



SARAH & THEODORE SMITH

MOROCCAN WEDDING AND CELEBRATION

WWW.SARAHANDTHEODORE.COM

THE KNOW BEFORE YOU GO GUIDE



Dear Friends and Family,

As our marriage celebration in beautiful country of Morocco approaches, we are counting down the days until we can share this special moment with each of you. We feel truly blessed to have our closest friends and family joining us to celebrate our union surrounded by the vibrant colors, rich traditions, and timeless beauty of this incredible country.

To help make your trip as smooth and enjoyable as possible, we've put together this "Know Before You Go" guide. Inside, you'll find everything from local travel tips to cultural highlights, dining suggestions, and must-see sights to explore during your stay.

November is a wonderful time to experience Morocco—expect warm days, cooler evenings, and skies that glow with unforgettable sunsets over bustling medinas and golden deserts. We encourage you to pack a light layer for the evenings, an adventurous spirit for exploring, and a readiness to be swept up in the sights, sounds, and flavors of this extraordinary place.

Whether you're traveling from near or far, we are so grateful for the effort you've made to join us in such a special setting. We can't wait to create unforgettable memories together—surrounded by Moroccan beauty, laughter, and the love of our favorite people.

Here's to the adventure ahead...

With all our love,

Sarah & Theodore

WEDDING ITINERARY

TBD. Additional Sections Below.

WEATHER & SUGGESTED ATTIRE

November in Morocco is a beautiful time to visit, with mild, sunny days and crisp evenings. Depending on the region, daytime highs typically range from the upper 60s to upper 70s°F, while nights can cool to the 50s or even the 40s in desert or mountain areas. Along the coast, expect milder evenings and a fresh ocean breeze, while inland cities like Marrakesh and Fez are warmer during the day but cooler after sunset. In the Sahara, temperatures can be hot under the midday sun but drop sharply at night — layering is essential.

Light layers such as linen or cotton for the day, paired with a cardigan, sweater, or light jacket for the evening, will keep you comfortable. If you plan to enjoy Morocco's beaches, desert oases, or riad pools, bring swimwear along with sunscreen and a hat — the sun can still be strong in November.

For the wedding, we request semi-formal attire. Gentlemen, lightweight suits or dressy shirts with slacks are perfect; ladies might choose flowing dresses or elegant separates.

A note on cultural dress etiquette: Morocco is a predominantly Muslim country, and while tourist areas are generally relaxed, it's considered respectful to dress modestly when exploring cities, markets, or rural areas. This means covering shoulders and knees, especially when visiting religious sites. For women, a scarf or shawl

can be useful for both modesty and sun protection, required within mosques

PACKING ESSENTIALS

Clothing /Accessories:

- Lightweight, breathable layers
- A warm layer for evenings
- Formal outfit for wedding
- Modest attire – shoulders and knees covered for mosques, rural areas, and conservative towns.
- Sandals
- Scarf or Shawl – for sun protection or modesty in certain settings
- Sun Hat
- Comfortable walking shoes

Sun & Heat Protection:

- Sunscreen – High SPF
- Sunglasses
- Sunblock
- Reusable water bottle

Toiletries & Health:

- Basic medications – Morocco lacks easy access to many available medicines in the US. They will give you something really strong.
- Hand Sanitizer
- Tissues/Wet Wipes – public restroom may not always have toilet paper

Travel & Comfort Gear:

- Copies of important documents – passport, travel insurance, itinerary
- Camera
- Travel adapter – Morocco uses EU Type C and E plugs
- Small Daypack – for exploring cities or hiking

