

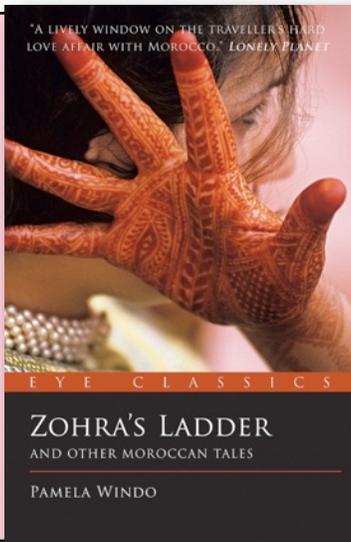
Learn Before We Go!



As we continue to receive registrations for our 2016 World Conference in Morocco, we are looking for ways to further educate ourselves about the country and its culture. In this first instalment of our “Learn Before We Go” series, we’re focussing on the written word (with a few films thrown in for good measure!).

Whether you are planning to join us in Marrakesh this September, or are simply hungry to learn about this fascinating country and her people, here are some book and film recommendations that won’t disappoint. Most of those listed are in English, but several books have been translated into other languages, and many films should be available with subtitles or dubbing in your mother tongue.

We hope you will enjoy reading and watching. If you love any Moroccan-themed books or films not mentioned here (in English or in your language) please let us know!

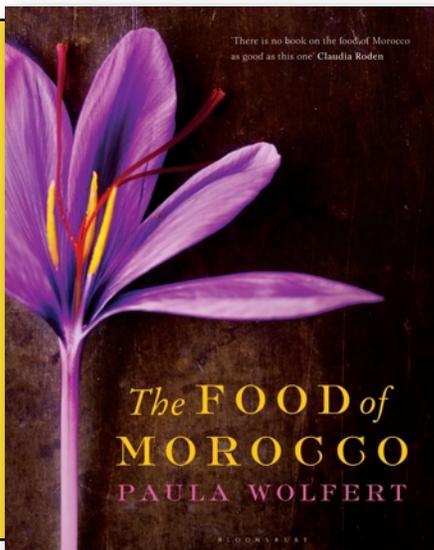


Zohra's Ladder and Other Moroccan Tales

by Pamela Windo

Described as "a poetic and richly sensual chronicle of a Westerner's unexpected love affair with Morocco," this book comprises 26 personal vignettes describing some of Windo's experiences in Morocco, where she lived for seven years. She paints delicate portraits of Moroccan people and places, imparting warmth and passion as well as the colours and flavours of the land. Most importantly, she makes her reader want to go there and experience some of it for herself.

[BUY IT HERE](#)

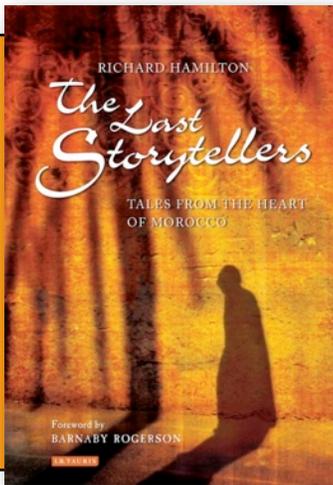


The Food of Morocco

by Paula Wolfert

The stunning cover image of a saffron flower adorns this luscious book. Wolfert includes a number of classical dishes as well as some more unusual regional variations. But this is no ordinary recipe book. *The Food of Morocco* dips into Moroccan culture - by way of the taste buds - and is highly informative too. This is not the first book Paula Wolfert has compiled on Moroccan cuisine, and her passion shines through.

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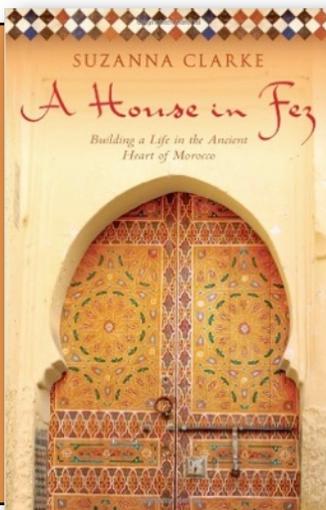


The Last Storytellers

by Richard Hamilton

Hamilton has listened, learned and been captivated by the storytellers of Morocco, re-telling some of the country's charming and spellbinding traditional stories. The tales are amusing, whimsical and leave you feeling that you are reading stories which may soon disappear.

