

## Morocco Kasbahs & Desert - DCKD

8 days: Casablanca to Marrakech

### What's Included

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Meknes guided city tour, Volubilis guided tour, Fez medina guided tour, Overnight Berber tented camp camel excursion in desert, Local village farmland walk, Entrance to Ait Benhaddou kasbah, Marrakech medina guided walk.

The information in this trip details document has been compiled with care and is provided in good faith. However it is subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and G Adventures. The itinerary featured is correct at time of printing. It may differ slightly to the one in the brochure. Occasionally our itineraries change as we make improvements that stem from past travellers, comments and our own research. Sometimes it can be a small change like adding an extra meal along the itinerary. Sometimes the change may result in us altering the tour for the coming year. Ultimately, our goal is to provide you with the most rewarding experience. Please note that our brochure is usually released in November each year. If you have booked from the previous brochure you may find there have been some changes to the itinerary.

**VERY IMPORTANT:** Please ensure that you print a final copy of your Trip Details to review a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans.

**VALIDITY:** Valid for all trips departing January 1st, 2013 - December 31st, 2013

### Itinerary

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### Day 1 Casablanca

You are welcome to arrive in Casablanca at any time, as today is a designated arrival day with no planned activities. Please note that there will be an important welcome meeting this evening at our joining hotel. Please check the hotel notice board for more information on the location of this meeting or ask at reception. Please bring your passport and travel insurance documents to this meeting, as you will be required to fill out some important pre-trip admin documents. After learning more about our tour and plans for the following day, you are welcome to join the CEO and your travelling companions for an optional dinner.

Please note, this tour does not spend any time in Casablanca. You may wish to come a day early in order to explore Casablanca's small medina, beachfront and classic examples of Art Deco architecture. Be sure to visit the spectacular Hassan II mosque. Entrance is only permitted via guided tours which operate from Saturday to Thursday (closed Fridays) at 09h00, 10h00, 11h00, and 14h00. Please refer to optional activity section of these notes for prices. These times are subject to change (particularly around Ramadan) please double check these times with your hotel.

Overnight in Casablanca.

A general note about this tour. This is a very fast paced itinerary which covers lots of ground. While this is great as it allows us to see a great amount in the available time, it also means some early starts, some long drives in the mini van and less free time than many other G Adventures.

### Day 2 Meknes/Volubilis/Fes (1B)

Today is a long and busy, but wonderful day as we begin our morning drive in private transport from Casablanca to Meknes, where we will enjoy a guided city walk.

We start our guided tour in front of the impressive 18th century Bab Mansour, the ornamental gate to the imperial city of Meknes built by Sultan Moulay Ismail in honour of himself. The gate faces Place el-Hadim, where, after dark fills with many Moroccan families

coming to be entertained by story-tellers, snake-charmers, horse rides & medicine men. To the left of the square you'll find one of Morocco's most colourful & friendliest fresh produce souks and home to the city's famous confectionaries. Behind the square is the entrance to the rambling souks where you can discover the many artisans and their crafts.

From here we enter what is left of the imperial city (Meknes was flattened by a huge earthquake in 1755) and visit the small but impressive Mausoleum of Moulay Ismail. Then we will pass by the entrance of the Meknes Royal Palace and end up at Moulay Ismail's massive Heri es Souani. This was his personal stable & granary for his 12,000 horses.

Afterwards, we will make our way through the rolling hills for a guided visit of the impressive Roman ruins of Volubilis, the best preserved Roman ruins in this part of Northern Africa. Once an important Roman town, the site is situated near the westernmost border of the Roman Empire. In 1997 Volubilis was listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Wandering through the deserted streets where chariots once passed, you can envision the vibrance the town once had. Listen to your certified local guide explain about life in the Roman Empire as you peer into old bathhouses, marveling at the still-present mosaic floors and gazing up at the towering marble pillars.

Overnight in Fes.

We will be staying in the the new city of Fes, built by the French during their Protectorate of Morocco. This area has the feel of a French provincial town, with its cafés, restaurants and wide boulevards. Head off for a Moroccan feast at one of the many restaurants and finish off the night with some famous Moroccan mint tea.

Overnight in Fes.

Approx travel times: Casablanca to Meknes, 4 hrs, Meknes to Volubilis, 45mins, Volubilis to Fez, 2 hrs

### **Day 3 Fes (1B)**

Today we have a half day medina walking tour, after which you will have some free time to explore on your own if you wish. The Fez medina is the world's largest living medieval medina in the world & in the 11th century, was the largest city in the known world.

We enter through one of the great gates into the chaotic, confusing & melee that is the Fez medina. We explore the medina's many artisans' quarters, such as the brass & copper souqs, the wedding souq & the carpenters plus its bakers, butchers & spice sellers, ending up at Fez's famous Tannery, where we have great views from its panoramic viewpoints.

