

ESSENCE OF MOROCCO



21 March – 6 April 2027

17 days/16 nights, Casablanca to Casablanca

Just four guests – ladies only – private rooms, no single supplement

HIGHLIGHTS

- See the key attractions of Rabat, the capital of Morocco
- Wander the streets of the blue-painted town of Chefchaouen, known as 'The Blue Pearl'
- Immerse yourself in the history and culture of the ancient medina of Fes
- Learn about Moroccan spices in the local market in Rissani
- Relax in a luxury camp in the Sahara, ride a camel and enjoy African drumming around the fire
- Explore the ancient kasbah of Ait Benhaddou, a UNESCO site and location of the Gladiator movie
- Shop for textiles, jewellery and other handicrafts in the many souks of Fes and Marrakech
- Relax in the laid-back coastal town of Essaouira

Cost: €5655*. Tour is priced in Euros and converted to Australian dollars, or other major currency, at time of final payment. Cost is per person, based on four guests travelling, single occupancy. Non-refundable deposit of AU\$900 will secure your booking. * Terms and conditions apply – see website for details.

Contact Heather + 61 448 739946 or heather@moroccanescapes.com.au

<http://www.moroccanescapes.com.au/>

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Inclusions

- *All land-based travel in Morocco*
- *16 nights' accommodation in carefully chosen boutique riads and hotels, including a night in a luxury desert camp*
- *16 breakfasts, 1 lunch, 4 dinners and an evening food tour*
- *Local guides in Volubilis and Fes*
- *Entry to: Hassan II Mosque, Volubilis Roman site, Le Jardin Majorelle*
- *Tea with the Berber owner of an ancient cave house, organic goat's cheese tasting*
- *Private transport with a local English-speaking driver*
- *Casablanca airport pick up and drop off at scheduled arrival and departure times*
- *Transfers between Merzouga and desert camp by camel or 4x4*
- *Accompanied by Heather*

Exclusions

- *International flights*
- *Transfers to and from your local airport in Australia or home country*
- *Travel insurance – mandatory*
- *Meals and activities, other than those specified in the itinerary as included*
- *Personal items such as drinks, laundry*
- *City tax, where charged separately by hotels/riads*
- *Tips (widely expected in Morocco – guidance will be provided)*

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**Casablanca – Rabat – Chefchaouen – Fes – Erfoud – Merzouga – Dades Gorge –
Ouarzazate / Ait Benhaddou – Marrakech – Essaouira – Casablanca**

Day 1: 21 March 2027, Casablanca

Arrive into Casablanca international airport early afternoon, where you'll be met by our local driver for transfer to the hotel. Take time to relax at the hotel before our welcome dinner tonight. (B, D)

o/n Casablanca

Day 2: 22 March 2027, Rabat

Before leaving Casablanca, we'll visit the spectacular Hassan II Mosque, overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. This is one of the largest mosques in the world and the only functioning mosque in Morocco open to non-Muslims.



It's just over an hour's drive to Rabat, the capital of Morocco. We'll visit the Kasbah of the Udayas, with its Andalusian Garden, and other key sights, including the Hassan II tower and Mohamed V Mausoleum. (B)



o/n Rabat

Day 3: 23 March 2027, Chefchaouen

From Rabat, we drive through the Rif Mountains to Chefchaouen, 'the Blue Pearl', famous for its beautiful, blue-painted buildings in the medina. It's a small, friendly town, easy to explore: the perfect place to wander the pretty streets of the medina. (B)



o/n Chefchaouen

Day 4: 24 March 2027, Chefchaouen

A free day in Chefchaouen to explore the cafes and shops of Chefchaouen medina, Place el Haouta, the main square, the kasbah and several viewpoints above the town. This evening, before dinner, there is an optional 30-minute walk to the Spanish mosque outside Chefchaouen to watch sunset over the town. (B)



o/n Chefchaouen

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Day 5: 25 March 2027, Volubilis, Fes



Morocco was at the outer edge of the Roman Empire and today, on our drive south to Fes, we'll visit the Roman city of Volubilis, where a local guide will explain the history of the Romans in Morocco and bring to life the ancient ruins and wonderful mosaics. We'll have lunch nearby before continuing to Fes, our home for the next three nights. (B)

o/n Fes

Day 6: 26 March 2027, Fes

Fes is synonymous with ceramics and leather, so we start the day with a visit to a ceramics workshop and the famous Chouara tanneries, which are quite a sight (and smell!). Then a guided walking tour of the medina, with its labyrinth of lanes and alleyways, traditional artisans, stunning architecture and, of course, the souks, jam-packed with anything you might want to buy. (B)



o/n Fes

Day 7: 27 March 2027, Fes

Enjoy a free day in Fes – there are several options today: learn how to prepare a classic Moroccan meal in a cooking class, have a hamman (traditional Moroccan spa) or take part in a bread-making workshop (subject to availability and at extra cost); go shopping in the many souks, wander in the medina where there is something new around every corner or take time to relax at the riad. (B)



o/n Fes

Day 8: 28 March 2027, Erfoud

South towards the Sahara! We have a long drive today but with stops along the way, including a goat's cheese farm tour and tasting and tea with the Berber owner of a traditional cave house. Passing through Ifrane, known as the Switzerland of Morocco, we'll look out for the barbary apes that live in the nearby cedar forests.



