



6 Days

# Magical Morocco

Short on time? Join us on this 6-day adrenaline shot of all things Moroccan: Jellabas, carpet shops, snake charmers and mint tea; intricate souks, high mountain passes, ancient Kasbahs and spectacular sunsets. This culturally focused itinerary offers a unique insight into the landscapes and history of one of our favourite countries.

Dates: 22-27 July 2019, 28 Oct-2 Nov 2019, 25-30 May 2020, 19-24 October 2020

- ] Trekking in the Atlas Mountains
- ] Camel ride along the beach
- ] Surfing & yoga on the Atlantic Coast
- ] Souks & sights of Marrakech
- ] Moroccan magic, tea & tagines
- ] Holy shrines & ancient palaces



## About STC Escapes

STC Escapes is part of the STC Expeditions family. We've been organising adventurous school trips and expeditions since 2006. Over the years we have helped school groups summit 6000m peaks in the Himalaya and visit remote tribes deep in the rainforest clad interior of Venezuela. Not all the school trips we arrange are as adventurous as these, yet wherever we operate our key goal is to provide an exceptional educational travel experience.

### Escape the Classroom

The idea for **STC Escapes** and our range of holidays to *Escape the Classroom* came from our loyal tribe of teachers. We were tasked with providing an opportunity for teachers to travel together, relax, have fun and explore the world – without having to worry about looking after students at the same time! STC Escapes is about taking a group of teachers on an amazing adventure, helping you return to the classroom feeling refreshed and inspired.

### Magical Morocco - Trip Overview

With a foray into the wonders of Marrakech, the dramatic Atlas Mountains and an exploration of the wonderfully laid-back coastal town of Essaouira, this is the perfect journey to discover the warmth and welcome of magical Morocco.

**Duration:** 6 days

**Dates:** 22-27 July 2019, 28 Oct-2 Nov 2019, 25-30 May 2020, 19-24 October 2020

**Trip Grading:** Physical 2/5, Culture 3/5, Comfort 3/5

**Cost:** £650 land only, £850 including flights (optional single supplement)

**Focus:** Adventure

**Summary:** 6 day expedition in Morocco; 3 days of easy day walks, camel ride, surfing or yoga, sights & souks of Marrakech, 2 nights village house; 2 nights hotel/riad, 1 night wild camping.

### Itinerary

**Day 1** Arrive Marrakech - Berber Village

**Day 2** Trekking Atlas Mountains

**Day 3** Mountains to Sea

**Day 4** Essaouira, Camel ride

**Day 5** Marrakech

**Day 6** Return UK

### Cost

**Flights included:**

<b>Deposit</b>	£250	Due on booking
<b>Interim payment</b>	£250	Due 4 months prior to travel
<b>Final payment</b>	£350	Due 1 month prior to travel
<b>Total cost</b>	£850	Including flights

**Land only – meet in Marrakech:**

<b>Deposit</b>	£250	Due on booking
<b>Interim payment</b>	£250	Due 6 months prior to travel
<b>Final payment</b>	£250	Due 1 month prior to travel
<b>Total cost</b>	£750	Not including flights

### What's included

**During the trip:**

- ) Return international flights & airport departure taxes (unless land only)
- ) 6 day adventure; all activities as per itinerary
- ) 3 days of trekking in the Atlas Mountains
- ) Marrakech city tour & exploring Essaouira
- ) Camel ride along the coast
- ) Surfing or yoga class
- ) All accommodation
- ) All transportation in country
- ) All meals as set out in itinerary
- ) FREE trip t-shirt
- ) FREE Water-to-Go Bottle & access to daily water refills
- ) Bi-lingual, first aid-qualified STC Local Expedition Leader
- ) Assistant Leader from STC Expeditions
- ) 24/7 UK operational support whilst overseas
- ) Permanent operations team in your destination
- ) Travel insurance (this does not include cancellation and personal effects insurance)
- ) Group first aid kit and prescription meds pack
- ) Full support, safety management & emergency plans
- ) Carbon offsetting of all flights

**Before the trip:**

- ) Dedicated travel expert from STC Expeditions to help with planning your perfect adventure
- ) STC online portal
- ) Detailed pre-departure information including kit lists, visa and vaccination information
- ) ATOL financial protection

