

Your passport to adventure

Marrakech & Sahara Teen

Country(ies): Morocco

Tour type: Family

Transport: A/C minibus/coach & 4x4 jeeps

Group size: Min: 2 | Max: 16

Days: 8 days

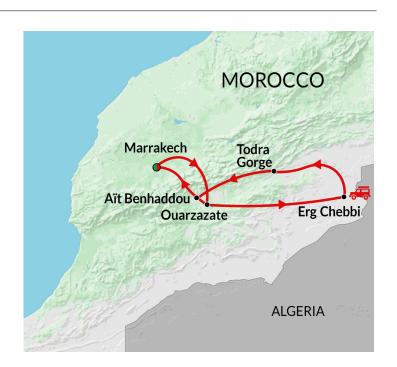
Start Location: Marrakech, Morocco

End Location: Marrakech, Morocco

Meals: Breakfasts - 7, Lunches - 3, Dinners - 6

Highlights:

Marrakech medina, Djemaa El Fna square, Todra Gorge, Sahara Desert Berber Camp, Ait Benhaddou UNESCO site.



Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive in Marrakech, transfer to hotel

Welcome to Morocco! After a short transfer from the airport, you will have a free day to explore this vibrant city. Tonight you will meet your fellow travellers at your pre-departure meeting at 6pm, organised at the joining hotel in the heart of town.

OVERNIGHT: Marrakech hotel

MEALS: Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 2: Travel through the Atlas Mountains to Ouarzazate

After breakfast we travel to Ouarzazate. For centuries Ouarzazate has been the place where people from the Atlas Mountains, Draa and Dades Valley have converged to do business. The modern town we see today was built as a French garrison in the 1920's and the movie business took off here in the 1950's. The region has since built quite a resume as a body-double for Tibet, Rome, Somalia and Egypt. Following lunch, there is an optional tour of the Film Studios, famous for films such as Gladiators, The Last Temptation of Christ and the Living Daylights. There is also an option for Quad Biking in the desert, or just exploring the town and Kasbah, which featured as a backdrop in Star Wars.

OVERNIGHT: Ouarzazate hotel

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 3: Desert here we come! Camel Trek and Berber camp

Today we enjoy a stunning drive where we will stop to visit traditional irrigation wells. This intricate network of canals, dates back to the 14th Century and covers more than 300km. We stop for an optional lunch, and in the summer - a relaxing swim before heading towards the great desert dunes of Erg Chebbi, Merzouga, where we transfer to our camels for a trek into the Sahara to our authenic Berber Camp. We enjoy local food, music and an amazing night out under the Saharan stars.

Please note that to ensure the well being of camels used on this tour, we have the following policies in place:

- Our camels are only used for approximately 1 hour, once per day.
- Camels are free to roam throughout the day and have access to food and water.
- No camels younger than 4 years old are used for camel rides.
- We have a policy of only 1 rider per camel.
- All camels are regularly vet checked.

OVERNIGHT: Traditional berber camp

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 4: Todra Gorge, optional rock climbing

After a wonderful breakfast in the Dunes we leave the desert and stop along the way to visit ancient irrigation wells. We can see how they were created from an intricate network of underground canals, running from the Atlas to the Sahara, more than 300km and dating back to the 14th century. We move on to Todra Gorge. We have lunch at our hotel on arrival here. The stunning gorge, set amongst the Palmeries and hemmed in by 300m cliffs changes colour throughout the day, as the sun moves from east to west. We have time to explore the gorge or, go for some optional rock climbing. We go to Tizgui, one of the old villages of Todra and visit a local carpet cooperative where we learn how to make Moroccan tea and a Berber rug.

OVERNIGHT: Todra Gorge hotel **MEALS:** Breakfast,Lunch,Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 5: Road of 1000 Kasbahs to Ait Benhaddou

We have a leisurely depart from Todra this morning as we head off to Ait Benhaddou. On the road also known as the road of a thousand Kasbahs we will make a stop at Kasbah Amridil. This is one of the best Kasbah examples in Morocco and once featured on the Moroccan 50 Dirham bank note. We arrive at Ait Benhaddou a UNESCO World Heritage site for lunch. We will make a guided tour of the Ksar of Ait Benhaddou this afternoon, a traditional pre Saharan habitat of earthen walled dwellings fortified by surrounding walls and guarded by 4 corner towers. This evening we will enjoy dinner and soak up the atmosphere of this inspiring place.

