



TRAVEL INFORMATION

MOROCCO



CHECK THE VALIDITY OF YOUR PASSPORT AND FIND OUT ABOUT YOUR DIPLOMATIC CONTACTS.

GETTING AROUND

Morocco is well served by airline companies and has numerous airports.

Proximity and speed

In just a few hours, you are at the foot of the High Atlas mountains or at the seaside. Casablanca is only one hour's flight from Madrid, three hours from Milan and Paris and three hours 20 minutes from London. Marrakech is hardly any further: two hours from Madrid, three hours from Paris, four hours 45 minutes from London.

Come by plane

There are 15 airports so you can land as close as possible to your final destination: Agadir, Al Hoceima, Casablanca, Dakhla, Essaouira, Errachidia, Fez, Laâyoune, Marrakech, Nador, Ouarzazate, Oujda, Rabat-Salé, Tangier and Tétouan. Royal Air Maroc and European airlines run regular services and there are many charter flights for easy access to tourist destinations.

PASSPORTS, VISAS AND EMBASSIES

Being in possession of a valid passport is compulsory. Whether you need a visa depends on your nationality. Embassies and consulates can direct you before and during your journey.

Documents

To avoid any misunderstandings during your stay in Morocco, check that you have a valid passport in your possession.

Visa

No visa is required for European Union nationals or those from Switzerland and Canada. For all nationalities, the maximum length of a tourist visit is 90 days.

Embassies and consulates

When preparing for your departure, note the contact details for your embassy and the regional consulates. You can renew your papers there in the event of loss and obtain all sorts of advice (health, safety, etc.). In general, all diplomatic offices have an emergency number to be called in emergencies. Most of the time an administrative department will be able to help you, even in the event of an emergency.

MONEY, EXCHANGING CURRENCY AND BANKS

The national currency in Morocco is the dirham. It cannot be converted outside the Kingdom's borders, so don't forget to exchange money or bring other means of payment.

Currency exchange

The importation and exportation of Moroccan currency is strictly forbidden. However there is no limit on the importation of foreign currency. On presentation of your exchange permit, you can exchange the international currency of your choice for dirhams.

Where can you change money?

There are bureaux de change in airports, certain hotels and most banks. Some counters require your passport for the transaction. Remember to change the dirhams you have left before leaving. You cannot do this for more than 50% of the amount exchanged for your vacation.

Advantage of credit/charge cards

Find out from your bank where you can withdraw cash with your credit/charge card. Banking establishments in large Moroccan cities are often equipped with ATMs. Exchange money as you need it. The vast majority of purchases or services are paid for in cash, after the usual negotiation...

To remember

Check the exchange rate for your currency and whether your bank is in the Moroccan banking network.

TELEPHONE AND COMMUNICATIONS

Cell/mobile phones, telephone boxes, internet, postal, fax and telegram services: you can stay connected for your entire journey.

Telephone

The network of telephone boxes extends to the smallest villages. As well as these, stores offering private telephone booths operated using coins are springing up across cities. You will be able to spot them from their signs. Most cell/mobile phone operators have a network here, but ask before you leave. Top tip: don't forget pre-paid cards. Warning: rates charged by hotels are sometimes high.

Postal services

The extensive network of post offices makes it easy for you to send telegrams, parcels and faxes wherever you are. In the case of a simple postcard, you can find stamps in newspaper kiosks, cigarette stores and some hotel receptions.

Internet

Cybercafés and internet stores abound in Morocco, particularly in cities. They offer a good connection for an often modest sum.

LEARN A FEW COMMON **WORDS** TO MAKE IT EASIER TO COMMUNICATE WITH MOROCCANS AND SUBMERGE YOURSELF IN THEIR CULTURE.

LANGUAGE AND KEY VOCABULARY

Arabic is the language used in Morocco, but you will also be understood in French and Spanish in many places.

Modern and spoken Arabic

Spoken Moroccan Arabic is the product of the country's historic and cultural influences. It includes expressions and words of Berber origin in everyday language. Modern Arabic is used by government, the media, the justice system, culture, religion as well as politics.

Foreign languages

Geographical proximity and history make Spanish and French languages known by many Moroccans. In Tangier, Tétouan and Chefchaouen, the language of Cervantès is widely spoken. Meanwhile French is the country's first foreign language and is spoken throughout the country.

A few common words in Moroccan Arabic

Yes = na'am/lyyeh

No = la

Thank you = choukran, barak el-lah fik

Okay = ouakha

Please = min fadlak / afak

Goodbye = be-slama

Good morning = sebah-el-kheir

Excuse me = smeh-li

How much is that? = chhal / chhal el-tamane

I do not understand = ma fhemt-ch



TIME AND PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

For a stress-free trip, check for any time difference, see what the weather is like where you are going and find out about public holidays.

Time check

The time is the same in Morocco throughout the year as Greenwich Mean Time or universal time. When it is noon in Paris, it is 11am in Morocco. The Spanish enclaves of Melilla and Ceuta are on Madrid time, i.e. two hours (later) ahead than Morocco.

Feasts galore

Non-religious public holidays are related to the country's history (including independence day on November 18th, and Throne Day on July 31st) or shared with other nations (January 1st and May 1st). On these days, most stores and restaurants remain open. Religious festivals meanwhile follow the lunar calendar and therefore change slightly each year. There are five of these: 1st Muharram (New Year), Mouloud (birth of the prophet Mohammed), the start of ramadan, the Aïd es-Seghir (end of ramadan) and the Aïd el-Kébir (sacrifice of the prophet Abraham). Ramadan is the ninth month in the Muslim calendar and marks the start of the revelation of the Koran to the prophet Mohammed. Muslims fast for this entire month from sunrise to sunset; the evening is therefore a time for gatherings and feasts. Be aware however that tourists are not obliged in any way in relation to this fast: they will be served even during the day, and can bathe and carry on as normal. Public parties to celebrate saints' feast days are organized throughout the year, across all regions.

To remember

Before you leave, find out about public holidays and upcoming festivals.





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