MOROCCO

DETAILED ITINERARY

KASBAHS, BERBERS AND THE SAHARA

Sep 02/26



Known to the Arabs as al-Maghreb al-Aqsa, or the farthest land of the setting sun, Morocco stands at the western edge of the Arab and Muslim world. Separated from Europe by just nine miles at the Strait of Gibraltar, Morocco is both a crossroads and a frontier state, as it has been since the 11th century, when it became the gateway for Islam's most successful advance upon Western Europe.

We start in Casablanca and travel to one of Morocco's greatest charms - the labyrinths of the imperial cities of Rabat, Meknes and Fes. We continue across the Middle Atlas Mountains to Erfoud, where we reach the sands of the Sahara and witness the sunrise over the dunes. Here we experience a touch of nomadic Berber life, as we ride camels with the local tribesmen into the majestic solitude of the Sahara Desert. We enjoy a night in Berber tents with a traditional feast and Berber folklore.

FACTS & HIGHLIGHTS

• 17 land days • Maximum 16 travelers • Start and Finish in Casablanca • All meals included • Berber camping adventure • Enjoy a golden Saharan sunrise and camel safari • Roman ruins of Volubilis (UNESCO) • Traverse the Middle, High and Anti-Atlas Mountains • Visit the medieval imperial cities of Rabat, Meknes, Fes and Marrakech • Relax in the seaside fortress of Essaouira • See 1000 ft walls of the Todra Gorge

DEPARTURE DATES & PRICE

Oct 03 - Oct 19, 2027	-	**$6995 USD**
Mar 22 - Apr 07, 2028	-	**$7495 USD**
Oct 04 - Oct 20, 2028	-	**$7495 USD**

Activity Level: 2

Comfort Level: Some long drives.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Comfortable hotels with private bathrooms.
1 night of camping with shared facilities.

Traveling west, our next destination is the Todra Gorge, a striking natural wonder with 1,000-foot walls which narrow to just 30 feet apart at one point. Through the Dades Valley, set amidst the snow-capped High Atlas Mountains, we travel on to Ouarzazate along the "Road of a Thousand Kasbahs" and continue to the historic city of Taroudant.

Our last week is a journey through the seldom-visited Anti-Atlas Mountains in the south. We visit the historic fortifications of Essaouira, a lovely coastal town and a favorite hideaway of Orson Welles.

We finish in Casablanca after enjoying an overland journey from Marrakech.





DAY 1 ARRIVE IN CASABLANCA

Arrive at Mohammed V Airport in Casablanca, where you are met and transferred to our hotel. Our tour leader will greet you at a welcome meeting before our group dinner.

Overnight in Casablanca.

DAY 2 CASABLANCA AND RABAT

Before departing Casablanca, we visit the Hassan II Mosque (one of the largest in the world). We drive from Casablanca to the imperial city and capital, Rabat. Here we visit the Mausoleum of Mohammed V and enjoy a walk in the old Medina which was founded in the 12th century as a military town.

We continue across the rich plains and cork forest to Fes.

Overnight in Fes.




Rabat


Tanery in Fes

DAY 3 MEDIEVAL CITY OF FES

Fes, the oldest of the imperial cities, is the symbolic heart of Morocco and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. We explore the medieval Medina, where narrow winding alleys and covered bazaars offer every conceivable type of craft workshop, markets, restaurants and mosques, all surrounded by magnificent old stone walls. Our stroll through this ancient labyrinth highlights the color and activity of Moroccan souks (markets).

In the afternoon, we visit the Bab Boujloud gate, tannery, the Jewish Quarter and the entrance of the Old Palace.

Overnight in Fes.

DAY 4 ROMAN RUINS OF VOLUBILIS AND MEKNES

We begin our day exploring the 1,700 year-old site of Volubilis, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and the best preserved complex of Roman ruins in Morocco. One of the Roman Empire's most remote outposts, Volubilis was actively inhabited until the 18th century. With its House of Orpheus, Basilica, Forum and Tri Arch, Volubilis is a splendid reminder of the vast impressive legacy left by the Romans.

We then make our way to Meknes which became the capital under the rule of Moulay Ismail, the second Alawite sultan. The sultan endowed the capital with an enormous palace complex and stables, surrounded by 25 miles of imposing walls adorned with monumental gates. We visit the former stables and granary of Moulay Ismail which once housed 12,000 horses.


