

go guide

don't leave home without it



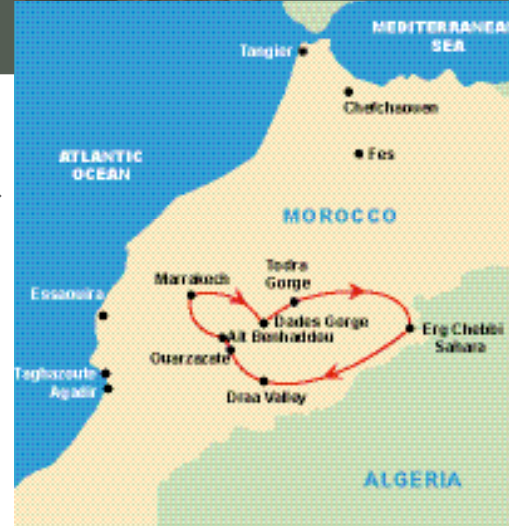
tour spotlight

what you see

- Marrakech - UNESCO-listed Place Djemaa el Fna, (medina, souks and market place).
- Bahia Palace - 19th Century palacial residence of the grand vizier Sidi Moussa & Koutoubia Mosque.
- High Atlas Mountains and views of Mt Toubkal - North Africa's highest peak
- Dades Gorge - valley & stream
- Erg Chebbi sand dunes - reaching some 150m high
- Merzouga - Berber village and start point for our camel trek into the great Sahara
- Todra Gorge - towering red canyon
- Ouarzazate - opt to visit the film studio
- Ait Benhaddou - UNESCO-listed fortified kasbah city

what you get

- 7 breakfasts, 4 lunches and 5 dinners including a traditional Berber meal at our Sahara camp.
- 4 nights 3 star hotel, 2 nights 2 star hotel
- 1 night camping - Berber desert camp in the Sahara
- Todra Gorge walk
- Camel trek into the great Sahara
- Guided tour of Marrakech
- Arrival transfer from Marrakech airport on day 1
- Escorted by an English speaking tour leader
- Specialist local guides at some sites
- All transportation and transfers in private mini van/ touring vehicle
- All road taxes and tolls.



on location

Your guide to on the ground...

visa requirements

Visas are not required for British, Australian, Canadian, US and other EU nationals for a stay of up to 3 months. Please ensure your passport is valid for six months after your return date and that you get your passport stamped upon entry into Morocco. All other nationalities should contact the Moroccan embassy for details. Visas are your responsibility. Don't forget to check!

climate

Temperatures in Morocco are generally high, particularly during the summer months from May to September, when the sun can be fierce and temperatures are at industrial levels, so take sunscreen. In winter (October to February), it is colder, especially in the Atlas Mountains where it can drop to below freezing - so take plenty of warm clothes including jacket, long-sleeved tops, jumper, gloves and trousers.

time

Morocco is 0 hours ahead of GMT (daylight saving time +1 ahead of GMT)

money

GBP £1 = MAD13 USD \$1 = MAD8 EUR 1 = MAD11 AUD = 7.4 MAD = Moroccan Dirham, rates are subject to fluctuation. Exchange facilities are available at various bureau de changes in major towns and most banks have ATMs.

health requirements

It is recommended that you be vaccinated for Tetanus and Polio, if you haven't had a booster in the last ten years. Food and waterborne diseases are more common, so we recommend vaccinations for typhoid (valid 3 years) and Hepatitis A (validity varies). Please consult a physician or travel clinic for further information.

how much

- **ENTRANCE FEES**
Entrance fees are not included in your tour. Please budget approximately **USD20-30**
- **TIPPING**
A small tipping kitty will be collected from all tour participants to cover tips en route. **USD20-30**
- **Mineral water** (local brand, 500ml or 1L) **MAD15**
- **Meal for 2** (entree, main, local restaurant) **MAD100**
- **Beer** (local brew Efes - 330-500ml approx) **MAD20**
- **Chocolate bar** (local brand) **MAD5-10**

optional activities

We make sure that you have free time whilst touring, in order to relax and enjoy the sights independently. If you prefer to stay active, here are some optional activities, that are available to book locally (prices are approximate).

