

DISCOVER LTD TOURS TO MARRAKECH, THE HIGH ATLAS AND PRE-SAHARA

Useful Information for Lead Teachers and other school staff.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF LEAD TEACHER(S) AND DISCOVER GROUP LEADER(S): Lead Teachers are advised to comply with their LEA or Board of Governors' instructions concerning competence of accompanying teachers/adults, ratio of teacher/adults to pupils in relation to the type and destination of your trip. The 'Educational Visits Coordinator' should be consulted during the planning and organisation of the trip. Group leaders are referred to the DCSF booklet '*Health and Safety of Pupils on Educational Visits*'. A British standard BS 8848 is now available for overseas trips.

The lead teacher is in "loco parentis" and has a "duty of care" for their group at all times. Discover Ltd. staff also have a "duty of care" and will be there to assist / aid the teacher where appropriate but cannot normally assume "loco parentis". Their role is to act as a local expert, guide, facilitator etc. The lead teacher is responsible for discipline and group conduct and should ensure that all students are present at "bedtime" and as appropriate during the day. All members of the party must behave in a sensible and reasonable manner so as not to endanger/inconvenience themselves, other members of the party or members of the public and other guests in the hotels/pensions that we use. If you as lead teacher have any problems or concerns do not hesitate to enlist the help of our staff.

Students should always be in groups of a minimum of three people, ideally in mixed groups (all-female groups will inevitably attract more attention). They must obtain permission from the lead teacher (who should know exactly where they are going!) before going out and should report back at the agreed time so that the lead teacher is aware when everyone has returned. Discover staff are there to assist you, and you should not hesitate to enlist their support if needed. Make sure everyone in the party has the lead teacher's mobile phone number, and knows the name and location of the hotels – give out hotel cards if appropriate.

Please remember that safety standards in Morocco are different to those in the European Union. Discover will not use accommodation or vehicles which do not comply with the local safety standards. However, we would not boycott a hotel simply because of the absence of a safety feature which might be found in a EU hotel. Fire alarm systems, emergency lighting and swimming pool safety are often at a standard below that normally found in Europe. For example, many hotels have roof terraces with low balconies and wide gaps; coaches and minibuses may not be fitted with seat belts. A group list is kept by the Discover Group Leader and all accompanying staff, containing any relevant medical and passport details. Room lists should be prepared for each hotel stayed in.

All activities have been assessed for safety using a system of generic risk assessment. These should have been sent to you before your visit. Please discuss any safety concerns you might have with your group leader before undertaking any activity. These are **active** documents and Discover staff will discuss with you about making changes to the activity or programme if local circumstances, weather and particular requirements of group

members dictate this. This is an essential part of dynamic risk assessment, and should involve all those concerned in the activity – participants, staff, students, etc.

CODE OF CONDUCT: A reasonable standard of behaviour is expected of participants for the safety and well being of all, as well as the fulfillment of the visit's objectives. We ask that groups visiting Morocco with Discover Ltd abide by our Code of Conduct:

- All groups should abide by Discover Ltd trip rules.
- All accommodation, coaches, aircraft, sites visited and any equipment provided should be treated with due care and attention. Groups may be liable for any damage caused.
- Students and staff mustn't behave in a way that places either themselves or any other person at risk.
- Alcohol is often a cause of problems and injuries (including death) to school parties. Since Moroccan attitudes to drink are very different to those in the UK, alcohol may become an issue with locals. Party leaders should therefore discuss and agree drinking guidelines with students and parents **prior** to departure. Bringing alcoholic drink onto any premises for consumption by under age students is not allowed. This includes alcohol purchased en route to the Morocco or whilst in the country.
- Although recreational drug use is fairly common in Morocco, it is **not legal** in Morocco and the authorities will take a very strong line with overseas visitors. Discover Ltd therefore operates a zero tolerance policy on the purchase and/or use of drugs, other than drugs for medical use.
- Smoking is strictly prohibited on coaches, airlines and all sleeping accommodation. Lead teachers should establish rules for smoking before departure.
- Discover Ltd will reserve the right to report any unlawful activities to the relevant authorities.
- Discover Ltd reserves the right to send any party member(s) home for persistent or gross misconduct, eg. possession or use of illicit substances (drugs) or if they constitute an unacceptable health and safety risk to themselves or others. In such cases the cost of repatriation will be borne by the party concerned. A charge may also be made for providing access to medical treatment, where this has been made necessary through poor behaviour or alcohol/drug use.
- Please be aware that homosexuality is considered a criminal offence in Morocco.

DISCOVER LTD TRIP RULES: Please help us to enforce the Trip rules – these are to ensure the Health and Safety of your students and to ensure a happy and productive working and socialising atmosphere. Please feel free to add to these and to circulate to your students.

- Don't do anything to put yourself and/or others at risk.
- No leaving any hotel grounds without permission from your teacher – day or night.
- No person of the opposite sex in a single sex dormitory or room.
- Please dress appropriately (and conservatively!) for the country/hotel/climate that you are in, and be aware that sunstroke is a serious, and potentially life-threatening condition.
- Please be considerate of other hotel users and visitors. Quiet between 2330H and 0700H.
- No smoking in the bedrooms or vehicles or any other non smoking areas.
- Cigarettes must be extinguished and disposed of safely.

- No alcohol to be purchased or consumed (including on the journey to the Morocco) without permission from your staff.
- No drugs to be purchased or used, unless for medical reasons.
- All litter to be put in the bins provided.
- No leaning or sitting on any railings or window ledges.
- All breakages are to be reported and may, if caused maliciously, be charged for.
- All losses of and damage to fieldwork equipment will be charged for.
- Knives, BB guns or any item will be confiscated if considered a hazard.

CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT: As a guideline your *total* luggage (including hand luggage) should not exceed 25kgs. If you are travelling by budget airline there are very strict limits on weight and size of luggage; you will be charged if you exceed these. There is no need to bring a large rucksack unless you are on a trekking trip. It is preferable to bring your luggage in soft hold-alls rather than a large suitcase as it is easier to pack them under seats on the coaches. It is best to travel light. For short distances you or a mule will have to carry what you bring! You are likely to buy souvenirs, adding to the weight.

Practical and conservative clothing is needed with perhaps one smarter set (not essential) for the hotels. The Islamic faith has particular clothing rules. Morocco is a liberal country, used to foreign tourists but to avoid unwanted attention or giving offence it is a good idea and good manners for females especially, to be discreet. Please encourage *all* students (but particularly female students) to dress conservatively and avoid strappy and very tight fitting tops, short shorts and short skirts. Cut-off trousers and longer skirts are ideal for girls to wear, cap-sleeved t-shirts are good, and a head-scarf/wrap is a good piece of clothing to throw on if feeling uncomfortable.

In the mountains you will be staying at around 2,000m (6,500 feet) so extremes of temperature and climate can be experienced. Some of the hotels are not centrally heated, so they can feel quite cold in the winter, so always come prepared for both hot and cold weather. To give you an idea of typical temperatures:

Marrakech High Atlas Desert

	Marrakesh		High Atlas		Desert	
	Summer	Winter	Summer	Winter	Summer	Winter
Max (°C)	45	32	35	22	45	32
Min (°C)	15	0	8	-5	20	0

See page 4 for our **suggested equipment list**. You may consider having an equipment check/packing session with your group prior to departure to check they have all the equipment they will need.

Equipment list for Morocco Tours.

LUGGAGE: Soft hold-all rather than a suitcase. Bring a day sack as hand luggage.

SLEEPING BAG: Essential for all trips. For trekking trips, a *minimum* requirement is a 3-season bag.

WATERPROOFS: Whatever time of year you are coming you must bring a minimum of a waterproof jacket. A good waterproof jacket and over trousers are essential for trekking trips.