We'll also get to see its religious & historical heart when we visit Moulay Idriss II's Mausoleum (the founder of Fez), the 14th century Bou Inania Medersa & the 9th century Al Karaouine University.

This evening there may be the chance to partake in an optional dinner in a grand old Fez riad which has been converted into a spectacular restaurant. You would not only enjoy a delicious meal of local specialities, but also an evening of entertainment such as singing, music and belly dancing.

### **Day 4 Merzouga (1B,1D)**

A very early start today (6am) as we have a full days drive today crossing the Middle Atlas Mountains to reach the edge of the Sahara. Keep your eyes open for a glimpse of Barbary apes en route.

On our arrival, there will be a chance to repack and taking only our day packs with what we will need for this evening, in the late afternoon we set off on an hour's camel ride to our desert camp deep in the dunes. Your local guides will teach you how to mount and dismount and other handy camel-related safety tips. Be sure to get them to teach you the trick of tying your turban to keep the desert sun off your face and add a little flare to your photos. From your first cup of mint tea you'll enjoy a warm welcome at our desert camp. A traditional dinner under the stars, cooked by our hosts awaits. In the evening there will be time to hear stories about life in this region and perhaps, if we are lucky, we might be treated to some traditional music on the drums.

Facilities are very basic - each tent Bedouin tent sleeps approximately 4 people but most people prefer to relax and enjoy the sounds of silence during a night under the starry desert skies.

Mattresses and a sheet and blanket are provided. For those travelling in the winter months (Nov- April), we recommend a sleeping bag for additional warmth. It is back to nature as far as bathroom facilities go.

There will be the chance to take a shower after breakfast on our return to our Merzouga auberge the following morning.

Approx travel time: Fez to Merzouga, total travel time, 10 hrs

Approx travel time: Merzouga to camp, 1 hr (by camel)

Overnight in the Sahara Desert (Tented Camp)

### **Day 5 Todra Gorge (1B)**

Today we rise before the sun and boarding our camels, watch the sunrise, casting different shadows and colours over the the sea of sand dunes, the highest in Morocco, before returning to our desert hotel.

We continue through a stone desert to the stunning Todra Gorge followed by a visit to a valley palmery. Wedged between massive cliff walls, the gorge is filled with a green oasis of palm trees. This serene spot is great for hiking along, relaxing on the edge of the river or sampling some local Berber delicacies.

We over night in Todra Gorge.

Approx travel time:

Desert Camp to Merzouga 1hr (by camel)

Merzouga to Todra Gorge, 3.5hrs

### **Day 6 Aït Ben Haddou (1B)**

We travel along the "Route of 1000 Kasbahs" to the thriving town of Ouarzazate where we will break for lunch. This town is home of Atlas Film studios, where many films have been shot over the years, including Lawrence of Arabia and Gladiator.

We make our way to the fascinating and beautiful Aït Ben Haddou.

Aït Ben Haddou is a wonderful example of a kasbah, a type of fortress or palace. Over the years it has been carefully restored and is now considered to be one of the best preserved kasbahs in the area. A few families still call the kasbah their home, but the majority of locals have gradually moved to the nearby settlement. During our visit to the Kasbah, lose yourself in the narrow, winding passageways and feel the magical atmosphere of this incredible structure.

We overnight in Aït Ben Haddou

Approx travel time: Todra Gorge to Aït Ben Haddou, 3.5hrs

### **Day 7 Marrakech (1B)**

Travel to Marrakech with breathtaking views through the High Atlas Mountains via the Tizi n'Tichka Pass (2260m). Arrive in Marrakech in time for lunch with the rest of the day free to wander the city.

A great place to start is Djemaa el Fna square, the heart of Marrakech, that changes its offerings throughout the day. In the morning you'll wander past the fresh orange juice stalls, water sellers in colourful costumes with traditional leather water bags and brass cups, and snake charmers reminiscent of an era past.

As the day progresses the snake charmers are replaced by Chleuh dancing-boys, story-tellers, magicians, and peddlers of traditional medicines. As the sun sets, the square fills with dozens of food-stalls, packed with locals and the entertaining chefs and waiters. Grab a spot on a bench with the other diners and try the Tanjia (slow cooked lamb), Harira soup, grilled seafood, famous Moroccan couscous, tajine, snails or even sheep's head for the truly adventurous, and wash it all down with some spiced tea.

To really get a taste of everyday life in Marrakech, head into the maze of tiny streets and alleyways of the ancient medina. Tourists and locals alike will find everything they desire in the souks, whether it's spices, traditional jalabas and slippers, or famous Moroccan lanterns, the selection here is exhaustive, and don't forget to bargain, it's definitely part of the fun!!!

For history and architecture buffs Marrakech is sure to dazzle. The Koutoubia Mosque, Bahia Palace, Saadian Tombs, Ben Youseff Medersa and Almoivid Koubba are all easy to get to and well worth a visit.

