

Mesmerising Morocco

Saturday 17 April - Arrive in Morocco!

Welcome to the first day of our adventure to Morocco.

For those arriving directly from Australia your flight departs Australia on the evening of 16 April to arrive in Casablanca on 17 April. The most direct flights are with Emirates via Dubai. However this may depend on your departure city. We can advise the most convenient and direct flights for you. Your Australian Tour Manager will be travelling with you from Australia and will assist with making your journey as stress free as possible.

For those arriving from the U.K. or Europe we suggest Casablanca is the best arrival city. If you are travelling from Spain via ferry we can assist with ferry options.

Which every way you choose to arrive in this mesmerising country you will be warmly welcomed by your Moroccan Guide and Driver on arrival in Casablanca. Once completing customs and immigration we leave Casablanca (to return later in our journey) and travel the hour's drive to Morocco's capital, Rabat. After arrival at our lovely hotel we have time to settle in and recharge our batteries for the magical journey ahead.

The Hotel will prepare a light dinner for us in the early evening

D

Sunday 18 April – Rabat – Meknes – Volubilis - Fes

After a leisurely breakfast we continue our introduction to Morocco with a relaxed tour of Rabat including a visit to the remarkable Mausoleum of the late King Hassan. The kingdom of Morocco is ruled by King Mohammed VI whose main palace is located here in Rabat.

Our journey today takes us from Rabat via the Imperial city of Meknes and the Roman ruins of the once beautiful city of Volubilis. We stop for a picnic lunch in the stunning setting of the roman ruins of Volubilis with its well preserved and vibrant mosaics. The walls surrounding Volubilis date back to the 1st and 2nd centuries.

We arrive in the ancient city of Fes by late afternoon. This is our first experience of staying in the medina of a Moroccan city and is a great way of experiencing life as it has existed for hundreds of years. Our accommodation combines traditional Moroccan with the luxury and décor of the modern day so we can experience the best of both worlds.

Dinner own arrangement

B. L.

Monday 19 April - Fes

A morning to explore Fes – the new town with its museums and Royal Palace followed by a walk through the Medina stopping for a mint tea. We walk by the Medersas and Karaouyne University, which has existed for the past 1000 years. We watch craftsmen working in the narrow lanes much as they done for centuries. The Fes Medina is listed by UNESCO as a world heritage sight and after our walk this morning you will understand why. Lunch today is in the heart of the Medina to enjoy a delicious Moroccan Tajine. After lunch we continue through the Medina to our hotel to rest and enjoy the Spa and Hamman (Turkish bath). Dinner own arrangement

B.L

Tuesday 20 April - Fes

This morning we have organized a visit to the potteries to watch the marvellous Moroccan Tajines being made and perhaps buy one for ourselves - or simply watch and wonder. A visit to Fes is not complete without experiencing the sights, sounds and aromas of the famous tanneries. A sprig of mint may assist with this tour.

The remainder of the day is free - to shop, to explore the medina or enjoy the excellent spa and hamman at the Palais Jamais.

Dinner tonight is at Le Maison Bleue – this house was the home of the chief astronomer of Morocco and is still owned by the same family. Experience the traditional Moroccan Cuisine in a very Moroccan family atmosphere.

B. D

Wednesday 21 April – Fes to Marrakech

Today is a full day of travelling through the Berber villages of Azrou and Khenifra and south to Marrakech. The scenery changes from the more fertile areas of the north to the arid south. There will be many photo opportunities during our drive. We take advantage one such stop to enjoy our picnic lunch. Time allowing we will visit the Kasbah of Ras El Ain and the spectacular outlook over the fertile Tadla Plain.

Arrival in Marrakech is in the late afternoon. After settling in to your accommodation we suggest an evening stroll to the market square, Djemaa El Fna to see the jugglers, story tellers, snake charmers, acrobats and vendors performing at sunset much as they have done for centuries. There is so much action here it will take you a few minutes to adjust to what is before you

B, L

Thursday 22 April - Marrakech

Time to get to know Marrakech a little more with a morning tour with our guide to discover all the delights this romantic city can offer. A visit to the Bahia Palace, located in the Jewish quarter known as the Mellah, the Saadien Tombs in the Kasbah, and onto the Medina and Souks.