- Marrakech - hammam **MAD75**
- Ouarzazate - quad biking (1 person 1 bike) **MAD500**
quad biking (2 people 1 bike) **MAD600**
visit to film studio **MAD50**
- Todra Gorge -
rock climbing (summer 2 hrs/winter 1hr) **MAD150**
horse trekking - summer only **MAD200 - 500**

things to bring

- Rucksack and a day pack/bag for day to day items
- Sleeping bag for overnight stay in the Sahara
- Towel - most hotels do not provide them
- Torch and batteries
- Camera and spare memory card/film
- Mosquito repellent
- Water bottle
- Personal first aid kit
- Swimming costume/shorts for hammam
- Comfortable pair of trainers/walking shoes
- Two spare passport photos and a photocopy of your passport





xmas in morocco: itinerary

day 1 - 23rd dec - marrakech

23rd December. Welcome to Morocco! A country steeped in history and culture. Arrival transfer from Marrakech airport to the hotel located in the heart of the old city. This evening (at 19:00) our welcome meeting takes place where you will meet your tour leader and fellow travellers and afterward, maybe go for a drink at a bar. Overnight - Marrakech.

day 2 - dades gorge

Marrakech - Dades Gorge - breakfast. Leaving Marrakech we drive through the Dades Gorge, an awe-inspiring valley which extends from the High Atlas to the Jebel Sarhro range in the south.

The Atlas Mountains span some 2,090km covering vast regions of Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia. The mountain chain comprise of a series of parallel ranges running west to east including the Anti-Atlas, High Atlas and Middle Atlas. With an average elevation of 3350 metres, the Atlas claims the highest peak of North Africa. The Berbers (original inhabitants of North Africa) built many impressive kasbahs on the mountain steep and in the valley gorges for defence purposes. En route to Dades Gorge we pass many of these medieval kasbahs and stop at one of the highest vantage points to enjoy a cup of sweet minted tea and take in panoramic views of the impressive snow capped mountain vista. Lunch, dinner and overnight - Dades Gorge.

day 3 - xmas in todra gorge

Dades Gorge - Todra Gorge - breakfast. Merry Christmas! The morning is spent at Dades Gorge where you can choose to partake in a leisurely walk/hike through the simple local villages and foothills of the gorge or spend the morning at leisure. After a hearty lunch we drive onward to Todra Gorge.

The gorge is one of the most dramatic sights to be seen anywhere in Morocco. Created millions of years ago, the striking gorge snakes its way through the rugged mountain range. The final 600 m of the Todra gorge are spectacular as the canyon narrows to a flat stony track as little as 10m wide in places with sheer and smooth rock walls up to 160m high on each side.

It's an easy walk through the rosy red gorge and often we have the opportunity to partake in an afternoon session of rock climbing (book/pay locally). With such spectacular scenery, ever changing colours of the rock face and the hubbub of locals passing through herding camels or selling their wares, it's the perfect place to stop a while. Late this afternoon we visit the village co-operative where hundreds of hand made Berber rugs, kilims and carpets are displayed are offered for sale. Lunch, Xmas dinner and overnight - Todra Gorge

day 4 - camel trek & camp

Todra Gorge - Erg Chebbi - breakfast. Crossing Jebel

Sarhro, we enjoy lunch and a swim before travelling down to Erg Chebbi sand dunes, the start point of the mighty Sahara Desert. The Erg Chebbi dunes located near the remote frontier town of Merzouga are renowned for their incredible height and size. In parts the vast sand pile reaches skyward to heights of 150 metres!

