

REST of the BEST: MARRAKESH RETREATS

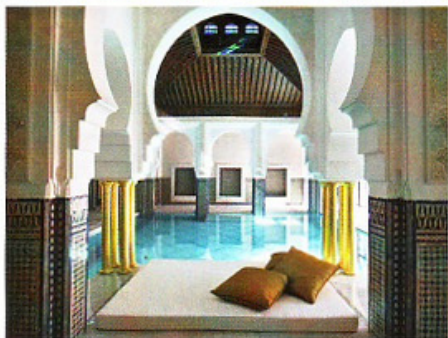


Best for INDULGENCE

Ezzahra, Palmeraie

This villa truly is the epitome of luxury. It sleeps 14 and has a staff of 15, so Ezzahra is great as a group retreat, with stunning gardens and pool. It is situated 15 minutes from the Medina, and the price includes all meals, hammam and beauty treatments.

Seven nights, from £19,500 (sleeps 14), including one transfer a group, with Cazeneuve + Loyd (020 7384 2332; www.cazloyd.com).

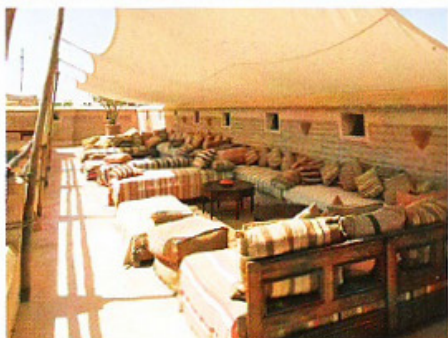


Best for GRAND DESIGN

La Mamounia, Marrakesh

Legendary La Mamounia Palace, recently revamped by Jacques Garcia, has the designer's theatrical design stamp all over it. Opulent bedrooms and lush marbled public spaces with curtained-off areas are like little stage sets. The expansive grounds include pools, a spa, a teahouse and restaurants.

From £466 a night in a Haivernage Classic Room (www.mamounia.com).



Best for RELAXING

Riad El Fenn, Marrakesh

This is as seductive as a hotel can be. All 21 suites are distinctly beautiful: intricate tiles come in sensuous colours, there are giant baths and fantastic art, collected by owner Vanessa Branson. The Medina and souks are a step away, yet it's tempting to simply hang out in the in-house hammam.

From about £230 a room a night B&B, including transfers and refreshments (www.riadelfenn.com).



Best URBAN RESORT

Es Saadi, Marrakesh

This grand hotel is a lung in the dusty heart of Marrakesh, close to the fabled Menara Gardens and surrounded by scented lemon and orange groves. As well as 'the palace' – made up of 90 unique and beautifully designed suites – the resort has 10 secluded villas, perfect for a furtive getaway.

From about £163 a night B&B in a City View room (www.essaadi.com).



Best RUSTIC ESCAPE

Dar Moulouya, Ourika Valley

In the rugged Ourika Valley, eight miles from Marrakesh, this luxuriously rustic villa is the ideal retreat for family or large-group getaways. Dar Moulouya has seven bedrooms, a pool and a chef, and the terraces and gardens are filled with the scent of jasmine and hollyhocks.

Seven nights, from £6,000, with Scott Williams (www.scottwilliams.co.uk).