



20 Days

Morocco

Summit to sea expedition

Mountains and sand dunes, camels and Berbers! This 20-day expedition is a fantastic immersion into Morocco. From the bustling medieval cities, majestic mountainscapes of the High Atlas to the arid landscape of the Sahara, Morocco provides the perfect setting for this adventurous and cultural expedition. Welcome to 'Idraren Draren' Mountain on Mountains. A challenging climb of North Africa's highest peak, Mt Toubkal (4167m) as well as a camel trek in the stunning Sahara with nights spent under the stars are on the menu. A trip to Morocco would not be complete without a visit to Marrakech to soak up the atmosphere and barter with the locals. An all-round fantastic adventure that will stay with students forever.



Recommended expedition itinerary

Day
1

Arrive Marrakech

Arrive in Marrakech and transfer to your hotel. Depending on the time of your flight we may have time to explore the city and take in some of the wonderfully atmospheric souks and markets. In the evening, during dinner near the famous Djemaa el Fna square, we will also have a short language lesson (optional) to help with some basic phrases during the trip.

Day
2

Marrakech cookery class

This morning you head out and visit the souq and mix with the local Marrakeshi as you shop for the fresh produce for your meal; meat and vegetables, herbs and spices that form the basis of Moroccan cuisine. This is the perfect opportunity to try out your new language skills learnt the night before. In Morocco cooking spices are used extensively and have been imported here for thousands of years. There are also many home grown ingredients like saffron from Tiliouine, mint and olives from Meknes as well as oranges and lemons from Fez.

During your hands-on cookery class, the chef will teach you how to make traditional dishes that are central to Moroccan cuisine. Along the way you'll learn about the spices and key ingredients needed to make authentic fare. Among the most famous Moroccan dishes are couscous, pastilla, tajine, tanjia and harira. Although the latter is a soup it is considered as a dish in itself especially during the month of Ramadan. It's often served with delicious local dates. For lunch you get to savour the gastronomic delights of your morning cookery class, while enjoying the riad setting. Finally head back to Djemaa el Fna Square where we can enjoy a freshly squeezed glass of orange juice from the local market stalls. After our rest stop we continue with a tour of the markets and Bahia Palace. In the evening we have dinner at a restaurant near Djemaa el Fna.

Day
3

Atlas Mountains

This morning we head out of colourful Marrakech and head into the mountains (approx 90 minutes) to the Imlil valley. Our day will be based in the village of Aguersioual, a traditional village of around 40 houses built into the mountainside overlooking Mount Toubkal, Africa's 3rd highest mountain at 4167 meters. After our journey (around 1.5 hours) we have an orientation walk around what will be our home for the next 6 days. There is a women's association in Imlil, depending on the time of year we can visit this to talk to the local women in the village and learn more about life in a rural community. We stay overnight in a traditional gite (6 nights). A gite d'étape consists of a basic village house with simple dormitory rooms each with space for approximately 6 people per room. Communal facilities usually consist of a couple of showers and toilets. Dinner will be prepared for us in the gite.

Day
4

Berber life

During the day we'll split up into smaller groups as we learn about traditional cooking techniques used. We'll prepare a tagine (which we'll get to eat later) and experience traditional bread making. We'll also learn about the important role of subsistence agriculture, the crops they grow, the way they rear and look after their livestock and the importance of water management in this arid area. The day will also provide a fascinating insight into the close community of the Berber people and the different roles men and women play in this community. In the afternoon further activities will take place, depending on the time of year this could include time to observe the harvest of fruit in the orchards, management of livestock including milking (all done by hand) or preparation and preservation of produce to sell in the market. Please note this is not a touristic activity; we will be guests of our ground agent's family.





Day
5-8

Project work

The next 4 days are set aside as specific project working days – the exact nature of the project will depend on what the school want to get out of their time and what help the local community needs. There is a village association that will meet to discuss the needs of the community and put forward suggestions and it is often the case that we won't have exact details of the project work until nearer the time.

