

Mosaic of Morocco

HIGH ADVENTURE TOUR!

November 4 - 14, 2022 • 11 Days • \$5275

With its enviable geography and vibrant history, Morocco is a beautiful country with a complicated, colorful, mosaic-like culture we look forward to sharing.

Tour Type: Classic Curated

- [Overview](#)

Situated in north Africa, Morocco sits at a unique junction of influences. Bordered on the north by the Mediterranean, with Spain and Portugal just a stone's throw across the Strait of Gibraltar, its western flank is hemmed in by the Atlantic Ocean. Dreamy dunes of the Sahara Desert push up from the south against the 14,000-foot peaks of the Atlas Mountains, while broad, fertile plains producing bountiful agricultural harvests and rich mineral resources connect the Atlas Mountains with two other significant mountain ranges.

Historically, Moroccans were mainly Berber tribes in the eons before the 7th century Arab Muslim movement entered the region. Arab and Berber cultures and bloodlines combined and their armies, often called Moors, invaded and controlled major sections of the Iberian Peninsula of Europe for nearly 800 years. The Moors continued to develop one of the most advanced civilizations on the globe, with significant contributions to medicine, science, mathematics and city planning - all while the capitals of Europe were still dumping raw sewage into public streets!

A few highlights offered by this Adventure:

- **Tangier:** Separated from Spain by only 20 miles of the Gibraltar Strait, Tangier has a fascinating mix of north African, Spanish, French and Portuguese influences that inspired Henri Matisse.
- **Chefchaouen:** Perched beneath the rugged peaks of the Rif Mountains, Chefchaouen acts not only as the perfect base for one of our walks but is also one of the most visually striking towns in Morocco with its beautiful blue-washed buildings.
- **Fez and Marrakech:** These two imperial cities were capitals of two of Morocco's four dynasties at various points in the country's long history. Their respective medinas provide some of the trip's most colorful and memorable scenes.
- **High Atlas Mountains:** We crisscross the High Atlas range twice, and wind back and forth along the southern foothills for a good part of that time, connecting with multiple facets of the Berber side of Moroccan culture.

- **The Sahara and southern deserts:** The dunes of the Sahara display stunningly stark scenes and are some of the planet's harshest environments, while the region south of the High Atlas Mountains that descends into the Sahara shares multiple aspects that will impress upon us the precious value of water.

Including:

- Airport to hotel group transfers on first day
- All land travel as outlined by motorcoach
- Accommodations in a blend of hotels and riads (traditional inns)
- 18 meals: all breakfasts, 2 lunches, and 6 dinners as denoted (BLD), including 3 cultural meals with local residents
- 8 walk routes (6 IVV)
- Walking fees for those collecting IVV walking credit
- WAI guide service throughout(2 guides)
- Cultural & historical expertise of a national guide throughout
- Local guide assistance on several days
- All tipping for local guides, coach drivers, and group meals
- Pricing is based on double occupancy. A limited number of single rooms are available for a supplement of \$600. We also provide a roommate matching service.

Activities/Visits to:

- Guided Tour of Tangier
- Guided Tour of Volubilis (UNESCO)
- Guided Tour of Fes (UNESCO)
- Al-Qarawiyyin University
- Tanneries of Fes
- Camel Trek & Overnight Luxury Desert Camp in the Sahara
- Khettaras medieval irrigation system
- Guided Walk in Tinghir Palmeraie oasis
- Rose distillery visit
- Ait-Ben-Haddou (UNESCO)
- Guided Tour of Marrakech (UNESCO)
- Bahia Palace
- Saadian Tombs
- More fun and educational stops than we can list!

Optional Excursions:

- Caves of Hercules & Asilah (Day 1)
- Fassi dinner and show (Day 5)

- [360.260.9393](tel:360.260.9393)
- [Email Us](#)



Adventure Pace

Tour Pace: 1 2 3 4 5

Walk Challenge: 1 2 3 4 5

[About Adventure Pace](#)

Adventure Pace

How much Adventure do you want? Here are a few features to help gauge the following factors on each tour.

Tour Pace: On a scale of 1 (slowest pace) to 5 (fastest pace), we've rated the following factors: number of 1-night hotels; driving miles per day; fullness of schedule; mid-tour airline flights; high elevation setting; and average amount of walking per day.

