

# EXPLORE!



## BEST SELLER

**Family Rock the Kasbah**  
8 days

Morocco - Trip code FAT



## Family Rock the Kasbah

An active adventure in the Moroccan wilderness exploring North Africa's highest mountains and the world's largest desert. We ride mules in the High Atlas and cycle the southern mountain slopes. We explore the great Sahara Desert by camel and sleep among the dunes. We also discover the ancient city of Marrakech and experience the evening street entertainment on the Djemma El Fna square.

## Trip highlights

- ★ **Atlas Mountains** - Take a crazy mule ride to a remote Berber village and an exhilarating bike ride.
- ★ **Ouarzazate** - Visit the Atlas Film Studios, the film set of Gladiator and Lawrence of Arabia.
- ★ **Tidri Dunes** - Travel like a nomad in a camel caravan in the desert
- ★ **Berber Villages** - Visit the oases and villages of the Draa Valley and meet the local friendly Berber people.
- ★ **Sahara Desert** - A night camping in the desert and sleeping under the stars.
- ★ **Marrakech** - Explore the manically mad Medina and Djemma el Fna with its snake charmers and acrobats.

### ACCOMMODATION GRADE:

#### Standard

Our standard, mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service, often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en suite facilities.

**TRIP PACE:****Moderate**

Moderate pace tours are ideal if you want a holiday which combines exciting activities and experiences with plenty of time to relax and unwind. Typically you'll be active and busy for part of the day but then also have time to rest and recharge your batteries.

**GROUP SIZE:****10 - 16**

Maximum group size ranges from between 6 to 20 people, depending on the type of trip, the transport and accommodation used and activities included. We rarely have groups that are smaller than five or six people and the average is 12 people plus an Explore leader.

# Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

## DAY 1 - Join tour Marrakech

Our tour starts today in Marrakech. Depending on the schedule of your flights, you may be able to explore the vibrant Red City independently before meeting your Tour Leader and group at the hotel.

Located just outside the city walls, the hotel is only a 20 minute walk from the main Djemma El Fna square. The new town is close by and it offers the options of small restaurants and fixed price souvenir shops. The hotel has a swimming pool and a restaurant and all of the rooms have air-conditioning.



**Accommodation: Hotel Meriem** (or similar)



Premium Hotel



Swimming pool available



Meals Provided: None

## DAY 2 - Drive to Anmiter and take mules up to Tighza

Departing Marrakech after breakfast we head south, crossing over the Tizi 'n Tichka Pass (2260m) and following a meandering course that takes us deep into the towering peaks of the Atlas Mountains. North Africa's greatest mountain range, the High Atlas presents us with some of the country's wildest landscapes, a region culturally removed from the rest of Morocco and one that has provided a barrier between the northern plains and the pre-Sahara for centuries. This is the land of the fiercely independent Berbers, the 'Lords of the Atlas', whose traditions and ways still hold sway up here in their mountain strongholds far away from the cities below. The Berbers present us with a unique view of a way of life lost to the rest of North Africa, where music and dance, even language and religion, are far removed from their Arab neighbours. Our morning's journey brings us past the ruined Glaoui kasbah of Telouet to the fortified village of Anmiter, lying at the end of the tarmac road. Here we join our mules and, at a more relaxed pace, follow a winding track with stunning views onto the small village of Tighza where we spend the night in a remote, local gite high above the valley.

This family owned village house has many rooms with shared facilities as well as a lovely terrace providing great views of the valley.



**Accommodation: Gite Tighza** (or similar)



Simple Gite



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

## DAY 3 - Morning valley hike; drive to Ait Ben Haddou

We spend some time this morning hiking through the valley in this remote corner of the Atlas. Heading down the southern slopes of the High Atlas we reach the Berber village of Ait Ben Haddou. A UNESCO Heritage Site, dramatically located along a fertile hillside, Ait Ben Haddou presents us with one of Morocco's most famous locations, a once important stop along the old trading routes between Marrakech and the Sahara during the 16th century and a superb example of a typical fortified ksar.