Todra gorge

After lunch we drive back to Fes, stopping at a local pottery factory before arriving at our hotel. Enjoy a sunset overlooking Fes with the haunting "calls to prayer" echoing from below.

Overnight in Fes.

DAY 5 TRAVERSE THE MOUNTAINS TO THE SAHARA

Our day begins with a morning trip across the Middle Atlas Mountains and the beautiful cedar trees that cover their slopes. In the afternoon, we reach the Ziz Valley with its magnificent gorges.

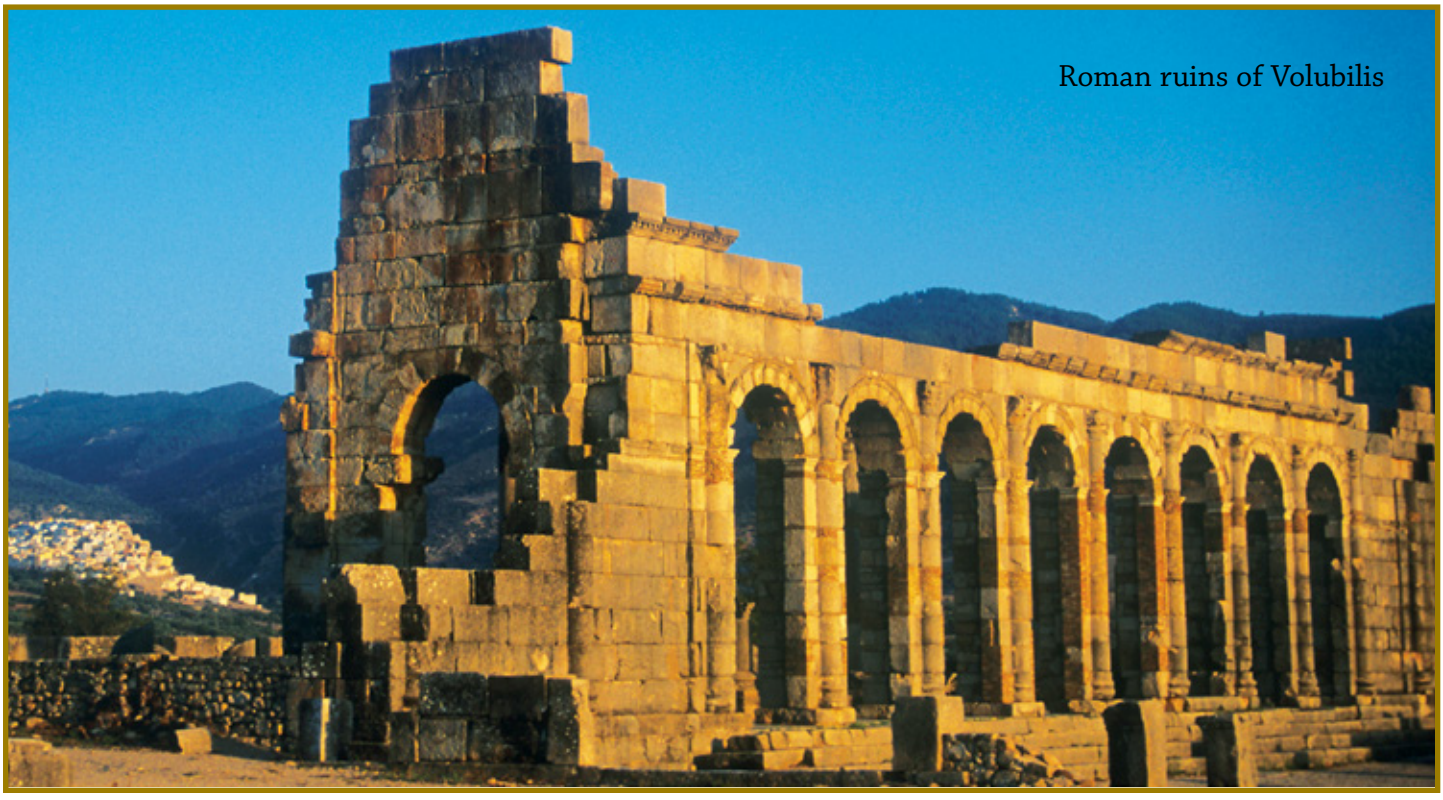
We continue past palm fringed towns and old fortresses to Erfoud, a small town on the edge of the Sahara.