FOOTWEAR: Good **walking boots** are essential for all trips where you are planning to walk around Imlil (day hikes, overnights and obviously the summit of Toubkal). *Also* bring good trainers with good soles, the more robust the better, for walking around towns. Flip flops are useful for hotels and showers / hammam, but can result in injuries if worn outside so we prefer you have strap-on sandals.

BATTERY OPERATED SMOKE DETECTOR: 1 between every 3 to 4 students.

TORCH: Useful in the event of a power cut, and an essential piece of safety equipment.

STRONG WORK BOOTS (WALKING BOOTS) AND WORK GLOVES: If you are doing community work, these items are essential and are not easily available in Morocco. Bring them with you. We may not let you do community work without them.

CLOTHING: Bring a mixture of clothing for warm and cold conditions, depending on the time of year, but bear in the mind that the mountains and the desert at night can be very cold at *any* time and a fleece jacket is essential. Some hotels are not centrally heated, so they can feel cold in the winter. For trekking trips, hat, gloves and scarf are essential, and thermal clothing is a good idea for the summit of Toubkal. Remember to dress conservatively: light weight long trousers/skirt, long sleeved shirt and pale colours will help avoid sunstroke, which can ruin your trip. If intending to use the hammam (Turkish baths), bring swimming wear.

SUN HAT & SUNGLASSES: Even in winter the clean air and high altitude can cause sunburn or even heat stroke. A wide brimmed hat is best, but a baseball cap should be considered the minimum.

TOILETRIES: Towel, toothpaste, toothbrush, soap, shampoo, personal first aid kit, prescription medication (enough to last your stay), sun cream (min. factor 25), wet wipes and anti-bacterial no-water hand wash. Diarrhoea relief tablets, travel sickness tablets (if you suffer) and rehydration sachets can be useful! Spare first aid items can be donated to your tour leader after your trip, to be put to good use in the local community.

WATER BOTTLE: Bring a plastic water bottle for your use only - sharing water spreads germs.

PENS, PENCILS, PAPER, NOTEBOOK, CLIPBOARD, CALCULATOR and ODDS AND ENDS: Also bring a book, iPod, cards and other entertainment for evenings and long journeys. An alarm clock and camera are useful, and some snacks that you like can be comforting!

PASSPORT AND VISA REQUIREMENTS: A full passport is necessary for Morocco - British citizens do not require a visa. Holders of **non-British** (including diplomatic) passports should check with their Embassy about visa requirements – **this is your responsibility**. It is normally a requirement that passports **MUST be valid for a minimum of six months**. We suggest that any passports with less than this should be renewed in plenty of time before your trip.

MONEY: The currency of Morocco is the Dirham, which is a restricted currency (not available normally outside the country). Visitors can either bring cash which can be exchanged in banks or some hotels or use cash dispensing machines in some large towns. Remember options to change money will be limited in rural locations. Generally prices in Morocco for basic items are much lower than in Western Europe, so bringing some money for souvenirs is a good idea.

TELEPHONES: There is mobile phone coverage through most parts of Morocco used by Discover. In most towns and larger villages there are tele-boutiques, where international calls can be made.

FOOD: Pleasant Moroccan cuisine with continental breakfast can be expected throughout, often taking the form of a tagine (traditional Moroccan stew) or couscous for the main meal (vegetarians can be catered for). It is essential that you inform Discover in advance of any special dietary and medical requirements such as food allergies.

FLIGHTS AND IN-COUNTRY TRANSPORT: Travel to Morocco is typically by airplane. We recommend that if you are travelling by budget carrier that you ask students to **bring sandwiches and snacks** with them, as they may not be able to purchase these on the flight, and flights can arrive in Marrakesh very late (they will need to purchase drinks after passing through check-in on both the outward and return journey). Transport in Morocco will depend on your group size and will be by car, minibus or coach. There is no legal requirement in Morocco for coach or minibus transport to be fitted with seat belts, other than in the front passenger seat, but wherever possible we will ensure that these are fitted.

ACCOMMODATION:

Marrakech – Hotel rooms: The hotel in Marrakech is situated right in the heart of the city close to the famous square and Medina.

Ouarzazate – Hotel Pension for Students: Students will sleep communally in a large salon on couches - sleeping bags will be required. The hotel has a swimming pool (no lifeguard on duty).

Zagora – Hotel Pension for Students: Students will sleep communally in a large salon on couches - sleeping bags will be required. The hotel has a swimming pool (no lifeguard on duty).

The Kasbah Du Toubkal, Imlil: Groups normally stay in communal rooms with access to some of the Kasbah facilities. It must be understood that this is not a hotel in the city/town sense of the word. It is an extension of the Berber house into a hospitality facility.

Dar Imlil, Imlil: This hotel, located in Imlil, provides excellent group accommodation. Meals will be served here.

The Dar Toubkal, Imlil: This village house, located in Imlil, is owned by Discover and provides groups with their own self contained accommodation. Meals will be served here.

Local accommodation, Atlas Mountains: Sleeping arrangements are in communal rooms or on flat rooftops gazing up at the stars. Toilet facilities may be basic. The evening meal is often a form of tagine (traditional Moroccan stew) or cous cous, with freshly baked bread.

Neltner Hut, Mont Toubkal: Used on the ascent of Toubkal. Basic accommodation with communal dorms.

Upon Arrival at hotels:

- Ensure groups are aware of rules of hotel, any no go areas and location of visiting staff and group leader should an emergency occurs.
- Ensure that a fire assembly point has been designated.
- Ensure that the lead teacher is aware of the location of all rooms being used by the group, visiting staff and the group leader.
- Check with your Discover leader over any safety issues concerning a particular hotel. This is of particular concern if a hotel has a swimming pool.
- Staff should ensure that students are aware of any procedures relating to going off-site from the hotel
- As you will be staying in hotels, the fire procedure will be communicated to the group and everyone should be familiar with all emergency procedures (these are normally located on bedroom doors). A fire drill will normally NOT be practical.

Upon Departure from hotels:

- Please ensure that your students are ready to depart in good time and that they have all luggage is loaded onto the coach or is in storage.
- Hand in any keys to the hotel reception or your Discover leader.
- Ensure that all students (and staff) are present before departure. If anyone is not accompanying the group and remaining behind, please ensure the Discover leader is aware of this in good time.

HOTEL SAFETY IN MOROCCO: Discover has completed audits of the accommodation used by groups in Morocco. It is felt that these currently offer the best in location, value for money and facilities available. They also comply fully with Moroccan safety standards. However these standards are often below those that might be expected in a European Union or North American hotel. Standards are such that Discover Ltd will continue to use these hotels, but we suggest that the **Lead Teachers** with groups might consider the following to increase levels of safety for their group.

Individual Smoke Detectors: These battery operated devices are cheap and easily available throughout Europe and North America. If a number of these are brought along with the group (1 per 4 should be sufficient), with a new battery, then they can simply be placed in rooms that are being used by students. These should be placed as high in the room as possible (on curtain rail, shelf, door bracket etc) and taken away when the group leaves. In this way the Lead Teacher will know that every room should be woken before any fire or smoke levels becomes too great. Ensure that students are advised what to do if a smoke alarm should be activated.

Torches: These are on the kit list and the inclusion of this item cannot be stressed strongly enough. In the event of a fire, electricity may be cut off in a hotel and emergency lighting/exit signs may not be sufficient to ensure a safe exit in the dark. Standards are improving in Morocco, but are still a long way below European norms. If every room has a working torch by the bed or exit this will go a long way to assisting in a safe exit.