## What's not included

- ) UK airport transfers
- ) Visa if required (British nationals do not require a visa)
- ) Any necessary/optional inoculations
- ) Tips for guides, drivers and porters (approx. £25)
- ) Alcoholic drinks

## Day to Day Itinerary

### Day 1 Arrive Marrakech – Berber Village

The group and STC Assistant Leader meet at the UK airport 3 hours before our early morning flight to Marrakech. We arrive in time for lunch and in a completely different world! We meet our STC Local Expedition Leader on arrival and after introductions and a quick rest, we drive 2hrs from Marrakech to the small mountain town of Imlil – the starting point for expeditions to Mount Toubkal and beyond. From here we will begin a 1.5hr trek to the Berber village of Aremd, set deep in the Atlas Mountains. We will have an orientation walk around the village, meet local people and have a briefing from our Expedition Leader on what to expect from our Moroccan adventure. Life has changed little here over the years and our accommodation tonight will be a simple village house or 'gite'. Later we will have the opportunity to learn how to prepare real Moroccan mint tea and bake Berber flat bread. The best you ever tasted!

**Walking time:** approx. 1-2hrs

**Accommodation:** Village house/gite

**Meals:** L, D & Water-to-Go

### Day 2 Trekking in the Atlas Mountains

In the morning, we will trek up the Milzane Valley to the holy shrine at Sidi Chamharouch. This is the start of the journey to Toubkal and we will undoubtedly bump into local women with huge bales of scrub for their mules. Above the village of Sidi Chamharouch towers a huge painted rock famous all over Morocco. People with problems and those who are unhappy, visit this shrine to sacrifice a goat or chicken and share it with the village. They stay until they dream good thoughts and see a better future! With a picnic lunch high in the Atlas, we will trek back to Aremd for a peaceful night in our local house!



**Walking time:** approx. 5hrs

**Accommodation:** Village house/gite

**Meals:** B, L, D & Water-to-Go

### Day 3 Mountains to Sea

With a wave and a "salam alaykum" we descend to Imlil and after a short time exploring, we leave the Atlas and drive out to the wild Atlantic coast to visit and explore the town of Sidi Kaouki (approx. 5hrs) - starkly beautiful and famous for surfing and kite surfing. We enjoy a picnic lunch, while the Atlantic pounds the beach. This afternoon you can take part in a surfing lesson or a relaxing yoga class on the beach. Finally, we walk down the beach to our stunning camp at Sidi Mbark. Dinner will be served in our traditional Berber dining tent and stargazing fit in before bed!

**Walking time:** approx. 1-2hrs

**Accommodation:** Camping

**Meals:** B, L, D & Water-to-Go

### Day 4 Essaouira, Camel ride



You cannot visit Morocco and not ride on a camel, so before making our way to Essaouira we experience this local form of transport! We take a walk and camel ride along the stunning golden coastline. Essaouira is a UNESCO listed port town, famous for its handmade deep-sea fishing boats and seafood (1hr drive). Exploring the walled city and souks is an experience not to be missed and do make sure you keep some money for some local Berber curly toed slippers. Here we will experience a stunning sunset over the Atlantic before spending a restful night in a typical Riad.

**Accommodation:** Riad/Hotel

**Meals:** B, L & Water-to-Go (*feel free to find your own restaurant for dinner*)



## Day 5 Marrakech

After breakfast we take the road east back to Marrakech approx. 3hrs. It is possible to stop en-route to visit an Argan Oil Women's cooperative. These cooperatives have developed recently and made the commercial production of Argan Oil possible as well as made a difference to local women's lives. After we arrive in Marrakech, we enjoy lunch in a typical restaurant before experiencing the hustle and bustle of this magical city, its souks and The Medina. As well as a fully guided tour of the city, we will also visit the Bahia Palace. Built in the late 19th Century, this is a stunning collection of buildings and gardens which housed the hareem and concubines of the Grand Vizier (prime minister) of the Sultan. Tonight, we meet for a final group meal & party!

**Accommodation:** Riad/Hotel

**Meals:** B, L, D & Water-to-Go

## Day 6 Return UK

An early rise this morning for a traditional Moroccan breakfast before our transfer to Marrakech Airport and flight back to the UK.

