

Royal Palm – Marrakech – November 2014



Mediaeval Marrakech is exactly as you imagine, a maze of streets built around the central square, the famous Djemaa el Fna and the focal point for Berber musicians, snake charmers, fortune tellers and the gateway for the souks selling a multitude of goods. As a UNESCO World Heritage site, Marrakech has ancient buildings, the famous Majorelle Gardens, owned by Yves St Laurent, and the towering Koutoubia Mosque.

Marrakech in my opinion is a bucket list destination, you have to go but, it isn't like Rome or Barcelona. There isn't enough to do in the city to fill three or four full days and due to religious beliefs you cannot while away the afternoon with a glass of wine in a piazza restaurant.

Choosing the right location for your holiday is key.

Marrakech is best seen in bite size chunks. An afternoon shopping in the souks, a coffee, then at sunset drift into watching the square transform itself into the carnival described earlier. Next day take a guided tour, and yes it must be guided or you will not get the true essence of Marrakech, but then what do you do, old Marrakech has no pavement cafes to while away the day nor do the Riads (small hotels) lend themselves to taking advantage of the fantastic weather Marrakech has for a lot of the year.

I have been twice now and when I go again the question I will ask myself is - do I stay in or out of town?

Marrakech is full of interesting and exciting hotels. The www.mamounia.com is great and the www.villasdesorangers.com beautifully gentle. So why have I chosen the **Royal Palm**

as the hotel to stay in and what sets the **Royal Palm** apart from the others? Undoubtedly the quality is exceptional, as good as if not better than many others and I will talk about the hotel later, but what really sets it apart from a lot of the other hotels in Marrakech is its location.

I like Marrakech and for the right person staying in the Medina for a short break is a great idea, but this part of Morocco has so much to offer that I suggest staying out of the city walls in a hotel of the quality of the **Royal Palm**. It is an easy 20 minutes from town for your bite size chunks of old Marrakech plus you will have easy access to the High Atlas Mountains, the coastal town of Essaouira, the fantastic sunshine, especially early and late in the year, golf, spas and walking excursions.

A trip to the High Atlas Mountains can be an organised, walk/trek with a local Mountain guide where you will see soaring peaks, lush valleys and terraced hillsides dotted with Berber settlements. Alternatively take a 4WD tour and choose between lunch with a local family or at Richard Branson's magical retreat, the luxurious Kasbah Tamadot. We can organise both before you depart.



Essaouira is a coastal town and only two hours from Marrakech, ideal as a two centre venue but very achievable as a day trip to see medieval battlements looking out over a golden

sandy beach. Visit the harbour, an excellent spot for a sea food lunch. A real contrast to Marrakech, yet still steeped in Moroccan culture.



The sunshine record in Marrakech is also great, especially early and late in the season. I have sunbathed all day in May and played golf in shorts in November. It does get really hot in high summer, but consider Morocco early and late in the year as a good alternative to the Middle Eastern destinations such as Dubai and Oman. Take a look for yourself.....

Temperature	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Precipitation (mm)	28	34	32	31	19	4	1	2	7	22	34	29
Temperature (°C)	18	20	23	26	29	33	38	38	33	28	22	19

Sunshine hours	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Sunshine hours	7	8	8	9	9	11	11	10	9	8	7	7
Daylight hours	10.3	11.1	12.0	13.0	13.8	14.2	14.0	13.3	12.3	11.4	10.5	10.1
UV Index	3	5	7	8	10	11	11	11	9	6	4	3

Finally, I mentioned leisure activities such as golf or a spa which brings me to my visit at the **Royal Palm**. This hotel is a truly great resort hotel with high levels of comfort, space which allows them to offer a range of leisure facilities. The following pictures I think talk for them self, but summarise by saying the **Royal Palm** is very comfortable, the food in its three restaurants is some of the best I have experienced in a hotel. It is great for families, golfers, honeymooners or couples just looking for a luxury base to explore the area. I really liked and recommend this hotel, but don't take my word for it, check out the review sites or look at these beautiful pictures.

The Royal Palm main pool area which is heated all year and is the location of its lunch time restaurant the L'Olivier



Food plays a big part at this hotel although it is easy to get to the square for your street food or a choice of restaurants in the more modern Marrakech. Ask about Belly Dancing at Le Comptoir Darna . But don't miss out on the obvious quality of The Royal Palm's head chef.

