**Hassi Messaoud**

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**Hassi Messaoud** ([Arabic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arabic_language): حاسي مسعود‎) is a town in [Ouargla](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ouargla) province, southeast [Algeria](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Algeria), north [Africa](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Africa). [Oil](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oil) was discovered there in 1956 and the town's prominence has grown rapidly since then. It is an oil refinery town named after the first oil well. A water well, dug in 1917, can be found on the airport side of town. It is considered as the First Energy town in Algeria where all the big oil and gas companies have offices and bases.

**History**



The Historical Hassi Messaoud Well

The Name Hassi Messaoud means "the well of Messaoud" in Arabic. Messaoud Rouabeh, son of ElHadj Rabah, son of Amira, was from the tribes of Chaamba (Arabic tribes living near the region of Ghardaia and Ouargla) and exactly from the tribe named "Oulad Belkacem" (sons of Belkacem). He was born in 1875 near Ouargla. He dug other water wells in the region; the last one before that in Hassi Messaoud was the well of Doubba, and since that well was crowded by Bedouin using it, he decided to travel elsewhere to find another water point. When traveling south-east from Ouargla, he found some green areas in the place named now "Bou Amamma". He decided to dig a well there and he found a liquid with a bizarre color and odor, The information didn't manage to reach the French colonies at that time. From that time i.e. 1917, they named the region as "Hassi Messaoud".

Before the discovery of oil in the region, Hassi Messaoud was not very populated. After discovering oil in the region in the 1950s the French built two petroleum bases. After the nationalization of oil and gas in the early 70s, the bases became property of [Sonatrach](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sonatrach) (the national oil and gas company). In 1984, and after a new administrative zoning, Hassi Messaoud became a municipality (a local district) with a local assembly. After that date people started populating the town independently. Sonatrach has imported ready-built houses, approximately 2000 units. Now Hassi Messaoud is a town with more than 60,000 inhabitants (non official source), without counting those living in the oil and gas company bases. The town contains several bases for the oil and gas companies, where Algerian and foreign people are working and living.

**Infrastructure**

The town has several areas, among them : Les 1850 villas, Le Boulevard, Aissat Idir city, Bouamama, Les 136, Batima Hamra, AADL city, Les 200. It has approximately : 5 post offices, 3 police stations, 8 Pharmacies, 4 clinics (basic), 1 hospital (basic), 5 mosques, several supermarkets, 1 daily market, 5 primary schools, 3 secondary schools, 1 sports-hall.

**Climate**

The weather is extremely hot and dry in summer (May to September),the heat starts in February, with temperature ranges of 30 to 50 degrees and even 60° sometimes plus (max) and 15 to 27 (min). It is cold and dry in the winter (October to April) with temperature ranges of 17 to 30 degrees (max) and 5 to 15 (min). The average maximum temperature is 30 degrees, the average minimum is 15. Precipitation is negligible.

Sand storms are common before summer time (from March to June), lasting from 6 hours to 4 days. These storms vary in their intensity but in general they prevent any external activity and driving becomes very hazardous.

**Transportation**

The town has a coach and taxi station which serves all major cities in the country.

The town is served by the [Oued Irara Airport](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oued_Irara_-_Krim_Belkacem_Airport) which has services to [London-Gatwick](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gatwick_airport), [Madrid](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madrid), and [Paris Charles de Gaulle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_de_Gaulle_Airport), among others. The London-Gatwick flights are currently operated by JetAir chartering aircraft from [Monarch Airlines](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monarch_Airlines) and runs one flight per day on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday. [Iberworld](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iberworld) Airlines (again charted by JetAir) run a once a day flight from Madrid, Spain on a Tuesday and Friday with GoFast Airlines handling the Paris route.

ICAR Aviation from France / AviationPlus from the Netherlands operate 2 flights a week with a AN12 Freighter aircraft for the oil industry. GoFast operates cargo services from Paris to Hassi Messaoud twice a week.

**Attacks against women**

Main article: [Hassi Messaoud mob attacks against women](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hassi_Messaoud_mob_attacks_against_women)

In 2010 [Amnesty International](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amnesty_International) reported that [mob attacks](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hassi_Messaoud_mob_attacks_against_women) against single women accused of being [prostitutes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prostitute) were taking place in Hassi Messaoud. According to Amnesty International there are reports that "some women have been sexually abused" and were targeted "not just because they are women, but because they are living alone and are economically independent."

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