Once you've tired yourself out, relax at one of the tea houses around the square, indulging in the ubiquitous sweet mint tea, watching the hustle and bustle from your shady spot.

We overnight in Marrakech.

Approx travel time: Ait Benhaddou to Marrakech, 4 hrs

### **Day 8 Marrakech (1B)**

You are free to depart at any time today. Please note that check-out time from the hotel is normally mid-morning, but luggage storage facilities are available. We are able to organise extra post-trip accommodation if you wish to extend your stay for a few more days. Please ask at the time of booking.

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## What's Included

Meknes guided city tour, Volubilis guided tour, Fez medina guided tour, Overnight Berber tented camp camel excursion in desert, Local village farmland walk, Entrance to Ait Benhaddou kasbah, Marrakech medina guided walk.

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## Highlights

Wandering the winding streets of ancient medinas, exploring natural gorges and Roman ruins, riding a camel to a desert camp, bargaining in exotic souks.

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## Dossier Disclaimer

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## Itinerary Disclaimer

While it is our intention to adhere to the route described below, there is a certain amount of flexibility built into the itinerary and on occasion it may be necessary, or desirable to make alterations. The itinerary is brief, as we never know exactly where our journey will take us. Due to our style of travel and the regions we visit, travel can be unpredictable. The Trip Details document is a general guide to the tour and region and any mention of specific destinations or wildlife is by no means a guarantee that they will be visited or encountered. Aboard expedition trips visits to research stations depend on final permission.

Additionally, any travel times listed are approximations only and subject to vary due to local circumstances.

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## Important Notes

1. Itinerary pace. This is a very fast paced itinerary which covers lots of ground. While this is great as it allows us to see a huge amount in the available time, it also means some early starts, some long drives in the mini van and less free time than many other G Adventures. We feel that if you enter this trip with this knowledge and expectation, you will appreciate even more the variety of locations we are able to include in this itinerary.

2 Transport. We use a 16-seater minivan for this tour. With a full group every seat will be used. The legroom in the minivan is possibly smaller than you may be used to and taller passengers may find space a little cramped. It is important to be aware that as it is not a legal requirement in buses in Morocco, your vehicle may not be equipped with seat belts.

3. Camel ride and desert camp.

Please note that it is not possible to reach our desert camp by 4WD or any other vehicle. There is the option to walk (can be very hot and tiring) for those who cannot/prefer not to ride a camel.

4. Weather: Please note that the climate in Morocco can be both very hot during the day in summer months (up to 50°C) and cold at night in the mountains in autumn, early spring and winter (down to -6°C). Summer months, from April to September are very hot throughout Morocco. Winter months November to March can be cool to cold, especially in the Atlas Mountains, with high probability of snowfall. Most Moroccan buildings are not equipped with heating, so without proper layers you will be cold at night. Please bring appropriate clothing for the months in which you are travelling and check temperatures before you leave. Bedding is provided in the desert camp and the gîte, but in winter months if you feel the cold you may wish to bring a sleeping bag too.

5. Depending on the lunar cycle, Ramadan will fall between July 10 to August 10, 2013. Please note that Ramadan is a month of fasting observed by Muslims throughout the world, during which time the followers of Islam should not eat or drink between sunrise and sunset. There may be some limitations to services and disruptions to schedules during Ramadan, but generally our tours still operate effectively during this period and food is available to non-muslims throughout the day.

## Group Leader Description

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This G Adventures group trip is accompanied by one of our group leaders, otherwise known as a Chief Experience Officer (CEO).

As the group coordinator and manager, the aim of the CEO is to take the hassle out of your travels and to help you have the best trip possible. You can expect them to have a broad general knowledge of Morocco, including historical, cultural, religious and social aspects. They will also offer suggestions for things to do and to see, recommend great local eating venues and introduce you to our local friends.

We also use certified local city guides where we think more specific knowledge will add to the enjoyment of the places we are visiting - we think it's the best of both worlds.

## Group Size Notes

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Max 14, Avg 10

## Meals Included

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7 Breakfasts, 1 Dinner.

## Meals

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Breakfasts on tour

Many breakfasts are included as part of your tour.

Moroccan breakfasts tend to be different from your usual cereal and toast morning fare – most will be very simple - a croissant or sweet roll with jam and instant coffee and some hotels will have buffets where you will have more variety.

While you are experiencing what a Moroccan family would eat, some travellers do find the provided breakfasts a bit “bread heavy” and enjoy buying fruit the day before to supplement their breakfast.

Lunches and dinners

Moroccan cuisine is world famous and your CEO will be taking the chance to show you the best of it.

Staples include cous cous, a type of grain topped with stew, tagine which is actually the name of the pot this tasty dish is cooked in, and brochette, bbq skewers of meat. These meals will generally cost between 45- 70 MAD depending on the type of restaurant and which part of the country you are in.

