



Erin Leiter-Pariser



MARRAKECH May 11th – 17th



May 11th

Arrivals and independent transfers to our beautiful Riad in the medina.

A night for us to explore mystical Marrakech.

May 12th

Early morning wake up and drive to Essaouira.



Essaouira is an outstanding and well-preserved example of a mid-18th century fortified seaport town, with a strong European influence translated to a North African context. With the opening of Morocco to the rest of the world at the end of the 17th century, the Medina of Essaouira was laid out by a French architect who had been profoundly influenced by the work of the military engineer Vauban at Saint Malo. For the most part, it has retained its appearance

of a European town and worth a walk around the town for the first half of the day. A delicious lunch of fresh seafood by the ocean followed by an afternoon of hiking on the Atlantic beach.

Then we will head to Villa de L'o for the evening in this charming boutique hotel.

MAY 13th

After breakfast, we would do an on road ride around the mountains with lunch in a local Berber restaurant.

If you have always wondered where the road leads to when you turn off before the village of Asni on the mountain road, today you will find out. The signpost says 'Moulay Brahim', a village named after a well-known Moroccan Sufi saint. The Argan Xtreme Sports crew has discovered amazing scenery through this area starting at the top of Moulay Brahim in the Atlas Mountains. You will climb roads winding its way back and forth steeply up the mountainside and see spectacular views from the top. The valley between you and



them is green and verdant until you hit the beautiful Kik plateau. The land has flattened out revealing the most stunning landscape - in part desolate but dotted with the occasional village. You will see for miles across ploughed fields, barren land and terraced escarpments to the mountains beyond - they provide a glorious backdrop to this plateau. This ride provides an equal mixture of uphill and downhill leading you down and around to the infamous lake Lalla Takerkoust. Super beautiful area, which is why this is an incredible day. We finish with a delicious Moroccan lunch of chicken and beef shish kebob along with handmade baked bread, a vibrant salad nicoise, fruit, and classic mint tea overlooking the mountains we just rocked!

After a full day of riding, we head back to check into our Kasbah and get ready for our opening ceremony before meeting for cocktails on the deck and an amazing dinner.

MAY 14th

After breakfast an all day amazing, challenging and picturesque hike in the Atlas mountains.



In Imlil, you start a walk with a guide to Aremd village (1900 meters). On the way, you will be able to see traditional Berber villages and see the highest peak in the North of Africa, Jbel Toubkal. The High Atlas, the greatest mountain range of North Africa, is perhaps the most beautiful and intriguing part of Morocco. It has retained a remoteness, which until recent decades was virtually complete, and contains villages where the way of life has changed little for centuries. We will explore this until early evening.

Have a shower, relax, maybe a massage before drinks and dinner at the Kasbah.

MAY 15th



The Magical Marrakech city tour is a magnificent laid back scenic road ride throughout the hustle and bustle of local Marrakech city life with a stop at the infamous Djema El Fna for fresh squeezed orange juice. We will visit the main square filled with great photo ops and a ton of shopping. Your senses will be

overloaded with discoveries of this red city. We pass the beautifully scented spice souks and many historical landmarks like the Koutoubia mosque, Royal Palace, and everyday life around the city before heading towards the Palmery for the 2nd part of the tour and day. The phenomenal Palmery tour is serene paradise. You will ride through hilly sand dunes whilst passing camels, small villages, palm groves, and the exotic plants and spices that grow wild and free in that area. The Palmery is a large oasis of palm tree groves just 15 minutes from the big square in Marrakech. The palm trees were planted in the early years after the founding of the city, and an irrigation system was devised to keep water flowing and the palm trees green so it is truly beautiful and filled with gorgeous nature that is definitely overlooked in Marrakech. After this full day of adventure, we will certainly need a late afternoon scrub, a Moroccan black soap hamman bath, and massages and spa treatments. The works!



After dinner back in the Jma El Fna at the outside open eateries we will head to your beautiful Riad in the city.

MAY 16th

We will start the day with yoga and head to breakfast soon after.

