



Indigo Gazelle Tours

Gallop Further

Moroccan Fantasies

An Exclusive Small Group Cuisine & Culture Tour

October 31 - November 10, 2021

Featuring Celebrity Chef & Mediterranean Diet Ambassador, Amy Riolo

Each time I go to a place I have not seen before, I hope it will be as different as possible from the places I already know

-- the late author and long-time Tangier resident, Paul Bowles

Indigo Gazelle Tours is excited to offer this exclusive, small group tour to Morocco that will explore the cultures, colors, sensations, hospitality—and its trademark savory & sweet cuisine—for which this North African country is renowned. Celebrity chef, author, culinary historian, and Mediterranean Diet Ambassador, *Amy Riolo*, and Indigo Gazelle's Morocco specialist, *Alex Safos*, will lead this delicious, intimate, enlightening, and sophisticated tour. If you long for the romance of travel after these past, grueling many months, this is your journey.

This multi-layered itinerary will traverse: commercial, cosmopolitan **Casablanca** with its magnificent Hassan II mosque and Jewish Museum (the only such kind in the Arab World); "The Rose City" of **Marrakech** with its African, frontier-like spirit, glamorous panache, and storied *Djemaa el Fna* or "Square of the Dead"; the picturesque, laid-back, charming Atlantic coastal town of **Essaouira**; and a magical finale of luxury tent camping in the **Agafay Stone Desert**.

This experiential insiders tour will include hands-on cooking classes, guest lectures, guided tours to UNESCO World Heritage sites, characteristic dining and lodgings, and leisure time for shopping and sampling the country's diverse local fare (*tagines*, *b'stilla*, couscous, rustic breads, honey-drenched pastries, succulent olives, fresh oranges, preserved lemons, sweet almonds, countless dates, reputable wine, and ever-flowing mint tea—just to name a few). Along the way, Chef Amy Riolo will introduce us to Morocco's rich culinary history, its uniqueness, and how indigenous concepts of design, worship, and aesthetics influenced the Moroccan table. Join us this coming fall, inhale the fragrant orange blossom water, and discover this mesmerizing culture through its food and people.

Day 1

October 31, 2021

US Departure: IAD -> Mohammed V Intl. Airport/Casablanca

Depart Washington Dulles airport to Casablanca, Morocco on non-stop overnight Royal Air Maroc flight.

Days 2, 3

November 1-2, 2021

Casablanca: “Cosmopolitan & Complex”

The metropolis of Casablanca, Morocco’s largest city (est. 3.7 million), business and financial center, and once home to the largest port in Africa (recently ceded to Tangier’s Tanger-Med II), is our introduction to al-Maghrib (“Morocco” in Arabic—literally, the place where the sun sets). This Bogart and Bergman mythologized city wraps commercialism and cosmopolitanism around a prevailing core of history and tradition. European, African, Islamic, and Arab, “Casa” is a revealing microcosm of the complex and often conflicting forces shaping modern-day Morocco.

After our early afternoon arrival and 5* boutique Art Deco hotel check-in, we’ll refuel with a light lunch and shake out the jet lag with a walk to the nearby Abderrahman Slaoui Foundation Museum. Moroccan decorative arts, an excellent—and revealing—collection of Orientalist travel and product posters, ornate perfume flasks, and splendid Amazigh (the appropriate alternative to the pejorative “Berber”—literally meaning “of the free men”) jewelry will be some easily digestible cultural artifacts so soon after arrival. If renovations are complete, we’ll also stroll through Casa’s palm tree-lined, fountain-filled Arab League Park, a delightful and tranquil but rare green space amidst the busy sprawl. And if there is an interesting exhibit of contemporary art, we may visit the cosy Villa des Arts to appreciate Morocco’s modern art contribution to its rich and dynamic cultural heritage.

