

TEXTILES TOUR with HOLLIS CHATELAIN

12 - 26 October 2024

Marrakech, Atlas Mountains, Sahara, Fes, Chefchaouen, Rabat



IMAGE: Hollis Chatelain, *Blue Men*, cloth quilt, hand-dye-painted, machine-quilted, 58 x 75 inches

Travel with textile artist Hollis Chatelain and explore the traditional Amazigh (Berber) crafts of Morocco at a grassroots level where womens cooperative ventures present a range of textile creations melding age-old skills with new innovations.

In Marrakech we visit the exquisite new Yves Saint Laurent Museum featuring his fashion design as well as the Berber Museum that houses the Moroccan textiles and jewellery that inspired his work.

We then venture into the High Atlas Mountains and follow the ancient trade routes across the Tizi'n'Tichka Pass from Marrakech to the Sahara. Weavers of carpets and cloth, embroiderers and basket weavers are found in remote locations where they still employ their skills and maintain their traditional life style.

Next we make our way north to Fes and the blue city of Chefchaouen for a feast of colour and Islamic culture, finishing in the capital city of Rabat.

The tour includes hands-on experiences and demonstrations with local artisans. On the road in the mountains and Sahara we learn some exquisite embroidery techniques, tie knots to make rugs, explore some eco-dyeing using Rose Madder root.

Hollis Chatelaine will share her skills and experience to allow participants to develop their ideas for textile design, drawing inspiration from the sublime landscape and rich cultural environment provided by the art and architecture of Morocco.



ABOUT HOLLIS CHATELAIN

Hollis Chatelain is an internationally recognised and award-winning artist specialising in textile painting. Through her work that addresses challenging social and environmental themes, Hollis reflects 12 years of experience living in West Africa and working with humanitarian organisations.

With an educational background in design and photography, and over 35 years experience as a professional artist, Hollis' work can be found in public and private collections throughout the world. In addition to creating her art, Hollis holds lectures and workshops in the United States and abroad, instructing students in subjects including colour, drawing, design, dye-painting, and quilting technique.

"My art most often comes to me in my dreams; usually influenced by current events and the many years I spent living in West Africa. This is why I tend to create surreal dreamlike compositions with a photographic quality...I create "textile paintings" because fabric not only gives me a way to do all the things I love - photography, drawing, painting - but it is also very tactile."

Beginning with dreams, then researching images and following a drawing process to create her designs Hollis transfers her design to fabric using fiber reactive Procion dyes. With a passion for thread, Hollis uses over 200 different colours to add contour, depth, and volume to the image through quilting.

MORE ABOUT THE TOUR

The tour is not an intensive workshop as there is too much to see and experience in Morocco, but time will be devoted to sharing ideas, discussing composition, colour, materials and trialling techniques for future development.

Accommodation is provided in the most comfortable traditional guesthouses, where we enjoy the extraordinary delights of Amazigh food and hospitality. You will discover the highlights of Morocco and the indigenous Amazigh culture that evolves and continues largely through the extraordinary textiles traditions. We also enjoy music and a complete range of traditional cultural experiences and crafts.

Traveling with a small group of like-minded people and an experienced team of co-hosts the program offers an innovative and creative way to explore a new place that is stimulating, supportive and safe.



DETAILED ITINERARY

DAY 1: Marrakech

Arrive Marrakech. Greet and transfer to our Riad in the old Medina.

5pm meet in the lounge room for introductions followed by our first short walk in the Medina before dinner. This first evening we have some informal discussion as some people may be tired after a long journey. Accommodation in a traditional guesthouse in the old Medina on HB (Half Board) includes dinner and breakfast.

DAY 2: Marrakech

8.30am breakfast 9 -9.30am orientation and update on tour itinerary. We will discuss the the itinerary, what to expect, any minor changes and answer questions about the tour.

9.30am morning walking tour of the Medina with a City Guide. Visit Museum collections of textiles & artefacts from the Saharan basin and weavers in the old Medina. After lunch we visit the exquisite Les Jardins Majorelle, see the private collection of Yves St Laurent at the new Musée Berbère including regional Amazigh (Berber) costumes, jewellery and carpets that inspired his life and work. Next door there is the new Yves St Laurent Museum that is a showcase of his personal clothing and jewellery design.

6 - 7pm Hollis Chatelain will make a presentation about her own work practice and discuss ideas for developing your own creative ideas and designs to make the most of your travel experience in Morocco.

Dinner in a local restaurant nearby. Riad accommodation on B&B includes breakfast.

DAY 3: Ait Ben Haddou

8am breakfast, 8.30am transfer across the High Atlas pass of Tizi-n-Tichka. Along the way we will stop to see an Argan Oil cooperative, a production industry that had been largely given over to the indigenous Amazigh (Berber) women in Morocco to allow them a means of subsistence in a male dominated culture. The roasted nut of the Argan tree, endemic to Morocco, provides a delicious culinary oil with outstanding health benefits which is eaten with bread and used in salads and couscous. The raw Argan nut also produces a rich oil that has become widely used in cosmetics. As the cosmetic industry has now begun to mechanise the process, the women's Argan associations are under threat. We will meet the women who will demonstrate the labour intensive process as we sample the wares and have a tasting.

