

Essaouira — Day Plan

3 nights · Riad Emotion in the Medina ·  Early check-in 12-1 PM approved · 69°F coastal breeze · CHILL

OFFLINE-READY — MOROCCO

Before leaving Madrid: open Apple Maps → search "**Essaouira**" → tap the region card → "**Download**". Same for "**Marrakech**". ~250 MB each; works fully offline (search, routing, POI cards).








- **Riad pinned offline:** *Riad Emotion*, 18 Rue Malek Ben El Morahal, Medina Essaouira 44000. Drop a manual pin in Apple Maps now so you can route to it without signal.
- **Petit taxi (blue/white) flat rates: 8 MAD day / 9 MAD night** anywhere in town — fixed, no haggling. Thin late at night + during prayer times: pre-book if Marrakech bus delays you.
- **Wifi / eSIM:** Maroc Telecom eSIM bought at RAK (~150 MAD) covers Essaouira too. Riad Emotion wifi works only in lobby — count on cellular outside.
- **Medina reality:** cars blocked inside the medina — Riad Emotion porter meets you at the drop point. Walk last leg.


GETTING AROUND AFTER DARK

- **No urban bus network.** ALSA/CTM/Supratours intercity only, daytime.
- **Petit taxis** (blue/white) — flat 8 MAD day / **9 MAD night anywhere in town.**
- Taxis thin late at night and during prayer times. Pre-book if Marrakech bus is delayed.
- Medina blocks cars — porter from Riad Emotion meets at the drop point.

DRINKING SPOTS — BY PRICE · DISTANCE FROM RIAD EMOTION

⚠ **Medina has NO off-license shops.** For bottles to bring back to the riad: petit-taxi to **Carrefour Market** (10 min ride, 8 MAD). Riad-Emotion lobby may serve wine — WhatsApp +212 5244-72309 to ask.

| Spot | \$ | Walk | Vibe |
|--|----------------------------|-------------|----------------------------|
| Carrefour Market (booze run)  | \$ beer 12-16 MAD/can | 10 min taxi | Stock the riad |
| Triskala Café  | \$ beer 40, wine 60 | 4 min | Tiny back-alley, candlelit |
| Restaurant La Découverte  | \$ beer 40, wine 70 | 3 min | Local-feel, low-key |
| Mega Loft (live Gnaoua Fri/Sat)  | \$\$ drinks 80-150 | 5 min | 4-floor rooftop, late |
| Taros Café rooftop  | \$\$ spritz 80, beer 50 | 4 min | Touristy but reliable |
| Salut Maroc rooftop  | \$\$ drinks 80-120 | 5 min | Live concerts Fri-Sun |
| Madada Mogador rooftop  | \$\$ cocktails 80-120 | 4 min | Smaller, better view |

Heure Bleue Palais 5-star bar 

\$\$\$

spritz 150+, cocktails 180+

5 min

Polished, best view in town




No nightclubs in Essaouira — late-night = live music at Mega Loft/Taros/Salut Maroc until ~2 AM. For real clubbing, Theatro is back in Marrakech.

★ **KNOWN FOR**

Windswept Atlantic medina + Game of Thrones' Astapor

- 🐟 Port fish-grill stalls — pick your catch fresh off the boat, they grill it on the spot
- 🎵 Gnaoua music — annual June festival, but jam sessions happen year-round
- 🏰 Skala de la Ville — 18th-c sea ramparts + cannons (Orson Welles filmed Othello here)

- 1:30 PM **Drop bags at Riad Emotion** ↗
 18 Rue Malek Ben El Morahal. Just bags — eat first, check in properly after. Porter meets you at the drop point. 📍 [Open in Maps](#)
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- 2:00 PM 🐟 **STARVING LUNCH — Port Fish Grill** ↗ (\$) · 6 min walk S
 You arrive at 1:30 PM — port grills run til ~4 PM, you're in window. 6 min walk south from the riad to the blue-and-white shacks outside Skala du Port gate. Same place as Fri's planned big lunch, but Thu is the "shake out the drive" version. **Order light for two:** ½ kg sardines (~20 MAD/\$2) + 2 calamari (~30 MAD) + bread/salad/harissa (~20 MAD) = ~70 MAD (\$7) total. Saves the full feast for Fri.
 📍 [Open in Maps](#) [MORE +](#)
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- 3:30 PM **Full check-in at Riad Emotion + freshen up**
 Walk back 6 min N. Now with a belly full of grilled fish. Shower off the drive.
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- 4:30 PM **Skala de la Ville** ↗ · 5 min walk W
 18th-century sea ramparts & cannons. Sunset photo spot later. 📍 [Open in Maps](#)
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- 5:15 PM **Wander the medina** · out the riad door
 UNESCO old town. Smaller, easier than Marrakech. 📍 [Open in Maps](#)
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- 6:15 PM 🍹 **Booze run — Carrefour Market Essaouira** ↗ (\$) · 10 min taxi (NOT walkable)
 ~10 min petit-taxi (8 MAD) out to **Carrefour** on Av. Lalla Aïcha for beer/wine/spirits. **The medina has NO off-license shops** — only restaurants/bars. Cash, bring passport. Stock the riad for the rest of the stay.
 📍 [Open in Maps](#) [MORE +](#)
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- 7:00 PM 🍹 **Sunset spritz — Taros rooftop** ↗ (\$\$) · 4 min walk SW
 Walk-in. Place Moulay Hassan. Top of the food chain for first-night sunset views over the port + ramparts. Spritz ~80 MAD, beer ~50 MAD. 📍 [Open in Maps](#)
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- 7:30 PM 🐟 **Wander-only Port d'Essaouira — recon for tomorrow's lunch** (\$) **DON'T eat at the port at night**
 — grill stalls are MIDDAY only (~11 AM-4 PM, peak ~1 PM when boats land). Tonight: walk the port at golden hour for blue feluccas + gulls + auction wind-down. [MORE +](#)
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- 9:30 PM **Salut Maroc** ↗ (\$\$\$)
 Riad rooftop with live concerts Fri-Sun. 5 min walk. 📍 [Open in Maps](#)