Other tastes not to be missed include pastilla, a sweet pasty with a savoury filling which is traditionally pigeon and harira, a delicious soup based on chick peas and filling enough when teamed with fresh bread to be a whole lunch. If you are heading to the coast the fresh seafood cooked at one of the local markets is a must eat!

Snacks

Morocco's fresh orange juice is highly recommended and you should not leave without trying a glass. The brave can try the tiny snails which are perhaps the local's favourite snack but you might prefer a cone of piping hot bite-size fried cake donuts.

Generally meals are not included in the trip price when there is a choice of eating options, to give you the maximum flexibility in deciding where, what and with whom to eat. It also gives you more budgeting flexibility, though generally food is cheap. Our groups tend to eat together to enable you to taste a larger variety of dishes and enjoy each other's company. There is no obligation to do this though. Your CEO will be able to suggest favourite restaurants during your trip. The above information applies to G Adventures group trips. For Independent trips please check the itinerary for details of meals included. For all trips please refer to the meals included and budget information for included meals and meal budgets.

## Meal Budget

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Allow USD190-250 for meals not included.

## Transport

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Private air-con van, camels.

## About our Transportation

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Please note that there is a lot of fast paced travel on this itinerary which necessitates some long travel days in our mini van. We feel that if you enter this trip with this knowledge and expectation, you will appreciate even more the variety of locations we are able to include in this itinerary.

We use a 16-seater minivan and with a full group every seat will be used. The legroom in the minivan is possibly smaller than you may be used to and taller passengers may find space a little cramped. It is important to be aware that as it is not a legal requirement in buses in Morocco, your vehicle may not be equipped with seat belts. The minivans have air conditioning, however please note that summer temperatures in Morocco can easily reach 50 celsius. When the outside temperature is so hot, a minibus air conditioning system will not be able to cool the bus to the temperatures you are used to enjoying at home. Please bear in mind that travelling in Morocco in summer will inevitably involve very hot temperatures and some discomfort may be experienced when travelling.

## Solo Travellers

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We believe single travellers should not have to pay more to travel so our group trips are designed for shared accommodation and do not involve a single supplement. Single travellers joining group trips are paired in twin or multi-share accommodation with someone of the same sex for the duration of the trip. Some of our Independent trips are designed differently and single travellers on these itineraries must pay the single trip price.

## Accommodation

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Hotels (6 nts), tented desert camp (1 nt, multi-share)

## My Own Room Exceptions

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Night 4, Desert Camp (Merzouga).

## About Accommodation

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On this trip you can expect to stay in local hotels or pensions (with the exception of the start and finish hotels, which are often larger city hotels), which will vary a little in standard and facilities: some may not have elevators, air-conditioning or English-speaking staff, but most importantly all are locally-run, with some traditional character, and in excellent central locations to give you maximum time for exploring the sights. Where a town has both an ancient medina and a "ville nouvelle" we generally stay in the ville nouvelle, both because the standard of hotels is higher, and because travellers (especially women) often find the medinas at night a little confronting.

Please note that Morocco is a developing country and as such the infrastructure is not as reliable as you would expect at home. Expect quirky plumbing and the odd cold shower!

In the desert we will spend a night at a nomad camp: Facilities at the camp are very basic - we all sleep in one large communal tent. Mattresses and bedding are provided. For those travelling in the winter months (Nov- April), we recommend a sleeping bag for additional warmth. It is back to nature as far as bathroom facilities go. There will be the chance to take a shower after breakfast on our return to Merzouga the following morning. In Todra Gorge we will be staying in simple, family run hotel. As with all accommodation located within the gorge itself, electricity is supplied via a generator. Please note that no electricity is available between midnight and 7am, this also affects the air-conditioning/heating. Don't worry though, we find that the experience of staying in such a beautiful location more than makes up for it!

## Joining Hotel

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Morocco House Hotel  
2 Rue Mohamed Smiha (Cote Ave des FAR)  
Centre Ville, Casablanca, Morocco  
Tel: +212 522543566

The following location will be used as the joining hotel for specific 2013 departures:

Hotel Diwan  
31, Blvd Hassan Seghir  
Casablanca  
Morocco  
Tel: +212 (0) 522 446514

August 24, September 7, September 21, September 28, October 12, October 26

## Joining Instructions

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When arriving at Casablanca Int'l Airport you have a choice of taxi or train shuttle to Casablanca station then taxi to hotel. Please follow the signs for taxis once you exit from the baggage hall. The ride from the airport to our starting hotel will take between 35-45 minutes depending on traffic and should cost approx. 250-300MAD Shuttle train to Casablanca station and then taxi to the hotel is approx. 80-100MAD.