Walk Challenge: This number represents an average walk difficulty rating for the tour using a scale of 1 (easiest) to 5 (hardest).

[Book Now](#) [Contact Us](#)

Important Info



Group Size

Maximum 22 travelers



Hotels

Accommodations in a blend of hotels and riads (traditional inns)



Meals

18 meals included: all breakfasts, 2 lunches, and 6 dinners, including 3 cultural meals with local residents. Meals are denoted in itinerary as (BLD).



Airfare

Not Included. Travelers will fly into Tangier (TNG) and out of Marrakech (RAK).



Transportation

Included in a motorcoach with 40 seats.



Traveler Age

Our travelers usually range from 50-75 years of age. All ages welcome!

Your Guides



Scott and Ruth Burk have spent much of their free time over the last two decades exploring the world, while successfully instilling wanderlust in their two adult children. Ruth now operates her own business as a writer consultant for high tech companies, and Scott recently retired from a career as an air traffic control manager for the Portland, Oregon, airport. They love traveling and sharing their experiences with others! Scott & Ruth led the inaugural Morocco Adventure in 2021, along with our gregarious and well-connected local guide, Abdou Idrissi. They look forward to sharing the colorful cultures and fascinating history of exotic Morocco with another group of inquisitive WAI walkers in November 2022.

Itinerary

Click on each day to reveal more details. BLD refers to meals included, Breakfast, Lunch or Dinner.

[DAY 1-November 4: Arrive Tangier, Morocco \(D\)](#)

Optional Asilah Walk - 4 km, rating unknown

Travelers arrive into the Mediterranean Morocco port city of Tangier today. Separated from Spain by only 20 miles of the Gibraltar Strait, Tangier is a complex mix of north African, Spain, France, and Portugal. In fact, until 1956, Tangier was governed under joint

international control. As such, it is a worthy entry point for our odyssey through the Moroccan mosaic.

Optional Excursion ~ Caves of Hercules & Asilah: *Those arriving a day early are invited to join us for an optional excursion to the Caves of Hercules & Asilah on the Atlantic side of Morocco. The first part of the day takes us to a cave near Tangier just south of where the Atlantic and Mediterranean Sea meet. Historically, circular cuts on the ceiling and walls of the cave bear witness to the use of the cave by Phoenicians to quarry millstones. Mythically, it is considered a resting place of Greek hero Hercules after he finished The Eleventh Labor of Hercules of gathering the Golden Apples of Hesperides. From the Cave of Hercules, we travel further south to the Atlantic town of Asilah, a charming artist community of whitewashed homes decorated with colorful murals. Each year the town is whitewashed and a festival follows during which artists redecorate the walls with new splashes of color. We'll enjoy this special slice of the Moroccan cultural tapestry with a walk through the medina (old town) and along the waterfront promenade. (Minimum 15 participants; Estimated Price: \$120) From Asilah, we return to our hotel in Tangier for this evening's Welcome Dinner.*

[DAY 2-November 5: Tangier - Chefchaouen \(BD\)](#)

Walking Tour of Chefchaouen - 2 km, rating 3B

After a relaxed breakfast, we depart mid-morning on a guided tour of Tangier. We drive first to the kasbah (fort) at the top of the old medina for a panoramic overview of the city and the sea beyond. Walking is the best way to see Tangier, and a swirling stroll through the bustling serpentine lanes introduces us to our first Moroccan medina, scenes that captivated Henri Matisse and other famous artists. After time for lunch, we rejoin the bus for a drive inland to Chefchaouen. After checking into our hillside cottage lodgings, join us for an evening stroll through this unforgettable town. Yesterday we visited a whitewashed city; Chefchaouen is striking for its blue-washed buildings. We start along the Ras el Ma, pass the local laundromat (aka the river) and wind our way through blue alleys and lanes to Place Outa el Hammam, the central square of the city, for this evening's group dinner.

