

## Authentic desert 4x4.

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**MOROCCO | 8DAYS / 7NIGHTS**

Route: From and to Marrakech (Possibility from/to Casablanca or Agadir)

Type of tour: Adventure

Departure days: Thursday

## TOUR OVERVIEW

This trip takes you to discover the great Moroccan south and the Sahara Desert. Venture out on a total immersion in the nomadic desert culture of southern Morocco. Cross the Draa Valley over the former Paris-Dakar Road, one of the most scenic roads in Morocco, lined with palm groves, picturesque kasbahs, pisé houses, and a thousand shades of red. Cross moonlike desert landscapes and embrace the impressive dunes of the seemingly endless Sahara. Beginning and ending the tour in Marrakech, this is a 4x4 trip of a lifetime, which features sustainable, eco-friendly accommodation, participates with local social projects and supports local environmental protection plans. The tour is run on a full-board basis for your comfort.

## TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

**DURATION: 8 days / 7 nights**



**Start & finish destination**  
Marrakech

**Destinations**

|                   |               |
|-------------------|---------------|
| 2. Boumalne Dades | 4. Chegaga    |
| 3. Zagora         | 5. Foug Zguid |

**Ouarzazate:** Visit the fortified village of Kelaat M'Gouna, famous for its yearly rose festival

**Boulmane Dades:** This town is a stone's throw away from the 'Rose Valley', where the cultivation of roses is the locals' main economic activity, creating wondrous rose water, essential oils and beauty products

**Zagora:** This desert outpost is the point where the ancient Saadi dynasty set off to conquer Timbuktu

**Chegaga Dunes:** These impressive dunes can reach up to 60 metres in height, and the dunes' remoteness brings only the most adventurous travellers

**Marrakech:** Admire the famous Koutoubia Mosque, the beautiful Bahia Palace, the Saadian Tombs and Agdal Garden, and wander through the bustling Jemaa el-Fnaa market

## DON'T MISS!

**A mean tagine:** Morocco's most popular dish is a delicious stew made with fish, chicken or lamb and vegetables served with couscous

**Tea time:** Savour a deliciously delicate cup of aromatic mint tea with local roses, which is believed to serve as a remedy for many issues

**Ouallywood:** Scenes in Arabia, Egypt, the Holy Land, Tibet and even Yunkai from Game of Thrones have all been filmed at Atlas Studios in Ouarzazate

## DAY BY DAY

### DAY 1 | ARRIVAL MARRAKECH

Check in to the hotel on arrival in Marrakech followed by dinner and lodging. If your incoming flight arrives to Agadir or Casablanca, upon arrival to the airport, take a three-hour transfer (not included) to Marrakech where you spend the first night. Airport transfer optional.

▪ **Overnight in hotel in Marrakech. Dinner included.**

## DAY 2 | MARRAKECH

Enjoy breakfast at the hotel before embarking on a visit of the top monuments charting the history of Marrakech. Admire the magnificent **Koutoubia mosque**, whose 70 meter-high minaret is the city's most famous landmark. It dates from the late 12th century, when most of northern Africa and the southern Iberian Peninsula were part of the Almohad Empire. Behold the beautiful **Bahia Palace** with its exceptional cedar and marble decorations and discover the beautifully decorated **Saadian Tombs**. After lunch at the hotel, continue to the walled **Medina** and its maze of alleys and side streets. Browse the souks and admire the rich craftsmanship of their wares before arriving at **Jemaa el-Fnaa square**, the beating heart of Marrakech. Marvel at this bustling hive of activity as the sun sets over this vast space packed with stalls and heaving with snake charmers, Gnawa musicians and a myriad of colourful characters. While at the souk, enjoy a visit to an association of handicapped women for human development, where the aim is to help women become more self-sufficient by learning crafts such as embroidery, knitting, weaving, etc. For dinner, enjoy a fantastic Moroccan dinner show in the Medina.

▪ **Overnight in hotel in Marrakech on a half-board basis. Dinner included.**

## DAY 3 | MARRAKECH – OUARZAZATE – BOUMALNE DADES (320km – 5.5 hrs)

Breakfast at the hotel is followed by departure from Marrakech by 4x4 vehicle southward through the Tizi N' Tichka mountain pass, the highest major mountain pass of North Africa. Pass through the winding roads and admire the rolling landscape surrounds. Continue towards **Ait Ben Haddou**, one of the famous *ksars* (castles) of the south, classified as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO and a preferred filming site for many famous TV shows and films. Lunch in Ouarzazate is followed by a visit of the **Glaoui kasbah**. In the afternoon, continue to **Boumalne Dades**, located at the edge of a desert plateau, ending in **El Kelaa M'Gouna** in the fragrant Rose Valley, known for cultivating roses for cosmetic purposes and other delicacies such as saffron, noted for its annual *moussem*, the rose festival.

