



Custom Morocco Tours and Treks

Dear Traveler,

Thanks for visiting us at Journey Beyond Travel. We've put together this brochure so that you can have some of the highlights of our website in an easy-to-read and colorful magazine. Inside, you'll be able to meet some of our team members, flip through our itineraries, and learn a little bit more about Morocco. Our team is made up of American and local Moroccan staff who have been working on the ground for more than ten years to become one of Morocco's most respected travel companies. Many attempt to mimic what we do (and new companies seem to be popping up daily), but our background, local connections, and combined knowledge is unsurpassed. Our team has grown to nearly twenty persons strong, both in our Moroccan office and in various places around the country, to ensure you are in the best care no matter where you choose to visit.

Over the last few years, many of the trips we do are word-of-mouth excursions thanks to past travelers recommending us to their friends and families. This has truly inspired us since it means we are doing things right, with innovation, with flexibility, and always with the goals of continually bettering what we do.

We look forward to helping you arrange your trip. Contact our team and prepare to go beyond the destination!

*Thomas Hollowell
Founder
Journey Beyond Travel*



Journey Beyond Travel - Morocco Travel Specialists

Office: Avenue Lalla Amina, Residence Afifa Apt. 1 Hay Riad, Ifrane 53000, Morocco

1 855 687 6676 (US Toll Free) | 1 765 387 4404 (US & Worldwide)

+44 (0) 20 8123 8708 (UK) | +212 610 41 45 73 (Morocco)

www.journeybeyondtravel.com

Go beyond the destination with Journey Beyond Travel ...

...on one of our top-notch Morocco tours. Unlike most other companies, we are located in-country. Our on-the-ground team is made of up Americans and Moroccans who will help you put together a Moroccan adventure unlike any other.

Our knowledge of the country is unmatched; members of our team are former Peace Corps Volunteers, staff, and guidebook authors.

Tours Designed Around You

Our Morocco itineraries focus on culture, history, cities, the desert, and hidden getaways. No other company researches, designs, and continually improves their routes like Journey Beyond Travel. All of our itineraries are unique and full of genuine experiences. Each itinerary is flexible and fine-tuned with you step-by-step. Once you contact us about your tour to Morocco, we dedicate time to developing a unique itinerary to fit your needs. Initially, we'll connect with you to offer some of our thoughts and may be able to send you a full itinerary right away. Your personalized route will include activity choices, hand-picked riads (local guesthouses), and pricing options. We'll work with you to perfect the trip.

The Best Drivers & Guides

Forget the stories of drivers and guides taking you to unwanted stops and shops. Our drivers have been with us since the beginning, earn top salaries, and truly care about your experience. Your driver is your tour leader, host, and local connection. It's this local care that really makes our tours stand above any other offerings that you'll find.

Memorable, Genuine Experiences

Our trips to Morocco are full of local cultural experiences with opportunities to enjoy meals at family's homes, walk in villages, and see how Moroccans live, work, and share their livelihoods. These are just some of the highlights that you'll enjoy on your tour. Smiles, stories, and meaningful connections are the rewards. We look forward to providing you with a unique and special tour unlike any other.

Flexibility & Sustainability

Each trip we design gives you the freedom to discover and explore a side of the country left unseen. All our our Morocco tours are planned and fine-tuned with your aspirations in mind. Additionally, we work to ensure each tour meets sustainable and responsible travel standards. We are proud to support various environmental and educational initiatives as we help to make Morocco the best country it can be.

JOURNEY BEYOND TRAVEL

Our team wants to take you to all the special places we've come to know and love in Morocco. Our aim is to always meet the needs of travelers through careful planning and flexibility. We live up to our vision of responsible tourism that gives back to the local people and environment.

Let us take you "...beyond the destination!"



ECLECTIC MOROCCO - 7-12 days

IMPERIAL CITIES - 8-12 days

ULTIMATE MOROCCO - 12-18 days

GOLDEN SAHARA - 5-10 days

WILD SAHARA - 8-14 days

EASY EXPLORER- 5-10 days



This route is customizable. It is best done in 7-12 days and is available in reverse. Our Morocco Eclectic Itinerary takes you on a circuit to see the highlights of Morocco so you can experience the best the country has to offer. This route can be adjusted from seven to twelve or more days to fit your schedule. Our Eclectic Itinerary is one the most popular Morocco trips currently available. This route can be done in the opposite direction, which is a good idea if you are starting and ending your trip in Marrakesh.

Day 1 - ARRIVE CASABLANCA | RABAT

• Airport Transfer (2hrs)

Depending on your time of arrival, after our driver has dropped you off at your hotel you might like to see some of the sights of Casablanca, in particular the Hassan II Mosque with the tallest minaret in the world. Our Insider's Guide to Casablanca tells you all you need to know. For those who do not arrive early enough, you may spend the night in Casablanca and go to Rabat tomorrow.



Day 2 - MEKNES | VOLUBILIS | FEZ

• Transport (4hrs), Breakfast, Dinner

Today, you travel onward to Meknes, one of Morocco's lesser-visited Imperial Cities. Built on the backs of tens of thousands of slaves by the tyrannical Moulay Ismail, it was conceived to be the 'Versailles of Morocco'. Overlooked as it may be by many travellers, should you decide to take an optional guided tour you will find charms that make your visit worthwhile; Heri es Souani, where Moulay Ismail stabled his 12,000 horses; his tranquil tomb, which he had built during his reign to ensure it would equal the glory of his imperial city; and the Bab Mansour, said to be one of Morocco's most fabulous gates. Your next stop, Volubilis, is the most impressive Roman ruins in Morocco, and one of the former Empire's most remote outposts, as the tough legionnaires were held back from further expansion by the Berber Tribes. Once a thriving provincial city, it takes only a little imagination to see toga-clad senators and scurrying plebeians filling its streets. You will spend tonight in Fez, the historic centre of arts and sciences in Morocco.

Day 3 - FEZ GUIDED VISIT

• Guided Visit, Breakfast, Lunch

More than just a hat with a twirly tassel, Fez is a jewel box of exotic delights. To unravel the intricacies of the nine thousand streets and alleyways of the UNESCO-protected Fez Medina would take a lifetime, but your Fez born-and-bred guide will reveal the city's most special parts, including the Fondouk Nejjarine, the tanneries and the various craft souks. Do you know why the bakery is also a de facto marriage bureau? Probably not, but your guide will explain why, and tell many other tales of this fascinating city. The tour lasts from 9:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. with lunch included. You can prepare more for



your visit by reading our Fez travel guide. Some other sites of interest in Fez are the King's Palace and Mellah/Jewish Quarter, the Pottery Complex, and the Batha Museum.

Day 4 - IFRANE | AZROU | MIDELETT | ERFOUD

• Transport (7hrs), Optional Walk, Breakfast, Dinner

A long drive today, but one that shows the visual wealth of Morocco. You'll depart around 9am and head for Ifrane, the 'Switzerland of Morocco,' developed during the French Protectorate as an administrative centre and escape from the searing summer heat, before continuing onward through Midelt and on to Erfoud for the night. You also have the option of spending the night in Midelt, which helps shorten today's driving time. This also opens up the possibility of a walk within the cedar forests of the Azrou and Ifrane areas (available May through October). Choosing Midelt is a good option in the warmer months, while Erfoud is a better option in the winter months (November through May).

