

Best of Morocco

13 days | Starts/Ends: Marrakech



The journey of a lifetime awaits in Morocco on this exhilarating two week adventure. From the sights and sounds of Marrakech, the ancient Kasbah of Ait Benhaddou and the vast Sahara Desert, to the history of Fes, Rabat and Meknes, there's plenty to amaze. Plus top off your trip with a relaxing few days by the coast in breezy Essaouira.

HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS

Trip Highlights

- Essaouira - Enjoy some free time in this ancient medina with its wind-swept beaches and charming cafes
- Marrakech - Wander around the UNESCO-listed medina, mosque, palaces and souks and visit Yves Saint Laurent's famous blue gardens
- Casablanca - Explore Morocco's largest city and visit the famous Hassan II mosque
- Rabat - Enjoy a guided tour of the capital of Morocco
- Meknes - Discover this great Imperial city
- Volubilis - Marvel at UNESCO-listed Roman ruins

- Fes - Explore the oldest medieval city in the world and visit its medina, dye pits and tanneries
- Erg Chebbi sand dunes - Spend a night under the stars in the Sahara
- Todra Gorge - Admire this towering red canyon
- Ait Benhaddou - UNESCO Listed ancient kasbah

What's Included

- 12 breakfasts, 3 lunches and 3 dinners including a traditional Berber meal at the Sahara camp
- 11 nights 3 - 4 star hotels and riad, 1 night camping - Berber desert camp in the Sahara Desert (Hotel upgrade available)
- Airport arrival and departure transfers on day 1 and day 13
- Guided sightseeing of Casablanca, Rabat, Volubilis, Fes, Merzouga, Todra Gorge and Ait Benhaddou and Marrakech
- Escorted by a licensed English speaking Moroccan tour guide from day 1 to 9
- Specialist local guides at some sites
- Camel trek into the Sahara
- All transportation and transfers in private air-conditioned tourism vehicles
- All road taxes and tolls

What's Not Included

- Tipping Kitty: USD\$40-50pp, paid in local currency

- Entrance Fees: USD\$70-90pp, paid in local currency
- International flights and visa
- Gratuity for your tour guide & driver. Budget approx USD\$2 - 3 per person per day. Tipping your tour guide and driver is an entirely personal gesture

ITINERARY

Day 1: Welcome to Marrakech

Saturday. Upon arrival at Marrakech airport you'll be met and transferred to our hotel in the centre of town. The remainder of the day is at leisure for you to explore Marrakech - why not head to the medina and discover the delights of Djemaa el Fna, the exuberant market place, which is a hive of activity, sights and smells at both day and night. Later on there will be a welcome meeting at the hotel at 19:30hrs. **Overnight - Marrakech**

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Day 2 : Majorelle Gardens & Marrakech City Tour



After breakfast we head over to the beautiful Majorelle Gardens just a short drive from the hotel. These botanical gardens were designed by the French Artist Jacques Majorelle in the 1920s and 1930s. He used a distinctive shade of cobalt blue for the majority of the garden and although a lot of his other work has largely been forgotten – this garden is seen as his greatest master piece. The garden has been owned by Yves Saint Laurent since 1980 and his ashes were scattered here after his death in 2008. The garden contains an extensive collection of exotic plants and trees and is home to 15 species of bird. There is also a Berber Museum representing the various indigenous tribes of Morocco including over 600 artefacts. The newly opened Yves Saint Laurent museum nearby is also well worth a visit - this museum was opened in 2017 and is dedicated to the life and works of Yves Saint Laurent himself. Please note entrance into the YSL museum is not included and costs 100 MAD per person if you would like to go in.

This afternoon you will meet up with the rest of the group who are coming in from Casablanca before embarking on a guided tour of Marrakech. Inside the rose coloured medina walls is a tangle of winding streets and alleys that open onto verdant gardens and bustling souks. At the heart of the medina is Djemaa El Fna, the city's exuberant market place and towering over it, is the famous Koutoubia Mosque, the tallest building in the city.

Overnight - Marrakech (B, D)

Day 3 : UNESCO World Heritage Listed - Ait Benhaddou & Ouarzazate



Marrakech - Ait Benhaddou - Ouarzazate. Departing the city this morning we travel across the plains of haouz and reach the great High Atlas mountains. Climbing over the pass of Tizi n Tichka, we stop for lunch and then continue onwards with great views over the Mountains and valleys to Ait Benhaddou. This incredible ancient fortified Kasbah was built for defence purposes high on a hill and is a stunningly well preserved medieval city which has famously featured in many blockbuster movies, including Gladiator and Laurence of Arabia as its beauty is unequal to any other fortified kasbah in south Morocco. Carrying on we continue south to the Hollywood of North Africa – Ouarzazate (pronounced war-zazat). Ouarzazate is famous for being the filming location for many other Hollywood blockbusters and famous TV shows including James Bond – The Living Daylights, The Mummy and more recently Game of Thrones.

