landscape of painted mountains and visit the wool mill.

Lunch in majestic surroundings

p.m. Take in a natural dye workshop with a group of local artisans and hear more about sourcing locally.

Eve. Return to the hotel where dinner is an option.



Day 13

Magical Marrakesh and all its glory

a.m. After a short drive of 90 minutes, we will arrive by mid-morning in the bustling and magical city of Marrakesh. Check into our traditional and stylish riad, a walking distance to the pulsating Djemma de Fna - the famous thousand-year-old square filled at night with food stalls, monkeys, snakes, fortune tellers, henna painters, herbalists, dancers, musicians, orange juice sellers and tourists in awe. Explore the labyrinth of alleyways and souks with throngs of people, shops, colour, baskets, jewelry, clothing, food and riches all tumbling over each other wherever you turn.

Lunch at one of our recommended nearby restaurants

p.m. Visit the Textile Museum and Boucherouite (rag rug) Museum if you wish or just continue the sensorial overload of this famous city of design, history and dreams.

Eve. Foodie tour around the square. (Optional)

Day 14

Berber Beauty, Glorious Gardens and Design Love

A.m. An inspirational morning visit to the Jardin Marjorelle, Berber Museum, and Yves Saint Laurent Museum with some time to browse the local designer boutiques.

Return to riad for free time to shop, explore or be pampered at a local spa. There is a lifetime of discovery in Marrakesh, from palaces to gardens, museums to herbalists or just sit in a cafe and watch the world go by.

Eve. A farewell dinner **M**



Day 15

Ma3salama Friends

Farewell breakfast and *departures

*Transfers to the airport can be arranged, see our accompanying transport document.



Additional information

Meals-

Breakfast is included. Midday and evening meals are not included in the price. We have found that many people like to make their own arrangements, to explore culinary offerings or dietary requirements. We often recommend restaurants that we can escort guests to. Food is ample in Morocco and Moroccan hospitality never lets a stomach rest. Textile Quest assures a feast for all the senses, not only the taste buds.

There are occasional lunches and evening meals included in the itinerary, indicated by a **M**

Accommodation-

Textile Quest accommodates you in a variety of comfortable lodgings including carefully selected hotels, ecolodges, traditional Moroccan riads and on occasion apartments. Rates are based on twin shares, respecting gender or previously bonded friendships. We travel as a group and leave with a camaraderie.

Note-* The itinerary is preliminary and subject to modification.

Please see the complementary documents for more detailed information



Price 2990€ pp (based on a twin room). Or a Supplement Single Room + 400 € (Limited places)

Included:-

- A rich program of engagement
- Breakfast everyday (2-8), Occasional main meals when indicated
- Nights in mentioned hotels or equal
- Entrance to museums
- Accompaniment by professional tour-leaders Jess Stephens

Excluded:

- All other meals
- Flights
- Personal insurances.

Note - The itinerary is subject to modification, if the universe delivers us an option that is irresistible. (*T.B.C)
To be confirmed.

Some activities can only be planned within a short timeframe due to elements beyond control. We assure you that the program remains its fullest



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for more information on the program.

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<https://culturevultures.ma/>