Before dinner—either at the hotel’s atmospheric and elegant Art Deco restaurant (sense a theme here? Casablanca is home to many remarkable examples of Art Deco architecture and design during its time as a French Protectorate, 1912-1956) serving traditional and refined fare, or at a legendary Moroccan restaurant with its own

atmospheric salon and courtyard—we'll get a bird's eye view of Casablanca's vastness over a cocktail, glass of wine, local beer, or mint tea from 28 stories up. From this panorama, the Hassan II mosque—our main sight for our second day in Casa—glows and stands sentinel over the city and out toward the Atlantic. It is the city's landmark without question, and you'll begin to understand why.

The following morning after breakfast, we'll embark on a guided tour of the extraordinary Hassan II mosque, the largest mosque in Africa (and the 5th largest mosque in the world) and an exclamatory testament to faith and the 1,400 master-craftsmen who created it. It is the only mosque in Morocco open to non-Muslims, so you will be privileged to enter this massive and spectacular spiritual site. Afterward, we will also visit the Jewish Museum of Casablanca—the only such museum in the Arab World—which catalogues Morocco's significant Jewish heritage (since recognized in Morocco's 2011 Constitution) once accounting for nearly 300,000 Jews while now only around 3,000 remain in country.

Yes. It must be done. You may, at first, pause at the concern for cliché...but trust us, the theme is executed flawlessly and authentically, and the food and ambience deliver. This last night in "The White House" (as the Portuguese re-named the settlement of "Anfa" in the 15th Century), we will relish a delicious dinner at a Casablanca institution: Rick's Cafe. "Of all the gin joints," this smart replica from the 1942 classic, "Casablanca," will romantically fool you into thinking it has endured since then—whereas in actuality it was constructed on a Hollywood set. Nonetheless, with a pianist playing "As Time Goes By" periodically, the motion picture looping on a screen at the bar, and conviviality brimming amidst the potted palms, beaded lamps, and tasty fare, there will be no judgment.

Days 4, 5, & 6

November 3-5, 2021

Marrakech: "Food, Fashion, & Fantasy"

After breakfast and check-out, we'll transfer by our private minibus to The Rose City...The Pearl of the South...or simply "Marrakech" about 3 hours south. Where, as you will see, Fes conveys a sense of timelessness, Morocco's second largest city pulsates with the possible. Its frontier-like, African spirit is certainly a reflection of its history as a depot for caravans transporting slaves, gold, and ivory from Timbuktu, Mali.

Stylish, ambient, ochre-colored, and sunny, Marrakech has achieved ultra-glamorous and high-design status with the celebrity and jet-set circles which frequent the posh riads, clubs, and luxe restaurants. We'll swim in these waters for a moment, checking into our boutique riad in the "medina", Riad L'Orangeraié, with its beguiling courtyard, expansive rooftop terrace, peaceful plunge pool, and effusively hospitable staff. On a clear day, the glorious High Atlas Mountains are visible to the south, home to the highest mountain in North Africa at 13,671 feet.

Marrakech's "medina" (old city) is a UNESCO World Heritage site, and we'll take one if not two guided tours during our stay here to appreciate its own unique cultural and historical treasures, including: the Koutoubia Minaret, the Ben Youssef Medersa; the Bahia Palace; the Saadian Tombs; and perhaps Dar Si Saïd, which now houses the Museum of Moroccan Arts. Morocco's emblematic architecture, artisanal excellence, geometric expression, and handicrafts will be in high definition. Shopping will furiously beckon here in happenin' "kech", and if acquiring something in particular (e.g. textiles, tiles, rugs, ceramics, leather, lanterns, art...) is part of your travel plans, let us know in advance so we may direct you to a reputable, quality seller. Regardless, be prepared to bargain (or opt out if the game of haggling is not your "cup of mint tea") and hear phrases like "friend price" or "this is a very special one." Be forewarned: given the goods and setting, the shopping and the bargaining can become quickly addictive!

