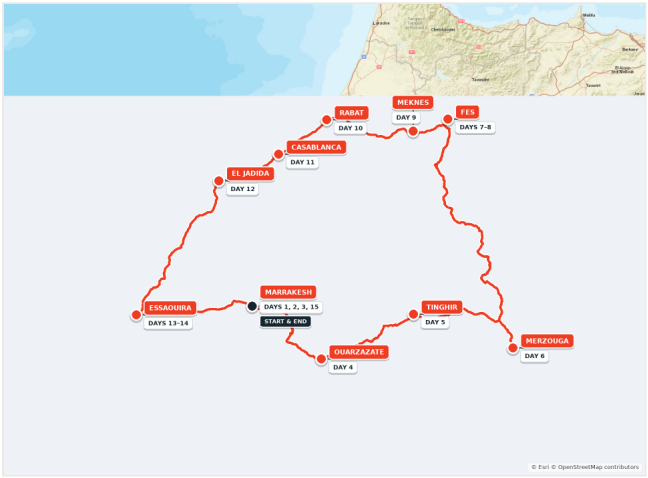
ENCOUNTERS TRAVEL

Your passport to adventure

Morocco Uncovered

COUNTRY(IES)	Morocco
TOUR TYPE	Private
TRANSPORT	AC car/minibus & 4x4 vehicle
GROUP SIZE	Min: 2 | Max: Any
DURATION	15 days
STARTS	Marrakech, Morocco
ENDS	Marrakech, Morocco
MEALS	Breakfasts - 14, Lunches - 0, Dinners - 10

TOUR ROUTE MAP **15 Days**



ROUTE: **Marrakesh** (Start) → **Ouarzazate** → **Tinghir** → **Merzouga** → **Fes** → **Meknes** → **Rabat** → **Casablanca** → **El Jadida** → **Essaouira** → **Marrakesh** (End)

HIGHLIGHTS

Djemaa El Fna Square of Marrakech, Koutoubia Mosque in Marrakech, UNESCO world heritage site of Ait Benhaddou, oasis town of Tinghir, Berber camp of Merzouga, souks of Fez, Berber town of Meknes, romantic Casablanca

Itinerary

DAY 1 Arrive into Marrakech. Transfer to hotel

Arrive at Marrakech Airport, where you are met and transferred to your hotel. Depending on your arrival time, relax by the hotel pool or explore Marrakech independently before meeting your tour guide and fellow travellers at 6.00pm. If you arrive after the meeting, introductions will be made the following morning. Dinner is included at the hotel this evening.

ACTIVITIES

- **Arrive at Marrakech Airport**
  Arrive at Marrakech Airport and begin your journey through Morocco. Meet your local representative before transferring into the city.

- **Drive from Marrakech Airport to Marrakech City Hotel**
  Travel from the airport to your hotel in central Marrakech. Settle in and get your first impressions of the vibrant Red City.
- **Free Time in Marrakech**
  Enjoy free time in Marrakech to relax at the hotel or explore at your own pace. You may choose to wander nearby streets, browse local shops, or simply unwind by the pool.
- **Welcome Meeting with Tour Guide in Marrakech**
  Meet your guide and fellow travellers at the scheduled welcome meeting. Review the itinerary and receive practical information for the days ahead.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS	EXTRAS
Marrakech hotel	None	Extra day in Marrakech - pre-tour, Single room supplement (MOTMMU)

DAY 2 Marrakech, city tour

Discover the cultural heart of Marrakech through a blend of historic landmarks, lively neighbourhoods, and vibrant local traditions. This holdings captures the essence of the city’s rich heritage, from its architectural gems to its bustling souks and atmospheric squares. It reflects the contrasts that define Marrakech, where ancient foundations meet modern rhythm in a setting shaped by Berber, Arab, and Andalusian influences. The experience highlights the city’s layering of history, craft, and daily life, offering a rounded introduction to its most characteristic sights and stories.

ACTIVITIES

- **Explore Marrakech City Tour**
  Discover Marrakech on a guided city tour, starting in the medina and seeing landmarks such as the Koutoubia minaret, Dar Si Said Museum and the Bahia Palace. Learn about the city's architecture and history as you explore.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Marrakech hotel	Breakfast

DAY 3 Drive to Ouarzazate via Ait Benhaddou

Leaving Marrakech, the road climbs through the High Atlas towards the drier landscapes of southern Morocco. Visit Ait Benhaddou, an earthen ksar associated with historic trans-Saharan caravan routes, before continuing to Ouarzazate. The journey combines mountain travel, fortified architecture and the cinematic associations of a city positioned between the Atlas and the desert.

ACTIVITIES

- **Drive from Marrakech to Ait Benhaddou**
  Depart Marrakech and cross the High Atlas Mountains toward Ait Benhaddou. Enjoy winding mountain roads and panoramic views of villages and valleys along the way.
- **Explore Ait Benhaddou**
  Visit the ancient ksar of Ait Benhaddou, a fortified village of earthen buildings perched on a hillside. Walk its narrow lanes and learn how this UNESCO World Heritage site became a backdrop for many films.
- **Drive from Ait Benhaddou to Ouarzazate**
  Continue from Ait Benhaddou to nearby Ouarzazate, gateway to Morocco's desert region. Pass kasbahs and palm groves as you approach the city.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Ouarzazate hotel	Breakfast

DAY 4 Drive to Tinghir via Boulmane

Travel from Ouarzazate towards Tinghir through the Roses Valley and Dades region. The road passes cultivated areas before entering increasingly rugged canyon scenery, with distinctive rock formations and elevated viewpoints along the way. After exploring the Dades landscapes, continue towards Tinghir and reach another of southern Morocco’s important oasis towns without adding activities beyond the overland journey and scenic stops.