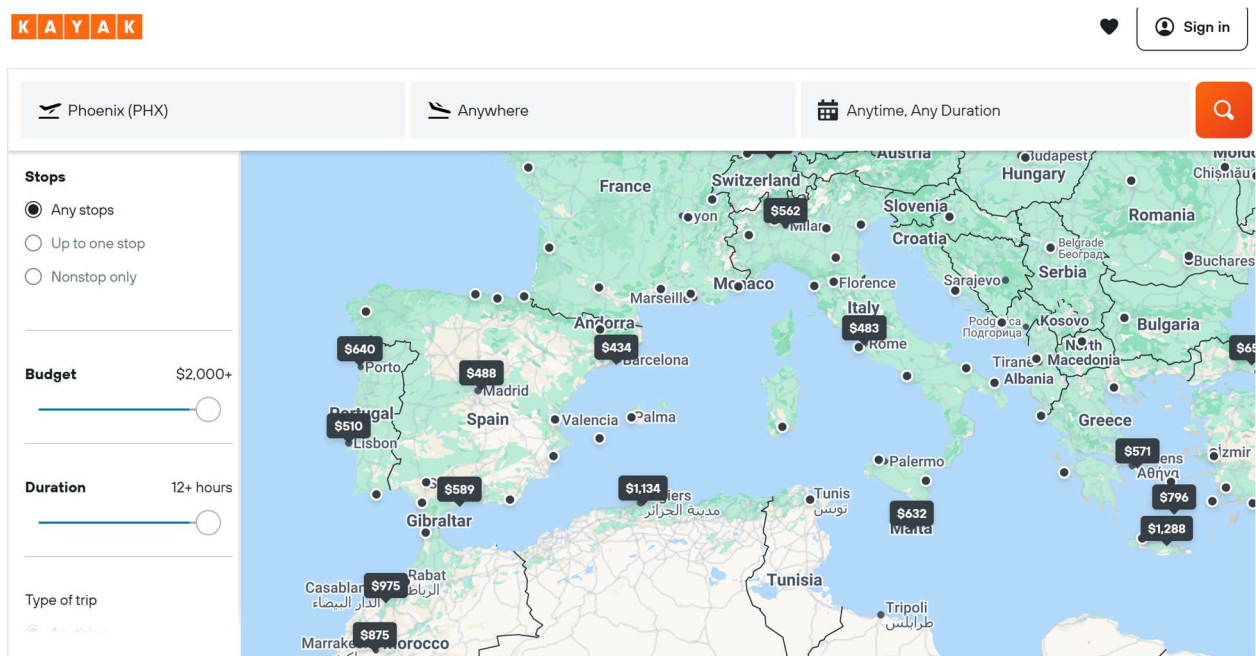
TRANSPORTATION

Flights:

Rabat-Salé airport (RBA) is the closest airport to fly into (~40 minutes away), but you can also fly into Fès–Saïs (FEZ) or Casablanca (CMN) which are ~2 hours away by car or train.

If flying into Europe, It is usually cheapest to fly into Spain, Portugal, Ireland, or Denmark. Flights to Rabat usually run \$40-\$70.

To find the cheapest flight, we tend to use the map feature on Kayak <https://www.kayak.com/explore>. You can also find this if you search for a flight to "anywhere" in the app. It is useful for finding the cheapest flight to a specific region in a specific month/date range.



Trains:

High Speed trains are available between the big cities and are the recommended form of travel around Morocco (other than guided tours). Train service is limited in Southern Morocco, so if you are planning to visit the South, please reach out to us for recommendations.

First Class tickets are slightly more expensive and get you assigned seating, a larger and more comfortable seating area, and less crowding.

Tickets can be booked directly at onctickets.com. They can also be purchased at the train stations directly. Rail staff does speak some English but be prepared with a translate app or ask a Moroccan to help you.

Here are some time tables for your convenience:

Kenitra-Rabat: 22 minutes

Kenitra-Tangier: 50 minutes

Kenitra-Fez: 2h 13m

Kenitra-Casablanca: 1h 20m

Kenitra-Marrakech: 4h 14m

Automobiles:

Driving gets a bit crazy in Morocco, especially in big cities. We would recommend using the train system for inter-city travel and using taxis to get around the cities.

