

Tours 2026

7 DAYS: MARRAKECH, HIGH ATLAS, TODRA GORGE & SAHARA AT MERZOUGA

An exclusive immersion of 7 days in the heart of Morocco

TRIP OVERVIEW

This tour takes in the very best of Morocco, a tour that is ideal for groups that either for a specifically geography focussed tour as well as for a more broadly educational, cross curricular tour. This tour's itinerary includes Marrakech, the High Atlas, the Valley of a Thousand Kasbahs, the Todra Gorge and the glorious Erg Chebbi sand sea in the Sahara (by Merzouga). As a result, many aspects of both physical and human geography are encountered. For physical geography, the High Atlas allows topics such as mountain building, earth forces, river processes and their forms to be viewed (and on a very grand scale). On entering the Sahara, arid landscape processes and their forms are then encountered. Both the positives and negatives of living in these very different environments, mountain and hot desert, can be evaluated. For human geography, in Marrakech, aspects of city life in a developing country are seen, contrasting the Old Medina with the new Guilez area. Moving into the High Atlas, the contrasting rural lifestyle of the Berber people is encountered. In the Sahara, it is the Bedouin people whose lives are seen. As well as seeing and experiencing these aspects of human geography, many development topics and issues can be discussed in the light of "seeing the reality". For cultural understanding, Morocco has much fascination to appreciate too. Aspects of religion and deeply rooted rural traditions are fascinating to learn about.







TRIP OVERVIEW (CONTINUED)

NOTE: Although this tour is best covered in 7 days, it can be completed in 6 days, depending on flight times (we can advise on this; a 6 day tour version needs a morning arrival flight on Day 1 and an evening departure flight on Day 6). THIS TOUR'S HIGHLIGHTS Marrakech, its vibrancy, colour and clamour The Dramatic Landscapes of the High Atlas mountains Tizi-n-Tichka Pass The Valley of a Thousand Kasbahs along the Dadès Valley The Valley of the Roses The Todra Gorge The Sahara by Merzouga The vast Erg Chebbi Sand Sea Camel ride Saharan Sunset/Sunrise Saharan starry night skies Overnight in a Bedouin Camp Bedouin drumming and singing under the stars Tizi-n-Tnififft Pass Ouarzazate, the Peaceful City Aït Benhaddou Kasbah, a UNESCO World Heritage Site



TRIP OVERVIEW & INCLUSIONS

INCLUDED SERVICES

✓ 5 x nights hotel accommodation on a half board basis; twin/triple rooming for pupils; single rooms for teachers; 1 night in a Bedouin Camp on a half board basis (twin/triple tents for pupils;

✓ An ATS Moroccan Courier, English speaking, throughout, to help with all practical and logistical matters

✓ A City Guide on 2 occasions for visiting the Medina

✓ Camel ride in Merzouga (1 camel per participant) with camel leaders

✓ 2 x large bottles of water per person, per day on the coach

✓ Lunches on 7 days

✓ Film Studio visit in Ouarzazate

✓ Optional items that can be added at a supplement:

✓ Soft drinks with a lunch and/or an evening meal

✓ Entry to the Majorelle Gardens, Marrakech

✓ Entry to the Water Museum, Marrakech

✓ A Day in Douar Oulad Elguern village (See the Single Day Itinerary Options section)

NOT INCLUDED

× Personal Insurance & Group Insurance

× Personal spending

× Tips

× All other items not mentioned in the WHAT ANZAL TOURS INCLUDES list

DETAILED ITINERARY

1 ARRIVE MARRAKECH; MEDINA VISIT, SOUKS AND APOTHECARY

EDUCATIONAL TOPICS: Contrasting Cultures; Developing World City; World Heritage Site Arrive into Marrakech Menara Airport and transfer to hotel. Depending on flight time, walk to the Old Medina. Here the city bustles and fascinates in equal measure. Take in a view of the Koutoubia Mosque, move across Jemaa el Fna Square and enter the Souks with a City Guide. A traditional Apothecary visit is included too. Overnight Marrakech