Overnight in Erfoud.

DAY 6 ERFOUD, CAMEL SAFARI, BERBER EXPERIENCE & OVERNIGHT IN THE SAHARA

The region of Erfoud is famous for the petrified remains of plants and animals. In the morning, we visit a local workshop to learn about the fossils and watch them being made into everything from jewellery to furniture. We also explore an ancient ksar (a fortified village) and if he is home, we'll visit a local man who still lives there.

We board our jeeps to explore the local agriculture and irrigation system used in the Sahara. The ride is very scenic and if we're lucky, we may be able to visit a nomadic family along the way. We also visit the house of a local music group, where we can appreciate their music and dances that they brought with them when they came from the sub Sahara. Moroccan caravans were connecting Morocco to Timbuktu since the 8th ceuntry.



Roman ruins of Volubilis

In the late afternoon, we meet up with our camels for our safari through the desert to our campsite (those who do not wish to ride a camel may ride in jeeps). Tonight we experience the desert in local fashion as we spend the night in a traditional Berber tented camp. The camp has a main tent for meals and folklore show. Each of the sleeping tents has 2 beds, a table and candles for light. Shared bathroom facilities have toilets, sinks and showers.

Climb the dunes to watch the sun setting over the Sahara. Later we can gather around the fire to share stories under the shimmering night sky before we head off to bed.

Overnight in the Sahara desert.

DAY 7 GOLDEN SAHARAN SUNRISE, TODRA GORGE

We wake up early to watch a spectacular golden sunrise over the Merzouga Dunes. Following breakfast, we travel in 4x4 jeeps across the desert landscape and we meet up with our bus before our departure northwest towards the striking Todra Gorge. This gorge lies at the end of a lush valley filled with mud-brick villages and palm groves. Hemmed in by barren, craggy mountains, it is one of Morocco's most magnificent natural sights. The natural walls are 1,000 feet high and a river runs through the bottom of the gorge that narrows to a width of only 30 feet.

After lunch, we walk along the river of the gorge and have the opportunity to see many local families enjoying a tagine picnic by the water.

Overnight in Boumalne Dades

DAY 8 OUARZAZATE

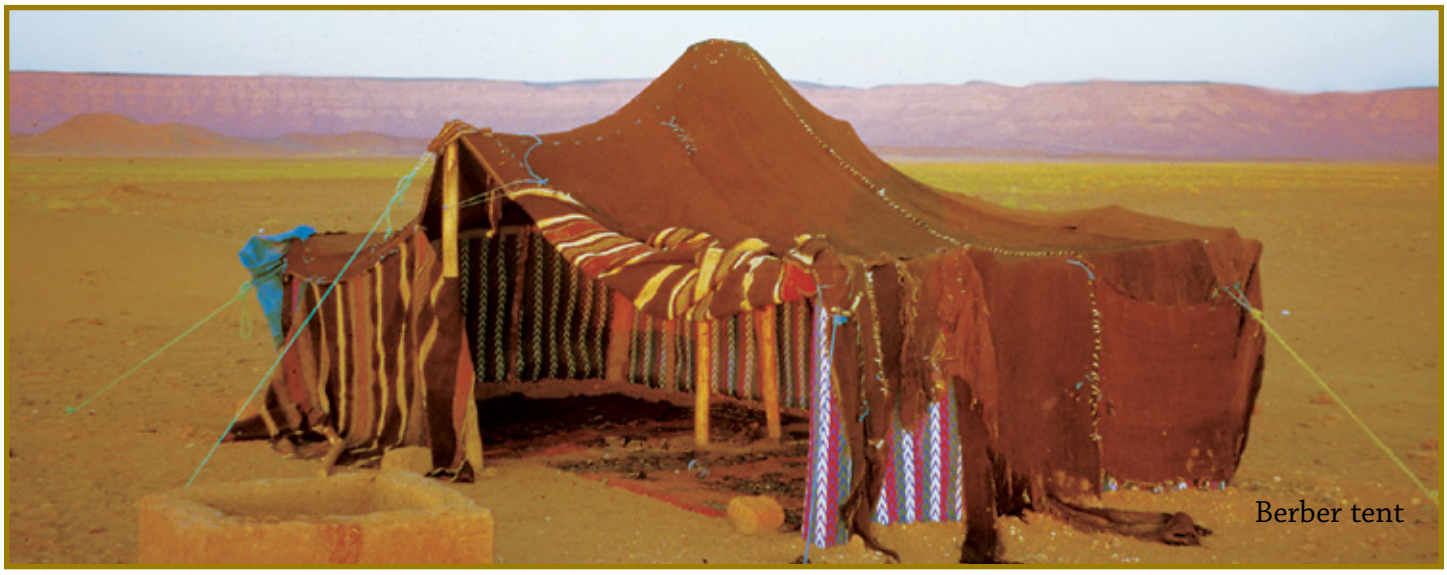
We travel west along the "Road of a Thousand Kasbahs", stopping to explore Kasbah Ait Youl (Saad), which is 200 years old. After exploring, we join a local family for mint tea.