Please note that Day 1 is an arrival day and no activities have been planned, so you may arrive at any time. Similarly the last day is a departure day in which no activities are planned. When you arrive to the hotel there will be information on the evening meeting either on a message board or at reception. If you arrive late, your CEO will leave you a message detailing what time and where you should meet the next morning. Your CEO will organize a short meeting in the evening, during which you will meet other tour participants and receive information about general and specific aspects of the trip.

If you have pre booked an airport to hotel transfer, please look for your transfer driver at the Airport Information Desk in Terminal 1. He will be holding a G Adventures sign and waiting in this area for you. Your name will not be on the G Adventures sign, so please ask the driver whom they are there to meet.

The Airport Information Desk is located in the main Arrival Halls in Terminal 1, next to the stairs and escalators to the train station. If you have arrived in Terminal 2, please make your way to the Airport Information Desk in Terminal 1 to find your driver.

## Arrival Complications

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We do not expect any complications and nor should you but the following information is supplied in case of extra ordinary circumstances.

### PRE-BOOKED AIRPORT TO HOTEL TRANSFERS

If you have pre booked an airport to hotel transfer, please look for your transfer driver at the Airport Information Desk in Terminal 1. He will be holding a G Adventures sign and waiting in this area for you. Your name will not be on the G Adventures sign, so please ask the driver whom they are there to meet.

The Airport Information Desk is located in the main Arrival Halls in Terminal 1, next to the stairs and escalators to the train station. If you have arrived in Terminal 2, please make your way to the Airport Information Desk in Terminal 1 to find your driver.

If you are unable to locate your G Adventures airport representative, please call our local staff at +212 528 824898 (during office hours Mon-Fri) or +212 661 429700 (after office hours or at any time if you are unable to get through to the office) They will assist you in getting to the joining hotel.

If you have arrived at Casablanca airport, before calling please double-check with the airport staff which terminal you have arrived at. (This may not be the terminal stated on your airline ticket, as Casablanca flight arrivals often experience a change in arrival terminal). Please make your way to the Airport Information Desk in Terminal 1 (this is a short walk from the other terminals)

If you are not travelling with a telephone, please head to the airport Information booth who will be able to assist you in the purchase of a phone card and direct you to a telephone.

If for any reason you are unable to commence your trip as scheduled, or your flight is delayed, please call the above numbers to inform our staff so we can re-book your transfer.

## Emergency Contact

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Should you need to contact G Adventures during a situation of dire need, it is best to first call our local G Adventures Morocco operator. If for any reason you do not receive an immediate answer, please leave a detailed message and contact information, so they may return your call and assist you as soon as possible.

G Adventures Operator - Morocco

Open 5 days a week, Monday to Friday 09:00am to 5:30pm local time (GMT).

Tel: +212 (0)528 824898 (during office hours)

Emergency Cell Phone: +212 (0)661 429700 (after office hours).

If you are unable to contact either of these numbers please phone G Adventures Regional Emergency Cell Phone: +44 7817 262559

If you are unable for any reason to contact these numbers, please call the numbers listed below, which will connect you directly with our 24 hour Sales team, who will happily assist you.

Toll-free, North America only: 1 888 800 4100

Calls from UK: 0844 272 0000

Calls from Australia: 1 300 796 618

Outside North America, Australia and the UK: +1 416 260 0999

## Finishing Point Instructions

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We are able to organise extra accommodation post-trip should you require it. Please enquire at the time of booking.

For departure to Marrakech International Airport: a taxi will cost spproximately MAD150. Ask the Hotel staff or your CEO for help in arranging a taxi.

For departure to Casablanca: Take the train from Marrakech to Casablanca. The train service is comfortable and fast (approx 3hrs 10 mins to Casablanca city centre and 4hrs 40 minutes to the airport). It is probably best to go to the Marrakech station and buy your ticket the day before travel. Ask your CEO if you need any advice.

Please note that Casablanca Airport is directly served by train so if you are going to the airport make sure you buy tickets to Casablanca Mohammed V Airport (approx MAD200 first class).

To give you sufficient time to catch your plane, please do not book a flight home which departs before 13:00 at the absolute earliest

Take a petit taxi from the hotel to the Gare (train station) in Marrakech (approx MAD20, may be more with luggage).

## What to Take

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You will be on the move a lot, so our advice is to pack as lightly as possible. We highly recommend using a backpack or light sports bag, whichever you find easiest to carry, plus a small daypack. Luggage space on public transport is limited. You must be prepared to carry your own bags and be comfortable carrying them between transport and hotels (max. 15-20mins walking), hopping on and off trains and public buses and up and down stairs.