**Meals:** B & Water-to-Go

*Whist every effort will be made to follow this schedule, in the event of unforeseen problems there may be slight changes made. We will do our best to make your trip as enjoyable and hassle-free as possible.*

"Having been involved in trips to many far-flung places, it was really striking how quick, easy and cost-effective Morocco is to offer a real taste of adventure and experience...  
'where the magic happens'..."

**S.H. Portsmouth Grammar School, 2018**

## Morocco Video

Click on the image below to watch a short video of a teacher trip to Morocco with STC Expeditions in 2018!



## Itinerary Map

You will see a variety of terrain in this 6 day itinerary from the Atlas Mountains to the Atlantic Coast and magical Marrakech.

Click on the map below to browse your itinerary online.



## Kit & Equipment

You will receive a detailed Kit List, specific to this itinerary, on the STC online portal once signed up. Here you will also find general kit advice and a range of discounts with outdoor retailers.

Below are a few examples of the main kit & equipment items you will need:

- ) Walking boots
- ) Large rucksack or duffle bag (55-70 ltr)
- ) Smaller rucksack for daily items (20-30 ltr)
- ) Season 2-3 sleeping bag & liner
- ) Extra sleeping mat (optional as one will be provided)
- ) Lightweight jacket
- ) Walking trousers, shorts & t/shirts
- ) Personal first-aid & hygiene kit
- ) Sun hat

## Climate

Morocco's climate can be categorised into three main areas. The north and west of the country have 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.

July, whilst hot, is a perfect time to visit Morocco for this itinerary. Average temperatures are 29°C and cooler overnight. Bring cool loose fitting clothes for hotter days and a warm jumper or lightweight jacket for the evenings.

For more information on Morocco climate, please visit the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) website:

<http://worldweather.wmo.int/en/city.html?cityId=180>

## Trip Grading

### Physical Rating: 2/5

**Grade 2:** Some low-level physical activities included in your trip, including walking on uneven terrain, maybe a morning/afternoon trek of two to four hours. That said, no physical preparation is required to make the most of the tour. High humidity and temperatures can occur at certain times of the year.

### Cultural Rating: 3/5

**Grade 3:** Expect some culture shock. You'll be exposed to signs of poverty. The food will be quite different to home and English, whilst still spoken, will be less prevalent. Respecting the local culture will make it easier to fit in and get the most out of your trip. We're likely to visit remoter locations on this tour where access to western style services may be sporadic. Often on trips of this grading there are parts of the itinerary which are more remote, interspersed with sections which are more 'comfortable'.

### Comfort Rating: 3/5

**Grade 3:** The accommodation on this trip will be a mixture of basic accommodation, usually traditional of the destination, and some camping. There may be basic washing facilities for the nights under canvas. Journey times are generally only a few hours at a time in private vehicles. This grade suggests there may be lower standards of cleanliness than the UK and you should expect to embrace a day or two without spa showers!

## Accommodation

- ) Village houses/traditional gite - basic Berber accommodation where the bed may be a mattress on the floor
- ) Hotel accommodation – twin sharing
- ) Camping – mountain tents (twin sharing) and a communal dining tent. Toilets and wash hand basins provided.

## Single supplement

Accommodation will be allocated on a twin sharing and 'single sex' basis. If travelling with a friend or partner, you will be able to request to share your room with them when completing your online booking form.

You can purchase a single supplement if you wish for days 3-6 (not possible in village house/gite) for an additional £50. This will be added on to your final balance payment.

## Food

Morocco really is a destination of culinary delights! Most food is locally grown and homemade.

Breakfast, lunch and dinner are included as set out in the itinerary. This does not include dinner in Essaouira (Day 4) where you are welcome to explore the seaside town and enjoy dinner in smaller groups, or to meet the rest of the group for a team meal.

**Breakfast** – fried eggs, bread, pancakes, pastries, goat's cheese, orange juice and Moroccan mint tea.

**Lunch & Dinner** – typically a curry cooked and served in a tagine with cous cous, bread and olives. Lunch is usually the biggest meal of the day.

Dietary requirements can almost always be catered for so long as you inform us with enough notice. Please record any allergies or dietary requirements on your online booking form.

