

EXPLORE!

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BEST SELLER

Highlights of Morocco

MOROCCO - TRIP CODE MMR

DISCOVERY

Why book this trip?

Discover the highlights of captivating Morocco on this fast-paced, adventurous trip. From the iconic imperial cities of Marrakech, Fez and Meknes to the golden sand dunes of Erg Chebbi and the friendly Berber villages in the Atlas Mountains.

- **Imperial cities** - Explore the vibrant souks and exhilarating atmosphere of Morocco's cities
- **Todra Gorge** - Walk in Morocco's Grand Canyon through spectacular rock formations
- **The Atlas Mountains** - Beautiful mountain scenery in the highest mountain range in North Africa

**INCLUDED MEALS**Breakfast: 8
Dinner: 2**TRIP STAFF**Explore Tour
Leader
Driver(s)**TRANSPORT**4WD
Minibus**ACCOMMODATION**1 nights
comfortable
auberge
1 nights simple
camping
1 nights
comfortable
guesthouse
5 nights
comfortable hotel**TRIP PACE:**

Full on

**GROUP SIZE:**

10 - 15

Itinerary

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

DAY 1 - Join trip in Marrakech

Arrive in the 'red city' of Marrakech. This atmospheric city encompasses the very essence of Morocco; opportunities to get lost in the narrow, winding lanes of the medina and to people watch with a traditional mint tea in Djemma el-Fnaa.

There are no activities planned today, so you are free to arrive in Marrakech at any time. If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you'll need to arrive into Marrakech Menara Airport (RAK), which is around 20 minutes from the hotel depending on traffic. For those arriving on time our Leader plans to meet you in the hotel reception at 6pm for the welcome meeting and for those that wish, there is the chance to go out for dinner. Should you miss the meeting, your Leader will inform you of any essential information as soon as you catch up.

If your flight arrives earlier in the day, perhaps you might choose to visit Jardin Majorelle just a short walk from our hotel.

**ACCOMMODATION:**

Hotel Moroccan House, Marrakech (or similar)

**Grade: Comfortable Hotel**



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

DAY 2 - Discover the narrow lanes of Marrakech's souks before driving to isolated Bin el Ouidane lake

After breakfast we will explore the city. Marrakech is the spiritual heart of the country, a cultural melting pot of the mountain Berbers and the desert nomads of the south. Blessed with some of the most stunning architecture in Morocco, its mix of tradition, colour and history makes for a fascinating walk. A local guide will lead us through the narrow pathways of the medina this morning to explore the colourful souks, busy with both visitors and locals. We'll also visit the remarkable Bahia Palace, a fusion of Moroccan and Islamic styles that is excellently preserved within the medina.

Following our tour we then depart Marrakech, for the beautiful waterfalls at Cascades of Ouzoud. We will stop en route for lunch in a local restaurant in Tamalet. After visiting the waterfalls we continue on to our stop for tonight in Bin el Ouidane. The drive is around three hours, with stops along the way to stretch our legs, before arriving in the late afternoon. Our hotel for this evening is hidden peacefully in the Atlas Mountains boasting views across Bin el Ouidane lake.



ACCOMMODATION:
Bin El Ouidane Hotel (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



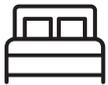
MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 3 - Drive to Fes; visit the imperial city of Meknes and the Roman ruins of Volubilis

We will have a very early start this morning for the full day journey to Fes via Meknes and ancient Volubilis. The drive will follow the northern slopes of the Middle Atlas Mountains, into the Oued Boufekrane River Valley with a picnic stop en route to the city of Meknes.

Once the heart of the Moroccan Sultanate, Meknes was built by the tyrant, Moulay Ismail, and was once filled with palaces and grand gateways. Although much of Ismail's capital has crumbled to dust, it still exudes a sense of its former regal grandeur. In the company of a guide we will visit the old granary of Heri es-Souni and the Mausoleum of Moulay Ismail himself. In spite of the sultan's infamous blood lust and cruelty, many still see his reign as a golden age and the tomb is held in high regard.

After time in Meknes we'll take a short 45 minute drive to the ancient site to Volubilis. Once the capital of the Roman province of Mauritania Tingitana, Volubilis is Morocco's best-preserved Roman site, set among rolling, fertile plains, and was once a thriving city home to an estimated 20,000 residents. We'll have time to explore and learn about the extensive history of the area. The day ends with another hour drive to Fes, our home for the next two nights.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Zahrat al Jabal (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE

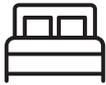


MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 4 - Explore the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Fes medina; free time this afternoon

Fes is the oldest of Morocco's imperial cities, home to the world's oldest university and certainly boasts the most well-preserved medieval quarters in the Arab world. This morning we enjoy a guided tour of the city that has long been regarded as Morocco's 'artisan capital', taking in the medina and the souks and paying a visit to the Royal Palace (Fes El Jedid). Craft work made and sold in the Fes medina is considered amongst the finest in Morocco and a wander through its artisan districts reveals an array of weavers and brass workshops, coppersmiths and tanners, producing beautiful pieces much as they have for generations. It's difficult to get a sense of the size and complexity of the medina, so after our tour we'll drive outside of the city to the viewpoint at Borj Nord, for great panoramic views of the city.