On the day of our arrival, we have arranged an intimate encounter over tea with a Moroccan with a story worth telling. You will have the great privilege of meeting a humble, kind, and fascinating Moroccan gentleman who will offer you a casual introduction of Berber (Amazigh)-Sahara culture. The Berbers (indigenously and preferably known as the Imazighen -- literally "Free Men") are the indigenous inhabitants of North Africa who pre-dated the Arabs' arrival and settlement in the 7th and 8th centuries. Although converts to Islam, the Imazighen possess their own language and culture and form part of the fascinating Moroccan mosaic. This Moroccan expert will share his perspective and personal story from his challenging childhood in a desolate southern village and offer insights on Marrakechi history and culture. One inspirational nugget: he first learned English from tourists by bartering words/phrases for dates (as in the fruit, of course!)...and now runs a thriving business, advising, coaching, and placing Moroccan students in colleges world-wide.

Our private cooking classes in Marrakech, led by Amy Riolo with assistance from local cooks, will have two venues. The first class will take place in our riad where Chef Riolo will teach participants how to make traditional, rustic Moroccan bread (a sacred staple in this culture). There are two rewards to your vigorous kneading: the first being a walk to the nearby communal bakery where you will meet the neighborhood baker entrusted with your dough; and the second being, of course, savoring that fresh, aromatic, round disk once it's done.

For the second cooking class, the setting will be at cooking school—now part of a boutique medina hotel—with a culinary history dating back to 1946 when two French women were granted the right by pasha Thami el Glaoui to open the first medina restaurant which could cater to foreigners. But first, they had to master Moroccan cuisine, and the pasha dispatched “dadas” (traditional Moroccan cooks) to teach them. Now this renowned cooking school will be the backdrop for Chef Riolo's next discovery of Moroccan gastronomy. What might be on the menu? A Moroccan salad to start—possibly “Taktouka,” a traditional zesty salad of roasted peppers and cooked tomatoes, or “Zaalouk,” a cooked salad made with eggplant, tomatoes, garlic, olive oil and spices. Then as the main course perhaps a lamb tagine with apricots and succulent prunes, or a chicken tagine with lemon and almonds. Dessert is when one of Morocco's famed pastries will make a cameo—a delicate creme anglaise pastilla (flaky paper-thin (“warqa”) dough similar to phyllo). This feast will demand a mint tea digestif and a nap back at our riad.

We'll also visit the splendid subtropical garden, Jardin Majorelle--designed by the French painter Jacques Majorelle and owned by the Pierre Berge-Yves Saint-Laurent Foundation. Amidst cacti, bamboo, trickling fountains, bursts of bougainvillea, and towering palms, color exclaims--particularly the cobalt blue created by Jacques which accents the many planters and pergolas. The on-site Berber Museum's impressive collection is worthy of admiration. Similar to the sanctuary of hidden dars and riads within the medina, this placid 12 acre setting is a soothing elixir to Marrakech's frenzy.

Our experience of Moroccan cuisine will take a fantastic, carnival-like turn one evening by encountering Marrakech's primary source of spirit and energy: the place and spectacle of “Djemaa el Fna” (Assembly of the Dead)--an open square where musicians, peddlers, merchants, snake charmers, henna artists, fortune-tellers, acrobats--and festive food stalls--co-mingle and perform day into night, every night.

The drum beats of the square lure you in kilometers away. We'll venture in, taste buds open wide to the starry skies pocked by grill smoke, and with a knowledgeable guide, partake in a multi-course meal. Familiar and not so familiar tagines, couscous, and b'stilla mingle with spicy merguez sausages, kebabs, fried fish, "harira" soup (Morocco's iconic bowl of tomatoes, lentils, chickpeas, and pasta), stewed snails, and--for the most brazen--sheep's heads with eyes intact, of course, for effect and the travel journal. Orange juice stalls, kaleidoscopes of olives, and pyramids of dates of various hues and tastes round out the psychedelic nature of this overwhelming, intoxicating experience!

