



You will remember this.

ABOUT MOROCCO

TO KNOW BEFORE LEAVING



INHABITED FOR MORE THAN 300,000 YEARS, **MOROCCO** IS A **MEETING PLACE FOR CIVILIZATIONS** WHICH ARE OPEN TO OTHERS, WITH THEIR OWN STRONG IDENTITY.

WHY TRAVEL TO MOROCCO

The Kingdom of Senses

The Desert Mystique

The Millenarian traditions

The Unique Landscapes

The Legendary Places

The Lost Paradises

SHORT HISTORY

Morocco has been influenced by several civilizations since Antiquity. Each has marked the land with an indelible imprint. This has produced an incomparable historical heritage.

Tolerance and openness

The different civilizations which have followed on from each other in Morocco have each influenced our identity. Which undoubtedly explains the tolerance and open-mindedness of Moroccans. There are no culture clashes here, just meetings and sharing.

Berber origins

According to legend it was Hercules who created Morocco when he opened the Strait of Gibraltar. Whatever the case, the presence of mankind here has been shown to date back 300,000 years. Originally inhabited by Berbers, the country opened up to Phoenician and Carthaginian influences, before submitting until the 5th century to the Romans. They would leave relics, such as the site at Volubilis, testifying to the prosperity which came from agricultural production. From 647, the Arab and Islamic conquest began.

Kingdom and dynasties

In 788, Idriss I, contesting the power of Baghdad, founded the Idrisid kingdom in Volubilis. There followed the Almoravid dynasties, the Berber conquerors of the south, then the Almohads whose power extended into Muslim Spain, and finally the Merinids, Berbers from the high plateaus.

Varied heritage

Religious tolerance, Andalusian heritage, and the prosperity of these dynasties created treasures which now constitute the cultural, artistic and architectural richness of the country. From the 16th century, the empires of Arabic, Saadian then Alaouite origin ensured the unity and independence of Morocco. Today, Morocco is ruled by His Majesty King Mohammed VI, crowned on July 30th, 1999; He is the 23rd king in the Alaouite dynasty which came to power at the beginning of the 17th century. The monarchy ensures the unity of the country, and the reign of Mohammed VI is marked by a desire to build a unified and modern democratic state, which respects its traditions and its identity.



THE **TEMPERATE** MOROCCAN **CLIMATE** MAKES IT POSSIBLE TO ENJOY THE RICHNESS AND DIVERSITY OF THE COUNTRY **ALL YEAR** ROUND.



THE CLIMATE AND THE SEASONS

Beaches or mountains: it is important to know what temperatures and weather conditions to expect at different times of the year.

Visiting in spring

Morocco offers the guaranty of excellent quality sunshine for most of the year. The spring is particularly warm and pleasant. In spring temperatures are around 23-26 °C in Marrakech. The trees are in bloom and the mountain peaks still have snow on them... making for fantastic photos.

Visiting in summer

The hot summer temperatures are kept in check on the coast by the sea breeze. On the far side of the upper Atlas mountains, the south of the country experiences high temperatures (38 °C on average). Take advantage of the cool and the exquisite climate of the mountains in summer.



For example, as in the Ifrane valley (at 1 650m altitude) with its pastures, woodlands and waterfalls. In Morocco, a suitable climate is never far away, no matter the season!

Visit in winter

The Atlantic and Mediterranean climate provides mild temperatures all year round on the coasts. On the uplands, winter is cold and damp.

Visit in fall/autumn

This is the season for rest: nights are longer and temperatures fall inland. The winter rains have not yet arrived and it is still pleasant to swim in the sea.

MOROCCO ENJOYS AN **INFINITE** VARIETY OF **LANDSCAPES** AND REGIONS. MOUNTAINS, COASTS, DESERT, EVERY PLACE HAS IT OWN CHARMS AND A **UNIQUE** NATURAL **RICHNESS**.





LANDSCAPE AND GEOGRAPHY

The variety of Moroccan landscapes is incredible. You move from summits to plains, from the greenest vegetation to the most complete aridity.