▪ **Overnight in hotel in Boumalne Dades on a half-board basis. Lunch included.**

## DAY 4 | BOUMALNE DADES – TINEGHIR – NKOBI – DRAA VALLEY – ZAGORA (325km – 4.5 hrs)

Depart after breakfast to Tineghir with a small stop to admire the breathtaking **Todra Gorge**. After, take to the road towards Tazzarine, with a stop at Nkob, the first village of the **Draa Valley**. Lunch at Kasbah Baha Baha with visit of the on-site Berber museum, and marvel at the vast panoramic views of the 'village of the 45 Kasbahs'. Continue by road to the oasis town of **Zagora** where we visit the city, then stop at the iconic *Tombouctou, 52 jours* sign, which translates to '52 days to Timbuktu'.

▪ **Overnight in hotel in Zagora on a half-board basis. Lunch included.**



## DAY 5 | ZAGORA – TAMEGROUTE – M'HAMID – CHEGAGA DUNES (105km – 1.5 hrs)

After breakfast, depart to M'hamid, **the gateway to the Sahara**, passing through Tamegroute to visit a potter's workshop and its old Koranic library (depending on availability). We then continue to M'hamid where we find the first dunes of the desert. Lunch and activities available, time-permitting. In the afternoon, **pass over sand dunes, hamadas and oases** via the Oued Laatache ('river of thirst'). Make a photo stop at the sacred oasis before arriving at the magnificent Chegaga camp, surrounded by the great rolling dunes, and have fun on an **Arabian camel ride through the desert**. Then arrive at the bivouac, our campsite for the night, to climb the highest dune to watch the sunset over the infinite dunes.

▪ **Overnight in desert camp in Chegaga on a half-board basis. Lunch included.**

## DAY 6 | CHEGAGA DUNES – IRIKI LAKE – FOUM ZGUID (90km – 3 hrs)

After a breakfast in the desert camp, the adventure continues towards the desert town of Foug Zguid by the route between Erg Chegaga and the dry bed of Draa, passing by Iriki Lake for a break via the old Paris-Dakar route. Have lunch in Foug Zguid by the pool or in tents. **Foug Zguid** is located in a palm grove grouping several ksars (castles). The modern military districts adjoin the old village. Visit some of the active associations and co-ops of the village of Foug Zguid,

whose goal is to promote locally made products such as henna, dates, ecologically grown couscous and rugs, to name a few. Return to the hotel an optional hammam and massage.

▪ **Overnight in hotel in Fom Zguid on a half-board basis. Lunch included.**

## DAY 7 | FOUM ZGUID – TAZENAKHT – TALIOUINE – MARRAKECH (425km – 7.5 hrs)

After breakfast, continue via Tazenakht and Taliouine, a village located at 930m altitude. The region is best known for the cultivation of saffron, the world's most expensive spice by weight. Visit a **saffron co-operative** and taste a local specialty of mint tea with saffron, nicknamed 'red gold' and the area's most famous product. Continue via Tizi-n-Test pass to Marrakech and check in to your hotel upon arrival.

▪ **Overnight in hotel in Marrakech on a half-board basis. Lunch included.**

## DAY 8 | DEPARTURE MARRAKECH

Check out after breakfast at the hotel or opt for a longer stay by selecting one of our extensions, such as an extended stay in Marrakech or a beach extension in the lovely seaside town of Agadir. Optional transfers for passengers departing from Agadir or Casablanca airports, and to Marrakech airport.

▪ **Breakfast included.**

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### END OF SERVICES

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## INCLUDED

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### TOUR GUIDE:

- Operated with English and French-speaking guide during the 4x4 tour

### ACCOMMODATION:

- Seven nights including hotels and tents with different category options, 3\*/ 4\*, on a half-board basis

### MEALS:

- Full-board basis: 7 breakfasts, 6 lunches, 7 dinners

### TRANSPORT:

- Transfers during the tour in a 4x4 air-conditioned vehicle, maximum 5 pax per vehicle + 1 guide / 6 pax per vehicle

### ENTRANCE FEES AND ACTIVITIES:

- Admission to all museums and monuments mentioned in the itinerary

## NOT INCLUDED

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- Visas and international flights, and airport taxes (clients pay direct)
- Driver-guide gratuities
- Personal travel, baggage and medical insurance
- Telephone bill, laundry and any items of a personal nature such as drinks and meals not stated in the programme
- Transfers from airport to hotel and vice versa

## OPTIONAL EXTRAS

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A wide range of optional excursions and pre and post-programme extensions are available on request. Please ask tour designer Fatima Lahricha for rates and conditions.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

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Visitors should not wear sleeveless shirts, shorts, short skirts or skimpy clothing when visiting religious or official buildings in Morocco. Sun protection, sunglasses, a hat and mosquito repellent can be very useful during your stay.