Experience Morocco through the expertise and passion of your local guide on this captivating 8 day group tour. From Marrakech, marvel at the beauty of Todra gorge, bed down for the night in the Sahara desert, explore medieval Ait Benhaddou and so much more. After a day of seeing the sites enjoy the comfort and amenities of your hotels, each carefully hand-selected by us for their convenience and facilities, and many meals included.

HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS

Trip Highlights

- Marrakech - UNESCO-listed Place Djemaa el Fna, (medina, souks and market place)
- Bahia Palace - 19th Century palatial residence of the grand vizier Sidi Moussa
- High Atlas Mountains and views of Mt Toubkal - North Africa’s highest peak
- Erg Chebbi sand dunes - Reaching some 250m 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

Day 1: Marrakech
Welcome to Morocco! Upon arrival at Marrakech International Airport you will be met and transferred to your hotel. Why not relax by the pool before the pre-departure meeting at 18.00 where you will meet your fellow travellers. Overnight - Marrakech (D)

Day 2 : Ouarzazate
After breakfast we head south to the film capital of North Africa - Ouarzazate. After a local lunch we have the chance to take an optional tour of the film studios - famous for many blockbusters including Gladiators, The Last Temptation of Christ and James Bond's - The Living Daylights! We can also opt to go quad biking and further explore the town.
Journey Time: approx 4 hours Overnight - Ouarzazate (B, L, D)
Marrakech & Beyond

Day 3 : Into the Sahara

This morning we take a stunning drive towards Erg Chebbi. Later we stop for a relaxing swim. Afterwards we head to Merzouga to enjoy some free time at the pool (summer only) before transferring to our camels for a trek into the Sahara. We spend the night at our traditional Berber Camp. We enjoy local food, music and an amazing night out under the Saharan stars.

Journey Time: approx 5 hours
Camel Trek: approx 1.5 hours Overnight - Erg Chebbi (B, D)

Day 4 : Todra Gorge

After a tasty breakfast in the Sahara we climb back on board our trusty camels and head out of the Sahara. Once out of the sand we get back on the road, stopping to explore ancient irrigation wells run which have been created from an intricate network of underground canals, dating back to the 14th century they run for more than 300km all the way from the Atlas mountains to the Sahara. We arrive into Todra Gorge this afternoon, where we will enjoy lunch at our hotel. This 1000ft gorge is hemmed in on all sides by vertical limestone cliffs and is also called Morocco’s Grand Canyon.

Later this afternoon we’ll have the opportunity to explore the gorge or even take part in some optional Rock Climbing. We’ll then continue to Tizgui, this beautiful old village is home to a local carpet cooperative, where you’ll be able to see how traditional Berber rugs are made.

Journey Time: approx 3 hours Overnight - Todra Gorge (B, L, D)

Day 5 : Ait Benhaddou

Enjoy a leisurely morning before we depart Todra for Ait Benhaddou. Making our way through the stunning landscape along the route that is often labeled ‘the road of a thousand Kasbahs’ we will first stop at Kasbah Amridil. This is one the best preserved Kasbahs in Morocco and at one time featured on the 50 Dirham note.

Arriving at the UNESCO world heritage site of Ait Benhaddou this afternoon we enjoy lunch before taking a guided tour of the Kasr. This traditional pre saharan habitat is a maze of tightly packed houses offering defence from the outside with adding reinforcement coming from the 4 large corner towers. This evening we will enjoy dinner together, soaking in the atmosphere and enchantment of this incredible place.

Journey Time: approx 2.5 hours Overnight - Ait Benhaddou (B, L, D)

Day 6 : Crossing the High Atlas Mountains

This morning we traverse the towering High Atlas Mountains en route to Marrakech. Arriving into Marrakech this afternoon you can enjoy an optional guided tour of Marrakech with a local payment of 100 Dirhams per person, alternatively you can explore the city yourself or relax by the pool. Marrakech has some amazing places to explore, the winding streets and bustling souks, visiting Bahia Palace, the Jewish Quarter and the beautiful Koutoubia Mosque - the landmark of Marrakech, which towers over the ancient Medina.

This evening is free for you to explore the lively hustle and bustle of Djemaa El Fna square or simply relax at the hotel.