ACTIVITIES

- **Drive from Ouarzazate to Boumalne Dades via Roses Valley**
  Drive from Ouarzazate through the scenic Roses Valley toward Boumalne Dades. Pass fields of roses, small villages, and rocky hillsides before reaching your overnight stop.
- **Explore Dades Canyon Scenic Drive**
  Discover the scenery of the Dades Canyon with its colourful rock formations and deep valley. Stop at viewpoints to appreciate the rugged landscape shaped by water and time.
- **Drive from Dades to Tinghir**
  Leave the Dades Canyon and travel on to Tinghir. Arrive in this oasis town on the edge of the Todra Gorge.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Tinghir hotel	Breakfast

DAY 5 Todra Gorge, 4x4 safari & camping at Merzouga

Travel from Tinghir through Todra Gorge and continue towards Merzouga as the terrain changes from steep canyon walls to open desert country. Arrival near Erg Chebbi brings you into the Sahara environment and leads to an overnight stay in a Berber camp. The day remains focused on the overland transition, the gorge and the desert accommodation without adding unsupported activities such as camel riding.

ACTIVITIES

- **Drive from Tinghir to Todra Gorge**
  Set off from Tinghir for the short drive to nearby Todra Gorge. Follow the palm-lined valley as the cliffs rise around you.
- **Explore Todra Gorge**
  Walk in the Todra Gorge, where high rock walls tower above a narrow valley floor. Enjoy an easy stroll among palm trees and streams while admiring the sheer cliffs.
- **Drive from Todra Gorge to Merzouga (Erg Chebbi)**
  Continue east from the Todra Gorge toward Merzouga on the edge of the Sahara. Watch as the landscape gradually becomes drier and sand dunes begin to appear.
- **Stay Overnight at Berber Desert Camp**
  Stay at a Berber desert camp near the dunes and share a traditional dinner under the stars. Enjoy music around the fire and the rare chance to sleep in the Sahara's stillness.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS	EXTRAS
Berber camp	Breakfast,Dinner	Sunset desert camel ride

DAY 6 Merzouga, drive to Fez

Travel from Merzouga to Fez via the Ziz Valley and Midelt, moving through several distinct regions of central Morocco. Desert surroundings gradually give way to fertile valley scenery and higher mountain country before the route continues north. The day is primarily devoted to overland travel, with the changing landscape providing the main interest as you leave the Sahara and return to an urban setting.

ACTIVITIES

- **Drive from Merzouga to Midelt**
  Leave the dunes of Merzouga and drive north through changing desert and mountain scenery towards Midelt. Pass small villages and wide open plateaus along the way.
- **Explore Ziz Valley Viewpoint**
  Stop at viewpoints over the Ziz Valley to appreciate its contrast of lush palm groves against barren hills. Learn how the river sustains farming communities along its length.
- **Drive from Midelt to Fez**
  Continue from Midelt over the Middle Atlas towards Fez. Arrive in Morocco's spiritual and cultural capital later in the day.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Fez hotel	Breakfast,Dinner

DAY 7 Fez, city tour

Spend the day exploring Fez and enter the labyrinth of Fès el-Bali, where souks, mosques and spice-filled streets reveal the city’s long history. Visit the Moulay Idriss Mausoleum, Nejjarine Fountain and Bou Anania Medersa before continuing through the medieval medina to the tanneries, carpet shops and local commercial quarters. Later, head to Fez Jdid and explore more of the city’s varied souks and traditional urban life.

ACTIVITIES

- **Visit Fez Medina and City Tour**
  Explore the medieval medina of Fes on a guided tour through its narrow streets and crowded souks. Visit viewpoints, religious buildings from the outside, and neighbourhoods where traditional crafts are still practised.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Fez hotel	Breakfast,Dinner

DAY 8 Fez, drive to Meknes via Volubilis

Travel from Fez to Volubilis and spend time among the Roman archaeological remains before continuing to Meknes. The second visit focuses on the fortified architecture, monumental gates and imperial history of the city. The day is centred on these two heritage locations, providing a chronological contrast between the Roman period and Morocco’s later royal era without adding attractions not specifically supported by the source.

ACTIVITIES

- **Drive from Fez to Volubilis**
  Travel from Fez through rolling countryside to the Roman ruins of Volubilis. Enjoy rural views en route.
- **Explore Volubilis**
  Visit the UNESCO-listed ruins of Volubilis, one of North Africa's finest Roman sites. Walk among mosaics, columns and ancient streets that reveal the life of this provincial city.
- **Drive from Volubilis to Meknes**
  Drive a short distance from Volubilis to the historic city of Meknes. Arrive in one of Morocco's former imperial capitals.
- **Explore Meknes City Highlights**
  See Meknes, the Berber city transformed by Sultan Moulay Ismail into a royal capital. Admire its monumental gates, high ramparts and elegant gardens.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Meknes hotel	Breakfast,Dinner

DAY 9 Meknes, drive to Rabat and city tour

Leave Meknes after breakfast and travel west to Rabat, Morocco’s capital on the Atlantic coast, a city settled as far back as the third century BC. A full guided tour of the city takes in the Royal Palace, the Oudaya Kasbah and its gardens, and the Hassan Tower Mosque, tracing the contrast between Morocco’s inland imperial heritage and its modern political capital as fertile plains give way to Atlantic breezes. This holdings pairs the road journey from Meknes with a day among Rabat’s fortified kasbahs, elegant boulevards and landmark institutions.