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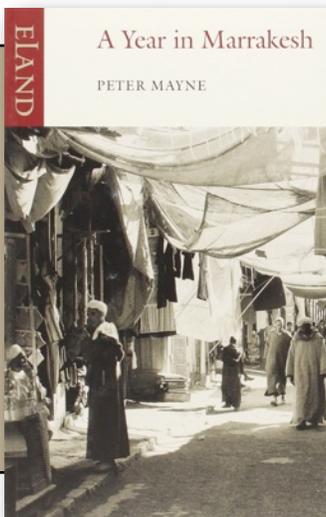


A House in Fez

by Susanna Clarke

Clarke and her husband are inspired to restore a dilapidated, centuries-old riad in Fez using only traditional craftsmen and handmade materials. So begins a remarkable adventure that is bewildering, at times hilarious, and ultimately immensely rewarding. It is also a journey into Moroccan customs and lore, and a window into the lives of its people as friendships blossom.

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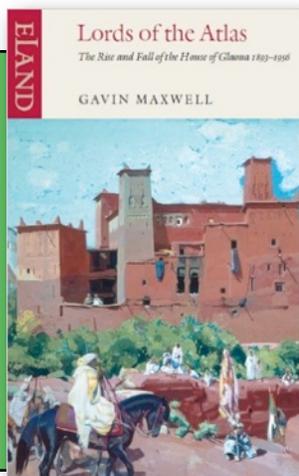


A Year in Marrakesh

by Peter Mayne

This takes us back to 1950s Morocco before the country was a tourist destination. Mayne provides an insightful and entertaining account of the people he meets while he is living with the locals, and captures the way of life and flavours of the medina.

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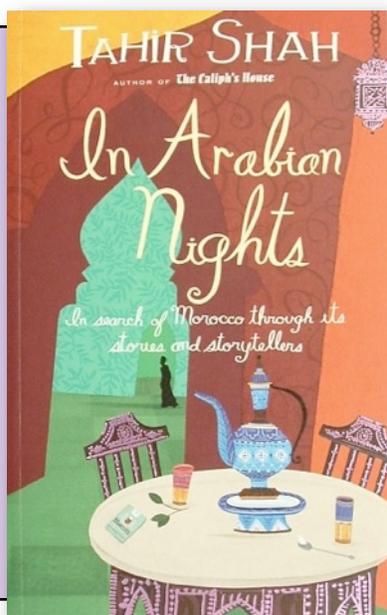


Lords of the Atlas

by Gavin Maxwell

Set in the medieval city of Marrakesh and the majestic kasbahs of the High Atlas mountains, *Lords of the Atlas* tells the extraordinary story of the Madani and T'hami el Glaoui, warlord brothers who carved out a feudal fiefdom in southern Morocco in the early twentieth century.

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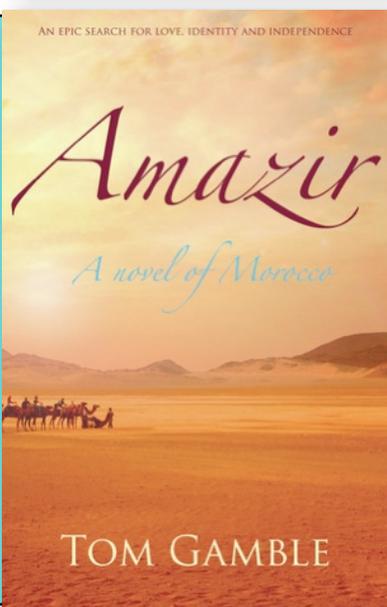


In Arabian Nights

by Tahir Shah

Shortly after the 2005 London bombings, Tahir Shah was thrown into a Pakistani prison on suspicion of spying for Al-Qaeda. He was sustained during this terrifying ordeal, he says, by the stories his father told him as a child in Morocco. On his return, he felt compelled to go in search of his country's storytellers - and this book represents the treasure-chest he found. It is full of vivid and eccentric characters and reinforces the fact that the art of storytelling and the passing down from father to son or mother to daughter is still very much alive. Also take a look at Shah's other novel, *The Caliph's House*.

[BUY IT HERE](#)



Amazir

by Tom Gamble

Adventure and romance with a dash of coming of age thrown in. Set in North Africa and Morocco in the late 1930s, where French Colonials are fighting for control and Europe is on the cusp of the Second World War, *Amazir* tells the story of an idealistic young Englishman, Harry Summerfield, who befriends an American oil explorer in Gibraltar. This meeting sparks a journey for both men in which they encounter the harsh realities of Berber opposition to French colonial rule and fall in love with the same young French woman. Gamble gives us fascinating descriptions of a simple Berber life in the mountains written in an engaging style.

