

Morocco EXPLORED tours

Sample Itinerary Tangier to Marrakech

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Hello,
thank you for your interest in our tours. This is Salah Chabaoui from Morocco Explored here to help with your plans. When you know your flights I can pin down your tour. All are custom made and can start any day. We can add or reduce the number of days to match your budget or flights.

I have a sample itinerary below. We'll meet you at the ferry or the airport and you'll drive to the blue city of Chefchaouen. Visit Volubilis Roman ruins on the way to Fes, then traverse the Rif and Atlas mountains to the Sahara for an overnight camel trek in Erg Chebbi dunes near Merzouga. Travel onward to Todra gorge, Dades Valley, Ait Benhaddou world heritage site and finally the vibrant city that is Marrakech.

There will be driving time in the desert region (between 3-5 hours a day) but this includes stops along the way. On travel days you'll be out of the vehicle walking the sites. Many places do not allow vehicles to enter. There's a lot to see!

You'll be on guided walking tours in Fes and Marrakech medinas with no vehicle travel on these days. You will have free time to explore on your own. While on the road you may stop to visit regional markets; drive off road, walk in the Todra gorge and much more. You can discuss with your driver what's possible each day. We explain a lot more about how this all works in our TRAVEL GUIDE sent with each booking.

We use small hotels and riads that are of interest because of location, good food, and unique traditional architecture.

Please don't hesitate if you have any questions.

MOROCCO EXPLORED TOURS

TANGIER TO MARRAKECH 9 DAYS

Options to upgrade to 4* hotels and luxury desert camp.

HOW TO BOOK THIS TOUR

What's Included

- all taxes,
- private transport and fuel,
- experienced Moroccan driver,
- door to door service,
- breakfasts (vegetarians welcome),
- en suite 3*/4* unique hotels with heating and air conditioning,
- English speaking walking tours in Marrakech and Fez,
- overnight camp in the sand dunes,
- mattresses, blankets, sheets and pillows are provided in desert camp,
- camp also has solar lighting and toilets, kitchen and dining tent,
- camel guides and friendly camels... and lots of sand.

What's Not included

- free to have lunch where and when you like,
- dinners
- personal purchases,
- tips,
- camel guides and drivers are paid, but also welcome tips

9 DAYS ITINERARY

Day 1 Chefchaouen

Arrive Tangier and transfer to Chefchaouen. Surrounded by the Rif mountains, Chefchaouen is small enough to wander freely on foot and explore the narrow streets that wind throughout this blue and white medina. Known as the blue city, Chefchaouen or Chaouen for short is famous for the electric blue that covers it's houses and mosques. The custom dates back to the 15th century when Jewish refugees settled here and brought their tradition of painting things blue to mirror the sky and remind them of god. The photographic opportunities are endless, especially fascinating in the mid day sunlight. Stay in medina hotel includes breakfast as above.

Day 2 Fez

This morning drive to Fez. Along the way you will stop and visit Meknes old city, the 17th-century imperial city-within-a-city of Moulay Ismael, palaces, mosques, and gardens. The highlights are the royal stables containing grain silos that used to hold enough food for the city residents for a year, as well as a stable big enough for 12,000 horses. Continue onward to the ruins of Volubilis. The Romans built this city as a trading doorway into Africa and for 200 years in the 2nd and 3rd century, it was the furthest outpost of all Roman cities. It's beautiful mosaics and columns can still be seen. The surrounding land is prized for it's olive trees. Nearby is where Moulay Idriss I brought the religion of Islam in the year 789, and started a new dynasty. In addition to founding the town, he initiated

the construction of Fez. Arrive Fez in time for dinner. Stay medina 4*riad includes breakfast.

Day 3 Fez

After breakfast meet your guide* and explore this fascinating medina. The endless labyrinth of narrow streets is like no other, with hundreds of tiny shops, a dyers souk and craft manufacturers who ply their trade in narrow medieval grottoes. Visit the famous leather tanneries still using techniques from ancient times to produce fine leather in beautiful colours. Fez is also famous for its robust and beautiful pottery, brass and copper trays and tea services, regional cuisine and ancient medersa (schools of Islam). Stay medina riad. Includes breakfast.

*Includes a private walking tour of Fez.