Dining... Smelling, tasting, discovering, sampling, travelling... The multiple-Michelin starred French chef, Philippe Jourdin invites you to experience a truly exciting encounter with the very best colours and flavours of fine Moroccan cuisine. Winner of the Meilleur Ouvrier de France (Best Craftsman of France) accolade in 1993, he has had a highly-notable career with some of the most prestigious restaurants in Europe, including La Tour d'Argent, Les Moulins de Mougins and Le Faventia until 2010.

The L'Olivier restaurant



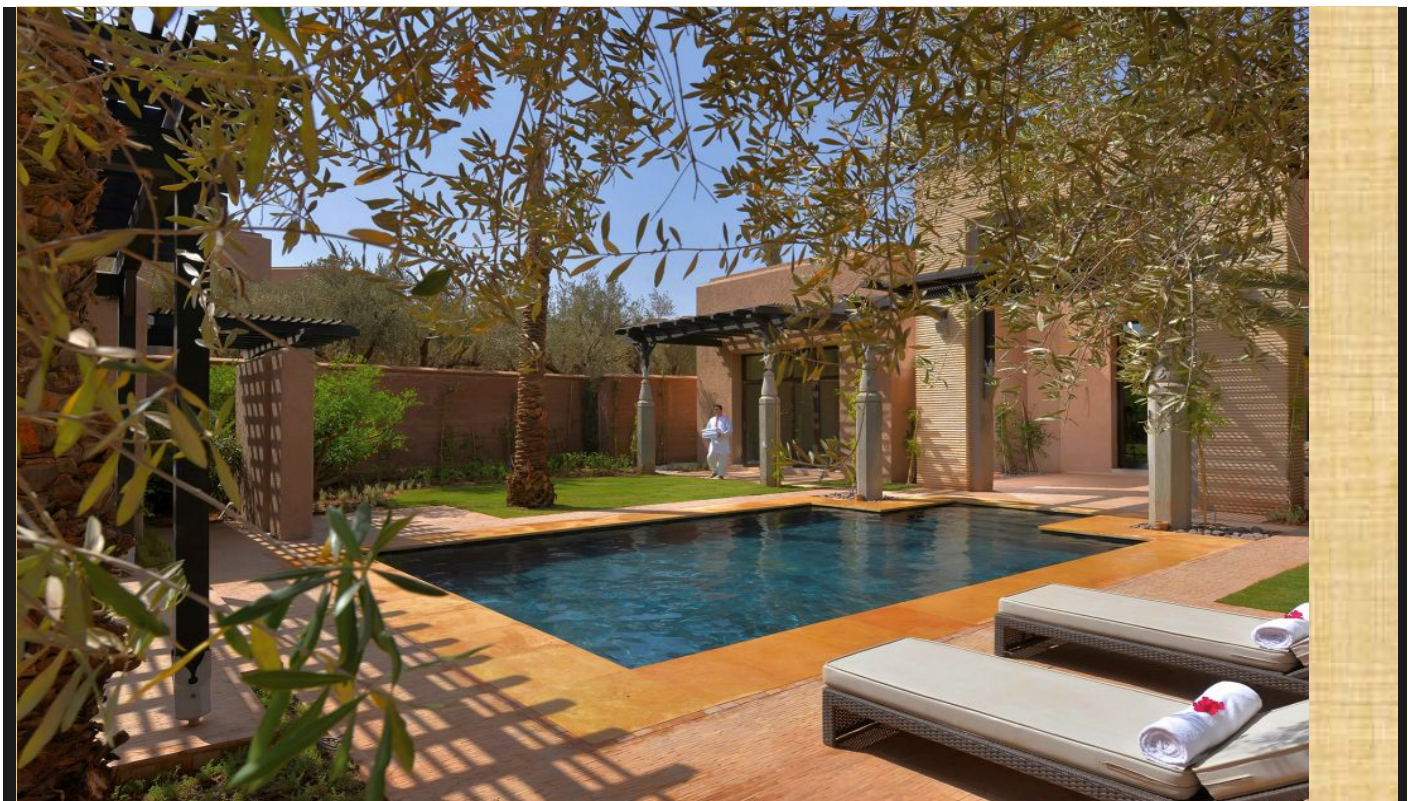
The Sumptuous Main Bar



One of a choice of suites which can inter-connect with other rooms and create good family options



Or choose a Villa



Children's club



Full 18 hole golf course at less than £40 a round for guests is a bargain



Finally, no great hotel is without a spa and the Royal Palm is no exception plus it has a Hammam.

