
Truly Morocco Trip Proposal

10 Day Travel Plan



Day 1 Casablanca - Rabat

International arrival to Casablanca with airport pick up. Tour the stunning Hassan II Mosque in Casablanca and take in the sea air along the corniche before heading to Rabat for the evening. Overnight in Rabat hotel or riad of your choosing, breakfast included.

Day 2 Rabat - Chefchaouen

Immersion into Moroccan culture and heritage begins in Imperial City Rabat. Situated along the Atlantic, Rabat is the current political, financial, and administrative capitol of Morocco. It's the country's second-largest metropolis behind Casablanca.

A guided tour of Rabat this morning includes visits to:

Hassan Tower One of the most prestigious monuments in Rabat, Hassan Tower was constructed over 8 centuries ago during the Almohad period. Some say this magnificent mosque was built to rival its neighbor to the north, the Great Mosque of Cordoba, which at the time was the capitol of the Islamic Kingdom of the west. An earthquake in 1755 destroyed practically all remains of the grand old mosque.

Mohammed V Mausoleum Raised in memory of his father, Hassan II commissioned Vietnamese architect Vo Toan to design a group of buildings including a mosque, mausoleum and museum devoted to the Alaouite Dynasty of Morocco. The complex was erected with the help of 400 Moroccan craftsmen. Mohammed's remains are interred in a sarcophagus under the ornate dome.

Oudeyas Kasbah This fortress overlooks the Bou Regreg river surrounded by imposing ramparts mostly but in the 12th century by the Almohads defending Rabat by land and sea.

Royal Palace One of the king's many palaces throughout Morocco.





Chellah Necropolis Final resting place for many dynastic men of prominence and their wives.

Plus, we'll spend some time in both the Medina (Arab quarter) and Mellah (Jewish quarter).

In Morocco, a homes' occupants were evident by its architecture. Arab dwellings were constructed with inner courtyards equipped with gardens and fountains or pools and each interior room opening toward the center. Jewish buildings have balconies constructed on the exterior and windows opening out into the street.

This afternoon we will travel overland to Chefchaouen. Arguably the most charming and beautiful Moroccan village awash with varying shades of sky blue nestled among the lush and wild poppy fields of the Rif Mountains. Artsy, even hippyish, this old Andalusian town, where Spanish is still spoken, is popular with hikers and backpackers and those wishing a more laidback vibe. Find inner peace and your free spirit in this quaint hilltop town.

Legend has it that Jewish inhabitants of the 1930s painted the town in blue and the tradition remains today. You will have the opportunity to relax, take in the fresh air or roam freely in the medina before enjoying a nice kosher dinner.

Overnight in riad or hotel of your choice.



Day 3 Chefchaouen - Fes (via Volubilis and Meknes)



Our journey begins after breakfast as we depart for Fes. We will continue to Volubilis where ancient Roman ruins are found. Journey back to the 3rd century and the most important archaeological site in Morocco. Hidden among the intricate mosaics and rows of standing columns and building facades, excavators found a tombstone with Hebrew inscriptions dating back to the second century. Enjoy the beautiful and peaceful scenery and an impressive informative guided tour for one-two hours.

Exhibiting splendid and grand Moorish architecture, Meknes, our next stop, is one of Morocco's Imperial Cities. One of the larger cities, it's situated in the heart of a bountiful agricultural area and has long been considered Morocco's food basket.

Spend some time perusing the spectacular medina and mullah surrounded by impressive ramparts. Enjoy visits to the **Grand Mosque** (only muslims allowed inside) and **Bou Inania Medersa**, a fine exhibit of Moroccan architecture and craftsmanship. You may also wish to tour the **Mausoleum** of the great sultan, **Moulay Ismail**.

From here we continue on to Fes for overnight in your choice of lodging. Perhaps an evening of traditional Moroccan music and belly dancing will suit you before retiring in your lodging choice.

Day 4 Fes

Possibilities abound in this tantalizing city where past and present co-exist among scholars, artisans, vagabonds and everything in between. Visit UNESCO's Fes-el-Bali souk in the old medina, a labyrinthine maze where you will be transported back in time to medieval days where centuries of Moroccan heritage is on display, including the confounding working tannery. The famous blue gate of Bab Boujeloud ushers in a sense of history and architecture leading to the mosque with its green tiled minaret and the oldest known university in the world.



Fes is among the most renowned cities in medieval Jewish history. Once home to a sizeable Jewish population, Fes is well respected for its former historic and significant population that celebrated Jewish life. Throughout the old city of Fes, there are traces of such. It was once the home of Rabbi Isaac Alfasi "The Rif" (1013-1103), the most influential Talmudic scholars of all times, and Torah scholar and philosopher Maimonides, who lived in the city from 1159-1165. Suffering from the persecutions of the Almohad dynasty, Maimonides emigrated to escape forced conversion. Now, with backing from the Moroccan kingdom, the Jewish community of Fes is working hard to maintain its community spirit and preserve its heritage and traditions.