DETAILED ITINERARY

2 MARRAKECH > MARRAKECH PLAIN > HIGH ATLAS > TIZI-N-TICHKA PASS > OUARZAZATE

EDUCATIONAL TOPICS: Fold Mountains; River Systems; Small Scale Water Management; Flash Flooding; Berber Communities and Activities; Development Issues; Hazardous Environments; Climate Change First travelling across the Marrakech Plain, it's then up and over the High Atlas (highest peak in can often be seen, Mount Toubkal, 4,167m). The Berbers (the Mountain People) live here; to see their villages and to observe their everyday farmland and village activities is fascinating. Water is a very precious and life sustaining resource; its traditional management to lead it to the terraced fields is impressive. The Berbers' traditional pisé mud brick homes are seen plus the rapid, recent change to concrete construction. After Taddert lunch is taken. An Argan Oil Co-operative can be visited here (an example of rural development to help ladies' income). The recently improved N9 road continues to snake upwards to the Tizi-n-Tichka Pass (2,260m), the watershed of the High Atlas; great panoramic views over the mountain range and the road recently travelled. Descending the south facing slopes of the High Atlas there is much to still fascinate in the local Berber activities seen. A stop is made overlooking Zaouite Inkkal village; the many positive geographical factors influencing the site selection for this village can be discussed, and also the



DETAILED ITINERARY

3 VALLEY OF A THOUSAND KASBAHS > DADÈS VALLEY > TODRA GORGE

EDUCATIONAL TOPICS: Large Scale Water Management; Renewable Energy (Solar Project); Nomadic Pastoralism; Irrigated Agriculture; Climate Change; Development Issues; Urban Growth; River features (wadis and gorges) Departing Ouarzazate, heading eastwards, a stop is made at the very important reservoir of El Mansour. It provides water for domestic use, for farming and to generate hydro-electricity. In the very near vicinity is a major solar power plant development (unfortunately, a visit is not possible). Your group's journey then travels along the Valley of a Thousand Kasbahs, a kasbah being a fortified "fort" where chiefs and landowners once lived. Many kasbahs are now in disrepair (having been made of pisé mud). Between the small towns of this area you can see various farming activities, many still using traditional methods. Nomads to are often encountered, herding their sheep, goats and camels – look out for their tented encampments as you travel. At El Kelaa Mcgouna, the intensely cultivated plots of farmland are bordered by rose bushes. The rose petals are used in the cosmetic industry. In May a Rose Festival takes place, celebrating the year's production. Boumalne Dadès is a major town, bridging the Dadès River; a terrific overlook can be stopped at to take in the exotic landscape and activities. After Tinerhir, the journey continues towards the Todra



DETAILED ITINERARY

4 ERFOUD > RISSANI > MERZOUGA > SAHARA > ERG CHEBBI SAND SEA > SUNSET CAMEL RIDE

EDUCATIONAL TOPICS: Arid Landscapes and Landforms; Semi Desert and Desert Transition; Sand Dunes and their Management; Artesian Water; Climate Change; Different Cultures; Star Gazing The ever-increasing aridity and parched landscapes are entered on travelling towards the Sahara. Passing through many small towns (e.g. Tinejad, Melaah) often a market day can be encountered; lively, bustling and colourful. Erfoud is where your group's travels turn southwards. In Erfoud, "fossil capital" of this area, there is the opportunity to visit a craft workshop where the fossil rich rocks are skilfully changed into objects, some practical (e.g. tables) and some decorative (e.g. plates and bowls). On then to Rissani, a bustling market town, and then to Merzouga. By now the massive sand sea of Erg Chebbi will be looming on the forward horizon. Here the sand dunes rise to over 200m, covering a 35 square kilometre area – a classic Sahara scene. There it is time to take a camel ride into the sand dunes from your Bedouin Camp (where you will spend a night), to climb to a high vantage point and to watch the sun slowly set; a magical moment. NOTE: An option in Merzouga/Erg Chebbi is to use an hotel, if wished; this can be discussed. There is sure to be some traditional music after you evening meal. Pounding drum rythms and singing complete the Saharan atmosphere



