

NORTHERN MOROCCO



ITINERARY:

Our driver will meet you on arrival at either Rabat or Casablanca Airports

This 14 day/13 night trip starts and ends with transfers from/to Casablanca or Rabat Airports. It takes in Morocco's northern Atlantic Coast; 3 of its 4 Imperial Cities; the classical sites of Volubilis and Lixus; the 'whitewashed villages' of the lush Rif Mountains and the forests and pastures of the Middle Atlas Mountains.

Day 1

Pick-up at Casablanca Airport for transfer to Rabat (1.5hrs), Morocco's Royal Capital (**2 nights**). Check into our lovely Riad in the Medina for the evening, where we gather for our first dinner together.

Day 2

Guided tour in Rabat: the Oudaia Kasbah, where we enjoy the obligatory mint tea and pastries at Cafe Maure and visit the Andalusian Gardens, explore the Roman remains and Merinid necropolis of the Chellah Gardens. After lunch we visit the Mohammed V Mausoleum before returning to our Riad to relax. Later in the afternoon one can stroll in the nearby bustling Souk.

Day 3

Today we travel northward along the Atlantic Coast to Morocco's northernmost City, Tangier. En route we stop at Lixus, an extensive Punic and Roman site, and

the whitewashed town of Asilah with its Spanish influence and a very bohemian feel (Total drive time 5hrs). Our Riad in Tangier (**2 nights**) is located at the top of the Medina (Walled city), with stunning views over the city.

Day 4

Guided Visit on foot of Tangier's main sights: the Kasbah, the bustling Grand and Petit Soccos, the American Legation, and afternoon coffee at Cap Spartel. The visit will include lunch and will finish mid afternoon.

Day 5

Depart for Tetouan, one of Morocco's lesser-visited coastal towns. We explore the UNESCO WHS old city and colonial quarters.

We continue south into the Rif Mountains and to Chefchaouen, Morocco's famous 'blue town' (Total drive time 3hrs). Our Riad is located in the centre of town (**3 nights**).



Day 6

Guided morning walking visit of Chefchaouen. This will cover all the main sights and help you get your bearings of this pretty labyrinthine town full of picturesque nooks and crannies. Though busy with tourists it is also easy to get away from the crowds. The tour will last from 9:30am until after lunch.

Day 7

We drive 40 minutes to visit one of the Rif's largest and most important weekly markets, where all manner of goods are being bought & sold by local Berbers in traditional attire. We then head for the Mediterranean coast for a fish lunch and a possible swim in the warm October sea.

Day 8

This morning we travel south through mountain scenery to the holy town of Moulay Idriss, where we stop for a delicious lunch at a private home. We then head for Fez to stay (**4 nights**) in one of the Imperial city's best Riads with lovely gardens (5hrs total travel time). Fez medina is the largest in Morocco and the world's largest urban pedestrianised area.

Dinner at our Riad.

Day 9

Guided day tour of the UNESCO protected Fez Medina, with over 9,000 bustling streets and crowded alleyways there is much to see. Our guide will show us some of the main sights such as the Bou Inania Madrasa, the Fondouk Nejjarine, the Mellah or Jewish quarter, the tanneries and the various craft souks. The tour lasts from 9:30am until 3:30pm. Lunch will be en route.

Day 10

This morning we drive 1.5h to the UNESCO WHS Roman ruins of Volubilis for a guided tour of this wonderfully preserved site. After a break for lunch we visit the Imperial city of Meknes, a jewel of planned C17th Islamic architecture, and its most impressive UNESCO sites (Openings are subject to a lengthy restoration project).

Day 11

Technically a free day in Fez to enjoy exploring the medina independently. We will provide an escorted morning activity option for those who want it but you may wish to wonder the lanes and Souks independently, visit museums, do some shopping and discover on your own. Today is also a good day to schedule a Hammam/spa visit.

Dinner at the Riad sampling some more home-made delights.

Day 12

After a leisurely departure from Fez we climb into the Middle Atlas Mountains to the town of Ifrane (1h travel time). The latter, at 2,000m altitude, was the 'summer capital' of the French Protectorate. After lunch we check in at our luxury mountain hotel (**1 night**). Later in the afternoon we set off for a walk (1.5h) in the surrounding cedar forests (Part of the largest forest in North Africa) where we may spot the native Barbary Macaque, various bird species, fox, wild boar, and autumn flowers.

Dinner tonight is at a local Berber family's home where we also enjoy a special performance of local Berber music.

Day 13

This morning we descend to the town of Azrou, where we visit a local, government-sponsored, crafts cooperative. The weaving cooperative in particular is a rare example of rural women's empowerment and an excellent place to purchase unusual Middle Atlas Berber carpets directly from the producers at very reasonable prices (Please note they only take cash).

After lunch we continue our journey back to Rabat (3 hours total travel time) for our final trip dinner together (**1 night**).

Day 14

Transfer to Casablanca Airport (2hrs) for flights back home.