We then visit the spectacular Dades Gorge. The rock formations and different colors in the gorge are superb. Before arriving in Ouarzazate, we stop in the Rose Valley to smell the roses!

Our overnight is in Ouarzazate, Morocco's premier movie-making center.

DAY 9 TO TAROUDANT

This morning we visit the legendary kasbah of Ait Ben Haddou (the location used in the filming of



Berber tent

"Lawrence of Arabia" and "The Last Temptation of Christ"). Leaving the rugged scenery of south central Morocco behind, we head west toward the Anti-Atlas region. Enroute, we see our first Argan trees. We stop and sample saffron tea in Taliouine and drive through the fertile Sousse Valley, known for its orange groves.

Late afternoon we arrive in Taroudant, a relaxed and pleasant Moroccan city surrounded by magnificent and well-preserved red mud walls. Taroudant maintains its traditional feel due to the absence of a ville nouvelle (new city), which the French added to most Moroccan cities during their long colonial reign.

Overnight in Taroudant.

DAY 10 TAROUDANT

We spend the morning in the fortified Berber town of Taroudant, which is known as "Little Marrakech". The absence of foreign travelers makes it the perfect place to see everyday Moroccan life in a relaxed atmosphere. Our first visit is to its charming souk and we finish our tour with a coffee in the local square. We will have lunch in the small village of Tiout where we will sample the delicious local bread and famous goat tagine. Your afternoon is at leisure to enjoy the surroundings.

Overnight in Taroudant.

DAY 11 COASTAL DRIVE TO ESSAOUIRA

We travel along the western part of the High Atlas Mountains as we set our sights on the Atlantic Ocean again, stopping for lunch by the beach in Agadir.

Following lunch, we head north along the dramatic coastal road to the small port town of Essaouira, where we spend two relaxing nights.

Overnight in Essaouira.

DAY 12 ESSAOUIRA, FORTRESS ON THE SEA

Essaouira is a quaint, historic town filled with interesting streets, a colorful harbor home to hundreds of fishing boats, Portuguese ramparts and fortifications, as well as miles of white sand beaches. Essaouira also offers some of the best seafood in



all of Morocco, which may be why it was a favorite hideaway for Orson Welles.

Our morning includes a walking tour and visit to a local Thuya Wood (an exquisite wood endemic to the area) Cooperative. The afternoon is free to explore this charming town.

Overnight in Essaouira.

DAY 13 THE ROAD TO MARRAKECH

This morning we visit a local woman's argan oil cooperative to see how this precious oil is produced before we travel to Marrakech.

After lunch, we enjoy a caleche ride (horse-drawn carriage) through the streets of Marrakech to visit the exotic Majorelle Gardens and Islamic Arts Museum. These gardens were once owned by Yves Saint Laurent. After time to explore, we head to Djemaa el-Fna, a huge square and focal point in Marrakech. The square turns into an incredible and fascinating spectacle every night where a massive food court is erected each evening, while storytellers, dancers, snake charmers, musicians, comedians and acrobats keep their audiences spellbound.

Overnight in Marrakech.

DAY 14 MARRAKECH SITES

In the morning we set out to discover the fabulous 11th century city of Marrakech. Marrakech is steeped in history and tradition! We stop at the city's famous landmark, the Koutoubia Mosque, before visiting some of Marrakech's beautiful palaces.



Essaouira

Of course, for those interested, there is plenty of opportunity for shopping in the souks.

Overnight in Marrakech.