Swimming pools: Lead teachers should be aware that **any** swimming is a potentially hazardous activity. More British children die in pools abroad whilst on vacation than at home in the UK. Inadequate supervision was found to be the most common factor associated with drowning or near drowning. Discover staff are not trained or qualified to supervise this activity. A number of hotels have swimming pools, but staff must be aware of the risks before allowing students to swim. In most Moroccan hotels swimming pools do not have lifeguards, depth markings, non slip surrounds, fences or illumination. Establish clear rules and supervision responsibilities – **ideally before the trip**, to avoid disappointment if students are not to be allowed to swim. Discover group leaders are not qualified to supervise swimming. **It is recommended that if groups are allowed to go swimming then the lead teacher should set clear guidelines.** These might include:

- o *Diving is not allowed* (accounts for 10% of all swimming pool injuries to children and 70% of all severe spinal injuries).
- o *Staff should supervise* (or at least be present) during any swimming.
- o *Swimming should not be allowed at night.*
- o *Swimming should not be allowed if alcohol has been consumed.* (nearly half of all drowning and diving-related spinal injuries can be attributed to alcohol consumption).

Here a few facts:

- There are on average 648 swimming pool injuries per day in the EU.
- Nearly half of all drowning and spinal-related diving accidents in adolescents can be attributed to alcohol use.
- Inadequate supervision was found to be the most common factor associated with drowning and near drowning.
- In the UK more children died in pools whilst on vacation than did at home. Over half of those that drowned could swim.
- Diving accounts for 10% of all swimming pool accidents and 70% of all recreational spinal injuries.
- Drowning is the 2nd highest cause of injury death in children in the EU.

COMMUNITY WORK IN AND AROUND IMLIL AND ASNI: Increasingly, groups are incorporating an element of community work into their stay in Morocco. This may be in the form of a series of physical, practical tasks in the mountain villages in and around Imlil, or as part of your schools' sponsorship of a local girl staying in Dar Asni, our boarding house project which helps facilitate the education of girls from the remote rural mountain communities in the High Atlas mountains. Practical tasks are *always* useful and beneficial to the local community, but may not always be the most exciting jobs! We are guided by the local community and what they would like us to do to help them, so please do not be disappointed if your group cannot take part in building a school or medical centre – the villages may have these already! Every group wants to build a school, but building work is a very highly skilled job which carries a high element of risk, and best left to locals who are

trained and highly experienced. It is more likely that your group will be involved in litter clearing, helping to construct, clear or repair irrigation channels (seguias) in the mountains, build and maintain footpaths, etc.

Due to the physical nature of many of the tasks, this may carry a higher level of risk. Please consult the risk assessment on the CD and make sure that you all bring with you **strong boots** such as walking boots to work in (trainers are NOT ADEQUATE, you would not want to step on a nail in trainers) and **work gloves** to prevent cuts, scrapes and blisters, which can quickly become infected. Do not expect to be able to purchase these items in Morocco. Work gloves can be left behind for the villagers, and will be put to very good use after you leave.

Please take note of the following points from the risk assessment:

- All community work is negotiated through the Kasbah and the Discover Group leader, and accompanied by a local guide. Participants must not do anything which could put themselves or others at risk. Verbal instructions are given about the tasks to be carried out, how to use any tools safely, and how to work safely in the work area.
- No safety helmets are available on site, so students should not be working on building sites with people working overhead. Participants are told *not* to go into high risk work areas, eg. over head hazards during building work. Participants should themselves only work at ground level (no ladders to be used) and always be aware of other workers around them.
- The Discover Group Leader and lead teacher must be particularly vigilant to group and individual activities at all times. Instructions about lifting to safe-guard the back will be given if necessary. Students and staff are expected to follow instructions precisely, and will be stopped from working if deemed unsafe.
- Appropriate, strong footwear (eg. walking boots) should be worn when doing physical work, to reduce the risk of foot injuries – these should be brought with them – trainers are not really suitable. For building work, wearing work gloves may reduce the risk of minor injuries. Work gloves should be brought along by the group and these are not necessarily available in-country.
- All group leaders are first aid trained. Health problems of the students are known prior to the trip and held on file and sensible measures taken to minimise risk (eg. carrying extra food for diabetic participants, etc.). Students are reminded to take medication with them.
- All group members are told to stay together in small groups (minimum of 3). Students must not go off alone without prior permission from the group leader. Small work teams should be accompanied by a teacher.
- All the activities which are dependent on the weather are assessed by Omar Ait Bahmed (Discovers Alpine Mountain Leader) who has the final say whether an activity goes ahead or not. All Discovers group leaders are first aid trained and carry a first aid kit with them.
- Students should have appropriate clothing and carry ample water for the trip. Be aware that carrying out physical labor will make participants more dehydrated and susceptible to the effects of heat exhaustion.
- Physical work can make participants more susceptible to the effects of heat exhaustion. Sun hats and sunscreen must be worn if necessary, extra water than normal should be available.
- Warn about mules kicking and danger of falling from animal if riding (no helmets)
- Hands must be washed before eating, and any cuts and scrapes immediately washed and covered to prevent infection. There is no evidence of presence of Weils Disease in stream/rivers, but this is always a possibility.

Students advised to cover cuts before working in and around rivers, and should not splash themselves or each other. Advice can be given on Weils disease symptoms if requested.

Having said all the above, there are opportunities to fund-raise for specific, larger-scale building projects to which your students can then contribute their physical labor during their trip. To give you some idea, these projects have been put forward by the local community for the year 2010-11:

Imlil valley -- Arghen - Mzik : trail / sentier .	approx. 20,000 Dh (2,000 euros)
Imlil valley -- Targalmoula : construction of water tower	approx. 30,000 Dh (3,000 euros)
Azzaden valley - Tizi Oussems: construction of water tower	approx. 50,000 Dh (5,000 euros)
Azzaden valley - Tahliouine : construction of water tower	approx. 50,000 Dh (5,000 euros)
Imnane – Tinghrine: construction of water tower	approx. 40,000 Dh (4,000 euros)
Imlil: construction of incinerator	approx. 30,000 Dh (3,000 euros)

Please talk to us at the earliest opportunity if you think that you would be interested in fund-raising for one of these projects.

Toubkal Ascent

Guidance notes for all teachers considering climbing Toubkal with their group.



Jbel Toubkal is the highest mountain in North Africa at 4165m. It is in the High Atlas mountain range and is a **serious** undertaking for any group. Discover Ltd recommends that all members of the group are prepared both mentally and physically for the climb. This should be done in the following ways:

- **Physical preparation.** Before coming to Morocco, teachers should ensure that all party members are physically fit and able to walk the long distance and climb the steep gradients that Toubkal represents. This may well involve some sort of assessment at school or as part of a preparation day/weekend organised by the school. At 4165m, Toubkal is high enough for some, all, or indeed none of the party members to experience **altitude sickness**. It is impossible to predict in a party who, if anyone, will be affected, but the effects are serious and potentially life threatening, requiring immediate descent. Physical fitness, prior experience at altitude and stamina do not guarantee making the summit, but these will all help and make the experience a pleasure rather than a torment. The descent has some notoriety – strenuous with long sections walking on unstable scree. If at all possible, participants should have some experience of walking in mountains before hand.
- **Mental preparation.** Jbel Toubkal is a serious undertaking. Even reaching the base camp at the Neltner hut is an amazing achievement! All participants need to be mentally prepared for a tough expedition involving carrying their own equipment (day sacks), physical fatigue and potentially the effects of altitude. A positive mind-set really helps reach the summit! Participants should also be mentally prepared for the very real possibility not to be able to make the final climb due to deteriorating weather conditions. It can be disappointing not to be able to complete the trek after so much preparation.
- **Equipment.** All participants must be well equipped for the ascent. This includes excellent, and well worn-in footwear (walking boots **must** be worn – trainers or similar are in no way adequate), waterproofs and warm clothing including a fleece jacket, hat and gloves. Sunglasses, high factor sunscreen and a sunhat are advisable when there is snow around, as the glare of the sun on snow can be fierce. Walking poles are extremely useful for both the ascent and particularly for the descent. You will need to bring your own as we do not have supplies for everyone at the Kasbah, and participants should practise using them before the trip. Inadequately dressed participants will not be allowed to climb Toubkal. You should also bring some snacks such as chocolate or nuts, or even glucose energy tablets, to help get you to the top. You will need to bring a good sleeping bag, as the hut where we stay before and after the ascent can be very cold.



