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HIGHLIGHTS OF MOROCCO 11 DAY SAMPLE ITINERARY

Morocco is located on the northernmost extension of the African continent at the gateway to Europe. It has a variety of geological features, including a long coastline, interior lowlands extending into the foothills and highlands of the Rif Mountains and the Middle Atlas and High Atlas ranges which sore up to 4,150 m (13,700ft). Between the mountain ranges and the Atlantic lie plains and plateaus of fertile agricultural lands. To the east the arid mountain slopes drop into the unforgiving Sahara desert.

Your Morocco itinerary is by no means a circuit of palaces, mosques and ruins, it is an exploration of the highlights of Morocco from cities to souks and medinas, mountains, valleys, gorges and desert.



HIGHLIGHTS

- Experience a camel ride in the Sahara Desert
- Pass through the Todra Gorge and the Atlas Mountains
- Soak up the local culture in the medina of Fez
- Immersion in the four imperial cities of Morocco

DAY 1: ARRIVAL CASABLANCA

Welcome to Morocco! On arrival in Casablanca, you will be met outside the terminal building by your private English-speaking driver, who will transfer you to the hotel and accompany you throughout the journey. After check-in, relax for a while and later set off for the **Hassan II Mosque**, the largest mosque in Morocco and the 5th largest mosque in the world.

Overnight: Casablanca

DAY 2 : CASABLANCA – RABAT - FEZ

Breakfast

After breakfast, depart for **Fez**, stopping en route in **Rabat** to visit the **Mausoleum of Mohammed V** and the 12th century **Hassan Tower**, which are important historical landmarks in Morocco. Continue on to the Muslim necropolis site of **Chellah** and the **Kasbah of the Udayas**. Next, pay a visit to the **Oulja handicrafts village** with many artisanal potters offering various high-quality traditional products such as clay pots, plates, cups, ashtrays, saucers, flower pots. Continue on your way to Fez.

Overnight: Fez

DAY 3: MEDINA OF FEZ

Breakfast

Today you will enjoy a guided tour in the UNESCO-listed **Medina of Fez**, which was founded in the 9th century and is home to the oldest university in the world. Pass through the Blue Gate and explore the old town of Fez by walking along the narrow and winding streets. Your guide will take you to the **King's Palace**, the tanneries and potteries to soak up the Arabic and Islamic culture.

Leisure time this afternoon to discover the charm of the oldest imperial city in Morocco. With fresh fruits, mounds of spices, mosaic artworks and various handicrafts being sold on both sides of the street, you will feel as though you have been transported back to medieval times!



Fez Blue Gate (Flickr, Vladimer Shoshvili)



Fez Medina (Flickr, Dan Lundberg)

DAY 4: FEZ - VOLUBILIS - MOULAY IDRIS - MEKNES - FEZ

Breakfast

Morning excursion with your driver to the **Ruins of Volubilis**, a well preserved and partly excavated Roman city. On to **Moulay Idriss**, located 5km from the Volubilis ruins and considered to be the holiest city in Morocco. The white houses in serried ranks spread across the base of the Atlas Mountains.

After lunch, head for **Meknes** to take in the medieval ambiance. With fewer tourists, Meknes provides an opportunity to interact with locals and experience the authentic Moroccan lifestyle.

Overnight: Fez.

DAY 5: FEZ - THE ATLAS MOUNTAINS - ERFOUD

Breakfast, Dinner

Today, your driver will transfer you to **Erfoud**, passing through a scenic forest of cedars and across the Middle Atlas Mountains. Stop in the mining city of Midelt for lunch before continuing your journey to Erfoud. Check in to your hotel and enjoy the rest of the day at leisure. Dinner at your hotel.

Overnight: Erfoud

DAY 6: ERFOUD – ERG CHEBBI

Breakfast, Dinner

This morning you will learn about local life in the desert by visiting the **goat hair tent**. Meet the ethnic Gnaoua people and enjoy authentic Gnaoua music during your visit.

In the afternoon, head for **Erg Chebbi** and venture deep into the fascinating **Sahara Desert** in 4x4 vehicles. Enjoy a **2-hour camel ride** from the sand dunes to the oasis.

Overnight in a Berber tent.



Ruins of Volubilis (Flickr, Chico Boomba)



Desert tent (Flickr, Maureen)

DAY 7: ERG CHEBBI - TINERHIR - OUARZAZATE

Breakfast

Early wake up call today to climb a dune, where you will experience the incredible silence of the desert and capture the spectacular sunrise. Return to your tent for a shower and breakfast. Drive to the **Dades Gorge** at **Tinerhir**, renowned for lush palm trees and its Jewish quarter. Pass through **Todra Gorge (Todgha Gorge)**, recognized as one of the most spectacular canyons in the world with 300 meter sheer cliffs and a 20 meter wide mouth.



Todra Gorge (Flickr, Peter Collins)



Ait Ben Haddou (Flickr, Rodrigo Silva)

Continue your journey to **Ouarzazate**, a city south of Morocco's High Atlas mountains, known as a gateway to the Sahara Desert with views over the rugged local landscape.

Overnight: Ouarzazate

DAY 8: OUARZAZATE - MARRAKECH

Breakfast

Set off for the **Ksar of Ait Ben Haddou**, a striking example of the architecture of southern Morocco, located in the foothills on the southern slopes of the High Atlas Mountains. The famous movies *Gladiator* and *Jesus of Nazareth* were filmed here. You will overlook the splendid valley surrounded by a river while walking along the path of the castle. Depart for **Marrakech** and enjoy free time to explore on your own.

Overnight: Marrakech

DAY 9: MARRAKECH CITY TOUR

Breakfast

Your city sightseeing tour starts at the brilliant **Bahia Palace** and moves to the **Saadian Tombs** where you will find many treasures. After lunch, visit the **Koutoubia Mosque** and take a leisurely stroll through its gardens. On to the famous **Jemaa el-Fnaa**, the market place (souk) in Marrakech's medina quarter. End your day exploring the souk where you can observe local trading and perhaps buy some special souvenirs.

Overnight: Marrakech



Saadian Tombs (Flickr, Mike Prince)



Bahia Palace (Flickr, Chris)

DAY 10: MARRAKECH FREE EXPLORATION

Breakfast

Today is a leisure day to explore the city at your leisure, browsing through the streets, rambling in the magical parks, shopping in the old medina. Soak up the local atmosphere and culture in this fascinating country and enjoy the full day at your own pace.

Overnight: Marrakech

DAY 11: MARRAKECH - CASABLANCA, DEPARTURE

Breakfast

Leisure time before being transferred to the Casablanca airport for your flight home. Enjoy your last views of Morocco during the 3 hour drive to the airport.

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