The desert winds ensure this astonishing landscape is forever changing and no two days offer the same panorama. Mounting our subservient camels, they relaxedly glide across the desert sands as we happily photograph and take in the breathtaking scenery. Arriving at our simple Berber camp, we enjoy dinner and a night under the Saharan stars. Wrap up warm and remember your winter weight sleeping bag. Lunch, dinner and overnight - Berber camp.

day 5 - draa valley

Erg Chebbi - Ouarzazate - breakfast. After a stunning sunrise and a tranquil ride back to our frontier post (camel HQ) there is time to freshen up before driving to the verdant Draa valley. Besides the natural, historical and architectural wonders that the Draa Valley offers, there are also small villages along the valley where time seems to stand still, so little is the effect of modernity on them. Here, women are fully and always veiled while washing their clothes on the riverbanks and the watchful men seem distant, unaccustomed to foreign visitors. These people, besides speaking Arabic also speak their own dialect of the Berber vernacular, called Tashelhiyt.

Along the route of 1000 Kasbahs, we continue on to Ouarzazate, (pronounced as wazza-zat). Sitting at an altitude of 1160 metres in the middle of a barren plateau, Ouarzazate lies at the cross roads of all routes going north, south, east, and west. Its geographical position has made it a key trading post in both ancient and modern times. Capital of a large province, the towns' northern limits run along the southern aspect of the High Atlas and its southern boundary disappears back into the ever present and mysterious Saharan desert. Today, the area is still essentially populated by Berber people, who were constructors of the numerous fortified kasbahs and dwellings for which the region is famous. Lunch, dinner and overnight - Ouarzazate.

day 6 - ait benhaddou

Ouarzazate - Ait Benhaddou - Marrakech - breakfast. This morning you can opt to go quad bike riding or visit the film studio that produced Lawrence of Arabia, Alexander the Great, The Last Temptation of Christ and The Living Daylights.

Arriving at nearby fortified city of Ait Benhaddou - built for defence purposes high on a hill with a bubbling steam within its shadows, the stunningly well preserved medieval city is a true highlight of our tour. Famously used as a backdrop in the film 'Gladiator',

its beauty is unequal to any other fortified village in south Morocco. Overnight - Marrakech.

day 7 - djemaa el Fna

Marrakech - breakfast. This morning we enjoy a guided tour of old Marrakech. Set within the rose-coloured walls of the medina and a tangle of winding streets lead to bustling souks, the focal point is the central square, the Djemaa el Fna, an extraordinary gathering and market place. Full of colour, spicy aromas and traders it is best seen in the evening when overflowing with food stalls, dancers, acrobats, fortune tellers, musicians and henna artists. Towering over all this is the Koutoubia mosque, the tallest building in the city and a reminder of the importance of Islam to the lives of the city's residents. Spend the afternoon at leisure, pamper yourself at the local hammam or further explore the city your own way. Dinner and overnight - Marrakech.

day 8 - marrakech

30th December. Breakfast. Spend the morning relaxing or picking up a few last minute souvenirs. Our tour concludes upon hotel check out at 12 noon.

Useful information

what to pack We recommend you pack all your gear in a rucksack/backpack for this type of trip. Also bring a daypack, to keep personal items such as your wallet, camera, water bottle and valuables to hand.

tipping

Our tip kitty does not include a gratuity for your on the go tour leader or driver.

As a guideline we would suggest a tip for your tour leader of approx USD\$20 - \$40 per person and USD\$10 for your driver for a job well done. Tipping is an entirely personal gesture and the decision to tip or not and the amount is ultimately up to you.

Sleeping bag - You will need a sleeping bag for your night in the Berber camp

Clothing: Over Xmas & New Year Morocco is blessed mostly with warm sunny days and clear blue skies. Temperatures do drop as the sun goes down it can be particularly cold in the desert and high up in the Atlas Mountains. It's a good idea to pack long sleeve shirts and pants for daytime and plenty of warm clothing including hat, gloves, scarf and a warm jacket for the evenings.

We recommend check the five day weather forecast online before packing to get an accurate idea of the temperature at each of the destinations you will be visiting.

*The go guide & information contained herein has been compiled with care and in good faith. It is as accurate an illustration as can be given with regard to the proposed itinerary. Circumstances beyond our control such as inclement weather or local conditions could force us to amend the proposed itinerary. This document does not form part of a contract between the client and on the go and their affiliates. Any costs shown may be subject to change but are an accurate reflection of costs at the time of writing this go guide. Please also be advised that visa requirements are subject to change and remain the responsibility of the traveller and not that of on the go.



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