

Morocco Desert Safari

Country(ies): Morocco

Tour type: Shoestring

Transport: A/C minibus/coach & 4x4 landcruisers

Group size: Min: 2 | Max: 40

Days: 7 Days

Start location: Marrakech, Morocco

End location: Marrakech, Morocco

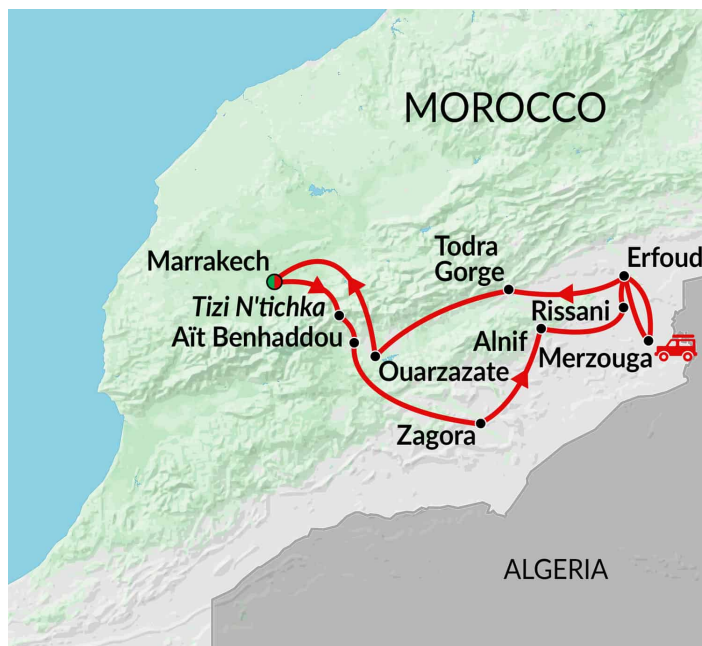
Departs On: Saturdays

Meals: Breakfasts - 6, Lunches - 1, Dinners - 5

Highlights:

Marrakech medina, Djemaa El Fna square, Atlas Mountains, Ait Benhaddou World Heritage Site, Boumalne, Pre-Saharan villages, Erg Chebbi sand dunes, Berber desert camp, Dades Canyon, Road of a Thousand Kasbahs, Ouarzazate

Places Visited: Marrakech medina, Djemaa El Fna square, Atlas Mountains, Ait Benhaddou World Heritage Site, Boumalne, Pre-Saharan villages, Erg Chebbi sand dunes, Berber desert camp, Dades Canyon, Road of a Thousand Kasbahs, Ouarzazate



Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive in Marrakech, transfer to hotel

On your arrival in Marrakech airport (RAK) our representative will greet you and transfer you to your hotel. The rest of the day is free for you to settle in, relax after your flight, and have a first look around. Extra nights before the tour starts are available on request.

If you arrive early enough, you can head into Marrakech's famous Djemaa el Fna Square for a first taste of Moroccan food at one of the main street stalls, while watching the many street performers and salesmen offering their wares.

OVERNIGHT: Marrakech hotel

MEALS: Dinner

EXTRAS: Extra day in Marrakech - pre-tour || Single room supplement - Standard Hotels (MOSHDS) || Single room supplement - Comfort Hotels (MOSHDS) || Single room supplement - Superior Hotels (MOSHDS)

Day 2: Marrakech, city tour

Today's tour of Marrakech, Marrakech's second oldest Imperial City, starts in the morning with visits to the Menara Garden, the Bahia Palace which hosts intricate and beautiful Arabic craftsmanship, the Koutoubia Mosque, home to the minaret which has become a symbol of the city and finally, the Dar Si Said Museum. After a break for lunch in the hotel, we spend the afternoon exploring the old centre of the city. Home to many different types of traders these bustling and aromatic souqs and handicraft quarters provide a real taste of Morocco. The tour finishes at the Djemaa el-Fna Square, which is well worth revisiting later in the evening when it is packed with street food stalls, musicians and entertainers - one of Morocco's highlights.

Full-board option: dinner with show.

OVERNIGHT: Marrakech hotel

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch

EXTRAS: Full board supplement (Morocco Desert Safari)

Day 3: Across the Atlas Mountains to Ait Benhaddou and onwards to Tinghir

After breakfast this morning we bid farewell to Marrakech and take a scenic drive across the mountains of the high Atlas, passing through the Tich'n'Tichka pass at an altitude of 2260m. After descending out of the mountains we'll stop at what is probably the most well-known kasbah in Morocco - Ait Benhaddou. The kasbah is a UNESCO protected monument and has appeared in countless movies. In the afternoon we continue our journey to the desert, travelling through Ouarzazate and Kalaa M'gouna before arriving at the town of Tinghir where we spend the night.