OVERNIGHT: Ait Benhaddou hotel **MEALS:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 6: Pass through the High Atlas en-route to Marrakech

We will depart this morning traversing the mighty and impressive High Atlas mountains en route to Marrakech. There is a chance to go on an optional guided tour of Marrakech in the afternoon which takes approximately 3 hours and includes Bahia Palace, The Medina, pharmacy visit and a walk around the Katoubia Mosque or you can just explore for yourself. You can enjoy a free night in Marrakech, enjoy the hussle and bustle of the medina, eat in Djamma el Fna square, shop, visit a club or if you prefer a quieter time, why not enjoy a nice meal at the hotel and bar?

OVERNIGHT: Marrakech hotel

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS:

Day 7: Free day in Marrakech (optional excursions)

There is time today to take an optional hot air balloon ride before breakfast, consider any optional excursions in the region or just explore more sights and soak up the incredible atmosphere of Marrakech. The hotel pool is a welcome sight for you at the end of your day in town. The day ends with our last group meal in the Djemaa El Fna

the legendary main square full of acrobats, snake charmers, juice sellers and various open air restaurants.

OVERNIGHT: Marrakech hotel **MEALS:** Breakfast, Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 8: Depart from Marrakech

Your adventure tour ends after breakfast. For those flying out of Marrakech on this day you can arrange airport transfers with your guide, and these can be booked any time for this day – there is luggage storage at the hotel should you need to check out before your go to the airport.

OVERNIGHT: N/A **MEALS:** Breakfast

EXTRAS:

Included:

- 6 nights accommodation in 3 to 4-star hotels
- 1 nights in a traditional berber desert camp
- Transport in AC minibus/coach or 4x4
- 24-hour airport arrival transfer service
- English speaking tour leader throughout and specialist local guides
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary
- Entrances fees to monuments as stated

Excluded:

- International flights (available on request)
- Visa fees
- Travel insurance (compulsory, available on request)
- Departure airport transfer service
- Meals not indicated in the itinerary
- Drinks, snacks and other personal expenses (e.g. laundry)
- Tipping Kitty (\$55 per person)
- Tips for guides and drivers (not included in the tipping kitty)
- Any other items not mentioned above

Notes

Hotel Gala Dinners

Many of Morocco's higher level hotels arrange a very special gala dinner with entertainment in the evening on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. Payment for these is normally optional on Christmas Eve (24 Dec) but normally compulsory on New Year's Eve (31 Dec), whether you attend or not. Prices for any compulsory Gala Dinners are included in our tour prices.

Options

Our tours are designed to include all that you need to enjoy a really special time in the destination you're visiting. However, we do also offer some extra options to complement the tour and add some additional sightseeing or activities, or some extra time at either end of the tour.

All accommodation based options (e.g. Single supplements, extra nights, cruise upgrades) should be booked and paid for in advance so that we can make the appropriate arrangements. Other options may either be booked and paid for in advance or while you are on the tour, though we recommend booking in advance to ensure there are no issues with availability.

Many options are priced the same throughout the year, but some may incur single or high season supplements - full details are given on the tour reservation form or on request.

Extra day in Morocco - pre-tour (EXSGMO)

Min numbers: 1

This option adds an extra day to the start of your tour, staying in the same hotel as the main tour itself (subject to availability). Your airport arrival transfer is still included. Prices shown are per person and based on two people sharing.

Note: Single room and peak season supplements apply.

Extra day in Morocco - post-tour (EXSGMO)

Min numbers: 1

This option adds an extra day to the end of your tour, staying in the same hotel as the main tour itself (subject to availability). Your airport departure transfer is not included, but can be easily arranged through your hotel or with the help if your tour guide. Prices shown are per person and based on two people sharing.

Note: Single room and peak season supplements apply.