[DAY 3-November 6: Activities from Chefchaouen \(BL\)](#)

Rif Mountain Panoramas Walk - 8 km, rated 2B

Today's after-breakfast activity is a short but challenging bonus hike up to the Spanish Mosque for panoramic morning views of the city. Later, we ascend by coach into the Rif Mountains to the starting point of the main walk of the day. Our first stop along the route is in the humble village of Kalaa. Following a picnic lunch, the walk continues with sweeping vistas over the northernmost of Morocco's three main mountain ranges. Our coach meets us at the end of this linear trail and returns us along a scenic drive to Chefchaouen, where late afternoon and rest of the evening are free to explore on your own.

[DAY 4-November 7: Chefchaouen - Fes \(B\)](#)

Volubilis Roman Ruins Walk – 7 km, rated 2B

We head south this morning to explore the ruins of the Roman outpost of Volubilis. According to the UNESCO World Heritage listing, Volubilis is “an exceptionally well-preserved example of a large Roman colonial town on the fringes of the Empire”. The city was reclaimed by the local Amazigh tribes around 235 AD and it was near here, in the 8th century, that Idriss I established the first dynasty of the Kingdom of Morocco.

Our walk has two stages, starting from a village in the neighboring hills then trekking through rural scenes of the bucolic Moroccan countryside to Volubilis, where we finish with a guided tour.

Our home for the next two nights is a traditional riad in the bustling and vibrant medina of Fes.

[DAY 5-November 8: Activities in Fes \(B\)](#)

Fez Idrisid Dynasty Walk – 6 km, rated 1B

Our local guide meets us this morning after breakfast for a brief overview of the day followed by a multi-faceted walk and driving tour of Fes that features: a walk past the Royal Palace and through the old Mellah (Jewish Quartier); a drive to one of the Borj (towers) for a panoramic view of the entire medina; a stop at a mosaic house for a demonstration of traditional pottery methods utilized by Fassi artisans; a walking tour of the mesmerizing medina of Fes to get lost in its ancient streets and neighborhoods; and visits to various artisan sections and important historic monuments (including the tomb of Idriss II and the Al-Qarawiyyin University – the oldest continually operated university in the world). After time for lunch, and a visit to the photogenic tanneries of Fes, the rest of the afternoon is free to explore on your own.

Optional Excursion ~ Fassi Dinner and Show: *Enjoy traditional Fassi cuisine this evening while watching a show that includes local music, folklore, belly dancing, and even a little magic. Estimated Price: \$60*

[DAY 6-November 9: Fes - Erg Chebbi \(BD\)](#)

Our longest driving day takes us south towards the Sahara Desert this morning. Along the way, we see a wide cross section of the mosaic of Morocco. First stop is a rest break in a mountain town whose forested slopes have earned it the nickname “Little Switzerland”. We continue south through the largest cedar forest in Africa, home to Barbary apes (aka Atlas Monkeys). Next is the ascent through the Middle Atlas Mountains for a lunch break (fresh trout from one of the region’s volcanic lakes) on the high plains between the Middle and High Atlas ranges. Finally, we cross the High Atlas Mountains via the Ziz River Gorge descending to the stunning sun-soaked dunes of Erg Chebbi. Camels are the preferred method of transport (4×4 jeeps are also available) for our trek into the heart of the dunes to this evening’s luxury tent camp (facilities en suite). Dinner is served at camp, preceded by

the chance to climb a dune to watch the sunset, and followed by local music and desert stargazing.

[DAY 7-November 10: Erg Chebbi - Boumalne Dades \(BD\)](#)

Toughra Oasis Walk - 5 km, rated 1C

If you pre-arrange it, your camel guide will wake you early this morning so you can watch the sun rise over the Sahara. Breakfast back in camp is followed by a return camel trek over the dunes to rendezvous with a more conventional form of transportation (our bus). Leaving the Sahara, we stop to visit Khettaras, a fascinating and surprisingly effective medieval irrigation system that brought water to the desert from the distant Saghro Mountains. The oasis town of Tinghir is the venue for today's guided walk through the palmeraie (palm oasis) and Mellah (old Jewish area). The walk ends at a local rug cooperative for a demonstration of this traditional art form. A short distance away, our hotel boasts a terrace overlooking the Dades River Valley where we can unwind and enjoy a pre-dinner glass of wine.

