

HIKING THE ATLAS

plus SOUKS and THE SAHARA



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22 days/21 nights, including a seven-day trek to the summit of Mount Toubkal,
the highest peak in North Africa

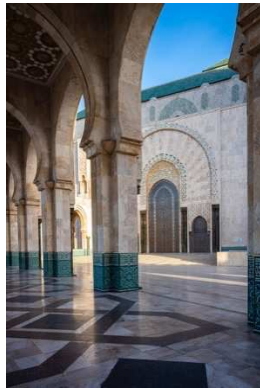
Stay in the Sahara and explore Northern Morocco

Small group – just eight guests

HIGHLIGHTS

- *Tour the Hassan II Mosque, one of the largest mosques in the world*
- *Sample a range of Moroccan delicacies on an evening food tour in Marrakech*
- *Trek to the summit of Mount Toubkal, the highest peak in North Africa, on a fully supported trek*
- *Experience the way of life in Berber villages of the High Atlas Mountains, unchanged for centuries*
- *Visit the ancient kasbah of Ait Benhaddou, location of the Gladiator movie*
- *Relax in a luxury Sahara Desert camp, ride a camel and watch the sun set over the dunes*
- *Have tea with the Berber owners of a traditional cave house in the Middle Atlas Mountains*
- *Explore the Roman ruins of Volubilis*
- *Wander among the blue painted buildings of Chefchaouen, known as 'The Blue Pearl'*
- *Shop for textiles, jewellery and other handicrafts in the many souks of Fes and Marrakech*

**Terms and conditions apply - see website for details.*



Inclusions

- *All land-based travel in Morocco*
- *Entry to the Hassan II Mosque, the Roman ruins of Volubilis, Kasbah Amidril*
- *Local guides in Fes and Volubilis*
- *15 nights' accommodation in carefully chosen riads and hotels*
- *6 nights' camping in tents or family homes on a fully supported trek*
- *Local trekking guide and chef to accompany the trek, all camping gear provided*
- *2 nights in a luxury Sahara Desert camp*
- *21 breakfasts, 9 lunches, 12 dinners*
- *Evening food tour in Marrakech, tea with Berber owners of a cave house*
- *Private transport with 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*
- *Tips (widely expected in Morocco)*
- *Escorted by Heather*

Exclusions

- *International flights*
- *Transfers to and from your local airport in Australia or home country*
- *Travel insurance – mandatory*
- *Any meals or activities not specified in the itinerary as included*
- *Personal items such as drinks, laundry*
- *City tax, where charged separately by hotels/riads*

Casablanca – Marrakech – Imlil – Mount Toubkal – Marrakech – Ouarzazate – Dades Gorge – Merzouga (Sahara) – Midelt – Fes – Chefchaouen – Rabat – Casablanca

Day 1: Casablanca

Arrive into Casablanca international airport early afternoon, where you will be met by our driver for transfer to the hotel in central Casablanca. Tonight, enjoy a welcome dinner. (D)



o/n Casablanca

Day 2: Casablanca – Marrakech

We start the day with a visit to the Hassan II Mosque, one of the largest in the world. From there, it's a three-hour drive to Marrakech, the bustling heart of Morocco. The rest of the afternoon is free to explore Marrakech medina. Don't miss the main square, Jemaa el Fnaa, with its snake charmers, musicians and entertainers - it truly comes alive after dusk. (B)



o/n Marrakech

Day 3: Marrakech

A free day to explore Marrakech, where there is so much to see and do: shop in the souks (markets), visit the beautiful Bahia Palace, seek out stunning Moroccan architecture or relax in a traditional Moroccan hammam (bath). This evening, we have a food tour with a Marrakechi local, sampling many Moroccan specialities – a fun and informative evening that takes care of dinner. The donuts are amazing!