Moroccan taxi drivers tend to try to rip you off if you speak English, so you may find it helpful to have a Moroccan help you get a taxi.

Recommended: There is a commonly used illegal rideshare app in Morocco called In-Drive. It operates similarly to Uber except you set your price and drivers accept that price if they choose. This app is commonly used by tourists who don't want to deal with taxi drivers.

Note: drivers will want you to refer to them as their friend for legal reasons.

GASTRONOMY

Dining Etiquette and Customs:

In Morocco, Moroccan hospitality is all about how you dine. Meals are shared with family and friends from a big dish. It's common to eat with hands, using your right hand.

Bread is key in Moroccan food, used as both food and utensil. Instead of forks and knives, Moroccans use bread to pick up food. Remember, the left hand is not used for eating, as it's for personal hygiene.

Mint tea is a big part of Moroccan culture. When you visit a Moroccan home, you'll get mint tea to welcome you. The first glass is a must, but you can choose to have more. This shows the kindness and warmth of Moroccan hospitality.

Dining in Morocco is a slow and enjoyable experience. There's plenty of time to enjoy the food and talk. Sharing meals is more than just eating; it's about being together and feeling part of the community.

Restaurants and Eateries:

Exploring Morocco's major cities is a delight for food lovers. Marrakech's busy streets and Fez's historic charm offer unique dining experiences.

In Marrakech, the best restaurants mix traditional and modern Moroccan dishes. Dar Yacout, Nomad, and La Mamounia are recommendations for a memorable meal in beautiful settings.

In Fez, you'll find authentic restaurants that highlight Moroccan food. Many riads and boutique hotels serve traditional dishes in lovely spaces.

Morocco's cities offer both fine dining and casual spots. With a focus on fresh ingredients, spices, and traditional cooking, you'll enjoy a memorable culinary journey in any of the major cities.

Must-Try Moroccan Foods:

Tagine:

A slow-cooked stew named after the conical clay pot in which it's prepared. Common varieties include lamb with prunes and almonds, chicken with preserved lemons and olives, or vegetable tagine. The dish is richly flavored with spices like saffron, cinnamon, and cumin.

Tangia:

A slow-cooked meat dish, typically prepared in a special urn-shaped clay pot called a tangia, common in Marrakech. It usually features lamb with preserved lemon, garlic, and spices.

Couscous:

Steamed semolina grains traditionally served with a stew of meat (often lamb or chicken), vegetables, and a flavorful broth. Couscous is often enjoyed on Fridays, a special day in Moroccan culture.

Pastilla (Bastilla):

A savory-sweet pie typically filled with pigeon or chicken, layered with almonds, eggs, and spices, then wrapped in flaky pastry and

dusted with powdered sugar and cinnamon. It's a festive dish often served at weddings and special occasions.

Harira:

A hearty soup made with tomatoes, lentils, chickpeas, meat (usually lamb or beef), and fragrant herbs and spices. It's traditionally served during Ramadan to break the fast.

Kefta:

Spiced ground meat (usually beef or lamb) shaped into meatballs or patties, often grilled or cooked in a tomato sauce and sometimes topped with eggs ("Kefta Mkaouara").

Mechoui:

Whole roasted lamb, slow-cooked until tender, typically served at large gatherings or celebrations. The meat is seasoned with cumin and other spices.

Zaalouk:

A flavorful cooked salad of eggplant and tomatoes, seasoned with garlic, olive oil, and spices, often served as a side dish or dip with bread.

Food Markets and Souks:

No visit to Morocco is complete without exploring the vibrant food markets and souks. The air is filled with the aroma of Moroccan spices and fresh produce. These bustling hubs offer a sensory experience like no other.

Stalls overflow with colorful fruits, vegetables, and specialty items like **argan oil** and **preserved lemons**. The Jemaa el-Fna square in

Marrakech is a must-visit. It transforms into a lively street food market each night, offering traditional dishes in an enchanting atmosphere.