[DAY 8-November 11: Activities from Boumalne Dades \(BLD\)](#)

Valley of 1000 Kasbahs Walk - 7 km, rated 2C

A scenic morning drive takes us along the Road of 1000 Kasbahs (fortresses) from the Dadès River Valley to the M'Goun River Valley. At Kasbah Tamaloute we stop for tea and restrooms, then set off on today's trail along the M'Goun River through local Berber gardens filled with spring roses that have become an important cash crop in these mountain valleys. One of the oldest kasbahs in the region offers a break for tea with the family, followed by more meandering through the Berber village to enjoy lunch with a different local family. After lunch, we meet our local transportation (2 public minibuses) and head off-road over M'Goun mountain to Ait Yul in Dadès Gorge. Along the way, we have the opportunity to visit a nomad family and get a sense of their stark and traditional way of life. Once in Ait Yul, we rendezvous with our private bus and return to the hotel.

[DAY 9-November 12: Boumalne Dades - Marrakech \(B\)](#)

Our coach follows the Dadès River into Kelaat M'Gouna, this morning, the heart of the Valley of Roses. A stop here at a local rose cooperative offers a demonstration of the distillation process of the region's most valuable crop. From here, we continue to the stunning UNESCO World Heritage site of Ait-Ben-Haddou. After time for lunch and to explore this maze-like hill town and impressive ksar, we motor over the High Atlas Mountains via the breathtaking Tizi n'Tichka Pass, reaching an altitude of over 7400 feet above sea level before beginning the descent into Marrakech. Upon arrival in Marrakech, we check into our hotel on the edge of the medina. You are free to explore this intriguing and lively old quarter and enjoy dinner on your own, or join us for a no-host dinner together.

[DAY 10-November 13: Activities in Marrakech \(BD\)](#)

Marrakech Medina Walk - 7 km, rated 1B

Our local city guide meets us at the hotel for this morning's fascinating walk through Marrakech, our third imperial city. Along the way we stop to explore Bahia Palace ("palace of the beautiful"), 19th century masterpiece of Moroccan architecture; the Saadian Tombs, containing sepulchers of nearly 60 members of this 16th century Berber dynasty; and Koutoubia Mosque, erected in the 12th century during the Almohad Caliphate, another Berber dynasty. Sprinkled in between the history and architectural wonders are a kaleidoscope of colorful Marrakech medina marvels - crafts and clothes and a potpourri of almost any kind of product imaginable. Following the walk, the balance of the afternoon is free to explore. Join us again this evening for a unique, only-in-Morocco Farewell Dinner. We've been invited into a local home to join a Moroccan family during this season of Ramadan as they break the daily fast.

[DAY 11-November 14: Depart Marrakech \(B\)](#)

We say "farewell" to Marrakech this morning. Our wanderings through the mosaic that is Morocco have introduced us to many of its mysteries - a kaleidoscope of customs and cultures at the crossroads of the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, Africa and Europe, Berber and Arab, Islam and Christendom.

More Details

Click on each heading for more details.

[How Do I Lock in My Place on This Adventure?](#)

To register, a non-refundable \$200 deposit is required to hold your spot. A final payment is due 60 days before departure and is non-refundable once paid. You will receive a reminder email from us a week or two in advance.

Soon after registration, an "Adventure Advice" email will be sent with critical information on flight arrangements as well as important steps to take in the months before your trip. Please do not buy your airline tickets until you review this Adventure Advice email.

Please follow this link to read our full [General Tour Conditions](#).

[Unique Aspects of this Tour](#)

Morocco is a **high adventure** destination. Morocco is a challenging destination for Americans; it's a culture that does not, or cannot afford to, place a premium on comfort. Traditional Berber culture is a recurring theme of the program and the American traveler will encounter many scenes, smells, and experiences that can rightly be labeled as "exotic" or "earthy" and possibly uncomfortable to some. Those who grew up on a farm may be well prepared for some of the medina market scenes.

Trails are not groomed! Sometimes they will feel more like goat paths than proper trails, and that will be accurate in places. Walking sticks are strongly advised!

Sleeping in the desert is a unique experience. We are investing in a luxury tent camp, but it is still not the Crowne Plaza Hotel.