We are reunited with our vehicle after two to three hours and drive along the picturesque Ounila Valley, its barren slopes are in sharp contrast to the rich green valley floor. After a couple of hours drive along over the high Atlas, we reach our hotel located opposite the famous Kasbah of Ait Ben Hadou. The swimming pool and the restaurant are on a separate building overlooking the Kasbah and the valley of Ounila. The rooms are air conditioned.



**Accommodation: Hotel Ksar Ljanoub** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Meals Provided: Breakfast & Lunch

## DAY 4 - Bike ride to Ouarzazate; visit film studios and drive to Tannougalt

This morning we take to the saddle as we cycle from Ait Ben Haddou and down towards the fertile landscapes of the Draa Valley and the town of Ouarzazate - we may start earlier on the summer departures (helmets are supplied in two sizes although you can bring your own helmets for a better fit). Known as the 'Doorway to the Desert' this fascinating outpost, lying to the south of the High Atlas and sandwiched between the high mountains and the expansive sands of the Sahara is home to one of the largest movie studios in the world. The Atlas Film Studios can boast an impressive list of productions, including The Mummy, Gladiator, Babel, Kingdom of Heaven and Lawrence of Arabia and we we'll pay a visit to the studios today, taking a tour of some of the famous film sets before we depart and continue through the beautiful Draa Valley. Continuing by bus from Ouarzazate we cross a landscape lined with palm groves, Kasbahs and traditional ksours (villages), as we make our way to the village of Tannougalt to explore what was once the capital of this remote desert region. The village's name translates as 'meeting point' and its history has been interwoven with the ruling qaids (masters) of the Mezguita region for centuries. Even today it hosts an annual festival in October when all the surrounding villages gather for a celebration of the religious and cultural traditions of these hardy people.

The name translates to the 'Kasbah of the Stars' as it offers great views of the starry sky. Located in the middle of the Draa valley with its green palm groves, the hotel is built in a Kasbah style. It has a swimming pool and easy access to the valley for nice walks in the fields. The rooms are air conditioned.



## Accommodation: Kasbah Itrane (or similar)



Standard Kasbah



Swimming pool available



Meals Provided: Breakfast & Lunch

## DAY 5 - Drive via Zagora to Tiraf Dunes; afternoon camel ride

Turning south today we follow the course of the Draa River, spending the morning driving through the ever-changing scenery as we make our way towards the vast oasis of Zagora, referred to by many as 'The Gate of the Desert'. Once a major outpost along the caravan routes, it is apparently 52 days by camel to Timbuktu, or so a nearby sign indicates! From here we continue on to Tagounite, lying at the outer fringes of a line of undulating sand dunes that provide a taste of the immense grandeur of the Saharan Desert that lies beyond. Amidst this seemingly inhospitable landscape the desert heat causes the air to blur and quiver, creating mirages that shimmer in the soaring temperatures, the ideal setting to explore in the time honoured manner of the Tuareg nomads.

We will take to camels, forming our own caravan, to reach the dunes at Tidri (The camel ride may take place in the late afternoon on any summer departures). The Arabian camel is ideally suited to these conditions and has long been highly prized by the nomadic peoples of the desert. Living for up to 40 years, they are not only valued for their endurance as beasts of burden, but also for their fur, skin and dung, all of which can be utilised for tents, leather and fuel for the fires.

Stopping to enjoy the quiet desolation of the setting and to learn something of desert life, we then reach our overnight camp to enjoy a late afternoon of bread making, before settling down under a desert sky for the evening. After a hearty Berber style meal we enjoy a night under the twinkling blanket of the African sky. Rather than sleeping in tents, you may choose simply to sleep out in the open, enjoying the rare majesty of the setting and watching out for shooting stars racing across the horizon.

Please note we recommend you bring a 3-4 season sleeping bag depending on season, sleeping bags can be hired at an extra cost, however these must be requested in advance.



