

Shopping and Souvenirs

Medina Shopping: Rabat's Medina is one of the best places to experience traditional Moroccan craftsmanship. The winding streets are lined with shops and stalls selling unique, handmade items that reflect Morocco's rich artistic heritage. Here are some of the most popular items to look for in the Medina:

1. **Rugs:** Moroccan rugs are world-famous for their intricate patterns and vibrant colors. The Medina is home to many weavers who produce both **Berber carpets** and **kilim rugs**. Each region of Morocco has its own style, so take your time to explore the various designs and qualities.
2. **Jewelry:** Look for traditional **Moroccan silver jewelry**, which is often handmade and incorporates Berber designs. You'll also find pieces with intricate filigree work, as well as jewelry made from local stones like **turquoise** and **amber**.
3. **Ceramics:** Moroccan pottery is known for its bold colors and geometric designs. Popular items include **tagine pots**, **decorative plates**, and **tilework**. The city of Safi, just south of Rabat, is known for producing some of the finest ceramics, but you can find a wide variety of these pieces in Rabat's Medina.
4. **Leather Goods:** The Medina offers a range of high-quality leather items, from **babouches** (traditional Moroccan slippers) to handbags, wallets, and belts. Moroccan leather is famous for its softness and durability, and you'll often find products dyed in vibrant colors.
5. **Spices:** Moroccan cuisine relies heavily on spices, and you can find an array of them in the Medina. Popular spices include **cumin**, **cinnamon**, **saffron**, and the famous **ras el hanout** blend, which is used in many traditional dishes. You can also buy **argan oil**, which is commonly used in both cooking and cosmetics.

Modern Shopping: If you're looking for modern, international brands or a more Western-style shopping experience, Rabat has several shopping malls and areas that cater to these tastes:

1. **Mega Mall**
 - *Location:* Route de Zaer, Rabat
 - *Description:* Mega Mall is one of Rabat's largest shopping centers, offering a mix of international fashion brands, electronics, and home goods. It's a great spot for those looking for a more familiar shopping experience. The mall also has a skating rink, bowling alley, and a variety of cafes and restaurants.
2. **Rabat Center Mall**
 - *Location:* Avenue Fal Ould Oumeir, Agdal
 - *Description:* Located in the upscale Agdal district, Rabat Center Mall offers a mix of luxury brands and more affordable stores. It's an excellent place to shop for clothes, accessories, and cosmetics. The mall also features a supermarket and a food court with international dining options.
3. **Arribat Center**
 - *Location:* Avenue Annakhil, Agdal

- *Description:* A modern shopping and entertainment complex, Arribat Center offers high-end fashion, beauty products, and electronics. The mall also includes a cinema, making it a great destination for a full day of shopping and entertainment.

Best Places for Souvenirs:

1. Rabat Medina

- *What to Buy:* Artisan crafts, pottery, rugs, and spices
- *Description:* The Medina is the heart of traditional shopping in Rabat. It's a labyrinth of stalls and shops where you can find one-of-a-kind souvenirs. Haggling is common practice, so be prepared to negotiate prices. A good rule of thumb is to offer around half of the initial price and then settle somewhere in between.

2. Oulja Artisan Village

- *What to Buy:* Pottery, leather goods, and traditional crafts
- *Location:* Just outside Rabat, in Salé
- *Description:* The Oulja Artisan Village is a fantastic place to shop for authentic Moroccan handicrafts. Artisans work on-site, producing handmade ceramics, woodwork, and leather goods. The prices here are often more reasonable than in the Medina, and you can witness the craftsmen at work.

3. Chellah Market

- *What to Buy:* Traditional Moroccan goods, spices, and artisan products
- *Location:* Near the Chellah Necropolis, Rabat
- *Description:* Chellah Market is a great place for tourists to buy souvenirs in a more relaxed environment compared to the bustling Medina. Vendors here offer a range of traditional Moroccan goods, including textiles, jewelry, and spices. It's also a good spot to buy Moroccan tea sets and small trinkets.

4. Rue des Consuls

- *What to Buy:* High-quality artisan crafts
- *Location:* Medina, Rabat
- *Description:* Rue des Consuls is a well-known shopping street in Rabat's Medina, famous for its high-end artisan products. You'll find beautifully crafted items, including jewelry, pottery, and carpets. The quality here tends to be higher, and it's a great place to find special, authentic souvenirs.

How to Bargain in Local Markets: Bargaining is an essential part of shopping in Moroccan markets, and it can be a fun experience if done politely. Here are some tips for haggling in Rabat's souks:

- **Start low:** When asking for the price of an item, offer a price that's about half or slightly less than half of the vendor's asking price. From there, you'll negotiate to reach a fair price.
- **Be respectful:** Haggling should be lighthearted and polite. Maintain a friendly attitude and don't be offended if the vendor offers a high price at first—it's part of the process.

- **Know when to walk away:** If you're not happy with the price, it's perfectly acceptable to walk away. Often, vendors will lower the price if they see you're about to leave.
- **Research average prices:** Before heading to the souks, it's a good idea to familiarize yourself with the average prices of popular items, so you have an idea of what's reasonable to pay.
- **Use cash:** Most vendors in the Medina prefer cash, especially when bargaining. Make sure to have small bills on hand for making purchases.