Back at the riad we will organise our gear for the trek tomorrow. (B, D)

o/n Marrakech

Day 4: Imlil – start trek

We will be picked up this morning for the 1.5-hour drive to the village of Imlil in the Atlas Mountains. Here we meet our trekking crew, who will load our trek luggage on to the mules. We start the trek, hiking towards Fousarou (2000m) via Tizi Tamaterte (2279m). Today's hike will be about 5 hours and tonight we will be camping in the mountains. (B,L,D)



Day 5: Fousarou – Tizi Likmete (3900m) – Azib Likemete (2,500m)

After a hearty breakfast, prepared by our camp chef, we set off for a day in the mountains, hiking about 6.5 hours. with lunch prepared for us along the way. (B,L,D)

Day 6: Azib Likemete – Tizi n'ourai (3109m) – Amsouzarte village (1750m)

Today's hike will be about 5.5 hours and after crossing a pass at 3109m, we'll come to the village of Amsouzarte, where we'll spend the night, either in our tents or in a family home. (B,L,D)

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Day 7: Amsouzarte – Lake Ifni (2300m) via Berber villages

Five hours of hiking today takes us through several Berber villages where the way of life has changed little in hundreds of years. We'll camp tonight near the lake. (B,L,D)

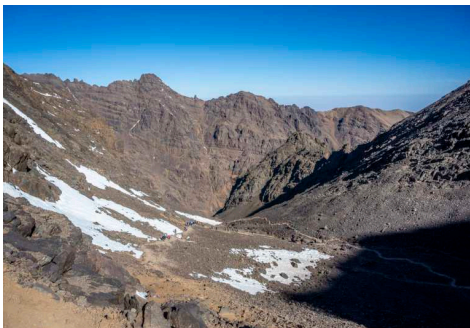
Day 8: Lake Ifni – Tizi Ouanoums (3700m) – Toubkal Refuge (3200m)

From Lake Ifni, we have 6 hours of hiking to the Toubkal refuge. We'll spend the night either in the refuge or in our tents. (B,L,D)



Day 9: Toubkal summit

This morning it's a four-to-five-hour hike to the summit of Mount Toubkal, the highest peak in Morocco (and North Africa), at 4,167m. Enjoy the stunning 360-degree views and snap some photographs at the top. Then we make our way back down to the refuge, for our last night of the trek. (B,L,D)



Day 10: Basecamp – Imlil - Marrakech

We set off this morning after breakfast for the return hike down to Imlil on an established trail (about four hours). In Imlil, we'll say goodbye to our crew and meet our transport for the drive back to Marrakech (1.5 hours).

The rest of the day is free to wander the medina of Marrakech or perhaps enjoy a well-earned hamman. (B)

o/n Marrakech



Day 11: Marrakech – Ait Benhaddou/ Ouarzazate

We leave Marrakech this morning for a 3.5-hour drive to Ait Benhaddou, an 11th century Berber ksar (fortified village), UNESCO world heritage site and filming location for many famous movies, including *Gladiator* and *Games of Thrones*. Spend the afternoon exploring the kasbah, with its cute shops and cafes and viewpoint at the top, overlooking the valley and mountains beyond.



Another 30 minutes brings us to Ouarzazate for dinner and our hotel for the night. (B)

o/n Ouarzazate

Day 12: Ouarzazate – Dades Gorge

From Ouarzazate, we take the Road of a Thousand Kasbahs. We'll visit one of the best preserved of these kasbahs, Amridil on the way to Dades Gorge. As we make our way along the gorge, there are many spectacular viewpoints. (B, D)

o/n Dades Gorge

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Day 13: Todra Gorge - Sahara Luxury Camp

Our first stop today is a local Berber carpet co-operative, in Tinghir. We continue to Rissani, known throughout Morocco for its spice market.