Day 5 - ZIZ VALLEY | SAHARA DESERT (ERG CHEBBI)

• Transport (3hrs), Light Walk, Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Before heading to the Sahara Desert today, you'll have the opportunity to visit the Ziz Valley, the largest producer of dates in Morocco. Look closely and you will see that not all the palm trees are tall, as the height depends on the variety, of which there are 283 recognized types grown in the country - the most delicious (and expensive) of which are Mejhoul. One of the highlights of your trip is lunch with the family of Journey Beyond Travel's local coordinator, Tata. His home is a traditional kasbah shared by his extended family, with a charming garden where they cultivate much of the produce used in their kitchens. Children coming along on this journey will be delighted to see the family's donkey, goats and chickens. Either before or after your meal you can a short walk through the date palms and farms that surround this small village. This afternoon, you'll head south towards Merzouga and the gateway into the golden dunes of the Sahara Desert. You'll have the chance to pack an overnight bag before choosing your 'ship of the desert' who will take you into the



sandy seas. After your hourlong camel ride, you'll have the chance watch the sun set over the Saharan dunes. Your home for the night will be a Bedouin-style tent in our private tented area, complete with beds, blankets and sheets, as well as rich Moroccan carpets covering the sand and a shared western-style bathroom facility. You can also choose to spend the night in deluxe tents (each tent having its own hot-water shower, sink, and western toilet). Nothing will beat this night under the desert stars.

Day 6 - TINJEDAD | DADES VALLEY | SKOURA

• **Transport (5hrs), Optional Walk, Breakfast, Dinner**

This morning, you'll be able to rise with the sun as it begins its glorious passage for another day. Make sure you grab some photos before climbing back onto your newfound camel friend for the short ride back to the hotel. Feeling invigorated by a hot show and hardy breakfast, you'll take the road to Rissani, where, if time allows, you can marvel at the multi-million-year-old fossils that the area is famous for. Then it's onward to Tinjedad for lunch to an extraordinary ksar (a completely walled-in village). En route to Skoura, you can choose to explore the Dades Valley on a one to three-hour guided walk in the palm oasis, which gives you hidden views of the amazing rock formations. You'll spend tonight in the Skoura palm grove, known as the Valley of Kasbahs.



Day 7 - OUARZAZATE | AIT BEN HADDOU | TELOUET | MARRAKESH

• **Transport (5-6hrs), Breakfast, Dinner**

After leaving Skoura, you'll travel to Ouarzazate, home to the Taorirt Kasbah, one of the strongholds of the Glaoui family who once ruled the south of Morocco. You'll then make your way to Ait Ben Haddou, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the best preserved Kasbah's in the entire Atlas region. Don't be surprised if you feel as if you are stepping into another, more ancient world, as the Kasbah has been the backdrop to many historical films, including Lawrence of Arabia, The Last Temptation of Christ, and Gladiator. You will also have the opportunity to visit Telouet, a lesser-visited Kasbah and the once rich and powerful throne of the Glooui family whose vast wealth came, in part, from the levies charged to the camel trains that passed through their territory. This will add one hour to today's travel time. We also offer a lunch experience with a local (and once famed artist) performing for you following your meal. They say that there are 340 bends on the Tizi n Tichka pass, but in reality there are only two, left and right, although they are repeated an awful lot of times. This amazing zigzag feat of French engineering that climbs to 2,260m (7,400ft), replaced the ancient route of the camel trains on their arduous journey from Timbuktu to Marrakech, bearing gold, spices and slaves. Your journey takes you over the Tiz n'Tichka pass in the High Atlas Mountains, to end in Marrakesh.

Day 8 - MARRAKESH GUIDED VISIT

• **Private Guided Visit, Breakfast, Lunch**

Your adventure continues today with a private guided tour to discover the secrets of the Marrakech Medina. Meandering the arms-



width streets of the souk with your guide, the centuries roll back as he regales you with the history of the city's glorious monuments (and their not always glorious past), telling you tales of a culture whose daily rhythm has changed little over the centuries. You can read more in our travel guide to Marrakesh that will help you get a feel of what this ancient city has in to reveal.

Day 9 - MARRAKESH TO CASABLANCA

• **Transport (3hrs)**

Depending upon your flight time tomorrow, you can stay in Marrakesh or travel to Casablanca this afternoon in preparation for your departure.

Day 10 - DEPART CASABLANCA

• **Airport Transfer (1hr)**

We say goodbye today and we hope you enjoyed your journey with our team!

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Meknes and/or Volubilis guided visit
- Fez activities (cooking, calligraphy, pottery, or mosaic workshops, artisan tour available)
- Azrou cedar forest walk & local lunch
- Dades Valley walk & lunch
- Atlas Mountains extension (one or more days walking, Berber village visits, local lunches available)
- Essaouira extension (wine tasting, cooking workshop, horseback riding available)



This route is customizable. It is best done in 8-12 days and is available in reverse. This itinerary focuses on Morocco's great imperial cities, Rabat, Meknes, Fez, and Marrakeh. This is one of our top Morocco tours as it gives you time to visit cultural and historical sites, explore the souks, stay in quaint riads, and taste fine Moroccan cuisine. This trip can be shortened or lengthened to accommodate your dates and can begin in any city. If you'd like to enjoy the best of Imperial Cities while still visiting the Sahara Desert, check out our renowned Eclectic Morocco Itinerary.

Day 1 - ARRIVE CASABLANCA

• Airport Transfer (1hr)

Depending on your time of arrival, you might like to see some of the sights of Casablanca, in particular the Hassan II Mosque with the tallest minaret in the world. Our Insider's Guide to Casablanca tells you all you need to know.



Day 2 - MEKNES | VOLUBILIS | FEZ

• Transport (4hrs), Breakfast, Lunch

Today, you'll head to the lesser-visited Imperial City of Meknes. Once you meet your local expert and guide, you'll be able to visit the famed gate of Bab El Mansour, Dar Jamaï Palace, the Royal Stables, and the tomb of Moulay Ismail. Just thirty minutes away is the Roman ruins of Volubilis, a fascinating former Roman stronghold with colonnaded streets, various ancient homes, buildings, and olive presses, as well as well-preserved (yet not well protected) mosaics. Not far off is the sacred town of Moulay Idriss, which appears as a sitting camel, when seen from the ruins of Volubilis. It's a good place to grab a bite to eat before you head to Fez. This evening, a fine Moroccan meal will be served in your riad.

Day 3 - FEZ GUIDED VISIT

• Private Guided Visit, Lunch

The maze of arms-width alleyways and donkey-width roads of the UNESCO protected Fez medina – said to be around nine thousand of them, (although no-one says who counted them) – are confusing even to those who have spent years living in this delightful city. Your Fez born-and-bred guide will unfold the hidden stories and tucked away corners, the minutiae of daily life and the magnificence of its madersas and palaces. You see the fabulous Fez as only a true local can know. (You can plan ahead with the help of our Insider's Guide to Fez). The tour lasts from 9:30am until 5:30pm, with lunch included.

Day 4 - RABAT

• Transport (3hrs), Breakfast, Dinner

Morocco's capital, Rabat, is the most relaxing of the Imperial cities to visit. You will be spending the night in a delightful riad, a traditional Moroccan home within the Rabat medina, which will give you an opportunity to experience the peaceful streets of this ancient



centre before the hustle and bustle of the more hectic medinas of Fez and Marrakech. You can spend your day exploring the city; the monumental unfinished Hassan Tower, with the pillared stumps of its mosque being all that remains from the devastating earthquake that killed an estimated ten thousand people in North Africa in 1755. There is also the near-by Mausoleum Mohammed V, watched over by red-robed Royal Guards; smell the flowers in the Andalusian Garden of the Kasbah Oudayas, a walled 'village within a city'; and discover the Chellah Gardens and Necropolis, where hundreds of storks send their strange clacking call through the air.