Forested hills gradually give way to an arid, more barren landscape before we reach today's destination - the oasis town of Erfoud, famous for its date palms and the many fossils found in this area. Our overnight stop before the desert. (B)

o/n Erfoud

Day 9: 29 March 2027, Merzouga/Sahara

Today we visit Rissani, known for its authentic spice market. After trying the local speciality of 'Berber pizza' for lunch, we'll meet our camels on the edge of the dunes for the transfer to the desert camp. Or, if you prefer, you can go in a 4x4. And, in case you're wondering, the desert camp tents have aircon and en suite bathrooms.



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Tonight, after dinner, enjoy a performance of African drumming around the campfire. (B, L, D)



o/n Sahara Luxury Camp

Day 10: 30 March 2027, Dades Gorge

The early risers this morning can watch the sunrise over the vast expanse of Erg Chebbi, the 'Sea of Dunes'.



Back to Merzouga by camel or 4x4, to meet our transport for the drive along the 'Road of a Thousand Kasbahs.' We'll stop near Jorf to see some centuries-old irrigation systems and in Tinghir to visit a Berber weaving co-operative before continuing to Boumalne Dades.



Then we're in Dades Gorge, with spectacular views at every turn. (B, D)

o/n Dades Gorge

Day 11: 31 March 2027, Ait Benhaddou

Before leaving Dades Gorge this morning, we have an optional hike among the amazing rock formations of Monkey Fingers Canyon.



This afternoon, we continue to the regional town of Ouarzazate, stopping en route at a rose oil co-operative.

o/n Ouarzazate / Ait Benhaddou

Day 12: 1 April 2027, Marrakech

This morning, we will visit Ait Benhaddou, an 11th century ksar (fortified village), UNESCO World Heritage Site and filming location for many famous movies, including Gladiator and Games of Thrones. We'll spend some time exploring the kasbah, with its cute shops, art studios and cafes and a viewpoint at the top, overlooking the valley and mountains beyond.



Casablanca – Rabat – Chefchaouen – Fes – Erfoud – Merzouga – Dades Gorge – Ouarzazate / Ait Benhaddou – Marrakech – Essaouira – Casablanca

From Ait Benhaddou, we have a scenic drive over the High Atlas Mountains to the 'red city' of Marrakech. This evening, enjoy strolling in the main square, Jemaa el Fnaa, and a street food tour with a local guide. It's a fun and informative evening that takes care of dinner. (B)



o/n Marrakech

Day 13: 2 April 2027, Marrakech

We begin the day with a visit to Le Jardin Majorelle, a beautiful garden in the Ville Nouvelle that was established by French artist Jacques Majorelle and later bought and restored by Yves Saint Laurent.



After Le Jardin Majorelle, we'll return to the medina – the rest of the afternoon is free. (B)



o/n Marrakech

Day 14: 3 April 2027, Marrakech

A free day in Marrakech You may want to do an early-morning hot-air balloon ride, shop 'til you drop, enjoy some spa treatments or explore the medina and its many historical buildings. (B)



o/n Marrakech

Day 15: 4 April 2027, Essaouira

This morning, we leave Marrakech behind for the three-hour drive west, to the laidback coastal city of Essaouira. We'll stop on the way to visit an argan oil co-operative, arriving in Essaouira in time for lunch. Famous for its seafood, handicrafts, surfing and thriving arts scene, Essaouira is the perfect finale to the trip. (B)



o/n Essaouira

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Day 16: 5 April 2027, Essaouira

Today is an unstructured day in Essaouira giving you plenty of time in the friendly medina. It's a great place for last-minute shopping, walking on the beach, having a last hamman or sipping a mint tea in a café as you watch the world go by - the ideal place to relax. Tonight, we'll have a farewell dinner together. (B, D)



Day 17: 6 April 2027, Depart

All good things must come to an end and this morning we transfer back to Casablanca airport (4.5 hours), arriving in the early afternoon, in time for a late afternoon or evening flight. Please ensure you have at least three hours at the airport before your onward flight. Safe travels!



o/n Essaouira



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