



MEJDI TOURS

MEJDI Tours Group Departure

Tour: The Wonders of Morocco

Included: 10 nights' accommodation at the following 4- & 5-star hotels or similar (double occupancy): Les Jardins de la Medina (Marrakech), Riad Mimouna (Essaouira), Oscar Hotel by Atlas Studios (Ouarzazate), Luxury Oasis Camp (Merzouga), Riad El Yacout (Fes)
1 local guide for 10 days
11 days of private bus transportation including group arrival and departure transfers
Meals listed in the itinerary: 10 breakfasts, 4 lunches, 4 dinners
Entrances, sites, and honorariums for speakers¹
Water on the bus throughout the tour
US-based customer service representatives

Not included: International airfare
Travel insurance-**HIGHLY RECOMMENDED**
Single Supplement
Meals not mentioned in the itinerary
Gratuities
Anything not explicitly mentioned in the included section

¹ Subject to confirmation based on availability

Itinerary:

Day 1: Arrival - Marrakech, Morocco

Arrive in Marrakech, a former imperial city, major economic center, and home to mosques, palaces, extravagant gardens, and the famous red stone walls that surround the “Red City.” Transfer to your hotel. Afternoon **visit to the bustling Jemaa el-Fnaa, a square and market place in Marrakech's Medina Quarter, or Old City** (if timing allows). Enjoy a group **welcome dinner** and **meet with local official in Marrakech** for a discussion on women’s empowerment in politics this evening.

Hotel: Les Jardins de la Medina, Marrakech (D)

Day 2: Marrakech

This morning, visit **Gueliz Synagogue** and **meet with Jackie Kadosh, a leader in the Jewish Community** in Marrakech. Visit **Mellah**, the Jewish Quarter and enjoy lunch on your own in the market. This afternoon, visit **Medrasa Ben Youssef**, formerly the largest Islamic college in Marrakech. See **Bahia Palace**, a late 19th century palace built by Si Moussa, the powerful Grand Vizier of Sultan Hassan I, featuring dazzling displays of zellij tiles, painted ceilings, ornate wrought iron features, opulent salons of the harem era, and a massive grand marble courtyard and explore the historic **Saadian Tombs**. Stop in at a **traditional Amazigh pharmacy** and visit the **Kutubiyya Mosque**, or “Bookseller’s Mosque,” the highest structure in Marrakech and a prominent meeting point at the heart of the city. Return to your hotel and enjoy dinner on your own this evening.

Hotel: Les Jardins de la Medina, Marrakech (B)

Day 3: Marrakech and the Villages of the High Atlas

Spend the day with the **High Atlas Foundation**, an organization that promotes sustainable development, women and youth empowerment, and interfaith relations. Visit some of the villages and womens’ co-ops with whom they work and hear first-hand stories of the life-changing work the organization is doing in the villages of the High Atlas. Enjoy lunch with locals in a nearby village. Return to Marrakech for dinner on your own this evening.

Hotel: Les Jardins de la Medina, Marrakech (B, L)

Day 4: Essaouira

Today, travel to the vibrant and picturesque port town of Essaouira (~2.75 hours drive).

Meet with the Mayor and the President of Essaouira Mogador International Airport. Visit to Bayt Dakira, or the House of Memory, the former home of a wealthy trader, converted to a space dedicated to the historic co-existence of Morocco’s Jewish and Muslim communities and **meet with the museum director**. Enjoy some time at leisure to wander on your own through the charming labyrinthine lanes lined with Portuguese, French, and Amazigh architecture. This evening, enjoy **dinner and an evening of live Gnawa music**, Moroccan and sub-Saharan African Islamic religious songs and rhythms that combine poetry with traditional music and dancing.

Hotel: Riad Mimouna, Essaouira (B, D)

Day 5: Marrakech

This morning, **meet with the head of Zawya Kadiriya for a discussion on woman and Sufism.** Return to Marrakech and learn the secrets of Moroccan cuisine at a **local cooking class.** After lunch, explore **Majorelle Garden**, a 2.5 acre botanical and artist's landscape garden. Enjoy an evening at leisure and dinner on your own.

Hotel: Les Jardins de la Medina, Marrakech (B, L)

Day 6: Ait-Ben-Haddou - Ouarzazate

This morning, make your way toward Ouarzazate, stopping in **Ait-Ben-Haddou**, a spectacular ksar village and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. A striking example of southern Moroccan architecture, Ait-Ben-Haddou was once a major stop along the caravan route between Marrakech and the Sahara. Continue along winding mountain roads with sweeping desert and mountain views to **Ouarzazate**, the gateway to the Sahara and Morocco's movie capital, where many famous movies have been filmed. **Meet with Amazigh movie maker, Said Belli, tour Atlas Film Studios, and learn about the art and business of film production in Morocco.** Visit **Kasbah Taourirt**, a fortified historic complex. Enjoy dinner on your own this evening.