THINGS TO DO

Morocco is a country with beautiful nature, a plethora of cultural experiences, and delicious food. Some experiences can be found in any city while others experiences require travel to get to. This guide is an attempt to provide a foundation for you to build your trip from.

Organized Activities:

Sarah's dad Richard will be helping to organize activities that people express interest in. Please reach out to Sarah or Teddy with a list of activities that you would like to do as a group.

We would like to organize a 4-day group trip out to Merzouga after the wedding. This will be a trip through the desert, seeing historic communities in the desert, enjoying sleeping in tents on the Saharan dunes, riding camels, and sandboarding. Let us know if you are interested in joining this activity.

General Moroccan Experiences:

Exploring the Medina:

Morocco's medinas (historic old town) are UNESCO World Heritage sites filled with centuries of history. In cities like Fez, Marrakech, and Chefchaouen, these ancient walled quarters are alive with winding alleyways, bustling markets, and stunning architecture. As you stroll through, you'll find artisans crafting leather goods, metalwork, and colorful textiles right before your eyes.

The medinas offer a sensory overload of sights, sounds, and smells — from the clatter of merchants to the fragrance of spices and fresh bread. It's easy to spend hours getting lost in their charm and discovering hidden riads, cafes, and artisan workshops.

Shopping in the Souks:

Moroccan souks are colorful, vibrant marketplaces where bargaining is both an art and a tradition. Wander through stalls piled high with handwoven rugs, shimmering lanterns, fragrant spices, and finely crafted leather goods. Each souk specializes in different crafts — from metalwork to pottery — making shopping here an immersive cultural experience. Friendly haggling with shopkeepers is expected and part of the fun.

Note: Shopkeepers will generally try to overcharge tourists. Be prepared to walk. It is helpful to have a Moroccan-speaker with you if you really want to go shopping.

Savoring Moroccan Cuisine:

Moroccan food is a celebration of bold flavors and slow-cooked perfection. Signature dishes like tagine — a fragrant stew of meat, vegetables, and dried fruits cooked in a conical clay pot — and fluffy couscous served with tender meat and vegetables are staples. Don't miss pastilla, a savory and sweet pie combining pigeon or chicken with almonds and cinnamon. And of course, Moroccan mint tea is a ritual — poured from a height to create a frothy top and served generously sweetened. Try dining in a traditional riad to dive into the rich culinary heritage of Morocco.

Hammam:

A visit to a hammam, or traditional Moroccan bathhouse, is a must-do cultural experience. These communal steam baths offer gender-separated cleansing and relaxation, featuring rituals like full-body exfoliation with black soap, steam sessions, and massages. Hammams range from simple neighborhood spots to luxurious spa retreats. Beyond the physical benefits, hammams are social places where locals gather, making the experience both rejuvenating and culturally immersive.

Touring Historic Palaces and Mosques:

Morocco's architecture tells stories of dynasties and artistry. The Bahia Palace in Marrakech dazzles with ornate tilework, carved cedar ceilings, and peaceful gardens. The Koutoubia Mosque's soaring minaret is a city landmark. In Fez, the Al-Qarawiyyin Mosque is among the oldest universities in the world, while the Royal Palace showcases exquisite Islamic design. These sites offer a window into Morocco's rich cultural and religious history.

Enjoying Moroccan Music:

Morocco's musical heritage is rich and varied. Experience the hypnotic rhythms of Gnawa music, the Andalusian classical melodies, or Berber folk songs that have been passed down through generations.

Places to Visit:**Chefchaouen – The Blue Pearl:**

Nestled in the Rif Mountains, Chefchaouen is famous for its picturesque streets painted in varying shades of blue. It's a peaceful escape perfect for wandering narrow alleys, shopping for

handmade crafts, and enjoying breathtaking mountain views. Don't miss sampling traditional Moroccan tea and pastries in one of the local cafés, or hiking nearby trails for panoramic vistas.