Continue to our guesthouse in Ait Ben Haddou.

Accommodation on HB includes breakfast and dinner.



PHOTO: Ait Ben Haddou Ksar, UNESCO World Heritage Site

Day 4: Ait Ben Haddou

We start the day with a guided tour of the UNESCO World Heritage site of Ait Ben Haddou, an impressive walled Ksar (fortified village) and back-drop to many famous movies including Gladiator, Jesus of Nazareth, Game of Thrones and more. Then we visit a carpet cooperative to see weavers at work and view a range of traditional Amazigh carpets. The women will show us how to tie knots in weaving and we can investigate the many colour and design elements in these glorious hand made textiles. The local women will prepare a family lunch for us to share before we return to our guesthouse.

Afternoon activity: We begin working on ideas for composition and design using a range of drawing materials and photographs that we have taken as we travelled.

Accommodation on FB includes breakfast, lunch and dinner.

DAY 5: Skoura Oasis

Next a short drive to a village in the Anti-Atlas Mountains to visit a women's textile association where the local women work together to support their creative traditional weaving. The women will demonstrate natural dyeing techniques using rose madder and show us their hand crafted wares. This is an opportunity for us to also do some dyeing of our own using silk we have preprepared ahead of time. The association also generally serves tea and too much food and it is an amazing cultural experience! We then continue to our destination in the Skoura Oasis. Accommodation in the Skoura Oasis on FB to include breakfast, lunch and dinner.

PHOTO: womens textile association eco dyeing with Rose Madder

DAY 6: Skoura Oasis

After breakfast we walk through the oasis gardens to see how the locals manage their subsistence farming and then on to a local pottery for a demonstration by the traditional artisans. Visit the local womens textile cooperative to view the local produce, embroidery, weaving, baskets and beading. We return to our guesthouse for lunch.

Afternoon activity: time to continue working with Hollis on our design projects.

Accommodation on FB include all meals and a spectacular traditional music performance.



DAY 7: Erg Chebbi Dunes, Merzouga

8.30am breakfast. 9am transfer to Merzouga (5-6hrs) via the Valley of the Roses. Lunch in a cafe en route

and visit the Musee de Oasis at Tinjdad and a women's embroidery association where they create the traditional shawls worn in the Sahara. Continue via the village of Erfoud and visit the Fossil Museum and sales outlet where they produce a range of items made of the local black marble embedded with ancient fossils. Accommodation on HB to include dinner and breakfast.



DAY 8: Erg Chebbi Dunes, Merzouga

A day to enjoy the Sahara, you can get up early and see the sunrise in the desert.

Morning activity: time to work on our designs for a fabric painting project.

For lunch we will take a short drive to the nearby village of Khamlia to a cafe that serves a specialty dish called Medfouna, followed by a traditional Gnawa music performance. Accommodation on FB includes all meals.

PHOTO: Erg Chebbi Dunes Sahara

DAY 9: Fes

Depart early to drive north to Fez (8-9 hours). A long, but spectacular drive through the incredible landscape of the Ziz Valley and Middle Atlas Mountains, home of the Barbary apes. The sublime landscape offers plenty of scope for your imagination and design elements for textiles. Accommodation in the old Medina on B&B.

DAY 10: Fes

9.30am morning guided tour of the oldest Medina in the Islamic world, operating for 1,000 years. Visit the famous leather tannery and wander the streets to see the cultural highlights, artisanal workshops, the wood and metal souks and more before having lunch in the Medina. Return to our guesthouse and continue on your textile project.

Afternoon activity: time to work your art quilt design project. Riad accommodation on B&B.



PHOTO: Fes leather tannery

DAY 11: Chefchaouen

Today we drive north to the famous 'blue city'. Founded in 1471, Chefchaouen is nestled in the Rif Mountains and reveals a mix of cultural backgrounds as in its early history many Spanish Moors and Jews exiled from Spain settled amongst the local Amazigh people and the region was also annexed to Spain for a time in the early 20th century.

Accommodation on B&B includes breakfast.

Day 12: Chefchaouen

A day to explore the beautiful 'blue' village. After breakfast we walk to the 'Ras el Maa' waterfall at the top end of town and then wind our way back through the narrow streets of Chefchaouen, back to the Uta Hammam square at the bottom of the hill for lunch and free time to explore.

Afternoon activity: time to work on your project.

Accommodation on B&B.

DAY 13: Rabat

A half day drive from Chefchaouen, en route we visit the ancient Roman ruins at Volubilis, for a guided tour of the archeological site learning about the history of Morocco and the famous mosaics depicting Roman Gods and ancient life. The mosaics provide a great source of inspiration for textile and quilt design. We continue to the capital city of Rabat.

Accommodation on B&B includes breakfast.