## Checklist

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Suggested Items:

- Light fleece top
- Light windproof/waterproof jacket
- Small towel and swimwear
- Sun hat
- Personal clothing (See also "What to Take" and "Local Dress" sections of this dossier)
- Hiking boots/sturdy walking shoes
- Sunblock
- Sunglasses
- Toiletries (biodegradable)
- Watch or alarm clock
- Headlamp/flashlight/torch for desert camping
- Money belt
- First-aid kit (should contain lip salve, Aspirin, bandaids, anti-histamine, Imodium or similar tablets for mild cases of diarrhea, rehydration powder, insect repellent, extra prescription drugs you may be taking)

Additionally for departures Nov-Feb:

- Sleeping bag (optional but recommended in a cold winter or if you feel the cold)
- Warm jacket, anorak or fiber filled jacket
- Warm hat
- Gloves
- Scarf

Optional Items:

- light weight sleep sheet for use in desert and at mountain gite.

#### Documents:

- Passport (with photocopies)
- Travel insurance (with photocopies)
- Airline tickets (with photocopies)
- EUR/USD cash
- Credit or debit card (see personal spending money)
- G Adventures vouchers, pre-departure information and dossier
- Any entry visas or vaccination certificates required

## Laundry

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Laundry facilities are offered by some of our hotels for a charge. There will be times when you may want to or have to do your own laundry so we suggest you bring non-polluting/biodegradable soap.

## Visas

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All countries require a valid passport (with a minimum 6 months validity).

To date, citizens of the UK, EU, US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand do not need visas for visits of up to three-months. Other nationalities may need to organise a visa pre travel- please check the individual requirements of your passport nationality.

Please note this information is given in good faith, is beyond G Adventures's control and subject to change at any time.

Contact your local embassy, or consulate for the most up-to-date visa requirements, or see your travel agent. It is the individual's responsibility to ensure that travel documentation is correct.

## Detailed Trip Notes

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#### Climate:

The climate in Morocco is Mediterranean along the coast, becoming more extreme towards the interior of the country. The winter months are from October to March and are characterized by cold nights and pleasant days. Summer is from April to September and starts off very pleasantly with moderate temperatures until mid-June when temperatures get extremely hot, to return to more moderate heat in late September. Inland, the climate is very dry and high temperatures predominate during the day for most of the year, except in the higher mountain areas. It rains generally only in short bursts in the period from the beginning of November until March.

#### Electricity:

Morocco uses 220V, 50Hz and plugs are two prong rounded (as for Europe).

#### Languages:

Arabic is the official language of Morocco, spoken in the distinctive Moroccan dialect. Approximately 40% of the population (mainly in rural areas) speak Berber in one of its three different dialects (Tarafit, Tashelhiyt and Tamazight). French is Morocco's unofficial second language and is taught universally, serving as the country's primary language in economics and commerce, as well as being widely used in education and government. Many Moroccans in the north of the country speak Spanish and English is widely spoken in tourist areas.

Capital city: Rabat

Principal ethnic groups: 30% Arab, 60% Berber

Religion: Islam is the official state religion with almost the entire population being Sunni Muslim. 1% are Christian and about 0.2% are Jewish.

## Spending Money

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Every traveller is different and therefore spending money requirements will vary. Some travellers may drink more than others while other travellers like to purchase more souvenirs than most. Please consider your own spending habits when it comes to allowing for drinks, shopping and tipping. Please also remember the following specific recommendations when planning your trip.

## Money Exchange

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The local currency in Morocco is the Moroccan Dirham (MAD).

ATMs are very common in Morocco with Cirrus and Plus system cards are the most widely accepted debit cards. While ATMs are commonly available, there are no guarantees that your credit or debit cards will actually work - it is important you check with your bank before departure and advisable to travel with more than one type of card.

Visa cards are the most widely accepted credit cards, but are generally only useful for larger/expensive purchases. You should be aware when purchasing products or services on a credit card, that a fee usually applies.

The foreign currency most commonly accepted in Morocco is the Euro. You will be able to exchange Euros, as well as GBP and USD at money exchange offices in major cities.

Do not rely on credit or debit cards as your only source of money. A combination of cash (Euro/GBP or USD) and cards is best.

As currency exchange rates can fluctuate often we ask that you refer to the following website for daily exchange rates: [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com)

## Emergency Fund

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Please also make sure you have access to at least an additional USD \$200 (or equivalent) as an 'emergency' fund, to be used when circumstances outside our control (ex. a natural disaster) require a change to our planned route. This is a rare occurrence!

## Departure Tax

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Usually included in your ticket, check with your air travel agent.

## Tipping

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Morocco has a strong tipping culture - it is customary and even expected to tip small service providers such as restaurant and bar waiters, hotel staff, reception, cleaning personnel, bell boys, taxis and van drivers. Tips are regarded as an essential means of supplementing income for those working in the tourism industry.

Even though this might not be customary to you, nor such common practice in your home country, it is generally expected and of great significance to the people who will be assisting you during your travels.

Depending on your preference and/or that of the group, you may choose to tip individually, organize the tipping with your travelling companions, or, your CEO will offer to collect the tip money at the beginning of your tour and tip as a group with your participation as the tour progresses. A recommendation for tipping small service providers is about \$3 USD per day, depending on the quality of the service (this does not include your G Adventures CEO).