Marrakech – The Red City:

Marrakech is a sensory feast — from the bustling Jemaa el-Fnaa square filled with storytellers, musicians, and food stalls, to the tranquil Majorelle Garden, once owned by Yves Saint Laurent. Explore the vibrant souks where you can shop for spices, textiles, and lanterns, or visit historic sites like the Bahia Palace and Saadian Tombs.

As the sun sets, Marrakech truly comes alive. The city's nightlife offers everything from rooftop bars with stunning views over the medina, to traditional Moroccan music performances, lively nightclubs, and elegant lounges. Whether you want to enjoy a quiet evening sipping mint tea or dance the night away to local and international beats, Marrakech's nightlife scene is vibrant and diverse, making it a must-see destination.

Fez – The Ancient Medina:

Step back in time in Fez, home to one of the world's oldest universities and a medina that feels frozen in history. Wander through the maze-like streets, watch artisans crafting leather goods in the famous tanneries, and visit historic mosques and madrasas.

Fez is also renowned as Morocco's traditional craft and manufacturing hub — many of the beautiful textiles, ceramics, leather goods, and metalwork found in souks across Marrakech,

Chefchaouen, and beyond originate from skilled artisans in Fez. This city's rich artisan heritage is a cornerstone of Moroccan culture and economy, making it a fascinating place to explore for those interested in craftsmanship and history.

Merzouga Desert Tour – Sahara Experience:

The Merzouga desert tour offers a unique opportunity to explore the vast, golden dunes of the Sahara Desert. Visitors embark on camel treks across the sand, following traditional caravan routes while taking in the expansive desert landscape.

Accommodations consist of traditional Berber tents set directly on the sand, providing an authentic desert experience under clear, star-filled skies. Evenings include communal meals around a campfire, often accompanied by traditional music and cultural storytelling.

Daytime activities typically include sandboarding on the dunes, hiking to scenic viewpoints, and visits to nearby Berber villages to observe local customs and lifestyle. Sunrise and sunset offer striking views as the desert transforms with changing light, ideal for photography and quiet reflection.

This tour provides an immersive introduction to the natural beauty and cultural heritage of the Sahara Desert, allowing guests to experience its unique environment and traditions.

Exploring the Atlas Mountains:

The Atlas Mountains stretch across Morocco, offering breathtaking landscapes, traditional Berber villages, and a variety of outdoor

activities for travelers. From rugged peaks to lush valleys, this mountain range showcases diverse natural beauty.

Key highlights include:

- **Toubkal National Park** — Home to Jebel Toubkal, North Africa's highest peak at 13,671 feet (4,167 meters). Hiking enthusiasts can embark on multi-day treks to summit the peak or explore scenic trails through valleys, waterfalls, and high mountain passes.
- **Berber Villages** — Scattered throughout the range, these traditional villages offer a glimpse into local life, with mud-brick homes, terraced fields, and welcoming communities. Many villages provide opportunities for cultural immersion, homestays, and guided hikes.
- **Ourika Valley** — A popular day trip from Marrakech, this lush valley features flowing rivers, cascading waterfalls, and vibrant markets. Visitors can hike to scenic spots like Setti Fatma waterfalls and enjoy traditional Berber cuisine.
- **Ouzoud Waterfalls** — Located on the edges of the Atlas range, these spectacular falls plunge over 100 meters into a green gorge, surrounded by olive groves and opportunities to spot wild monkeys.
- **Ait Ben Haddou** — While technically at the edge of the mountains, this UNESCO World Heritage site is a stunning example of traditional Moroccan earthen architecture and has been the backdrop for numerous films.

The Atlas Mountains offer a refreshing contrast to Morocco's cities and deserts, providing adventure, tranquility, and a deep connection to the country's natural and cultural heritage.

We can't wait to celebrate with you!
Safe travels & See you soon!