Day 14: Rabat

A day to explore the old Medina of Rabat and the nearby Oudayas Kasbah. In the morning we will have a guided tour of the Kasbah and visit the Andalusian garden and visit the new National Museum of Finery - jewellery and costume - with displays in various exhibition halls dedicated to "The historical development of the finery and the chain of manufacture"; "The history of Moroccan costume"; "The male finery and harness"; "The Amazigh jewelry"; and "The regional specificities of the main production centers of urban jewelry".

5-6pm Final review of our design works!

7pm Final farewell dinner.

Accommodation on B&B includes breakfast.

Day 15:

Tour ends after breakfast.

Transfer to Casablanca airport included in tour price (or return to Marrakech by mid afternoon).

TOUR PRICE:

AUD\$7,890/US\$5,700 twin share/double room accommodation

Single room supplement AUD\$1,600/US\$1,150

CONTACT Email: enquiries@culturaltoursmorocco.com

TOUR PRICE to INCLUDE:

Guest artist: Hollis Chatelain
Experienced Tour Leader: Rita Lazauskas
English-speaking professional Amazigh Guide: Abdou
Private vehicle with driver and fuel for duration of the Tour
Airport transfer from Marrakech Airport on tour start date
Airport transfer to Casablanca airport on tour end date
Accommodation on FB (full board with 3 meals), HB (half board with evening meal & breakfast) or B&B (bed & breakfast) as per itinerary - includes all breakfasts, 7 dinners, 4 lunches
Local City Guides for walking tours in Marrakech, Fes and Volubilis
Hands-on workshops with Memory Quilt Project materials included
Entrance fees to cultural sites (Jardin Majorelle, Musée Berbère, YSL Museum, Ait Ben Haddou, etc)
Tips Kitty - on behalf of group for hotels, porters, driver and guides
Bottled water on the bus

PRICE to EXCLUDE:

Flights
Travel and health insurance (compulsory)
Airport transfers on dates other than tour start and end dates as listed above
Lunches, Evening meals when on B&B
Extras eg. Massage, hammam, cooking classes, etc
Beverages including alcohol, soda and mineral water that can be purchased locally
Personal tips for extra meals and other personal services

**Please note that this tour starts in Marrakech and ends in Rabat.
We recommend that you fly in to Marrakech and out of Casablanca airport.**

(We also offer a free transfer to Marrakech on the last day, however we do not arrive until mid afternoon so if flying from Marrakech on that day you would need an evening flight. Or we can arrange post tour accommodation at your request)

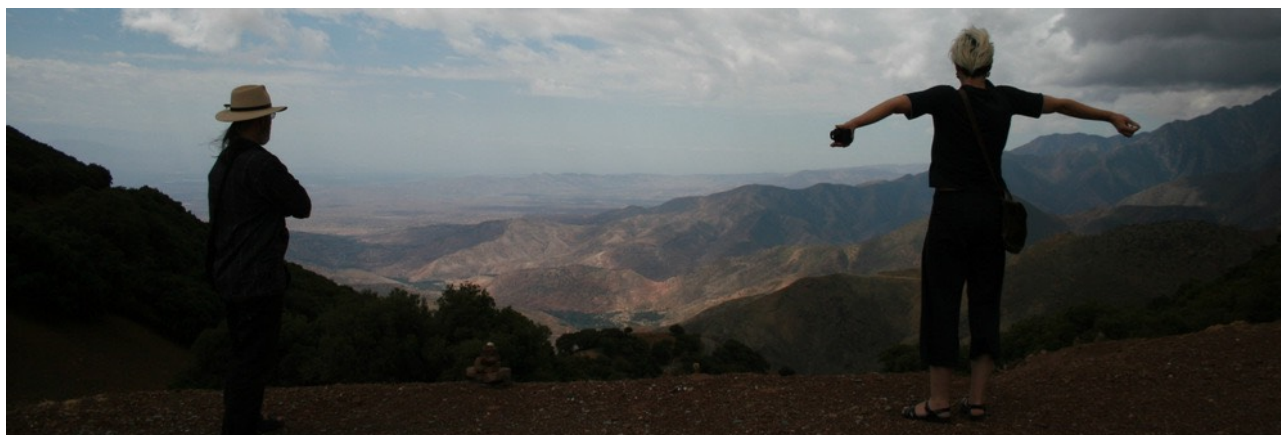


PHOTO: Enjoying the High Atlas Mountains!

If you wish to extend your stay in Morocco we can organise airport transfers or make arrangements for any extra pre or post tour accommodation or extra tours. We highly recommend staying an extra day or two in Rabat if you want to catch up on some shopping or return to Marrakech.

If you would like to spend more time in Morocco we can recommend a trip to the coast at Essaouira or the ancient city of Taroudant in the south. We offer extension tours with a 5% loyalty discount. Ask us for some ideas on what's on offer!

Note:

Itinerary occasionally subject to variation as we are always building on the program as new opportunities arise, or if local conditions outside of our control change.

AMAZIGH CULTURAL TOURS
Australian Business Reg. 26284232312