

FIVE Sights in Marrakech worth seeing!

So you're in Morocco and you want to see a million different things. After spending a few weeks there, including about a week in Marrakech, time in Fez, Chefchaouen, Rabat, and Casablanca, I was able to check out most of the top sights in this beautiful North African country. Out of all the cities, I believe Marrakech offers the most sights, and is the only one worth spending more than 2 days in. After taking part in about 20 of the top Tripadvisor suggestions, I've listed the top attractions in Marrakech below and tell you why you should visit them! Keep in mind that many of these sights are incredibly close to each other and you can actually visit the Medina, the Ben Youssef Madrasa, Jemaa Al Fnaa, and Le Jardin Secret all in one full day.

1. **The Medina:** Every city with a history has an old walled city center, cobble-stone walkways, skinny corridors, and the smells/sights/sounds of locals going about their day. The Medina in Marrakech is the same way, and walking through the Medina makes you feel as if you were spun back in time to 1000 years AD. This is a place you can spend quite a few hours in, wandering and checking out the various wares and tasting local cuisine. This is also close to a few major sights which I have as must-do's listed below.



The spiderweb of corridors in the Medina is a place you'll spend hours exploring

2. **Jemaa Al Fnaa:** This is the square of the Medina, and if you haven't seen enough in the Souk's of the Medina you'll also spend some time here, this is also where the famous snake shows are along with numerous other vendors selling almost anything you can think of that's local to Morocco. You won't need much time here, but it's worth looking at. In the summer's I'd recommend coming here at night because during the day time it is ridiculously hot and not many vendors will be around.



The center of the Medina is a marketplace that is an all day attraction

3. **Ben Youssef Madrasa:** This was one of the first Islamic College's constructed over 1000 years ago. It's an interesting place to visit as architecturally everything is built geometrically symmetrical, and the ornate work done by the builders is evident as the place looks as pristine as if it were built yesterday. This is right next to the Medina and doesn't take more than 10-15 minutes to look at so I wouldn't allocate too much time but I would certainly drop by.



The architecture here is worth the visit.

4. **Le Jardin Secret:** This garden is similar to Jardin Majorelle, but in my opinion is a better visit because it's less crowded and has a really cool belltower that is worth going to the top of to get a view of the Medina and surrounding neighborhood. The garden is composed of two large courtyards lined with beautiful foliage and a few spaces with artwork and other rotating exhibits.



The larger of the two courtyards in Le Jardin Secret

5. **La Mamounia Spa:** This is the famous spa and hotel that everyone in Morocco takes pictures at when they're visiting Marrakech. I got spa services for myself, and can't say they were really that great, but the spa and property boast some really intricate moorish interior design and architecture. You can pay for a cheap day pass here to use the pools (indoor and outdoor), and I highly recommend it.



This is probably the most popular image of Morocco on Social Media

REVIEW: The Four Seasons Johannesburg – The Perfect Post Safari Hotel

The Four Seasons in Johannesburg is a unique property, built into a hillside right in the middle of Johannesburg, and ripe with colonial inspired architecture. As a newly remodeled property (as of this writing in 2017), it is absolutely gorgeous, and is very much in line with other top Four Seasons properties throughout the world.



Nestled into the side of a hill, this expansive property does not fail to impress

My stay here was just for one night, and if you are in South Africa for one of the famed safaris, this should be your preferred hotel while you're waiting for transfer to your next destination.

Johannesburg is a bustling city, and unfortunately, it also has one of the highest crime rates in South Africa, and in the

world. This shouldn't dissuade you from visiting, but it should be of concern when selecting a property.

When you enter, you'll notice that there is armed security at the front entrance of the hotel, and diligent staff ensuring the safety of the premises. Once you are inside the gates, the hotel amazes at once.

The hotel is a large complex, and it spans multiple buildings in the side of the Westcliff hills, encompassing two pools, a massive spa complex, and rooms with some incredible views of the surrounding city.

My single most favorite part of this property was the spa, which I spent half a day at



The rooms are classically Four Seasons, luxurious and modern but with refined touches that will age well. Nothing was amiss in my room, and the bed was especially comfortable (dare I say, more so than any other Four Seasons bed i've slept in!).

I loved the newly decorated rooms and enjoyed an amazing night of rest here!

At the top of the hill is the premier restaurant on the property – Flames – which offers stunning views, and some pretty awesome local cuisine.



Flames restaurant has impressive decor, amazing views, and delicious cuisine

I had the pleasure of both dining there for brunch and dinner, and am happy to report that it is definitely the place to eat at if you're staying here.



There is a lot to like about this property, including the welcoming and warm staff, the impressive spa, and the beauty of the gardens and architecture. If I were to visit Johannesburg again, transit or otherwise, I wouldn't think twice about staying at the Four Seasons here!

RATING:

Hard Product:

-Location (How close is this to top attractions in the surrounding area?)

It's right in the center of Johannesburg, so if you're looking to get around town, it doesn't get any closer

10/10

-Cleanliness (Is the grout in the bathroom clean? How good is

maid service here?)

Extremely well put together, and very well maintained

9/10

-Upkeep (Is the hotel in need of a remodel, or is it being constantly kept up?)

Just remodeled, this is the time to come to this new property!

10/10

-Public Spaces (How unique/inventive/useful are the public spaces?)

Great public spaces including a hillside terrace, rose gardens, multiple pools, and relaxation spaces

9/10

Soft Product:

-Service (How good is the service here?)

Wonderful service, representative of Four Seasons

9/10

-Restaurants On-Site (Are the restaurants on site somewhere even the locals would go to?)

Great food on site, I highly recommend the in room dining as well!

8/10

-Concierge (Specifically, how effective is the Concierge at helping you with a new locale?)

The concierge service did a great job helping me handle some personal errands including shipping packages back to the US

10/10

TOTAL: 65/70

(35/70 is average)

PROS:

Lovely spa spaces

Just remodeled!

The views from Flame restaurant are outstanding

CONS:

It is sort of tough to get up the hill unless you can find a golf cart to take you, but just consider it the exercise!

SECRETS:

Be sure to check out the free spa relaxation area near the gym