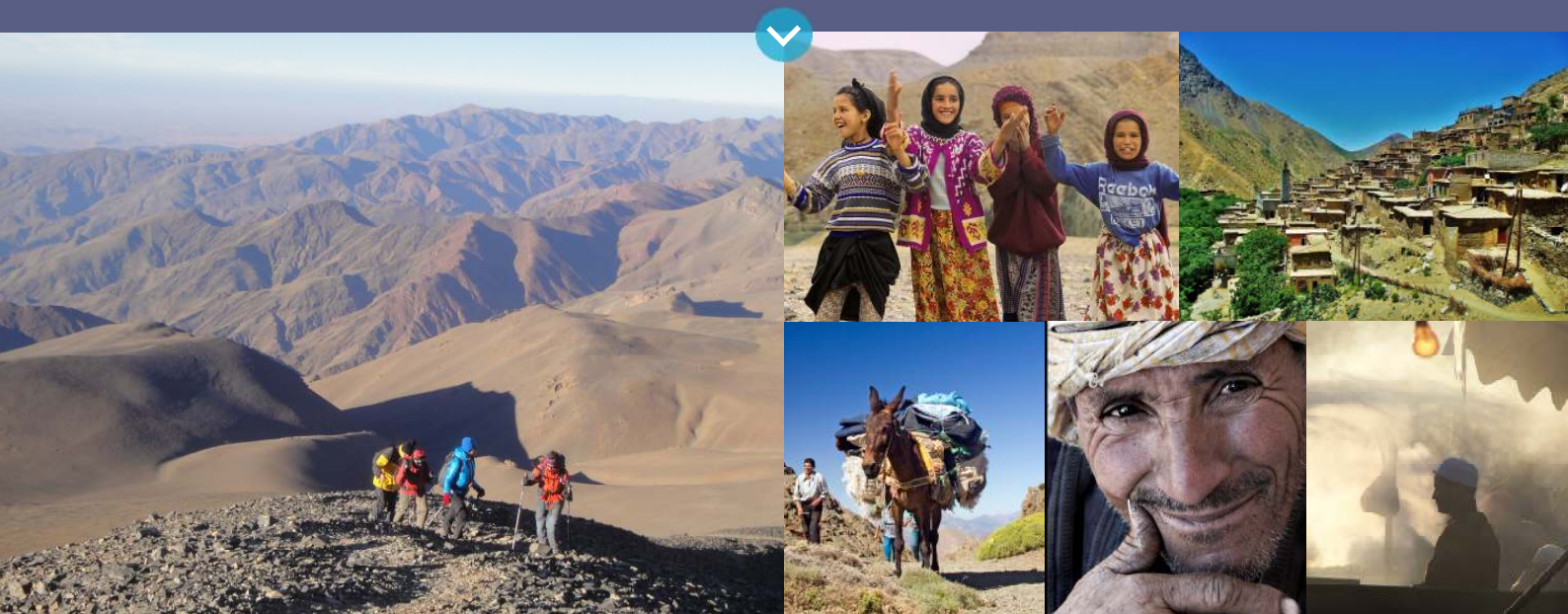


Morocco

Grand Atlas Traverse



An exceptional expedition experience; this unique trip is one of our flagship old school expeditions. Far removed from the crowds of the Toubkal region, it's a tough undertaking, yet one which takes schools on an extraordinary journey through the snow-capped mountains, dramatic canyons and remote villages of the Central High Atlas Mountains. On this extended journey, Morocco will slowly seep into your soul as you gain access to a region, people and way of life that has changed little over the centuries. We finish with the bustling mayhem of Marrakech and an opportunity to reflect on a stunning journey that will change your global perspective and open up a world of adventure.



Recommended itinerary

Culture shock rating: 
Physical rating: 

Day 1: Fly from the UK to Marrakech. On arrival in Marrakech we are met and transferred to our hotel. Overnight Hotel.

Day 2: We transfer to Imilchil 2100 m, then start trekking to Oulghazi 2120 m. Approximately a 2 hour trek. Overnight camp.

Day 3 - 4: We begin our trek, passing through Berber villages in the Melloul Valley. Via the gorges and along the Asif Melloul River to Timicha 1900 m. Walk through the (usually shallow) water part of the way. Approximately a 5 hour trek. Overnight camp. The walk on day 4 is largely in the river gorges and from time to time we will cross the river. If the water level is too high, we will use another trail, but in the summer months we should be fine. Reach Batli camp at 1600 m and set up camp for the evening. Today is a tougher day of approximately 7 hours trekking. Overnight camp.