From Rissani, it's a short drive to Merzouga and the gateway to the Sahara. In the dunes just outside town we'll swap four wheels for four legs, as we meet our camels for the hour-long ride to our desert camp. Enjoy African drumming around the campfire after dinner. ((B,L,D)



o/n Sahara camp

Day 14: Sahara Luxury Camp

Today is a day to relax in the camp or walk in the dunes. You might like to rent quadbikes, try sandboarding or take a 4x4 excursion to visit an abandoned kohl mine and some desert nomads who eke out a living in this desolate landscape (at extra cost). Watch the sunset over the desert from the top of one of the nearby dunes. (B,L,D)



o/n Sahara camp

Day 15: Merzouga – Midelt

You might want to catch the sunrise this morning before we leave the camp, to return to our transport in Merzouga. In the nearby village of Khamlia, we hope to find a group of Gnaoua musicians, who are descendants of sub-Saharan African slaves. In Erfoud, we'll see some of the incredible fossils found in this area and then it's on to Midelt, the half-way point on our drive north to Fes. (B)

o/n Midelt



Day 16: Midelt – Fes

We continue north this morning, leaving behind the arid landscapes of southern Morocco as we reach the Middle Atlas Mountains and the town of Ifrane, known as the Switzerland of Morocco. Look out for the Barbary apes that live in the cedar forests - they often wait close to the road in the hope of being fed by passing tourists. Closer to Fes, we'll have tea with the Berber owners of a traditional cave home, in the village of Immouzzer. And then on to beautiful Fes. If time permits, we'll stop at the impressive gates of the king's palace before checking into our riad and our home for the next three nights. (B)



o/n Fes

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Day 17: Fes

Fes medina, a UNESCO world heritage site, is the largest car-free urban area in the world. Spend the morning exploring the thousands of alleyways and key historical sites with a local guide. Or, if you prefer to explore on your own, you are free to do so. Make sure to see the famous Chouara Tannery where leather has been dyed in stone vats for hundreds of years and a madrasa (a koranic school) with its stunning architecture.



This evening, we have a 15-minute drive to the Merenid Tombs lookout above the city for sunset views, before returning to the medina for dinner (included). (B,D))

o/n Fes

Day 18: Fes

A free day in Fes. Take the opportunity to do a Moroccan cooking class, a bread-making workshop, a photography walk (subject to availability and at extra cost) or prepare to get lost as you wander through the many souks in the medina. (B)

o/n Fes

Day 19: Volubilis and Chefchaouen

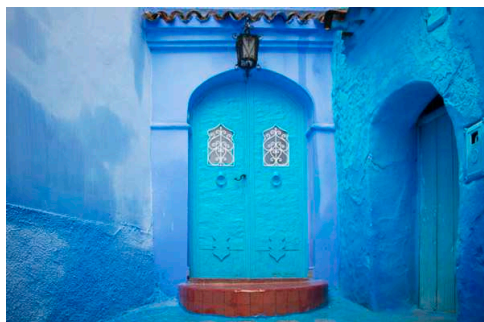
Who knew the Romans made it to Morocco? This morning, we will explore the Roman ruins of Volubilis in the countryside north of Fes. We'll have lunch nearby, before continuing to Chefchaouen and our riad in the medina. (B, L)



o/n Fes

Day 20: Chefchaouen

Enjoy a relaxing day in Chefchaouen, one of Morocco's prettiest towns, with the buildings in the medina painted vibrant shades of blue. Visit Place el Haouta, with its blue and white fountain, climb the tower in the kasbah for views over the medina or sip a mint tea in the main square while you watch the world go by.



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This evening, before dinner, there is an optional 30-minute walk to the Spanish mosque on a small hill outside the town. There are great sunset views from here, over the medina and mountains beyond. (B)



Day 22: Rabat - Casablanca

This morning it is just over an hour's drive to Casablanca airport and your onward flight. Please allow three hours for check-in before your flight departs. (B)



o/n Chefchaouen

Day 21: Chefchaouen - Rabat

We have a four hour drive this morning to the elegant capital of Morocco, Rabat. After lunch, we'll visit some of the main sights, including the Hassan II Tower and the Mausoleum of Mohammed V. Later this afternoon, explore the kasbah, with its whitewashed buildings and pretty Andalusian garden and wander through the alleyways of the nearby medina. Tonight, we will have a farewell dinner together. (B,D)



o/n Rabat