Dragon School Expedition on the Summit of Toubkal, 2008.

Time taken. Fit adults undertake the climb in two days. The first day is the ascent to the Neltner hut, the second is the final push to the summit and the descent back to Imlil. The second day can be very long and exhausting for well prepared adults. We therefore recommend that most groups should consider doing the route over **three days**, taking 2 days for the descent by spending a second night at the Neltner hut after attempting the summit, before returning to Imlil on day 3.

[Here are some detailed notes on climbing Toubkal:](#)

Pliny, the Roman geographer, described the Atlas peaks as the most fabulous mountains in all of Africa, whilst Louis Neltner (after whom the CAF hut at the base of Toubkal is named) described them as “neither more nor less beautiful than the Alps, but something different”. The native inhabitants of these mountains are the Berbers, whose name for the High Atlas Mountains is Idraren Draren (Mountains of Mountains). The Toubkal Massif is made up largely of green volcanic rocks, Andesites and Rhyolites, which are fractured and bedded together, producing huge scree slopes. The Toubkal scree slopes are used as a yardstick for comparing similar slopes on other mountains. Do not be put off, those who climb with open minds and unblinkered vision will love it. This highest summit was not assuredly identified until 1922, although Berber tribesmen probably climbed the Atlas long before recorded ascents began.

The first ‘official’ expedition to the Atlas was in 1871 when a small scientific expedition organised by J. D. Hooker was given permission to visit the Toubkal region. The first European to the top of Toubkal was the Marquis de Segonzac in June 1923, and the height of the mountain was determined in 1924, with a trigonometrical signal raised on the summit in 1931. The first British man to the summit was B. Beetham in 1926.

The route we are taking from Imlil to Toubkal is along one of the best used tracks in the High Atlas yet follows one of the most beautiful valleys in Morocco. After leaving the Kasbah, at just over 1800m, we follow a fairly steep zigzag path with a cemetery on our right. This is the path that features in Scorsese’s film *Kundun*, when the Tibetan monks are returning to the monastery. We fairly quickly join a vehicle track, which takes us through a small gorge, and past the village of Aremd (1920m), built on a peculiar geographical phenomenon called a rock glacier. Beyond the village we cross the ‘basin’ with its fields, orchards and outlying farmhouses to head off up the right hand side of the valley and through the last of the cultivation, as the altitude is now too high and the growing season too short for crops to grow. Beyond here we will see only sheep and goats as we wind up the zigzags towards Sidi Chamharouch (2320m) at about two and a half hours from Imlil.

At Sidi Chamarouch there are several small shops and cafes with quite high price, plus a white roofed mosque. This is a popular pilgrimage place for local inhabitants since the source of water, which emerges from the rocks here, is reputed to have healing powers. The waters are supposed to be particularly good for curing leg ailments

so we may need to stop here on the way down! Leaving this small settlement, the last this side of the mountains, we follow a steep zigzag path up the right hand side of the valley with the bulk of Toubkal on our left.

About two hours later as the path levels off the Neltner Hut can be seen in the distance, tucked in well below the col on the skyline. Another twenty minutes and the hut should be reached (3207m). We will be staying in either the Neltner hut, or a new Refuge, Gite Camping les Mouflons, which has been built near by. Both places have fairly basic accommodation (dormitories and no hot showers!). The nights can be very cold, so a good sleeping bag is a must.

On the second day, you will rise early (well before dawn!). Mules are not taken on the final ascent of Toubkal – you follow the guide on foot! The route starts directly behind the Neltner Hut, crossing the small river gorge of the Ait Mizane to find the first of the boulder slopes. A path of sorts, depending on the time of year and the recent weather conditions, ascends for about an hour to reach the large boulders which can be seen on the skyline from the hut. We then follow the path into the main cwm and head right, up a steep scree slope to more gently angled scree leading to Tizi-n-Toubkal (3940m, 2 hours 15 mins).

The worst is nearly over although, if you have rarely or never been at this sort of altitude before, you may be feeling a little nauseous and dizzy and will find it hard to believe how slowly you are able to walk. The key is to keep the pace very slow but steady; if you are getting out of breath, slow down even more, rather than stopping. We now follow the ridge to arrive at the summit (3 to 4 hours). At the summit is a large, iron, pyramidal structure and, haze and weather permitting, excellent views. The best view is probably towards the south, which is of layered distances of the Saharan Plateaux broken by the extinct volcano Siroua.

The descent of Toubkal has long sections on rough, loose scree – extreme care must be taken to avoid dislodging rocks onto those below you, and to avoid slipping yourself. After the hut (where you may have decided to spend a second night if the group is very tired, rather than risk accidents on the descent back to Imlil) we retrace our steps to Imlil for a well-earned hot shower!

ATTRACTIONS, VISITS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES:

Whilst there are a number of attractions and activities that take place in Morocco (and this number is increasing) Discover does not include these as part of its normal tours. Therefore groups that wish to take part in or visit these as part of their tour would have to carry out their own assessment, including a risk/benefit assessment, before undertaking any visit. Staff should not expect that standards found throughout Europe and North America will necessarily be found in the same activities and attractions in Morocco. Other than The Kasbah du Toubkal, Discover Ltd does not control or formally inspect any attraction, visit or outdoor activity. Discover Ltd. carry out generic risk assessments for all sites and activities and will not arrange activities that are considered to carry a unacceptable level of risk. However, mountain biking can pose a greater risk of injury to some groups than say bungee jumping. Visiting staff are reminded that almost all activities carry some inherent risk (several hundred young people die each year falling down stairs). Activities selected should therefore be appropriate to the age, size and ability of the group. The lead teacher should ensure that groups are fully supervised at all times and that any instructions or safety briefings are followed at all times. Any safety equipment provided should be worn at all times.

FACILITIES AND VALUES: The Berbers are a hard working people. In the mountains they have retained their independence and traditionally earned their living mainly by working the land. As mountain tourism has developed many have adapted to become guides and some into souvenir sellers. Their lives are changing rapidly as more money comes into their area from tourists and the authorities begin to develop the area. As the population of the area has grown the land has not been able to support all the families who live in the region. Many now live on the earnings of their men folk who have gone to the big Moroccan cities of Marrakech or Casablanca or abroad to Europe to earn money to support their families.

At the Kasbah du Toubkal we have attempted to marry some of our European needs and values with those of the local Berber community. The result is that we have renovated a large ruined building on the most prominent site in the Imlil valley where the Caid Souktani used to have his summer residence. This has been done entirely by hand, with no power tools and using local labour and a few specialists. Everything was carried up by hand or mule and a water supply using a spring was brought in from a long distance under gravity feed.

The major European values which we have established concern cleanliness and hygiene and clothing. There are European style washing and toilet facilities together with a traditional Berber hammam (steam bath). It is normal when entering rooms or going into carpeted areas to remove your shoes. This is some thing we observe. The rest of the area has been tiled so that shoes do not have to be removed. As a Muslim country Morocco has very different expectations of what constitutes acceptable clothing compared to European countries. Females in particular should be discreet, wearing long skirts or trousers and avoiding 'skimpy' tops. This is also sensible in helping to avoid sunburn. Sunhats are recommended at all times of year.

At the Kasbah students will often sleep communally in gallery sleeping salons. There is also the opportunity to sleep on the terrace under the stars (an experience not to be missed). A supply of mattresses/karrimats is available. In hotels and Dar Toubkal there will either be large communal sleeping areas or shared rooms.

