

Welcome to...

KASBAH DU TOUBKAL

MOROCCO'S PREMIER MOUNTAIN RETREAT

A New Year, a New Kasbah

While the Kasbah isn't technically 'new' it's the beginning of our first year with our 'new look'; a swimming pool with mountain views, added salons, a shaded roof terrace and more, and judging by the comments we have received, they are very much appreciated by guests. But the 'old' is still very much in evidence; the same level of service and caring from our Berber staff, the same excellent traditional cuisine, same gardens, same stunning views – although admittedly we didn't have any influence over that!

While the world may come to Imlil for a short stay, occasionally some stay longer, as did Alice Morrison, Adventuress. In this issue Alice tells us about her arrival in Imlil and the cleverly cunning way she made herself welcome. In our next issue we hear about her life as the 'Indiana Jones for girls'.



Photo: Tony Makepeace

The setting is breathtaking, perched high in the Atlas Mountains, with amazing panoramic views. The pool framed by the rugged peaks offered the most stunning views we've ever encountered. It was so peaceful and relaxing, a fabulous place to disconnect and slow down.

An Adventurer

Arrives

in

Imlil



According to Alice Morrison, writer, broadcaster, and walker of very, very long distances, she didn't choose Morocco, Morocco chose her. And as many of those very long walks are through Morocco, accompanied by a few camels and a couple of experienced guides/friends, it's probably not a bad idea to start from as close to home as possible. In her case, Imlil, in the shadow of Jbel Toubkal, the highest Mountain in North Africa, which just also happens to be her training ground for high-altitude running and ultra-marathons. There's no holding some people back!

I came to Morocco in 2014 to run the Marathon des Sables, which is the toughest foot race on earth, six marathons across the desert in six days, carrying all your own food and equipment. I successfully achieved that, but I decided to make it more of a story and to try and write about it, do some broadcasting about it and so on, so I stayed afterwards and I'm still here. And that was eleven years ago. So really, Morocco chose me.

I came to Imlil in 2018. I've done a lot of hiking and mountain biking around here, so I knew it, and I knew some of the guides. But I basically came here because I needed to train for the Everest Trail Race, which is an ultra-marathon where you run around Everest for six days. I moved to Imlil because the training conditions are ideal for that kind of race because you're in the mountains, the state of the trails is similar and I didn't have to travel anywhere to train, I just had to walk out my front door. But the

main reason I stayed in Imlil is really the kindness of the Amazigh people and the beauty of my surroundings. I moved from my home in Essaouira, and one of my friends, who's a guide, Hassan, got together a group of men to help me bring everything. I had an enormous lorry full of all my household stuff, which caused quite a stir in the village, but everyone joined in and helped. And that was really an indication of the culture here, where everybody does help you. But I didn't know I would still be here seven years later!

Obviously I was already aware of Moroccan culture, so I made lots of effort, and the minute you make any effort here, you're met with a huge return. I did two things, which I consider to be very clever. First thing is I bought a massive jar of lollipops, so when the children came to knock on my door, I would do little running races with them and then I'd give them all a lollipop. So that endeared me to the children. And then

when I went to where I live now, my landlord, said, "No bikinis, no parties, no men!" Which amused me highly because my life is very far from all those



things. I'm a very well behaved, modest person. His mother was then in her late eighties and she could only speak Tashlihit, the Berber language of the region, but she took a huge shine to me. She was a tiny, warm-hearted, warm-handed woman, and she'd come to my house every single day and she'd speak to me in Tashlihit, which I understand a little bit of, and she'd say, "My son built you a beautiful house," and we would sit together on the terrace and look at the view. And every day she'd bring me a present, like a peach or some bread, and I would try and give her something back. So she accepted me and made friends with me from the very beginning. Sadly, she's passed away now, but because I had the children and the matriarch both liking me, I won everybody over.

I live in a *douar*, a hamlet, where there are four families and me, but I think most people in Imlil know me. One of the things that's helped me is I'm around a lot. I hike a lot and I do a lot of publicity for Imlil, because I'm a writer and a journalist and I do masses of online and heritage media promotion for Imlil, for the guides. I don't work in tourism and I don't take any profit. Everything I do, I hope just benefits other people, *inshallah*. In this village, everybody knows everybody. It's very nice.