A high toleration for noise is an aspect many traditional cultures share. We are sensitive to this in our planning, but we will not be traveling in a bubble and you will feel the differences which, of course, is one of the primary purposes of travel. Pack your sense of adventure and you will have a good start to maximizing your Moroccan experience!

[What's a Classic Curated Tour](#)

With help from local experts and walking guides, these itineraries are hand-crafted with extensive on-site planning by WAI tour planners.

When planning Classic Curated Tours, our objective is to capture the essence of a destination—the history, culture, and natural wonders unique to that part of the world. We then build activities and walks that take us inside these characteristics.

Yes, these tours are educational, but they are also interactive and immersive; walking gets us off the bus and penetrates local cultures to not only see but touch, smell, and feel these special spaces.

Along the way, local walking guides amplify the experience by sharing insights into the magic of that particular location.

[Walk Difficulty](#)

We will experience a broad spectrum of Morocco during our walks!

Several will feature the medinas, or traditional centers, of Moroccan towns, places that look, sound, and feel like something out of *Arabian Nights*. These are not antiseptic places where goods are neatly packaged and refrigerated! As mentioned in the “Unique Aspects of This Tour Section”, the medinas can be very earthy places where life is lived in the open and food and other merchandise takes a very direct path to the marketplace. Walking is the best way to experience these iconic and colorful aspects of Moroccan culture. These walks are not “difficult” but they can be culturally intense beehives of activity. It’s important to stay with the group because they are also labyrinthine.

Trails outside the towns are usually not well-groomed! Sometimes they will feel more like goat paths than proper trails, and that will be accurate in places. We will certainly encounter sections of trails that would be considered unsafe if encountered in the USA. We will do our best to warn you in advance, but will also count on you to know your limits and exercise good judgment, communicating to your guides if a trail section is too difficult for you. Elevation gain and loss (ups and downs) are not usually the issue; uneven surfaces are

generally what accounts for the challenge. Walking sticks are strongly advised! Opting out is always acceptable!

Morocco is an smorgasbord for the senses! Walking, as always, is the best way to experience it! Be prepared for a supremely memorable, and sometimes challenging, series of walks!

Walk Ratings

We generally walk at a pace of 2 to 3 miles per hour. Walks that are oriented more towards education may take longer due to stops for guide commentary. Nature walks, on the other hand, generally continue at a steadier pace because we're stopping less to talk. In most cases, we are not "strolling." We are walking at a relaxed but steady pace. Your experience will be significantly affected by your level of physical fitness. If not walking regularly at home, we strongly recommend that you make a priority of "training" beforehand to both enjoy the trip and avoid medical issues due to overexertion.

If you have questions about your ability to participate, please contact our office at fun@walkingadventures.com.

We have adopted a walk difficulty rating system which contains a numeric indicator for trail incline and an alpha indicator for trail terrain. The explanation for this system is presented on the table below:

INCLINE

1. Minimal hills or stair climbing. Cumulative elevation gain: <200 feet.
2. Some moderate hills and stair climbing. Cumulative elevation gain: 200-1000 feet.
3. Some significant hill or stair climbing. Cumulative elevation gain: 1000-2000 feet.

TERRAIN

- A. Almost entirely on pavement.
- B. A significant part of the route is on well-groomed trails with very few obstacles.
- C. A significant part of the route is on somewhat difficult terrain (rocky / rooted paths or soft sand).

Elevation on Tour

Though we drive through two passes of the High Atlas Mountains, most of our accommodations and walks are near or below 2000 feet above sea level with the following exception.

Our stay in Boumalne Dades on day 7 and day 8 is just over 5000 feet above sea level and our *Valley of 1000 Kasbahs* is at about the same elevation. Elevation should not be an issue on this Adventure.

[How is Airfare Arranged?](#)

The official start point for this Adventure is the airport in Tangier, Morocco (airport code TNG), while the official end point is the airport in Marrakech, Morocco (airport code RAK). WAI is monitoring the flight situation into Tangier and Morocco in general. More details about flight arrangements and travel agent contact information will be provided in an Adventure Advice PDF by email after you register for the Adventure. Please do not book your airfare prior to receiving these flight details from us!