Children and schools: You will be asked by children for sweets, money and pens. Whilst it is often hard not to give we would ask that you refrain from giving presents to children who ask for them. It encourages further begging and a dependence on tourist handouts. If you wish to give to the local community we would ask that you give the items to your group leader who will ensure that they are given to the local school teacher in the area in which you wish to make the donation, typically the Imlil region or Zagora/Tinfou area. Discover is keen to support the local school in Imlil and all the schools in the surrounding area - it is often possible for us to arrange a visit by the headmaster of the Imlil School to the Kasbah to allow students to ask questions. It is difficult to visit the school as it disrupts lessons. He has said that any pens/paper/books donated by individuals or the party collectively will be put to good use.

The Village Association: The NGO, "The Association of the Valleys of Imlil" has been established since July 1999 for the whole of the Imlil valley. This umbrella organisation assists in the development of the area around Imlil to the benefit of all the stake holders in the area. One of the initial moves of this association was

to provide an ambulance for the area which has greatly improved the access locals have to modern medicine and of course can be of benefit to visiting tourists should accidents happen. A 'hamman' was opened in Imlil in 2004, and we also organised the building of a refuse incinerator which burns the rubbish from the bins we have installed through Imlil. Donations will be gratefully received.

PURCHASING SOUVENIRS: One of the pleasures of Morocco is the opportunity to purchase souvenirs. There are many shops and Souks who want your business. Be aware that you will be expected to haggle over price! There are no hard or fast rules to this. The best decision is to decide what you are willing to pay for an item and try to get close to this. Although at first this can seem a daunting prospect, most people are enjoying it by the end. Souvenirs made by local artisans, or sourced locally can also be purchased at the Kasbah du Toubkal shop. You aren't expected to haggle over basics such as coffee, bottled water etc!

DRINKING WATER: It is essential to have your own water container to carry with you. There will be regular access to refill these from safe supplies – bottled water, springs, etc. In the towns the tap water is officially drinkable but we recommend that you buy mineral water that is readily purchasable even in small villages like Imlil. We also recommend that drinking bottles are not shared as this is how germs are spread. If staying at the Kasbah, tested and safe drinking water is available, and we recommend that you fill your water bottles here.

INOCULATIONS AND MEDICATION: We recommend that you check that you have a tetanus injection and that your polio inoculations are up to date. Check with your doctor about the current advice for travelling in Morocco, including malaria tablets and hepatitis, typhoid and cholera injections. Information is available on www.fco.gov.uk. Any prescription medication required should be carried in sufficient quantities for the trip.

PHOTOGRAPHY: Discretion **must** be used when taking photographs of people – no one likes having a camera shoved in their face, and this is becoming a real problem in the mountains and desert, where you will cause real offense. In Marrakech on the square you would be expected to pay. Ask your group leader if you are unsure about appropriateness of photographs.

SLEEPING BAG: Even in the summer the nights can be cool in the mountains. If travelling late/early in the year a good quality sleeping bag is essential. These can be hired from us (contact Kate in the UK Office).

MULES: For some day- and over-night trekking in and around Imlil, we use mules to transport our equipment and food. Due to an increasing number of incidents involving mules, they are **only to be ridden in exceptional/emergency circumstances, and mules will not be made available with the express intent of riding them**. Please take particular note of the information on mule trekking provided in the risk assessment. Riding on mules can be hazardous, especially on steep, rough, narrow mountain trails, and participants will be informed of this before taking part. **Helmets are not available** so there is potential for severe head-injury. Participants will receive instruction on riding the mules, and must follow the directions of the muleteers. When

out walking, if a mule is to be passing coming in the opposite direction, this should be done by standing still on the uphill side of the mule until it passes. Avoid going too close to the back on the mules as they can kick.

CAMEL TREKKING ZAGORA: For those that wish, and we highly recommend it, an overnight camel expedition is arranged spending the night under the stars in a nomadic tent of the Tuaregs, the 'blue men' of the desert. We ride our camels into the desert, where our guides set up camp and prepare an evening meal in the traditional fashion including making bread on hot stones. The night is spent under the stars and then waking up to a desert sunrise is a truly unforgettable experience! Please take particular note of the information on camel trekking provided in the risk assessment. Riding on camels can be hazardous. **Helmets are not available** so there is potential for severe head-injury. Participants will receive instruction on riding the camels, and must follow the directions of the cameleers. Participants must ride **one person to a camel** (ie. no 'doubling-up') and it may occasionally be necessary, depending upon demand and availability of camels and numbers in the group that two participants may need to share a camel. This is done by two people alternating riding the camel with walking, as the Tuaregs themselves would do.

ROAD SAFETY AND SAFETY WHILST TRAVELLING: All members of the party must behave in a sensible and reasonable manner so as not to endanger/inconvenience themselves, other members of the party or members of the public. When crossing roads you should look "ALL AROUND" and when no pavement is available, for example country roads around the Kasbah, you should walk in single file on the left hand side of the road so as to face oncoming traffic. This must be enforced by visiting staff. Group leaders may refuse to undertake certain activities if groups are incapable or unwilling to act safely on roads. **The road crossings in Marrakesh can be particularly hair-raising**, exercise extreme caution at all times, and use official crossings wherever possible. On coaches and other transport, seat belts must be worn at all times, when available, and kept on until the coach has stopped. The emergency doors are only to be used in an emergency or at the request of the driver. When travelling in Morocco (they drive on the right) passengers, must pay attention and look before disembarking. Move to the side of the road as soon as possible. All group members should be aware of departure times and a check made that everyone is present.

ADVICE FOR THOSE WISHING TO CONTACT GROUPS DURING THE TRIP (EG. PARENTS): Our offices in France/UK will be in contact as needed with the Discover group leader running your trip. Group leaders have mobile phones but we will not give out these numbers because if an emergency situation should arise these phones need to be kept free so that we can contact Discover group leaders and liaise as necessary. We do not want their lines blocked by numerous incoming calls from parents. Also, on standby the batteries of these phones last for a long time, considerably less long if used and we know from experience that people ring "Emergency numbers" for trivial events. You have the fax and land-line telephone numbers of all your overnight stays. Mobile phones typically work in Morocco, although some areas do not have coverage. We cannot stress enough for the enjoyment and well being of your students parents should only use these in cases of emergency. Encourage them to use these numbers with intelligence. Our suggestion is that the following premise should prevail: **"UNLESS YOU HEAR FROM ME, OR I YOU, THE ASSUMPTION IS THAT ALL IS OK"**

If this is not acceptable, it is easiest for students to ring their parents from time to time. But please, if parents ask their children to do this, they should not worry if the students do not contact them, which could happen for numerous minor reasons. It is best to assume that no news is good news.

OUR STANCE ON SECURITY AND TERRORISM FEARS:

(Extract from full and complete letter written by the Director of Discover Ltd. Mike McHugo, on the 18th May 2003 after the Casablanca bombings.) *“People might have thought terrorism was going to be a short lived event, it is now nearly 2 years since September 11th all available evidence seems to indicate that the risk of terrorism worldwide will be with us for many years to come. How long do you allow it to interrupt the educational experiences of your children? I have little doubt that the most dangerous thing we do is something we all do most days, drive on the public highway, we all seem to accept this risk so why not others. The FCO will advise against travel to locations when it thinks the risk of doing so are excessive, their recent advice to Kenya indicates their willingness to do this. Our advice is that we should follow the FCO advice, it is the appropriate position for people to take, be they group leaders, headmasters or parents.”*

The Madrid bombings in 2004, the London Bombings of 7th July 2005 and the second attempted London bombings 2 weeks later have not caused us to change our stance or assessment. On the contrary, unfortunately recent events in Madrid and London have only made the arguments and questions posed in May 2003 more pertinent. The following was written in the Financial Times soon after September 11th 2001: **“Meanwhile, the best that the ordinary citizen can do, especially if we are in for the long haul, is doggedly to pursue our normal activities.”**

We believe the events since 9/11 have shown what sound advice that was. Discover Ltd. intends to carry on with our business and our lives, until we have evidence or recommendations that the risk of doing so are unreasonable. Our risk assessments and that of the FCO, indicate that travelling to Morocco or to most other places for that matter is reasonable. We should carry on with our lives and allow our children to a full and rewarding upbringing. With this in mind, lead teachers are advised to consult the Foreign Commonwealth Office website (which is reproduced here) when consulting with parents. Consult the FCO website for up to date information: www.fco.gov.uk

(Disclaimer: The purpose of FCO Travel Advice is to provide information and views to help British nationals form their own judgments about travelling to or operating in a particular country. While every care is taken in preparing FCO Travel Advice, the FCO do not assume any responsibility, including legal responsibility, to those who read the Travel Advice and who may choose to take it into account when making any decisions relating to a particular country. Neither the United Kingdom Government nor any member of British consular or diplomatic staff abroad can accept liability for injury, loss or damage arising in respect of statements contained in FCO Travel Advice.)