And then I've also been helped by my TikTok, '*AliceOutThere1*', because I do all my TikToks in Arabic and Tashlihit, and some of them have gone really viral, especially the Tashlihit ones, so now when I walk up the village, people quote my TikToks to me. It's really gained me a lot of friends because they're funny and they're nice and people like them. I've got 265,000 followers, so I do get recognized for it. I think it's because I'm a British woman who speaks Arabic and Tashlihit, which is a bit of an oddity."

Being already an Arab speaker when I arrived was a total game changer for me. The language here is not actually Arabic, it's Tashlihit, and the women I spend most of my time with are Tashlihit speakers,



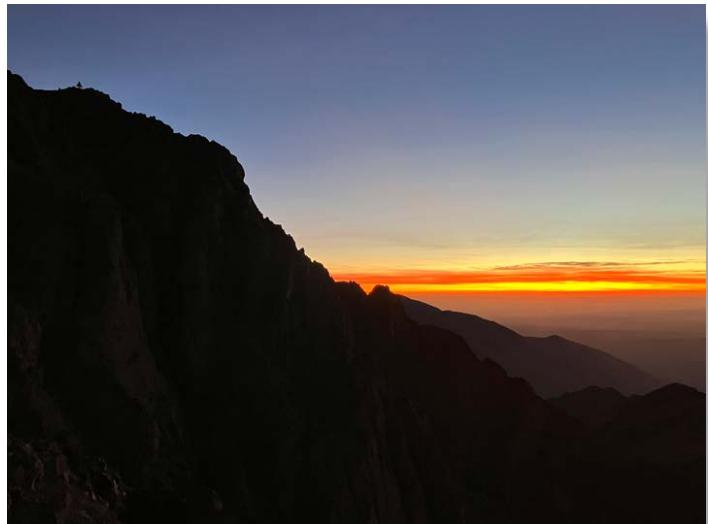
but the children and the fathers all speak Arabic, and it changes everything. It's an express train into understanding and acceptance because I speak their language.

I think I'm perceived as a good person who loves the culture, loves the people, loves the mountains, who has done some big adventures, and who honours the people around her and who's given respect back. So, I think it's a very mutually respectful relationship. I guess I'd be seen by a lot of people as their favourite auntie. It's wonderful. I really lean into that role. I love it, but it's funny, because while I'm proud of my accomplishments as an adventurer, they're absolutely meaningless to the lovely women that I live with and spend my days with. They pity me and say, "Miskina, oh, miskina!" Which means 'you poor thing', because I'm not married, I don't have children, I'm not a very good housekeeper and my cooking is very different to their cooking. So for them, on every standard that they judge a woman by, I fail. But they still like me, they still help me. They think I'm hilarious. They're like, "Where are you off to?" And I'm like, "Oh, I'm walking across Saudi Arabia now", and they're like, "Oh, why?"



In the next issue we'll hear more about Alice and her very, very long walks, but meanwhile, you can learn more about the [Indiana Jones for girls](#), and her adventurous life at [her website](#), as well as keeping up with her current adventure, crossing Saudi Arabia.

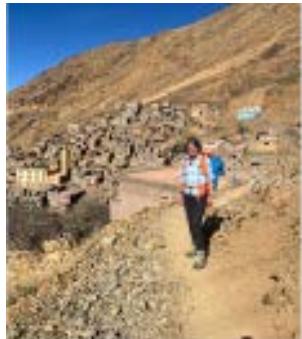
Spectacular Jbel Toubkal



Photos: K Allison

Walking With Women

In the company of mountain leader
Helen Menhinick



Trekking in the
High Atlas Mountains
Morocco

28th Sept – 3rd Oct 2026 £1192

- 5 nights at the beautiful Riad Dar Imlil
- An all women group
- Day walks from the mountain village of Imlil
- An immersive cultural day – meeting the local people, seeing how they live, cook and work
- Included: transfers Marrakesh-Imlil-Marrakesh, 5 nights full board, twin room share accommodation with en-suite

The team:

Helen Menhinick UK Mountain Leader – Trek Group Manager
Latifa Asselouf – Qualified Moroccan Mountain Guide

To book/enquire, contact either:

Gilly at Discover Ltd bookings@discover.ltd.uk or
Helen at Bryn Walking helenmenhinick@hotmail.co.uk

Not included: flights, kit and equipment, your personal snacks, tips, travel insurance

Arrival and departure times at Dar Imlil are flight dependent

Bryn Walking for Women



For more information contact bookings@discover.ltd.uk

From the Swiss Alpsto the High Atlas Mountains

As Pennsylvania born Carly Snedeker's training in dance therapy in Switzerland, her home for twenty-five years, came to an end, her teacher wanted to end the whole shebang in Morocco, where she rented two beautiful villas outside of Marrakesh and they danced for seven days.