Day
9-13

Treks

9 We start our 5 day trek today (1750m) with a leisurely pace as we walk for around 3 hours to Tizi Oussef. The valleys are home to tiny hamlets and villages of the ethnic Berbers, a herding and farming community. **10** Today's walking (1900m) is around 4 hours as we trek up Azzaden valley to Azib Tizikert at the foothills of Aguelzim. **11** Following the mule trail you hike up to the base of the Aguelzim pass (3520 m). From the pass you will have great views across to Djebel Toubkal. Descent to Neltner camp. **12** Today is summit day. Standing at 4167m Jebel Toubkal is the highest peak in North Africa. You may encounter some sections of scree and snow but these are safe to pass over and the route is non technical, there will be around five hours of walking. On a clear day the views from the summit extend all the way to Marrakech, so it's well worth the effort. **13** We descend back down to Aremd today (around 3 hours walking) for our last day of trekking.

Day
14

Aremd—Taroudant

We are reunited with our driver today as we head over the spectacular Tizi n Test pass to Taroudant, a walled Berber market town situated just south of the High Atlas mountains and to the North of the Anti Atlas Mountains in the heart of the beautiful Souss Valley. It's a great place to experience the real Morocco, with charming souks and wonderfully varied local geography. Overnight hotel.

Day
15-18

Coastal Treks

15 After a short visit to the Medina of Taroudant we drive back into the mountains to the village of Immouzer des Ida Outanane. Overnight camp. **16** Drive via the Paradise valley to the Atlantic coast and on the main road up north in direction of Essaouira. Meet the camelhandlers enroute and begin the trekking along the coast. Approx. 2 h **17** We continue our coastal trek up to Sidi Mbark. Approx. 5 h. **18** Continue the trek along the coast with approximately 3:30 hours of walking today ending at Sidi Kaouki. Drive to Essaouira, approx. 45 min. Essaouira is one of Morocco's most attractive coastal cities. The wild waves of the Atlantic crash remorselessly onto the rocky coastline of this old pirate's hideout. Portuguese, Berber and French battlements encircle the maze of narrow lanes with tiny cafes looking out onto small squares. Two fortresses look out over the ocean and on an offshore island stands another even larger castle. As befits a seaport, the pace of life is more relaxed here and the whitewashed streets lend a truly Mediterranean air to the city. We recommend a stroll around the lively old port that is full of colour and interest. The early morning is the best time when fishermen can be seen bringing in their catch or mending their nets. Whilst the Atlantic Ocean is not the warmest for swimming there is an expansive beach which you can relax on. You could walk along to the crumbling castle at the end of it – reputedly the inspiration for Jimi Hendrix's 'Castles made of Sand'. Hotel -1 night

Day
19-20

Essouira—Marrakesh—UK

We have a free morning to relax in Essaouira before heading back to Marrakech. Hotel – 1 night. Day 20 sees us transfer back to the airport for our flight home after breakfast. With heads full of Moroccan memories!

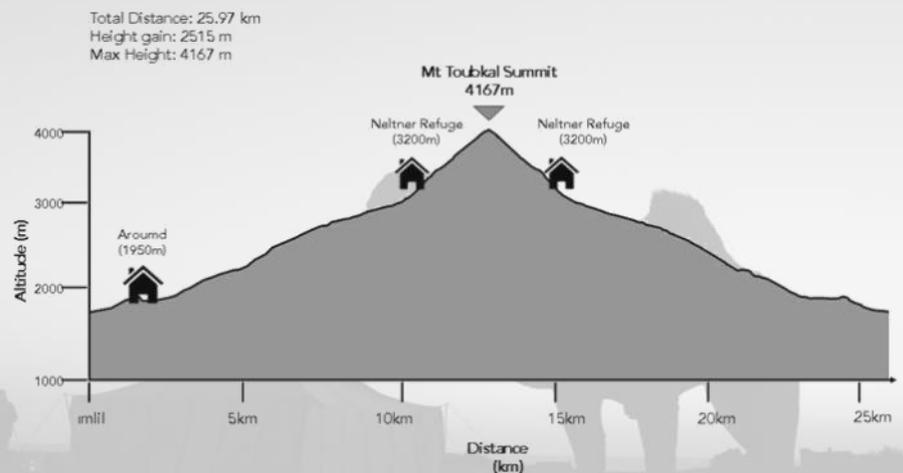
Further information

Look what's included!

