



## MESMERIZING MOROCCO & THE SAHARA DESERT TOUR

### Detailed Itinerary

#### **Sunday, April 6, 2025:**

Depart the USA for Morocco

#### **Monday, April 7, 2025: Arrive in Marrakech**

Upon arrival at the Marrakech Airport, you will be greeted with a warm welcome by our friendly representative and taken to your Riad/Hotel for your overnight stay. Upon arrival, take time to freshen up before enjoying a welcome dinner at the riad with your fellow passengers.

**Accommodations:** Riad Spa and Bahia Salam Hotel or similar

**Meals:** Dinner

#### **Tuesday, April 8, 2025: Marrakech**

After breakfast you will have a full day tour to discover Marrakech, the famous Red City. Your guide will take you to the most beautiful palaces and monuments of Marrakech, including the 19th century Bahia Palace, the 16th century Saadian Tombs, the Koutoubia Mosque, and the Majorelle Gardens. You will have lunch on your own in the Medina where you will also have an opportunity to visit the famous souks, where the merchants sell everything from leather and carpets to spices and jewelry. Next visit Jemaa el-Fnaa Square, one of the most famous town squares on earth. From ancient times until today, tradesmen, snake charmers, acrobats, magicians, mystics, musicians, and monkey trainers have populated this UNESCO World Heritage site.

**Accommodations:** Riad Spa and Bahia Salam Hotel or similar

**Meals:** Breakfast

#### **Wednesday, April 9, 2025: Ait Benhaddou – Ouarzazate – Skoura – El Kelaa M'gouna – Boumalen Dades**

After breakfast, depart your riad and drive through the Tizi-n-Tichka Pass, rising to an elevation of 6867 feet, while enjoying the stunning views of the High Atlas Mountains and picturesque Berber villages. We will then visit the exotic Kasbah of Ait Benhaddou, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Then have lunch on your own before visiting Atlas Studios, the largest movie studio in the world. Atlas Studios was host to such famous films and television shows as *Lawrence of Arabia*, *The Jewel of the Nile*, *The Mummy*, *Gladiator*, *The Man Who Would Be King*, *Vikings*, *Game of Thrones*, and *Aladdin* as well as several James Bond and Jason Bourne movies. Then transfer to the hotel where you will enjoy an included dinner.

**Accommodations:** Kasbah Hotel Xaluca Dades or similar

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

#### **Thursday, April 10, 2025 : Todgha Gorge – Tinjdad – Erfoud – Merzouga**

After breakfast, we will head toward Merzouga, stopping first at the spectacular Todgha Gorge where you can hike along the gorge floor between the canyon walls. We will then continue across the valley to Tinjdad where we will have lunch. After lunch, we will drive through Erfoud where we will visit an amazing fossil factory and learn how they excavate, polish, and shape trilobites, orthoceras, ammonites, and other fossils into beautiful objects. We will continue on to the Merzouga desert, arriving in the late afternoon. Upon arrival your camel guides will have your camels ready to take you on an adventure into the golden dunes of Erg Chebbi; the highest dunes in Morocco at 2400 ft elevation. You will enjoy beautiful scenery, an amazing sunset and the quietness of the Sahara desert before you arrive at your luxury Sahara desert camp. After check-in, delight in an authentic Moroccan dinner at the luxury camp.

**Accommodations:** Dunes Luxury Desert Camp or similar

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

#### **Friday, April 11, 2025: Merzouga – Sahara Sand Dunes Tour – Hassi Labied – Khamlia**

After breakfast you will take a guided tour of the sand dunes on a 4x4 allowing you to visit the black volcanic rocks of the region and visit a nomad family living in a tent. Then attend a cooking class with lunch where you will learn the art of Moroccan tagine cooking. After lunch, proceed to Hassi Labied where you will see the canal irrigation system and take a hike on the oasis located on the foot of the dunes. Next we visit Khamlia Village with special entertainment of the spiritual music of Gnawa, and visit the Lake Dayte Sarji which attracts pink flamingos and interesting wildlife. Then transfer to your hotel where you will enjoy an included dinner.

**Accommodations:** Auberge du Sud Hotel or similar

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

#### **Saturday, April 12, 2025: Ziz Valley – Errachiddia – Azrou – Ifran – Fes**

After breakfast, depart for Errachidia via Erfoud, Aoufous, and Ziz Valley, stopping for a panoramic view of the oasis of Aoufous in the Tafilalte region. Continue to Midelt across the pass of Tizi N'talghamt where you will have a lunch break. After lunch, you will be driven to Fes, the medieval city via the Cedar forest near Azrou and the Middle Atlas mountain range with the possibility to see the Barbary apes living in that region. Make a photo stop in Ifrane, known as the Switzerland of Morocco before being dropped off at your accommodations in Fes. Your evening is at leisure to explore the country's cultural capital on your own.