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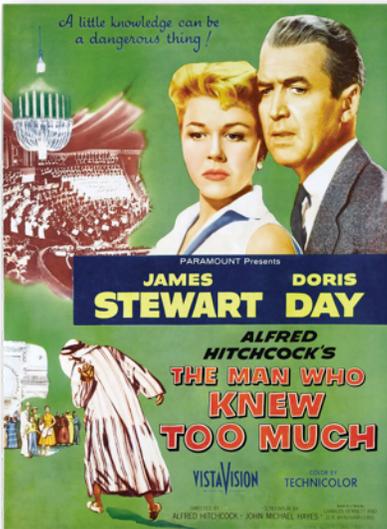
Films



[Marrakech Express](#)

(Salvatores, 1989)

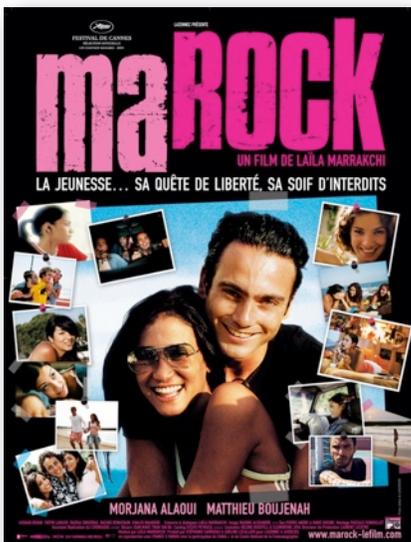
A group of ex-high school friends reunite in their 30s for a long journey to Marrakesh, hoping to help out a friend in jail. The film has been compared to Lawrence Kasdan's *The Big Chill* and Kevin Reynolds' *Fandango*. The incredible and diverse soundtrack contributes to the nostalgic atmosphere of the movie.



[The Man Who Knew Too Much](#)

(Hitchcock, 1956)

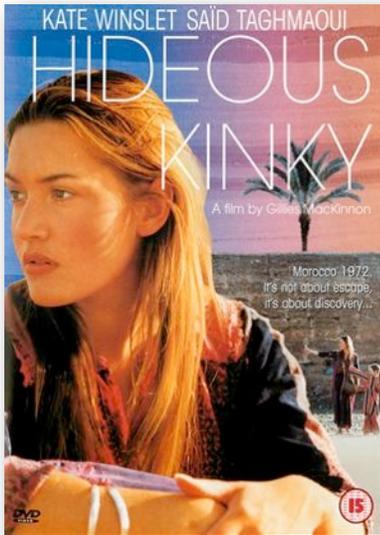
A family vacationing in Morocco accidentally stumble on to an assassination plot and the conspirators are determined to prevent them from interfering. Part of Hitchcock's film, starring James Stewart, was shot in the Dar Essalam restaurant, the location of our optional dinner event during the FFI World Conference.



[Marock](#)

(Marrakchi, 2006)

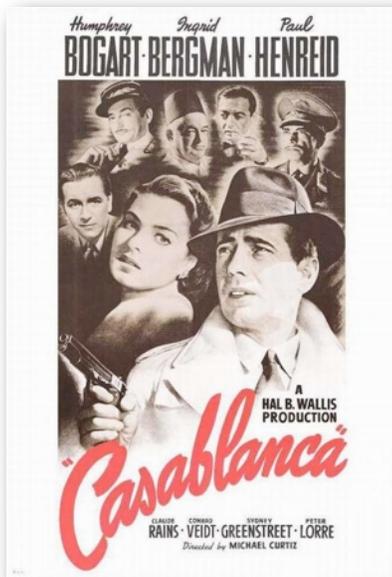
The film was 2006's most successful film in Morocco, scoring more than 3 million dirhams at the Moroccan box-office. It was very controversial as it deals with a Muslim/Jewish romantic relationship between two young people in Casablanca, Morocco; Rita and Youri.



[Hideous Kinky](#)

(MacKinnon, 1998)

An Englishwoman (played by Kate Winslet) travels to Morocco with her two young daughters, where they deal with and adjust to the culture and people of the area. Told from the perspective of the youngest daughter, the story provides insight into the Moroccan atmosphere. Based on the 1992 novel by Esther Freud.



[Casablanca](#)

(Curtiz, 1942)

Starring Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman, this film is set in Casablanca, Morocco during the early days of World War II. An American expatriate meets a former lover, with unforeseen complications.

Next time in our “Learn Before We Go” series for the FFI World Conference,
Moroccan Arabic: Language and Phrasing for Conversing with Locals.