Day 4 Desert camp

Depart Fez for Azrou where there are opportunities to see Barbary apes in the cedar forests. Midelt on the edge of the Sahara is another world in contrast. This bustling desert town has an interesting shop that sells carpets made with striking abstract designs by the women of the region, and a regional market on Sundays. Continue into the Sahara until the Erg Chebbi dunes appear on the horizon. The Ziz valley is a date palm oasis that stretches all the way to Erfoud, containing hundreds of kasbahs and ksar (a group of kasbahs). In Erfoud you'll have time to stop to visit the (Saturday) date market, and resupply for anything you need at the local super market. Your destination is the desert camp beyond the town of Merzouga, far from the many hotels lining the dunes. Have tea or a drink by the pool in the desert inn before meeting your camel guides to ride to the camp. Dinner is served (vegetarians welcome) under the evening stars. Climb the massive dunes and watch the moon rise before retiring to your bed in your tent. Today includes breakfast and dinner.

Day 5 Ait Benhaddou

Take a walk on the dunes at sunrise before returning to your camp for breakfast and a shower. Ride the camels back to the desert inn where your driver will be waiting to take you to Tinehir, and walk through Todra Gorge. Sheer limestone walls rise to 300 m in its narrowest part. Your next destination is Ait Benhaddou. Along the way you'll drive off road (weather permitting), across the mountains to the remote village of Boutaghrach to visit nomads in the area, then pass through many Berber villages and riverside oasis and barren hills clustered with kasbahs (fortified dwellings that house many families and their livestock). Villages sprinkle the Skoura oasis and the Valley of the Rose, famous for producing elegant Persian rose oil. After Ouarzazate is Ait Benhaddou World Heritage site kasbahs.

Spend the night in a riad with views of Ait Benhaddou. Includes dinner and breakfast.

Day 6 Marrakech

This morning you can take time to explore the World Heritage Site of Ait Benhaddou. The village of clustered Berber Kasbahs has been used as a backdrop for countless adventure films. In its prime it was one of the most powerful fortress strongholds on the Salt Road for the camel caravans that were plagued by thieves and raiders in the High Atlas. You'll follow the old Salt Road camel caravan route to Telouet to explore the old Glaoui kasbah. This kasbah has an amazing story behind it that is intrinsically linked to the formation of Morocco as a country. This once beautiful kasbah now stands crumbling to ruins because no one wants to remember "the vulture" who lived here until the 1950's. After lunch descend the High Atlas mountains Tichka pass (2260m) to Marrakech with time to stop

and enjoy impressive landscapes over coffee and fresh-squeezed orange juice. Arrive in Marrakech at your medina riad. Includes breakfast.

Day 7 Marrakech

Explore the back street maze of Marrakech with a guide,* visit the Saadian Tombs and the Bahia Palace, or the Ben Youssef Medersa and Quebba, the Koutoubia mosque, or the Marrakech Museum. Afternoon is free to explore the vast souk (market). The Souk is comprised of many specialist areas e.g. metalwork, where crafters ply their trade; dyers workshops are strung with colourful skeins of wool; carpets, and carpet sellers entice you into their shops with a cup of mint tea; tiny shops selling Berber jewelry, old silver, and African beads; spices, olives, fresh herbs; visit traditional apothecaries where you can learn about all manner of potions to heal or cast spells of love or revenge. Stay Marrakech medina riad includes breakfast.

*walking tour included.

Day 8 Essaouira - Marrakech

Transfer to Essaouira. Set on the Atlantic region that was once the pirate haunt called Mogador, it's now famous for its fresh seafood, thuja wood crafts and artists colony. The coast is peppered with Argan trees (yes - there are goats in the trees) and the expansive beach is great for long walks. Visit a traditional pharmacy and learn about natural medicines and cures, and a womens cooperative where Argan nuts are processed by hand into one of the rarest oils in the world. Old Portuguese ramparts overlook the sea, guarding the walled city where you can watch silver craftsmen and wood carvers at work in the most charming medina in Morocco. In winter Essaouira is generally warmer and wetter than Marrakech, and in summer pleasantly cool and breezy, rarely going beyond high 20's Celcius. Return to Marrakech or you may stay this night in Essaouira. Stay in medina riad includes breakfast.

Day 9 Marrakech

Transfer to the Marrakech or Casablanca airport for departure.

A FINAL WORD ABOUT OUR TOURS

Please know that Morocco is still developing; things change, roads are winding and rough, activities and things stop running or change, and weather can send the best laid plans out the door. We will do our best to provide what is planned and offer alternatives but please take into consideration the nature of the journey that you are embarking on and understand that a certain degree of flexibility is necessary. If you have a problem please inform us immediately and we will do our best to make the necessary changes to keep you happy on tour.