DAY 15 SCENIC WALK IN THE HIGH ATLAS MOUNTAINS

Today we walk through the beautiful valleys of the High Atlas Mountains, with the majestic Toubkal Mountain as our backdrop. Standing at over 4000 meters / 13,000 ft, it is the highest peak in the Atlas Mountains, North Africa and the Arab world. We glimpse the local culture as our scenic walk takes us close to Berber villages. We will enjoy lunch at a local restaurant afterwards.

Walk: Approx. 2 hours (2000 meters/6500 ft)

Overnight in Marrakech.

DAY 16 RETURN TO CASABLANCA

Today we will drive back to Morocco's largest city, Casablanca. Tonight we enjoy a Farewell Dinner, reminiscing on all of the wonderful encounters and experiences during our Moroccan adventure.

Overnight in Casablanca.

DAY 17 DEPART CASABLANCA

The trip concludes with a transfer to the airport for departing flights.









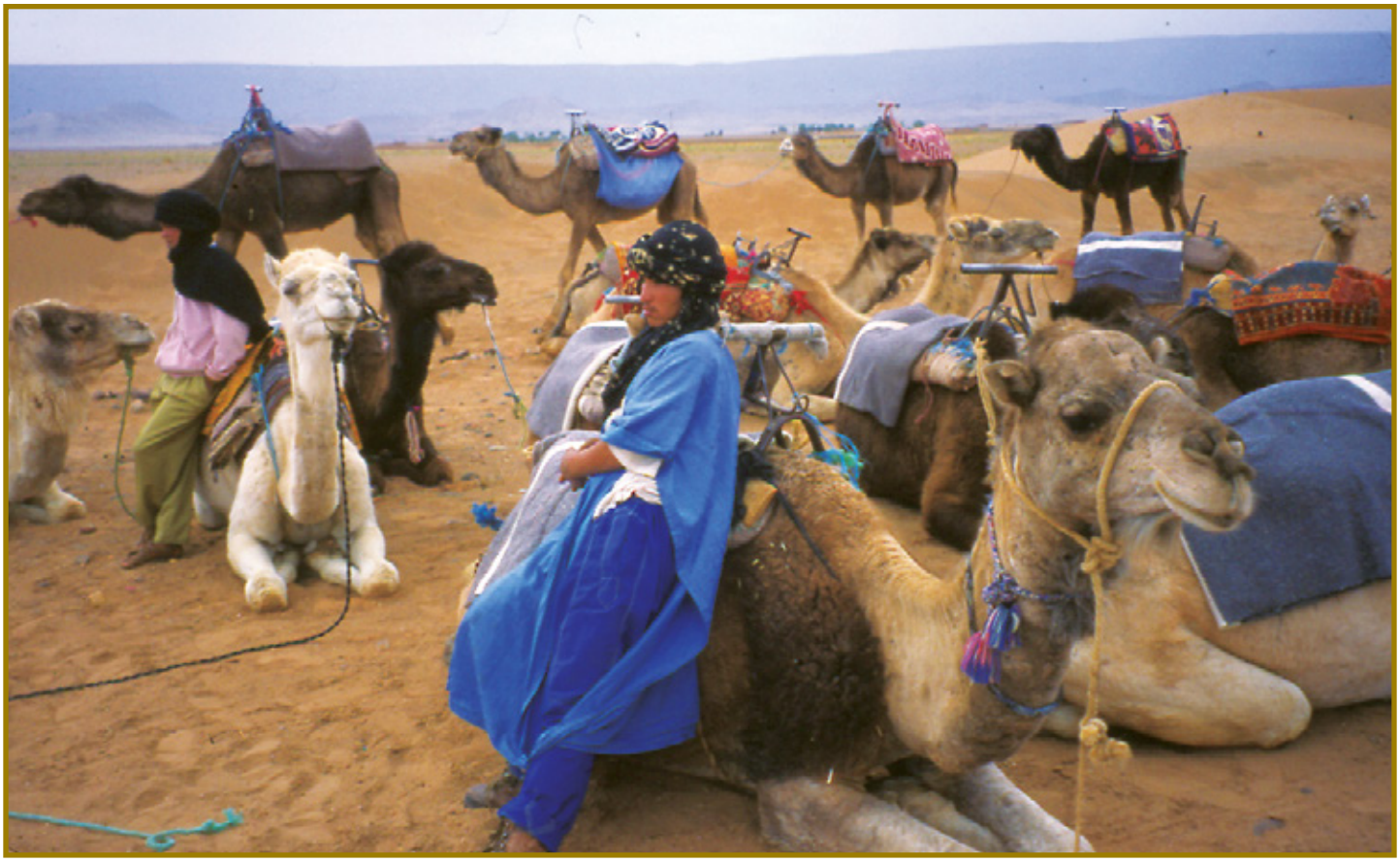







Anti Atlas Mountains





QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1. HOW BIG ARE THE GROUPS?