Days 7, 8, & 9

November 6-8, 2021

Essaouira: "The 'Chill' Antidote on the Atlantic"

We now head to the Atlantic coast, appreciating Morocco's incredible geographic diversity, and arrive at the self-proclaimed "Windsurfing Capital of Africa", Essaouira, after an approximate 3 hour drive. En route, we'll visit an Argan oil cooperative and see firsthand the many products derived from this native, nut-bearing Argan tree: cooking oil, food, soaps, and cosmetics (the latter's immense popularity prompting questions of sustainability). Goats facilitate the process by eating Argan berries and depositing kernels that are ground and pressed for oil. You are not hallucinating: goats dangling ornament-like high in these trees are an iconic Moroccan visual and we'll seek out this strangeness in a woodland reserve. Just outside the city, we'll also enjoy an al fresco "country lunch" at a farm specializing in artisanal, organic cheeses where you may have the opportunity to taste, yes, camel cheese.

Laid-back, charming (but unpretentious), and "chill" are adjectives that come to mind in describing this whitewashed and blue-shuttered town. With an evocative seaside "medina" encased in a Portuguese fortress, flecked with cafes and art galleries, and spiked with aromatic "thuya" wood from cubbyhole workshops, Essaouira is a compact and restorative tonic to Marrakech's high energy. It's simple, easy to like, and our three nights in our historic, chic medina riad with its many charming nooks and intimate hideaways along with Atlantic sunsets on the terrace might have you noting a future return to "disappear" and write your novel or memoir. Or just be. That's "Essa's" allure and vibe. Our dinners will be together, and Chef Riolo will conduct an olive oil tasting (Morocco's product might surprise you) and another cooking class at a lovely

countryside villa not far from the city where the menu may include: Moroccan “briouates” (hand-pies filled with cheese, beef, vegetables, or seafood); its national chickpea, lentil, tomato, and spice-filled soup, “harira”; couscous with fresh fish or vegetables; and, to close, the luscious pistachio orange cake...or the sublime Cornes de Gazelles (“Gazelle Horns” which are filled with a dreamy almond paste infused with orange blossom water).

You will have ample time on your own, including lunch [consider the famous seafood grills near the port], to wander Essaouira’s stroll-friendly and relatively hassle-free medina, shop, wander, photograph, sketch, take in the scene from a cafe, relish the breezes, walk along the beach, or indulge in a spa treatment at our riad. And abide by the local saying, “relax to the max without the tax....”

Day 10

November 9, 2021

Agafay Stone Desert: “Luxury Tents, Lanterns, & Quiet Beauty”

Silence, starlight, winking lanterns, an expanse of undulating stone, muffled grunts of camels in the distance, the canvas of your luxury tent sounding the zephyrs from the Sahara, a heated opalescent pool seemingly in the middle of nowhere...it’s understandable if your fairy-tale quota was met days ago, but keep your sensory gates open for just one more day and night for a dramatic end to our adventure. Here. In the Agafay Stone Desert. Less than an hour from Marrakech.

The sun will set and drape its showy salmon and lavender plumes across the High Atlas Mountains, and we’ll make the landscape shimmer a bit more with an evening cocktail or glass of wine before dinner. A short camel ride—before sundowners—is also an option. Dining in a tent this last night, we bid farewell to North Africa and call out highlights from the flood of experiences, encounters, and sensations these past 10 days. Check your map and admire the ground you’ve covered! Then it’s time to pack souvenirs, spices, and choice moments to share with family and friends back home. When you reminisce about your remarkable journey, do so to the rhythm of this curious Moroccan proverb: “Little by little, the camel goes into the couscous.”

Day 11

November 10, 2021

Return to US: Marrakech -> Mohammed V Intl. Airport/Casablanca -> IAD

Depart after breakfast for the Marrakech airport by private ground transfer (approx. 1 hour) for the early afternoon connecting flight to Casablanca then onward to Washington, Dulles non-stop on Royal Air Maroc

Tour Details

Tariff: \$7,595 per person (double or single occupancy) inclusive of:

- Cultural and Tour Leadership Services of Alex Safos, Indigo Gazelle
- Culinary Leadership Services of Chef Amy Riolo
- Round-trip economy flights from Washington, Dulles to Casablanca (non-stop) and from Marrakech (connecting in Casablanca) to Washington, Dulles on Royal Air Maroc (*tickets are non-refundable and non-changeable, and this inclusion of air transportation is contingent on 10 confirmed tour participants)
- Private ground transportation throughout, including airport transfers
- All lodging, including taxes and daily breakfasts
- All lunches and dinners, including taxes and gratuities
- Moroccan wine offered with most dinners and cocktails noted in description
- Daily bottled water
- 2 private cooking classes and resulting meals
- A private bread-making class with a visit to a communal oven
- Olive Oil Tasting
- Culinary Medicine Workshop
- Admission to the Abderrahman Slaoui Foundation Museum in Casablanca
- Official guided tour of Casablanca's Hassan II Mosque
- Official guided tour of The Jewish Museum in Casablanca
- Official guided tours of the Marrakech "medina", including site admissions
- Guided food tour of Marrakech's "Djemaa el Fna", including a multi-course dinner
- Tour of an Argan Oil co-op
- "Tea with a Local/Marrakech": Lecture/Discussion on Amazigh-Sahara Culture
- Camel Ride in the Agafay Stone Desert
- Private Musical Performance at a luxury camp
- Gratuities for baggage assistance, driver, local guides, and guest speakers

Payment

A *partially refundable deposit of \$2,000 per person is due by July 12, 2021

Balance of payment, \$5,595 per person, is due by August 2, 2021

Only checks—payable to “Alex Safos, Indigo Gazelle”—are accepted; mail to:

Alex Safos
Indigo Gazelle Tours
2321 Nordok Pl
Alexandria, VA 22306

*Deposits are fully refundable minus a \$250 reservation fee until August 2, 2021—after which they are non-refundable.

Terms & Conditions

Cancellation Policy: Tour cancellations must be made in writing and are effective from date of postmark or email time-stamp. Deposits are fully refundable minus a \$250 reservation fee until August 2, 2021. Cancellations made after August 2, 2021 are subject to full forfeiture of the tour price unless the tour is fully subscribed and your space is resold (in which case a \$250 service fee will apply). Leaving the tour in progress, for any reason whatsoever, will not result in a refund, and no refunds will be made for any unused portions of the tour.

Indigo Gazelle reserves the right to cancel any tour due to insufficient enrollment that makes the tour economically unfeasible to operate or because of good-faith concerns with respect to the safety, health, or well-being of the participants. If a tour is canceled for any of these reasons, deposits will be returned minus a \$250 service fee.

This exclusive small group tour is limited to 10 participants.

Proof of a Covid-19 vaccination is a pre-requisite to participate on this tour

Travel Insurance/Trip Cancellation/Overseas Medical Insurance/Emergency Evacuation coverage is not included. Travel and Trip Cancellation (especially "for any reason" coverage) insurance along with Overseas Medical Insurance with Emergency Evacuation coverage is highly recommended.

Meals, snacks, beverages, services, and activities not noted in the itinerary above are at the discretion and cost of the traveler.

Extra baggage fees beyond the standard allowance are the responsibility of the traveler.

Unless otherwise noted, alcoholic beverages are not included.

Fares for taxis, buses, or other transportation for independent excursions are not included.

Tips to bellhops and hotel staff for luggage assistance or other personal services are not included.

Note that this tour involves moderate exercise with significant walking at all destinations with hilly elevations and uneven pavement. Please be physically prepared and pack appropriate footwear.

Accommodations in 4-5* hotels, riads, and a luxury desert camp.

By participating on this tour, you hereby grant Indigo Gazelle permission to use any and all proprietary and copyrighted media (photos, video, audio, etc.) created/captured by Indigo Gazelle on this tour for marketing, advertising, promotional, and/or educational purposes.

Mutual Waiver and Indemnity Agreement

Indigo Gazelle Tours, LLC ("Indigo Gazelle") offers its participants the opportunity to experience international travel/culinary and cultural tours. Certain potential risks to personal health and safety are associated with international travel in a foreign country. You should not participate in a such a tour unless you are willing to accept the associated risks.

Indigo Gazelle cannot guarantee the health and safety of participants in a travel abroad tour or eliminate all risks from travel abroad environments.

