

Chaotic Marrakech: My Introduction to Morocco



Everybody said I'd struggle in Marrakech.

Even I arrived a little apprehensive of what lay in store for me.

After all, Marrakech is everything I usually dislike in a city – it's large, crowded, noisy, polluted, chaotic and intense. I had a feeling that it wouldn't be long before I was huddled up in a corner of my riad, trembling and refusing to go outside.

I'm pleased to announce, however, that the complete opposite occurred.

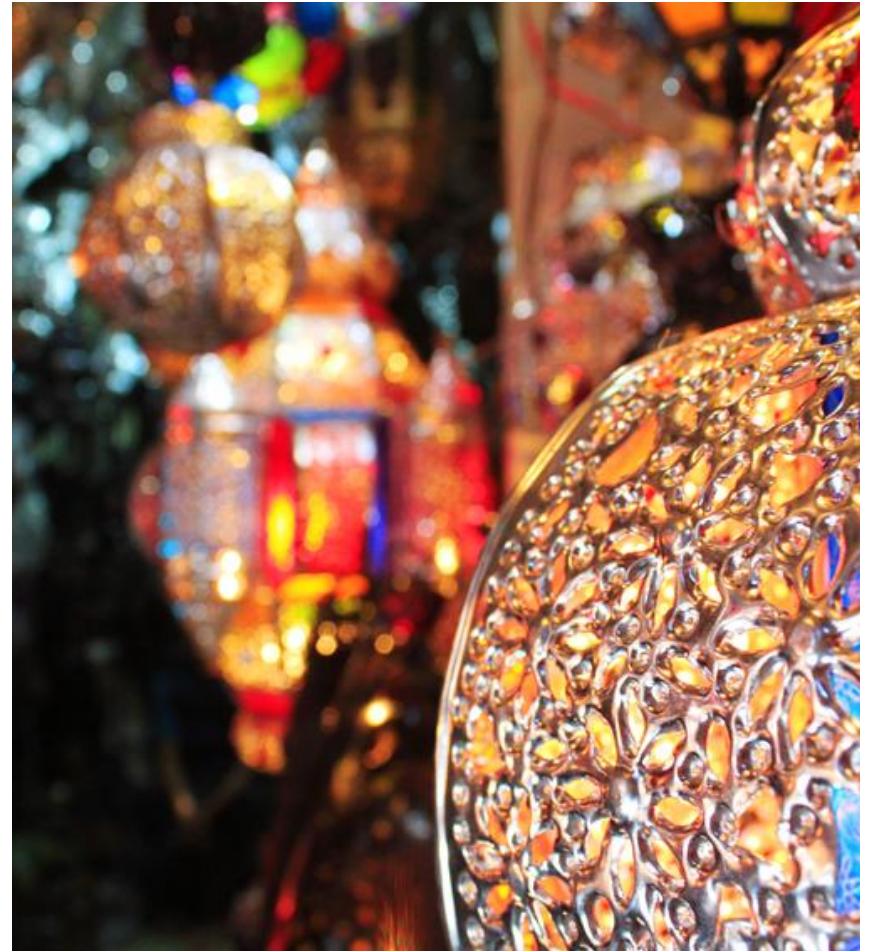
Within a few hours of arriving, I had discovered a side to Marrakech that I wasn't aware existed.

Much to my surprise, I found myself taking a liking to this city.

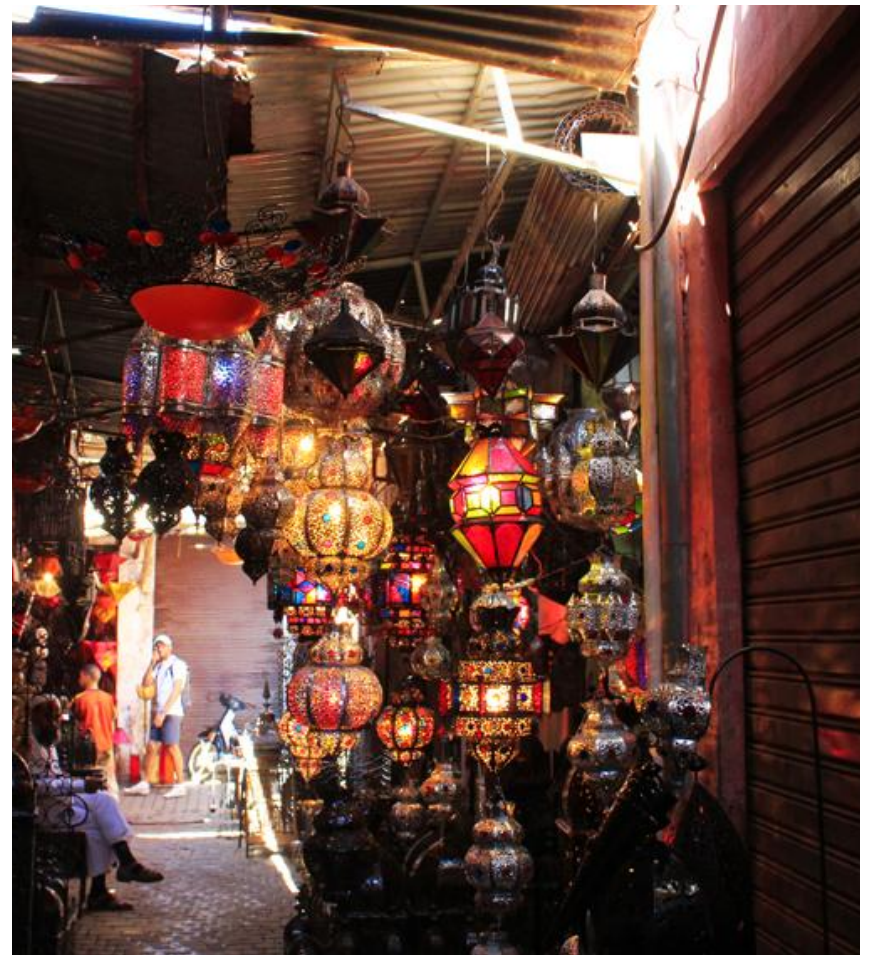


The medina in Marrakech is unbelievable. Terracotta houses and shops line a claustrophobic labyrinth of streets filled with tourists, vendors, cars, scooters, donkeys, camels and just about anything you can think of. Within seconds of entering, expect your senses, and your sanity, to be overwhelmed

On my way to the souks, we first stopped off at the Bahia Palace, a 19th century palace and gardens with some amazing architecture – it's worth a visit just for the incredibly intricate artwork and ceilings.



the next three hours, I explored. First, we checked out the fabric and clothing section. Next up, were the gorgeous and vibrant lantern stalls. And one of my favourite areas and I so desperately wanted to buy one for the home I no longer have...



And then, finally, after a quick lunch of chicken tagine, I climbed up to the roof terrace of a nearby shop and was rewarded with views over the whole medina, with the Atlas Mountains making for a stunning backdrop



If you're visiting Marrakech for the first time, I can wholeheartedly recommend hiring a guide on your first day to take you around the souks and to see some of the main attractions of the city. I have no doubt that had I been wandering around on my own I would have ended up seeing just 10% of what I experienced with my guide – and would have spent the majority of my time lost and confused.

Indeed, one of the true delights of Marrakech is the joy of wandering aimlessly through the alleyways and medina, but I can honestly say that after having explored first with somebody who knew where everything was I felt a lot more comfortable walking around in the days that followed.