ACTIVITIES

- **Drive from Meknes to Rabat**
  Depart Meknes and drive to Rabat on Morocco's Atlantic coast. Arrive in the modern capital city.
- **Explore Rabat City Tour**
  Tour central Rabat to see the Hassan Tower and the Mausoleum of King Mohammed V and King Hassan II, and continue into the Oudaya Kasbah, the historic fortress above the Bou Regreg with its Andalusian gardens. Learn about their importance in modern Moroccan history and admire the ceremonial architecture.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Rabat hotel	Breakfast,Dinner

DAY 10 Rabat, drive to Casablanca and city tour

Travel from Rabat to Casablanca and explore Morocco’s largest city on a full tour of its major landmarks. Visit the Royal Palace, Central Market and Mohammed V Square before continuing to the impressive Hassan II Mosque, known for its vast scale and towering minaret. The sightseeing provides a broad introduction to Casablanca’s civic, commercial and religious character after the drive south from the national capital.

ACTIVITIES

- **Drive from Rabat to Casablanca**
  Depart Rabat and follow the coastal highway back to Casablanca. Arrive in the city and check into your hotel for the final night of the tour.
- **Explore Casablanca City Tour**
  Enjoy a city tour of Casablanca including Mohammed V Square, the Royal Palace area and the spectacular Hassan II Mosque. Learn how Casablanca became Morocco's economic powerhouse.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Casablanca hotel	Breakfast,Dinner

DAY 11

Casablanca, drive to El Jadida

Travel from Casablanca to El Jadida and explore this historic coastal settlement, known for architectural remains linked to its Portuguese past. Fortifications, old streets and the waterfront reveal a character quite different from modern Casablanca. The drive and visit provide an easy introduction to Morocco’s Atlantic heritage while moving from a large urban centre into a smaller seaside town.

ACTIVITIES

- **Drive from Casablanca to El Jadida**
  Follow the coast from Casablanca to the historic port town of El Jadida. Arrive beside the Atlantic walls and harbour.
- **Explore El Jadida City Tour**
  Stroll through El Jadida's fortified Portuguese citadel and narrow streets. See how European and North African influences blend in this coastal town.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
El Jadida hotel	Breakfast,Dinner

DAY 12

El Jadida to Essaouira

Travel from El Jadida to Essaouira with a stop in Oualidia along the Atlantic coast. The sheltered lagoon provides a relaxed pause before the road journey continues south. Arrival in Essaouira completes a coastal travel day shaped by changing seascapes and the transition from quiet lagoon surroundings to a historic port city.

ACTIVITIES

- **Drive from El Jadida to Oualidia**
  Travel south from El Jadida to the small seaside town of Oualidia. Reach the sheltered lagoon that makes this stop so appealing.
- **Explore Oualidia Blue Lagoon**
  Spend time at Oualidia's tranquil blue lagoon. Enjoy the coastal scenery and relaxed resort atmosphere.
- **Drive from Oualidia to Essaouira**
  Continue along the Atlantic coast via fishing ports and seaside villages towards Essaouira. Arrive in this atmospheric walled town in the late afternoon.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Essaouira hotel	Breakfast,Dinner

DAY 13

Essaouria, free time

Enjoy a full day at leisure in Essaouira and decide how active or relaxed you would like to be. The medina, fishing harbour, ramparts, craft shops and beachfront are all available for independent exploration, while those who prefer a quieter day can simply unwind by the Atlantic. There are no organised visits, giving you complete flexibility to spend your time according to your own interests.

ACTIVITIES

- **Free Time in Essaouira**
  Spend the rest of the day at leisure in Essaouira after checking into your hotel. You can relax by the ocean, browse artisan workshops or find a café in the medina.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Essaouira hotel	Breakfast,Dinner

DAY 14

Essaouria, drive to Marrakech

Travel from Essaouira to Marrakech and make the transition from Morocco’s Atlantic coastline back to the interior. The drive ends in the country’s most energetic tourist centre, where the remaining time is free. You can rest after the journey or explore the medina and surrounding neighbourhoods independently, with no additional organised activities attached to the afternoon or evening.

ACTIVITIES

- **Drive from Essaouira to Marrakech**
  Leave the coast and drive inland across plains and farmland to Marrakech. The road brings you to Morocco's famous ochre city at the foot of the High Atlas.
- **Free Time in Marrakech**
  Enjoy free time in Marrakech to relax at the hotel or explore at your own pace. You may choose to wander nearby streets, browse local shops, or simply unwind by the pool.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Marrakech hotel	Breakfast,Dinner

DAY 15

Marrakech, departure transfer to the airport

Spend the first part of the day at leisure in Marrakech and make your own plans according to your flight time. There are no organised sightseeing activities before departure, so you can rest or explore independently. Later,

drive from the hotel to Marrakech Airport and complete the final supported transfer of your Morocco trip before continuing with your onward journey.