- 10:00 AM **Slow breakfast at riad**
Rooftop breakfast included.
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- 11:30 AM **Essaouira Beach**
Atlantic coastline, windsurfing visible. 5 min walk.
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- 1:00 PM **Camel ride on the beach**
Classic Essaouira experience. Quick & cheap on the beach itself. [Open in Maps](#)
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- 12:30 PM  **PORT D'ESSAOUIRA FISH-GRILL LUNCH — THE DANI MOVE** (\$)
This is THE meal of the Morocco leg.
Go ~12:30, boats land 11-1 PM, freshest catch + fewest tourists. **Location:** outside Skala du Port gate, blue-and-white wooden shacks between port + Bab Marrakech. ~30 stalls in a U.
[Open in Maps](#) **MORE +**
-
- 2:30 PM **Beach walk-off, mint tea on the seafront** (\$)
Mint tea + coffee anywhere on the seafront promenade. You'll be greasy, salty, and grinning.
[Open in Maps](#)
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- 4:00 PM **Hammam / spa — OPTIONAL** (\$\$)
You'll have already done **2 hammams in Marrakech** (Les Bains Mon + Le Bain de Kasbah Tue) — a 3rd might be overkill. If you want one anyway, options ranked by walking distance from Riad
Emotion: **MORE +**
[Open in Maps](#)
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- 5:30 PM  **Madada Mogador rooftop — sunset cocktails** ↗ (\$\$)
WALK-IN OK for cocktails. (Reserve only if you want dinner — phone +212 5247-47512.) Non-touristy rooftop overlooking the port — better view than Taros, smaller crowd. Cocktails 80-120 MAD. 4 min walk SW. [Open in Maps](#)
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- 6:30 PM  **Heure Bleue rooftop spritz** ↗ (\$\$)
WALK-IN OK on weekdays (Fri qualifies). Single most spectacular rooftop view in town — ocean + ramparts panorama from this 5-star hotel in **Essaouira**. Spritz menu from ~150 MAD (~€14). 5 min walk S to the gate called **Bab Marrakech** (that's the Essaouira medina gate that faces the road toward Marrakech — confusing name, but the hotel IS in Essaouira). [Open in Maps](#)
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- 7:30 PM **Sunset on Skala — actual sunset 7:55 PM**
Arrive 7:30 for the build, stay through 8:10 for the afterglow. Best vantage in town. [Open in Maps](#)
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- 8:30 PM **Dinner + drinks** (\$\$)
Mega Loft walk-in OK for drinks, table reservation rec for Fri-night live Gnaoua band [Taros](#) walk-in OK [Salut Maroc](#) rooftop, live Fri-Sun, walk-in OK before 9 PM [Taros](#)

10:00 AM

Breakfast at riad

Rooftop included.

11:00 AM

Big Dunes & Atlantic Coast Tour (\$\$)

2 hrs, \$63 pp. Highest-volume Essaouira tour. Decide today.

2:00 PM

Light lunch — Restaurant Essalam ↗ (\$\$)Tagine or sardine sandwich at **Restaurant Essalam** (Pl. Moulay Hassan, 60 MAD tagine, where Souiri families eat). Cheap, plastic-tablecloth, not on TripAdvisor. 📍 [Open in Maps](#)

2:45 PM

NEW: Marché aux Grains — covered market ↗ (\$) 🌿

Opposite the fish market — olive stalls, lemon mountains, raw butter, raw spices. Locals shouting prices. Dani's lens, missed by 90% of tourists. Mornings best (8 AM–noon) but Sat afternoon still has vendors.

📍 [Open in Maps](#)

3:00 PM

Medina Spice Square + La Joutia flea market (\$) 🌿**Spice Square (Place Souk Jdid)**: covered hallways of spice mounds, herbal cures, Berber pharmacist potions. Buy: **custom-blended ras-el-hanout** (~40 MAD / 100g — Essaouira's blend has more cumin + ginger than Marrakech's), argan oil from co-op stamp only (50 MAD / 100ml), saffron threads. **La Joutia** (just W of Bab Doukkala, biggest on Sun morning but Sat afternoon still has stalls): town flea market — secondhand thuya-wood boxes, Berber silver, vintage tea trays. Auction every morning, browse Sat. Haggle 40-50% off opening. 📍 [Open in Maps](#)

3:30 PM

Game of Thrones spots

Filmed as Astapor in S3. Walk the medina ramparts.