Journey Time: approx 3.5 hours Overnight - Marrakech (B)

Day 7 : Marrakech

Early this morning there is the option to start the day with an awe-inspiring hot air balloon ride. Alternatively you can have a relaxing morning before enjoying some free time to further explore Marrakech.

This evening we come together as a group for a sumptuous group meal in the exciting and exotic Djemaa El Fna square. Overnight - Marrakech (B, D)

Day 8 : Marrakech

Our tour ends after breakfast with check out at the hotel. (B)

HOTELS

Highlighted below are some of the hotels which we frequently use on this tour, though we reserve the right to substitute these hotels to ones of a similar standard.

Please refer to your Tour Voucher for your confirmed arrival hotel and further arrival information.

El Andalous Hotel & Spa
Just 10 minutes from the airport, the El Andalous Hotel and Spa offers a welcome respite from the hubbub 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

Marrakech & Beyond - 8 Days
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This information has been compiled with care and good faith. They give an accurate illustration of the proposed arrangements for this holiday. Circumstances beyond our control such as changes in local conditions, inclement weather or other reasons could force us to make changes to this itinerary. Any costs shown are subject to change, though are an accurate reflection of costs at time of setting. Please also note that visa requirements are subject to change and are the responsibility of the traveller and not that of On The Go Tours.
Marrakech & Beyond

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!

Les Jardins
A fairly new hotel in Ouarzazate, the Hotel les Jardins is in the traditional style of a Moroccan kasbah, with spacious rooms. The hotel is set in exquisitely manicured gardens, which provide guests with a much needed breath of fresh air. The experience is complete with a pool and restaurant, where visitors can while away the hours in the warm, starry evenings. The hotel is on the outskirts of Ouarzazate and has numerous restaurants and shops nearby.

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

Our partners in Morocco
This tour is operated in conjunction with our trusted partner and you will join travellers who booked through different operators, not solely On The Go.

Tipping kitty and departure transfer
At the start of your tour we will collect a Tip Kitty (the amount is noted under exclusions on page one of this document) from all tour participants to cover tips throughout your holiday. This saves you the hassle of knowing when and how much to tip. It will be collected by your tour leader at the Welcome Meeting on day 1 and is payable in Moroccan Dirhams (USD, Euro or GBP is also accepted at the current exchange rate). The Tipping Kitty is distributed throughout your tour to hotel porters, hotel waiters, local guides for city tours, airport transfer drivers, Berber camel herders and local restaurant tips.

This amount does not include a tip for your tour leader. For a job well done, we suggest USD$2 - 3 per day, per traveller for your tour leader. Tipping is an entirely personal gesture and ultimately the amount is up to you.

Departure transfers are not included. A taxi to the airport will cost approx MAD100 and can be booked locally.

Guides & groups
Some of our group tours are sectors of a larger tour. Some travellers on your tour may only travel with you for part of your tour. It also might be that you end your holiday part way through a longer tour and others in the group continue on. As such, you may have more than one guide during your holiday.

In order that we show the best of Morocco in a non-hurried fashion to you, it is imperative you do not delay and inconvenience fellow travellers. It is your responsibility to be at the proposed meeting point for the group in time. We will depart at our specified times.

Optional activities
During free time you can head out and independently explore, relax or take part in one or more optional activities. The optional activities are booked locally and are subject to availability, prices are indicative.

If you tour includes:
The half day hot air ballooning excursion from Marrakech includes: Land rover transportation, a traditional breakfast, a 1 hour hot air balloon flight in front of the High Atlas Mountains, a visit to a local Berber house and a camel ride in the palmerie of Marrakech.

Rock climbing at Todra Gorge is weather dependant and not offered if it is raining or very windy. Please also note that rock climbing is not suitable for travellers under the age of 16.

Hotels
The hotels in Morocco are simple, clean, comfortable and centrally located. We try to use local and traditional hotels with plenty of character wherever possible. In smaller towns, the choice of accommodation often limited, but we will always book the best accommodation available for our travellers. Please be aware that hotels in Morocco are not of the same standard as Western hotels and facilities are often basic.

Welcome to Morocco - Arrival transfer
We provide a complimentary airport arrival transfer on day 1 of your tour or if you arrive early and have booked pre tour accommodation with us. Please proceed to the arrivals hall and look for our representative holding an On The Go Tours sign. Pre and post tour accommodation can be arranged upon request, please contact us for rates.