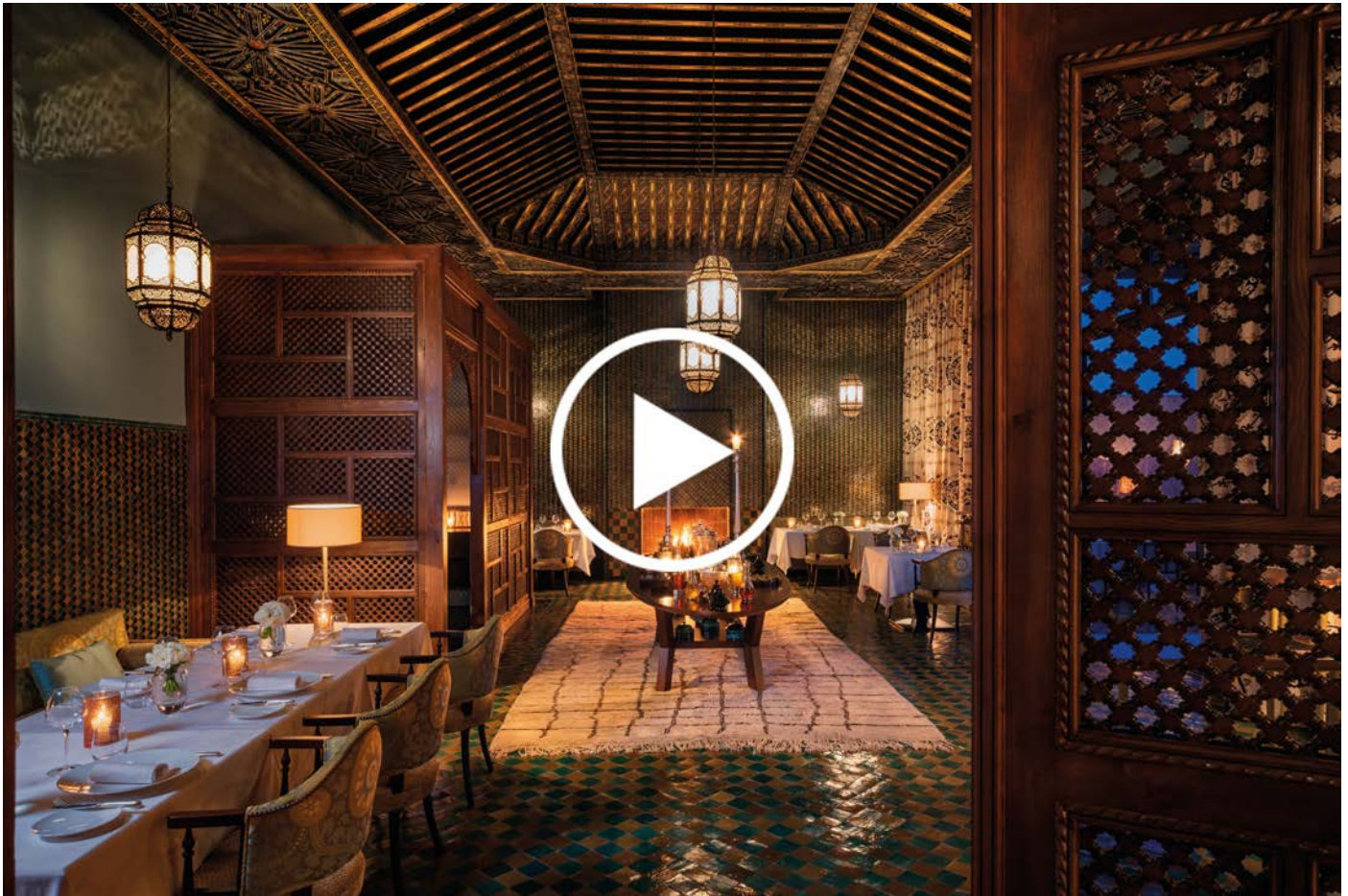


The Royal Palm oozes quality and no, you don't have a beach, but you have culture, activities, scenery, sunshine and shopping. I will return for a third time soon because Marrakech works as a perfect holiday venue.

See the [Royal Palm Gallery](#)



See the video at



Or

Give me a call on 01268 735301 if I can help more with the delights of Marrakech and the Royal Palm. Also visited by Trevor at our Upminster office (01702) 588555 and Tina from Wickford (01268) 735301.

Ian Prior November 2014