Day 5 - MARRAKESH

• Private Transport (4hrs), Breakfast, Dinner

You depart from Rabat this morning and travel to the most well-known Imperial City - Marrakesh. En route, you'll have plenty of opportunities to stop for breaks and will arrive into the 'Red City' in time to enjoy the main square, called Jmaa el Fna, before a scrumptious dinner is served in your lovely riad this evening. You can settle in and have a read through our Insider's Guide to Marrakesh to decide what you will most like to see and do tomorrow. You will have a night's rest before really exploring the souks tomorrow.

Day 6 - MARRAKESH GUIDED VISIT

• Private Guided Visit, Breakfast, Lunch

Marrakesh, with its vivacious souk where you will be dazzled by the displays of djellabas, soft brightly colored babouches, intricately pierced lanterns, conical mounds of exotic spices and the hubbub of life in the spider's web of alleys, is the focus of today's private guided city visit. Our energetic guide will regale you with the history and stories of the Medina, the Souk and the Mellah sections housed within the city's rose pink walls. Lunch is included on the tour today.



Day 7 - MARRAKESH TO EL JADIDA

• Transport (2hrs). Breakfast

Depending upon your flight time tomorrow, you can stay in Marrakesh or travel to El Jadida for a relaxing night before tomorrow's departure. Some travelers may wish to go to Casablanca instead of El Jadida if there are still some sights you wish to see. You might also opt to stay in Marrakesh tonight where the travel time to the Casablanca airport tomorrow is three hours (so an afternoon flight will work best). You might also find flights departing from Marrakesh (RAK) airport.

Day 8 - DEPART CASABLANCA

• Airport Transfer (1.5hrs)

You'll be departing Morocco today, so we hope you enjoyed your tour!

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Fez activities (cooking, calligraphy, pottery, or mosaic workshops, artisan tour available)
- Atlas Mountains extension (one or more days walking, Berber village visits, local lunches available)
- Essaouira extension (wine tasting, cooking workshop, horseback riding available)



This route is customizable. It is best done in 12-18 days and is available in reverse.

Our Ultimate Morocco Itinerary takes you from the north of the country through Chefchaouen, Fez, down through the Sahara Desert, stunning oases valleys, and gorges, then to Marrakesh, the mountains, and coast.

It's the ultimate trip by the ultimate tour company.

Day 1 - ARRIVE CASABLANCA (OR TANGIER)

• Airport Transfer (2hrs)

Welcome to Morocco! It's possible to start your trip in either Casablanca or Tangier. Upon arrival, you will be collected and taken to your hotel to unwind and relax. If you have time to spare, our Insider's Guides on our Morocco travel blog can help you discover the best of both cities.

Day 2 - CHEFCHAOUEN

• Private Transport (3-5hrs), Breakfast, Dinner

Your Moroccan adventure truly begins with a jump start today. You'll be picked up by your personal driver and will travel to Chefchaouen, or 'Chaouen' as it's known locally. This town is a visual delight in blue; walls, doors, windows; stairways, alleyways and archways – everything is a combination of soft pastel sky blue and deeper, more powerful hues. This afternoon you are free to explore at your own pace or simply relax. Outa el Hammam is the main square, and the place to watch the world go by. Walk up the tiny higgledy-piggledy alleys away from the more tourist orientated areas and you will find the every-day life of the town.



Day 3 - CHEFCHAOUEN

• Transport, Breakfast

Having had a good read of our Chefchaouen travel guide will help you in your preparation to fully discover more about the 'Blue Town' on this free day. Meander the mystical medina, which, despite the number of intriguing shops, is still mainly residential, and where for every shop selling tourist gifts there are twenty supplying the neighborhood with its daily requirements; shoe repairs, groceries, stationery and sweets, a tailor sewing an elegant djellaba, butchers, bakers (one of the centers of life in each quartier) although candle-stick makers don't seem to have survived – Moroccan life as lived by the people of Chaouen. And don't ignore the new town, which has some lovely examples of Andalusian architecture and a charming park at the end of Avenida Mohammed V. Your driver is at your disposal if you would like to make a short excursion into the Rif Mountains.

Day 4 - VOLUBILIS | MOULAY IDRIS | FEZ

• Private Transport (4 hrs), Breakfast, Dinner

You say goodbye to Chefchaouen and head south to Volubilis, the most important and extensive remains of a Roman city in Morocco, and one of the most distant of the Empire's domain, thanks to the



powerful Berber tribes who showed themselves to be more than a match for the conquering legionnaires. Once one of the most important regions producing grain to feed the voracious Roman appetite, and wild animals to keep the crowds entertained as they tried to devour gladiators in the arena, this prosperous provincial city was home to some 200,000 residents at the height of its glory. The importance of the city is reflected in the Capitoline temple, the Basilica, said to be one of the most beautiful in Africa in its day, and its 1,300 square meter Forum, with sumptuous mosaics still to be seen in some of the most luxurious homes. You move on to Moulay Idriss, which, from a distance, looks like a sitting camel. The oldest town in Morocco, it was founded by Moulay Idriss I in 789, having fled Mecca because of religious and tribal conflicts. It was here that the Idrisid dynasty was founded, and the town has the only round minaret in Morocco. You end today in one of Morocco's four imperial cities, Fez, where you can prepare for tomorrow's fascinating tour around this delightful medieval city.

Day 5 - FEZ GUIDED VISIT

• Private Guided Visit, Breakfast, Lunch

This is your opportunity to see the UNESCO protected Fez Medina through the eyes of a local, with your own private Fez born-and-bred guide. Your tour lasts from 9:30am until 5:30pm with a break for lunch (a real treat at a local family's home). Before you head out in the morning, you can discuss with your guide which sights you'd like to see most. If you have never been to Fez before, you might like to read our travel guide to Fez, which will not only give you a fascinating insight into this equally fascinating city, but will also help you decide which sites you would like to experience with the help of your guide. It really will be worth your while to put yourself in his hands and allow him to show you the mysteries and secrets of the nine thousand streets and alleyways that make up this amazing historic city – but don't worry, you won't be expected to walk all of them!

Day 6 - IFRANE | AZROU | MIDELT | ERFOUD

• Transport (7hrs), Optional walk, Breakfast, Dinner

You will leave Fez around 9am and head for Ifrane, before continuing onward through Midelt and on to Erfoud for the night. After a relaxing night in the hotel, you'll be fully rested for the next day's Sahara adventure. Travellers have the option of stopping in either Midelt (4hrs away) or Erfoud (7hrs). A walk can be arranged in the



cedar forests of the Azrou/ Ifrane area (April through October) for a chance to see local Barbary Macaque monkeys, wild boar, and a varied bird life, among other flora and fauna.



Day 7 - ZIZ VALLEY | SAHARA DESERT (ERG CHEBBI)

• **Transport (3hrs), Light walk, Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner**

Today you are going to experience two of the most memorable moments of your tour. The first is lunch with your guide and his family at a traditional Moroccan home in the Ziz valley. This is your chance to find out about Moroccan family life, but not by simply asking questions, more by just being there – and any children in your group will have a great time petting the family donkey and goats, and maybe even feeding the chickens. Before lunch you can enjoy a short walk through the date palms and farms of what is the biggest date-producing region in Morocco. And you will be surprised to see that not all date palms tower over you, because there are 283 recognized varieties of date grown in the country, the most delicious (and expensive) of which are known as Mejhoul. After lunch it's off to Merzouga, the Erg Chebbi region of the Sahara Desert. Prepare for a memorable night under the stars. A hour's camel ride weaving along the tops of the dunes brings you to your camp, with its Bedouin-style tents and thick Moroccan carpets to keep the sand from between your toes. A rich tajine is your dinner, eaten by candlelight. You can choose between standard and deluxe tent types; in either you'll probably choose to drift off to sleep while watching the twinkling stars.