This evening we have a special dinner at Restaurant Le Yacout, famous in Morocco for its cuisine, décor and complete dining experience

B, D

Friday 23 April - Marrakech

This morning is for options – a relaxing time to catch up on shopping or perhaps a journey to the Atlas Mountains to ride Mules over the winding hilltop tracks (additional cost).

In the late afternoon our caleche – (horse drawn carriage, pronounced *kalesh*) will be waiting to take us to the famous Jardin de Marjorelle. These historic gardens were owned by Yves St Laurent and he chose this beautiful location as his last resting place.

B

Saturday 24 April – Marrakech to Essaouira

We have enjoyed the cuisine during our time in Morocco so this morning we learn how we can enjoy this food in our own homes. We travel to the Cookery School located in beautiful gardens just outside Marrakech to watch, participate and enjoy Moroccan cuisine. Our reward is our lunch, taken while sitting beside the pool in this idyllic setting.

After lunch we leave Marrakech for the beautiful fishing port of Essaouira – two and a half hours to the west. The countryside changes again as we approach the coast. The area between Marrakech and Essaouira is well known for its Argan trees. The nuts from the trees are used for cooking oil and cosmetics (and are a favourite of the local goats which will climb the trees to reach them!). Essaouira's Portuguese influence and fascinating history adds to its rich appeal. We learn of this history from our guide and have time to stroll around the port watching the fishing boats at work.

Dinner tonight is at our beautiful hotel.

B, L, D

Sunday 25 April - Essaouira

There is a small Medina in Essaouira which is less chaotic than Marrakech but uniquely interesting. Today we have the opportunity to fully explore this medina and the beautiful town. We can relax and watch the Atlantic waves in a day of rest and leisure.

B, D.

Monday April 26 – Essaouira to Casablanca

Our Moroccan adventure is coming to a close as we leave Essaouira early for the drive to Casablanca. We will be following the Atlantic Coast north stopping for lunch on the way.

At times during this drive we feel we could be travelling an Australian coast (with more Olive Groves). We travel through a countryside where agriculture is the dominating industry to the industrial outskirts of Casablanca. The modern city of Casablanca is our last stop in Morocco. Perhaps we will have time to look for Rick's Bar before dinner?

B, L

Tuesday April 27 - Casablanca

We leave our hotel this morning for the airport and our departure to our next adventure. We have one last sightseeing stop and one that is well worthwhile - the colossal Hassan II Mosque, named after the present King's father. It is the second largest mosque after Mecca and a sight not to be missed. It was Hassan II who described Morocco as "a tree whose roots lie in Africa but whose leaves breathe in European air".

We say goodbye to Morocco far richer for the experience and return to our homes, or further adventures.

B

Abbreviations:

B – Breakfast **L** – Lunch **D** – Dinner

When the above abbreviations follow the Itinerary Description it denotes that these meals are included in the cost of the Tour.

Costs and Additional Details

Cost	For more detailed information and cost geraldine@traveljourneys.com.au or +61 3 9015 7986
Departs	16 April 2010 ex Australia 17 April ex Casablanca
Finishes:	Casablanca 27 April 2010 - Option Available for Dubai Stopover
Group Size:	14 maximum
Please Note:	Limited single room accommodation available on request for additional cost.
Accommodation	Accommodation is 4 stars where available.
Stopover	Dubai Stopover available on return journey – please ask for Costing

Tour Inclusions

Meals	As listed in Itinerary - All Breakfasts, Five Lunches, Five Dinners.
Services	Australian Tour Manager travelling with you from Australia. Moroccan English Speaking registered Guide.
Transport	Guide and Driver travel with us throughout our time in Morocco Air Conditioned Mini Bus
Fees	Daily Excursions and Tours All Entrance Fees Moroccan Cooking Class Caleche ride, Marrakech <u>All of the above - as per Itinerary.</u>
Cost	Based on Share Twin/Dbf room Single cost available subject to availability of single rooms

Tour Exclusions

Meals	Other than those listed in Itinerary
Tips	It is custom to tip both the Guide and the Driver in Morocco. Guidelines will be advised with departure documents.
Airfares	Group Airfare is available for those departing Australia on the group departure date if there are sufficient numbers.
Option	Dubai Stopover available on return journey - please ask for costing.
Misc.	Items of a personal nature such as laundry, dry cleaning, personal accident and medical expenses, incidental expenses, taxi fares where not part of a regular transfer, telephone and internet communication charges, excess baggage.