



## Highlights of Morocco

For sheer diversity, Morocco is the perfect destination. Explore the imperial cities of Marrakech, Meknes and Fez; mountain ranges where sand dunes and kasbahs are scattered among palm oases inhabited by friendly Berbers.



YOUR  
ADVENTURE  
AWAITS

15 days/14 nights

### ITINERARY

#### Day 1: Casablanca

Arrive in Casablanca independently and transfer to your accommodation.

#### Days 2: Casablanca and Rabat

A modern and commercial seaport, Casablanca is a complete contrast to the Morocco we are soon to explore. This morning we visit the Hassan II Mosque, one of the largest mosques in the world. We then lunch in Rabat, the political capital of Morocco, but second to Casablanca in importance. Although mostly modern, Rabat has an excellent old quarter that we take time to explore before striking out over the northern plain to Meknes. We begin to see the scenery change as the landscape becomes more cultivated, Meknes being one of the most fertile areas of Morocco.

#### Day 3: Meknes and Volubilis

Sultan Moulay Ismail's old capital of Meknes is our first example of one of the Imperial Cities. The morning is free to wander the narrow streets and explore the souk (market) and perhaps have our first taste of bartering for souvenirs. In the afternoon we take a short drive to the largest and greatest kept Roman ruins in Morocco's Volubilis. After exploring this site we continue our journey to Fez, where we spend two nights.

#### Day 4: Fez

This fascinating city is the intellectual and religious centre of Morocco. Founded over a thousand years ago, Fez has many mosques and medersas (theological colleges) including the 9th century Karouine University, whose architecture is very similar to that seen in Moorish Spain. The medina in Fez is one of the largest in the world. In its immense and confusing warren of souks are thousands of craftsmen with their tiny shops opening onto the narrow alleyways. Noisy and pungent, hot and claustrophobic, the medina of Fez is a totally absorbing and unique experience. Our city guide shall walk us through different sections of the souk - from the dyers souk to the brass and copper souks. And of course, no visit to Fez is complete without a visit to the tanneries. Outside the medina we shall visit the Jewish District (mellah), the exterior of the Royal Palace and drive to a panoramic viewpoint over the medina. We shall also visit the potteries where the famous mosaic tables are made from the grey clay of the Rif Mountains.

#### Day 5: Journey to the desert

Today we have a long journey over the Middle Atlas, down through the picturesque Ziz Valley to the Hamada (flat stony desert) gradually approaching the spectacular site of the golden sand dunes of Erg Chebbi. We stay in a small and welcoming auberge on the edge of the dunes where it is easy to climb their summits to watch the sunrise.

#### Day 6: Saharan camel trek

There is time today to explore the largest sand sea in Morocco or to relax in the shade of a palm tree by the dunes. The sand sea is famed for its pink dunes that take on a spectacular rose colour at sunset. In the late afternoon we partake in a genuine Saharan experience - a 2-hour camel trek through the dunes to an oasis, where we spend the night in a simple Bedouin camp.



### **Day 7: Desert Camp – Todra Gorge**

After sunrise, we leave our desert camp and travel, by camel, back to the auberge where we can have a shower before heading west towards the little town of Tinerhir and onwards to Todra Gorge for the night. Our hotel is set against the backdrop of the impressive walls of the gorge itself and we can spend the evening watching the rocks change colour with the setting sun.

### **Day 8: Todra Gorge**

We spend the day in the magnificent gorge of the Todra River. There is the opportunity to take a five hour guided walk, or to relax in the gorge, walking beneath vertical cliffs rising up to 400m. In the afternoon there is the option of a guided palmery tour.

### **Day 9: Route of Thousand Kasbahs**

Leaving Todra Gorge, we rejoin the main road and drive west along the 'Route of the Thousand Kasbahs' via Ouarzazate and on to the well-preserved Kasbah Ait Benhaddou. This UNESCO World Heritage Site is one of the most spectacular sights of the Atlas, made famous as the location of several Hollywood films including 'Gladiator'. After admiring the view, we may see something of the simple village houses. Continuing into the mountains we branch east through a wide flat mountain valley, finally arriving at Anmiter. Here we leave our bus and take an hour's picturesque walk on a gentle uphill gradient to our base, where we spend the next two nights (Our bags will be transported to the gite for us).

### **Day 10: High Atlas Mountains**

We start our day with a four hour walk through the villages of the Tjihza Valley, passing fields cultivated by the Berber women. Heading up into the hills on mule tracks, the peaks of the High Atlas act as a fitting backdrop to our walk. The afternoon is free to relax with a book, enjoy the mountain views, take a stroll through this beautiful landscape or challenge the local children to a game of football! Tjihza is just one of four villages in this remote valley that has been supported by Exodus for over ten years on various projects requested by the Village Association, such as building a water tower or a Hammam (Moroccan steam bath) that will help with hygiene standards in the village.

### **Day 11: To Essaouira**

Leaving the gite, we walk back to our bus for a short drive to the fortress of Telouet. Although abandoned and crumbling, we absorb the atmosphere of this labyrinthine, fairy-tale like structure. We continue our scenic drive over the High Atlas Mountains to Marrakech, driving over the Tizi'n'Tichka, which at 2,260m, is the highest road pass in Morocco. The scenery is spectacular and there are some wonderful views of the mountains. The second half of the trip brings us to the flat arid plains of Marrakech and then onwards to Essaouira.