Day 8 - SAHARAH DESERT

• **4x4 Exploration (2hrs), Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner**

Rise with the dawn to watch the sun beginning its daily arc with a cool blue morning sky as it illuminates the desert shadows before becoming a glowing ball of fire. The return ride by camel takes you to the hotel, where a welcome hot shower and breakfast awaits. Then it's onward to explore the desert regions starting with a visit to visit a nomadic family. You can then head to the village of Khemlia where an African brotherhood of Gnawa musicians will lull you into a desert trance with their spiritual rhythm. You'll enjoy lunch here before returning to the Kasbah hotel on the edge of the dunes to enjoy the pool, spa, and dinner as you watch the sun set over the golden dunes.



Day 9 - DADES VALLEY | SKOURA

• **Transport (6hrs), Optional walk, Breakfast, Dinner**

Today, you'll travel from the dunes to the stunning Dades Valley. Your first stop en route is Tinjedad where lunch is available. If time allows, you must visit Ksar El Khorbat, a roofed-over town whose dark streets are streaked with intermittent patches of sunlight, and which houses a delightfully worn-at-the-edges cultural museum. En route to Skoura, through the Valley of the Kasbahs, you can elect to visit either the Todra Gorge or Dades Valley. In the Dades Valley, we can offer a delightful walk for views overlooking the stunning rock formations that most travelers miss outright. Tonight, you'll be staying in the Skoura palm grove, known as the Valley of Kasbahs.

Day 10 - OUARZAZATE | AIT BEN HADDOU | TELOUET | MARRAKESH

• **Transport (5hrs), Breakfast, Dinner**

When you leave Skoura your road takes you in the direction of Ouarzazate, the Hollywood of Africa, where the Atlas Studios is reputed to be one of the largest movie studios in the world. Although many of our travelers opt not to visit, the Kasbah de Taorirt is worth a stop. It was once owned by the Glaoui family, one of the richest and most powerful in the area, whose vast wealth came in part from levies charged on the camel trains that passed through their territory carrying gold, spices and slaves from Timbuktu on their journey to the markets of Marrakech and beyond. Your most vivid memory from today will be of your visit to Ait Ben Haddou, a UNESCO world heritage site, which, as well as being the best extant example in the area of a walled town protected by Kasbahs, the homes of the wealthy and powerful, has been the backdrop to many Hollywood blockbusters and major historical television programs, including Gladiator and Lawrence of Arabia. If you are a fan of A Game of Thrones you will recognize Ait Ben Haddou from the final scene of series three. (The series has used a number of locations around Morocco.) From Ait Ben Haddou, you may wish to continue to the lesser-visited (and possibly more impressive) area of Telouet. Here, you can meander about the former palace of the Glaoui family and even enjoy lunch with a local (once celebrity) Berber singer chanting of days gone by. The last leg of today's journey is over the High Atlas Mountains on the impressive zig-zag of Tiz n Tichka pass, eventually to arrive in Marrakesh where you may have time to explore the famed Jmaa el Fna square before dinner is served in the riad.



Day 11 - MARRAKESH GUIDED VISIT

• **Private Guided Visit, Breakfast, Lunch**

This is your discovery day in the 'Red City,' aided by your private guide who will meet with you in the morning at your riad to discuss the day's possibilities. Leave the everyday behind as you dive into the souks, the markets that have provided Marrakschis with all their needs for over one thousand years. Vibrant colors, rich aromas, cat-calls and music, merchants in djellabas, street chefs in white hats, whatever your image of the exotic is you will find it in Marrakesh. A visit to the Museum of Photography or the Majorelle Gardens are also highly recommended. You can read more about our thoughts on

the Red City in our Marrakesh travel guide that will give you a good understanding of what there is to see and do. The tour lasts from 9:30am until 5:30pm and includes lunch.

Day 12 - MARRAKESH TO ESSAOUIRA

• Transport (3 hrs), Breakfast

From Marrakesh, you'll head to the most laid-back beach town in Morocco. And whatever you may have heard to the contrary, Jimi Hendrix didn't write Castles Made of Sand in Essaouira, because it was written two years before he visited in 1969. But a good story anyway, and one that the locals play on to the utmost. Essaouira has only recently been discovered by the tourist trade, and it's still life as lived by the locals. So follow their lead by taking a stroll along the ramparts. You can read all about what to see and do in this small ocean-side city in our travel guide to Essaouira, which will help you make the most of your time.



Day 13 - ESSAOUIRA

• Transport, Breakfast

You'll have the day free to explore Essaouira. The beach is a nice place for a stroll or run. It's also a great spot to enjoy a horseback ride at sunset. Some locals also offer camel rides on the beach. For the sports-oriented traveler, Essaouira is home to some fine wind and kitesurfing schools. Beyond the beach, you can spend hours in the medina - craftsmen, little shops, hidden vistas, and other gems are worth exploring. Tonight might be a great time to enjoy a local fish dish should the catch of the day be tempting.



Day 14 - ESSAOUIRA TO EL JADIDA

• Transport (5hrs), Breakfast

At your leisure, you can travel up the coast to the town of El Jadida for an overnight before tomorrow's departure. El Jadida is our new cove for Casablanca airport departures since it's quieter, more relaxing, offers a wonderful guesthouse stay with scrumptious dinner and is relatively the same distance to the airport as Casablanca.

Day 15 - DEPART CASABLANCA

• Airport Transfer (1.5hrs)

You'll say goodbye to Morocco today. Plan on needing 3 full hours at the airport today since customs can be slow. We truly hope you enjoyed your journey with our team!

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Chefchaouen (pottery workshop, guided walks available)
- Fez activities (cooking, calligraphy, pottery, mosaic workshops, artisan tour available)
- Azrou cedar forest walk & local lunch
- Dades Valley walk & lunch
- Atlas Mountains extension (one or more days walking, Berber village visits, local lunches available)
- Essaouira (wine tasting, cooking workshop, horseback riding available)



This route is customizable. It is best done in 5-10 days and can also start in Fez. This is one of our most popular Sahara Desert tours and takes you into the heart of the mesmerizing golden dunes. It can depart from Marrakesh or Fez and return to either city. (A similar excursion is our Erg Chigaga tour.) It is designed for couples, families, or small groups who want to experience first-hand what Morocco's desert has to offer. We stand apart from other companies since we have our own private camp area. Our camp is away from potential crowds and our facilities are of the highest-quality. Enjoy a truly memorable experience in Morocco's Sahara Desert.

Day 1 - ARRIVE MARRAKESH (OR CASABLANCA)

• Airport Transfer, Dinner

We'll pick you up at Marrakesh airport and deliver you to your riad, a delightful hotel in the historic medina. You have the day to unwind and relax, and a great place to begin exploring is Jmaa el Fna, the center of Marrakesh life.