Full board option: Lunch

OVERNIGHT: Tinghir Hotel

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

EXTRAS: Full board supplement (Morocco Desert Safari)

Day 4: Todra Gorge, Erg Chebbi Sand Dunes

We leave Tinghir today and continue on towards Erfoud, we'll pass by the Todra Gorge where rock faces reach up to 250m. Erfoud is on the edge of the famous Erg Chebbi sand dunes where you'll have a 4x4 drive into the dunes

before returning to your Erfoud accommodation for the night. You then have two options for tonight. The standard tour spends the night in a hotel in Erfoud, with a 4x4 safari to the sand dunes for sunrise or sunset. Alternatively you can take a 4x4 safari to the sand dunes for sunset, and then have dinner and spend the night at a comfortable Berber Camp at the edge of the dunes.

OVERNIGHT: Erfoud Hotel (or Berber Desert Camp)

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

EXTRAS: Full board supplement (Morocco Desert Safari) || Overnight Desert Camp, 4x4 Safari and Dinner

Day 5: Tinjdad Oasis, Dades Canyon, Road of a Thousand Kasbahs

You can rise early this morning and if staying in the desert camp take a walk or camel ride to witness an amazing sunrise over the Erg Chebbi sand dunes before returning to the camp. If staying in the hotel at Erfoud, an option is available to take 4x4 vehicles into the desert to enjoy sunrise on the dunes.

After breakfast we then head away from the desert and to the impressive Tinjdad Oasis before we continue on to the Dades Canyon, close to Tinghir, whose rocks tower around 250 metres above you. Our journey then continues along the 'Road of a Thousand Kasbahs' crossing Kalaat M'Gouna and the Skoura Valley before arriving at Ouarzazate or 'place of no noise'. An incredibly dramatic landscape, this area has played host to countless well known films and is home to the famous Atlas movie studios. We'll take a short tour of the city this afternoon before taking dinner at the hotel.

OVERNIGHT: Ouarzazate Hotel

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

EXTRAS: Full board supplement (Morocco Desert Safari)

Day 6: Cross the Atlas Mountains to Marrakech. Free afternoon

After breakfast today we'll make another crossing of the Atlas Mountains and the Tizi N'tichka col on our way back to Marrakech. You'll arrive in time to spend the afternoon exploring Marrakech's souqs and bazaars further for some final sightseeing and souvenir shopping, and to enjoy a final night back in the Djemaa el-Fna Square after dinner in the hotel.

OVERNIGHT: Marrakech Hotel

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

EXTRAS: Full board supplement (Morocco Desert Safari)

Day 7: Marrakech departure, transfer to the airport

Our exciting week in Morocco comes to an end today. You'll have free time until you are transferred to the airport for your departure flight. Subject to your flight departure time, additional options such as spectacular hot air balloon flight (which runs first thing in the morning for around 4 hours with a flight of around 1 hour) or a full day trip to the Ourika Valley including lunch are available today. Extra nights in Marrakech are available if you would like to extend your stay to accommodate these options or just to spend a bit more time exploring Marrakech.

OVERNIGHT: N/A

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS: Marrakech hot air balloon flight || Ourika Valley half day tour || Extra day in Marrakech - post-tour

Included

- All accommodation as stated in the itinerary
- Transport in AC minibus/coach (4x4 landcruisers in the desert)

- 24-hour airport arrival & departure transfer service
- English speaking tour leader throughout and specialist local guides
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary
- Entrances fees to monuments as stated

Excluded

- International flights (available on request)
- Visa fees
- Travel insurance (compulsory, available on request)
- Optional 4x4 desert safari and night in Berber desert camp
- Meals not indicated in the itinerary
- Drinks, snacks and other personal expenses (e.g. laundry)
- Tips for guide & driver
- Any other items not mentioned above

Notes

Hotel Gala Dinners

Many of Morocco's higher level hotels arrange a very special gala dinner with entertainment in the evening on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. Payment for these is normally optional on Christmas Eve (24 Dec) but normally compulsory on New Year's Eve (31 Dec), whether you attend or not. Prices for any compulsory Gala Dinners are included in our tour prices.

Options

Our tours are designed to include all that you need to enjoy a really special time in the destination you're visiting.

However, we do also offer some extra options to complement the tour and add some additional sightseeing or activities, or some extra time at either end of the tour.

All accommodation based options (e.g. Single supplements, extra nights, cruise upgrades) should be booked and paid for in advance so that we can make the appropriate arrangements.

Other options may either be booked and paid for in advance or while you are on the tour, though we recommend booking in advance to ensure there are no issues with availability.

Many options are priced the same throughout the year, but some may incur single or high season supplements - full details are given on the tour reservation form or on request.

Marrakech hot air balloon flight

Min numbers: 1

The hot air balloon tour lasts about 4 hours, with the flight itself lasting about 1 hour. You start very early in the morning (around 05.30-06.30) with a pick up from your hotel and a drive in a comfortable 4WD vehicle to the take-off site just outside the city. Once the balloon is prepared and ready, you take off and float across the beautiful Moroccan scenery. Depending on the weather and the day's selected take off and landing sites, you'll see different Berber villages, the outskirts of the city, small oases, and terraced irrigated fields as well as the distant High Atlas mountains. A chase vehicle follows you on the ground, in constant contact by radio with the balloon. After landing you rejoin the vehicle and drive back to Marrakesh, stopping for tea and a snack at some of the Berber villages you've passed over. You get back to your hotel in Marrakesh around midday. Note - this flight is subject to weather conditions - a refund will be provided if it is not able to go ahead.

