

marie claire .CO.UK

The Es Saadi Palace, Marrakech

What

A family run resort that has been around since the 1950s when the Rolling Stones and the Gettys came to town, and stayed here.

Where

Just outside Marrakech's medina, a 10-minute walk to the Jemaa El Fna (or two minutes in a cab). Set in 8 hectares of mature gardens facing the Atlas Mountains.

The hotel

Choose between the original hotel built in 1952, the Palace built in 2000 or one of the 10 unique one and two bedroom villas. Each villa has its own pool; one is in the shape of a heart, perfect for honeymooners. The Palace has two pools, one is heated all year and there is a pool bar that you can swim up to. It feels like a family home.

Reception

Guests enter the Palace between two antique cavalry horses into the enormous lobby complete with a large fountain under a carved cupola. Mint tea accompanies check in. Each floor of the Palace is themed with a different colour - our floor was Majorelle Blue - this detail extends even to the mosaic tiles in the stairwells. Each room and suite in the Palace is decorated individually from the room door to the colour of the marble in the bathroom, from the rugs to the beds, and contemporary Moroccan art hangs on the walls.

The rooms

I stayed in a junior suite and had a four-poster bed, black marble bathroom, walk-in dressing room/ wardrobe, sitting area with flat screen TV, private terrace, Berber rugs, antiques, modern paintings by Moroccan artists.

Cost

Junior suites at the Palace start at 5200 DH (approx £361).

Breakfast 150 Dh

Lunch or Dinner menu 320 Dh

Must-see

The heart-shaped pool, the spa, the beautiful carved cupolas, the gardens and pool. Oh, everything!

Eco news

Citrus fruit, vegetable and herbs served on site are grown organically in Es Saadi's nearby farm, Le Bled. The Palace powers its hot water system and heats the pool with solar panels and a recycling station provides water for the tropical gardens.

Extras

The resort has the first casino to be built in Morocco, back in 1952.

Theatro, the resort's club, attracts the beautiful people from 11.30pm each night.

Free WiFi throughout the resort.

Breakfast marmalade is made from the orange trees on-site.



Details: Rue Ibrahim El Mazini, Hivernage ((212) 24 44 88 11, www.essaadi.com)

Review by Emma Sibbles