DETAILED ITINERARY

5 ALNIF > JBEL SARHRO > TAZZARINE > NEKOB > ANTI ATLAS > TIZI-N-TINIFIFFT > OUARZAZATE

EDUCATIONAL TOPICS: Relic Limestone Pavement (historic Climate Change); Acacia Forests; Arid Landscapes and Landforms; Date Palmeraies; Development Issues; Bee keeping Project This journey is truly spectacular, traveling through a remote, empty land that borders the Sahara. Views are vast and extensive, with desert plains and high mountains and plateaux all around. This journey gives a real feeling of wilderness; it is awesome in its grandeur. The journey is wonderful. Stops can be made to “feel” this wilderness, to appreciate the wide skies and the lack of any human impact (other than the road!). Acacia forests are seen too, “umbrella shaped” trees, specially adapted to the harsh environments. Protected gazelle reserves too are passed (although sightings not expected). After Alnif, a lunch stop (and a place with fossil interest), it is on to the Draa Valley, a valley rich with date palmeries on the valley floor; very tasty too (many stall holders are seen, in the season, selling delicious dates). Turning north in the direction of Ouarzazate, it is then up and over the Anti Atlas and the Tizi-n- Tififfft Pass (1,660m); spectacular, of course. The river here has deeply incised the valley in the past and during flash floods of today, developing a polished rock channel floor; fascinating. It is a mini Grand Canyon! Overnight Ouarzazate



DETAILED ITINERARY

6 OUARZAZATE > AÏT BENHADDOU KASBAH > HIGH ATLAS > MARRAKECH

EDUCATIONAL TOPICS: Aït Benhaddou (World Heritage Site); Incised Meanders; Rural Development Issues; Rural Push and Urban Pull Factors; Communication Issues; Living in Hazardous/Challenging Environments In Ouarzazate fist take a stop at a Film Studio e.g. Atlas Studios (on the western outskirts of the city). A guided visit describes much about the activities of the Studios as you walk around the various sets; many good stories told by the Guide. Then your journey begins to take you over the High Atlas. Before the highest part of your High Atlas journey, about 45 minutes from Ouazazate, is Aït Benhaddou is a grand fortified settlement, now a World heritage Site and well worth a stop and a stroll. Aït Benhaddou is the most famous Kasbah in Morocco. It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The kasbah is believed to date from the 11th century. Its strategic location gave it a commanding position on the trans-Saharan trade route between Marrakech, Ouarzazate, and the Sahara. A wander amongst the fortified villages, through narrow alleyways and up stairways, is pleasant. Also, a climb to the old Granary at the top of the highest point in Aït Benhaddou gives expansive views of the surrounding area; you can easily imagine the yesteryear camel trains that would have once focused here. Many big movies have been partly filmed in Ait Benhaddou. These include



DETAILED ITINERARY

7 DEPARTURE DAY

Depending on your flight times, there may be the opportunity for more time to walk into Marrakech Medina (or, if you have en evening departure flight, at a supplement, spend 5-6 hours in Douar Oulad Elguern, a hugely impacting practical, “hands-on” day in a traditional village on the Marrakech Plain - see our Day Option Inserts page for full details of this) Another option are the Majorelle Gardens (once owned by Yves St Lauren). At a supplementary cost this can be added. The Gardens offer a most tranquil, a lush oasis by contrast to the Medina. Another option is the new and excellent Water Museum. At a supplementary cost this can be added. Transfer to airport NOTE: group should be at airport at least 3 hours before the scheduled time of your departure flight



Ready for adventure?

Contact our experts to tailor this trip to your preferences.

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