Today you will immerse in cultural activities in the spiritual and intellectual epicenter of Morocco with an official city tour guide in Fes el Bali. Fes is well known for its handicrafts such as pottery, mosaics, metal works and leather goods. Visit an artisan's shop and learn the age-old Moroccan way of creating ceramic mosaic pieces.

You may wish to enjoy a traditional Moroccan hammam or visit a museum like Musee Dar el-Batha at leisure. Maybe a cooking class?

Sites include:

Bab Boujeloud The Blue Gate marks the entrance to the Medina. The structure is a beautiful example of Moorish architecture. Its angled positioning was deliberate so as to aid in defense of the city during the 12th century and sits on the main street giving access to the University and mosque.

Zalouia of Moulay Idriss II A religious complex and shrine to Idriss II, descendant of the prophet Muhammad and ruler of Morocco from 807-828 a.d. Idriss is credited as the founder of Fes and was of central importance in expanding control over territory mostly known as Morocco today, as well as the Islamization of Morocco.

Karaouine Mosque Referred to by scholars as the oldest University in the world, the most illustrious spiritual and intellectual centers comprising a University, Madrasa, and Mosque were built by Fatima al-Firhi in 859 using all her worldly riches. Religion and law are the primary

disciplines taught here. Students must memorize the full text of the Qur'an. Girls have been allowed to attend just since the 1940's. al-Attarine Madrasa Built by the Marinid Sultan Uthman II Abu Said in the early 14th century, the madrasa was once an important center for learning and spirituality. It is a wondrous illustration of ornately decorated Moorish architecture and design.



Chouara Tannery Using tanning methods unchanged since medieval times, the tannery operates without the use of machinery. It's an amalgam of stone vessels, some filled with white liquids made from various mixtures of cow urine, pigeon feces, quicklime, salt, and water in order to clean and soften tough animal skins, and others filled with natural dyes like poppy, indigo and henna used to color the hides before being laid to dry under the sun and sold and reworked into fine leather products.

The Watchtower Rising up over the city for stunning views on the medina below and picturesque green hills and valleys below.

The Mellah The Jewish quarter of Fes is over 650 years old. This picturesque neighborhood adjoins the royal palace where Jews took shelter during the 1912 pogrom.

The Danan Synagogue The Ibn Danan Synagogue is one of the oldest and most intact synagogues in Morocco originally built and owned by a prominent Moroccan Jewish family in the mid-seventeenth century. This synagogue, located in the heart of the mellah is a rare survivor and considered a precious gem in the preservation of Jewish history. Be sure to go out on terrace for expansive views of the mullah and the white tombs of the cemetery below.

The Jewish Cemetery The carefully preserved and maintained zaouia contains the tombs of more Jewish saints than any other cemetery in Morocco like Solika, a young woman executed by the king of Fes in the nineteenth century for refusing to surrender her Jewish identity and convert to Islam.

Day 5 Fes – Erfoud/Rissani

The journey continues south to Erfoud which hugs the edge of Erg Chebbi desert in Western Saharan Morocco. Depart after breakfast for the middle Atlas through Ifrane, the Switzerland of Morocco and cool cedar forests where you can feed the macaques and observe these impish monkeys at play.

We pass through Berber villages, the Ziz gorge and endless miles of stunning oases and palm groves along the Wadi Ziz. The landscapes are a dramatic shift from lush rolling green hills and agriculture to vast deserts and barrages. Many photo opportunities await you. Not only is Erfoud the gateway to the Sahara it is the Date capital of Morocco thanks to prolific date palm groves and is celebrated with a 3-day festival each October during harvest. Another popular draw to Erfoud is the fossils. The area was once covered by water as evidenced by the preponderance of artifacts turned into beautiful art pieces and collectibles.

You may also wish to visit a camel preserve and potentially milk the camels and taste their milk.

This area was once an important stop on the caravan trade route and is particularly rich in history. Rissani boasts one of the most famous souks in the area showing off dates, spices, vegetables and domestic animals like goats and mules.



Day 6 Erfoud – Ouarzazate



We continue our journey through the desert, valleys, gorges, and oases to Ouarzazate. Exploration continues in Todra Gorge, Dades, and Rose Valley. In the month of May each year Rose Valley hosts the Festival of Roses. Thousands of Damascus roses are in bloom across the valley and are harvested and turned into beauty products – a staple of Moroccan industry. Overnight in lodge of your choice.

Day 7 Ouarzazate - Marrakech

Onward to Marrakech. Our excursion today takes us overland through the High Atlas Mountains and a visit to UNESCO's World Heritage Site Ait Ben Haddou. We commence our journey to Marrakech with a visit of Ouarzazate the "Hollywood" of Africa and visit the Atlas Film Studios. Films like Gladiator, Cleopatra and Game of Thrones were filmed on location here. We will visit Taourirt Kasbah built by the family who controlled access to the Atlas mountains in this region and later used by the French Legionnaire during French occupation 1912-1956.



