

Atlas & Atlantic Coast

10 days | Starts/Ends: Marrakech



PRIVATE TOUR: Experience vibrant Marrakech, visit the beautiful Cascades D'Ouzoud waterfalls, see Lake Bin Ouidane, explore Sidi Moussa and Ait Bougamez and take the road less travelled up into the High Atlas Mountains for a taste of real Morocco. Top it all off with a relaxing break in coastal Essaouira.

HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS

Trip Highlights

- Marrakech - Take in the highlights of this iconic city with a guided tour, plus enjoy free time to head out and explore your way
- Cascades D'Ouzoud - Admire this beautiful three-tiered waterfall and spend some time walking the scenic trails around the cascade
- Ait Bougamez - Spend three nights staying at a kasbah in this beautiful valley, with time for hiking, spotting dinosaur tracks, and exploring rural local villages
- Sidi Moussa - Enjoy an included visit to the Zawiya of Sidi Moussa, a historic ancient granary, and fortification

- Lake Bin Ouidane - Visit this scenic lake, popular for carp fishing and with wealthier Moroccans on holiday
- Essaouira - Soak up the laid back vibe of this coastal town and head into the pretty medina with plenty of free time to explore

What's Included

- Breakfast daily, 3 lunches and 3 dinners
- 6 nights SUPERIOR hotels and riads, and 3 nights Mountain Retreat. STANDARD and DELUXE hotel options are also available upon request. Accommodation rating - See Trip Notes for details. Note: Deluxe hotels and riads are not available in Ait Bougamez
- Visiting - Marrakech, Cascades D'Ouzoud, Ait Bougamez, Sidi Moussa and Essaouira
- Entrance fees to all included sightseeing
- Services of a licensed English speaking tour guide at all included sites
- Driver, all transfers and transportation in a private modern air-conditioned tourism vehicle
- An airport arrival transfer day 1 and a departure transfer day 10 (Marrakech Airport)

What's Not Included

- International flights and visa
- Tipping - An entirely personal gesture

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1 : Marrakech

Arrival in Marrakech Airport, where you will be met by our On The Go representative and transferred to your centrally located hotel or riad. The remainder of the day and evening are free to independently explore the vibrant Djemaa el Fna Square. Full of colour, spicy aromas and traders, it's best seen in the evening when overflowing with people, acrobats, fortune tellers, snake charmers and much more! **Overnight - Marrakech**

Day 2 : Bahia Palace & the old medina

This morning we enjoy a guided city tour, taking in all the highlights of Marrakech including the Koutoubia Mosque and Bahia Palace. Spend the afternoon at leisure, perhaps visit to the beautiful Jardins de Majorelle or wander around the souks. **Overnight - Marrakech (B)**

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Day 3 : Cascades D'Ouzoud & Ait Bougomez



Marrakech – Ait Bougomez. An early morning departure takes us into the High Atlas Mountains along the route, for Fes. After a short drive we turn off south and arrive at the glorious waterfall of the Cascades D'Ouzoud for lunch. After taking some time to rest and enjoy our magnificent surroundings it's back onto the scenic mountain road past Azilal and onward to reach the heart of the High Atlas – the valley of Ait Bougomez.

Ait Bougomez is a hidden gem, a valley close to Ighil Mgoun, the highest summit in Morocco apart from the Toubkal Range. The area is popular for trekking, as there is a long and easy trek from the Tessaout Sources/ Tarkeddid Plateau, which is reached from the Ait Bougmez Valley. Exploring the valley is easily done on foot and it can be preferable to driving, as so many places still have poor roads. The centre of the region is the village of Tabant, and from here, in less than an hour's walk several small villages can be explored – Imelghas, Iskatafene, Ikhf-n-Ighir, Agouti, Ait Imi Iqballioun, Ifrane, and Arous. Three hours walk away is the village of Taghoulit. With incredibly striking scenery and off the beaten track location, Ait Bougmez is still unspoilt. Here, you'll spend the next three nights in a Kasbah, exploring the beautiful surrounding area.

Overnight – Ait Bougomez (B, L, D)

Day 4 : Scenic walk & picnic in the hills



Today, we can take a mule ride to the dinosaur tracks at the head of the valley, the route winds through fields of grain and the apple and almond orchards. After a picnic in the hills, we return to the Kasbah via a different route, stopping for a cup of tea in a Berber house. **Overnight – Ait Bougomez** (B, L, D)

Day 5 : World Heritage Site of Sidi Moussa

If you're feeling energetic, a walk up to the pass of Tizi ait Imi is well rewarded with views of Jbel Mgoun and the southern peaks of the High Atlas, otherwise it's possible to take a walk around the village, maybe see the felt makers and carpet makers at work and have a picnic at the side of a stream watching the farmers in the fields. In the afternoon, take a walk up to the World Heritage Site of Sidi Moussa – an ancient granary and fortification. **Overnight – Ait Bougomez** (B, L, D)

Day 6 : Lake Bin Ouidane



Ait Bougamez – Marrakech. Descending from the mountains today, we take the route past the lake of Bin Ouidane, where many wealthier Moroccan's go for water sports. We then descend

down to the Orange farms of Beni Mellal and take the road back to Marrakech. Spend the evening at leisure, perhaps wander around the souks, or enjoy a meal in one of the roof top restaurants overlooking Djemaa el Fna. **Overnight – Marrakech** (B)

Day 7 : Coastal Essaouira



Marrakech – Essaouira. This morning we journey Essaouira, about 2.5 hours drive from Marrakech. Essaouira is a quiet seaside town with a long beach, an interesting little medina with souks and a grand harbour and fortifications. It's the perfect place to relax either on the beach, in a cafe on the square, or just watching the fishing boats coming in and out of the harbour.