Price: Starting from - \$205

Ourika Valley half day tour

Min numbers: 2

Situated at the base of the famous Oukaimeden ski station, the lush Ourika valley slowly rises up to the foothills of the High Atlas mountains. This beautiful valley is home to many traditional Berber villages and its rushing river is dotted along its route by many cafes and restaurants popular with locals escaping for the day from Marrakech. Ourika is also famous for its local pottery. As well as driving through the valley, you'll have time for a walk to see the many waterfalls, and to take a break at one of the riverside cafes. The tour takes around 4 hours in total.

Price: Starting from - \$60

Extra day in Marrakech - post-tour

Min numbers: 1

This option adds an extra day to the end of your tour, staying in the same hotel as the main tour itself (subject to availability) on a bed & breakfast basis. Your airport departure transfer is not included and will be charged as an additional supplement if required based on the number of people in your party. Prices shown are per person and based on two people sharing. Note: Single room and peak season supplements apply.

Price: Starting from - \$55

Single room supplement - Standard Hotels

Min numbers: 1

The tour price is based on 2 people sharing twin/double rooms. This option books a single room in all the accommodation throughout the tour. If you are a single traveller and would be happy to share a room, let us know and we will see if we can pair you up with another single traveller of the same sex. If a room share is not available when you book then we will add the single room supplement to your booking and it will be payable with your balance

payment unless we have arranged a room share for you by then. If a room share is arranged after you have paid the supplement then we will refund it to you. Room shares are arranged in order of booking. This option is applicable to those requiring a single room who have booked standard level accommodation. Note: Single supplement prices may vary seasonally.

Price: Starting from - \$180

Full board supplement

Min numbers: 1

This option adds lunches in local restaurants to days 3-6 of the tour. If you don't add this option you'll often still need to eat lunch at the same restaurants as those adding the option, but pay locally. Dinner is also added on Day 2.

Price: Starting from - \$120

Overnight Desert Camp, 4x4 Safari and Dinner

Min numbers: 1

This option takes you from our base on the edge of the Sahara Desert at Erfoud, and travels by 4x4 into the spectacular Erg Chebbi sand dunes in time for sunset. You'll then have dinner and spend the night at a comfortable Berber camp at the edge of the dunes. Proper beds and all bedding is provided. After an evening by the campfire with your Berber hosts you'll have another chance to climb the sand dunes in the morning before we head back to Erfoud after breakfast to continue the tour.

Price: Starting from - \$30

Single room supplement - Comfort Hotels

Min numbers: 1

The tour price is based on 2 people sharing twin/double rooms. This option books a single room in all the accommodation throughout the tour. If you are a single traveller and would be happy to share a room, let us know and we will see if we can pair you up with another single traveller of the same sex. If a room share is not available when you book then we will add the single room supplement to your booking and it will be payable with your balance payment unless we have arranged a room share for you by then. If a room share is arranged after you have paid the supplement then we will refund it to you. Room shares are arranged in order of booking. This option is applicable to those requiring a single room who have booked comfort level accommodation. Note: Single supplement prices may vary seasonally.

Price: Starting from - \$275

Single room supplement - Superior Hotels

Min numbers: 1

The tour price is based on 2 people sharing twin/double rooms. This option books a single room in all the accommodation throughout the tour. If you are a single traveller and would be happy to share a room, let us know and we will see if we can pair you up with another single traveller of the same sex. If a room share is not available when you book then we will add the single room supplement to your booking and it will be payable with your balance payment unless we have arranged a room share for you by then. If a room share is arranged after you have paid the supplement then we will refund it to you. Room shares are arranged in order of booking. This option is applicable to those requiring a single room who have booked superior level accommodation. Note: Single supplement prices may vary seasonally.

Price: Starting from - \$385

Extra day in Marrakech - pre-tour

Min numbers: 1

This option adds an extra day to the start of your tour, staying in the same hotel as the main tour itself (subject to availability), staying on a bed & breakfast basis. Your airport arrival transfer is not included and will be charged as an additional supplement if required based on the number of people in your party. Prices shown are per person and based on two people sharing. Note: Single room and peak season supplements apply.

Price: Starting from - \$55

1. Accommodation

We use good quality mid-range tourist class hotels on this tour, rated at the local Moroccan 4-star level (local star ratings may vary slightly from international standards). Upgrades are available to higher "Comfort" and "Superior" levels on request (please see the dates and prices tab for pricing). If some people take up this upgrade there will be multiple hotel pick-ups and drop-offs each day, though we do aim to use hotels as close together as possible to minimise any extra travelling time.

Example accommodations for each category can be found below, though other hotels of the same level may be used.