**Accommodations:** Riad Al Makan or similar

**Meals:** Breakfast

#### **Sunday, April 13, 2025: Fes**

After breakfast you will start your journey to the most amazing places in Fes. We will visit the walled medina, the old city with its ramparts and alleys, and the famous medieval tanneries. We will also explore the Karaouine Mosque, founded in 859 by Fatima Al-Fihri and considered the most magnificent and historic religious attraction in the city. After a break for lunch, we will discover the superb architecture of the Merenid Tomb, the Madrasa Bou Inania, the Al-Attarin Madrasa, and the Neijarin Fountain. We will also visit a donkey fondouk, a traditional way-station that provides shelter and care for working donkeys.

Our final stop in Fes is at a popular souk with an opportunity for shopping for handcrafts, edible goods, copperware, and pottery before being transported to our authentic Moroccan riad.

**Accommodations:** Riad Al Makan or similar

**Meals:** Breakfast

### **Monday April 14, 2025: Meknes – Volubilis – Chefchaouen**

After breakfast at your riad, we will start our journey visiting Meknes, known as “The Versailles of Morocco,” for its elaborately decorated gateways. We will visit the Bab El Khamis and Bab El Mansour, two of the most beautiful gateways, and the Mausoleum of Moulay Ismail. We will stop for lunch here and then visit both the old and new Medina. Next, we will head to the village of Moulay Idriss Zerhoun, a place of pilgrimage for Moroccans. Afterward we will explore the ancient Roman ruins of Volubilis, a fascinating UNESCO World Heritage Site. The city dates from the third century BC and is amazingly well preserved, with several stunning mosaics. Next we continue on our day crossing the riff mountain to the famous Chefchaouen, known as the Blue City of Morocco.

**Accommodations:** Riad Cherifa Hotel or similar

**Meals:** Breakfast

### **Tuesday, April 15, 2025: Chefchaouen – Rabat**

After breakfast at your accommodations, you will begin your day exploring Chefchaouen, the famous Blue City of Morocco. With its blue-washed houses, narrow cobblestone streets, and mountainous backdrop, Chefchaouen begs to be photographed! Unlike many parts of Morocco, Chefchaouen was occupied by Spain, and its architecture shows a heavy Spanish and Moorish influence. Stroll through the winding streets and blue walls of the medina, then have lunch on your own in a local restaurant. Next you will be transferred to Rabat, the Capital city of Morocco.

**Accommodations:** Riad Zyo or similar

**Meals:** Breakfast

### **Wednesday, April 16, 2025: Rabat – Casablanca**

After breakfast, we will explore the Rabat medina and stroll the labyrinth of souks and artisan shops. Visit Place Souk el-Ghezal and the Wool Market Square. Take note of the ornamental motifs and moldings arranged on the doors of the residential area. Walk the famous and lively Rue des Consuls where foreign consuls were once obliged to live. Browse shops selling clothes, shoes, food, and other crafts. Visit the old Jewish mullah. Then continue to the Hassan Tower, which stands on the hill overlooking the Wadi Bou Regreg, a gigantic mosque that is emblematic of Rabat and famous for the unfinished minaret where storks nest. Proceed to the beautiful Mausoleum of Mohammed V decorated with stained glass windows, white marble, a wrought-iron entryway, and a stairway leading to an impressive dome. Then we visit the Saint-Pierre Cathedral, which houses an extensive collection of archaeological artifacts, and the beautiful Necropolis at Chellah, the last vestiges of the Roman town of Sale. Next we transfer to Casablanca with a stop for lunch on your own before visiting the Hassan II Mosque, the largest mosque outside of Mecca. You’ll have a chance to experience the Cornish seaside and marvel at the gates of the Royal Palace and the French-built Quartier Habous. We will also visit the ‘new mullah’, home to the largest population of Morocco’s Jewish community, and the Bet El Synagogue before checking into your accommodations. We conclude our tour with a special farewell dinner at a popular Moroccan restaurant.

**Accommodations:** Onomo Hotel Casablanca Airport or similar

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

**Thursday, April 17, 2025: Flight to the USA**

After an early breakfast at your hotel, transfer to the airport for your flight back to the USA, bringing back special memories of our mesmerizing Morocco trip!

**Meals:** Breakfast

**Inclusions:**

- 11 Day Comprehensive Fully Escorted Tour of Morocco
- 9 Nights Accommodations in an Authentic Moroccan Riads or Hotels
- 1 Night Accommodations in Deluxe Berber Tents in the Sahara desert of the Erg Chebbi Dunes
- Sunset Camel trekking to your desert luxury camp in the Sahara desert
- 16 meals: 1 Breakfast, 1 lunch, 5 dinners
- Cooking Class to learn how to prepare traditional Moroccan Tagines
- Entrance Fees per itinerary
- All airport transfers with group air booking
- Services of English-speaking guides throughout

**Not included:**

- Airfare
- Meals not included on itinerary
- Beverages
- Pre-paid gratuities for guides & drivers
- Travel Insurance
- Personal Spending