This afternoon is free to enjoy at your own pace. As with many Moroccan cities, Fes is divided into old and new. After a busy morning in the bustling medina you may choose to take a seat at one of the many European-influenced cafes, which line the pavements in a Parisian fashion and watch the world go by in the French Ville Nouvelle area of the city. Alternatively, you may choose to head back into the souks for some time to explore at your own pace and take the chance to buy some of the city's handicrafts.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Zahrat al Jabal (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 5 - Drive over the Middle Atlas Mountains; spend the night under a blanket of stars in the desert

Today we have a long, but very scenic drive over the Middle Atlas Mountains to Erg Chebbi. The lands we cross today are home to the fiercely independent Berbers, the 'Lords of the Atlas', whose timeless traditions still hold sway up here in their mountain strongholds far away from the cities. The road takes us through Ifrane and Azrou where we will take a short walk through the Atlas cedar forest, home of the endangered Barbary macaques. We then continue our drive into the Gorge du Ziz and across the broad plateau towards the desert settlement of Erfoud. Following the meandering course of the Ziz River we then head into the dunes of the Sand Sea, the traditional homeland of the Alaouite, who ruled this region for some 300 years.

Towards the end of the day we will arrive into Merzouga where we'll leave our bus and get into 4WD vehicles for the exhilarating journey into the desert. Our final destination this evening is Erg Chebbi, an area of high dunes that are among the most spectacular natural landscapes anywhere in Morocco. We'll be staying in a simple camp to experience the unrivalled tranquillity of this desert setting. We'll have a traditional tagine dinner and the crew will set up a campfire for everyone to sit around in the evening. The tents can sleep up to 4 people and mattresses, blankets and pillows are provided and simple washing facilities are available, however, hot water cannot be guaranteed.



ACCOMMODATION:
Nomad Camp - Chebbi Dunes (or similar)



Grade: Simple Camping



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & DINNER

DAY 6 - See the sunrise over the sand dunes and experience a camel ride; afternoon walk in the Todra Valley

Waking early we'll climb the sand dunes to see the sun come up over the desert. The word 'erg' is Arabic for 'great sand dune area' and although many people imagine the Sahara as an endless sea of rolling golden sand dunes, they actually cover only about one-fifth of its surface. After breakfast we'll then have the chance to experience a camel ride among the dunes taking us back to Merzouga to meet the bus.

From Merzouga, we'll begin the long drive along the southern slopes of the Atlas towards Rissani and Tinjdad, where we will stop for lunch. After a break to eat and stretch our legs we continue to the town of Tinerhir, set among the dramatic ochre-coloured cliffs of the Todra Gorge. Upon arrival we'll check in to the hotel before departing on foot for our walk through the narrow gorge. Our leader will lead us through cultivated fields and into the gorge of towering, sheer sided walls that in some places are up to 300 metres high and little more than 10 metres wide. The walk will take between 2-2.5 hours along well marked paths and we'll return to the hotel in the early evening.



ACCOMMODATION:

Dar Ayour Guesthouse (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Guesthouse



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



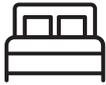
MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 7 - Drive to Bou Tharar via the Road of a 1000 Kasbahs; visit a Berber village

This morning we will drive along the famous Road of a 1,000 Kasbahs to Boumaine-Dades where we will stop for a lunch break. The Dades Valley boasts some of Morocco's most authentic Berber settlements, with each of the oasis towns offering up its own distinctive charm and character. Many of the original kasbahs lie in ruins now, but enough remain to provide a real flavour of Morocco's ancient heritage. We continue through to El Kelaa Mgouna via the Valley of the Roses, where we will stop and take a scenic, easy hour-long walk through fields to learn more about the agriculture here.

In the afternoon we will arrive into the Berber village of Bou Tharar, located at the entrance to the wonderfully scenic Mgoun Gorge. After checking in, we will head back out on foot to walk through this stunning area and along the way our leader will take us to visit a local Berber village. The walking route will be decided by the leader but will be along a well marked trail with an ascent to a panoramic view point.

After a busy day, we'll all have the chance to relax at the small, locally run auberge. Our accommodation is traditionally decorated and staffed by people from the local village. Our evening meal is included and is a chance to try the local tagine.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Awayou (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Auberge



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & DINNER

DAY 8 - Drive to Marrakech via Ouarzazate and the Tizi n'Tichka mountain pass

We'll begin the day with an early breakfast, before departing Bou Tharar to drive to the oasis town of Skoura, where we pay a visit to Kasbah Amredhil. Kasbahs are traditional walled-neighbourhoods which were once very common throughout Morocco. Dating back to the 17th century, Kasbah Amredhil is a symbol of Morocco, appearing on the 50 dirham note, and today is an open-air museum.