## Modes of Travel

Transport on this trip will be by:

- ⦿ Private coach or minibus
- ⦿ Camels
- ⦿ Trekking

**Trekking:** This mode of transport is as old as time and is tried and tested to ensure you can absorb all the environment has to offer! Your feet, legs and back may get sore with the miles racked up so look after them! If you're carrying a bag you may get sores on your shoulders or bottom of your back due to the sweat. However, trekking can take you to amazing remote locations - places that trucks and bikes simply can't. Yes, there is a physical price to pay for the great rewards, but you will have earned the feeling of accomplishment afterwards. A great bonus is that often you're away from light pollution and the stars will be utterly fantastic!



## Country Information

**Full Country Name:** The Kingdom of Morocco

**Area:** Total: 446,550 sq. km

**Population:** 35.3 million

**Capital City:** Rabat

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

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

**Time:** GMT. Flight time from Gatwick to Marrakech approx. 3 hrs 30 minutes

### Country Overview

Kingdom of Morocco is the most westerly of the North African countries known as the Maghreb - the "Arab West". It is one of the most diverse countries in Africa, with high mountains, sweeping desert, rugged coastline, and the

winding alleyways of ancient medina cities and souks. Its rich culture is a blend of Arab, Berber, European and African influences.

## Morocco



### Geography

Morocco spans from the Atlantic Ocean, through mountainous areas, to the Sahara desert. Morocco is a Northern African country, located in the extreme north west of Africa on the door of continental Europe. The strait of Gibraltar separates Spain and Morocco with a 13km span of water. It borders the North Atlantic Ocean to the west and the west Mediterranean Sea to the north. Morocco is host to two large mountain regions: The Atlas Mountains are located mainly in the centre and the south and the Rif Mountains are in the North. To the west of the country, along the Atlantic coast, rich coastal plains stretch from Tangier to Agadir. In the extreme South-East of the country, the lands are usually arid, due to their proximity to the Sahara Desert.

### Cultural considerations

Morocco is primarily a Muslim country. Respect local traditions, customs, laws and religions and be aware of your actions, ensuring they don't offend, especially during the holy month of Ramadan or when visiting religious areas. You should dress modestly. Women should avoid wearing shorts and sleeveless tops away from tourist resorts. For more information see [www.guide.culturecrossing.net](http://www.guide.culturecrossing.net)

### Regulations & Red Tape

A full passport is required for travel to Morocco. British passport holders do not currently need a visa for stays of up to 90 days in length. Before travelling, make sure your passport is not damaged; some travellers have been refused entry when travelling on damaged passports.

### Foreign Office Advice

You should familiarise yourself with up to date advice for travel to Morocco. This is available on the foreign office website: [www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/morocco](http://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/morocco) and contains useful information regarding safety and security, health and entry requirements.

### Health Information and Vaccine Advice

Shortly after booking, all our groups receive a trip specific health and vaccination briefing letter from our medical advisor. If you want to look up the latest health advice and recommended vaccinations for your destination prior to booking, please visit the TravelHealthPro country specific website on the following link:

<https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/country-details.php?cnt=154>

## Pre-departure information

All trip information will be available online on the STC Portal. Log in using the same details as when you first registered (you can click Forgot your Password if needed!). More information will be added in the build up to your trip and we will send you regular email updates, so you can plan and prepare as thoroughly as possible.

This information will include advice on:

- J Itinerary & flight details
- J Kit list, advice and discounts
- J Health & hygiene advice
- J Passport and visa requirements
- J Responsible travel guide
- J Country information
- J Training programme (if needed)
- J Booking conditions
- J Travel insurance policy
- J What to do in an emergency and emergency contact information
- J Team Facebook group
- J Sources of further information about your destination

## Meet the Team



3 months before your trip, you will be invited to join a Facebook Group created just for your trip. This is a great opportunity for you to get to know others in your group before you arrive at the airport. Get involved, ask questions and share travel stories!

## A Few FAQs

**What will the weather be like?** In July expect hot, dry days of high 20s (°C) and cooler evenings in late teens.

**Do I need a visa?** Not if you hold a British Passport. If you do not, seek advice from either your nationality consulate or us at STC Expeditions.

**How fit do I need to be?** The fitter you are the more you will enjoy your trip. If you are comfortable walking for up to 5hrs on uneven and undulating terrain, carrying a backpack of about 10kgs, you are at an appropriate level of fitness for this trip.

**What's the one meal I shouldn't miss?** Harira (lentil soup) to start, Tagine with Zaalouk (eggplant side dish) and Khobz (bread cooked in wood-fired oven)

**What about vaccinations?** You'll be able to consult a health and vaccination brief specific to your trip on the STC portal. We are unable to give further advice on vaccinations and recommend you consult your GP or local Travel Nurse.