Then we will spend the day exploring the mazes and labyrinths deep in the souks of the Marrakech center/medina. Shopping and haggling is part of the charm when you are buying something...If they say a price, immediately go to half that and see where you can compromise! We will probably split up and conquer and meet back at our Riad for cocktails followed by our last dinner together and party into the night.

MAY 17th

After breakfast, we will check out and head back to the airport or your next destination leaving with incredible lasting memories and more friendship bonding taken to the extreme. Until we meet again.



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CATALUNYA, SPAIN'S GARDEN NOVEMBER 10-16 2015



The geography of Catalonia is highly rich and diverse, which creates exceptional panoramic views. The mild climate, the variety of landscapes and the essentially mountainous character of Catalonia, together with the notable natural architectural and cultural wealth of the territory, make Catalan trails amongst the most interesting ones in Europe.

Day 1.

Arrive Barcelona. Meet and greet our local guide Meritxell then transfer via Tarragona to Spain's first Roman Imperial city to walk off our "plane legs" for a couple hours touring the main archaeological sites as well as a chance to sample some tapas and get to know our guide. We will arrive at our hotel in the charming hilltop village of Gratallops. It's in the centre of the compact Priorat - Montsant wine producing region, with breathtaking views over the surrounding steep terraced hillsides. Our first dinner will be on one of those terraces.

Day 2

Morning yoga will be waiting on the veranda while we get ready to hike back in time. We will be on top of two worlds with our hike into the nearby Nature Park of Montsant with eagle eye views over the territory. Hidden paths through seemingly impenetrable cliffs, access a plateau from where you can see all the way to the Mediterranean Sea! The route culminates in a breathtaking approach to the hidden village of Siurana, once the last bastion of Moorish held territory in the case of the Christian Reconquest in medieval times. Time for legends and tales of Moorish princesses! Not us, silly. But we princesses will be back in time for our opening ceremony and dinner on the same veranda we started the day practicing yoga.



Day 3

Our experience starts with a drive to the inland Terra Alta region and enjoying a half-day hike from Corbera d'Ebre to the hermitage of Santa Madrona with a special picnic lunch with local sheep farmer.

Arrive later to tour Horta de St Joan, our next base, once home to Picasso during his summer breaks. He famously caused a



local riot when installing himself with his mistress! Can you imagine that?

Our stay in Hotel Capcades is a nearby rural luxury retreat, with its own heated pool, and shiatsu masseuse available upon arrival after the yoga class in the garden.

Day 4



Get ready for a tough but rewarding hiking route on ancient trails and paths, from Horta to the village of Pauls, passing through the Montsagres wilderness, a region full of wildlife, from Griffon vultures to the native Ibex mountain goat. This is a special day where we will also meet our philanthropic endeavor.

Day 5

A necessary yoga class near the pool to start the day. This area was once home to a brief C20th mining boom, with a railway built specially to transport the workings to the coast. The spectacular rail route that was blasted through canyons and over rivers still exists, but is now a 'Green Route' used only by walkers and cyclists. We will mount the bikes to cycle 54kms gently through tunnels and over viaducts, passing holy places and former stations turned watering holes, until we emerge by the mighty Ebro River for a swim.



Here the landscape and weather pattern change to become milder and more humid. Visit an organic citrus grower to sample his seasonal mandarins and oranges, as well as trying his estate distilled citrus liquor before heading back to clean up for dinner.

Day 6



Our last hike together will take us to the Arnes Gorge and Picasso's cave. It's a hike into an impressive landscape of towering cliffs on either side of the River Estrets. Time has carved its own initials into this unique landscape. Certainly Picasso thought so, using the rocky reliefs and the local caves as a base from where he received inspiration. A visit to a local artisan honey producer will enable us to bring home the medicinal treat for our loved ones. Our farewell dinner until we meet again....

Day 7

Transfer to Barcelona for a day (or 2) to explore this magical city with late flights home.

The Investment is \$4800, with %100 of the proceeds donated to a local charity.