Day 2 - MARRAKESH GUIDED VISIT

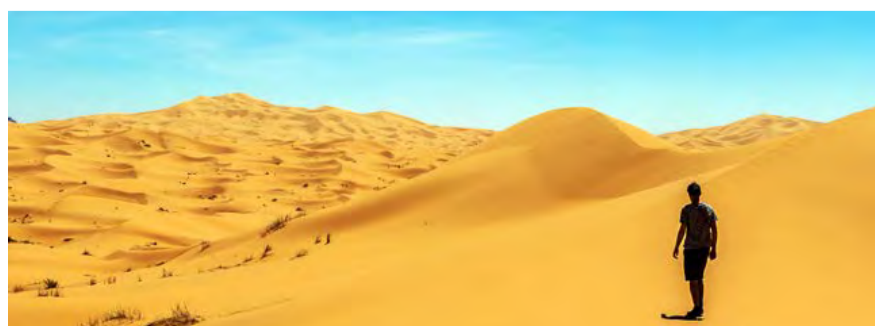
• Private Guided Visit, Breakfast, Lunch

Today you have a private guided tour of Marrakesh. The tour lasts from 9:30am until 5:30pm Medina (including lunch). And with the knowledge you gained from reading our Marrakesh travel guide, you will be able to discuss with your guide the sights you would like to see most. It is worth allowing your guide an element of free rein to bring out the best of the Red City and give you a bundle of memories to carry home with you.

Day 3 - AIT BEN HADDOU | OUARZAZATE | SKOURA

• Transport (5hrs), Breakfast, Dinner

You leave Marrakesh at 9am and traverse the Atlas Mountains by way of the Tizi n'Tichka Pass, a masterpiece of road construction that peaks at 2260 metres above sea level. Before it was built by the French in 1936 the only other way of crossing the High Atlas was by the route followed by camel trains, and the zig-zag route of the road shows just how arduous that would have been. You have lunch en-route and the chance to visit the World Heritage Site of Ait Ben Haddou, a splendid red mud and straw village that has formed the backdrop for many a Hollywood film production, and the final scenes of series three of the TV blockbuster, A Game of Thrones. You might also like to explore Ouarzazate, home to Kasbah Taourirt, once owned by the powerful Glaoui family who built their fortune on charges levied on camel caravans passing between Marrakesh and Timbuktu.



Day 4 - DADES VALLEY | ERG CHEBBI SAHARA DESERT

• Transport (6hrs), Light Walk, Breakfast, Dinner

You continue onward to the stunning Dades Valley where you can enjoy a stroll (one to three hours) to see the region's impressive rock formations and Berber villages before continuing onward to Merzouga. Here at the hotel on the edge of the dunes, you can store any baggage while packing an overnight bag to bring along. After a short introduction to the camels, prepare for a one hour jaunt into the desert to our own private tented camp. You can either ride your chosen camel or keep up alongside at a steady pace. The night is spent dining alfresco under the stars followed by sweet dreams in a Bedouin-style tent. If you prefer not to camp out, simply ride the camel for one hour to view the sunset and spend the night at the kasbah hotel. We have both standard and deluxe camps available.

Day 5 - ERG CHEBBI SAHARA DESERT

• 4x4 Sahara Exploration, Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today continues the Sahara Desert tour as you exit the dunes, enjoy a shower and breakfast, and continue exploring the dunes with an expert 4x4 driver to see what the local culture has in store. You can visit a local village of Gnawa musicians, have tea with a nomadic family, and following lunch, head back to the Kasbah hotel to relax. Enjoy the hammam (spa) and bask in Morocco's hottest region.

Day 6 - ALNIF | DRAA VALLEY | AGDZ

• Transport (6hrs), Breakfast, Dinner

You return by a different route today through Alnif to Agdz, giving a taste of the Draa Valley. Agdz means 'resting place' and is set on the old caravan route that connected Marrakech with Timbuktu.

Day 7 - RETURN TO MARRAKESH

• Transport (6hrs), Breakfast

You have a reverse view of the Tizi N Tichka Pass and the High Atlas Mountains today as you return to Marrakesh. You'll have the evening to explore the souks, smells, and sights of Marrakesh. Tonight is a good night to enjoy a special dinner before your departure tomorrow.

Day 8 - DEPART FROM MARRAKESH (OR CASABLANCA)

• Airport Transfer

You depart from Morocco today and we hope you had a fascinating journey with our team!

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Dades Valley walk & lunch
- Atlas Mountains extension (one or more days walking, Berber village visits, local lunches available)
- Essaouira extension (wine tasting, cooking workshop, horseback riding available)

This route is customizable. It is best done in 8-14 days and can also be done in reverse. Going into the heart of Morocco's wild side takes determination, gumption, and some flexibility. Long days of long travel bring off-the-beaten path rewards that leave an imprint on your soul. A long time in the making, our Wild Sahara itinerary takes travelers to Morocco's untouched Erg Chigaga Sahara Desert region, through seemingly uncharted land, to the unspoiled coastline of Mirleft and back to civilization. Filled with fun and off-the-beaten-path experiences, this Sahara tour to Erg Chigaga is great for families.

Day 1 - ARRIVE MARRAKESH (OR CASABLANCA)

• Airport Transfer, Dinner

A driver will be waiting for you at Casablanca airport to take you to your riad in Marrakesh. An early flight arrival you will give you time to put your toe in the exotic water that is this wonderfully flamboyant city. Before the guided tour of the Medina tomorrow, this afternoon you might like to enter into the spirit of Marrakesh by taking a ride in a caleche, the horse-drawn carriages that are the most romantic way to see the city from beyond its pink walls. You'll have dinner this evening in the comfort of your riad.



Day 2 - MARRAKESH GUIDED VISIT

• Private Guided Visit, Breakfast, Lunch

Don't worry if you get lost in the Medina should you choose to wander on your own, just point yourself in the direction of Jmaa el Fna (or La Place as it's better known among local Marrakschis) and you will soon find your way home. That won't be a problem once you've experienced a private guided tour (which includes lunch) as your guide unravels the clustered streets and shows you the more interesting places to visit. He'll intrigue you with stories of life within the nineteen kilometers of wall that encircle the Marrakech Medina. The tour lasts from 9:30am until 5:30pm, and before you set off you will be able to discuss with your guide the sights you would most like to see. (See our Marrakesh travel information.)

Day 3 - TELOUET | AIT BEN HADDOU | OUARZAZATE | SKOURA • Transport (5hrs), Breakfast, Dinner

Your route today takes you over the 2260 meters-high Tizi n'Tichka pass, a sashaying engineering feat completed in 1936. You zig-zag through a desolate terrain of hairpin bends, but the ravishing views make it all worthwhile. Have your camera at the ready and your driver will find somewhere safe to stop. For those who want to explore further off the beaten path, Telouet makes an impressive stop via the back way towards Ait Ben Haddou. It is said that the ruins of a slave village can still be seen, although little remains, and Telouet itself is rapidly disintegrating. Ait Ben Haddou is next on the agenda. A walled town of traditional mud and straw buildings, you get an eerie sense of history as you walk the shadowed streets between crumbling walls, although as it is now a recognized UNESCO site of special interest much work has been done to restore some elements of it to its former grandeur. The road then descends to Ouarzazate the tribal home of the Glaoui family who demanded tolls from anyone passing through the mountains on their way to



and from Marrakesh. Salt was important to the Glaoui fortunes, and a large Jewish community once lived nearby who oversaw the production of this precious commodity. Next, you head to Skoura in the Valley of the Kasbahs, where you have the afternoon to relax in this peaceful oasis before dinner is served.

Day 4 - DRA VALLEY | ZAGORA | M'HAMID | ERG CHIGAGA

• Transport (6hrs), Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

This morning you leave Skoura and head two hours south to the remote village of M'hamid where the paved road ends. Lunch is taken with a local family, after which, nicely rested, you begin the next part of your journey off-road, traveling into Morocco's wildest Sahara region – Erg Chigaga.