ACTIVITIES

- **Free Time in Marrakech**
  Enjoy free time in Marrakech to relax at the hotel or explore at your own pace. You may choose to wander nearby streets, browse local shops, or simply unwind by the pool.
- **Drive from Marrakech City Hotel to Marrakech Airport**
  Travel from your Marrakech hotel to the airport for your departure flight. Say farewell to Morocco as you head to the terminal.
- **Depart from Marrakech Airport**
  Depart from Marrakech Menara Airport at the end of your Moroccan Melodies Tour. Board your flight with memories of imperial cities, kasbahs, desert dunes and mountain passes.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS	EXTRAS
N/A	Breakfast	Marrakech hot air balloon flight, Marrakech quad-biking, Ourika Valley half day tour, Extra day in Marrakech - post-tour

INCLUDED

- Accommodation in Riads, 4-star level hotels, and a comfortable Berber desert camp
- All transport and transfers
- 24-hour airport arrival & departure transfer service
- Services of an experienced local tour leader throughout
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary
- Entrances fees to monuments as stated

EXCLUDED

- International flights (available on request)
- Visa fees (not required for many nationalities)
- Travel insurance (compulsory, get a quote here)
- Meals not indicated in the itinerary
- Drinks, snacks and other personal expenses (e.g. laundry)
- Tips
- Any other items not mentioned above

Tour 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.

No additional options available for this tour.

Important Notes

1 Accommodation

This tour uses good quality Riads and hotels rated at the Moroccan 4-star level, plus a comfortable desert berber camp where we stay for 1 night amidst the sand dunes. Riads are converted Moroccan houses or palaces that have an interior courtyard or garden. They tend to only have a handful of rooms, and are full of character with period furniture and friendly hosts. They make for a really interesting way to explore Morocco, but the better ones are popular and fill up quite quickly. The hotels and riads listed for this tour are therefore a guide and may vary depending on your preferred dates and availability when you book. To balance the tour, and in areas where good riads are not available we also use several more modern hotels at around the 4-star level.

Accommodation is based on double or twin en-suite rooms with air conditioning. All couples will be given a private double room. Single travellers will need to pay a single room supplement to guarantee themselves a single room throughout the tour.

At the Berber desert camp out in the sand dunes, comfortable permanent Berber tents with mattresses and traditional local blankets are provided. You do not need to bring a sleeping bag, but we do recommend bringing a sleeping sheet or sleeping bag liner for extra comfort (and to avoid the sand!). Shared toilet facilities are available.

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 air conditioned private vehicles throughout this tour. These include cars, minibuses or coaches subject to the number of people in your party. We switch to 4x4 vehicles for your desert safari.

3 Group Size / Guides

As a tailor-made tour, this trip can be run for any number of people, though the size of the Riads used does mean that groups of more than 6 people can be a problem and will need to stay in some different, larger hotels.

Pricing shown on the website is based on 2 or 3 people travelling, with significant discounts available if 4 or more people travel together.

A fully trained, local English-speaking Moroccan guide and driver will accompany you throughout the tour. We also have local representatives in many of the towns and cities en-route who are also at your service, and will be

handling some of the practical arrangements for the tour in their area.

At Encounters Travel we only use local Moroccan guides and reps. 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.

4 Dates and Prices

This is a private tour, and as such can be run on any dates you wish. We can also customise the itinerary to suit your available time, budget, and likes or dislikes about the set itinerary.

Prices shown are based on 2 or 3 people travelling. Substantial discounts are available if 4 or more people book and travel together.

5 Transfers

Many of our Morocco tours include a 24-hour airport meet & assist service in Casablanca/Marrakech airports (depending on the exact itinerary), your arrival and departure airport-hotel transfers and all other transfers. Some tours however many not include airport transfers, please check the tour inclusions/exclusions for information on which transfers are included on your specific trip.

Where transfers are included, these are only included in our tour prices on the first and last day of the set tour itinerary. We will be happy to arrange transfers on any additional days if you book your hotel room with us. If you make your own arrangements for additional accommodation at either the beginning or the end of the tour then you will need to arrange your own airport transfers on these days.

On our Shoestring group tours we do offer optional hotel upgrades. This may mean that additional pick-up and drop-offs are required each day. We do endeavour to ensure that all hotels used are close to each other and to streamline and time arrangements to limit any extra driving time as much as possible.

6 Booking & Payment

If you would like to book a place on this tour, please complete the online reservation form on our website (via the Dates & Prices tab on the tour page). You may make a deposit or full payment online, or just hold a reservation if you prefer (full payments are due 8 weeks before departure). We will then contact you with more details about how to complete your booking. Payments may be made by debit or credit card (subject to a card processing fee), or by making a bank transfer, or posting us a cheque/bank draft. Full details will be provided in your booking confirmation email. Please contact us if you would like any more information or have any questions before making a booking.

7 Financial Security

We are a UK registered company and are committed to providing our customers with financial protection to provide peace of mind and to allow you to book with confidence.
We have therefore partnered with Trust My Travel Ltd., which provides financial protection services to over 2000

partners around the world. Funds paid to us by our customers are protected via an Insurance policy held by Trust My Travel. Each traveller and the description of services sold is declared against Trust My Travel's insurance policy directly against our financial failure. In the event of our insolvency, you will be refunded for any unfulfilled products and/or repatriation to the UK (where applicable). Please see our website or booking conditions for more information.

