# globetrotter

## SOUAD LARUSI SPILLS HER MARRAKECH SECRETS

Since setting up her textiles brand in 2000, Souad Larusi has been the queen of all things weaving and Berber rugs. She's also a fount of knowledge when it comes to Marrakech, so who better to turn to for the coolest haunts, shopping spots and hidden gems in Morocco's culture capital?

**Best store for a Moroccan decor fix?** Mustapha Blaoui. Get lost in this emporium of chests, carpets and antiquities scattered across three floors and a myriad of rooms. The shop doesn't have a sign on the door, so look out for a large unmarked door at 144 Rue Fab Doukkala.

**The street-food snack to try?** I go to Krita fish food stall in Jemaa el-Fnaa square (open evenings only). The fish is fresh, cooked on-site, and you eat by hand. I love their mashed aubergine, too!

**The restaurant with the best interiors in town?** Dar Cherifa (in Mouassine). Housed in a splendid 16th-century riad, it's a restaurant, gallery and café, and has lots of books on Moroccan arts and crafts.

**Help us pick a riad.** I'd say Riad Due (riaddue.com) in the medina. I love its contemporary and calming interior. The same company also owns the luxury boutique hotel Riad 72.

**Souks - where do we start?** Souk Cherifa – the home of bohemian fashion – has a cluster of boutiques selling chic accessories.

**The best gallery or museum in town?** You can't go wrong at the Musée Yves Saint-Laurent (museeyslmarraakech.com), with its superb collection of iconic pieces from the late designer.

Souad Larusi in her London showroom

Musée Yves Saint-Laurent

Bahia Palace

Dar Cherifa restaurant

**Best place for a lazy Sunday brunch?** Among the lush gardens at Beldi Country Club (beldicountryclub.com), which is a short drive from Marrakech city centre.

**Where can we find a hidden gem?** Azhar, a tailor in the medina at 93 Bis Kennaria. Two gentlemen make tunics and trousers. You can buy ready made or take your own fabric. Visit them in good time, as it may take a few days to complete your order.

**Stylish spot for a cocktail or two?** Comptoir Darna (comptoirmarrakech.com) in the Hivernage quarter is a dramatic den of opulence. Alternatively, try the Cafe Arabe (cafearabe.com) rooftop in the medina.

**Recommend an independent boutique.** Aya's, run by Nawal El Hriti. It specialises in kaftans and accessories. Past customers include Prince and Tom Hanks. Atika in Gueliz does the best loafers.

**Best trip out of town?** Kasbah Bab Ourika (kasbahbabourika.com), a hotel with spectacular mountain views. Or visit the otherworldly dunes of Agafay Desert, about 30 kilometres from Marrakech.

**Picturesque spot for a quiet moment?** Try the peaceful Le Jardin Secret, a haven of serenity and contemplation.

**Don't leave without visiting?** The 19th-century Bahia Palace by *caleche* (horse-drawn cart). Magical in the early evening.

**FEATURE** PATRICK HAMILTON COURTNEY **PHOTOGRAPHS** (MUSEE YVES SAINT-LAURENT AND THE BAHIA PALACE) ALAMY; (SOUAD LARUSI) JAKE CURTIS