If you are arriving earlier and you have booked your accommodation independently, you will need to make your own way to our start hotel, which will be centrally located. The hotel name and address can be found on your Tour Voucher.

If, for any reason you have trouble locating our representative (after waiting 20 minutes in the arrival hall) or your flight to Morocco is delayed, please call or send a text message (standard text message, not Messenger or WhatsApp) to the emergency contact number as stated on your Tour Voucher.

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Marrakech & Beyond

Visas & Passports
Please be advised that visa requirements are subject to change and that visa procurement is the responsibility of the traveller and not On The Go Tours. Please also ensure that your passport is valid for at least 6 months from your planned date of departure from Morocco. UK, EU, Australian, New Zealand, Canadian and USA nationals do not require a visa at present to enter Morocco. Please check if you are from another country.

RSA (South African) passport holders need to obtain visas in advance of arrival. Please check your personal visa requirements with the embassy.

After booking your holiday, please provide us with your passport details as soon as possible so that we can proceed to book your holiday arrangements.

Please be advised visa requirements are subject to change, therefore it is essential that you check current visa requirements with the embassy before travel.

Tipping in Morocco
In Morocco it is customary to tip on and our group tours a tipping kitty (the amount is noted under ‘what is not included’ on page one of this document) will be collected by your guide at the welcome meeting on the day you arrive. This is payable in Moroccan Dirhams. USD, Euro or GBP can also be accepted, at the current exchange rate. The tipping kitty is used for the following; hotel porters, hotel waiters, local guides for city tours, airport transfer drivers, Berber camel herders and local restaurant tips.

The tipping kitty does not include a tip for your Moroccan tour leader or driver and as a guideline we recommend you budget approx Euro 2-3 per day, per traveller for your tour guide and Euro 1-2 for the driver for a job well done (payable in Moroccan Dirhams). Naturally the amount is up to you though, this is simply a suggestion.

Shopping
Morocco is a shoppers’ paradise. The souks of Fes, Marrakech and Meknes are full of pottery, carpets and kilims, leather goods, spices and cloth. Keep space in your backpack for your purchases! Best buys are: carpets – from the High Atlas mountains or a woven and embroidered Kilim; the burnoose, an elegant hooded cape; spices; or traditional pottery and leathers from Fes.

In the tourism industry it’s common practice for commission to be offered in exchange for recommending particular shops or suppliers. This can become an issue when clients feel obliged to purchase. We do our best to avoid this by monitoring all shopping experiences offered.

All shopping experiences on your tour have been noted in the itinerary and they have been carefully selected based upon positive feedback from On The Go travellers. You are under no obligation to partake in a listed shopping experience and you are most welcome to wait inside or outside the premises.

Although we only visit reputable retailers, please note that we cannot explicitly guarantee the quality of their products. All purchases made whilst on holiday with us are at your own discretion. Please make sure that you are completely happy with your purchase. On The Go cannot be held responsible for any items that you buy if they fail to meet expectation, or any shipping arrangements. Proceed with caution.

Health requirements & water
You should seek medical advice for vaccinations and about medications before travelling. While tap water in Morocco is generally considered safe to drink in main cities, it is not advisable in smaller towns and remote areas. Drink bottled mineral water, which is readily available in hotels, shops and restaurants.

Essential packing & local currency
Please check local temperatures so you can pack accordingly. Visit www.worldclimate.com to get an idea of what the weather will be like on your tour.

• Lightweight cotton garments in summer, warm clothing for winter (temperatures can get quite low at night)
• Comfortable walking shoes or hiking shoes
• Electrical adapter. Standard voltage is 220V, 50Hz AC. Sockets require a Continental or European style plug (two round pins) - we recommend you bring a universal travel adaptor
• DEET based mosquito repellent and antihistamine cream
• First aid kit including Dioralyte
• 2 spare passport photos and a photocopy of your passport and your Travel Voucher
• A small daypack for your day-to-day needs
• Sunglasses, hat, sunscreen, swim costume, torch and money belt
• Either a rucksack or suitcase is suitable
• A towel for swimming
• A torch for your night in the Sahara Desert
• If travelling on our Essential (budget) group tour range, a sleeping bag for the Sahara Desert camp is required if travelling between Oct - Apr, a cotton sleep sheet will be adequate if travelling from May to September (Signature group tour travellers do not need this, as bedding is provided)

GBP, USD and Euro can be exchanged in Morocco at bureau de changes in major cities and towns (please note AUD and NZD Dollars, RSA are often tricky to exchange and often not accepted), and most banks have ATMs. Credit cards are often excepted outside main cities and towns. It’s advisable to request bank notes in smaller denominations, as it can be hard to get change from large notes and smaller notes are handy for smaller purchases and gratuities. Traveller’s Cheques are not recommended.