Morocco

Still current at: 20 January 2011



Updated: 18 January 2011

This advice has been reviewed and reissued with an amendment to the Travel Summary (possibility of developments in North Africa triggering public disturbances). The overall level of the advice has not changed; there are no travel restrictions in place in Morocco.

Travel Summary

- **You should follow news reports and be alert to developments in North Africa that might trigger public disturbances. You should take precautions for your personal safety and avoid public gatherings and demonstrations. Any increase in regional tension might affect Travel Advice.**
- **There is a general threat from terrorism in Morocco. Attacks could be indiscriminate, including in places frequented by expatriates and foreign travellers. You should have confidence in your individual security arrangements and maintain a high level of vigilance. [See Safety and Security - Terrorism.](#)**
- **You should be aware that there is a threat of kidnapping in the immediate and wider regions and particular care should be taken in remote regions and border areas. On 8 January 2011, French authorities confirmed that two French nationals kidnapped from Niamey, Niger, had been killed near the border with Mali. If you are considering rally racing in North or West Africa you should read the travel advice for all relevant countries and our [Rally racing](#) page.**
- **In April and May 2010, a number of foreigners, including British nationals, were expelled from Morocco for alleged proselytising. You should be aware of religious sensitivities in Morocco. [See Local laws and customs.](#)**
- **Morocco has a poor road safety record. [See Road Travel.](#)**
- **If you are travelling to Western Sahara, please see the separate [Travel Advice](#) covering this disputed territory.**
- **362,000 UK tourists visited Morocco in 2009 (Source: Moroccan Ministry of Tourism). Most visits are trouble free. [See General - Consular Assistance Statistics.](#) There are occasional incidents involving theft at knifepoint in the major cities. Violent crime, though not a major problem in Morocco, is growing.**
- **You should take out comprehensive travel and medical insurance before travelling. [See General - Insurance.](#)**

Safety and security

Safety and Security - Terrorism

There is a general threat from terrorism in Morocco. Attacks could be indiscriminate, including in places frequented by expatriates and foreign travellers. You should also be aware that there is a threat of kidnapping in the immediate and wider regions and particular care should be taken in remote regions and border areas. You should have confidence in your individual security arrangements and maintain a high level of vigilance. See our [Terrorism Abroad](#) page.

Significant events include:

- On 8 January 2011, French authorities confirmed that two French nationals kidnapped from Niamey, Niger, had been killed near the border with Mali.
- In May 2003, 45 people were killed in a series of terrorist attacks in Casablanca. These attacks were against relatively soft targets, including hotels and restaurants frequented by foreigners or those with Jewish links. The Moroccan authorities arrested and imprisoned a number of those considered to be responsible for the attacks; there is a high threat of further attacks.

You should be aware of the global risk of indiscriminate terrorist attacks, which could be against civilian targets, including places frequented by foreigners.

Safety and Security - Crime

Violent crime is not a major problem in Morocco, but it is growing. There are occasional incidents involving theft at knifepoint in the major cities and along beaches. Since March 2008 a number of Europeans, including British citizens, have been attacked and robbed at knifepoint, mainly late at night, near the centre of Tangier in the area from Blvd Pasteur/Mohammed V leading down to the beach, and in and around the Kasbah/Medina. You are advised to avoid those areas late at night and not to carry valuables with you at any time in those parts of town. A British tourist was injured in an apparent knife attack at a hotel in Marrakech on 9 May 2007. There has also been an increase in reports of other violent attacks, including some shootings, and of car jacking in Casablanca. Whilst driving, you should avoid stopping at the side of the road and drive defensively, with vehicle doors locked and windows closed at all times. Do not attempt to escape from hijackers or resist their demands.

Petty crime, such as pick-pocketing and bag snatching, continues to increase. Crime and aggressive begging near ATM machines are increasing. Credit card fraud and scams such as substituting inferior goods for those that were actually purchased are common. Intimidation is sometimes used to force customers to purchase goods. You should remain vigilant and alert to potential confidence tricks.

You should avoid run down areas and badly lit streets in areas such as the medina. If offered the services of a guide, you should ensure that the guide is authorised by or operating with the agreement of the local tourist authorities, and displays an official badge. Harassment of tourists by men posing as official tourist guides is common. There have also been reports of tourists being harassed on Moroccan trains.

Travellers to Morocco should be aware of the impact that the situation in Iraq, as well as the violence between Israelis and Palestinians, has had across the Arab world and the risk of public disturbance in response. You should follow news reports and be alert to developments in the Middle East that might trigger public disturbances. In addition, demonstrations against rising food and fuel prices across the region have on occasion turned violent. You should take sensible precautions for your personal safety and avoid public gatherings and demonstrations. Any increase in regional tension might affect Travel Advice.

Safety and Security - Local Travel - Road Travel

Morocco has a poor road safety record. According to the Moroccan Ministry of Equipment and Transport, road accidents claimed the lives of 3,946 people in 2009 and 103,180 wounded.

Accidents are especially frequent on busy major routes but also on narrower secondary roads. All drivers should take extra care when overtaking, particularly where there are no hard shoulders. You are advised to leave plenty of time to reach your destination and to stay well within speed limits.

If you are involved in a road accident resulting in a fatality and the Moroccan authorities consider you responsible, you may be detained pending a trial hearing.

If you are involved in a minor accident, you should complete a 'Constat Amiable' form, to be signed by both parties. The blank forms are available upon arrival at the Tangier port from the insurance company booths, or can be purchased from tobacconists in all cities.

Safety and Security - Political Situation

[Morocco Country Profile](#)

Local laws and customs

Local laws reflect the fact that Morocco is an Islamic country. You should respect local traditions, customs, laws and religions at all times and be aware of your actions to ensure that they do not offend other cultures or religious beliefs, especially during the holy month of Ramadan or if you intend to visit religious areas.

Women, especially when travelling alone, will attract attention. To minimise hassle, you should dress inconspicuously and avoid wearing clothes that could be regarded as provocative (e.g. short skirts and low-necked strappy tops), except on the beach.

Homosexuality is a criminal offence in Morocco. Sexual relations outside marriage are also punishable by law.

British nationals travelling to Morocco with a view to marrying a Moroccan should, before they travel, contact either the British Consulate in Tangier or the Consular Section of the British Embassy in Rabat to enquire about the documentation they will need to provide.

The penalties for possession of even small amounts of drugs are severe: up to 10 years' imprisonment, with no remission for good behaviour, heavy fines and confiscation of your vehicle/vessel. If you travel through the Rif Mountains, a major cannabis growing area, you may be harassed by drug dealers.

It is against the law to carry bibles in Arabic, to attempt to distribute any non-Muslim/evangelical literature or be involved in any such activity.