"It's my first time in Morocco and we were in a great



community of people, but we were very isolated and didn't see much of the culture around us, just the people working in the villa, says Carly. "I wanted to see more of the country but I wasn't sure if I wanted to go to the ocean or if I wanted to go to the mountains. A friend had been to the Kasbah and she said, you have to go. She

said, this is a really, really authentic, very unique experience.

"One thing that drew me in was it sounded like they were doing things in a responsible way, with Berber people working here. I always look for ecotourism and I'm not the kind of person that wants to have my towels washed every single day. It seems that the Kasbah is very much accepted in the community.

"I imagined it would be a bit of an oasis. I thought it would be peaceful here. From what I read I was imagining just a place sitting kind of up on a hilltop, very peaceful, very quiet, nothing happening all around. And that's what I wanted was just an escape from busy life. And the gardens are beautiful when you walk in and you see this majestic entrance in front of you and walking in and seeing the colors, the Moroccan colors and the textiles and yeah, it is a bit what I expected.

"When I walked into my bedroom, the first thing I thought was, "Wow, it's dark", but then I thought, "Okay, it's dark because it's hot here and it needs

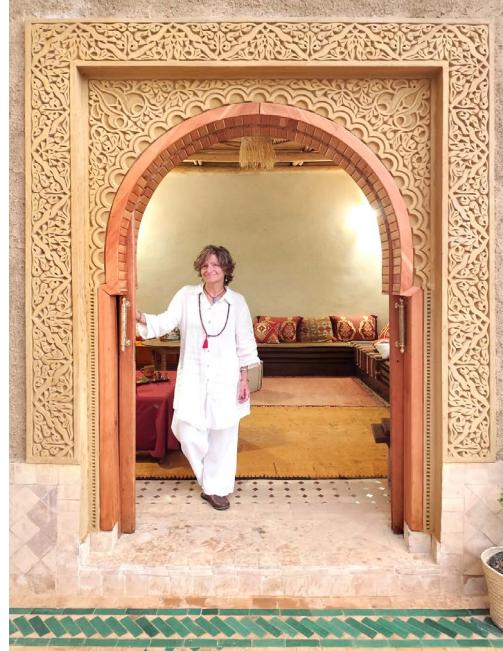
to be dark". And I opened up the windows to let in light. Now it's very cozy and very comfortable. It has a desk, where I can sit and write, and the bed is comfortable and there's a good energy. There is a beam going across the ceiling and it has carvings, like gorgeous carvings in the beam. I thought it was like an ancient building because of how it looks, this intricate work that that they do here."

The bricks and mortar of a hotel, the design, the comfort, all contribute to a guest's enjoyment of their stay, but as important, if not more so, is the attitude of the staff.

"They were really warm. They were very quiet and no disturbance whatsoever, but just walking by. And I could say if I needed a tea today, I asked for some because somebody walked by, but I had the feeling they were checking on me to see if I needed something. I think that the energy is amazing from the people."

With only two days to both relax and explore, Carly took a stroll down the hill to Imlil, to get a sense of a Berber community.

"I went down the path and stopped in a shop. The owner was lovely; he made me tea and we sat down on the floor on pillows. He laid everything out that I was interested in, and I got some really beautiful things to take back. And then I just continued down in the village, just putting around down there.



"I'd love to come back. I think it's so super unique that I feel very comfortable here. I'm somebody who makes myself at home wherever I go, and I feel like I can just, you know, curl up in a corner with my book or just wander room to room. I feel the Berber hospitality. Somehow, it's just in the air and I'm soaking it up."

"For me, telling the story of this place was a privilege. Walking through terraces overlooking the Atlas, Berber rooms, light filtering through courtyards, and silences that carry tradition, I discovered a structure that is far more than a lodge: it is a piece of culture, carefully preserved and deeply respected."

