



Morocco EXPLORED tours

Sample Itinerary New Years Marrakech to Fez

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Hello,

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

Celebrate New Years Eve with live music, dancing and a Moroccan feast under brilliant desert stars. You will depart Marrakech for the desert camp in the roadless Erg Chebbi where crystal clear nights are other worldly. On tour you will travel the old Salt Road to Ait Benhaddou and Telouet, plus visit Dades valley and Todra Gorge and much more. New Years tours can also end back in Marrakech on a four day trip.

There will be driving time in the desert region (between 3-5 hours a day) including stops along the way. On travel days you'll be out of the vehicle walking the sites, and you may stop to visit regional markets, drive off road, walk in the Todra gorge and much more. Many places do not allow vehicles to enter. You can discuss with your driver what's possible each day. Theres a lot to see!

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

We explain a lot more about how this all works in our TRAVEL GUIDE sent with each booking. Please don't hesitate if you have any questions.

MOROCCO EXPLORED TOURS

MARRAKECH TO FEZ NEW YEARS DESERT TOURS

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

HOW TO BOOK THIS TOUR

What's Included

- all taxes
- private transport and fuel
- driver/guide
- overnight camel trek to the Erg Chebbi camp
- camel guides
- hotel nights in Ait Benhaddou World Heritage site, or Dades Valley, or Todra gorge
- ensuite private rooms
- breakfast and dinner (vegetarians welcome)

4 days or longer may have:

- swimming stops April to September
- extended walks
- exploration of oasis palmery, museums, and visit nomads for tea
- markets and medinas
- exploring off road routes (seasonal)

What's Not Included

- lunches - you can eat anytime, anywhere while on the road
- tips
- personal purchases
- alcoholic beverages

3 DAYS ITINERARY

3 days **may not be available** due to winter weather delays in the High Atlas mountain passes. Three days is a quick tour that involves one very long driving day! **Please note** due to early winter sunset it's very time dependent you arrive early at the desert hotel.

Day 1 Tinehir

Your driver will meet you at your hotel to depart Marrakech and transport over the High Atlas mountains. Stop and enjoy impressive Tichka pass, and stop for coffee and fresh-squeezed orange juice. Pass through Ouarzazate for lunch, then drive to the Skoura oasis and Valley of the Rose, famous for producing elegant Persian rose oil. Pass through many Berber villages and green riverside oasis and barren hillsides clustered with ksars (fortified dwellings that house many families and their livestock). From here you'll drive off road (weather permitting), through mountain valleys and visit nomads in the area, then head for Dades gorge. Along the way you can visit the Tamnalt hills. Stay in small Dades valley hotel this night or you may continue to Tinehir and stay in an historic kasbah. Includes dinner and breakfast.

Day 2 Sahara Camel Trek Camp

After breakfast you'll have a short drive to walk through a massive fault dividing the High Atlas mountains. Todra gorge rock walls tower 300 m above in the narrowest part. Back in the car drive further into the desert and stop to visit any local Berber markets along

the way. After lunch in Rissani, continue until the Erg Chebbi dunes appear on the horizon. Your destination is the desert camp beyond the town of Merzouga, far from the 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. New Years party in the camp includes a multi course dinner (vegetarians welcome), and live music around the fire by local musicians.

Day 3 Fez

This morning you'll wake to have tea and get ready to ride the camels by a different route back to the auberge. Stop to watch the sunrise before returning for a big breakfast and hot shower. Depart for long days drive (8 hours with stops) to Fez, traveling from the desert through Midelt and the Ziz gorges of the Atlas mountains. 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 resupply for anything you need at the local super market. Onward to your destination, the bustling desert town of Midelt has an interesting shop that sells carpets made with striking abstract designs, and has a regional market on Sundays. The alpine Swiss styled town of Ifrane is a nice contrast from the desert. Stop here to visit the Barbary apes in the cedar forests of Azrou before descending into hilly lowlands where the ancient city of Fez is situated. You'll need to book your own hotel in Fez.

4 DAYS ITINERARY

Four days is highly recommended over three for the reason that you will spend far less time in the vehicle driving, and more time exploring. There's a lot to see!

Day 1 Ait Benhaddou

Your driver will meet you at your riad or hotel to depart Marrakech and transport over the High Atlas mountains. Stop and enjoy impressive Tichka pass, and stop for coffee and fresh-squeezed orange juice. At the height of the pass you will turn off the main road toward Telouet to visit the Glaoui kasbah. This kasbah that was intrinsically linked to the formation of Morocco as a country, now stands crumbling to ruins because no one wants to remember "the vulture" who lived here until the 1950's. Back in the car you'll follow the Salt Road caravan route to Ait Benhaddou, a UNESCO world heritage site. Spend the night in an auberge with views of Ait Benhaddou. Includes dinner and breakfast.

Day 2 Tinehir

This morning you can take time to explore the World Heritage Site of Ait Benhaddou before the crowds from Marrakech arrive. 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 fortresses on the Salt Road camel caravan route that was plagued by thieves and raiders from the High Atlas. After you'll head to the busy town of Ouarzazate. You'll pass through Skoura oasis and the Valley of the Rose, famous for producing elegant Persian rose oil. Berber villages and green riverside oasis and barren red hillsides are clustered with ksars (fortified dwellings that house many families and their livestock). From here you'll drive off road (weather permitting), through the mountain valleys and visit nomads in the area, then head for Dades gorge. Along the way you'll visit the red Tamnalt hills called locally the monkey fingers. Continue to Tinehir. Stay in an historic kasbah. Includes dinner and breakfast.

Day 3 Sahara Camel Trek Camp

After breakfast drive up to Todra Gorge for a walk. The gorge sheer rock walls rise to 300 m in the narrowest part. Back in the car drive further into the desert and stop to visit any local Berber markets along the way. After lunch in Rissani, continue further into the desert until the Erg Chebbi dunes appear on the horizon. 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. New Years party in the camp includes a multi course dinner (vegetarians welcome), and live music around the fire by local musicians. Please note that due to the early sunset this time of year it's very time dependent that you arrive early at the desert hotel.

Day 4 Fez

Depart for the drive (8 hours with lots of stops) to Fez, travelling from the desert through Midelt and the Ziz gorges of the Atlas mountains. 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 resupply for anything you need at the local super market. Onward to your destination, the bustling desert town of Midelt has an interesting shop that sells carpets made with striking abstract designs, and a regional market on Sundays. The alpine Swiss styled town of Ifrane is a striking contrast from the desert. Stop here and visit the Barbary apes in the cedar forests of Azrou before descending into hilly lowlands where the ancient city of Fez is situated. You'll need to book your own hotel in Fez.

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.