Entry requirements

Entry Requirements - Visas

British nationals do not require entry visas to Morocco for the purpose of tourism, for visits of up to three months.

Entry Requirements - Passport Validity

Your passport will need to be valid for at least six months after your entry into Morocco. When entering the country, particularly during the busy summer months, you should ensure that your passports are stamped. You will then be able to stay in Morocco for up to three months. Some tourists have experienced difficulties leaving the country because their passports bear no entry stamp.

Entry Requirements - Travelling to Western Sahara

If you intend to travel to the disputed territories to the South of Morocco, you should consult our separate Travel Advice for [Western Sahara](#).

Entry Requirements - Border Closure

You should also be aware that the border between Algeria and Morocco is closed, and no attempt should be made to cross it at any point.

Entry Requirements - Travelling with Children

Single parents or other adults travelling alone with children should be aware that some countries require documentary evidence of parental responsibility before allowing lone parents to enter the country or, in some cases, before permitting the children to leave the country. For further information on exactly what will be required at immigration please contact the Moroccan Embassy in London. When arriving by private boat, you must enter the country by a recognised port of entry. Entry through other ports will be considered illegal.

Health

In the 2010 Report on the Global AIDS Epidemic the UNAIDS/WHO Working Group estimated that around 25,000 adults aged 15 or over in Morocco were living with HIV; the prevalence percentage was estimated at around 0.1% of the adult population compared to the prevalence percentage in adults in the UK of around 0.2%. You should exercise normal precautions to avoid exposure to HIV/AIDS. For more general information on how to do this see [HIV and AIDS](#).

You should seek medical advice before travelling to Morocco and ensure that all appropriate vaccinations are up-to-date. For further information on vaccination requirements, health outbreaks and general disease protection and prevention you should visit the websites of the National Travel Health Network and Centre ([NaTHNaC](#)).

See our [Travel Health](#) page and the UK Department of Health website at: www.dh.gov.uk.

Natural disasters

Morocco is in an earthquake zone and earthquakes, usually minor ones, occur occasionally. But a strong earthquake hit northern Morocco around the port town of Al Hoceima on 24 February 2004, killing more than 600 people. You should familiarise yourself with general safety procedures in the event of an earthquake and take note of any earthquake-related instructions, e.g. in hotel rooms.

General

General - Insurance

You should take out comprehensive travel and medical insurance before travelling. You should check any exclusions, and that your policy covers you for all the activities you want to undertake.

General - LOCATE Registration

Register with our [LOCATE](#) service to tell us when and where you are travelling abroad or where you live abroad so our consular and crisis staff can provide better assistance to you in an emergency.

General - Money

You should bring sufficient funds for the visit in cash or credit cards. There is no limit on the amount you can import. Most major credit cards are accepted in the larger urban centres throughout Morocco. It is not possible to change Scottish or Irish bank notes and it's very difficult to change travellers' cheques in Morocco. The Moroccan Dirham is non-convertible and its export is prohibited. ATMs are widely available in cities and most main towns. If you enter Morocco with a vehicle, the registration number will be entered in the immigration computer. If you are not in possession of the same vehicle when leaving Morocco, you will be refused exit and detained.

General - Consular Assistance Statistics

362,000 UK tourists visited Morocco in 2009 (Source: Moroccan Ministry of Tourism). Most visits are trouble free. 103 British nationals required consular assistance in Morocco in the period 01 April 2009 – 31 March 2010 for the following types of incident: 18 deaths; 30 hospitalisations; and 33 arrests, for a variety of offences.

During this period assistance was also requested with regard to lost or stolen passports (76 cases).

General - Contact Details for the British Consulate-General, Consulates and Honorary Consuls:

British Honorary Consulate **TANGIERS**: Trafalgar House, 9 Rue Amerique du Sud, Tangiers 90000 - BP. 1203, Morocco Tel: 00 212 539 93 69 39/40 Fax: 00 212 539 93 69 14/00 212 53993 6914 uktanger2@menara.ma

British Honorary Consulate **AGADIR**: The English Pub, Boulevard 20 Août, Agadir
Tel: 00 212 528 84 76 09 00 212 528 84 76 09 Michelle.Kraino@fconet.fco.gov.uk

British Honorary Consulate **MARRAKECH**: Residence Taib, 55 Boulevard Zerktouni - Gueliz, Marrakech, Morocco Tel: 00 212 524 42 08 46/00 212 524 42 08 46 Fax: 00 212 524 43.52.76 matthew.virr@fco.gov.uk

If you are a British National and have a genuine emergency outside normal office hours, please call the Embassy switchboard on +212 (0) 537 63 33 33 +212 (0) 537 63 33 33 where you can obtain

details of our Global Response Centre who may be able to assist you. Please note that only emergency calls can be handled out of office hours. Visa enquiries can only be dealt with during office hours.

EARTHQUAKE SAFETY INFORMATION

Some popular holiday destinations, such as Greece, Turkey and the Caribbean, can frequently be shaken by small earthquakes or tremors which cause little or no damage. These are quite normal and you should not be alarmed if you happen to feel one. The chance of you coming to any harm due to an earthquake while on holiday is very small. Tourist hotels and other holiday properties are generally well-designed and well-built. Casualties from earthquakes are mostly caused to people living in badly-constructed homes or buildings.

However, occasionally a large earthquake may occur and knowing what to do and what not to do is important for your safety. The following advice has been prepared to assist you.

If you are indoors when an earthquake occurs

- Do not run outside, no matter how alarming the shaking is. *You are likely to run into a shower of stones and glass falling from the upper parts of the building. Also, it's hard to run during an earthquake and you may fall and hurt yourself.*
- Stay away from glass, windows, outside doors and external walls, and anything that could fall, such as lighting fixtures or furniture, such as wardrobes.
- If there is a heavy item of furniture in the room, like a big table, get underneath it. *It will shield you from falling debris. You may need to hold on to it in case it starts shifting around*
- If there isn't a table or desk near you, cover your face and head with your arms and crouch in an inside corner of the room. *If the ceiling collapses, it will fall into the middle of the room away from the walls.*
- Alternatively if there is a doorway, which appears to be a supported load bearing style stand within the doorway for shelter. *Doorways are very stable. Research shows that sometimes doorways remain standing even when an entire house has collapsed.*
- Beware of falling objects. *Heavy items like TV sets and wardrobes may fall or be thrown about the room.*
- Stay inside until the shaking stops. *Research has shown that most injuries occur when people inside buildings attempt to move to a different location inside the building or try to leave while shaking persists.*
- Be aware that the electricity may go out or the sprinkler systems or fire alarms may turn on
- DO NOT use the lifts.

If you are outside when an earthquake occurs

- Do not attempt to run inside. *You are likely to run into a shower of stones, debris and glass falling from building. Also, it's hard to run during an earthquake and you may fall and hurt yourself.*

- Stay away from buildings, street lights and utility wires; choose the most open space available to you. *Ground movement during an earthquake is seldom the direct cause of death or injury. Most earthquake-related casualties result from collapsing walls, flying glass, and falling objects*
- Stay away from steep slopes. *There may be danger of rock falls or landslips.*

If you are in a moving vehicle when an earthquake occurs

- Stop as quickly as safety permits and stay inside the vehicle. *Avoid stopping near or under buildings, trees, overpasses, or on or under bridges and utility wires.*
- Proceed cautiously once the earthquake has stopped. *Avoid roads, bridges, or ramps that might have been damaged by the earthquake.*

After the earthquake stops

- If it was a strong earthquake, once the shaking subsides, go outside, if it is safe to do so; go to an open space away from buildings. Don't use lifts. *If the earthquake has damaged buildings, they may be weakened and susceptible to damage or collapse from aftershocks. There will be aftershocks; you should expect this – especially in the next 48 hours.*
- Don't smoke or light matches. *There may be leaking gas.*
- Wait for instructions from the authorities or premises management. *They will decide which buildings are safe to re-enter.*

Tsunamis

Very few earthquakes produce tsunamis, and very few tsunamis are big enough to be dangerous. When a large Tsunami occurs, they are very dangerous, usually more dangerous than the earthquake, so it is important to be prepared. A tsunami may follow an earthquake that you feel; but it may arrive from a distant coast, too far away for you to have felt the earthquake.

