

Christmas in Morocco

8 days | Starts/Ends: Marrakech



Make your way to magical Morocco this Christmas, a short hop from Europe but worlds apart. An exotic land of spices, ancient Kasbahs, rolling Saharan sands, verdant valleys and bustling souks.

HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS

Trip Highlights

- Marrakech - UNESCO-listed Place Djemaa el Fna (ancient medina, souks and market place)
- High Atlas Mountains and views of Mt Toubkal - North Africa's highest peak
- Dades Gorge - valley of the roses
- Merzouga - Berber village and start point for our camel trek into the great Sahara
- Erg Chebbi sand dunes - beginning of the Sahara
- Ouarzazate - home to Morocco's film industry. Opt for a visit
- Ait Benhaddou - UNESCO-listed fortified kasbah city

What's Included

- 7 breakfasts, 4 lunches, 5 dinners including a traditional Berber meal in the Sahara
- 6 nights 3 star hotel accommodation and 1 night camping - Berber desert camp in the Sahara (Hotel upgrade available)

- Marrakech Airport arrival and departure transfers
- Camel trek into the great Sahara
- Guided sightseeing of Merzouga, Dades Gorge, Ait Benhaddou and Marrakech
- Escorted by a licensed English speaking Moroccan tour guide
- Specialist local guides at some sites
- All transportation and transfers in private air-conditioned tourism vehicles
- All road taxes and tolls

What's Not Included

- Tipping Kitty: USD\$30-40pp, paid in USD or local currency
- Entrance Fees: USD\$30-50pp, paid in USD or local currency
- 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
- International flights and visa
- Note: On some road journeys, the tour leader may not be in your particular vehicle

ITINERARY

Day 1 : Marrakech

23 December 2019. Welcome to Morocco! Arrival transfer from Marrakech airport to our hotel. This evening (at 19:00) our welcome meeting takes place, where you'll meet your

tour leader and fellow travellers. **Overnight - Marrakech**

Day 2 : Ait Benhaddou

Marrakech – Ait Benhaddou – Skoura. This morning we drive onwards to the legendary Ait Benhaddou - a 'fortified city' situated along the former caravan route between the Sahara and Marrakech, boasts some beautiful examples of ancient kasbahs. Only a handful of which remain inhabited. Granted UNESCO World Heritage listing, this incredible site had been the setting for many films including Gladiator. After exploring Ait Benhaddou we travel onwards to Skoura where we have an evening at leisure.

Overnight - Skoura (B, L, D)

Day 3 : Xmas Dinner at Dades Gorge



Skoura – Dades Gorge. Merry Christmas! We spend the morning visiting the kasbah Amridil before continuing to Gorge du Dades in the Dades valley. On arrival we take some time

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to explore the gorges, palmeries and kasbah ruins. We then have the evening to relax before enjoying a great Xmas dinner in the beautiful surroundings. **Overnight - Dades Gorge** (B, L, D)

Day 4 : Camel trek into the Sahara



Dades Gorge - Erg Chebbi sand dunes. Crossing the Jebel Sarhro, we head down to Erg Chebbi sand dunes, which signify the start of the mighty Sahara Desert. 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 camels, we trek across the vast rolling dunes of the Sahara and soak up 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.

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 - Erg Chebbi** (B, L, D)

Day 5 : The picturesque Draa Valley

Erg Chebbi – Agdz – Ouarzazate. Today we travel through Mercissi and Nkob in the Saghro Mountain region, passing the incredible rock formations and wells that have been dug over centuries by the nomads to get access to water, along the way. Onwards to the small town of Agdz, with its Palmeries, ancient Kasbahs and incredible views of Jebel

Kissane Mountain. Our final stop of the day is Ouarzazate – Morocco's film capital, where we lay our heads for the evening. This evening we enjoy a group meal together. **Overnight - Ouarzazate** (B, L, D)

Day 6 : Ouarzazate



Ouarzazate – Marrakech. Famous for being a prime filming location for many Hollywood TV shows and Blockbusters, we have the opportunity to explore the World's largest film studio this morning. Be sure to explore the iconic Colosseum used in 'Gladiator' and the prop jet used in 'Jewel of the Nile'. Carrying on we continue to Kasbah Telouet. Built in 1860 this kasbah was once home to the very wealthy Thami El Glaoui until he conspired with French Colonialists to delay Morocco's fight for independence.

Descending into the city of Marrakech, Morocco's pink city. We have the rest of the day at leisure to explore the Medina and the delights of Djemaa el Fna, the exuberant market place, which is a hive of activity, sights and smells at both day and night.

Overnight - Marrakech (B)

Day 7 : Djemaa el Fna



This morning we tour magical Marrakech, an exotic pink city of snake charmers, steamy hammams, bustling souks and hidden palaces. The focal point and highlight of the

city is the Koutoubia mosque and Djemaa el Fna - the central square, which is an extraordinary market place full of colour, music, spicy aromas and traders. Best seen in the evening when the square is overflowing with food stalls, dancers, acrobats, fortune tellers, musicians and henna artists.

This afternoon and evening is free for you to explore independently, soak up the incredible atmosphere and test your bartering skills in the souks. Perhaps pamper yourself with a steamy hammam!

Overnight - Marrakech (B, D)

Day 8 : Marrakech

30 December 2019. Our Moroccan adventure concludes after breakfast. Happy travels! If you would like to extend your trip and spend New Year's Eve in Marrakech or by the coast in Essaouira, take a look at our Rock the Kasbah or Surf the New Year tour.(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.

Dellarosa Hotel Suites & Spa

Just a short walk from the medina, Dellarosa Hotel Suites & Spa tastefully blends modern architecture with Moroccan authenticity. Guest rooms are tastefully decorated with comfortable beds and excellent en suite facilities. The hotel also has a restaurant Organza serving up a delicious array of Moroccan and International dishes as well as a bar for a tasty beverage or two. Those looking for some pampering should head to the onsite spa and wellness centre.



Desert Camp

Camping out in the Sahara Desert is an incredible experience, enabling you to sit

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on top of a dune to watch the setting sun, sit around a camp fire for dinner and lie back and see the stars. No alcohol.



El Andalous Hotel & Spa

Just 10 minutes from the airport, the El Andalous Hotel and Spa offers a welcome respite from the hubub of the city. Evoking the golden age of Arab-Andalusian culture; exotic and romantically rich. Guest rooms are well furnished with excellent en suite facilities as well as private balconies. The hotel pool is great place to relax by and enjoy a tasty beverage or two. The medina is just a 20 minute walk from here or a cab can get you there in a few minutes!



Hotel Marrakech Le Semiramis

Set amongst lush gardens, the Hotel Marrakech Le Semiramis is a modern establishment just a short drive from the medina. Guest rooms are tastefully decorated and all come with a private balcony. The grounds of the hotel also include a large outdoor swimming pool, tennis courts and French bowls. Meals are served in a selection of restaurants including the Chellah and Oasis restaurants which specialise in Moroccan and Mediterranean cuisine.



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
23 Dec	USD 995	USD 1,315

PRICES / DATES 2020

Date	Twin Share	Single
23 Dec	USD 995	USD 1,315

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