8 Responsible Tourism

It is impossible not to have an impact on the local environment, cultures and eco-systems when you travel. However, it is very possible to try and ensure that these impacts are as limited, or positive as possible. We are committed to ensuring that we try to leave our host countries in a better state than we found them and encourage and assist our travellers to help us with this.
The following are a few simple tips that require very little effort on your part but which will help ensure that any effect you have on the locations you visit is positive rather than negative.

- Don't prejudge: Things in different countries will almost certainly be different. That doesn't make them worse or inferior, just different.
- Communicate: Don't expect locals to speak your language. Take the trouble to learn a few words or phrases of the local language. Don't worry about sounding silly. Most locals are patient and accommodating and appreciate you making the effort to communicate in their language.
- Conserve energy: Be careful not to waste valuable resources. Use local resources sparingly. Switch off lights, air-conditioning and fans when you leave the hotel room and don't waste water. Remove superfluous packaging. Many countries have far less efficient waste disposal systems than ours. Remove packaging from newly acquired items before leaving home.
- Don't litter: No matter how untidy or dirty the country you're travelling in may look to you, avoid littering, as there is no need to add to the environment's stress. Many of the countries we visit have a tough challenge dealing with rubbish and waste. Please consider taking home as much plastic waste as you can (e.g. water bottles).
- Choose environmentally friendly products: By using environmentally friendly (bio degradable) sun creams, shampoos and detergents you can help reduce pollution.
- Respect local customs and traditions: As you are a guest in these countries, you should also comply with the local customs. If you are friendly and well mannered, the locals will reciprocate and it will only enhance your experience. It's important to follow dress and behaviour guidelines especially when visiting religious or sacred sites (your tour leader will advise you how best to do this).
- If a client commits an illegal act the client may be excluded from the tour and Encounters Travel shall cease to have responsibility to/for them. No refund will be given for any unused services.

All porters are employed and equipped following guidelines set by the International Porter Protection Group (IPPG).

9 Follow Us Online

You can stay in touch with us online by following us on Facebook and Twitter. We post updates on relevant travel news in our destination countries, special offers and discounts and other interesting travel related news and

information.

www.facebook.com/encounterstravel

https://x.com/encounterstravl (yes, without the 'e')

10 Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is compulsory on all of our tours and needs to cover personal accident & liability, medical expenses and repatriation, travel delay & abandonment. We also strongly recommend that you take out cover against cancellation and lost/stolen baggage. Personal medical insurance does not normally provide sufficient cover and is generally not suitable for travel on our tours. You will not be able to join your tour if you have not provided us with details of your insurance or if you arrive without cover in place (no refunds will be due in this event).

Considering travel insurance for your trip? World Nomads Travel Insurance offers coverage for more than 150 adventure activities as well as emergency medical, lost luggage, trip cancellation and more.

If your tour includes car hire, or if you plan to arrange a hot air balloon flight locally or do some scuba diving during your tour, you should check the small print in your policy to make sure these are covered (these are covered in our policy). Please also check the maximum altitude that you will be reaching and that full cover including emergency evacuation is provided up to this altitude.

If you are taking expensive camera gear or other electronic equipment with you then please check the coverage and the fine print of your policy to ensure that you have sufficient cover.

IMPORTANT: We must have your travel insurance details (policy number and type of insurance) before you depart or you may not be allowed to join the tour. If you haven't told us already, please let us know the details when you can. You should take a paper copy of your insurance policy with you as you may be asked to show this at the start of the tour.

Covid-19

Before purchasing any travel insurance, please check the coverage provided for situations related to Covid-19, and for the rules about government travel advice. Your normal policy may not be suitable.

11 Before you travel

It is important when considering and preparing to travel anywhere in the world that you have a good understanding of the country you are visiting, its laws and customs, and the possible risks and situations that may occur. This includes specific risks related to your itinerary (eg. does it involve water & can you swim, are you fit enough for the activities included), as well as more general risks such as terrorism and natural disasters.

General details and links to more information about health risks, visa requirements, money, and travel insurance are given in these tour notes. We recommend that you re-read all these before your departure as well as the small print of your travel insurance policy so you know exactly what is covered and what is not.

You should take copies of your important travel documents with you and ideally also store them online securely as a backup. Make sure that you have given us your emergency contact details and told that person where and when you are travelling. Ensure you take enough money with you and that you have access to emergency funds.

Finally, you should read through and stay updated with the current official government travel advice for your destination. We are registered partners with the UK Foreign Office's 'Travel Aware' campaign which provides further useful and invaluable information.

travel aware
gov.uk/travelaware

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12 Reduce Plastic Waste with Water-to-Go Filter bottles

Traveling responsibly means minimizing plastic waste, but staying hydrated on the go is essential. At Encounters Travel we are committed to reducing single-use plastics, which is why we've partnered with Water-to-Go. Their portable filtration system removes over 99.9% of contaminants from any non-saltwater source, turning even questionable water sources into safe drinking water.

Given that tap water is un-safe to drink in many of the countries in which we operate, we recommend purchasing a Water-to-Go bottle prior to departure. This will help you avoid the use of single use plastic bottles and keep you hydrated on the go.