Standard Hotels:

Marrakech - Zalagh Kasbah / Rawabi
Tinghir - Saghro / Bougafer
Erfoud - Erfoud Palace / Palms
Ouarzazate - Karam Palace / Hanane

Comfort Hotels:

Marrakech - Palm Plaza / Imperial Holidays
Tinghir - Xaluca / Tizzarouine
Erfoud - Xaluca / Palais du Desert
Ouarzazate - Ksar Ighnda / Dar Chamaa

Superior Hotels:

Marrakech - Kenzi Rose Garden / JAAL
Tinghir - Xaluca
Erfoud - Xaluca
Ouarzazate - Ksar Ighnda

Accommodation is based on double or twin en-suite rooms with air conditioning. All couples will have a private double room.

Please check the Single Room Supplement option for details on room sharing options and charges for solo travellers on this tour.

The optional overnight Berber camp in the desert is spent in simple but comfortable goat hair tents on the edge of the dunes with beds and bedding provided. You may want to bring a sleeping bag or sleeping sheet for extra comfort during the colder winter months (November-February).

2. Transport

Our trips feature a mix of different transport options. We want you to feel like you're really experiencing the country you're travelling through, but at the same time we want you to finish journeys refreshed enough to enjoy the next stage of the tour. The terrain and public transport options in Morocco mean that we use private AC minibuses or coaches throughout this tour, subject to the final size of the group. For your trip into the desert dunes, local 4x4 vehicles are used.

3. Transfers

Many of our Morocco tours include a 24-hour airport meet & assist service in Casablanca/Marrakech airports (depending on the exact itinerary), your arrival and departure airport-hotel transfers and all other transfers. Some tours however many not include airport transfers, please check the tour inclusions/exclusions for information on

which transfers are included on your specific trip.

Where transfers are included, these are only included in our tour prices on the first and last day of the set tour itinerary. We will be happy to arrange transfers on any additional days if you book your hotel room with us. If you make your own arrangements for additional accommodation at either the beginning or the end of the tour then you will need to arrange your own airport transfers on these days.

On our Shoestring group tours we do offer optional hotel upgrades. This may mean that additional pick-up and drop-offs are required each day. We do endeavour to ensure that all hotels used are close to each other and to streamline and time arrangements to limit any extra driving time as much as possible.

4. International Flights

We want to give you as much flexibility as possible when it comes to booking your holiday with us. So, to take account of people with varying travel plans, we don't include your international flights in the main tour price. We are however very happy to suggest flights to go with the tour. Please contact us with your preferred dates and departure airport and we'll give you a selection of airlines, times and fares to choose from.

Your airport arrival & departure transfers are included on the first and last days of the tour. Airport transfers on any days before or after the main tour will incur a supplement. Our Morocco tours either start/finish in Marrakech (RAK) or Casablanca (CMN) airports.

Some packages on our website are sold as flight inclusive and in this event you will see the departure airport listed on the Dates & Prices section. Airlines may vary on these packages, and baggage fees may be subject to an extra fee. Where these are shown on our website, prices are correct at the time of quoting, but are subject to continued availability of the fare used. Prices will be reconfirmed at the time of booking, and we will also provide the flight times and airline details before tickets are issued.

Flight inclusive prices are based on the cheapest Economy ticket class available which is generally non-refundable and non-changeable unless the flight is cancelled for reasons such as Covid-19, in which case the airlines are more flexible. More flexible ticket options, as well as Premium Economy and Business Class tickets are available on request for an additional supplement. Any changes made to flight inclusive bookings will be subject to the airline rules on your ticket.

Check in times for international flights to Morocco are generally 2 or 3 hours before departure depending on the airline - we recommend you aim to get to the airport 3 hours before departure to allow for any delays en-route and in passing through security checks. Online check in is available with most airlines from 24 hours before departure, though low-cost airlines may allow this straight after booking. Seat selection can be done at the point of checking in, either online or at the airport, or by calling the airline direct.

We do also sometimes advertise flight inclusive packages from selected airports.

Flight CO2 Emissions:

Traveling by air is an amazing way to explore the world, but flights also contribute to carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions that impact the environment. By considering the airline's CO2 emissions when you choose your flight, you can help minimize your travel footprint.

When selecting your international flights and airline, we do therefore recommend that you try and also take into account the flight CO2 emissions. Some airlines and flight search websites (eg. Google Flights, Skyscanner) do publish this information, so you can compare between your flight options and make an informed decision. Thankfully, many airlines are working towards sustainability efforts, and choosing a greener option allows you to contribute to positive change while still enjoying your incredible adventure.

5. Group Size/Tour Leaders/Guides

On our Shoestring tours we allow for larger groups than our other trips, and while the average group size tends to be around 8-12 people, this tour can run with a maximum of 45 travellers on a large coach (this will be reduced according to the local regulations as part of our Safer Encounters scheme). We may also share this departure with travellers booking through other operators so you may join with travellers booking with different companies and from different countries. This can make for some really interesting groups and new people to meet.

The minimum number of travellers required for the tour to run is 2.

The tour is led by a qualified, dual-lingual guide and a driver. This allows for explanations to be given in two languages to accommodate both English speakers and travellers with another first language. Specialist local guides may also be used in some locations to provide more site specific information.