Overnight - Ouarzazate (B, L, D)

Day 4 : Camel trek in the Sahara



Ouarzazate - Todra Gorge - Merzouga (Sahara). This morning we begin our journey into the Sahara with a medley of palm trees, rose fields and magnificent gorges. Travelling from Ouarzazate, there is a possibility of

visiting the kasbah Amherdhil in Skoura before seeing the rose fields and reaching scenic Todra Gorge. Surrounded by towering vertical limestone cliffs reaching heights of 1000ft, it is known as Morocco's Grand Canyon. The charm of Todra lies in its changing colours as the sun slowly moves from east to west. After time to wander through Todra we hit the road again for Merzouga – our base before we head into the Sahara. Depending on the time of year, spend the afternoon relaxing and swimming before climbing aboard our camels for an incredible trek into the Sahara Desert to watch a beautiful sunset and spend the night at our remote Berber Camp, nestled amongst the towering dunes of Erg Chebbi. We enjoy local food, music and an amazing night camping in the Sahara.

If you would prefer the comfort of a hotel with en-suite facilities this evening, opt for our Sahara hotel alternative at no additional cost. Please do let us know your preferred option at the time of booking. **Overnight - Merzouga (B, L, D)**

Day 5 : Sunrise camel trek & the beautiful town of Ifrane

Merzouga (Sahara) - Fes. Departing early, we climb back on our camels disembarking for a truly stunning sunrise. After freshening up and breakfast in Merzouga we're back on the road heading for Fes. It's a long drive today however there is a lot to see on the way. We'll pass through cedar forests full of Barbary Macaque monkeys on our way through the Moyen Atlas mountains. Just before Fes we stop at Ifrane – a beautiful town often likened to a Swiss Alpine resort. Along the way we also start to see our first glimpse of Morocco's nomadic Berbers – travelling across the mountains and often staying in make shift tents as they head to their next destination. We arrive into Fes in the early evening. **Overnight - Fes (B, L)**

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Day 6 : Fes el Bali medina, dye-pits & tanneries



Fes is the oldest and largest medieval city in the world and its medina is a cacophony of aromas, sights and sounds. This morning we enjoy a guided tour of Fes el Bali - the old walled city. This fascinating medina is a veritable rabbit warren of 9400 alleys that often finish with dead ends – so be sure to stay close to the group! We also visit the dye-pits and tanneries before lunch in the medina. The remainder of the day is at leisure – why not take part in an optional Tagine Making Class or a night of Moroccan entertainment and food at a restaurant in town (both payable locally). **Overnight - Fes (B)**

Day 7 : Roman ruins of Volubilis & Meknes



Fes - Volubilis - Meknes - Rabat. Departing Fes this morning we visit the fascinating UNESCO listed Roman ruins of Volubilis, which date back to AD40. Continuing on we stop at the Imperial City of Meknes, which became known as the Versailles of Morocco due to its impressive buildings and elaborate monuments. After lunch and some free time our final stop of the day is Rabat – Morocco's capital where we overnight. **Overnight - Rabat (B)**

Day 8 : Rabat city tour & Hassan II mosque



Rabat - Casablanca - Marrakech. This morning we take a guided tour of Rabat and visit some of the capital's highlights, including the impressive Chellah - a necropolis and complex of ancient, medieval ruins, the Royal Palace and the Mausoleum of Mohammed V. After lunch we continue to Casablanca where we visit the Hassan II Mosque, which has the tallest minaret and is the third largest mosque in the world - it can hold 25,000 worshippers at any one time. After our visit to the mosque we say goodbye to our fellow passengers leaving us in Casablanca and continue on to Marrakech for the night. **Overnight - Marrakech (B)**

Day 9 : Marrakech to the charming old town of Essaouira



Marrakech - Essaouira. Today we have a leisurely morning before starting our journey to Essaouira on Morocco's Atlantic Coast via private transfer, and upon arrival enjoy the rest of the evening at leisure. Why not find a restaurant in the charming old town and try the local cuisine. **Overnight - Essaouira (B)**

Days 10-12 : Free time in coastal Essaouira



Essaouira – Marrakech. Spend the next three days exploring the sights and delights of Essaouira at your own pace. Set on the rugged shores of the breezy Atlantic Coast, this charming seaside city offers a welcome respite from the hustle and bustle of Marrakech. While away the days here exploring its winding streets lined with whitewash houses, picking your way through the shops in its ancient medina, or by sitting at an ocean-facing restaurant sipping on a cup of coffee. During the warmer months why not try some water sports too, as the windy shores here offer ideal conditions for wind and kite surfing. Early evening of day 12 we return to Marrakech for the night. **Overnight - Essaouira (2), Marrakech (1) (B:3)**

Day 13 : Goodbye Morocco

Our amazing tour of Morocco ends today after hotel check out. An included onward departure transfer to airport will be provided.(B)

HOTELS

The hotels listed below are ones which we frequently use on this tour. We reserve the right to substitute these hotels to ones of a similar standard when necessary.

