

THE OUDAYAS KASBAH



The Oudayas Kasbah, built in the early 12th century, is the oldest section of Rabat. It was originally a fortress that protected the city within its walls from invasion. Today, it is the most peaceful and breathtaking section of the medina of Rabat.

THE OUDAYAS KASBAH

You can see the Kasbah from Avenue Al Marsa. After crossing this main road, you can walk along the Almohed walls and admire the beauty of the perimeter of the Kasbah.



These walls were constructed in the 12th century and were used in order to protect the city that lies within. They are made from a simple sand and water mixture that mimics the strength of concrete.



If you continue to walk straight, you will come across a set of stairs, as seen above. Travel up these stairs and you will come across the famed Bab Oudaya (seen below).



This ornate door was the original entrance to the Kasbah, constructed in the 12th century. The décor was carved directly into the stone and the large shells on either side of the entryway are the symbol of the Oudayas Kasbah.

The main entrance that most visitors use is located at the bottom of the stairs that lead to the Bab Oudaya (seen left).

By entering these, you are now in the Kasbah. When looking inside, you can see that there are two paths you can take. We are going to take the path to the right, through the black iron gates.



This path leads to the Andalusian Gardens. If you turn left at the security guard post, you can walk into the main gardens. These gardens were designed in the 12th century as a secluded park for many visitors and local residents to get fresh air and tranquility. In addition to its array of 650 species of greenery, the garden has a variety of water features and fountains that were inspired by Andalucia, or Islamic Spain.



THE OUDAYAS KASBAH

If you continue straight at the guard post, you will come across a small gift shop located in the walls of the Kasbah. Here you can buy post cards and other gifts that are handmade.



On this path, you will see a large building on the left. This is the Museum of the Oudayas, seen below.



Built in the 17th century by Moulay Ismail, it was initially used as a palace for the ruler. It is now used as a museum for arts and popular traditions. Here, you can find a collection of handmade rugs and carpets, pottery, musical instruments, and Amazigh jewelry.

If you continue on the path after passing the museum and through the gardens, you will see a door straight ahead (as seen below).



Enter through this door and you will come across the Moorish Café (seen below).



Here, many visitors relax, drink mint tea, enjoy pastries, and admire the beautiful views of Sale and the Bouregreg River. There are more seats than just this, however. If you travel toward the water-closets that are to the right of where you enter and take a left after them, you will find another seating area that includes a beautiful

view of the rest of the Oudayas Kasbah, Sale, the River, and Rabat (seen below). You can sit here to enjoy the café as well.



If you travel back to the main café and exit through the other main entrance, you will find yourself on the streets of the Kasbah. Many small souks, or shops are here. They sell handmade, traditional Moroccan goods such as leather, pottery, or jewelry.



THE OUDAYAS KASBAH

The walls here are blue and white. These colors represent the water that the Kasbah looks upon and the pureness of the area. This can be seen below.



There are many winding streets here that residents live off of. Continue on the path intended in order to get to the main road in the center of the Kasbah.

You can do this by walking straight until you come to a fork in the road. Here, you want to take a right. Keep walking on this road until you come to another fork. Here, you want to take the left, and immediately take a right. You can see the main concrete road from here. Continue walking until you are on it.

This street is the home for many small shops, a library, and the Jama al-Atiq Mosque. For our tour, you will be turning right once you reach the main road.

After walking for a bit, you will see the Jama al-Atiq Mosque on your left (seen below).

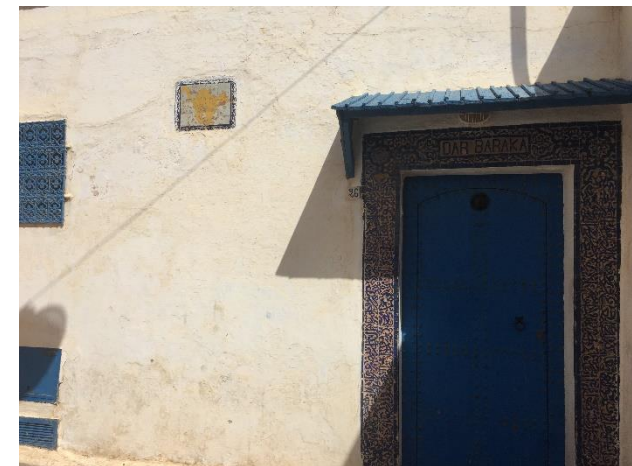


Built in 1150, it still stands as the oldest mosque in Rabat. It was initially built under the supervision of Sultan Abd el-Moumen but was later reconstructed in the 18th century due to structural degradation. The interior contains galleries and dining rooms, all surrounding a centralized prayer hall. This mosque acts as a sacred area, exclusively open to Muslims.

From here, you can see the library of the Oudayas. Here you can sit and read hundreds of books and magazines, or enjoy coffee or tea from the café inside.



If you continue walking along the main road, you will come across a house with a mosaic cat next to the door, as seen below.



This house is where a famous cat who found buried treasure lives. Many locals know the story, so ask around!

To the left of the cat's house and through the archway, is the Semaphore Platform.



The Semaphore Platform, as picture above, is the outermost point of the Oudayas Kasbah. The platform along with the three watchtowers were built in the late 18th century under the sultan Mohammed ben Abdallah. It overlooks the Atlantic Ocean and the Bouregreg River that runs between Rabat and Salé. Because of this easy access to the waterways of Rabat, the Semaphore Platform was used to communicate with vessels that wished to enter the port. Today, many people use this as a place to sit and relax while looking at the beautiful views and ocean breeze.



Travel down the stairs on the side that overlooks the Bouregreg River. From here, you can turn right for access to the water.



If you take a left at the bottom of the stairs and walk along the Kasbah walls, you will come back to the Avenue Al Marsa where we began.