Hotel: Oscar Hotel by Atlas Studios, Ouarzazate (B, L)

Day 7: Merzouga

This morning, depart for the **Dadès Gorges**, a series of rugged wadi gorges carved out by the Dadès River. Stop in **El-Kelaa Mgouna**, or Valley of the Roses and visit a rose cooperative. Continue on through the **Todgha Valley** to your tented camp in the desert dunes of **Merzouga**. This evening, enjoy a **camel ride** and a stunning sunset over the dunes. Later, **enjoy dinner and drum circle by the campfire.**

Hotel: Luxury Oasis Camp, Merzouga (B, D)

Day 8: Merzouga to Fes

Arise early this morning and watch the **sunrise over the desert.** Depart after breakfast for Fes, stopping along the way for lunch on your own and for stunning photo ops. Visit **Khamlia Village for some live Gnawa music & dancing.** Arrive in Fes this evening and enjoy dinner on your own.

Hotel: Riad El Yacout, Fes (B)

Day 9: Fes

Spend today in Fes, the oldest of the Imperial cities and the religious capital of the Kingdom of Morocco. **Explore the largest medina in North Africa**, with over 9,000 tiny streets and alleys, filled with ancient mosques, towering minarets, arched doorways, tranquil courtyards, and brilliantly colored intricate mosaic tiles, delicately engraved with quotes from the Koran, and the mellah (Jewish Quarter) that, prior to the Spanish Inquisition, had a native Jewish population that could be traced back to the period following the destruction of the Second Temple during the Siege of Jerusalem in 70 C.E. **Visit the dying vats and learn about leather production at one of the largest and oldest tanneries in the city.** Over lunch, sit down for a **discussion with local students and members of Mimouna Association, an organization that works to educate Moroccan Muslims about Jews**

and Judaism, and to advance Jewish-Muslim relations. This afternoon, **tour the Mellah with the Rabbi of Fes** and visit some local synagogues and cemeteries. Enjoy dinner on your own this evening.

Hotel: Riad el Yacout, Fes (B, L)

Day 10: Meknes and Sefrou

This morning, transfer to **Meknes** (~3.5 hour drive). Visit the **Medina of Meknes**, one of Morocco's four imperial cities, founded as a military settlement in the 11th century, and **Bab-el-Mansour**, the main ceremonial entrance to the Kasbah of Sultan Moulay Isma'il known for its beautifully preserved green and white zellij tiles, marble columns, and Koran inscriptions. After lunch on your own, visit the small Amazigh town of **Sefrou**, and learn about its Jewish population as well as its role in agriculture and trade. Return to Fes this evening and enjoy a **farewell dinner and Sufi ceremony**.

Hotel: Riad el Yacout, Fes (B, D)

Day 11: Departure or Optional Extension

This morning, transfer to the airport in Fes or Casablanca and depart for home, extend your time in Fes on your own, or depart for an optional extension. *(B)*

Optional Extension: Chefchaouen, Tangier, Rabat, & Casablanca

Included:

- 3 nights' accommodation at the following 4-star hotels or similar (double occupancy): Dar Echchaouen Maison d'Hôtes & Riad (Chefchaouen), Hotel Marina Bay (Tangier), Barcelo Hotel (Casablanca)
- 1 local guide for 3 days
- 4 days of private bus transportation including group departure transfer
- Meals listed in the itinerary: 3 breakfasts, 3 lunches, 1 dinner
- Entrances, sites, and honorariums for speakers²
- Water on the bus throughout the tour
- US-based customer service representatives

Not included:

- International airfare
- Travel insurance-**HIGHLY RECOMMENDED**
- Single Supplement
- Meals not mentioned in the itinerary
- Gratuities
- Anything not explicitly mentioned in the included section

² Subject to confirmation based on availability

Itinerary:

Day 11: Chefchaouen

Transfer to the artsy, blue-washed town of **Chefchaouen** (~4 hour drive), nestled in the Rif mountains, and originally founded as a kasbah from which to defend Morocco against Portuguese invasion. Over lunch, **meet with Anas Belhachmi, an expert in Andalusí music for a discussion and live music performance**. After lunch, take a guided tour of the Old City of Chefchaouen and explore the city's narrow lanes and maze-like medina. Enjoy dinner on your own this evening.

Hotel: Dar Echchaouen Maison d'Hôtes & Riad, Chefchaouen (B-main program, L)

Day 12: Tangier

Transfer to **Tangier** this morning. Visit of the **Old City** and the **American Legation Museum**, commemorating historic and cultural diplomacy between the U.S. and Morocco. Enjoy lunch at **Villa Josephine**, an historic boutique hotel overlooking the Strait of Gibraltar, then visit **Cape Spartel** and the **Cave of Hercules**. Later this afternoon, explore the **Villa Haris Museum and Gardens**, followed by dinner on your own this evening.

Hotel: Hotel Marina Bay, Tangier (B, L)

Day 13: Rabat

Transfer to **Rabat** this morning (~1.25 hour drive), Morocco's capital city on the Atlantic Ocean at the mouth of the river Bou Regreg. See **Dar-al-Makhzen**, the King's primary residence (outside only), and **Kasbah Oudaya**, a tranquil and tiny Andalusian-style neighborhood of twisting lanes surrounded by blue and white buildings. **Visit the Mausoleum of Mohammed V**, with its intricate tile work and grand marble tomb, adjacent to the unfinished Hassan Tower. Transfer to Casablanca (~1.25 hour drive) and check into your hotel. This evening, see the **Hassan II Mosque** (outside only) and enjoy a final farewell dinner at a local restaurant.

Hotel: Barcelo Hotel, Casablanca (B, L, D)

Day 14: Departure

Transfer to the airport and depart for home today. *(B)*