## Accommodation: Tiraf Nomad Camp (or similar)



Simple Camping



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

## DAY 6 - Visit Tamegroute; drive to Ouarzazate

Retracing our steps this morning we head north once more by camel for a couple of hours ride back to the road. We will make a stop at the settlement of Tamegroute to visit its famous 17th century zaouia, one of the most important in the Moroccan Sahara. This was once a centre of great learning and the base of the Naciri Brotherhood, who for centuries held sway over the tribes of the Draa Valley. The holy leaders of Tamegroute were traditionally (up until quite recent times) the arbitrators of desert disputes, settling differences amongst the residents of the surrounding kours and the traders that passed through these lands on the great camel caravans that journeyed through Zagora. We'll also pay a visit to the local potters' cooperative, before continuing back to Ouarzazate later this afternoon.

Located in the main avenue of Ouarzazate and close to the main market, the hotel has a swimming pool and the rooms are air

conditioned.



**Accommodation: Hotel Perle du Sud** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 7 - Drive to Marrakech; afternoon city tour

A morning drive takes us northwest back to Marrakech, where we'll have the rest of the day to explore a city that has for centuries been a meeting place for the mountain Berbers and the desert peoples of the south. This afternoon there will be an opportunity to explore something of its rich heritage with a sightseeing tour of Morocco's fascinating Red City, a city that can boast a staggering array of spectacular architecture and wonderful facades. Like many North African towns, Marrakech is divided into two distinct parts, the Gueliz (the modern French-built city) and the Medina (the Old City), a place where trade and barter amongst the colourful souks still has at its ancient heart a glittering cacophony of noise and colour. Journeying into this vibrant city with a local guide affords a chance to discover some of its most enthralling sites. The city's beating heart is the spectacular Djemma-el-Fna, a site not to be missed and a scene straight out of the pages of the Arabian Nights. Here you will find the streets and alleys alive with storytellers and musicians, jugglers and acrobats, snake charmers and clowns. You can wander past vendors selling doughnuts and fried grasshoppers, meander through native markets where Muslim women, their hands and feet dyed with henna, call out to sell their wares, and enjoy the sounds and the smells of the exotic. After our tour you may like to take some time to enjoy more of the remarkable Medina, haggling for a bargain or two, or simply sitting at one of the local cafés and watching the street tableaux unfold before you. Do remember that many of the mosques may be forbidden to non-Muslims and be careful of photographing women, as this may be unacceptable. It is always best to ask.



**Accommodation: Hotel Meriem** (or similar)



Premium Hotel



Swimming pool available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 8 - Tour ends Marrakech

The tour ends today in Marrakech after breakfast. Depending on the schedule of your flights, you may be able to spend some additional time wandering the souks before returning home. Note; on the summer departures, the tour leader may adjust the timing of when the activities take place based upon daily temperatures on the day.



Meals Provided: Breakfast

# Family information



Desert oasis, Southern Morocco

**High peaks, vast deserts, captivating Marrakesh:** Morocco is an easy going country to travel to with children of all ages and with a direct flying time between London and Marrakesh of just 3 hours 20 minutes, travel comes without the trials of a long haul flight.

We've packed a great deal into eight days. Starting and ending in Marrakech there is plenty of time to explore the labyrinth of market stalls that has firmly put Marrakech on the map. Venturing out of the city we journey over high mountain peaks to the sand dunes of the Sahara where we get to ride a camel to our Bedouin desert camp. Other highlights include cycling in the fertile landscapes of the Draa Valley, visiting the film studios outside Ouarzazate and witnessing the beauty of Ait Ben Hadou with its historic Kasbahs blending into the landscape.