Riad dar Chamaa

In the classic kasbah style, Riad dar Chamaa is set within the Ouarzazate palm grove with fantatsic views of the surrounding Atlas mountains. All guest rooms are air conditioned with en suite facilities. They are designed in a classic Moroccan riad style with marble floors. The riad boasts a beautiful central courtyard and a refreshing outdoor pool complete with sun loungers for

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relaxing. The riad also boasts a tea lounge, restaurant and pool bar.



Desert Camp

Set amongst the towering dunes of Erg Chebbi, the Berber camp is designed with a traditional Moroccan theme. The permanent tents include multiple beds and electricity (after night fall) Camping out in the desert is a wonderful experience, due to the lack of light pollution, the stars come out in abundance and really are a sight to behold.



Riad Al Makan

Situated inside the Fes medina, Riad Al Makan is designed in a beautiful Moroccan style. All of the en suite guest rooms are individually designed with beautiful mosaic patterns and marble floors. the riad also benefits from complimentary wi-fi, an onsite restaurant, 24 hour front desk assistance and a gift shop. There is also an outside terrace perfect for enjoying a cup of Moroccan tea on.



Hotel des Oudaias

On the edge of the medina in Rabat, Hotel des Oudaias is a beautiful riad style property. Guest rooms are spacious and beautifully furnished in a typical Moroccan style with wooden furnishings, marble floors and en-suite bathrooms. Rooms are air-conditioned and have flat screen TVs. The property also

boasts complimentary wi-fi throughout and an on site restaurant.



Riad Imilchil

Traditional and stylish, the Riad Imilchil is a beautiful example of boutique Moroccan accommodation. The 6 rooms and 1 suite are beautifully decorated with colourful interiors and gorgeous en suites. Free Wi-Fi is available throughout and there is a stunning rooftop terrace where guests can view the whole of the city whilst enjoying a refreshing drink. At night you can view the famous Djemma El Fna pulsating in the distance. Well located just 10 minute walk into the centre of the Medina.



Riad Zahra

Located in the residential district, the Zahra offers calm, relaxation and a peaceful stay. Its comfortable guestrooms are decorated in traditional Moroccan style and are equipped with an en suite and satellite TV. The property has a restaurant serving Moroccan and international specialities. There is another restaurant that serves grilled dishes. Riad Zahra is an ideal starting point for nautical activities or to discover Essaouira and the surrounding area. For your entertainment, the hotel proposes numerous activities including desert trips in a 4x4, surfing and kite surfing lessons.



PRICES / DATES INFO

Departure dates noted with a 'G' are guaranteed to operate. All other departure dates are guaranteed with a minimum of 2 persons. Prices shown are per person travelling. 'Twin/Double' prices per person apply when there are 2 people travelling, sharing a room. The 'Single supplement' applies for single travellers who require their own room and needs to be added to the 'Twin/Double' price. If you are happy to be paired up with another single traveller of the same sex on your tour, this can be arranged, thus avoiding the single person supplement.

PRICES / DATES 2019

Date	Twin Share	Single
01 Jun	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
15 Jun	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
29 Jun	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
13 Jul	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
27 Jul	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
03 Aug	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
10 Aug	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
17 Aug	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
24 Aug	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
07 Sep	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
14 Sep	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
21 Sep	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
05 Oct	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
19 Oct	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
26 Oct	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
09 Nov	USD 1,695	USD 2,235
23 Nov	USD 1,695	USD 2,235
30 Nov	USD 1,695	USD 2,235
28 Dec	USD 1,745	USD 2,285

PRICES / DATES 2020

Date	Twin Share	Single
04 Jan	USD 1,695	USD 2,235
18 Jan	USD 1,695	USD 2,235
08 Feb	USD 1,695	USD 2,235
22 Feb	USD 1,695	USD 2,235
07 Mar	USD 1,695	USD 2,235
21 Mar	USD 1,745	USD 2,285

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PRICES / DATES 2020

Date	Twin Share	Single
04 Apr	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
11 Apr	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
25 Apr	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
02 May	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
16 May	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
23 May	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
06 Jun	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
20 Jun	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
04 Jul	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
18 Jul	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
25 Jul	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
01 Aug	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
08 Aug	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
15 Aug	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
22 Aug	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
05 Sep	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
12 Sep	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
19 Sep	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
26 Sep	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
03 Oct	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
10 Oct	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
17 Oct	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
24 Oct	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
31 Oct	USD 1,745	USD 2,285
07 Nov	USD 1,695	USD 2,235
14 Nov	USD 1,695	USD 2,235
28 Nov	USD 1,695	USD 2,235

PRICES / DATES 2021

Date	Twin Share	Single
02 Jan	USD 1,695	USD 2,235

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