How much you spend depends on individual tastes, we recommend Euro 20 - 30pp, per day on top of any optional excursions.

Hotels
The hotels in Morocco are simple, clean, comfortable and centrally located. We try to use local and traditional hotels with plenty of character wherever possible. In smaller towns, the choice of accommodation often limited, but we will always book the best accommodation available for our travellers.

TRIP NOTES
Marrakech & Beyond

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Mosques & religion

Although freedom of religious faith is permitted by the Moroccan law, about 99% of people are Sunni Muslim. About 1% of the population is Christian, and less than 0.2 percent is Jewish. With the exception of the Hassan II mosque in Casablanca, it is not permitted for non-Muslims to enter mosques in Morocco. If you are entering the Hassan II mosque, please remember to dress conservatively, ensure limbs are covered and shoes removed when entering any mosque. Men must refrain from wearing shorts, as must women.

RAMADAN

Ramadan is a month of fasting observed by Muslims throughout the world and adherents of the Muslim faith fast during daylight hours and break their fast with lavish meals and lively celebrations in the evening. Ramadan culminates a month later in a 3 day celebration called Eid al - Fitr. Many shops (excluding those which cater mainly to tourists) and attractions close earlier during Ramadan. As such we will start our tour earlier during this period to make the best use of time and itineraries will be slightly altered to ensure we visit all attractions, leisure time will be offered in the late afternoon. Non-Muslims are not expected to fast over Ramadan, but it is considered impolite to eat food or drink on the street.

Note: Traffic is exceptionally heavy during Ramadan, especially toward the time of breaking the fast. Forthcoming Ramadan dates are as follows, (approximate) 12 April – 11 May 2021

Etiquette

Despite the inevitable ups and downs of travelling abroad, you will generally be shown great hospitality in Morocco. In return, please demonstrate sensitivity and respect for the local customs. Morocco is a Muslim country; so care should be taken to dress respectfully in local towns or villages.

- Ladies should avoid wearing ‘clingy, tight or suggestive’ attire, and stick to cool, flowing, cottons in small towns, local villages and in rural areas
- Take care to dress conservatively and ensure that limbs are covered and remove footwear prior to entering a mosque
- Ex-military style clothing should not be worn
- Ask permission before taking photographs of people
- The standard form of greeting is a handshake. Men and women do not kiss at any time as a form of greeting

Travel to far-flung corners of the earth involves lifestyles and conditions that are sometimes very different from what you are used to back home. You must come prepared to cope with unusual situations, local inadequacies and unpredictable events as and when they occur. Foreign travel is definitely not suitable for people who expect or demand everything to go exactly as planned. With the greatest respect and in the interest of your ultimate enjoyment you must understand this. Things can and do change in foreign countries.

Trouble shooting

It is currently not always possible to use VoIP (voice over internet protocol) services like Whatsapp, Viber, Skype and Facebook Messenger in Morocco. The text options on these services are still fine to use but the calling functions might not always work. It is understood that the Moroccan telecom providers have done this in order to push as much voice calls through their networks rather than people being able to use these free services.

Here are a few tips to keep your holiday hassle-free. Morocco is no worse than anywhere else when it comes to crime. The biggest problem seems to be petty theft, including pick-pocketing and bag snatching. Minimise your chances of being robbed with these tips:

- Leave valuables in the hotel safe or better still, at home
- Carry your passport on your person or a photocopy as ID
- Carry your bag close to your person rather than over your shoulder
- Travel in a group or pair, especially if you are female
- Don’t catch cabs late at night on your own
- Never drink anything offered to you, unless you opened it yourself

Please note On The Go Tours will not be held liable for loss or damage to personal property under any circumstances

Drones are not permitted

It is forbidden to bring drones into Morocco (even small ones that might fit in hand luggage), a special permit has to be arranged with the appropriate department in Rabat and this can take months to arrange.