From here we then continue to Ouarzazate, a desert outpost lying to the south of the High Atlas, sandwiched between the high mountains and the expansive sands of the Sahara. We'll journey over the Tizi n'Tichka Pass, taking in the extensive views of the surrounding landscapes which changes in colour and terrain as we ascend and descend over the mountains. We then continue to Marrakech, where we have a free evening to enjoy the many delights of the city. Marrakech is a city like no other, a place where trade and barter still renders its centre a delightful chaos of noise and colour and at its heart you'll find the spectacular Djemma-el-Fna, a site not to be missed.



ACCOMMODATION:
Hotel Moroccan House, Marrakech (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE





SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 9 - Trip ends in Marrakech

The trip ends after breakfast at our hotel in Marrakech.

There are no activities planned today, so you are free to depart from Marrakech at any time. If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you'll need to depart from Marrakech Menara Airport (RAK), which is a 20 minute drive from the hotel depending on traffic.



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

Trip information

Climate and 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	Plugs	Religion	Language
0	2 Pin Round	Islam	Arabic, Berber, French.

Budgeting and packing

Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were

originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Marrakech - Hammam £20

Clothing

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

Winter: Usually warm during the day but thicker clothing is essential for cold nights (Nov-Mar). 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, trousers and fleece are recommended in the winter months.

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 should also cover their heads when entering a sanctuary, though in general, mosques are forbidden to non-Muslims.

Footwear

We recommend sandals and walking boots with good ankle support if planning to do the walk in the Todra Gorge.

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

One main piece of baggage and daypack.

Equipment

A filter water bottle, sunhat and high factor sunscreen are all essential, whilst we recommend swimming costumes and towels.

Tipping

Explore leader

Tipping isn't compulsory, and we work hard to ensure that our leaders all receive a fair wage. However, you might want to recognise a leader that's done a great job or really added to your trip by giving them a tip. We're often asked about the recommended amount. It's a tricky one, and down to personal preference, but we'd recommend between £15 to £20 per person per week as a guideline.

Local crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. In order to make things easier for you, your leader may organise a group's tips kitty for included activities and meals and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

Accordingly, you should allow £20.00 per person for group tipping.

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	Dinner price	Beer price	Water price
£6.00 - 8.00	£8.00 - 12.00	£2.5	£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

4WD, Minibus

Accommodation notes

Morocco is a developing country and as such, the accommodation standards are not equivalent to those in Europe and can be more simple.

We choose our properties because of their location, cleanliness, traditional style or for their welcoming atmosphere, as we endeavour to provide an authentic Moroccan experience. However, some of the properties might have some outdated or simple furniture and the level of service may vary depending on

the location. Hot water is variable or limited in certain locations, and many of the older buildings have been built to protect from the summer heat, however, this can result in rooms being cold during the winter. Hotels will always provide more blankets but not all offer heating facilities so please bear this in mind when packing if travelling through the winter months.

Breakfasts are generally plentiful and in a continental style but can have a limited selection. A swimming pool is often available, especially in the cities.

During this trip we stay in the desert in a simple, multi-share camp. Mattresses, blankets and pillows are all provided. In the winter months, the nights and early mornings can be cold in the desert but please pack warm clothes to wear. Simple washing facilities are available, including showers and flushing toilets, however, hot water and strong water pressure cannot be guaranteed.

Essential Information

Government Travel Safety 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 citizens, check the latest Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office advice.

Please refer to our COVID-19 entry requirements page for any country-specific conditions of entry. Whilst we strive to update this on a regular basis we recommend you also check the FCDO website for the latest advice on entry requirements in this fast-evolving situation. Information can change at any time.

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.

UK passport holders are requested to have at least 3 months validity from the date of entry into Morocco. All other nationalities please check with your nearest embassy for requirements of passport validity.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may be able to apply through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See 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 receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The complimentary transfers will be arranged from the Explore designated airport or train station to your trips joining point, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. Generally the airport or station that Explore have selected will be the one that is closest to the town or city where the trip starts, or the one nearest to the joining point. It will be either an airport or train station but not both.

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.

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.

Additional Information



In 2022, Ramadan runs from 02 April - 02 May. Read more about travelling during Ramadan.

The following 2022 departures of Highlights of Morocco will coincide with Ramadan.

26 March 2022

09 April 2022

16 April 2022

Why book this trip

This is a perfect tour for travellers who want to experience the sights and sounds of Morocco in a short time. The tour takes you on a roller-coaster ride from the sensory highs of Fes to the peaceful serenity of the Sahara desert. A wonderful trip to begin your love affair with Morocco.

Reviews



AWARD WINNING
EXPLORE LEADERS



PRICE GUARANTEE
PROMISE



AIRPORT
TRANSFERS