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# Women's Health

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22

ways to be  
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on rock bottom,  
recovery and her  
route forwards



'Why being  
too nice is  
making me ill'

One people-pleasing  
writer investigates

02

## Morocco

**What:** A surf, spa and city break

**Where:** Jardin des Douars hotel, Essaouira; [jardindesdouars.com](http://jardindesdouars.com)

**How much:** Rooms from £140pn, including breakfast. Ryanair ([ryanair.com](http://ryanair.com)) flies to Essaouira twice a week from £14.99 one-way

**Who:** Amanda Statham, contributing travel editor

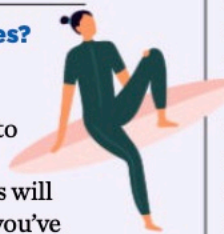
### Sounds like Essaouira has it all. What's the catch?

Ancient Essaouira on Morocco's west coast is known as the windy city and it *is* quite breezy. But honestly? When temperatures hover around 22°C with blue sky and sunshine, who cares? Plus, it's the wind that whips up the perfect surf-school waves off the city's 2km beach. It's like Morocco's answer to Santa Cruz, with plenty of wetsuit-clad hotties hanging around the surf, paddleboarding and kitesurf schools (if that's your

vibe), including Ion Club, a 15-minute stroll from the blue and white car-free medina. Reliable waves and dune views make Essaouira's surf the stuff of legend and the natural high I got when I stood on my board and rode a wave was truly dope(amine). Recovery took place next door at Ocean Vagabond cafe, a laid-back beach bar, where I sat post-lesson (from £17, including board and wetsuit hire), chatting to locals and making a sugar-laden mint tea last until sunset, which matched the colour of my Monzo card.

### When I'm not riding waves?

You'll be doing plenty of shopping. In fact, if you *don't* finish your trip trying to convince Ryanair staff that your rugs, bags and ceramics will fit into your carry-on, then you've really not got the measure of the place. Bargains can be found in the alleys off the main shopping streets such as Avenue Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah – don't forget to haggle and carry cash (many stalls don't accept cards no matter how much they look like the setting sun).



Coffee break

### And once I've shopped till I've dropped?

Catch a 15-minute shuttle bus to hotel Jardin des Douars, an oasis framed by palms and bougainvillea.

From rattan chairs to can-I-take-them-home-with-me rugs, the interiors make it hard *not* to snap every inch for Instagram. If you *can* tear yourself away, head to the spa. A hammam treatment with black soap and eucalyptus was abrasive enough to be character-building but left my skin baby's-bottom smooth, while the Relaxing Massage was just that. I even bought some vitamin E oil from the spa's gift shop. As if I didn't have enough baggage already.



The stuff Insta dreams are made of