At Encounters Travel we aim to only use local Moroccan guides and reps. We feel this gives you the best experience of the country and the sites you are seeing and many people rate our Moroccan guides as one of the highlights of their tour.

6. Entrance Fees

The tour price includes entrance fees to all the tourist sites mentioned in the itinerary. You will need to cover the cost of entrance to any other extra sites that you may wish to visit.

7. Tipping

Tipping and Haggling is an accepted and usual part of life in Morocco and other countries in the region. Wages for service staff are very low and tips are a necessary supplement to meagre incomes. If you are visiting from a country where this is not the case, then we have given some guidelines below which will hopefully prove helpful. .

Tipping Kitty

On our **Small Group Tours** we implement a Tipping Kitty for your convenience and to remove the hassle of being asked for tips by main people you may come across during the tour. This kitty will be collected in US Dollars cash at the start of the tour, and administered by your tour guide. You may ask for information on who they are tipping along the way if you wish as often they will do it out of sight for politeness. However, the tipping kitty amount covers people like hotel porters, hotel waiters, local guides for city tours, airport drivers, Berber camel herders and restaurant tips. It does not cover your main tour guide.

Please check the 'Not Included' section of the tour notes for details of the tipping kitty amount for your tour. This amount is payable per person (for adults only - children on family tours do not need to pay it).

This tipping kitty system works well on small group style tours. However, due to the different numbers of people travelling, we do not use it on our **Shoestring** or **Private/Tailor-made** tours.

Other tips

Your main tour guide is not included in our Tipping Kitty. On group tours we suggest you budget around USD 2-4 per person per day to cover the main guide's tip, subject to your personal budget, and your satisfaction with the level of service provided. On private/tailor-made tours we recommend you budget a bit higher.

Throughout your trip you may at times also have a local guide in addition to your main guide. These are covered in the Tipping Kitty on our small group tours, but on other tours we suggest budgeting around USD2-3 per per day. The same applies to drivers on our Shoestring and Private/Tailor-made tours.

In local markets, and basic restaurants you can leave the loose change. For more up-market restaurants we suggest 5% to 10% of the bill.

Haggling

Haggling is a traditional necessity, so never pay too much regard to initial prices. Instead fix an item's value in your mind then negotiate towards it unhurriedly (Moroccans never rush their bargaining), and don't be afraid to simply walk away if the price isn't right. However, if you do mention a price, then you should be prepared to pay it or risk

causing offence.

8. Health and Vaccinations

You should ensure you are fully insured for medical emergencies including emergency evacuation and repatriation.

Recommended vaccinations and other health protection measures vary according to the country you are visiting and where you are travelling from. We recommend you contact your GP/medical practitioner or a travel clinic for current information on vaccinations needed for your destination. You should ensure that you are up to date with vaccines and boosters recommended for your normal life at home, including for example, vaccines required for occupational risk of exposure, lifestyle risks and underlying medical conditions. In addition, additional courses or boosters normally recommended for the countries in this region are:

South Africa: Additional vaccinations: Hepatitis A. [Malaria map](#). Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from or having transitted through an infected area.

Namibia: Additional vaccinations: Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid. [Malaria map](#). Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from an infected area.

Botswana: Additional vaccinations: Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid. [Malaria map](#). Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from or having transitted or travelled through an infected area.

Zimbabwe: Additional vaccinations: Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid. [Malaria map](#). Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from or having transitted through an infected area.

Zambia: Additional vaccinations: Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid. [Malaria map](#). Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from or having transitted through an infected area.

Malawi: Additional vaccinations: Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid. [Malaria map](#). Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from or having transitted through an infected area.

Tanzania: Additional vaccinations: Diphtheria, Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid. [Malaria map](#). Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from or having transitted through an infected area.

Kenya: Additional vaccinations: Diphtheria, Hepatitis A, Poliomyelitis, Tetanus, Typhoid. [Malaria map](#). Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from an infected area.

Uganda: Additional vaccinations: Diphtheria, Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid, Yellow Fever. [Malaria map](#). Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from an infected area.

Sudan: Additional vaccinations: Diphtheria, Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid, Yellow Fever. [Malaria map](#). Yellow Fever certificate: Required if arriving from or having transitted through an infected area. A certificate may also be required for those departing Sudan.

Morocco: Additional vaccinations: Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Typhoid. Malaria not normally present. Yellow Fever certificate not required.

The above information can change at short notice. For up to date health information & vaccination requirements we recommend that you contact your medical practitioner or a travel clinic.

Malaria: Vaccinations are not available against Malaria, which is a disease transmitted by mosquitoes that can be very serious and sometimes fatal. You should avoid mosquito bites by covering up bare skin with clothing such as long sleeves and long trousers and applying insect repellents to exposed skin. When necessary, sleep under a mosquito net. Mosquitoes are most active during and after sunset. You should consult with your GP/medical practitioner/travel clinic about the most appropriate malaria prophylactic medication to take for the regions you are visiting.