Save big! Get a huge 25% off your Water-to-Go bottle and other Water-to-Go products (such as filters, lids, and carriers). Use code **ENCOUNTERS25** at checkout (valid in the UK, USA and Canada).

How Water-to-Go Technology works:

- Their reusable, BPA free water bottles contain their own unique 3-in-1 filtration technology effectively providing clean safe drinking water from any non-salt water source around the world.
- Three different (1 traditional and 2 nano) technologies are combined in one filter cartridge to remove up to 99.9999% of microbiological contaminants in water.

The three technologies used in a Water-to-Go filter are:

- Mechanical filtration – A tiny pore size, so small contaminants can’t fit through.
- Electrical – A positive charge reduces the pore size even further and attracts contaminants like a magnet, trapping them inside the filter.
- Activated Carbon – Unlike most carbon based filters, instead of using adhesives to glue the carbon particles together, (which vastly reduces the carbon’s efficiency) it is contained within the membrane, helping to reduce contaminants whilst eliminating bad tastes and odours. Try filtering water from your tap at home and taste the difference!

Water-to-Go filter bottles deliver safe, healthy water worldwide

- Water-to-Go filters remove bacteria, viruses, waterborne disease, protozoa, heavy metals such as lead as well as harmful chemicals.
- Their filters remove Chlorine and Fluoride from tap water.
- The filter will eliminate harmful contaminants from the water but allow beneficial minerals such as sodium and magnesium to pass through leaving you with the healthiest water possible.

- Water-to-Go filters have been independently tested against internationally recognised standards by industry specialists including The London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (UK), BCS Laboratories (USA), Bangalore Test House (India) and IMI (China).

Use Water-to-Go products and you'll be healthier, wealthier and helping to make the world a better place!

- Depending on filter size, each Water-to-Go filter is able to replace 260 or 400 single-use plastic water bottles!
- They ensure you have access to safe water anywhere in the world without ever having to buy environmentally damaging bottled water.
- Their water bottles deliver safe, clean drinking water at just 5p per litre.
- The filter membrane is biodegradable and the shrouds are recyclable.
- The water bottles are used and approved by everyone from backpackers to commuters, gym users to expecting mums. Perfect for everyday, outdoor and travel.

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13 Private & Tailor-made Tours

While our group departures offer a fantastic way to explore with like-minded travellers, we understand that some guests prefer a more exclusive experience. Most of our group tours can be booked on a private basis, allowing you to enjoy the same expert-led routes with your own dedicated party. The primary advantage of choosing a private arrangement is the flexibility it provides; we can easily customise the itinerary to include your preferred style of accommodation or adjust the pace to suit your needs. Private tours can be run on the same start days as our group tours, or on other dates. However, some activities within our trips are restricted to particular days of the week - we will advise you on anything like this that we need to work around. Pricing will be based on the number of travellers in your party, and any customisations you may like to make.

For those seeking something truly unique, our specialist sales team is available to collaborate with you on a completely tailor-made tour, designed from the ground up to match your specific interests, accommodation level and requirements.

To request a quotation for a private or tailor-made tour, please contact us.

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14 International Flights

We want to give you as much flexibility as possible when it comes to booking your holiday with us. So, to take account of people with varying travel plans, we don't include your international flights in the main tour price. We are however very happy to suggest flights to go with the tour. Please contact us with your preferred dates and departure airport and we'll give you a selection of airlines, times and fares to choose from.

Your airport arrival & departure transfers are included on the first and last days of the tour. Airport transfers on any days before or after the main tour will incur a supplement. Our Morocco tours either start/finish in Marrakech (RAK) or Casablanca (CMN) airports.

Some packages on our website are sold as flight inclusive and in this event you will see the departure airport listed on the Dates & Prices section. Airlines may vary on these packages, and baggage fees may be subject to an extra fee. Where these are shown on our website, prices are correct at the time of quoting, but are subject to continued availability of the fare used. Prices will be reconfirmed at the time of booking, and we will also provide the flight times and airline details before tickets are issued.
Flight inclusive prices are based on the cheapest Economy ticket class available which is generally non-refundable and non-changeable unless the flight is cancelled for reasons such as Covid-19, in which case the airlines are more flexible. More flexible ticket options, as well as Premium Economy and Business Class tickets are available on request for an additional supplement. Any changes made to flight inclusive bookings will be subject to the airline rules on your ticket.

Check in times for international flights to Morocco are generally 2 or 3 hours before departure depending on the airline - we recommend you aim to get to the airport 3 hours before departure to allow for any delays en-route and in passing through security checks. Online check in is available with most airlines from 24 hours before departure, though low-cost airlines may allow this straight after booking. Seat selection can be done at the point of checking in, either online or at the airport, or by calling the airline direct.

We do also sometimes advertise flight inclusive packages from selected airports.

Flight CO2 Emissions:

Traveling by air is an amazing way to explore the world, but flights also contribute to carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions that impact the environment. By considering the airline's CO2 emissions when you choose your flight, you can help minimize your travel footprint.

When selecting your international flights and airline, we do therefore recommend that you try and also take into account the flight CO2 emissions. Some airlines and flight search websites (eg. Google Flights, Skyscanner) do publish this information, so you can compare between your flight options and make an informed decision. Thankfully, many airlines are working towards sustainability efforts, and choosing a greener option allows you to contribute to positive change while still enjoying your incredible adventure.