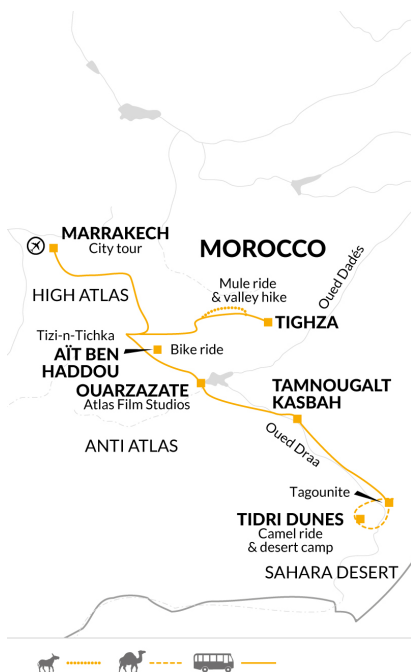
**Triple Rooms:** This trip allows the option for a limited amount of triple rooms to be included within the booking on all nights except the Berber homestay on day 2 and desert camp on day 5. If you would like this option please ask our Sales team for further information.

**Average Age:** As a guide we have identified the actual average age of the children who have travelled on this trip over the last 5 years, to help you decide whether it's the right one for your family. The average age on this trip is 14 years old; this trip is suitable for children of all ages. Be aware that it will be very hot over May half term and the summer holidays.

## Why book this trip

This tour is designed for families with teenagers that enjoy a range of activities from riding mules in the High Atlas mountains and camels in the desert to cycling to a film studio and walking amongst the mountains and visiting the Berber villages and their people. It's a journey as well as an active trip where the scenery changes daily and it gives you the chance to meet up with locals including a unique experience where camel handlers of the nomad tribes share a their lifestyle with the group.

Also note, we have priced this trip on a direct flight with BA arriving in the afternoon. There are alternative options including with Air Maroc which flies via Casablanca and arrives late at night.



# What's included?



## Included meals

Breakfast: 7  
Lunch: 4  
Dinner: 2



## Transport

Bus  
Minibus  
On Foot



## Trip staff

Explore Tour Leader  
Driver(s)



## Accommodation

1 nights simple camping  
1 nights simple gite  
2 nights premium hotel  
2 nights standard hotel  
1 nights standard kasbah

# Trip information

## Country information

### Morocco

#### Climate

The climate is both Mediterranean and Atlantic. The dry, hot season is from May to October when summer temperatures can reach 38°C and above (if sight seeing is included we will do our best to avoid the heat of the day during this period). Temperatures may drop significantly at times during the night as the day's heat rapidly diminishes. From December to January snow can be expected on mountain passes and it can be wet. In winter, day temperatures will probably be around 18-25°C, dropping to perhaps 0-5°C.

#### Time difference to GMT

0

#### Plugs

2 Pin Round

#### Religion

Islam

#### Language

Arabic, Berber, French.

## Budgeting and packing

### Clothing

Morocco is a Muslim country and it is important to dress with respect for local customs. People may be offended by shorts or revealing dresses, which can attract unwelcome attention. We advise that in general both men and women should cover shoulders, upper arms and knees. Transparent, plunging necklines and tightfitting clothes should be avoided. Women and older girls should also cover their heads when entering a sanctuary, though in general, mosques are forbidden to non-Muslims. While cycling it is no problem for you to wear your regular cycling gear, tight fitting or not.

Summer: Clothing should be lightweight. However, a warm jumper is also advisable, as the desert can sometimes get cold at nights,

even in the summer.

Winter: Warm days but much thicker clothing is essential for cold nights (between November and March). It is advisable to take warm clothing (eg. track suit or thermal underwear) to sleep in, as the quality of heating in Moroccan hotel rooms can be variable. A waterproof jacket, jumper trousers and fleece are recommended between December and March.

It may also be worth bringing cycling gloves for the mountain bike ride.

## Footwear

Lightweight walking bootshoes, plus sandals or trainers for relaxing.

## Luggage

20kg

## Luggage: On tour

One piece of baggage (suitcases not suitable as luggage is stored on the roof racks of our 4WD vehicles and we are restricted on weight) and a daypack for the walks.

