**Marrakech: Comprehensive Tourist Guide**

**1. General Presentation and History**

* **Nicknamed "Land of Joy", "Land of Bahja (الـبـهـجـة)", and the "Red City"**
* **Former imperial capital of Morocco for 350 years**
* **Located at the foot of the Atlas Mountains and near the desert**
* **Top tourist destination in Morocco**
* **Rich history with a blend of Berber, Arab, and French influences**

**2. Tourist Sites and Attractions**

* **Historic Medina: millennial center, labyrinth of alleys (UNESCO World Heritage)**
* **Jemaa el-Fna Square: vibrant heart of the city, especially lively in the evening**
* **Traditional souks**
* **Ben Youssef Madrasa: former Koranic school with Arab-Andalusian architecture**
* **Le Jardin Secret: palace with botanical and Islamic gardens**
* **Jardin Majorelle: art deco villa and botanical garden, Berber museum**
* **Numerous palaces, mosques, lush gardens**

**3. Districts and Architecture**

* **Medina: old Arab town surrounded by ramparts**
* **Gueliz: modern district developed under the French protectorate**

**4. Activities and Experiences**

* **Discovering local crafts**
* **Moroccan gastronomy**
* **Traditional hammams and spas**
* **Excursions to the Agafay desert and Atlas Mountains**
* **Water parks (e.g., Oasiria, Aqua Fun Club)**
* **Sports and leisure (e.g., paintball, virtual reality)**
* **Activities for children (e.g., educational farms)**

**5. Shopping and Crafts**

* **Modern shopping centers (e.g., Menara Mall, Almazar, M Avenue)**
* **Craft complexes (in Marrakech, El Kelaâ des Sraghna, Essaouira)**
* **Boutiques and art galleries**
* **Traditional souks in the Medina**

**6. Events and Festivals**

* **Marrakech International Marathon (January)**
* **Marrakech International Film Festival (November-December)**
* **International congresses and conferences**
* **Cultural events throughout the year**

**7. Accommodation and Practical Information**

* **Wide range of options, from youth hostels to luxury hotels**
* **Many traditional riads in the Medina**
* **Well-served international airport**
* **Semi-arid Mediterranean climate**
* **Best times to visit: spring (March-May) and autumn (September-November)**
* **3-5 days recommended for a complete visit**
* **Languages: Arabic, French, and Tamazight**

**8. Excursions and Surroundings**

* **Ourika Valley: waterfalls and Berber villages**
* **Agafay Desert: desert experience close to the city**
* **Essaouira: historic coastal town**
* **Ouzoud Waterfalls: highest waterfalls in Morocco**
* **Ait Benhaddou: UNESCO-listed kasbah**

**9. Culture and Art**

* **Cultural capital of Morocco with many unique museums**
* **Mix of Berber, Arab, and French traditions**
* **Dynamic contemporary art scene**
* **Numerous museums and art galleries**