Yellow Fever: This disease is spread by infected mosquitoes that bite during the day. A Yellow Fever Certificate of vaccination is often required as a condition of entry depending on which country you are arriving from, or that you have travelled or transitted through recently (including connecting flights with stopovers of over 12 hours). You can view this [US CDC information](#) about where the virus is present and follow the links to further information detailing which countries need you to have a Yellow Fever vaccination as part of their entry requirements. Please ensure you have this certificate organised in advance and with you and to hand during the trip.

Please inform us of any pre-existing conditions such as diabetes or asthma and any prescription medicine you may

be taking. We also need to know about any food allergies or physical disabilities that you may have. If you are travelling on an Overland tour or your trip includes wildlife safaris then please bear in mind that you may be travelling on bumpy roads and/or rough ground for several hours at a time. This can be very uncomfortable or painful if you have a bad back, and make such conditions worse. Please contact us if you have any concerns.

9. Passports and Visas

Passports should be valid for at least six months after your departure from the country. Please do not bring an almost full or almost expired passport. Visa arrangements are the responsibility of the traveller, and requirements are subject to change by the local authorities. We recommend that you contact your closest Moroccan consulate or embassy for current information for your nationality.

Currently, many nationalities (including USA, Canada, UK, European, Australian, New Zealand) do not need to obtain a visa to enter Morocco as long as your stay is for less than 3 months. Other nationalities should check with their local consulate.

10. Time

The time in Morocco is the same as GMT (plus 0 hours). Daylight saving adjustments are generally applied between the end of March and the end of October, making the time GBP plus 1 hour. During this period the time may revert back to GMT during Ramadan. Exact dates vary from year to year and sometimes the changes may be scrapped altogether.

11. Voltage

Sockets are two round pronged and 220 volts (Type C/E). Universal adaptors are available in most airport shops if you don't have one already. Standard European adapters will work fine, though sometimes they may feel a little loose in the sockets. All hotel rooms have electrical sockets where you can re-charge cameras, phones etc. Hair dryers are normally available on request from the hotel reception if not in your room already. If you have US appliances (110 volts) you will need a voltage converter as well as a plug adapter.

12. Money

The local currency in Morocco is the Dirham. We recommend you bring some cash in a hard currency (US Dollars, GB Pounds, Euros) and a good ATM card. Most major currencies can be converted at most banks, but it's not wise to carry too much. Euros and US Dollars are welcomed more than GB Pounds. Travellers cheques are not easily exchanged. It can be awkward outside of Marrakech to find an ATM machine that takes your card as many Moroccan banks have ATMs that only work with Moroccan cards. Don't put your card in an ATM unless you see the symbol that matches your card on the machine, as you might lose your card! We also suggest trying to avoid using Post Office ATMs. In some smaller towns there are no ATMs that take foreign cards, so be sure you get enough cash to carry you until the next major city. BCM seems to be the best bank, accepting foreign cards in most of their ATMs.

While in Morocco you will need sufficient funds to cover meals not included in the itinerary, drinks, snacks, souvenirs, tips and personal expenses such as laundry. These should generally all be paid for in Moroccan Dirham. It is difficult to recommend a level of personal spending money which will suit everyone as this can differ greatly, but as a guideline, we would suggest allowing USD 15-25 per person per day as a minimum. Allow more if you plan on doing lots of shopping, or buying many alcoholic drinks.

13. What to take

Luggage: Small or medium sized suitcases, rucksacks or fabric holdalls are all fine to bring with you to Morocco.

You should also bring a small daypack/bag to take out during the day. Your main luggage will often be left in the hotel during your sightseeing trips - you will not need to carry it far, and there are nearly always hotel porters to assist.

Luggage limits: There is no luggage limit for this tour. However, most airlines restrict you to between 20kg and 25kg for your hold luggage and between 5kg and 10kg for hand luggage. Please check with your airline before travelling to the airport.

Clothing: The Moroccan climate varies according to season and region. The coast has a warm, Mediterranean climate tempered on the eastern coast by southwest trade winds. Inland areas have a hotter, drier, continental climate. In the south of the country, the weather is very hot and dry throughout most of the year, though temperatures can drop dramatically at night, especially in desert and mountains and in the months of December and January. Rain falls from November to March in coastal areas, and the rest of the country is mostly dry with high temperatures in summer and a cooler climate in the mountains. Marrakech and Agadir enjoy an average temperature of 21°C (70°F) in the winter. So, depending the time of year you are visiting you should pack for both hot and cooler conditions. Modesty rates highly in Morocco, especially for women, so to respect the local culture & people, please ensure all clothes are loose fitting and not revealing. Shorts (not hot-pants) are OK in tourist sites, as are T-shirts, but these should not show too much bare flesh (we suggest that your shoulders should remain covered). In the centre of towns and cities outside tourist areas, and when visiting any mosques, legs and arms should be covered.

Other items: If your tour includes a Berber desert camp then all bedding is provided. However, as sand has a nasty habit of getting everywhere, for comfort, we recommend bringing a light sleeping sheet or sleeping bag liner all year round, and a light sleeping bag in the winter months (November to February) when it can get very cold in the desert. We also recommend you bring a sun hat, sunscreen, sunglasses, a basic first aid kit, toiletries, money belt, small torch, camera & charger.