6:00 PM

Sunset cocktail (\$\$)

Taros 📍 or Salut Maroc 📍 or Heure Bleue rooftop 📍

8:30 PM

Last big dinner (\$\$)Pick best seafood spot you saw earlier. Solid choices: **La Table by Madada** 📍, **Restaurant La Découverte** 📍, or **Triskala Café** 📍

11:00 PM

Mega Loft or Salut Maroc late (\$\$)Live music until ~2 AM. 📍 [Open in Maps](#)

8:00 AM

Fishing port walk — blue boats, 6-min walk

Single best photo of the leg. 340 feluccas being cleaned after night catch, gulls overhead, no other tourists. Then Driss Pâtisserie for msemmen breakfast on the way back.

9:00 AM

Pack + check out

9:30 AM

Transfer Essaouira → RAK ⚠ EARLIER PICKUP

Pickup 9:30 NOT 10:30.

2.5-3 hr drive + Ryanair 60-min check-in close = at RAK 12:30-1 PM latest for 3:55 PM flight. Riad concierge or essaouiramarrakech.com €75-85.

NOT YET BOOKED — book this week.

 [Open in Maps](#)

12:30 PM

At RAK airport — check in for Ryanair

Online check-in MUST be done before leaving riad or €55/pax fee. Weigh checked bags — 20 kg limit, after Morocco shopping.

3:55 PM

FR826 · RAK → TFS

Ryanair. Arrive Tenerife 5:45 PM.

BEFORE YOU GO

- **Sleep-in logic:** after late nights, start mornings later; no full day blocks. Plane sleep counts as recovery credit.
- 🌟 **BOOK ESSAOUIRA → RAK TRANSFER NOW** — Ryanair flight is 3:55 PM **Sunday Jun 21**. Pickup **9:30 AM (not 10:30)** — 2.5-3 hr drive + Ryanair 60-min check-in close = must be at RAK 1 PM latest. Best operator: essaouiramarrakech.com €75-85 fixed.
- 🎵 **GNAOUA FESTIVAL ramp-up week** — festival proper Jun 25-27, but badge exchange runs Jun 18-21 at Pl. Moulay Hassan parking lot, meaning the city fills with musicians + warm-up sets ALL THREE NIGHTS you're there. Check Dar Souiri door board on arrival for concert listings.
- 🐎 **Beach ride alternative:** horse on the beach (Ranch de Diabat, ~€30 pp) beats the camel for photos and is gentler.
- **Cooking class:** Essaouira Cooking Class — fits Friday morning if interested.
- **Bath houses:** Essaouira hammams are gentler/cheaper than Marrakech. Try Hammam Mounia.
- Pack: light jacket! Atlantic breeze can drop temps to 60°F at night.
- Skipped: Asian Red Food (only Asian option, weak signal).
- 💎 **Dani hidden gems (slot in Fri/Sat afternoons):**
 - **Galerie Damgaard** — Av. Oqba Ibn Nafiaa, just inside Bab Marrakech. The single best gallery in Morocco for the Essaouira "Singular" school painters — Mohamed Tabal, Said Ouarzaz — naïf trance art tied to Gnaoua music. €30-500 originals, prints from €25. Free to walk in. Daily 10-1 + 4-7.
 - **Argan Oil Women's Co-op (Marjana / Tighanimine)** — Av. de l'Istiqlal cooperative storefronts inside the medina (verify cooperative-stamped bottles, NOT souk knock-offs). Watch the actual stone-crushing demo, smell raw vs roasted, ~80 MAD / 100 ml. Skip the highway co-ops on the road from Marrakech, go in-town. Daily 9-7.
 - **Bayt Dakira / Maison de la Mémoire Juive** — Mellah, near old synagogue. Restored 19th-c Jewish heritage house + Slat Attia synagogue (one of last functioning Atlantic-coast synagogues). 30 MAD, Tue-Sun 9-6. One-room museum, micro-history, no tour buses.
 - **L'Atelier Madada cooking school** — 7 bis Rue Youssef El Fassi. Half-day women-run cooking class — go to the port for fish at 9 AM, cook 4 dishes at the riad, eat on the rooftop. ~€55 pp, ~4 hrs. Booking: atelier-madada.com. **The Dani sensory dream** if Fri morning opens up (before port lunch).
 - **Thuya wood workshops on Rue de la Skala** — tiny family ateliers carving cedar + lemon + thuya into boxes, chess sets, perfume bottle stoppers. Watch the lathe + inlay work. Boxes €5-50, takes 30 min to choose. Daily 10-7. Rue de la Skala is also the most photogenic "blue alley" in Essaouira at 7 PM golden hour.
- 📌 **TripAdvisor — Top-rated Essaouira restaurants:** https://www.tripadvisor.com/Restaurants-g293733-Essaouira_Marrakech_Safi.html — no Eater coverage for this city; this is the next-best curated list.