

surf the new year - 11 days

go guide

don't leave home without it



a world of discovery



tour spotlight

what you see

- Marrakech - UNESCO-listed Place Djemaa el Fna, (medina and marketplace).
- Bahia Palace - 19th century residence of the grand vizier
- Ait Benhaddou - UNESCO-listed fortified kasbah city
- Dades Gorge - valley & stream
- Erg Chebbi sand dunes - beginning of the Sahara
- Merzouga - camel trek and Berber style camp
- Todra Gorge - towering 300m high canyon
- High Atlas Mtns and views of the snow capped Mt Toubkal
- Essaouira - ancient medina and sweeping beach

what you get

- 10 breakfasts, 4 lunches and 5 dinners incl. a traditional Berber meal at our Sahara camp.
- 7 nights 3 star hotel, 2 nights 2 star hotel
- 1 night camping - Berber desert camp in the Sahara
- Arrival transfer from Marrakech airport on day 1
- Todra Gorge walk
- Camel trek into the great Sahara
- Guided tour of Marrakech
- 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
- Winter weight sleeping bag for night in the desert
- Torch and batteries
- Camera and spare memory card/film
- Mosquito repellent
- Water bottle
- Personal first aid kit
- Swimming costume/shorts for Essaouira
- Comfortable pair of trainers/walking shoes
- Two spare passport photos and a photocopy of your passport
- Beach towel - Essaouira





surf the new year: itinerary

day 1 - marrakech

23rd Dec. Welcome to Morocco! Arrival transfer from Marrakech airport to the hotel. Be sure to arrive in time for your pre-departure meeting at 8pm. Overnight - Marrakech.

day 2 - dades gorge

Marrakech - Dades Gorge - breakfast. Leaving Marrakech, we drive through the Dades Gorge, an awesome valley which extends from the High Atlas to the Jebel Sarhro range in the south. Berbers built many kasbahs in the vicinity of gorges for defence purposes. These many kasbahs combined with the stunning natural setting, makes this a beautiful region through which to travel. Lunch, dinner and overnight - Dades Gorge.

day 3 - trek todra gorge

Dades Gorge - Todra Gorge - breakfast. Merry Christmas! This morning you can choose to trek Dades Gorge or just relax. Afterwards, travel to Todra Gorge and witness it's changing colours as the sun slowly moves from east to west. Opt to go rock climbing. Lunch, Xmas dinner and overnight - Todra Gorge

day 4 - berber 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. Lunch, dinner and overnight - Berber camp.

day 5 - route of 1000 kasbahs

Erg Chebbi - Ouarzazate - breakfast. After a stunning sunrise and a tranquil and ambient 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. After hotel check in, consider a late afternoon swim. 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 (both payable locally). Then we head to Ait Benhaddou, a 'fortified city', situated along the former caravan route between the Sahara and Marrakech. It is situated on a hill along the Ouarzazate River and boasts some beautiful examples of kasbahs, some of which remain inhabited. Granted UNESCO World Heritage listing, the site is stunningly well preserved medieval city and a true highlight of our tour. Late afternoon we head back to Marrakech. Overnight - Marrakech

day 7 - djemaa el fna

Marrakech - breakfast. Glowing red, like a welcoming campfire, against the snow capped 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.

Set within the rose-coloured walls of the medina lies a reality that is not that far removed from an exotic film set - a tangle of winding streets that open onto verdant gardens and dark alleyways that 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. Enjoy a guided tour of Marrakech in the morning with free time after lunch. Perhaps test your bartering skills, buying souvenirs in the souks! Dinner and overnight - Marrakech.

days 8 & 9 - beachside essaouira

Marrakech - Essaouira - breakfast. This morning we drive to Essaouira. With a laid-back feel Essaouira is Morocco's hippest coastal town. The windswept fishing port, broad beaches and ancient walled medina with ramparts built into the cliff have long been a favourite refuge for artists, sculptors, food lovers, surfers and backpackers. The medina surrounded by a fortress with 5 main gates you can navigate by, has retained its traditional styles

and is laden with quirky shops, coffee houses, antiques, art studios, calligraphers, t-shirt designers and souvenir curios.

There's a relaxed feel to the place and shopping here is a real delight. Locals and visitors alike enjoy strolling along the ramparts as the sun sets. The port is a hive of activity with fishing boats hauling in their daily catch.

Opt for a swim in the Atlantic, though the water is a little cold this time of year, a game of football on the beach with the locals, an afternoon at the hammam, surfing, wind surfing or kite surfing (very cool to watch, even if you'd rather not participate yourself). The beach is also great for a stroll and since it runs for about 6 miles (10km) there's plenty of it. By nightfall sit back and relax at any one of the many al fresco cafes, pubs or bars serving cold beer and the freshest seafood. Free time to explore, try a hammam and practice your bargaining skills in the souks. On New Year's Eve our group can go for dinner at one of the many lovely local restaurants. Overnight (2) Essaouira

day 10 - essaouira to marrakech

Essaouira - breakfast. This afternoon we return to Marrakech. Overnight - Marrakech.

day 11 - tour ends in marrakech

Monday 02 Jan 2012. Marrakech - Breakfast. Spend the morning relaxing or picking up a few last minute souvenirs. Our tour concludes upon hotel check out at 12 noon. We hope you have had a great festive holiday!

Useful information

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.

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.

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!

*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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