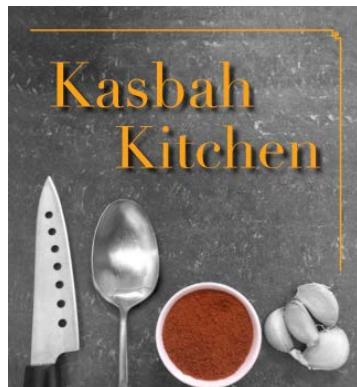
Giuseppe Scianna

“With the best rooftop views in North Africa”

Condé Nast Traveller



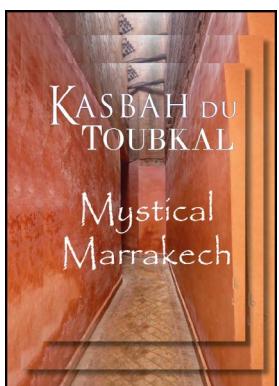
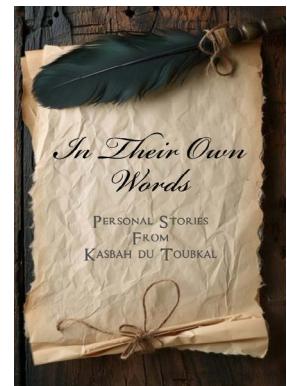
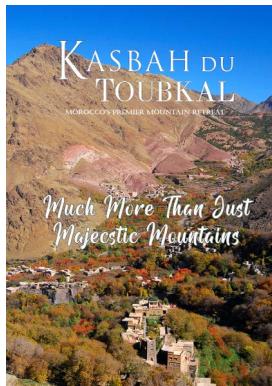
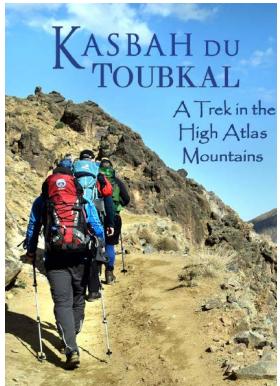
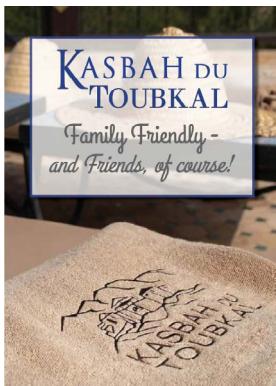
One of your favourite memories of your stay at the Kasbah will almost certainly be of the traditional local dishes you enjoyed, and while the many years of experience of our chefs (and perhaps the clear mountain air) might be difficult to copy, at least you can try and bring back those memories with recipes from our own cookbook.



So much to discover...

Whether you are planning your first visit to Kasbah du Toubkal or it's almost your home-from-home, there's far more to enjoy at our Berber Hospitality Centre than you might imagine, and we've created five new brochures to give you an idea of just how much you can experience. The content is taken from the pages of our magazine and newsletter, brought together to celebrate its tenth anniversary last year, and includes stories written by guests themselves. So sit back and take your time to anticipate your trip, or to remind yourself of the joy of waking each morning under the towering glory of Jbel Toubkal, the highest mountain in North Africa.

Click on a cover image to discover more



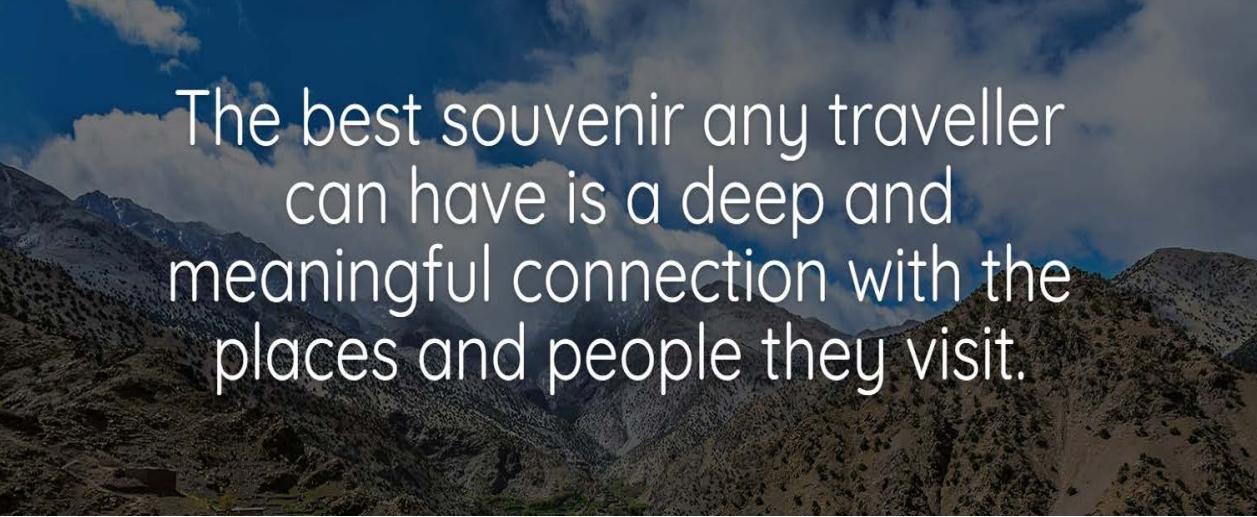
A gem of a boutique hotel
A special place in a beautiful valley, a wonderful experience moving back to the rhythms of a different age.