14. Dates & Prices

We run regular small-group departures on this tour starting on Saturdays throughout the year. All departures are guaranteed to run if a minimum of 2 travellers is reached. If we do not reach this minimum number (which happens very rarely), or other local reasons mean we cannot run the tour, then we will offer you the option to either pay a small supplement to do the tour exactly as planned but privately, to change your date, to transfer to another tour, or we will provide you with a full refund. Departure dates and prices are listed on our website and in our brochure. Please check the website for the most up-to-date prices and any special offers.

15. Booking & Payment

If you would like to book a place on this tour, please complete the online reservation form on our website (via the Dates & Prices tab on the tour page). You may make a deposit or full payment online, or just hold a reservation if you prefer (full payments are due 8 weeks before departure). We will then contact you with more details about how to complete your booking. Payments may be made by debit or credit card (subject to a card processing fee), or by making a bank transfer, or posting us a cheque/bank draft. Full details will be provided in your booking confirmation email. Please [contact us](#) if you would like any more information or have any questions before making a booking.

16. Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is compulsory on all of our tours and needs to cover personal accident & liability, medical expenses and repatriation, travel delay & abandonment. We also strongly recommend that you take out cover against cancellation and lost/stolen baggage. Personal medical insurance does not normally provide sufficient cover and is generally not suitable for travel on our tours. You will not be able to join your tour if you have not provided us with details of your insurance or if you arrive without cover in place (no refunds will be due in this event). [More information...](#)

You may arrange your own insurance, or you can take advantage of a comprehensive policy that we can arrange for you through Endsleigh Insurance which has been designed to be suitable for our tours. The policy is available to travellers of all nationalities and you do not need to live in the UK to take out the policy. For full details of cover provided, prices and to apply for one of our policies, please complete [travel insurance application form](#).

Note: Any country that borders the Mediterranean is considered as 'Europe' for the purposes of travel insurance (including Turkey, Israel, Egypt and Morocco). If you are doing a tour that visits one country in 'Europe' and one that is 'Worldwide' (for example, an Egypt and Jordan tour), then you need a 'Worldwide' policy. When completing the form you should enter your travel dates including any extra days involved in overnight flights or connecting travel between your home and the tour. Our policies are not able to cover any extra time or activities other than your tour and options booked with us and your travel to & from home.

Note - to comply with insurance sales regulations, our travel insurance policies are only available to customers booking directly with us. If you have booked through a travel agent you will need to arrange your own insurance.

If your tour includes car hire, or if you plan to arrange a hot air balloon flight locally or do some scuba diving during your tour, you should check the small print in your policy to make sure these are covered (these are covered in our policy). Please also check the maximum altitude that you will be reaching and that full cover including emergency evacuation is provided up to this altitude.

If you are taking expensive camera gear or other electronic equipment with you then please check the coverage and the fine print of your policy to ensure that you have sufficient cover.

IMPORTANT: We must have your travel insurance details (policy number and type of insurance) before you depart or you may not be allowed to join the tour. If you haven't told us already, please let us know the details when you can. You should take a paper copy of your insurance policy with you as you may be asked to show this at the start of the tour.

Covid-19

Before purchasing any travel insurance, please check the coverage provided for situations related to Covid-19, and for the rules about government travel advice. Your normal policy may not be suitable. Details about our own policies cover levels are given [on our website](#).

17. Financial Security

We are a UK registered company and are committed to providing our customers with financial protection to provide peace of mind and to allow you to book with confidence.

We have therefore partnered with Trust My Travel Ltd., which provides financial protection services to over 2000 partners around the world. Funds paid to us by our customers are protected via an Insurance policy held by Trust My Travel. Each traveller and the description of services sold is declared against Trust My Travel's insurance policy directly against our financial failure. In the event of our insolvency, you will be refunded for any unfulfilled products and/or repatriation to the UK (where applicable). Please see [our website](#) or [booking conditions](#) for more information.

18. Responsible Tourism

It is impossible not to have an impact on the local environment, cultures and eco-systems when you travel. However,

it is very possible to try and ensure that these impacts are as limited, or positive as possible. We are committed to ensuring that we try to leave our host countries in a better state than we found them and encourage and assist our travellers to help us with this.

The following are a few simple tips that require very little effort on your part but which will help ensure that any effect you have on the locations you visit is positive rather than negative.

