

rock the kasbah - 10 days

go guide

don't leave home without it



a world of discovery



tour spotlight

what you see

- Marrakech - UNESCO-listed Place Djmaa 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 of the Roses'
- 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

- 9 Breakfasts, 4 lunches, 5 dinners including a traditional Berber meal at our Sahara camp.
- 6 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. **USD25-35**
- **Mineral water** (local brand, 500ml or 1L) **MAD15**
- **Meal for 2** (entree, main, a beer, local restaurant) **MAD50-100**
- **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**

things to bring

- Rucksack and a day pack/bag for day to day items
- Sleeping bag for night in the desert
- 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 if you want a Hammam
- Comfortable pair of trainers/walking shoes
- Two spare passport photos and a photocopy of your passport





rock the kasbah: itinerary

day 1 - marrakech

23rd Dec. Welcome to Morocco! Our hotel is perfectly located in the heart of the old medina offering you the opportunity to explore the rambling souk, local sights and the Djemaa el Fna. 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.

Arriving at Todra Gorge we spend the remains of the day exploring the spectacular site, from its plunging depths to its awesome heights. Witness it's changing colours as the sun slowly moves from east to west. For those feeling very active, there is the option to rock climb (payable locally). Lunch, Xmas dinner and overnight - Todra Gorge

day 4 - camel trek & sahara

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

*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.

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 - route of 1000 kasbahs

Berber Camp - Ouarzazate - breakfast. Leaving the desert, we travel along the route of 1000 Kasbahs, continuing on to Ouarzazate, (pronounced as wazzazat). 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 there is the option to visit the film studio or go quad biking (payable locally). This afternoon we head to Ait Benhaddou, a 'fortified city', situated along the former caravan route between the Sahara and Marrakech. It is located on a hill along the Ouarzazate River and boasts some beautiful examples of ancient kasbahs, some of which remain inhabited. Granted UNESCO World Heritage listing, the site had been the setting for many films including Lawrence of Arabia and Gladiator. Late this afternoon we travel back to Marrakech. Overnight - Marrakech.

day 7 - djemaa el fna

Marrakech - breakfast. Glowing red, like a welcoming campfire, against the snowcapped High Atlas Mountains, the very name Marrakech conjures up images of an exotic, distant city, of magic carpets and snake charmers and of frankincense and myrrh brought in by camel trains. 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. And towering over all this is the Koutoubia mosque, the tallest building in the city. Enjoy a guided tour in the morning and spend the afternoon at leisure. Dinner and overnight - Marrakech.

days 8 - 9 - happy new year!

Marrakech - breakfast (2). Two days of free time to explore Marrakech independently. Perhaps try a hammam and practice your bargaining skills in the souks! On New Years Eve opt to coming along for dinner (and a few drinks) in a local restaurant to celebrate the coming of the New Year. Overnight (2) - Marrakech

day 10: marrakech

1st Jan. Marrakech - breakfast. Tour ends after breakfast. Happy travels!

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.

hotels

Please note: In smaller towns, the choice of accommodation is limited but we will always book the best accommodation available for our groups. Moroccan hotels do not always have heating, especially in remote locations such as Todra Gorge and Dades Gorge. Todra Gorge does not have a mains electricity supply, therefore all hotels in the area use generators, which are turned off through the night so it's back to basics and candlelight!



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