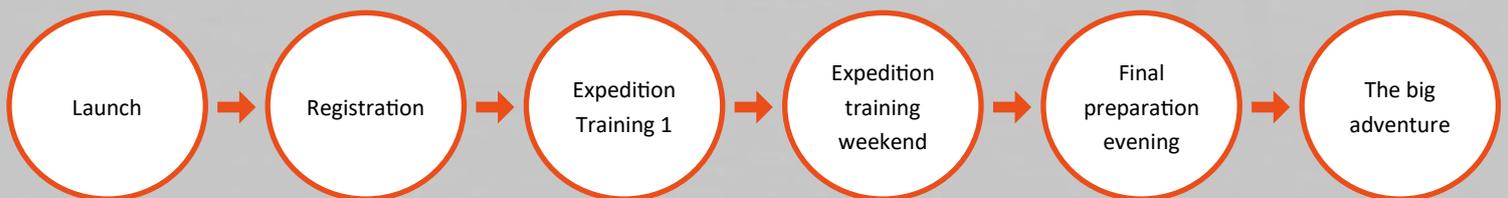
- International flights
- All accommodation
- All food
- All transportation and activities
- Bi-lingual, first-aid qualified local expedition leader
- Parent and student expedition launch evening
- Comprehensive pre-expedition training programme
- 1-day offsite safety INSET day for staff
- ATOL financial protection
- Medical Emergency / Repatriation Travel Insurance
- Group first aid kit and prescription meds pack
- BS8848 safety management and risk assessments
- Detailed pre-departure information and kit lists
- Comprehensive teacher travel packs
- Permanent operations team in your destination
- 24-hour UK operational support whilst overseas
- Carbon offsetting of all flights
- Free t-shirt for every participant and teacher

What's excluded?

- Transport to airport in UK
- Drinks (advice will be given on purification of water)
- Visas or tourist cards if required
- Any required inoculations
- Personal spending money
- Tips for guides, drivers and porters
- Airport departure taxes paid locally
- Cancellation and personal effects insurance



Your expedition timeline



Physical expedition rating:

● ● ● ● ○ 4/5

Fitness is important at this grade, which compares to extended walking in mountainous terrain such as the Lakes or Snowdonia, for up to three to five days in a row. It is likely that significant sections of a trip will involve walking and trekking with some days up to eight hours. Some of the trip could be at altitudes of up to 4,500m, but the itinerary will be designed with appropriate acclimatisation in mind. Be prepared for significant possible variations in temperatures throughout the tour. There is not usually time to 'get fit' on these treks, so a two to four month fitness improvement programme would ensure you get the most out of the trip.

Culture shock rating:

● ● ● ● ○ 4/5

Students joining trips at this level will find the comforts of home are more of a rarity – or viewed another way, a welcome luxury. English is unlikely to be widely spoken and the food will be quite different to home, perhaps for extended sections of the trip. You should observe local customs so not to cause offence. You'll be exposed to signs of poverty and accommodation in some locations is likely to be basic. Whilst a challenge, destinations and trips at cultural level 4 are also a fantastic opportunity to see a very different part of the world.



A journey of 1,000 miles...

Starts with a single step... Contact us now to start your expedition journey



1 Get your tailor-made proposal and further information

If this itinerary doesn't quite scratch your expedition itch then let us tailor-make one for you. Our wealth of experience and expert in-country contacts means we can design an itinerary just for you. Contact us for more information and a detailed quote.

2 Ask for risk assessments and marketing materials

We can provide initial risk assessments and destination threat assessments to help you with your expedition approval process. Ask for posters and your pre-booking information pack too.

3 Arrange an expedition launch evening at your school

This is a chance for students and parents to hear more about the expedition with a comprehensive information evening with opportunity for questions.



t: 01392 660056 | e: schools@thestc.co.uk | w: www.thestc.co.uk