Day 5: This morning we ascend through the pine forest to a pass at about 1840 m. Below us is our destination – the small remote mountain village of Ait Boulmane 1520 m. Today's trek is approximately 5 hours and we will reach the village around mid-afternoon. Tonight we have a little more comfort as we stay in the village house.

Day 6: After four days on the move, we have a break and relax in the wonderful surroundings of the mountains. There is an optional visit to the local Hamam to ease any sore muscles from the first part of our trek. Overnight village house.

Day 7: Today we are back on the trail, as we head along the valley and then hike up to the high pasture plateau of Ait Abdi to reach the camp at Imeder 2200 m. This is one of the longer days on the trek at approximately 7 hrs. Overnight camp.

Day 8: We trek via the high pass of 2750 m to Agoudal n'llamchal 2450 m. before setting up our camp again for the evening. Our trek today is approximately 5 hours. Overnight camp.

Day 9: Today we ascend to another pass, then follow the trail to the dramatic Taghia canyon where we camp at 2500 m. Approximately 4 hours. The descent into the canyon is very steep, without a trail, and only for very good and safe walkers who do not suffer vertigo, but this is an optional excursion – those who want to remain in the camp may do so. The canyon trek adds approximately another 3 hours. Overnight Camp.

Day 10: Trek up to a pass of 3000 m, followed by a long descent to Izourar lake (mostly dried out in summer). Another long day at approximately 7 hours, but we will be supremely fit by now and the endless dramatic mountain scenery and remote location adds to the sense of adventure! Overnight camp.

Day 11: Start with a descent into the fertile Ait Hkim valley where we follow the valley floor to the village of Ikhh n'Ighir 1850 m. Approximately 5 hours. Overnight in a Village House

Day 12: Free day in Ait Bougumez 1850 m Having finished the first section of our trek, we have a rest day in the village to sort out our kit and tend to any aches and pains. We also can start thinking ahead to the project over the coming days and discussing with the locals how we plan to tackle the tasks ahead of us. Overnight in a village house

Day 13-15: Project work The exact nature of the project the group will undertake in the village will depend on what help the local community needs at the time of our visit. The Village Association will meet to discuss the needs of the community and put forward suggestions of work they would like to be done. It is likely that we won't have the exact details of the project we will be working on until nearer the time of our visit. Previous groups have built incinerators, repaired footbridges and paths, planted cacti on the hill sides to prevent soil erosion and laid water pipes and drainage ditches. Whatever you end up doing, these days spent among the villages in the company of local families will be an undoubted highlight of our time in Morocco.

Day 16: Start Mt Mgoun ascent Saying goodbye to our hosts, we walk along the Bougumez valley to Arous and start the ascent to the high pasture of Ikkis. Camp at 2390 m. Trek is approximately 5 and a half hours. Overnight camp

Day 17: We gradually ascend up a narrow valley to a false pass, from here we follow a balcony trail to the Tizi n'Tarkeddid pass at 3400 m. We cross the pass and reach the camp on the plateau at the source of Tessaout river. Approximately 4 to 5 hours trekking.

Day 18: Summit climb Mgoun 4068 m. We leave early in the morning and hike up to a ridge in the mountain chain of Mgoun. With several ups and downs ranging in altitude of 3800 to 4020 m, we follow the long ridge to the main summit of Mgoun, with spectacular views all around us. After a rest at the summit we return the same way back to our camp at Tarkeddid. Approximately 8 hours trekking. Overnight camp

Day 19: Today we start our descent back to civilisation and leave the high altitudes via two low passes and trek down, part of the trail is very steep, into the Tessaout valley. Camp at Amezrai 2250 m. This is also the end of the trekking part of the expedition. Approximately 5 hours. Overnight camp

Day 20 -21: Mountain biking Today we swap boots for bikes and cycle along the upper Tessaout valley to Ait Ali n'Ito. The route is mostly downhill and takes approximately 3 hours. In the afternoon we visit the village of Megdaz 2140 m. In the evening we stay at a small local hotel. We continue cycling the next day to the natural bridge of Imi n'Ifri where we are picked up by our vehicles and transferred back to Marrakech. Approximately 5 hours cycling and 2 hours road transfer. Overnight Hotel.

Day 22 - 23: Marrakech We have two days to explore this vibrant and magical city beginning with a morning walking city tour of the highlights, with plenty of time to explore the markets and souks that make this city so famous. On the final evening, we celebrate with a big meal out at a local restaurant.

Day 24: Transfer to the airport and fly back to the UK.

It is important to realise that the itinerary needs to be flexible. While every effort will be made to follow the above schedule, in the event of political problems, airline schedule changes or natural events, we will do our best to make your trip as enjoyable and hassle-free as possible, but it is important to EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED and be prepared to accept some slight changes. Relax and have faith in your guides.



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