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15 Entrance Fees

The tour price includes entrance fees to all the tourist sites mentioned in the itinerary. You will need to cover the cost of entrance to any other extra sites that you may wish to visit.

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16 Tipping

Tipping and Haggling is an accepted and usual part of life in Morocco and other countries in the region. Wages for service staff are very low and tips are a necessary supplement to meagre incomes. If you are visiting from a country where this is not the case, then we have given some guidelines below which will hopefully prove helpful. .

Tipping Kitty

On many of our **Small Group Tours** we implement a Tipping Kitty for your convenience and to remove the hassle of being asked for tips by main people you may come across during the tour. This kitty will be collected in US Dollars cash at the start of the tour, and administred by your tour guide. You may ask for information on who they

are tipping along the way if you wish as often they will do it out of sight for politeness. However, the tipping kitty amount covers people like hotel porters, hotel waiters, local guides for city tours, airport drivers, Berber camel herders and restaurant tips.It does not cover your main tour guide.

Please check the 'Not Included' section of the tour notes for details of the tipping kitty amount for your tour. This amount is payable per person (for adults only - children on family tours do not need to pay it).

This tipping kitty system works well on small group style tours. However, due to the different numbers of people travelling, we do not use it on our **Shoestring** or **Private/Tailor-made** tours.

Other tips

Your main tour guide is not included in our Tipping Kitty. On group tours we suggest you budget around USD 2-4 per person per day to cover the main guide's tip, subject to your personal budget, and your satisfaction with the level of service provided. On private/tailor-made tours we recommend you budget a bit higher.

Throughout your trip you may at times also have a local guide in addition to your main guide. These are covered in the Tipping Kitty on our small group tours, but on other tours we suggest budgetting around USD2-3 per per day. The same applies to drivers on our Shoestring and Private/Tailor-made tours.

In local markets, and basic restaurants you can leave the loose change. For more up-market restaurants we suggest 5% to 10% of the bill.

Haggling

Haggling is a traditional necessity, so never pay too much regard to initial prices. Instead fix an item's value in your mind then negotiate towards it unhurriedly (Moroccans never rush their bargaining), and don't be afraid to simply walk away if the price isn't right. However, if you do mention a price, then you should be prepared to pay it or risk causing offence.

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17 Passports and Visas

Passports should be valid for at least six months after your departure from the country. Please do not bring an almost full or almost expired passport. Visa arrangements are the responsibility of the traveller, and requirements are subject to change by the local authorities. We recommend that you contact your closest Moroccan consulate or embassy for current information for your nationality.

Currently, many nationalities (including USA, Canada, UK, European, Australian, New Zealand) do not need to obtain a visa to enter Morocco as long as your stay is for less than 3 months. Other nationalities should check with their local consulate.

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18 Time

The time in Morocco is the same as GMT (plus 0 hours). Daylight saving adjustments are generally applied between the end of March and the end of October, making the time GBP plus 1 hour. During this period the time may revert back to GMT during Ramadan. Exact dates vary from year to year and sometimes the changes may be scrapped altogether.

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19 Health and Vaccinations

You should ensure you are fully insured for medical emergencies including emergency evacuation and repatriation.

Recommended vaccinations and other health protection measures vary according to the country you are visiting and where you are travelling from. We recommend you contact your GP/medical practitioner or a travel clinic for current information on vaccinations needed for your destination. You should ensure that you are up to date with vaccines and boosters recommended for your normal life at home, including for example, vaccines required for occupational risk of exposure, lifestyle risks and underlying medical conditions. In addition, additional courses or boosters normally recommended for the countries in this region are:

South Africa: Additional vaccinations: Hepatitis A. Malaria map. Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from or having transitted through an infected area.
Namibia: Additional vaccinations: Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid. Malaria map. Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from an infected area.
Botswana: Additional vaccinations: Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid. Malaria map. Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from or having transitted or travelled through an infected area.
Zimbabwe: Additional vaccinations: Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid. Malaria map. Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from or having transitted through an infected area.
Zambia: Additional vaccinations: Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid. Malaria map. Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from or having transitted through an infected area.
Malawi: Additional vaccinations: Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid. Malaria map. Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from or having transitted through an infected area.
Tanzania: Additional vaccinations: Diphtheria, Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid. Malaria map. Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from or having transitted through an infected area.
Kenya: Additional vaccinations: Diphtheria, Hepatitis A, Poliomyelitis, Tetanus, Typhoid. Malaria map. Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from an infected area.
Uganda: Additional vaccinations: Diphtheria, Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid, Yellow Fever. Malaria map. Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from an infected area.
Sudan: Additional vaccinations: Diphtheria, Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid, Yellow Fever. Malaria map. Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from or having transitted through an infected area. A certificate may also be required for those departing Sudan.
Morocco: Additional vaccinations: Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid. Malaria not normally present. Yellow Fever certificate not required.
Tunisia: Additional vaccinations: Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid. Malaria not normally present. Yellow Fever certificate not required.

The above information can change at short notice. For up to date health information & vaccination requirements we recommend that you contact your medical practitioner or a travel clinic.

