

ASPIRE DESIGN AND HOME

What's New in Morocco

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Morocco offers the intrepid traveler a dazzling array of experiences, from ancient cities and medinas to mountain ranges and the desert. Here's what's new:

Want to explore the country in rugged style? Hertz is offering a new 11-day motorcycle trip, the [Morocco Sensation Motorcycle Tour](#) that winds through forests, deserts and mountain passes. The much anticipated [Yves Saint Laurent Museum](#) opened in October in Marrakech. There's also been an influx of new hotels, mainly in Marrakech. The soon-to-open [Oberoi Luxury Spa Resorts](#) is tucked among 25 acres of olive and citrus groves and offers views of the Atlas Mountains. [The View Rabat Hotel](#) has sleek interiors and panoramic views of the city. [The Berber Lodge](#), located in the Ourika Valley outside of Marrakesh, consists of nine separate lodges and a pool. [The Royal Mansour Hotel](#) recently debuted a new restaurant from Michelin-starred Chef Yannick Alléno. The new [Le Trou au Mur](#) restaurant just opened in the Riad Farnatchi, a favorite of A-list celeb Angelina Jolie.

Insider Tips

Elizabeth Gordon, the Co-Founder & CEO of the luxury travel operator [Extraordinary Journeys](#), offers custom safaris in Africa. Explore the Anima Garden by artist André Heller. La Maison de la Photographie de Marrakech is a favorite museum with an amazing collection! Some of my top places to eat include Restaurant Le Jardin in Marrakech; Restaurant L'Oasis D'Or in Ouarzazate and Chez Michèle in Tinghir Gorges.

Wafah Jehou, the founder of Brooklyn-based [Atlas Showroom](#), showcases handcrafted Moroccan goods. Chefchaouen, known as the Blue City, is located in the North of Morocco in the Rif Mountains. Tangier is also one of my favorite cities. When I'm in Marrakech, Les Jardins Majorelle is one of my top places to visit. Ifrane is an amazing small city in the Atlas Mountains that is often referred to as the "Little Switzerland" of Morocco, named for its immaculate streets, snowy weather, a nearby ski resort and alpine-style architecture.

Maryam Montague, the founder of Marrakech-based brand [M.Montague](#): Take a balloon ride with Ciel d'Afrique, which might be the closest thing to a visit to heaven. Float above the low Atlas Mountains near Marrakech and then enjoy breakfast in a Berber tent. If you want to give back, Project Soar in Marrakech provides empowerment workshops to Moroccan teenage girls and was praised by Michelle Obama (with girls invited to the White House!).

Sarah Casewit, a co-founder of [Naya Traveler](#), offers experienced-based itineraries: Take a walk through Marrakech's Jamaa El Fna square in the medina to meet the personalities of the 1,000-year-old space. It's packed with storytellers, talismans, traditional medicine doctors, henna artists, musicians, acrobats and other unique characters.

Cindy McCain, founder of [Southern Girl Gone Global](#) blog: My preferred dinner restaurant is Pepe Nero, the former home of the King of the Atlas hidden in the medina. Ensemble Artisanal is the place to shop for items made onsite and with fair pricing. For design, the Bahia Palace in the Jewish Quarter and Ali Ben Youssef Medersa are must-sees. I loved stays at Jnane Tamsna, a botanical garden oasis in the Palmeraie, and Riad Hikaya in the Kasbah where every detail was designed by owners Jane and John Pittaway in a five-year labor of love.

Mike Korn, Senior Manager of [Heritage Tours](#). My favorite new hotel is the L'Hotel Marrakech by Jasper Conran. It's a chic five-suite riad located within the heart of the old city and hidden from the hustle and bustle. My hidden gem hotel is L'Ma Lodge in Skoura, in the heart of the Skoura Oasis. It has amazing food, a great pool and warm local hospitality and is ideal for a stop on the way from the Sahara to Marrakech — or to spend a couple of days unwinding. I don't dare come back home without a pair of new leather loafers for my wife, purchased at Galerie des Tanneurs in the new part of Marrakech (Gueliz).

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