Plains and mountains

When seen from the sky, Morocco – inserted between the Mediterranean and the Atlantic – has a long strip of mountains which runs from East to West before embedding itself in the sand at Mauritania. The landscapes are very varied and astonishing: the vertiginous snowy peaks of the (upper) High Atlas mountains, the crags and gullies of the Rif massifs, the dense forests of oaks and thuyas of the central plateau, the fertile plains of the Meseta, the arid lands of the high plateaus, the almost desert steppes and luxurious oases of the Souss basin and the Saharan sand dunes. It is magical!

Protected areas

The various types of habitat have created diverse cultures which have enriched our identity. There is such a variety of landscapes that travelers will be happy no matter what the season. When snow blocks the Atlas roads, beach activities are still possible in the south.

Flora and fauna

Each area has its native flora and fauna, which are now protected as part of the sustainable tourism development idea. Gazelles, eagles, mountain sheep and bat-eared foxes are not rare and it is easy to observe them going about their business. Morocco, sacrosanct nature...

MOROCCO IS AN ISLAMIC LAND WHERE **TOLERANCE** AND **RESPECT** FOR OTHER SPIRITUAL AND CULTURAL COMMUNITIES ARE THE BASIS FOR AN IDENTITY WHICH IS **OPEN TO DIFFERENCE**.

RICH TRADITIONS AND CULTURE

The Kingdom of Morocco is a melting pot of cultures made diverse by successive newcomers. Communities here live in harmony, each respecting others' differences.

Tradition of cohabitation

The numerous migrations that Morocco has experienced have created a spirit of tolerance and openness. Today Islam, Christianity and Judaism enrich one another spiritually and intellectually through the sharing and transmission of their culture.

Berber identity

The first inhabitants of Morocco, the Berbers are one of the pillars of the country and are contributing a new strength to the modern Morocco. The Royal Institute of the Amazigh Culture was set up on October 17th, 2001. Since then Berber has become recognized as an official language. It is now included in school syllabuses and on national radio and television stations. The richness of Amazigh tradition is expressed most clearly during the Timitar festival in Agadir.

Tolerant Islam

Down the centuries, Morocco has been able to encourage cohabitation between cultures. Mutual respect between religions practiced here has given birth to a peaceful society which shares traditions and values. Moroccan Islam's capacity to adapt to the constant evolution of society and to scientific, social and cultural progress ensures it a long-term future and respect.

Nondenominational dialogue

Morocco has always encouraged a spirit of dialogue between religions for the promotion of progress and peace. Israel posthumously awarded the title of "Just among the Nations" to former sovereign Mohammed V for refusing to apply the racist laws of Vichy, thereby protecting Morocco's Jewish community.



HEALTH AND SAFETY

Morocco is an easy destination. In terms of health and safety, a trip here only requires the same rules to be observed as back home.

When traveling the body can be more sensitive before it soon adapts. Remember to wash your hands frequently, do not consume water which has not been opened in front of you and avoid ice cubes. As everywhere else in the world, stomach upsets come from water or food which is not cooked enough or badly washed.

Respectful tourism

Whereas Morocco is resolutely committed to the path of progress, the modern customs of young people should not make them more familiar and less respectful. Contact should occur with a spirit of openness and respect for traditional customs.