Malaria: Vaccinations are not available against Malaria, which is a disease transmitted by mosquitoes that can be very serious and sometimes fatal. You should avoid mosquito bites by covering up bare skin with clothing such as long sleeves and long trousers and applying insect repellents to exposed skin. When necessary, sleep under a mosquito net. Mosquitoes are most active during and after sunset. You should consult with your GP/medical practitioner/travel clinic about the most appropriate malaria prophylactic medication to take for the regions you are

visiting.

Yellow Fever: This disease is spread by infected mosquitoes that bite during the day. A Yellow Fever Certificate of vacinnation is often required as a condition of entry depending on which country you are arriving from, or that you have travelled or transitted through recently (including connecting flights with stopovers of over 12 hours). You can view this US CDC information about where the virus is present and follow the links to further information detailing which countries need you to have a Yellow Fever vaccination as part of their entry requirements. Please ensure you have this certificate organised in advance and with you and to hand during the trip.

Please inform us of any pre-existing conditions such as diabetes or asthma and any prescription medicine you may be taking. We also need to know about any food allergies or physical disabilities that you may have.
If you are travelling on an Overland tour or your trip includes wildlife safaris then please bear in mind that you may be travelling on bumpy roads and/or rough ground for several hours at a time. This can be very uncomfortable or painful if you have a bad back, and make such conditions worse. Please contact us if you have any concerns.

Health Declaration: As many of our Africa tours travel through very remote regions, where medical facilities are limited, we are asking all of our travellers 65 years and over who are joining one of our Africa Overland Adventures to complete the attached medical questionnaire. The information provided to Encounters Travel and our local operational partners will be held to the strictest confidence and will be used only to the extent to provide necessary emergency medical care and/or evaluate physical health and fitness for travel.

We will request this from you approximately 30 days before your trip starts, so that your GP can sign your form based on your current health conditions. Please don't submit this several months in advance, as it is important for us to know you are fit for travel just before the trip departs.

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20 Voltage

Sockets are two round pronged and 220 volts (Type C/E). Universal adaptors are available in most airport shops if you don't have one already. Standard European adapters will work fine, though sometimes they may feel a little loose in the sockets. All hotel rooms have electrical sockets where you can re-charge cameras, phones etc. Hair dryers are normally available on request from the hotel reception if not in your room already. If you have US appliances (110 volts) you will need a voltage converter as well as a plug adapter.

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21 Money

The local currency in Morocco is the Dirham. We recommend you bring some cash in a hard currency (US Dollars, GB Pounds, Euros) and a good ATM card. Most major currencies can be converted at most banks, but it's not wise to carry too much. Euros and US Dollars are welcomed more than GB Pounds. Travellers cheques are not easily exchanged. It can be awkward outside of Marrakech to find an ATM machine that takes your card as many Moroccan banks have ATMs that only work with Moroccan cards. Don't put your card in an ATM unless you see the symbol that matches your card on the machine, as you might lose your card! We also suggest trying to avoid using Post Office ATMs. In some smaller towns there are no ATMs that take foreign cards, so be sure you get enough cash to carry you until the next major city. BCM seems to be the best bank, accepting foreign cards in most of their ATMs.

While in Morocco you will need sufficient funds to cover meals not included in the itinerary, drinks, snacks, souvenirs, tips and personal expenses such as laundry. These should generally all be paid for in Moroccan Dirham. It is difficult to recommend a level of personal spending money which will suit everyone as this can differ greatly, but as a guideline, we would suggest allowing USD 15-25 per person per day as a minimum. Allow more if you plan on doing lots of shopping, or buying many alcoholic drinks.

22 What to take

Luggage: Small or medium sized suitcases, rucksacks or fabric holdalls are all fine to bring with you to Morocco. You should also bring a small daypack/bag to take out during the day. Your main luggage will often be left in the hotel during your sightseeing trips - you will not need to carry it far, and there are nearly always hotel porters to assist.

Luggage limits: There is no luggage limit for this tour. However, most airlines restrict you to between 20kg and 25kg for your hold luggage and between 5kg and 10kg for hand luggage. Please check with your airline before travelling to the airport.

Clothing: The Moroccan climate varies according to season and region. The coast has a warm, Mediterranean climate tempered on the eastern coast by southwest trade winds. Inland areas have a hotter, drier, continental climate. In the south of the country, the weather is very hot and dry throughout most of the year, though temperatures can drop dramatically at night, especially in desert and mountains and in the months of December and January. Rain falls from November to March in coastal areas, and the rest of the country is mostly dry with high temperatures in summer and a cooler climate in the mountains. Marrakech and Agadir enjoy an average temperature of 21°C (70ºF) in the winter. So, depending the time of year you are visiting you should pack for both hot and cooler conditions. Modesty rates highly in Morocco, especially for women, so to respect the local culture & people, please ensure all clothes are loose fitting and not revealing. Shorts (not hot-pants) are OK in tourist sites, as are T-shirts, but these should not show too much bare flesh (we suggest that your shoulders should remain covered). In the centre of towns and cities outside tourist areas, and when visiting any mosques, legs and arms should be covered.

Other items: If your tour includes a Berber desert camp then all bedding is provided. However, as sand has a nasty habit of getting everywhere, for comfort, we recommend bringing a light sleeping sheet or sleeping bag liner all year round, and a light sleeping bag in the winter months (November to February) when it can get very cold in the desert. We also recommend you bring a sun hat, sunscreen, sunglasses, a basic first aid kit, toiletries, money belt, small torch, camera & charger.