

Marrakesh, the High Atlas and desert



Day 1

Upon arrival at Marrakesh Menara Airport, your group will be met by your Discover guide and taken to your accommodation, the Hotel Foucauld, in the ancient medina of Marrakesh. Depending on your arrival time, you may begin your exploration of this beautiful city, and visit the Djemaa el-Fna, the infamous 'Place of the Dead', in the heart of the ancient city of Marrakesh. Dinner is taken in the hotel restaurant, or very late arrivals may sip mint tea on the terrace before bed and rest for the next days adventure!

Islamic culture. In the evening, you may choose to head back into the Square and spend time watching the local entertainers, where snake charmers and acrobats, fortune tellers and dancers vie for your attention, and visit the spectacular food stalls which combine to make the atmosphere unforgettable...

Day 2

After breakfast, your Discover guide will accompany you and a local Marrakchi guide on a horse-drawn caleche tour around the city walls. You will spend the day exploring this enchanting city, visiting the leather tanneries, experience a local Berber apothecary, bartering for goods in the souks, or carrying out a field study into the human geography of this rapidly developing city in an LEDC. Here, youthful, dynamic and aspiring Moroccans live alongside more traditional



Day 3

After breakfast, your transport will take you to the High Atlas village of Imlil. Stops can be made en route to view some of the issues which affect a rapidly developing city in north Africa such as water supply and tourism. On arrival in Imlil, you will walk to your accommodation and settle in before lunch. After lunch, you may like to do a short local trek to a tea house, and simply absorb the fabulous mountain scenery around you. Mount Toubkal (4165m), the highest mountain in North Africa, dominates the valley and always impresses. Dinner is taken in your accommodation, and evenings are spent reviewing the day, star-gazing, chatting and reflecting together.



Day 4

The village of Imlil is set in fabulous mountain scenery. Your time in Imlil may be spent in a variety of ways:

Trekking. Trek from Imlil to one of several mountain passes from which you can view the mountain environment in all its splendour. With your Discover guide, a local mountain guide and mules will walk with you at your pace, and lunch is served as a Berber picnic on your arrival at your chosen vantage point. Awe and Wonder are the themes of your trek, as you discover this fabulous mountain environment, one of the world's classic mountain ranges.



Fieldwork. You may choose to spend your time in Imlil carrying out one of our fieldwork investigations. We have a range of studies enabling your students to investigate flooding and hazards in a mountain environment, river morphology, tourism and eco-tourism, cold environments, rural settlement, microclimates or ecosystems.



Community work. You may wish to spend your time in the mountains 'giving back' to the local community. We have many projects to which students can contribute their time and energy, from repairing footpaths to clearing irrigation channels, from clearing litter to engaging local children in play.



You may like to fund-raise or collect materials for a specific project before your trip, and spend your day in the Imlil area putting your efforts to good use. Past projects have included the construction of the village incinerator, ensuring a safe drinking water supply for the village, and working with the children in Imlil Primary School, listening to children read, playing games and doing craft work. Gifts of stationery and balls are always appreciated and will be put to good use!



Day 5

This is a long travelling day, but one of superlatives, lauded as one of the classic drives in the world! After an early breakfast, we climb over the High Atlas



mountains, cresting the Tizi n Tichka pass, at 2260m. Here, the rarified air is hard to breathe but the views are breath-taking anyway! Stalls selling rocks, fossils and minerals line the precipitous route, and we will stop regularly for our daily dose of Awe and Wonder! Continuing south, we arrive in the desert frontier city of Ouazarzate, where we spend the night at the Hotel La Vallee, nestled between the High Atlas Mountains and the great Sahara Desert.

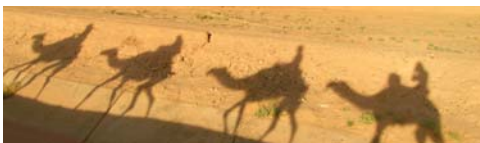
Day 6

After a relaxed start, we will visit Ouazarzate and tour the fabulous Kasbah, Ait Ben Haddou, a UNESCO World Heritage site now used as a film set. Continuing south, we cross the Anti-Atlas mountains and follow the desert oasis of the Draa valley, world famous for it's production of dates, before reaching Zagora, and the start of our desert adventure. Accommodation in the Hotel Fibule du Draa.



Day 7

This morning, we visit Tinfou, a village further into the desert, which is gradually being encroached by the sands, and students can carry out fieldwork here. We will have lunch in Zagora and be met by our local Tuareg guide, and introduced to our camels for our desert trek into the sand dunes in the pre-Sahara desert. Tonight, we make camp in traditional Bedouin tents and watch as the desert night unfolds around us.



Song, drumming and laughter will fill the night, as we experience an unforgettable night in the company of these proud nomadic people.

Day 8

Waking with the dawn, we breakfast early and return on our camels to Zagora. After all that sand, it is time to experience a traditional Moroccan hammam, where we can be washed, scrubbed and massaged before lunch! Later, we visit a traditional pottery and silver-smith and consider the impact of such eco-tourism in the desert. Night at the Hotel Fibule du Draa.

Day 9

Today we make the return drive from Zagora in the deep south, to Marrakesh, re-tracing our route through the desert and mountains. On arrival in Marrakesh, we once more check into the Hotel Foucauld, for our last night in this incredible city.



Day 10

Depending on the time of your return flight, you may have time to visit the Jardins Marjorelle, Yves St Laurent's fabulous garden, giving yourselves time to reflect and relax before your return to Marrakesh Menara Airport for your flight.