### **Day 12: Essaouira**

A free day in Essaouira, a charming old Portuguese fishing port overlooking the Atlantic Ocean coast. The settlement dates back to the 15th century but the present town was constructed around 1760 by Sidi Mohammed ben Abdullah, who needed a base from which to suppress a revolt from Agadir. Today, the town is extremely relaxed and its whitewashed houses with painted shutters, artisan's workshops, boatyards and fishermen provide a marked contrast to the desert, kasbahs and cities we have so far visited on this trip. Our hotel is situated in the heart of the old walled city, where we have plenty of time for some shopping in the souks or strolls along the picturesque beach. With many pleasant cafes and some outstanding seafood restaurants we have plenty of choice for our evening meal.

### **Day 13: To Marrakech**

After breakfast we head for the 'Pink City' of Marrakech and in the afternoon we enjoy a guided tour to help us find our feet and soak up the atmosphere of this amazing city. Our city guide will take us to the Bahia Palace, the Saadian tombs – which incredibly date to the 16th century – and the Koutoubia Mosque. We end in the Djemma el Fna, where the town becomes a maze of bustling bazaars, palaces and mosques. It is worth seeing this renowned landmark in the evening, as Marrakech revolves around the open-air central square. With the food stalls, snake charmers, water-sellers and acrobats, it is a place of night-time entertainment for both local people and tourists.

### **Day 14: Marrakech**

Today is a free day in Marrakech and there is no shortage of things to do. You might like to visit the largest Mosque in Marrakech, Koutoubia, or venture through the souks and old streets of the medina. After bartering for souvenirs in the labyrinthine souks, there will be time for a short visit to the Koranic School and Museum of Marrakech. After this, unwind by taking a hour Caliche ride (a bright green horse-drawn carriage) to the Jardin Majorelle. These tranquil gardens are decorated throughout in indigo blue and owned by Yves St. Laurent. A final treat would be a hammam, a traditional Moroccan steam bath.

### **Day 15: Tour ends in Marrakech**

Following breakfast your tour ends. You may choose to fly home from Marrakech or continue on to another interesting destination. The choice is yours and we can help you with your plans.

[Details](#)



**Group Size:** Minimum 4 / Maximum 16

**2018 Departures:**

February: 04, 18  
April: 01, 08  
May: 27  
June: 17  
July: 22  
August: 05  
September: 09, 23  
October: 14, 21  
November: 04, 25  
December: 09, 16

**2019 Departures:**

February: 03, 17  
March: 10  
April: 07, 21  
May: 12, 26  
June: 16  
July: 21  
August: 04

**2018 Pricing:**

All tour dates except October 07, 14  
CA\$1,485 – twin  
CA\$1,770 – single

October: 07, 14  
CA\$1,515 – twin  
CA\$1,800 – single

**2019 Pricing:**

CA\$1,595 – twin  
CA\$1,880 – single

Prices are shown in CA\$, per person based on two people sharing twin accommodation and one person in a single room. Prices may vary slightly from those shown for certain dates. As the availability of tours is constantly changing please ask us for the most up to date availability and prices.

**Trip Code:**

009390D-20

**INCLUDED**

- Arrival and departure transfers
- All transportation and activities listed in itinerary
- Tour leader throughout
- Accommodation as indicated
- Breakfast daily
- 4 dinners

**NOT INCLUDED**

- International travel to Casablanca and from Marrakech
- Single accommodation supplement
- Any other extra/ optional activities added to your program



- Passport and visa fees, if required
- Vaccinations, if required (recommended vaccinations are tetanus and hepatitis A)
- Items of a personal nature
- Travel Insurance

## TOUR NOTES

This program is a small group, guided holiday with between 4 and 16 like-minded people, with an average group size of 12. This trip provides an insight into the enormous variety that Morocco has to offer, including cities, history, architecture, desert and mountain scenery. We spend quality time in the places that matter, the pace is not rushed but a couple of the journeys are long. We are not confined to our vehicle though, as there are plenty of photo stops and opportunities to stretch your legs. Accommodation standards are below that of Europe and more comparable to that of Sub-Saharan Africa. The temperatures in the cities may also be hot in the summer months but we try to make the most of the coolest parts of the day.

A highlight of our trip is a camel trek in the Sahara and a night at a Bedouin camp. We fit in a visits to Todra Gorge, the beautiful 16th century kasbah of Ait Benhaddou, and enjoy a village walk in a picturesque valley of the High Atlas. We complete the trip with a walk along the sandy beach of Essaouira. A reasonable level of fitness is required in order to enjoy the outdoor, activity portions of this trip, including the hike in the Atlas Mountains.

**Ramadan:** Please note Ramadan runs from May 15th to June 14, 2018. During Ramadan, our local guides and drivers choose to work and so we continue to run trips in this period. However, it does need to be recognised that the energy levels of our local staff may be a bit lower than usual and that some restaurants may be closed during the day. Having said this, Ramadan is a unique time to visit a Muslim country – each evening the streets empty for an hour while everyone breaks their fast, and there’s a feeling of festivity in the air every night.

### Highlights of Morocco – Premium departures:

**2018:** February 18; April 08; May 27; July 22; September 23; November 04

CA\$1,895 – twin

CA\$2,275 – single

**2019:** February 17; April 07; May 26; July 21

CA\$1,955 – twin

CA\$2,335 – single

Premium tours offer upgraded accommodation (10 nights boutique hotel and premium riads, 1 night auberge, 2 nights mountain gite and 1 night Bedouin camp).

*Disclaimer: We do our utmost to ensure that information posted on our website is correct at the time of publication, however trip details are subject to change without notice by the suppliers and operators involved. We update the information as soon as possible when changes are advised to us, however, we cannot assume responsibility for such changes made by the suppliers and operators.*

## ROUTE MAP





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