We recommend that you contact Laura Pfahler, the travel agent we work with, to help book your flight arrangements. In this age of airfare complications and airport uncertainty, using a travel agent is a good investment!

- Laura Pfahler: 503.434.6401 or llp@wtpdx.com

[Travel Insurance](#)

WAI believes strongly in the importance of travel insurance for financial and medical protection from any number of unforeseen circumstances that can arise before departure or during your Adventure. This is now especially true in the era of COVID-19, which is typically treated like any other illness for travel insurance purposes. Many travel insurance providers are available for you to consider. Laura Pfahler and Sharon Mitchell of World Travel Inc. are travel agents who provides air travel and insurance services to many WAI travelers.

- Laura Pfahler: 503-434-6401 or llp@wtpdx.com
- Sharon Mitchell: 971-261-2091 or smitchell@wtpdx.com

Check out [Insurance Tips](#) from World Travel for a short introduction to travel insurance. (NOTE: WAI receives no commission or financial remuneration from World Travel Inc.).

As always, do some shopping to ensure you are getting the best value. Using the [squaremouth.com](https://www.squaremouth.com) website can be a good way to compare pricing.

Other options include:

- Allianz
- Betins
- Travel Guard
- Travel Insured International

NOTE: We suggest purchasing from a reputable, well-established insurance company (avoid buying insurance from an unknown company found only online). Travelers interested in purchasing “cancel for any reason” insurance coverage should be careful to check pricing and terms BEFORE they register for a tour. Recent changes in the international travel landscape has caused changes in the policies of some insurance companies, and made the purchase of this particular type of policy even more time-sensitive.

[What if WAI Cancels the Tour?](#)

Walking Adventures International reserves the right to cancel any tour departure with fewer than 15 participants, in which case registered participants will receive a 100% refund of payments received. This refund policy contains one exclusion related to the COVID-19 outbreak. Many suppliers require non-refundable deposits as a condition of booking services. Unforeseen circumstances linked to the virus can force us to cancel a tour. Due to these supplier's non-refundable policies, WAI intends to retrieve as much of these deposits as possible, but cannot guarantee a 100% refund. In cases where full refunds cannot be obtained for a cancelled tour, we will do our best to transfer unrefunded money as traveler credits to be applied to a future tour to that destination.

View our full [Coronavirus FAQ](#) for more details.

[Immunizations Required or Recommended](#)

We are not aware that any shots (other than COVID-19 vaccination) are required for a visit to Morocco, but as this is a developing country, you will want to check with your doctor or visit a travel clinic.

[COVID-19 Policies for This Tour](#)

Walking Adventures International official policy is to endeavor to mirror any COVID-19 policies in place in the destinations through which we travel.

At the time of this publication (April 2022), Morocco requires a proof of vaccination, but not a booster. They also require a negative PCR test taken within 48 hours of your departure for Morocco. Hopefully these requirements will ease between now and November.

The US requires a negative COVID-19 test taken within 1 day of departure for the USA. If this remains true in November, our partners in Morocco will assist us in meeting this requirement in Marrakech.

Requirements and restrictions have been fluid. WAI will update travelers upon learning of any changes.

Travelers participating in the *Mosaic of Morocco* tour must agree to abide by policies in place at the time of travel.

[What Happens Next?](#)

Upon registering for this Adventure, you will receive a welcome email and initial invoice notifying you of your tour balance and due date. All payments for the tour or optional services/excursions can now be made online.

Soon after registration, an "Adventure Advice" email will be sent with critical information on flight arrangements as well as important steps to take in the months before your trip.

Please do not buy your airline tickets until you review this Adventure Advice email.

About 70 days before departure, you will receive a final statement reminder about the final tour payment, which is due 60 days before departure. Please see our [General Tour Conditions](#) for the full terms and conditions for participation in this Adventure.

Around 2-3 weeks before departure, you will receive a final email packet with details of the program, including hotel names and contact information, a list of fellow travelers, and a more detailed daily schedule.

Take a few minutes to peruse the enclosed itinerary. Morocco provides a fascinating mix of history, culture and scenery waiting to be explored! In the end, we think you will agree that walking is still and always the best way to experience our world.