We continue on with a visit to UNESCO's World Heritage site, Ait Ben Haddou, follows. The exquisitely preserved fortress stands tall along the river on the old caravan road. A hike to the top affords panoramic views and a glimpse of ancient tribal life of its age-old inhabitants.



We traverse through the spectacular High Atlas mountains via the Tichka Pass, the highest road in Morocco at 2260 meters, winding through lush valleys and Berber villages clinging to mountain ledges. Fruit and nuts trees are prolific in this fertile area. Overnight in Marrakech riad or hotel.



Day 8 Marrakech

Lose yourself in this enchanting city of flavor and fragrance. Explore narrow passages of the souk in the medina where you'll have to share lanes with donkeys and motor bikes as you haggle for the best of Moroccan souvenirs if it's spices, carpets, ceramics, Argan oil, or a comfy pair of babouches (slippers). Spend the day enjoying a cultural tour of ancient palaces and tombs or museums and gardens. Resting at the foot of the glorious Atlas Mountains, Marrakech is a diverse melting pot of indigenous Berber civilization blended with expats from all over the world. It is as delicious and flavorful as the signature Moroccan tagine. Tantalize all your senses in colorful Marrakech.



After breakfast you will enjoy a full day guided city tour with an official guide visiting beautiful landmarks, palaces, gardens and souks. The tour includes Saadian Tombs, Koutoubia Mosque, Bahia Palace, Jewish Quarter and old Medina. You may also love to spend some time in Majorelle Gardens or one of the other stunning and peaceful Marrakech gardens. A visit to the night market Jemaa el f'na is also possible. Overnight in Marrakech riad or hotel.

Koutoubia Mosque The mosque's minaret is considered an important landmark of Marrakesh. It towers 253 ft in height and includes a spire and orbs. The mosque was completed under the reign of the Berber Almohad Caliph Yaqub al-Mansur period (1184-1199).

Medina Marrakech Medina, with its maze of lanes, old houses, souks, fondouks, craft and commercial activities, is an eminent example of a living historical city where treasure hunting is a must.

Saadian Tombs The mausoleum dates to the time of the Saadian dynasty sultan Ahmad al-Mansur (1578–1603) and comprises the interments of about sixty members of the Saadi Dynasty that originated in the valley of the Draa river. The tombs were rediscovered and renovated a century ago to their stunning decorative beauty made of Italian Carrera marble and finely worked local cedar wood and stucco.

Bahia Palace The former palace of Grand Vizier Si Moussa, Bahia Palace housed his wives and concubines. Courtyards and gardens engulf the palace built in the late 19th century intended to be the greatest palace of its time. It captures the quintessential Moroccan style, a mix of Moorish and Andalusian art. It is a masterpiece of mosaics and arabesques.



Jemaa el F'na The infamous open air public market and main square. Part carnival, part souk, it is a spectacle unlike any other. Most popular after dark when musicians and other traditional Moroccan entertainers delight visitors.

Jardin Majorelle The garden is a 40 year love affair created by its namesake and French painter, Jacques Majorelle, and a true oasis in the middle of Marrakech - a cool and quiet place to stroll, sit and reflect and take in the natural sites and sounds inherent in its own eco-system. Yves St Laurent purchased the property, saved it from ruin, and lovingly restored it to its intended glory.

Day 9 Marrakech - Essaouira

Save this day for leisure. We begin with a sunrise balloon ride over Marrakech and end with sunset on the beaches of Essaouira. Afternoon departure for the seaside town of Essaouira, a quaint old Portuguese fishing village on the seaside with ramparts, harbor and Medina. The drive will take approximately 3 hours and you may have a chance to spot goats foraging for nuts in, on, and among the prolific argan trees along the route. Morocco is famous for the highest quality argan oil and there are several area cooperatives if you wish to purchase products. Enjoy miles of sandy beaches and warm waters on this beautiful Atlantic coastline. You may wish to swim, have a nice walk or ride horses on the beach. This is a popular spot for surfing and kitesurfing. The seafood in Essaouira is especially fresh and delicious. Among the specialties are snails served in broth or fresh sea urchin. Of course, you will have the option to choose whatever you like but the aforementioned is Moroccan style.



Return to Marrakech for overnight in your choice hotel.

Day 10 Marrakech - Casablanca

Airport transfer from Marrakech and drop off at Mohammed V International for departure home.

Pricing:

- Price is 300 Euro per day and includes private transportation with driver/guide, fuel, tolls, parking, officially guided city tours in Fes, Marrakech, Rabat and Volubilis with monument tickets.
- You choose and arrange your own lodging. We can make suggestions as required.

Notes:

- This is a very energetic itinerary. It can be rearranged and customized to suit your needs and preferences. We will work with you to create something perfect and memorable. If you have something or somewhere specific in mind not mentioned we can include it.
- If you are a thrill-seeker looking for a bit more adventure we offer dune buggies, sand boarding, hot air balloons, trekking, horseback riding, jet skiing, wine tasting, cooking classes, surfing school, and much more!

