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**Global trips for women**

## *Morocco Odyssey*

*16 Days*

Come with us as we dive into ancient cultures and meander through breath-taking landscapes. You will love the gorgeous accommodation; the delicious food; and the heartwarming people you will meet. This trip promises to take your breath away everyday as we explore this incredible country, having new experiences daily! Small challenges like riding camels and a wonderful hike will leave you with a sense of achievement, and the food, shopping and hamman experience will indulge all your senses!

### DAY 1, CASABLANCA

This is arrival day - you will be picked up from the airport and taken to the hotel to recover from your flight. You have a free afternoon to go for a stroll along the Casablanca waterfront, drink coffee on the esplanade or relax by the pool at the hotel. Dinner together and trip briefing to kick off our exciting trip. Meals - D

### DAY 2, CASABLANCA

This morning we visit the Hassan II mosque, the third largest mosque in the world, built to commemorate the former Kings 60th birthday. We take a guided tour to learn more about Islam, which is a good introduction to the start of your trip. Lunch at a lovely local seaside restaurant. In the afternoon we go on a city tour of Casablanca. Our local guide will give you a fascinating insight into Moroccan/Muslim life and show us a few of the main sights. Dinner tonight in a beautiful Moroccan restaurant. Meals B, L, D

### DAY 3, CASABLANCA TO CHEFCHAOUEN

Leave 9am as it is a big travel day, stopping in Rabat to look at the "Kasbah des Oudayas", the mausoleum of Hassan 11 and to have lunch. After lunch we continue on to the wonderful Rif mountain town of Chefchaouen, a four hour drive. All the buildings here are painted a fabulous vivid blue, and the tight alleyways are crammed with gorgeous shops - your eyes will pop at all the fabulous treasures to behold (or buy). After a delicious dinner you might like to take a stroll through the twisting alleyways and stunning blue buildings. Meals - B, L, D

### DAY 4, CHEFCHAOUEN

Free day! Chefchaouen is all about the ambience - take your time to get lost in the lovely boutique shops brimming with beautiful handicrafts. Sit in a café in the square and do some interesting people watching while you sip on a mint tea. Or go for a short hike nearby for wonderful views over the village. Meals - B

#### DAY 5, CHEFCHAOUEN TO FES

Today we head for the fascinating imperial city of Fès, stopping at the Roman ruins of Volubilis for a brief but interesting visit, before heading to Moulay Idriss for a look around this picturesque town perched on a hill, formerly only open to Muslims. After lunch we continue on our exciting journey to Fes, in time for sunset, drinks and dinner at our riad. Meals - B, L, D

#### DAY 6 FES

Be prepared for a thoroughly insightful cultural tour of the amazing city of Fes with our local guide today! We will be walking through this carless old city, past laden donkeys, visiting the tanneries and various artisans and learning about life in the medina. Dinner tonight at your at a fabulous restaurant Meals: B, L, D

#### DAY 7, FES TO MERZOUGA

After breakfast we set off for the Sahara desert, stopping along the way in Ifrane, a "Swiss-style" town built by the French in the 30s. We pass through the dramatic Ziz Valley, and the landscape changes several times till we finally reach the edge of the Sahara. Here we stay in a beautiful Kasbah-style hotel made of mud, with a backdrop of huge golden dunes. All around us is desert, and tonight you will experience a Saharan sunset and a starry African sky.

Meals - B, L, D

#### DAY 8, MERZOUGA, SAHARA DESERT

This morning we enjoy a leisurely breakfast on the edge of the Sahara desert. The pace of life is slower out here under the hot sun, and somehow the nothingness is mesmerizing. Out in the desert you feel a million miles from anywhere.

We will visit some local musicians and hear them playing traditional "gnawa" music in their village - the ancestors of these black musicians were left here after the slave-trade ended and have developed their own style of music and dance. After a special local lunch and a bit of shopping for Tuareg and Berber artifacts we head back to our hotel for a swim or laze around the pool, before we take a sunset camel ride to sleep under a starry Saharan sky, in a lovely camp. Meals - B, L, D

#### DAY 9, SAHARA DESERT TO DADES GORGE

Next stop is Boumalne, gateway to the Dades Gorge, around 4-5 hours drive with interesting stops along the way. Unwind by the pool in the late afternoon as you will need energy for the excitement of the coming days. Meals - B, L, D

#### DAY 10, DADES GORGE TO AIT BENHADDOU

We leave our lovely hotel and take a drive through the spectacular Dades gorge, full of incredible rock formations in beautiful coloured sandstone. Our journey today takes us through the Vallee des Roses, where exotic products are made from the Damask Rose. Maybe you still have some room in your bag for some rose water, rose oil, or some beautiful handcreams etc. We stop at Ouarzazate, (Morocco's answer to Hollywood) , where Gladiator and the Mummy, amongst others, were filmed, for lunch, perhaps in a local friends home if she is available!