Day 5 - ERG CHIGAGA SAHARA DESERT

• 4x4 Sahara Exploration, Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

The dramatic 300 meter-high dunes of Erg Chigaga undulate into infinity like a vast ocean of sand, and today is dedicated to fully absorbing the desert experience. Little disturbs the silence other than the sound of your feet as you trek among the dunes (not quite as easy as your guide will make it look). You can meet nomadic families of the Ait Atta Berber tribe that live here, and learn about life in this wildest desert of Morocco.

Day 6 - LAC IRIKI | FOUM ZGUID | TAROUDANT

• Transport (8hrs), Breakfast, Dinner

Prepare yourself for a long drive today that is both diverse and



arduous. For three hours you travel off-road through the ‘badlands’ of Erg Chigaga, passing the fifty mile-long dry lake bed of Lac Iriki, made famous by the Paris-Dakar rally. At Foum Zguid you stop for lunch before welcoming a good road that takes you through the Anti-Atlas, a UNESCO Argan-tree Bioserve, and finally to Taroudant, known as the ‘Grandmother of Marrakesh’ because it looks like a smaller Marrakesh with its surrounding ramparts, and was used briefly as the country’s capital by the Saadians in the sixteenth century, before they moved onwards to the Red City.



Day 7 - TIZNIT | AGLOU | MIRLEFT

• **Transport (5hrs), Breakfast, Dinner**

Today, we set the compass for southwest and head to Morocco’s untouched beach haven of Mirleft. Discover what the French have known for a long time in this continually sunny paradise. The large beaches, long sunny days, and fun surf spots make this a hidden paradise. For those travelers who would rather not visit Mirleft, going to Essaouira is always an option. (See our Essaouira travel guide.)

Day 8 - SIDI IFNI | MIRLEFT

• **Transport, Breakfast**

You have the day free in Mirleft. One of the funnest activities here is a surf lesson on Morocco’s ‘Wild Beach’. Activities are best arranged beforehand, and include a surf camp and/or fishing. If you feel like exploring, you will find there is an oasis and a ruined fort nearby, and Sidi Ifni has some glorious Spanish Art-deco architecture. If you happen to be there on a Saturday morning there is a camel market at Guelmim.

Day 9 - AGADIR | MARRAKESH

• **Transport (5hrs), Breakfast**

A languid drive along the coast watching the crashing of the Atlantic surf. You pass Agadir, the largest seaside resort in Morocco which has been completely rebuilt since it was devastated by an earthquake in 1960. It’s here where you can stop off at an eco lodge to enjoy a mountain bike ride and lunch, which is a great option for families. You’ll then continue back to Marrakesh to enjoy one last night before your departure.

Day 10 - DEPART FROM MARRAKESH (OR CASABLANCA)

• **Airport Transfer**

You depart from Morocco today and we hope you had a fascinating journey with our team! If you are leaving from Casablanca, try to arrange your flight out in the afternoon as this will give you enough time to travel from Marrakesh.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Surf lessons and/or fishing in Mirleft
- Mountain biking & lunch in Agadir
- Essaouira extension (wine tasting, cooking workshop, horseback riding available)
- Atlas Mountains extension (one or more days walking, Berber village visits, local lunches available)



This route is customizable. It is best done in 5-10 days. A trip set up for the more relaxed adventurer, this is an excursion with a focus for those who do not wish to be on the go. Enjoy Marrakesh on a guided visit and head into the mountains for a guided walk, visits to Berber villages, and a cultural adventure before heading to the artsy and laid-back town of Essaouira to enjoy Morocco's windiest, neo-hippie art hub.

Day 1 - ARRIVE MARRAKESH (OR CASABLANCA)

• Airport Transfer, Dinner

Welcome to Marrakesh and the beginning of your exceptional holiday. You will be driven in a private car from the airport to your guesthouse, a traditional riad in the exotic Marrakesh Medina. You will have time to explore the main square of Jmaa el Fna, known as La Place locally, but goes under many names, one of which is the Place of the Dead as it was where the severed heads of criminals were set on spikes as a warning to others. Fortunately, the practice has been abandoned. The largest open-air restaurant in the world, various food and orange juice stalls line the square. If you arrive into Casablanca, note that the transfer to Marrakesh takes three hours.



Day 2 - MARRAKESH GUIDED VISIT

• Private Guided Visit, Breakfast, Lunch

Having pored over the contents of our Marrakesh travel guide, you will be ready to tackle the intricate alleys of the Medina, and you will be safe in the hands of your professional private guide. Some of the more important historic venues are the Madrasa Ali Ben Youssef, the Bahia Palace and the Saadian Tombs, but what will probably stay longer and fonder in your memory is the vivid life of the souks, its cascades of colour, humorous haggling, donkey cart dodging and over-the-top ebullience – everything exotic you've ever imagined about an Arabian market quadrupled. The tour lasts from 9:30am until 5:30pm and includes lunch.

Day 3 - ATLAS MOUNTAINS

• Transport, Breakfast, Lunch Dinner

A change of pace with a guided hike into the High Atlas Mountains, with lunch enjoyed at the home of a local family. Comfortably full, you will check into a quaint mountain lodge where you can relax and enjoy the views. Dinner will be served in the lodge this evening.

Day 4 - ATLAS MOUNTAINS

• Transport, Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

The choice is yours today. Would you prefer to take another guided hike of between two and five hours, which includes a picnic lunch, or to take a driving tour of the Nfiss Valley with a visit to the Tinmel Mosque? The architectural gem of Tinmel was built in the 12th century to commemorate the founding of the Almohad Dynasty that ruled Morocco for barely one and half centuries, the last representative of the line, Idris al-Wathiq, being murdered by a slave in 1269. The Koutoubia Mosque in Marrakesh was modeled on Tinmel, but while the former became one of the most famous mosques in Mo-



rocco. Tinmel fell into decline for centuries and was on the point of total collapse when recent restoration saved it from complete oblivion. Little of its former grandeur survives, but from what does you can imagine just how awesome the original must have been. Lunch will be served en route and dinner will again be at the mountain lodge.

Day 5 - TRAVEL TO ESSAOUIRA

• Transport (4hrs), Breakfast

On your drive to Essaouira today you may like to make a slight diversion to visit an association of local women that make Argan oil, 'liquid gold' as it's getting known as these days because of its excellent health and beauty properties. And two common legends to ponder; yes, goats do climb argan trees to eat the fruit, although you need to be wary of those who have trained their animals to stand in trees for photo opportunities for which they will charge you, and no, the fruit doesn't have to pass through the intestines of the goat before it can be used. The nut that comes out the opposite end to where the fruit goes in makes very inferior quality oil and would never be used in production. You can see our Essaouira travel guide to help you prepare for your visit to this unique coastal gem.

Day 6 - ESSAOUIRA

• Transport (8hrs), Breakfast, Dinner

You have plenty of time to relax today so there is no need to rush. Whether you are a surfer (including kite surfing) or would like to feel a board beneath your feet for the first time, there are some world-class surfing schools to get you onto the Atlantic waves – or maybe you just want to stretch out on the sands and watch. If you are even the slightest sort of foodie, you must visit the fishing harbor as the boats come in, and watch the freshest of fish being sold from boxes of crushed ice on the quayside. Buy your own and take it to one of the tiny kitchens in the backstreets of the Medina where they will grill it for you over beat-up barbeques made from old cans, or chose from the displays at the blue and white striped stalls beside the port, where they will cook and serve it to perfection. Various locations around the ramparts were used as backgrounds for scenes in the third series of Game of Thrones.

