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## 24 HOURS IN FEZ

The imperial city of Fez is considered Morocco's cultural and spiritual capital and makes for a fascinating city break. It's also home to Fes el Bali, the world's largest medina, with more than 9,000 alleyways and countless monuments, mosques and souks to explore.

And it's now easier for clients to pair Fez with ever-popular Marrakech, with hour-long flights from Air Arabia linking the two cities. Sarah Gilbert looks at how to spend 24 hours here.

**09:00**

Clients can explore the medina starting at the Bab Bou Jeloud's blue gate, and wander down the Talaa Kebira – one of the medina's two main arteries – to the Medersa Bou Inania, complete with dazzling zellige tiles, ornate stucco and hand-carved cedar wood. Stop to peek through the doorway of the Al-Qarawiyyin Mosque (closed to non-Muslims) then head to the iconic Chouara Tanneries to see the age-old leather-tanning process.


**12:00**

This is the ideal time for clients to take a sightseeing break with an alfresco lunch in the Ruined Garden, a leafy oasis in the medina with a menu of Moroccan tapas such as *zaalouk* (smoky aubergine and tomato salad), tasty tagines and hand-rolled couscous. Or they can take a class at Fez institution Cafe Clock's cooking school, where they'll learn to rustle up three traditional dishes after shopping for fresh ingredients in the souk.

**14:00**

Recommend time in the souks to shop for leather coats, bags and *babouches* (traditional slippers), Berber rugs, ornate lanterns, aromatic spices and blue-and-white Fassi pottery. For fixed prices and a contemporary take on traditional crafts recommend Medin'Art, the medina's first concept store. And trade-friendly Plan-it-Morocco ([plan-it-morocco.com](http://plan-it-morocco.com)) has just launched a half-day Souk Treasure Hunt, perfect for groups and families.


**17:00**

After a hard day's sightseeing, there's no better place to unwind than a traditional hammam and one of the best is at Riad Laaroussa, where the 17th-century marble bathhouse has been beautifully restored. Clients will be steamed, scrubbed and massaged with oils infused with fragrant jasmine or orange blossom into a state of total relaxation. Or they can indulge in a pampering treatment at the Hotel Sahrai's luxe Givenchy Spa, one of only three worldwide.


**19:00**

Suggest NUR for a unique fine-dining feast. Moroccan chef Najat Kaanache honed her culinary skills at restaurants around the world before moving to Fez and opening her restaurant in a striking medina riad. Her daily-changing, seven-to-nine-course tasting menu is based around market finds and creative flavour combinations – such as wild mushroom soup with red caviar or chicken with a Moroccan-meets-Mexican mole sauce, all paired with fine local wines.

**22:00**

On the edge of Ville Nouvelle, Hotel Sahrai's stylish indoor-outdoor bar The Rooftop plays host to top DJs at weekends – but the real star is the view from the terrace, so tell clients to grab a daybed and drink under the stars. Or they can try the art-deco-influenced Golden Bar at Palais Faraj for cocktails and old city vistas. ●



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