

RECLAIMING JOY RETREAT - March 22 - 28, 2024

The following are all confirmed, and all costs are included:

- Shared rooms at the ultra private Serai retreat center, 30 minutes from the ancient coastal city of Essaouira, Morocco (retreat attendees will be the only guests of the Serai during this event)
- All transport to and from Marrakech/Essaouira, and transport to off-site activities
- All workshops, which will include dance, yoga, breathwork, private shamanic healing sessions, private Akashic Records sessions, and more
- Decadent visit to a traditional hammam spa with transportation
- Tour of the ancient market of Essaouira (there will be time for personal shopping!)
- Moroccan cooking class
- Sunset horse riding on the beach
- Bonfire dinner on the beach
- Traditional music experiences
- Cacao ceremony
- All home cooked meals (dietary restrictions will be honored) at the Serai, excludes Market day lunch

MEETING LOCATION

One month prior to travel, we will send all participants the specific centrally-located meeting time and location in Marrakech. You will be responsible to arrive at the location at the designated time, where we will have transportation taken care of from then on.

ACCOMMODATIONS

You will stay in a shared room at The Serai. We will have the entire retreat center for our group, ensuring utmost privacy. If there are two in your group attending, you may request a room with your travel mate.

Set amidst a tiny and very traditional fishing and farming community 30 minutes from the hustle and bustle of Essaouira, this kasbah of rock, earth and lime offers an immersive experience of slow living and slow food wrapped in a silence so profound that nothing interrupts your power to simply be.

HEALTH

Please check with your doctor or a travel clinic to see if you need any vaccinations. Travel Health Insurance is highly recommended.

PACKING

The weather in March/April typically has a high of 70F and a low of 50F.

While at The Serai, feel free to dress however you choose. Western clothing is fine, as the owners have lived in Morocco for decades but are originally from Scotland and Argentina. They are not conservative and they are not Muslim. When we leave the site (for example to explore the ancient market in town and the hammam spa), it's best to respect local culture and cover your legs and shoulders. T-shirts are fine, while tank tops are best covered with a light shawl or

scarf. While this type of dress is not mandatory for tourists, you may be more comfortable not drawing attention to yourself.

Bring layers, as being on the oceanfront means weather can change rapidly. Nights can get a bit chilly or windy. Sneakers or comfortable walking boots are recommended.

Bring clothes for dance/simple yoga and for horseback riding on the beach. There will be photos at horse back riding, if that influences what you want to wear that day. Do not worry if you have no riding experience, this tour is for young to old and all levels of experience.

Pack one outfit that makes you feel fabulous for our closing ceremony. It can be anything (casual, elegant, wild, comfortable), as long as you feel your shiniest, most confident self in it. It should be comfortable, though, as we will be both sitting and moving in it.

The Serai is an eco lodge, laundry is available for emergencies, but not for daily use.

Leave room in your luggage to bring back souvenirs - at the market you will find enticing spices, incense, fabrics, clothing, handmade shoes, scarves, hand-pressed Argan oil, local rose cosmetics, rugs, etc. Prices range from 2 USD - 2000 USD (rugs). Set a budget for your souvenirs and have dirham (MAD) cash available for these.

You will need a US to Morocco adaptor for your electronic devices. These are easy to google search and order. They will not be provided so please have your power needs prepared.

MONEY

Dollars will not be accepted anywhere, only Moroccan “dirham” (MAD). Many places, especially at the market, do not take cards. At the airport in Marrakech you can very easily take cash out of the ATM. You will only need cash for any souvenirs that you wish to purchase, your lunch on market day, and to cover yourself before and after the retreat starts (getting a taxi to the meeting site in Marrakech, for example, on Day 1). It is not mandatory to leave a tip for any of the activity leaders we contract, or for the Serai hosts, but if that is something you feel compelled to do, you are more than welcome to and it would be appreciated by them.

INSURANCE

Travel insurance is your own responsibility.

MEALS

All of your meals at The Serai are included. They will be hearty, homemade, and made with fresh ingredients and local spices. Any dietary preference will be accommodated, we just need to know one month ahead of time.

The only meal that is not included is on town day when you have free time to meander the markets. You will be able to choose where you would like to eat. Most full meals in town even at tourist restaurants will cost less than 150 MAD, equivalent to 15 USD.

WORKSHOPS

Our mission for this retreat is to cultivate joy. Do not worry if you know nothing about dance, you can't even touch your knees for yoga, or if you don't understand what "shamanic healing" means. We will meet and celebrate everyone exactly where they are at, with their abilities, their curiosity and timidity, etc.

Note from retreat co-leader Catherine: Dance, for example, terrifies me like nothing else. But I'm going to take this retreat opportunity to look at my fear with compassion, consciously work to take down some of my many walls I have built up around me and dance, and dance my heart out! We are all in this together and you will be supported in a safe, nurturing environment.

CULTURAL NOTE

Morocco is an Islamic country with conservative values. Alcohol is only available for tourists in tourist restaurants and hotels. At The Serai we are definitely not opposed to sharing some beautiful wine every once in a while at dinner, but many of the workshops and activities will require a complete presence and clearness of mind.

It is sadly not a very open country for people from the LGBTQ+ community (although that is very slowly changing). At The Serai you can feel free to express your sexual orientation openly and proudly without judgment.

Tourists are exempt from Muslim law, and all over Morocco, friendly and helpful police are around tourist areas to make sure that tourists have a safe and pleasant time. Tourism is incredibly important to the country and they take the well-being of tourists very seriously.

ITINERARY

Everything in Morocco is *Inshallah*, meaning God Willing or Hopefully. Please know the exact details of what is done which day WILL most likely change and that's part of the beauty and history of the culture. We will also gauge the group's energy levels to make sure there is no burn-out happening - you are here to recharge, not become exhausted!

TRAVEL BEFORE AND AFTER THE RETREAT

If you choose to spend more time in the country either before or after the retreat, know that it is considered a safe country for single women travelers. On your own you may experience some stares by men, overpriced taxi rates, and insistence at the markets to try to get you to purchase a product, but overall Morocco is a very hospitable, non-violent country. You are encouraged to do some research and educate yourself as much as you can, this will be a most wonderful travel experience. If you would like any further details about additional activities, places to stay or visit, either before, after or during your time at the retreat, please contact your host Catherine. She has spent much time in Morocco and would be happy to advise.