- Listen to the advice of the civil authorities or premises management.
- Stay away from the beach and sea. Head for high ground if possible. *If the earthquake started a tsunami, it will usually arrive within about 30 minutes, but in exceptional cases, over an hour. After that, the danger has passed. If there is no high ground, you are safer on the upper floor of a building.*
- If the sea recedes rapidly as though the tide were going out, get away from the shore. *This is an unmistakable sign that a large tsunami is on the way. Don't go and investigate, get to high ground. You have perhaps approximately 20 minutes before the tsunami arrives. You will get this warning before a tsunami about half the time.*
- If you see a wave far larger than other waves approaching, sometimes with a roaring sound, move away from the area as fast as possible. *This is a tsunami approaching. If the earthquake was far away, and the*

sea didn't recede, this will be the first thing you see. Don't imagine the wave will stop at the beach; it will keep going for some distance inland. You need to get as high as possible as quickly as possible.

This leaflet has been produced utilising information available from the British Geological Survey (BGS) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) who are part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

Emergencies

In the event of an emergency we will work closely with the Lead Teacher, Discover Group Leader, School, Board of Governors and LEA to resolve the situation as satisfactory as possible. We have staff on 24 hour call to provide information, support and action. Full contact details are below:

DISCOVER OFFICE (UK) +44 (0)1883 744 392

EAGLE'S NEST (FRANCE) Office hours: +33 (0)4 66 45 83 95

EAGLE'S NEST (FRANCE) Out of hours: +33 (0)4 66 32 92 68 or +33 04 66 45 89 09

KASBAH DU TOUBKAL (MOROCCO) +212 (0)5 24 48 56 11

KASBAH DU TOUBKAL FAX (MOROCCO) +212 (0)5 24 48 56 36

HAJJ MAURICE – KASBAH HOUSE (MOROCCO) +212 (0)5 24 48 56 57

HOTEL FOUCAULD, Marrakesh (MOROCCO) +212 (0)5 24 44 54 99

GENDARMERIE (Marrakesh) +212 (0)5 24 44 96 33

BRITISH HONORY CONSUL, MARRAKESH +212 (0)5 24 42 08 46

Royal Air Maroc (Morocco) +212 (0)5 24 44 64 44/ 0900 00800

Royal Air Maroc (UK) +44 (0)20 7307 5800

BA

EASY JET

RYAN AIR

NB Telephoning from the UK to Morocco you dial 00 212 and miss off the "0"

Finally, please remember that the vast majority of School Visits take place without incident and are highly beneficial and enjoyable for all concerned!

These guidelines are intended to clarify policies and procedures and contribute to the success of your visit.

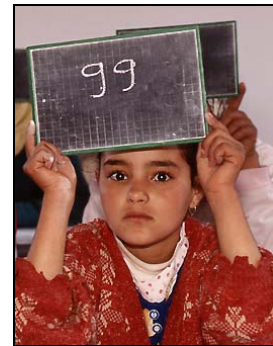


World Change Starts with Educated Children
'Educate a girl and you help educate
a future generation.'

A unique opportunity for up to 24 schools to link up and be part of this project

Few girls from the rural communities that surround the community of Imlil, in the High Atlas Mountains 40 miles south of Marrakech, get the opportunity of continuing their education after primary school. The high school in Asni, 17km away, is not accessible to them for two main reasons. Either their parents cannot afford to pay for lodgings at Asni, or they lack the confidence in the facilities at Asni to entrust their daughters to be away from their rural communities.

'Education for All', a Moroccan NGO, builds girls' boarding houses accommodating up to 36 girls, near to schools and colleges. We had our first intake of girls in September 2007, and September 2010 saw our third house take in its first girls.



Now we need your support! In order to look after one girl, provide them with food, some clothing, school materials and a House Mother, we are encouraging partner schools to raise and donate €1500 (£1000) per year, for a three year period. We are looking for **up to 24 partner Schools** to support and participate in this project. We are already delighted to welcome the support of our first partner schools, Bristol Grammar, Sevenoaks, Dragon, British School of Brussels, St Mary's and Madrid International School, amongst others, who have pledged their support for a girl to attend.

If you would like to join-in, please tick the box on your booking form. This commits your group to raise and donate at least €1500 (£1000) to support one girl at the boarding house for one year. If you would like to continue this donation for the three year period, even better! Participating schools will receive a termly newsletter and updates on life in the school. Most importantly, you may like to take the opportunity of visiting the boarding house in Asni to meet the girls and spend a day with them doing work in the local community.

We hope you and your students would like to join us in this project.



World Change Starts with Educated Children
'Educate a girl and you help educate
a future generation.'



Community Work for Schools in Morocco. CAS with Discover Ltd.

Discover has been actively involved in community work in the Imlil valley since we began running tours to Morocco right back in 1978! Our links with local communities and contacts with local people have led to our being held in very high regard in the valley, and also to receiving awards for sustainable development and tourism in Morocco. A huge part of our community work in the valley has been done with the physical help and financial support of schools who visit Morocco with Discover Ltd. (as well as the 5% levy which is added to the charge of everyone who stays at the Kasbah du Toubkal). In 1999, Discover Ltd. set up "The Villages of Imlil", an NGO which decides how the money raised is spent, and nominates projects which will be of benefit to the community. Projects include:

- Construction of the village public hammam and the local school;
- Purchase of a prime bull, to 'service' the village cows, and construction of a trout farm;
- Purchase of two ambulances for transporting people to the nearest hospital in Asni;
- Construction of the villages' incinerator, for disposing of village rubbish. Placing rubbish bins throughout the village and employing someone to empty them and burn the rubbish;
- Building and improvements to footpaths and irrigation channels (seguias).



We also work with the communities in Imlil and Asni through our "Education for All" NGO, established in 2007. Through this work, students and staff are invited to take part in small scale building and maintenance projects. Further information can be seen at www.educationforallmorocco.org If you would like to become one of these 24 schools please contact either Mike McHugo mike@discover.ltd.uk or Andy Phillips andy@apa-ec.co.uk for further information. We also encourage groups who would like to sponsor a girl through the 'Education for All' programme to visit the school/boarding house and spend some time with them during their trip. This time is often spent in play with the children, listening to them read, working on the computer, exchanging life experiences and doing art and crafts. ***Please do consider adding giving something extra to the communities which welcome you in Morocco during your trip. Thank you!***

Traveller's Ten Commandments...

Thou shalt not expect to find things as they hast them at home, for thou hast theft
thine home to find things different;

Thou shalt not take anything too seriously – for a carefree mind is the beginning of
a vacation;

Thou shalt not let the other tourists get on thine nerves – for thou art paying good
money to have a good time;

Thou shalt always remember thine passport, so thou knowest where it is at all time –
for a man without a passport is a man without a country;

Blessed is the man who can make change in any currency – for lo, he shalt not be
diddled;

Blessed is the man who can say thank you in any language – it shalt be worth more
to him than many tips;

Thou shalt not worry. He that worrieth hath no pleasure, and few things are ever
fatal;

When in Rome, thou shalt do as the romans do: if in difficulty, thou shalt use thine
common sense and friendliness;

Thou shalt not judge the people of a country by one person with whom thou hast had
trouble;

Thou shalt remember that thou art a guest in every land – and he that treateth his
host with respect shall be treated as an honoured guest.

*Please also see The High Atlas Tourist Code which has been sponsored by Discover Ltd
and The Kasbah du Toubkal*