Locally Available Options

Min numbers: 1

We offer a range of locally available options on this tour, these can be booked via your tour guide once you are in Morocco. Prices are per person, quoted in Moroccan Dirhams and may be subject to change.

- Guided city tour of Marrakech 3 hours (2-4 Pax 200 DH, 5-9 Pax 150 DH, 10 Pax 100 DH)
- Bahia Palace Entry Fee (100 DH)
- Hammam in Marrakech (prices from 150 DH)
- Hot air balloon ride over the High Atlas Mountains (2000 DH)
- Movie Studio visit in Ouarzazate (30 minutes = 80 DH)
- Cooking classes in Todra (300 DH)
- Quad biking in Ouarzazate AGE 16+ ONLY (2 hours = 590DH, 2 hours for 2 pax = 690DH)
- Rock climbing in Todra Gorge Adult must be present (1 hour = 300 DH)

The below options are only available on tours visiting Essaouira:

- Quad biking in Essaouira AGE 16+ ONLY (2 hours = 590DH, 2 hours for 2 pax = 690DH)
- Horse riding in Essaouira (1 hour = 250 DH, 2/3 hours = approx. 300 DH/390 DH approx.

- Windsurfing in Essaouira (2 hours = approx. 600 DH)
- Surfing in Essaouira (2 hours = approx. 350 DH)
- Kayaking in Essaouira (2 hours = approx. 350 DH)
- Kite surfing in Essaouira (2 hours = approx. 700DH

1. Accommodation

We use good quality mid-range tourist class hotels on this tour, rated at the local Moroccan 3 to 4-star level (local star ratings may vary slightly from international standards). Where possible, an effort has been made to use locally owned, family friendly accommodations for this tour.

Accommodation is based on double, twin en-suite rooms with air conditioning. All couples will have a private double room and generally an extra bed will be added for children.

Please check the Single Room Supplement option for details on room sharing options and charges for solo travellers on this tour.

The overnight Berber camp in the desert is spent in simple but comfortable goat hair tents on the edge of the dunes with beds and bedding provided. You may want to bring a sleeping bag or sleeping sheet for extra comfort during the colder winter months (November-February).

2. Transport

Our trips feature a mix of different transport options. We want you to feel like you're really experiencing the country you're travelling through, but at the same time we want you to finish journeys refreshed enough to enjoy the next stage of the tour. The terrain and public transport options in Morocco mean that we use private AC minibuses or coaches throughout this tour, subject to the final size of the group. For your trip into the desert dunes, local 4x4 vehicles are used.

3. Group Makeup / Tour Leader / Guides

We are committed to maintaining small groups wherever possible as we feel this gives everyone in the group the best chance to get to know their fellow travellers and to hear and make the most of their guide. This tour therefore has a maximum size of 16 people. The minimum number of travellers required for the tour to run is 2.

This is one of our Teen tours, and we therefore set the minimum age for travellers to join the tour at 12. There is no maximum age limit, but travellers need to be moderately fit and mobile and in general we would recommend this tour for those travelling with children aged 12+.

An English speaking guide will accompany the group throughout the tour, along with the driver. We may also use specialist local guides to give extra information at some of the sites visited during the tour. At Encounters Travel we aim to only use local Moroccan guides and drivers. We feel this gives you the best experience of the country and the sites you are seeing and many people describe our Moroccan guides as one of the highlights of their holiday.

We may share this tour with travellers booking through other operators.

4. Dates & Prices

We run regular small-group departures on this tour starting on Saturdays throughout the year. All departures are guaranteed to run if a minimum of 2 travellers is reached. If we do not reach this minimum number (which happens very rarely), or other local reasons mean we cannot run the tour, then we will offer you the option to either pay a small supplement to do the tour exactly as planned but privately, to change your date, to transfer to another tour, or we will provide you with a full refund. Departure dates and prices are listed on our website and in our brochure. Please check the website for the most up-to-date prices and any special offers.

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Note: Please $\underline{\text{download an up-to-date copy}}$ of these tour notes shortly before you travel as itineraries and information does change from time to time.