

20 KEY TERMS TO KNOW WHILE TRAVELLING IN MOROCCO

When you visit Morocco, you will hear a lot of different words to describe various architecture, food, accommodations, clothing, and activities. Below is a cheat sheet to help you navigate this beautiful country.

Courtesy of www.tiffanytakesonlife.com



RIAD/DAR

A traditional family house with a central garden usually found in the medinas of major towns and cities. A *dar* is just like a riad except it has an internal courtyard instead of a garden.



DIRHAM

The official currency of Morocco. You can't get dirham outside of Morocco in advance and you can't leave the country with dirham either. So be sure to spend the currency as your trip winds down.



JELLABA

Loose, angle-length, long-sleeved outer garment with pointed hood worn by men and women in Morocco.



BERBER

The indigenous ethnic group of North Africa made up of primarily Muslim nomadic or settled tribes. Also refers to the language used by this ethnic group, often with many different dialects.



SOUK

An outdoor market or bazaar organized by merchant. Those selling similar goods will be situated together.



MEDINA

The old walled part of many cities in towns in Morocco. Many medinas are car-free due to the narrow and winding streets. In larger medinas, mules and wheel barrels are used to transport supplies.



HARIRA

A savory Moroccan soup made with dried legumes, tomatoes, herbs and spices. There are many variations, including the addition of meats and pasta or rice. Traditionally, harira is eaten to break the fast during Ramadan, but it can be served year-round.

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ZELLIGE

Mosaic tilework made by chiseled pieces of geometric tiles set into a plaster base. This Islamic art form is a main characteristic of Moroccan architecture that you will find on walls, floors, and fountains.



HAMMAM

A steam room similar to a Turkish bathhouse where Moroccans go weekly to cleanse themselves and socialize. You can go to a public hammam or a private hammam in a riad or dar.



COUSCOUS

A classic Moroccan dish of Berber origin. Many different variations exist including those with vegetables, meat, dried fruits, and spices.



MEDERSA

A residential college that teaches theology and Muslim law.



TAGINE

A classic meal cooked in one pot—with the bottom of the pot being a wide rimmed shallow circle topped with a cone-shaped cover. The ingredients usually include a mixture of legumes, meat, and vegetables.



MOSQUE

Places of worship in Islam; non-Muslims are typically barred entry although some mosques allow visitors to the courtyard area.



KASBAH

A fortified extended-family/multi-family building. A *kasbah* is often a very large structure with high walls and few windows. Alternatively, a *kasbah* can refer to lodge-style accommodations ranging from low-end to luxury.

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KSAR

A fortified village where the ruling sheik or king once lived.



HARISSA

The sauce you add to couscous according to taste. The base of the sauce is usually the juices from the stew accompanying the couscous.



MELLAH

Former Jewish quarters in Moroccan cities.



MINARET

Square towers at one corner of mosques in Maghreb (western Islamic countries of Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia) and Spain, used to call people to prayers.



RAS EL HANOUT

The most famous spice blend in Morocco used in a number of dishes. It is a very common item to purchase as gifts.



VILLE NOUVEAU

The newer residential and commercial section of Moroccan cities.



BONUS WORDS

La = "No"

Shukran = "Thank you"

Afek = "Please"

tiffany takes on life



...one adventure at a time