Magical experience - a must do!
We have traveled extensively all over the world, and may have just found our new favorite place.



An unforgettable experience
The Kasbah was ideal and in such an impressive and beautiful location. The meal and entertainment on my birthday was amazing.



The best souvenir any traveller can have is a deep and meaningful connection with the places and people they visit.

Understanding the history of the Imlil Valley will put into context the lives of the locals and enrich your vacation

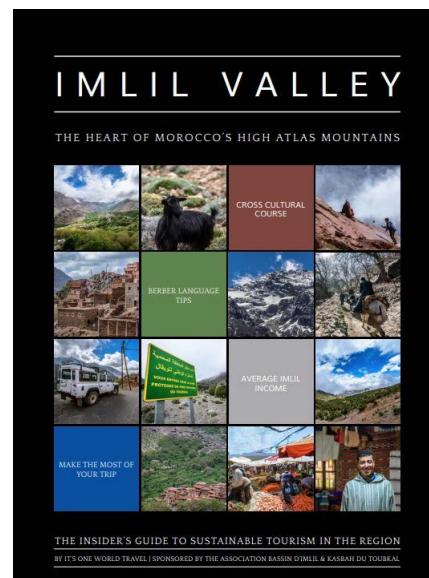
Originally a study centre for students from the UK, Kasbah du Toubkal has become widely known as a place to relax, to enjoy the peace of the mountains, the excellent local cuisine, its range of accommodation, from simple shared family rooms and cosy bedrooms to a luxury apartment, and the recent addition of a splendid oval infinity swimming pool. And it's still one of the foremost trekking bases in the majestic mountains of the High Atlas.

As the Kasbah has grown, so has Imlil. Prosperity breeds – more shops, more restaurants, more guest houses to cater for the increase in tourist numbers. But given its situation in little more than a cleft in the High Atlas, there is only so far the village can extend. It's still just one through road,

with a spur that runs off to the foot of the walnut grove that meanders to the gate of Kasbah du Toubkal.

Despite its growth, Imlil is still very much a traditional, close-knit Berber community, steeped in a culture that goes back millennia, and to respect that culture, the golden rule is – ***do as the locals do.***

For a brief dip into the history, culture, and life of the Berber people of the Imlil Valley – and to increase your enjoyment of your stay at Kasbah du Toubkal, click on the images below.





We're delighted to have been selected as a FINALIST for the 2025 Regenerative Health & Wellness Award

“**KASBAH DU TOUBKAL**, nestled in Morocco’s High Atlas Mountains, offers a wellness experience rooted in connection to both nature and culture. The retreat’s approach emphasizes mountain-based healing, where guided treks combine physical movement, crisp alpine air, and mindful engagement with the landscapes and traditions of the Amazigh people. Guests are encouraged to slow down, walk with intention, and immerse themselves in the rhythms of the mountains, creating a restorative experience that nurtures body, mind, and spirit.”

Click on the image above to read the full story of why we were selected, and to help us win the category with your vote.

HESPRESS



Moroccan caftan moves closer to UNESCO listing as experts validate nomination

greenprophet



Travel Morocco with teens at the Kasbah du Toubkal’s magical mountain retreat

euronews.



Photos: Rebecca Ann Hughes
Carpet weaving, fire dancing and argan oil: Discovering the ancient traditions of Marrakech



UK Ambassador Explores Cultural Links, Future Partnerships in Marrakech

Don't forget to visit our **website** and for further information **contact**