Each group is limited to 16 participants. Small groups are an important ingredient in adventure travel. They allow for more interaction and more personalized service throughout the itinerary.

2. WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE TOUR PRICE?

All accommodations throughout; all meals, starting with dinner on day 1 and finishing with breakfast on departure day (i.e. the last day of the ElderTreks tour); bottled drinking water throughout the trip; all internal transportation; airport transfers on day 1 and departure day (i.e. the last day of the ElderTreks tour); all day trips and entrance fees as outlined in the itinerary; tips for hotels (porterage), national guide, bus driver, restaurants and spot guides; services of a trip leader.

3. WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE TOUR PRICE?

International flights, tips to ElderTreks tour leader, alcoholic drinks, visas and travel insurance.

4. ARE THESE "EDUCATIONAL" TOURS?

Yes, in the broadest sense of the word, "educational". We visit many historical sites and have discussions on many aspects of history, culture and nature. But this is only a portion of the educational experience. We believe that it is equally educational to meet local people on a non-commercial basis, visit their homes and even try to learn a few words in the native language. Sometimes the most "educational" moments are spent sipping a cold drink in a street market.

5. HOW DO WE TRAVEL DURING THE TOUR?

All local transportation is included in the land price of the trip. We have our own air-conditioned vehicles for road travel. We use 4x4 jeeps in the Sahara near Erfoud and one can enjoy an optional camel safari to our Berber camp. Jeeps are available for anyone who would prefer not to take camels.

6. WHAT ARE OUR ACCOMMODATIONS LIKE?

We always stay in good accommodations — both hotels and lodges, where rooms have a private bath or shower. The accommodations have been chosen on the basis of location and atmosphere. With the Berbers, we camp in large Berber tents with 2 beds and shared facilities. Single supplements have their own tent.

7. WHAT ABOUT THE WEATHER?

We travel to Morocco during the pleasant months of spring and fall, avoiding the summer months when it is too hot in the interior, and the winter months when it is too cold in the mountains. During our trips you can expect daytime temperatures from the mid 50s˚F (10˚C)to the high 80s˚F (26˚C) under mostly clear skies. Keep in mind, it is possible that we may run into rain in various areas of the country.

8. WHEN IS PAYMENT DUE?

A non-refundable deposit of $500 USD (plus insurance if you require it) is due at time of booking and will reserve your place on the tour. Payment of the full land cost is due 120 days before departure. Cancellation charges are applicable and are outlined in the "Terms and Conditions" section of our brochure.

9. IS MEDICAL INSURANCE REQUIRED?

Insurance coverage is not included in the cost of your trip. Please note that medical insurance is not required for this adventure but is recommended. ElderTreks offers comprehensive travel insurance and we are happy to provide you with a quote if you call our office. If you are purchasing insurance elsewhere, please ensure you provide the details to ElderTreks as soon as possible.
Please note those travelers with pre-existing medical conditions must take out travel insurance at the time of deposit

10. WHAT SHOULD I TAKE ON THE TOUR?

There is a detailed "What to Take" list in our Trip Kit, which we will send to you after receiving your booking deposit for the trip.

11. WHAT MEALS ARE INCLUDED?

All meals during the itinerary are included, starting with dinner on day 1 and finishing with breakfast on departure day. We eat a variety of local foods, from tangine dishes to couscous, prepared in a wide range of settings. In many cases, we simply order a number of dishes and share, allowing you to sample new foods and decide what you enjoy best.

12. CAN YOU ARRANGE MY FLIGHTS?

We would be happy to take care of your air arrangements. ElderTreks offers personalized flight itineraries — not group flights. Stop over en route, come in a few days early, or extend your stay. Call us for a customized itinerary.

13. WHAT IF I WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION?

If you have any further questions about the trip, please do not hesitate to contact our office for additional information. A Trip Kit containing further details on the destination will be sent to you once you have booked on the tour.





Ait Ben Haddou





