Feasibility study for the creation of a tourism company for the protection of the Moroccan architectural heritage: The Southern Kasbahs

Study for the Tourism Dynamization of the Casablanca Medina through urban regeneration, creation of themed circuits and activities

The KasbahsProject

Objectives: How to combine heritage protection and rehabilitation, economic and social development...with tourism?

The Southern Kasbahs

The area of influence extends over the 3 valleys (Drâa, Ziz and Dadès) as well as the High Atlas

The common approach: rehabilitation and regeneration of Moroccan Heritage through Tourism use
The Kasbahs Rehabilitation project: transforming the Kasbahs with a higher potential into a Heritage Hotels chain

Spain’s Paradores (Heritage Hotel Chain) experience has strongly inspired the Project

The project also aims create a themed route with miscellaneous tourism activities and dynamize the entire Region’s economy

The Kasbahs Project

The Medinas Project

The initial approach is based on words and values leading to the generation of three potential themes for the future tourism circuit

1. The Medina - Port
   - The driver of the development and successive recoveries of the Medina of Casablanca
   - The Medina, the link between the port and the city
   - The Medina-Port, a medina shaped by centuries of port activity

2. An avant-garde Medina
   - Although it was primarily associated with the city of Casablanca, modernity has made its first steps in the Medina
   - The Medina has witnessed many trends that have shaped the spirit of the city
   - The Medina, source of inspiration of Casablanca

3. A Medina open to the world
   - The Medina has been a cultural melting pot for many years
   - Inside the Medina there are many testimonies of the multiculturalism of the past
   - Medina with a thousand influences

The Casablanca Medina Tourism Project

The Casablanca Medina project

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The Casablanca Medina Tourism Project

The Tourism focused approach will enable an in-depth and sustainable rehabilitation of the Medina as a district, including a comprehensive entertainment offering for both locals and tourists.

### Main urban interventions (long term)

- Gastronomic market
- Modern Arts Centre
- The Promenade (Rambla)

### Urban and media interventions (short term)

- Tribute to Casablanca and Humphrey Bogart

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The Casablanca Medina Tourism Project

The entertainment and leisure offering will consist of a permanent component clubbed with a temporary one composed of events and festivals.

### Spaces dedicated to art

- Permanent entertainment

### "Associations" with the Medina

- Temporary entertainment

### Tourism circuits

- Events
- Festivals
- Temporary markets
In addition to the proposed entertainment offering, tour circuits and their variations (as part of the permanent animation) will allow the discovery of the different facets of the Medina.

**Main and alternative circuit**

**Variations of the main circuit (in red)**

- The circuits allow learning about the medina from different approaches and points of view
- In addition, the different elements that can be found in the medina complete the visitor’s experience
- The subthemes of the circuits are adapted to the potential interests of today’s tourism
- The circuits are also designed to satisfy the curiosity of residents who wish to learn more about their city

The seasonal program has been selected based on the same criteria planned for the intervention on the Medina, which will become a hotspot in the entertainment offering.

**Events**

- The «White Night»
- Treasure hunt in the Medina
- Street art
- «Play it again, Sam»
- «Médina – Port» boat-race

**Temporary markets**

- Dlala carpets
- Traditional gourmet food market

Objective: promote the Medina to the citizens of Casablanca and showcase the local wealth of art and culture

Objective: promote the traditional products of Casablanca and Morocco
The scope of the studies was holistic to define a strategic and also an implementable action plan, with all project partners in a participative and consensus way.

### Kasbahs

- **Internal analysis**
- Market Analysis of the area, supply and demand
- Analysis of direct competition
- Supply and demand projections

### Casablanca Medina

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| T4: Tourism entertainment & leisure offering |

### External analysis: international benchmarks to determine best practices

- **Positioning**
- Preliminary programme
- Concept
- Sustainable development approach

- **Legal Structure**
- Economic and financial model

### The governance and business model for the Kasbahs and Medina studies

The governance and economic model is a key component to ensure the long-term sustainability of the initiatives and it is based on public-private sectors partnership.

### Kasbahs

**Moroccan State (51% or more)**

- Grants the right to exploit heritage assets to be rehabilitated under the “Foundouks du Maroc (FDM)” brand, as well as full control on the operation.

### Casablanca Medina

**Participation of public institutions**

- Prefectures of the Districts of Casablanca (Aouita)
- Tourism Regional Committee (Comité Régional du Tourisme) of Greater Casablanca

**Participation of private institutions**

- Affiliates (who are committed annually through contributions)
- Sponsors (with long-term commitment)
- Partners (general and media)

**Main responsibilities of the cultural institution**

- Hospitality and tourist information
- Tourism promotion of the Medina
- Organisation and/or coordination of tourism entertainment implemented within the Medina

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- **Public-private partnership**
- “Southern Kasbahs” Asset holding company
- “Foundouks du Maroc Gestion S.A.” Management Company
- JV to be created with private hotel management company

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- **Option 1. Management contract**
- **Option 2. Lease contract**

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- **Public-private investors**
- “Southern Kasbahs” Asset holding company
- “Foundouks du Maroc Gestion S.A.” Management Company

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- **Acquisition or lease**
- Public assets
- Private assets

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- **Cultural Association of the Old Medina of Casablanca (ACAM)**

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- **Healthcare and tourist information**
- Tourism promotion of the Medina
- Organisation and/or coordination of tourism entertainment implemented within the Medina
Projects outcomes

Lessons learned from the 2 projects

• Rehabilitation of heritage or distressed facilities or areas, in urban or rural areas, needs to address the issue in a holistic way:
  • Tourism use paired with other uses (leisure, arts, edutainment, business, etc.) in order to develop the whole economic and social value chain
  • Combination of actions on the “hardware” (buildings, spaces, etc.) and on the “software” (feeling of place, events, activities, theming, etc.)
  • Need to determine a strong marketing concept to make it attractive to all stakeholders
  • Creative partnerships combining public and private sectors’ contribution, as well as local society (whenever applicable) for planning, financing and management functions

• No need to reinvent the wheel! There are good references which best practices can be adapted: in Spain, Paradores is a good example for Heritage Hotels; as well as for instance Barcelona and Bilbao regeneration of abandoned or infra-utilized urban areas

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