Day 7 - ESSAOUIRA TO MARRAKESH

• Transport (3hrs), Breakfast

If you didn't find time to visit an argan co-operative on your way to Essaouira you could do it today on your leisurely drive back to Marrakesh. You have the afternoon and evening to catch up on your



shopping, and you may even be tempted to try one of the food stalls in Jmaa el Fna, if for no other reason than to say that you did it, or you might like to take a drink on one of the terraces that look down on the sparkling jewel-box of lights glittering through the smoke from the kitchens.

Day 8 - DEPART FROM MARRAKESH (OR CASABLANCA)

• Airport Transfer

You'll be departing Marrakesh today. You might also travel from Casablanca. We hope you enjoyed your journey!

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Longer treks in the Atlas available
- Essaouira (wine tasting, cooking workshop, horseback riding available)



We Set the Standard

Our highly knowledgeable staff lives and works in Morocco, making us the country's most renowned Morocco tour operator. A number of our team members are former Peace Corps Volunteers and Staff. No one knows the country better. Rather than simply sightsee, you'll experience Morocco's wonderful people, landscapes, colors, and flavors. With Journey Beyond Travel you are not a tourist, but a traveler! Our quality of service, flexibility, and communication are unmatched. We are Morocco's most customercentric operator making us the benchmark of quality service for Morocco's travel sector. We have decades of combined in-country experience, have lived in various regions, speak the local languages, and can help you arrange a customized tour to give you the best local experience. We are ecologically and culturally sensitive. A percentage from every tour goes towards sustainable development projects. Our cutting-edge 'green' website is hosted on wind-powered servers. We continually offer updated and real travel information via our innovative Morocco Travel Guide and newsletter. We want you to have a stunning tour whether you travel with us or not.

With each tour, clients can choose to donate to tree-planting projects around the country. Another way

We Stand Out

What makes us truly stand out as Morocco's premier tour operator is all the little extras we do, along with our local guides, drivers, and staff (the finest in Morocco), who go beyond the call of duty to give you a truly intimate experience of the country. Before comparing our prices with other companies, read all the fine print. Verify that they are a legally registered entity. Most other companies are not actually located in Morocco. We are! A majority of others operate from abroad and use an in-country 'partner,' which is most often a transport company who is not a licensed tour operator. In the United States, we are Journey Beyond Travel LLC. In Morocco, we are Journey Beyond S.A.R.L. Also, be sure that the company is insured and bonded, won't charge you extra when you arrive (often called an 'in-country fee') and have your best interests in mind. Our foreign and local staff have been living, working, and traveling here for years! If price is the only concern, you won't find the cheapest packages here – we simply won't compromise on quality. But, if having a trip that runs like clockwork, offers special amenities, takes you into the heart of each region, and offers you an unforgettable journey, then you've found the perfect match. **We wholeheartedly welcome you to go 'beyond the destination' with us!**

We Are Sustainable, Responsible, and Eco Friendly

Every traveler who comes on a trip has the opportunity to carbon offset their holiday with a small donation to the High Atlas Foundation. All proceeds go directly to tree planting initiatives. Some of this includes fruit and nut tree planting so that local co-ops can start sustainable businesses.

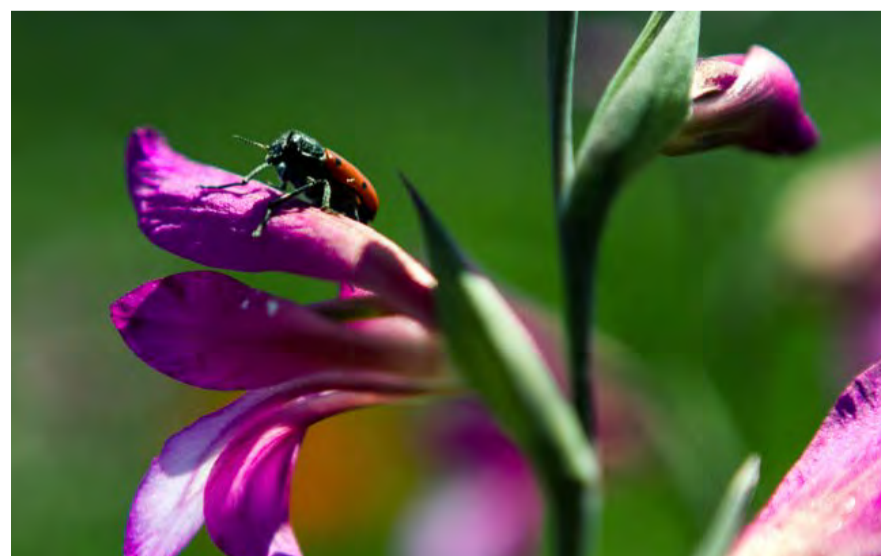
On tours, our clients visit various co-ops throughout Morocco. Depending upon the location, many of these are local women's co-ops that produce various products, both natural and artisanal. Money collected directly benefits these foundations and the women who work there.

Additionally, our clients have special opportunities to visit villages throughout the country with local guides who work directly with our team. In turn, these guides oversee some initiatives in their villages that we help sponsor, from collecting funds and supplies to local schools, to starting local foundations and co-ops. Our trips are all small scale. We do not arrange trips that promote mass tourism, but focus our efforts on small groups who fit our niche. We are proud to work with small, privately owned guesthouses and lodges across the spectrum. This includes eco-lodges in various regions in the country. Supporting these

Quality, Service and Accommodation

We pay special attention to the type of accommodations listed with each of our tours. We judge each hotel independently, in person. We rate each one on its own merit and by our strict quality standards. A hotel or riad (guesthouse) that claims five-star status may not deserve it. So, we might label it differently. In regard to price differences with other companies, note what sort of room you'll get in each location according to the type of tour you are taking. While another company might give you a standard room, we'll reserve the suite. It's these subtle differences in quality and thinking that make Journey Beyond Travel stand out from the crowd.

"Thank you to Journey Beyond Travel for an unforgettable experience. It was magical!"



Since Journey Beyond Travel is run by former Peace Corps Volunteers and Staff, we've always had a central goal of supporting local causes, associations, and initiatives throughout the country, especially in the places our travelers visit. For 2012 and onward, we've listed those current causes below that we support at the grassroots level. A percentage from each tour goes directly to these projects. For upcoming years, we hope to be as transparent as possible with exactly how much is going to each cause from your trip. If you'd like to know what amount of your trip that is going to a particular project, please let us know. Funds are usually allocated quarterly, so we may not have exact figures right away, but we'll be happy to share any information we have available.

Itto - Superstar Student

In 2012, we've started an initiative to support one student in the Alaouit Organization for the Protection of the Blind, a local school in Meknes offering education to orphaned and blind students. As we commence, we are offering aid to one student in particular named Itto who has successfully finished high school and is now attending university. She has dreams of studying English and translation at the Ph.D level. She's a gifted and eager student with a bright future. Funds help support all her living, educational, and technological needs.

Education for All

In 2013, we started helping with Education for All by allocating certain funds that go directly to this organization each year. We are proud to support such initiatives for education in Morocco - this one focusing on girls from rural communities.



Nomadic Families

Since 2008, we've tried to do all we can to support nomadic families living on the outskirts of Merzouga, the Erg Chebbi region of the Sahara Desert. We help with monthly supplies, but we're trying to do more.

**A CAUSE
YOU CAN
SUPPORT**

Village of Khemlia

Since we began, we've had travelers visit the village of Khemlia, just past Merzouga. In every trip we do, we collect 50dh (about \$6) per traveler for donations that go to this village of Gnawa musicians. They put on a quite a show and sell their CDs after a performance.



