



Morocco

Planning a trip to Morocco? Then you should talk to us... We offer independent expert advice and the ability to deliver top quality itineraries with the best tour operators that are exceptional value for money. Arranging your travel through The Specialist Travel Consultancy also reduces the time you have to spend researching and planning your trip. And our service is completely free!

Contact us to discuss your travel requirements on **0845 838 7667** or for more information on the service we offer please visit our website: www.thestc.co.uk

- We can arrange:**
- School expeditions
 - Walking & trekking
 - Geography tours
 - Link school visits
 - Cultural tours
 - Responsible Project Work

Facts & Highlights

Full Country Name: The Kingdom of Morocco

Area: Total: 446,550 sq km

Population: 32.2 million (2004 est)

Capital City: Rabat

People: Arab-Berber (99.1%), other (0.7%), Jewish (0.2%)

Languages: Arabic (official), Berber dialects, French often the language of business, government and diplomacy

Religion(s): Muslim (98.7%), Christian (1.1%), Jewish (0.2%)

Currency: Moroccan Dirham (DM)

Government: Constitutional monarchy

Electricity: 127/220 volts AC, 50Hz

Time: GMT



Marrakech: Explore the medina and souks of this vibrant southern city.

Trekking: Walk among spectacular mountains and isolated Berber villages in the mountains of the High Atlas, Anti Atlas or Mougou Massif.

The Sahara: Sleep under the stars and watch the sunrise over the ochre coloured sand dunes at Erg Chebbi, with only the Tuareg and their camels for company.

Mint Tea: Sample traditional Moroccan tea whilst bartering for your favourite carpet.

The Dades and Draa Valleys: Drive through the Dades "Valley of a Thousand Kasbahs" on route to the desert or experience the lush oases, palmeries and isolated expanses of the Draa Valley.

Essaouira: Take a break from the bustle of Marrakech in this divine fishing village overlooking the Atlantic.

Jellabas, carpet shops, snake charmers and mint tea; intricate souks, high mountain passes, ancient Kasbahs and towering sand dunes: Morocco has everything that goes to make up an ideal destination for a first foray into educational adventure travel.

Whilst a visit to Morocco is certainly not complete without experiencing the marvels of its geography, it's the local people and their traditions that make the country into a truly great travel destination. For a country that lies only a four hour flight away from the UK it's a wonder its cultures have managed to resist change so effectively.

The four great imperial cities of Rabat, Fez, Meknes and Marrakech have medieval rhythms about them and their intricate souks and vast medinas are a real joy to explore. Marrakech is perhaps the best known, not only for its famous square, the Djemaa el-Fna, but also as gateway to the High Atlas.

Of the three main mountain ranges in Morocco, the High Atlas is the most frequented. Home to the highest mountain in North Africa, Mt. Toubkal, 4167m, the High Atlas is a blend of sharp granite peaks, deep gorges, isolated Berber villages and spectacular Kasbahs perched high over raging rivers. Step only a little off the usual trails and the mountains will reveal a way of life that has changed little since Biblical times.

With French being the country's second tongue, Morocco is the ideal destination

for pupils to brush up on their language skills. On shorter itineraries, a visit to a local school could perhaps be in order, or a longer community based project, perhaps constructing irrigation ditches or refurbishing school buildings could be part of an extended expedition.

As you head east from the Atlas, the terrain transforms from often snow capped mountains to dusty plateaus and bizarre rock formations. This area of the Jebel Sahro provides a superb arena for remote desert trekking during our winter months.

Further east still and you begin to enter the Sahara proper. Areas such as the Draa Valley near Ouarzazate are intensely irrigated and offer the perfect setting to observe traditional life in the struggle against the desert environment. Further north the Erg Chebbi region with its spectacular expanse of dunes is a great place to spend a night under the stars with the Tuareg, either before or after visiting the northern cities of Rabat, Fez or Meknes.

Whatever you want from your visit to Morocco, be it purely trekking, a cultural tour, project work or a geography based field trip, then we can help find you the best operator and work with you in establishing a suitable programme.



Suggested Itineraries

1 Week (Adventure tour)

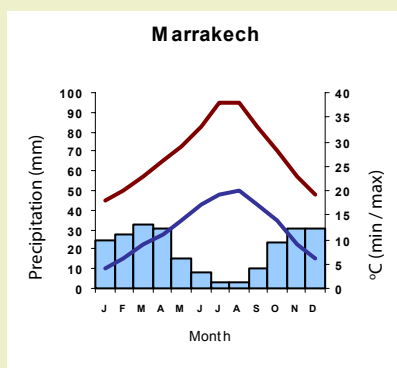
- DAY 1** Fly London/Marrakech.
2 Drive Zagora via Telouet Kasbah.
3 In Zagora; visit Amazrou village, Tamegroute sanctuary and Tinfou dunes; camel ride into the desert.
4 Drive to Tata via Fom-Zguid and Tissint.
5 Drive into Anti-Atlas mountains to Tagoudiche.
6 Walks in village and foothills; optional ascent of Jebel Lekst (2359m).
7 Short walk to Tamaloukt; drive to Marrakech.
8 In Marrakech, fly London.