Feel free to ask your CEO for the breakdown/distribution of the tips. Note that if you have been very disappointed by a particular service, please inform your CEO right away, and the tip will be adjusted accordingly.

Also, at the end of your trip if you felt your G Adventures CEO did an outstanding job, tipping is also expected and appreciated. The precise amount is entirely a personal preference, however \$20-25 USD per person per week can be used as a general guideline.

## Optional Activities

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Your CEO will recommend different optional activities, feel free to ask him for more information.

Please note that as this is a very fast-paced trip indeed, the available time for optional activities is limited.

Please note that prices are quoted in Moroccan Dirham (Dh)

Casablanca (for those who have time in the city before the trip starts)

Hassan II Mosque (Sat to Thurs) 9, 10, 11 and 2pm – Dh120

Villa de Arts (Tues to Sat) – free

Jewish Museum (Mon to Fri) - Dh30

## Fez

Traditional Moroccan 3 course dinner with folklore entertainment, in an old former palace in the medina - Dh300

Medersa bou inania – Dh10

Medersa el Attarine - Dh10

Dar batha museum (Wed to Mon) - Dh10

Belghazi museum - Dh20

## Ait Ben Haddou

Cooking class - Dh100 (includes dinner)

## Marrakech

Traditional Hammam (steam bath) including massage – Dh 300

Moroccan 3 course dinner and folklore entertainment in a traditional restaurant overlooking the famous Djemma el Fna Square - Dh 400

Ali Ben Youssef Medersa - Dh 40

Koubba Ba'adiyn - Dh 40

Museum of Marrakech - Dh 40

El Badi Palace - Dh10

Dar si Said - Dh10

Majorelle and Museum of Islamic Art - Dh 50

Bicycle hire – Dh 70–100 per day

All prices are per person (unless stated otherwise), and are subject to change as services are provided by third party operators.

## Health

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Please note inoculations may be required for the country visited. It is your responsibility to consult with your travel doctor for up to date medical travel information well before departure.

There are no specific health requirements for this trip. However, you should consult your doctor for up-to-date medical travel information before departure. We recommend that you carry a First Aid kit, hand sanitizers / antibacterial wipes as well as any personal medical requirements . Please be aware that we are in remote areas and away from medical facilities for some time during this trip, and for legal reasons our leaders are prohibited from administering any type of drug including headache tablets, antibiotics, etc.

When selecting your trip please carefully read the G Adventures brochure and itinerary and assess your ability to cope with our style of travel. Please contact us at [travel@gadventures.com](mailto:travel@gadventures.com) should you require any clarification on what is involved on your itinerary. G Adventures reserves the right to exclude any traveller from all or part of a trip without refund if in the reasonable opinion of our CEO they are unable to complete the itinerary without undue risk to themselves and/or the rest of the group.

## Safety and Security

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Many national governments provide a regularly updated advice service on safety issues involved with international travel. We recommend that you check your government's advice for their latest travel information before departure. We strongly recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt while travelling, for the safe keeping of your passport, air tickets, travellers' cheques, cash and other valuable items. Leave your valuable jewellery at home - you won't need it while travelling. Many of the hotels we use have safety deposit boxes, which is the most secure way of storing your valuables. A lock is recommended for securing your luggage. When travelling on a group trip, please note that your CEO has the authority to amend or cancel any part of the trip itinerary if it is deemed necessary due to safety concerns. Your CEO will accompany you on all included activities. During your trip you will have some free time to pursue your own interests, relax and take it easy or explore at your leisure. While your CEO will assist you with options available in a given location please note that any optional activities you undertake are not part of your itinerary, and we offer no representations about the safety of the activity or the standard of the operators running them. Please use your own good judgment when selecting an activity in your free time. Although the cities visited on tour are generally safe during the day, there can be risks to wandering throughout any major city at night. It is our recommendation to stay in small groups and to take taxis to and from restaurants, or during night time excursions.

Protests and Demonstrations- Protests and demonstrations, even those that are well intended, have the potential to turn violent with

no warning. Counter protests can also turn violent. Action by security forces to disperse demonstrators and protesters may occur at any time. If you are in an area where demonstrators or protesters are gathering, avoid the temptation of staying for a good photo opportunity and leave the area immediately.

Water based activities have an element of danger and excitement built into them. We recommend only participating in water based activities when accompanied by a guide(s). We make every reasonable effort to ensure the fun and adventurous element of any water based activities (in countries with varying degrees of operating standards) have a balanced approach to safety. It is our policy not to allow our CEOs to make arrangements on your behalf for water based activities that are not accompanied by guide(s).

Swimming, including snorkeling, is always at your own risk.