## Equipment

A head torch, water bottle, sunhat and high factor sunscreen are all essential, whilst we recommend swimming costumes and towels. Sleeping mattress will be provided for the desert camp or you may prefer to bring your own thermarest. Please also bring a 3-4 season sleeping bag depending on season (sleeping bags can be hired at an extra cost, these must be requested in advance). You may like to bring your own helmet for cycling to ensure a good fit. These can then also be used for the mule and camel rides.

## Tipping

### Explore leader

Tour Leader: At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

### Local crew

In this region, tipping is a recognised part of life across the service industry. Local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided.

To assist with this your Explore Leader may organise a group tips kitty for included activities and meals, they will then account for kitty use throughout the tour.

For this we suggest £20 per family member.

For all non-included services and meals on your trip please tip independently at your discretion.

## Country Information

### Morocco

#### Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

**Lunch price**  
£6.00 - 8.00

**Dinner price**  
£8.00 - 12.00

**Beer price**  
£2.5

**Water price**  
£0.6

#### Foreign Exchange



**Local currency**  
Moroccan Dirham (MAD).

**Recommended Currency For Exchange**  
US Dollars, Sterling and Euros are readily exchangeable. We recommend you take a mixture of cash and credit cards. Scottish bank notes and Australian dollar travellers cheques and cash are NOT normally accepted in Morocco.

**Where To Exchange**  
Most major towns - your Tour Leader will advise you.

**ATM Availability**  
ATMs are available in main towns/cities, though can be unreliable.

**Credit Card Acceptance**  
Not all places.

**Travellers Cheques**  
Travellers cheques are difficult to exchange and are not recommended.

## Transport, Accommodation & Meals

### Transport Information

Bus, Minibus, On Foot

### Accommodation notes

#### Booking a Single Room

All of our group tours are planned and operated on a twin-share basis, meaning that the standard cost is based either on individual travellers sharing accommodation with another group member of the same sex, or people who book together sharing accommodation. Please refer to the tour notes where the single room option availability is detailed on a night by night basis for this tour, and the price for the available nights is detailed on the dates & prices tab by departure date. For Self-Guided trips the Single Room supplement offers the option of a single room each and is charged per person. The Single Room supplement also applies to the third person in a party of three that will be accommodated in a single room.

The hotel in Marrakech is located in the new city centre with a 20 mn walk from the main Jamaa El Fna Square. The hotel has a swimming pool and a restaurant and the rooms are air conditioned. We then move into the mountains where we stay in a family owned gîte village house which has a number of rooms and shared facilities as well as a nice terrace for great views of the valley. We stay in a hotel in Ait Ben Haddou which is located opposite the famous Kasbah of Ait Ben Hadou. The swimming pool and the restaurant overlooks the Kasbah and the valley of Ounilla. The rooms are air conditioned. The hotel in Tamnougalt is located in the middle of the Draa valley with its green palm groves and easy access to the valley for nice walks in the fields. The hotel is designed in a Kasbah style and has a swimming pool with air conditioned rooms. After our camping experience in the desert, we stay in a hotel in Ouarzazate which is located in the main avenue of the town and close to the main market in the city centre. The hotel has a swimming pool and the rooms have air conditioning.

### Family swimming

Available at hotels in Marrakech, Ait Benhaddou, Tamnougalt and Ouarzazate

## Essential Information

### FCO Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice click here.

For more information from Explore about travel advice, click here

### Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

## Price Guarantee

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

## Visa and Passport Information

Morocco: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See [www.travcour.com](http://www.travcour.com) to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

## Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our [Essential Information](#) and [Booking Conditions](#).

## Transfers

[Find out more about Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions before you book.](#)

### Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

### Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Polar, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

## Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

## Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. [Read more about them here.](#)

### Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

### Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid

paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

## **Non refundable permits**

### **Morocco**

#### **Vaccinations**

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against tetanus, typhoid, infectious hepatitis and polio. Consult your travel clinic for latest advice on different prophylaxis available against malaria. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at [Explore Travel Health](#) and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

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