Geography & Climate

Morocco is a land of fertile plains, snow capped mountains, deserts and deep gorges. From the north east to the south west the Atlas Mountains form the backbone of the country and are a distinct divide between east and west. South and east of the Atlas lie the western fringes of the Sahara Desert with its spectacular dunes and rocky plateaux. To the west, are the fertile plains, coastal regions and the majority of the population.

Morocco's climate can be categorised into three main areas. The north and west of the country has a typically Mediterranean climate with hot summers and mild winters. In the mountainous regions the climate is governed primarily by altitude with heavy winter snow fall and snow cover lasting well into the summer. The Saharan regions receive little rainfall, but experience fierce temperatures in the summer and often bitterly cold nights.

Morocco can be visited year round, however the best time is generally considered to be our spring or autumn. Some areas such as the desert, Anti-Atlas, or Jebel Sahro are only worth visiting outside our summer months due to the high temperatures from May to September.



1 Week (Remote trekking in the Anti-Atlas)

- DAY 1** Fly to Agadir.
2 Drive to Taroudant for lunch; to Irghem.
3 Begin trek to village of Tagdicht.
4 Ascend Jebel Aklim (2531m).
5-7 Complete circuit of Aklim range; drive to Taroudant.
8 Return to Agadir and fly to London.

2 Weeks

As per 1 week Anti-Atlas trek itinerary (or an alternative in the Jebel Sahro) followed by a weeks cultural exploration of southern Morocco, taking in Marrakech, Taroudant, Essaouira, and /or The Dades or Draa Valleys. Also perhaps visit a local school.

3 - 4 Weeks

- DAY 1** Depart UK, arrive Casablanca .
2 In Casablanca, drive to Fes.
3 In Fes, visit medieval and modern sectors
4 Drive to Erg Chebbi and Sahara desert.
5 Camel ride Sahara desert, drive to Dades Gorge.
6 Visit Berber villages en route to Ouarzazate.
7 Drive to Marrakesh.
8/9 In Marrakesh, visit medinas, palaces and gardens.
10 Drive to Azzadene Valley, commence trek.
11/14 Trek through Berber villages.
15 Ascend Mt Toubkal (4167m).
16 Complete trek.
17 - 20 Community project in Berber village.
21/23 Drive to Essaouira, explore historic port.
24 Drive to Casablanca.
25 In Casablanca, return to UK.

National Holidays

Muslim dates (vary with the Muslim year)

Muslim New Year

Birth of the prophet Mohammed

Eid ul-Fitr

Eid ul-Adha

Jan 1: New Year's Day.

Jan 11: Proclamation of Independence.

May 1: Labour day.

July 30: Enthronement.

Aug 20: Revolution of the King and the People.

Aug 21: Birthday of King Mohammed VI.

Nov 6: Green March.

Nov 18: Independence Day.

Customs

Clothing should be conservative; avoid skimpy shorts or tops. Long sleeves and loose trousers or a long skirt will be more comfortable in the heat. Left hands are considered 'unclean' in Arabic cultures. Offering money with the left hand is especially insulting. The Muslim month of Ramadan (dates vary) involves fasting from dawn until dusk. Foreigners and non-Muslims are exempt, but consideration should be shown by not eating in public between these times.

Regulations & Red Tape

A full passport, valid for 6 months after your return date, is required for travel to Morocco. British passport holders do not currently need a visa for stays of up to 90 days in length.

Price Guide

Prices vary enormously depending on the length and style of trip required, and various other factors. A 1 week trek or cultural tour is likely to start from £750 per person including international flights. A 3 week expedition including a community project, extended trek and a cultural tour would be between £1200 and £1900.

Useful Addresses

Moroccan National Tourist Office

205 Regent Street, 2nd Floor, London, W1B 4HB. Tel: 0207 4370073
www.visitmorocco.org

Embassy of the Kingdom of Morocco in

the UK: 49 Queen's Gate Gardens, London SW7 5NE. Tel: 0207 581 5001/4. Opening hours: Mon-Fri 0930-1700

More Information

To discuss the travel and tour possibilities Morocco offers in greater detail, and to get free, impartial advice on suitable tour operators, please contact:

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