**What currency shall I bring?** The local currency is Moroccan Dirham and £1 = 12.25 MAD (2018). You can bring pound sterling or euros to change in country.

*You will find more FAQs on our website.*

## Your STC Contact

Your travel plans are being coordinated by:

**Emma Anderson**

STC Expeditions  
6b King Street  
Exeter  
Devon  
EX1 1BH

Direct dial: 01392 790013

Office: 01392 660056

Email: [emma@thestc.co.uk](mailto:emma@thestc.co.uk)



## Responsible Tourism

We are the leading UK expedition company in responsible travel and the only to be Travelife and Child Safe Certified. Our ethos is to educate the next generation of responsible world travellers. You can rest assured any adventure planned with us will be sustainable and ethical.



Here are just a few examples which prove we practice what we preach:

- ) Carbon offsetting all flights and donating to Friends of Conservation
- ) Members of Tourism Concern's Ethical Tour Operators Group
- ) Eco Car Club
- ) Pledged to Travellers Against Plastic
- ) Employing local leaders
- ) Responsible tourism training to in country staff and within UK schools to students and teachers alike
- ) Banned use of single use plastic water bottles, instead we give you a free Water-to-Go Bottle
- ) Policy against elephant riding and other unethical wildlife activities
- ) Fairtrade farm visits in our itineraries to Fairtrade coffee in the office!

## Safety & Risk

As an overseas expedition and Duke of Edinburgh provider, we exceed the industry standards in terms of our attitude to safety and risk. We have an unblemished safety record and are confident when we say you couldn't be in better hands.

We are British Standard BS8848:2014 compliant, hold an AALA License and are a Duke of Edinburgh Approved Activity Provider. We also have extremely comprehensive and rigorous systems in place concerning crisis response, safety management, risk assessment and pre-travel screening.

[CLICK HERE](#) for more information on our safety & back up.

## Financial Protection

All the flight inclusive tours and expeditions offered by STC Expeditions are financially protected by the ATOL scheme.

Our ATOL license number is **11054**.

On booking, you will be supplied with an ATOL Certificate. Please see our booking conditions for further information or for more information about financial protection and the CAA website for more details on the ATOL Certificate:

<https://www.caa.co.uk/ATOL-protection/Consumers/About-ATOL/>



"Friendly, organized, ethical, caring, good fun, realistic, honest, safe, enthusiastic, humble, knowledgeable, respectful.."

D.S. Abbotsholme School, 2018

## How to Book

First, please register your interest by contacting Emma at STC Expeditions. You will then receive a digital booking pack by email to sign up.

To sign up, you will need to complete an online booking form and pay the deposit.

Email: [info@thestc.co.uk](mailto:info@thestc.co.uk)

Call: 01392 660056

After registering your interest, you will receive the digital booking pack within 1 working day. This provides information on how to complete the online booking form and make the deposit payment.

### Deposit & Payment Plan

**Deposit payment** – of £250 is payable along with completion of an online booking form to secure your place on the trip.

**Payments accepted** - directly to STC Expeditions by BACS transfer or cheque. Regretfully we are not able to accept credit card payments or take payments over the phone.

**Payment Plan** – we will invoice you for the interim and final balance payments approx. 10 days before they are due. These can be paid by BACS transfer to the same account as the deposit.

**Flights included -**

<b>Deposit</b>	£250	Due on booking
<b>Interim payment</b>	£250	Due 6 months prior to travel
<b>Final payment</b>	£350	Due 1 month prior to travel
<b>Total cost</b>	£850	Including flights

**Land only** - You can book your own flights to Morocco if you prefer. Please note it is therefore your responsibility to meet us on the specified date and time for the trip to start and we cannot be held responsible otherwise.

<b>Deposit</b>	£250	Due on booking
<b>Interim payment</b>	£250	Due 6 months prior to travel
<b>Final payment</b>	£250	Due 1 month prior to travel
<b>Total cost</b>	£750	Not including flights

### Join the Conversation

We don't just 'do' Escape the Classroom trips! Follow us on social media for new travel inspiration, responsible travel news and ideas for school trips [@stcadventures](https://www.instagram.com/stcadventures).