We then drive on to Ait Benhaddou, one of the oldest and best preserved Kasbahs in Morocco. A Kasbah is an old mud-walled castle, with beautifully decorated mud turrets. This particular one is a UNESCO World Heritage site - our hotel tonight is surrounded by old Kasbahs, and a stroll around them will take you back in time, imagining the days when camel caravans crossed the desert, bringing wares to trade from Timbuktu. Meals - B, L, D

#### DAY 11, AIT BENHADDOU TO THE ATLAS MOUNTAINS

Today we enjoy an early morning visit to the incredible old Ait Ben Haddou kasbah. Some families still live here and we might be able to visit one of their homes. The kasbah is also brimming with tiny shops and amazing artists. Next stop, after lunch along the way: the Atlas Mountains! Our guides load donkeys with our overnight bags while we walk up to our Berber guesthouse nearby (hike from 1-2 hours at a leisurely pace). Tonight is a real cultural experience as we are immersed in a Berber village up in the mountains. This is guaranteed to be one of the many highlights of this trip as you get to learn how a Berbers survive up in the mountains using age-old traditions.

Meals - B, L, D

#### DAY 12, ATLAS MOUNTAINS TO ESSAOUIRA

Today we will hike for a couple of hours in the surrounding mountainous countryside, through gardens and rocky landscapes with our local guide, back down to the river valley. After lunch we head to the Atlantic coast, to spend some time in the white-washed town of Essaouira. Essaouira has a special, laid-back feeling and you will enjoy some time out here, strolling through the labyrinth of alleyways, discovering interesting little shops, cafes and crafts. Tonight we dine in a very special restaurant, watching the sunset over the Atlantic, and with a vibe like no other!

Meals - B, L

#### DAY 13, ESSAOUIRA

Today is your free day to do as you please - trawl the souq for exotic goodies, stroll around the port and see the local fishermen selling their wares, have a seafood lunch or find some funky cafes to drink coffee in and watch the world go by. Meals - B

#### DAY 14 ESSAOUIRA TO MARRAKECH

This morning we head to the exciting pink city of Marrakech! Marrakech is a vibrant city where East meets West - from the traditional old souq in the medina (old town) to the modern shops and French patisseries, you will find this place fascinating. After lunch you have an orientation walk and then a free afternoon to explore... In the evening we eat together on the Big Square. Jamaa El Fna is a hive of live street entertainment every evening - there are belly dancers, acrobats, storytellers, musicians and much more to keep you amused for hours.

Meals - B, L, D

#### DAY 15, MARRAKECH

This morning you are free to do last minute bargaining, explore the Jardin Marjorelle (must be booked online in advance), get a henna tattoo, or just soak up the atmosphere of this ancient town....spend a few hours watching the buskers (snake charmers, musicians etc) ... whatever you feel like! After lunch we head out for a "hammam" - this is a traditional communal bath house, where, using natural locally made products (olive oil soap etc) we are scrubbed till we are squeaky clean by one of the bathhouse attendants - guaranteed to come out feeling like a new born baby! The food is amazing in Morocco - our last meal tonight to recall all the incredible experiences of the past 2 weeks. Meals - B, D

#### DAY 16, MARRAKECH

Our wonderful Morocco trip finishes after breakfast. Your bags will no doubt be loaded with impressive, handmade gifts and your mind loaded with exotic memories! Meals: B

#### **Included:**

All activities, entries to cultural sites and monuments, accommodation on twin share basis (single supplement available on request), transport, transfers and guide services as stated in the itinerary, as well as meals as specified in the itinerary, except those on "free" days, where you can eat where you like at your own cost.

**Not included:**

Visa fees, international flight costs, meals or activities not stated in the itinerary, airport taxes, personal items, snacks, drinks (except where provided with meals), vaccinations, tips or gratuities, laundry, telephone, minibar, personal travel insurance, alcoholic beverages.

\*Rates are based on a minimum of 8 Guests.

\*If numbers fall below 8 Guests, we will offer the tour at a re-priced amount.

\*Prices are subject to change until paid in full.