High Atlas Foundation

For 2011 and onward from 2012, we've been collecting donations from travelers that goes directly to the High Atlas Foundation. The donation helps locals in the mountains plant fruit trees and helps to carbon offset your trip. You can donate at the time of booking.



Our new ebook, [A Whirlwind Around Morocco](#), is a collection of light-hearted tales from a high-speed two week trip around this enigmatic country (and a perfect read to entice you to Morocco). Best of all it's free, but when you download it from our website we ask you to make a donation to support the wonderful work done by Education For All. You can also download a free copy of [A Different Life](#), the story of EFA.

Morocco is a country of varied sights, sounds, smells and tastes that will totally overwhelm you, and during your time with Journey Beyond Travel you can look forward to a wide range of experiences while seeing the highlights of the country. Our aim is to help you enjoy the best Morocco has to offer and ease you into the culture and customs of the country by providing helpful tips and information.



A world of differences

On your trip get ready to travel through ecosystems and sites such as mountains, valleys, gorges, waterfalls, rivers, lakes, desert, oases, plateaus, plains, beaches, forests, medieval cities, Roman ruins, and more. From date palms to cedars, storks to Barbary apes, Morocco's plant and wildlife is abundant. Expect to come across camels, sheep, goats, hawks, woodpeckers, foxes, lizards and scorpions, just to name a few. You will see many different types of architecture; square, adobe huts in small, mountain villages, colonial-style buildings in the new cities and lavish palaces in the Imperial Cities. The road between Ouarzazate and Erfoud is known as the 'Route of 1000 Kasbahs'. There may not be exactly a thousand kasbahs, but these fortified Berber structures are primarily made from the reddish-brown mud of the region. Other notable structures to look for are mosques and minarets, medersas (koranic schools), mausoleums, babs (medina entries), and riads (traditional Moroccan houses).

Must See:

Marrakesh Medina: Koutoubia mosque, Jma el Fna, Medersa Ali Ben Youssef Fez Medina: Tanneries, Souks, Qarawayne Mosque Merzouga: Sahara Desert

Should See:

Essaouira: medina and ramparts, High Atlas Mountain villages, Ait Ben Haddou Kasbah, Dades Gorge, Meknes & Volubilis, Rabat: Chellah Necropolis, Kasbah des Oudayas, Casablanca: Hassan II Mosque

If you have time:

Chefchaouen Moulay Idriss Zerhoun, Ziz Valley Oasis, Ifrane



Food

Morocco abounds with food stalls, stands and restaurants. Moroccan gastronomy is delicious and can be an unexpectedly enjoyable experience, but if you're eating at these stalls, stands and restaurants, clean and sanitary conditions aren't always a main priority. Some travelers do get sick from the food and water, but a few simple precautions will usually avoid complaints. Drink bottled water, avoid eating uncooked salads, and make sure the places you eat at are relatively clean – check the kitchen and bathroom areas.

Moroccan food is quite rich. Most dishes are prepared with meat, spices, vegetables or dried fruit and plenty of oil. The meal will always come with round, flat bread and sometimes French fries served on the side. In family homes you will usually eat with your right hand by breaking off a bite-sized piece of bread then taking it, gripping the food with it, and putting the medley in your mouth. It takes some practice, but no need to worry because you will usually also be brought utensils.

Soft drinks are widely available, as is bottled water, and don't forget to try a pot of very sweet, mint tea after your meal. You may have an alcoholic beverage with your meal if you are eating in the new part of town; however, **alcohol** is not served in eateries in the old medinas, even in Fez and Marrakesh. In major cities, you will find restaurants, bars, cafés, shops, and supermarkets that do sell or serve alcohol to both foreigners and Moroccans. Try Moroccan wines, which are often surprisingly good.

Here's a list of a few tasty things you will find:



Snacks & Appetizers:

Rghaif/melaowee (Moroccan pancakes) Bghreer (spongy Moroccan pancakes) Tktooka (cooked tomato + green pepper salad) Zaalook (cooked tomato + eggplant salad) Frites (French fries)

Salade marocaine (diced cucumber + tomato salad) Salade du chef (varied vegetable salad)

Main Meals:

Harira (thick, tomato-based soup) Aadiss (lentil stew) Beessara (pureed fava bean soup) Couscous (stewed meat + veggies over semolina) Tajine (meat + vegetable stew)

Poulet grillé (barbecued chicken) Brochettes (grilled meat kebabs) Kefta (ground beef) Pastilla (sweet + salty chicken mix wrapped in flaky pastry sheets)

Desserts:

Cab ghezal (1/4 moon-shaped cookies filled w/ almond paste) Ghreeba (sweet almond or walnut cookies) Braywat (triangular-shaped pastry w/ sweet or salty filling)

Shopping

You will pass many shops and vendors. **The vendors** will urge you to go in and look, and possibly have some tea. If you do not want to, be polite and say no thank you.

If you do go in to look and are interested in buying something, **you MUST bargain**. The starting price you are quoted will be double, triple or more than the price you will eventually arrive at. **Be firm**; state your price and haggle. If you do not agree on a price, say thank you and walk out. You can shop around and compare prices, then go back if you want. However, if you do bargain for an item and agree on a price, then decide not to buy it, you will offend many vendors.

Bakeries, restaurants, bookshops, pharmacies, clothing shops in the new city, and supermarkets and local grocery stores have set prices. If you see a price tag on an item at any of the above places, do not bargain. Many cities and most towns have a weekly open-air market where you can find fruit, vegetables, spices, clothes, kitchenware, and anything else you can get at bargain prices. Tipping is expected when anyone does a service for you: waiters, guides, drivers, porters, etc. A standard tip would be 10% of the total bill. Give luggage porters 10-20 dirhams depending on how much luggage you have and how far they have to take it. It is also a nice gesture to leave a tip for hotel help. Taxi drivers are not usually tipped.

Family life

In general, Morocco is a safe country to travel in, with a liberal Muslim nation, but is still conservative in certain regards. You will see many mosques and tall rectangular minarets in every village, town and city. The call to prayer can be heard 5 times a day (one in the early morning a couple hours before sunrise), reminding practicing Muslims to pray. When passing by a mosque, be respectful. You can peer in, but do not go in. If prayer is in session, refrain from taking pictures.

Morocco is a very male-dominated society. You will notice, especially in rural areas, men leading businesses and sitting at cafés while the women are working inside the home or in the fields. Most Moroccan women do not wear the full black gown and veil. They either wear a long, colorful gown with a hood, called a djellaba, and a scarf covering their head, or western clothing. You will also see men wearing djellabas, but in more subdued colors. For women travelers it is wise to dress modestly. **Avoid** wearing clothes that are too short, low-cut, tight or revealing.

Family is very important to Moroccans and in most cases the main priority. Many are big and include the extended family. The main married couple may have their own bedroom; otherwise, the whole family will sleep on the couches that line the living room. **Greetings** are very important. Always say **hello** when entering and **goodbye** when leaving. It is considered rude if you don't. Many Moroccans, especially in the countryside, do not like to be **photographed**, so ask permission before doing so.

An expanded version of this brief information will be provided when you book.





JOURNEY BEYOND TRAVEL - Morocco Travel Specialists

Office: Avenue Lalla Amina, Residence Afifa Apt. 1 Hay Riad,
Ifrane 53000, Morocco

1 855 687 6676 (US TOLL FREE)

1 765 387 4404 (US & WORLDWIDE)

+44 (0) 20 8123 8708 (UK)

+212 610 41 45 73 (MOROCCO)

www.journeybeyondtravel.com