- Don't prejudge: Things in different countries will almost certainly be different. That doesn't make them worse or inferior, just different.
- Communicate: Don't expect locals to speak your language. Take the trouble to learn a few words or phrases of the local language. Don't worry about sounding silly. Most locals are patient and accommodating and appreciate you making the effort to communicate in their language.
- Conserve energy: Be careful not to waste valuable resources. Use local resources sparingly. Switch off lights, air-conditioning and fans when you leave the hotel room and don't waste water. Remove superfluous packaging. Many countries have far less efficient waste disposal systems than ours. Remove packaging from newly acquired items before leaving home.
- Don't litter: No matter how untidy or dirty the country you're travelling in may look to you, avoid littering, as there is no need to add to the environment's stress. Many of the countries we visit have a tough challenge dealing with rubbish and waste. Please consider taking home as much plastic waste as you can (e.g. water bottles).
- Choose environmentally friendly products: By using environmentally friendly (bio degradable) sun creams, shampoos and detergents you can help reduce pollution.
- Respect local customs and traditions: As you are a guest in these countries, you should also comply with the local customs. If you are friendly and well mannered, the locals will reciprocate and it will only enhance your experience. It's important to follow dress and behaviour guidelines especially when visiting religious or sacred sites (your tour leader will advise you how best to do this).
- If a client commits an illegal act the client may be excluded from the tour and Encounters Travel shall cease to have responsibility to/for them. No refund will be given for any unused services.

All porters are employed and equipped following guidelines set by the International Porter Protection Group (IPPG).

19. Follow Us Online

You can stay in touch with us online by following us on Facebook and Twitter. We post updates on relevant travel news in our destination countries, special offers and discounts and other interesting travel related news and information.

www.facebook.com/encounterstravel

www.twitter.com/encounterstravl (yes, without the 'e')

20. Before you travel

It is important when considering and preparing to travel anywhere in the world that you have a good understanding of the country you are visiting, its laws and customs, and the possible risks and situations that may occur. This includes specific risks related to your itinerary (eg. does it involve water & can you swim, are you fit enough for the activities included), as well as more general risks such as terrorism and natural disasters.

General details and links to more information about health risks, visa requirements, money, and travel insurance are given in these tour notes. We recommend that you re-read all these before your departure as well as the small print of your travel insurance policy so you know exactly what is covered and what is not.

You should take copies of your important travel documents with you and ideally also store them online securely as a backup. Make sure that you have given us your emergency contact details and told that person where and when you are travelling. Ensure you take enough money with you and that you have access to emergency funds.

Finally, you should read through and stay updated with the current [official government travel advice](#) for your destination. We are registered partners with the UK Foreign Office's '[Travel Aware](#)' campaign which provides further useful and invaluable information.

21. Reduce Plastic Waste with Water-to-Go Filter bottles

Traveling responsibly means minimizing plastic waste, but staying hydrated on the go is essential. At Encounters Travel we are committed to reducing single-use plastics, which is why we've partnered with Water-to-Go. Their portable filtration system removes over 99.9% of contaminants from any non-saltwater source, turning even questionable water sources into safe drinking water.

Given that tap water is un-safe to drink in many of the countries in which we operate, we recommend purchasing a Water-to-Go bottle prior to departure. This will help you avoid the use of single use plastic bottles and keep you hydrated on the go.

Save big! Get a huge 25% off your Water-to-Go bottle and other Water-to-Go products (such as filters, lids, and carriers). Use code **ENCOUNTERS25** at checkout (valid in the UK, USA and Canada).

How Water-to-Go Technology works:

- Their reusable, BPA free water bottles contain their own unique 3-in-1 filtration technology effectively providing clean safe drinking water from any non-salt water source around the world.
- Three different (1 traditional and 2 nano) technologies are combined in one filter cartridge to remove up to 99.9999% of microbiological contaminants in water.

The three technologies used in a Water-to-Go filter are:

- Mechanical filtration – A tiny pore size, so small contaminants can't fit through.
- Electrical – A positive charge reduces the pore size even further and attracts contaminants like a magnet, trapping them inside the filter.
- Activated Carbon – Unlike most carbon based filters, instead of using adhesives to glue the carbon particles together, (which vastly reduces the carbon's efficiency) it is contained within the membrane, helping to reduce contaminants whilst eliminating bad tastes and odours. Try filtering water from your tap at home and taste the difference!

Water-to-Go filter bottles deliver safe, healthy water worldwide

- Water-to-Go filters remove bacteria, viruses, waterborne disease, protozoa, heavy metals such as lead as well as harmful chemicals.
- Their filters remove Chlorine and Fluoride from tap water.
- The filter will eliminate harmful contaminants from the water but allow beneficial minerals such as sodium and magnesium to pass through leaving you with the healthiest water possible.
- Water-to-Go filters have been independently tested against internationally recognised standards by industry specialists including The London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (UK), BCS Laboratories (USA), Bangalore Test House (India) and IMI (China).

Use Water-to-Go products and you'll be healthier, wealthier and helping to make the world a better place!

- Depending on filter size, each Water-to-Go filter is able to replace 260 or 400 single-use plastic water bottles!
- They ensure you have access to safe water anywhere in the world without ever having to buy environmentally damaging bottled water.
- Their water bottles deliver safe, clean drinking water at just 5p per litre.
- The filter membrane is biodegradable and the shrouds are recyclable.
- The water bottles are used and approved by everyone from backpackers to commuters, gym users to expecting mums. Perfect for everyday, outdoor and travel.

Printed on: Saturday 18th of May 2024

Note: Please [download an up-to-date copy](#) of these tour notes shortly before you travel as itineraries and information does change from time to time.