We take all prudent measures in relation to your safety. For ways to further enhance your personal safety while traveling, please visit:

- [www.gadventures.com/travel-resources/safety/](http://www.gadventures.com/travel-resources/safety/)

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## Trip Specific Safety

Like anywhere in the world, major cities have areas safer than others, use common sense, be aware of your surroundings and mind your personal belongings.

It is important to note that as it is not a legal requirement in buses in Morocco, your vehicle may not be equipped with seat belts.

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## Medical Form

Our small group adventures bring together people of all ages. It is very important you are aware that, as a minimum, an average level of fitness and mobility' is required to undertake our easiest programs. Travellers must be able to walk without the aid of another person, climb 3-4 flights of stairs, step on and off small boats, and carry their own luggage at a minimum. Travellers with a pre-existing medical condition are required to complete a short medical questionnaire, which must be signed by their physician. This is to ensure that travellers have the necessary fitness and mobility to comfortably complete their chosen trip. While our CEOs work hard to ensure that all our travellers are catered for equally, it is not their responsibility to help individuals who cannot complete the day's activities unaided. Please refer to the physical ratings in this Trip Details document for more information.

Please note that all passengers traveling to Antarctica are required to fill out this questionnaire.

The medical questionnaire can be found online at:

[www.gadventures.com/medical-form](http://www.gadventures.com/medical-form).

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## A Couple of Rules

Illegal drugs will not be tolerated on any trips. Possessing or using drugs not only contravenes the laws of the land but also puts the rest of the group at risk. Smoking marijuana and opium is a part of local culture in some parts of the world but is not acceptable for our travellers. Our philosophy of travel is one of respect towards everyone we encounter, and in particular the local people who make the world the special place it is. The exploitation of prostitutes is completely contrary to this philosophy. Our CEOs have the right to expel any member of the group if drugs are found in their possession or if they use prostitutes.

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## Travel Insurance

Travel Insurance: Travel insurance is compulsory in order to participate on any of our trips. When travelling on a group trip, you will not be permitted to join the group until evidence of travel insurance has been sighted by your CEO, who will take note of your insurance details. When selecting a travel insurance policy please bear in mind that all clients must have medical coverage and that we require a minimum coverage of USD 200,000 for repatriation and emergency rescue. We strongly recommend that the policy also covers personal liability, cancellation, curtailment and loss of luggage and personal effects. If you have credit card insurance we require proof of purchase of the trip (a receipt of credit card statement) with a credit card in your name. Contact your bank for details of their participating insurer, the level of coverage and emergency contact telephone number.

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## Planeterra-The G Adventures Foundation

Through our commitment to responsible tourism we have developed the Planeterra Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to making a positive difference in the lives of people and communities around the world through support of international charities, local organizations and community projects in the places that we visit on our tours. G Adventures matches all individual donations and pays

all administration costs, which means that 100% of each donation is doubled and goes directly to support our projects. For more information about Planeterra and the projects we support, or to make a donation, please visit [www.planeterra.org](http://www.planeterra.org)

#### Planeterra Dollar-A-Day Program

Our Dollar-A-Day Program provides travellers with the opportunity to help us give back to the people and places visited on our tours by donating one dollar per day for the duration of their tour. 100% of these proceeds will go directly to support our Planeterra projects.

To participate in this program please indicate at the time of booking that you would like to participate in G Adventures' Dollar-A-Day program, either by clicking the check box online, or by advising your G Adventures specialist or travel agent. (Note: Donation will be charged in the currency of your booking)

### Local Dress

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While visiting mosques and other religious monuments you should dress modestly, cover your shoulders and you shouldn't wear short shorts or skirts. Outside of capital cities and the more touristic centres, local dress is often more conservative and as a matter of respect we ask that both men and women are aware of this and recommend loose-fitting clothes with your shoulders covered. Ask your CEO for more specific advice.

### Feedback

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After your travels, we want to hear from you! Your feedback information is so important to us that you'll receive a special discount code for free online prints and we'll give you 5% off the price of your next G Adventures trip if your feedback is completed on-line within 30 days of finishing your trip. Please visit <http://www.gadventures.com/evaluations>

### Newsletter

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Our adventure travel e-newsletter is full of travel news, trip information, interesting stories and contests. To avoid missing out on special offers and updates from G Adventures, subscribe at [www.gadventures.com/newsletters/](http://www.gadventures.com/newsletters/)

Stay current on how our company invests in our global community through our foundation – Planeterra. Sign up for [Planeterra's monthly news](#) to learn more about how to give back and support the people and places we love to visit.

### Travel Forum - The Watering Hole

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Be sure to stop by [The Watering Hole](#), our adventure travel forum. If you're interested in meeting others booked on your upcoming trip, check out the [Departure Lounge](#) section of our forum and introduce yourself. Otherwise, just drop in at anytime to share some travel tips, ask questions, meet other travellers and quench your thirst for travel. Our forum is located at [wateringhole.gadventures.com](http://wateringhole.gadventures.com).