By submitting your reservation form for this program and signing and dating this Mutual Waiver and Indemnity Agreement, you are agreeing to the following:

I understand that there are certain risks associated with international travel and residence in a foreign country and that Indigo Gazelle, including its owner and tour leader, cannot control or eliminate these risks.

I understand that these risks may include exposure to potentially serious health and safety hazards including, but not limited to: transportation accidents; storms, floods, earthquakes, and other natural disasters; infectious diseases (including Covid-19), inadequate medical care, remote access to medical treatment; armed insurrections; and terrorist activities.

I understand that Indigo Gazelle is not in a position to guarantee my personal health or safety during my participation in a culinary and cultural tour abroad.

I understand that Indigo Gazelle cannot monitor or control all of the daily personal decisions, choices, and activities of individual participants.

I understand that Indigo Gazelle cannot assure that U.S. standards of due process apply in overseas legal proceedings or provide or pay for legal representation for participants.

I understand that Indigo Gazelle cannot assume responsibility for the actions of persons not employed or otherwise engaged by Indigo Gazelle, for events that are not part of the program, or that are beyond the control of Indigo Gazelle and its subcontractors, or for situations that may arise due to the failure of a participant to disclose pertinent information.

I understand that Indigo Gazelle acts only as an agent for the various independent suppliers that provide hotel accommodations, transportation, sightseeing, activities, or other services connected with this tour. Such services are subject to the terms and conditions of those suppliers. Indigo Gazelle and its respective employees, agents, representatives, and assigns accept no liability whatsoever for any injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or any other incident which may be caused by the

negligence, defect, default of any company or person in performing these services. Responsibility is not accepted for losses, injury, damages or expenses of any kind due to sickness, weather, strikes, hostilities, wars, terrorist acts, acts of nature, local laws or other such causes. All services and accommodations are subject to the laws and regulations of the country in which they are provided. Indigo Gazelle is not responsible for any baggage or personal effects of any individual participating in the tours/trips arranged by Indigo Gazelle. Individual travelers are responsible for purchasing a travel insurance policy, if desired, that will cover some of the expenses associated with the loss of luggage or personal effects.

I understand and hereby acknowledge that I assume all risks incurred by my participation in an Indigo Gazelle international travel program.

I understand that I have the option to invite an attorney review this document and advise me of my rights.

In consideration of being allowed to enroll and participate in an Indigo Gazelle international travel program, the traveler(s) listed on the reservation form hereby release Indigo Gazelle, its owner, agents, and employees from any and all claims arising out of or in any way connected with any Indigo Gazelle program and the traveler's/travelers' participation in the program, including, but not limited to the risks as outlined above.

Signature (required) _____ Date _____

Signature (required) _____ Date _____

Moroccan Fantasies
An Exclusive Small Group Cuisine & Culture Tour
October 31 - November 10, 2021 | RESERVATION FORM

To reserve a place, return this form and a signed mutual waiver and indemnity agreement with your conditionally refundable deposit of \$2,000 per person, by July 12, 2021 to the below address. Deposits and balances are payable only by checks made out to "Alex Safos, Indigo Gazelle Tours."

Alex Safos
Indigo Gazelle
2321 Nordok Pl.
Alexandria, VA 22306

Or call (571) 217-9059 or email alex@indigogazelle.com for more information

Final payment of \$5,595 per person is due no later than August 2, 2021.

Name/s of Traveler/s (as appears in passport)

Passport # _____ Issue Date _____ Expiration Date _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____ Email _____

ACCOMMODATIONS

I wish to share a room with: _____

Double (1 shared bed) Twin (2 beds) Single Occupancy

PAYMENT

Enclosed is my check for my conditionally refundable deposit of \$2,000 per person, payable to "Alex Safos, Indigo Gazelle Tours"

I/We confirm that I/we have carefully read and agree to the Terms and Conditions and Mutual Waiver and Indemnity Agreement of this program, and agree to payment of the tour balance of \$5,595 to "Alex Safos, Indigo Gazelle Tours", by check no later than August 2, 2021. *Each participant must sign below:*

Signature (required) _____ Date _____

Signature (required) _____ Date _____