Simple rules

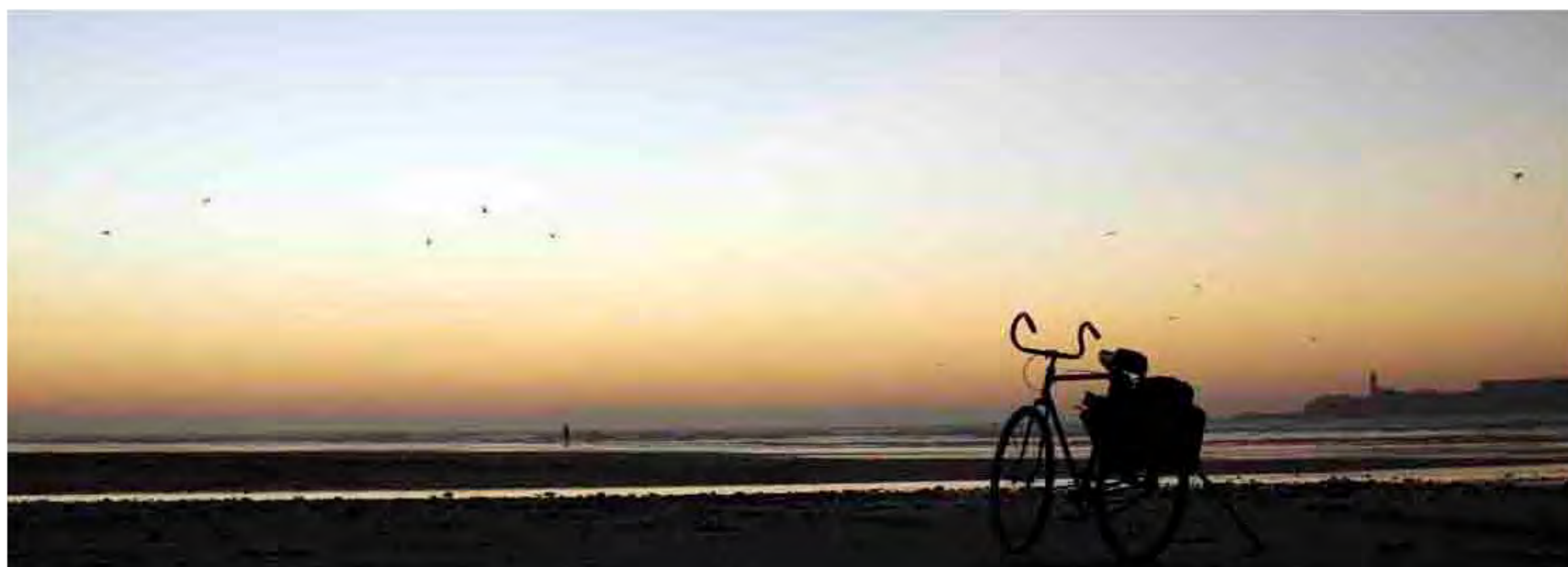
As for any journey, prepare photocopies of your identity papers and keep them separately. Also keep a list of useful telephone numbers, in case you lose your credit card for example. It is always useful to know the details of diplomatic contacts for your country. They can point you towards health professionals. Respect customs, and, of course, applicable laws and regulations.

Relax but be prudent

Safety rules to be observed are common sense. Your valuables and money must be discreet – always try to keep them in pockets close to your body. The safety of tourists is a priority here. The vigilance of the police and the severity of prosecutions represent an effective and highly dissuasive system. Morocco knows how to take care of its guests.

To remember

Morocco is a safe country, benefiting from all medical facilities. The rules on health and vigilance imposed are strictly common sense.



MOROCCO ADVOCATES **RESPECTFUL TOURISM** AS A PART OF A **SUSTAINABLE** DEVELOPMENT AND **ETHICAL** VISION.

RESPONSIBLE TOURISM

Responsible, fair and sustainable

By creating the responsible tourism charter, Morocco commits to making tourism an "instrument of peace and international understanding".

"Tourism is firstly a bridge between peoples and civilizations, an act of mingling peoples and cultures and, by its nature, an openness to the other and to modernity. Clean and responsible tourism, as it is respectful of mankind, nature, the environment and the rules and laws which govern the area."

His Majesty King Mohammed VI has made tourism one of the national priorities with a clear focus: responsible tourism. The "Vision 2010" plan sets out precise measures and actions to enable fulfillment of the objective of tourism which fully plays its role in the country's development. Among the numerous initiatives is the Moroccan Responsible Tourism Charter, extracts of which include:

Respect for Values

"The key tourism development players must ensure that sufficient attention is drawn to the traditions and the culture of regions and inhabitants."

Respect for cultural wealth

"The tourism business must be designed so as to allow supervision and development of the traditional cultural, craft and national heritage products, and not causing their standardization or impoverishment."

Respect for the environment

"It is the duty of all those involved in tourism development to protect the environment and natural resources as part of the objective for continuous and sustainable economic growth, in order to fairly satisfy the needs and aspirations of present and future generations."

Respect for childhood

"Exploitation of human beings in any form, particularly sexual, and especially when it targets children, attacks the fundamental objectives of tourism and represents a negation of it."



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