

Morocco Sahara Desert Experience **– Extreme Environment Tour – 8 Days**

Day 1 London - Morocco

Flying from London you arrive in Marrakech. You will be met at the airport by a local representative and transferred to your hotel where you will enjoy your first night in Marrakech. There may be time to visit the famous Square Djemaa el Fna to watch the amazing acrobats, snake charmers, storytellers and other performers, all trying to entice you to part with a few dirhams. Then it's to bed and a good night's sleep after what may have been a long day.

Day 2 Marrakech – Ouarzazate

This morning we awake early to a Moroccan breakfast and then meet up with our Guide for a guided tour of Marrakech. We will spend the morning on our guided tour of the city. We will see the Kourtoobia Mosque Minaret that dominates the city, the gardens of the beautiful Menara Pavilion, the Saadian Tombs, a true masterpiece of Hispano-Moresque art.

Then it's free time for shopping and lunch before we board our private coach to transfer to Ouarzazate. We leave Marrakech for Ouarzazate across a flat plain before beginning the slow climb through the Atlas foothills to eventually reach the highest pass through the mountain. Here we will pause to take in the magnificent views and also to take photographs.

En-route to Ouarzazate we take time out to pay a visit to the truly amazing World Heritage Site at Ait Benhaddou. The climb to the top through a series of alleyways is well worth it for the breathtaking views. Looking west back to the High Atlas Mountains and east across the flat plains to Ouarzazate and beyond, to the Sahara Desert, is a truly memorable experience.

We arrive late afternoon, early evening in Ouarzazate to rest and recuperate after our journey staying in a splendid Moroccan Kasbah style hotel. After dinner you may care just to relax in the gardens or go for a swim as tomorrow we continue our journey to the Sahara Desert.

Day 3 Ouarzazate – Todra Gorge

In the morning we leave Ouarzazate behind and head East through the beautiful Valley du Dades. This valley is known both as the "Valley of Roses" and also the "Valley of a Thousand Kasbahs".

Then we stop off for a visit to the spectacular 'Todra Gorge'. The 'Todra Gorge' is clearly among the most dramatic sights you can see in Morocco. An afternoon hike will reveal the diverse landscapes and reveal the canyon in all its impressive glory. Overnight at Todra Gorge.

Days 4 & 5 The Sahara Desert

We continue our journey until we eventually reach our final destination - Merzouga. Here in the shadow of the Great Dunes of Erg Chebbi we will spend the next days in a desert Auberge and desert Bivouac experiencing the fabulous, mystical Sahara Desert. The Sahara Desert is a great desert area in North Africa that extends from the Atlantic Ocean eastward past the Red Sea to Iraq. The entire desert, the largest in the world, is about 1600 km wide and about 5000 km long from east to west. We meet our Berber guides for the trip into the Sahara Desert, where we will make the journey on top of camels, over sand dunes and rocky escarpments. The ride is bumpy, but we will truly feel a real sense of adventure. As we get further away from Merzouga we begin to feel the isolation and remoteness of the desert life.

During the day, we will have time to explore the surrounding area by foot, climbing the dunes and taking in everything that the Sahara has to offer. As the day goes on and the sun moves towards the centre of the sky, the heat gets intense and we can understand how harsh an environment this place is. Here we will watch magnificent sunrises and sunsets, and listen and watch traditional Berber song and dance. At night we can lie under the stars and look at the constellations, some of which could never have been seen anywhere else other than in this remote area.

Day 6 Merzouga - Quarzazate

After breakfast, hopefully with good memories of our stay in the Sahara, we rendez-vous with the Autobus that will take us back to Ouarzazate. After a stop en-route for lunch, we arrive back at our hotel in time for dinner and a swim perhaps in the hotel pool. This evening we will have a special Moroccan Dinner to celebrate our arrival back from the Sahara Desert. Local musicians will entertain us with a selection of their regional music and dance.

Day 7 Ouarzazate – Tiffoultoute – Marrakech

This morning after checking out from the hotel we first pay a visit to the Grand Kasbah in the centre of Ouarzazate. Then it's just a short drive to the Berber Village of Tiffoultoute. Here there is an opportunity to experience and get a real feel for rural life in Morocco. Life in these small farming communities is simple and hard.

Then it's off again across the High Atlas Mountains to return to our hotel in Marrakech. This evening, to celebrate our adventure, there will be a 'Last Night' Dinner in a Marrakech restaurant. Also, a last opportunity perhaps to spend your remaining dirhams in the souk on a gift for those at home.

Day 8 Departure Back To London

Your trip to Morocco ends with a short drive to Marrakech Airport for the return flight home.