Essaouira has avoided becoming a tourist trap and maintains the original charm which made it a firm favourite with many legendary stars, including Jimi Hendrix, Bob Marley and Orson Welles who filmed Othello in Essaouira. **Overnight – Essaouira** (B)

Day 8 : Discover the Atlantic – beachside



Enjoy a lazy day at leisure in Essaouira. Perhaps take a camel ride along the beach, try a spot of wind surfing or simply laze about and soak up the

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sun. If you fancy some retail therapy, there are plenty of souks, a jewellery quarter and some good art galleries. Tonight, why not try one of the many tasty restaurants in the medina, where seafood is the speciality. **Overnight - Essaouira (B)**

Day 9 : Marrakech - your own way

Essaouira - Marrakech. After a morning in Essaouira, you'll be transferred to Marrakech. On the way back it's possible to stop at an Argan oil co-operative to see how the argan nuts from all the forests around Essaouira are converted into oils and soaps. Arrive back in Marrakech, in time for some last minute souvenir shopping. **Overnight - Marrakech (B)**

Day 10 : Farewell

Hotel check out and included onward departure transfer to the airport.(B)

ACCOMMODATION

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

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

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.



Dar Itrane

Bougamez Kasbah Dar Itrane is spectacularly situated on top of a hill with views all around. This property is locally rated as a 3.5 star hotel. It is an eco-lodge built in the traditional way, and is perfect for relaxing or as a base between hikes in the nearby mountains. Connect with the local culture as you engage with the local Berber people that live around and work within the accommodation. Both full board and half board options are available. Dar Itrane is located at the foot of M'Goun in the beautiful village of Imelghas.



Hotel Cote Ocean Mogador

Perfectly located on the beach of Essaouira, with wonderful sea views. This hotel is just a 10 minute walk from the Othello Garden and offers a private beach area, onsite restaurant, sun terrace, outdoor swimming pool and a bar. Car rental and bike hire is available for those that would like to get out and explore this picturesque area. The rooms feature air conditioning, Wi-Fi, TV and a private bathroom. Sea view rooms are available, please enquire.



BEFORE YOU GO

Accommodation ratings

On our Private trips, you can often choose your style of accommodation. The price quoted on our website is reflective of the included accommodation, please see the "included" section on the first page of this document for details. Should you opt for an alternative hotel category, this will be confirmed in writing with the respective price on your invoice.

For further details about the indicative hotels, please see the "hotels" tab on our website. Here we rank hotel's in their respective country (REGIONAL CATEGORY) - but we also tell you how it ranks by Western standards (OUR CATEGORY).

STANDARD - Equates to a Western 3-star standard, always featuring en-suite rooms and usually a restaurant.
SUPERIOR - Equates to a Western 4-star standard, featuring en-suite rooms and usually a restaurant and often a swimming pool and/or a fitness centre.
DELUXE - Equates to a Western 5-star standard, usually featuring spacious, en-suite rooms, a restaurant, swimming pool and fitness centre and an array of amenities, excellent service and customer care.
LUXURY - Equates to a Western 5-star plus standard - the creme de la creme. Featuring spacious, en-suite rooms, a restaurant, swimming pool and fitness centre and an array of amenities, this accommodation is a cut above the rest. Sheer opulence!

Tipping

Tipping is an essential part of the culture. For a job well done, we would suggest for your tour guide: USD \$5-6 per traveller, for each day of sightseeing.

For your driver and On The Go Representative we'd recommend USD\$2-3 per traveller for each day of service. Tipping is an entirely personal

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gesture and ultimately the amount is up to you.

Morocco Country Guide

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.

Visas & passports

Visa requirements are subject to change and 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.

After booking your holiday, please provide us with your passport details as soon as possible so that we can proceed to book all services. Please be advised visa requirements are subject to change, therefore it is essential that you check current visa requirements with the embassy before travel. For information about visas, head to

www.onthegotours.com/Morocco/Visas

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.

Packing List

Please check local temperatures so you can pack accordingly. Visit www.worldclimate.com

- Lightweight cotton garments in summer, warm clothing for winter (temperatures can get quite low at night)
- Comfortable walking shoes or hiking shoes
- Universal travel adaptor
- DEET based mosquito repellent and antihistamine cream
- First aid kit including Dioralyte
- Tour Voucher and a copy of your travel insurance policy, spare passport photos and a photocopy of your passport
- Sunglasses, hat, sunscreen, swim costume, torch and money belt
- Either a rucksack or suitcase is suitable. A small daypack for your day-to-day needs
- A towel for swimming
- A torch for your night in the Sahara Desert
- If travelling on our Handpicked Morocco tours a sleeping bag is required 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)

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.

Note: If you are travelling on our **Mount Toubkal Trek** please refer to the Trekking Packing List.

Hotels

The hotels in Morocco are clean, comfortable and centrally located. We

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try to utilise local and traditional hotels with plenty of character wherever possible. In smaller towns, the choice of accommodation is 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 can be more basic.

It's not like home, what to expect & Ramadan

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.

Please visit www.onthegotours.com/Morocco/Travel-tips-and-useful-info for local customs, currency, etiquette, WiFi and other helpful information to prepare for your holiday.

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) 22 Mar - 20 Apr 2023 & 10 Mar - 08 Apr 2024.

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