

Marrakesh, Sahara & Fès

Morocco

Cultural Walking Adventure



CLASSIC JOURNEYS
THE WORLD'S FINEST WALKING TOURS



“Classic Journeys provides unbeatable access to experiences around the globe.”

—Travel + Leisure

A Forbes Magazine Luxury Walking Favorite

Entering a desert encampment after a sunset camel ride, you see only the glowing Berber tents carpeted with kilims. Cumin-scented stew simmers over a campfire. And away from the native singers and the circle of light, the sky is simply amazing. Not until a morning breeze stirs your tent's flap do you see in full light how stunning your desert setting is. Our Morocco travel adventure is full of surprises and this is just one of the many we share with you. Colossal Saharan dunes. Cool cedar-forested mountains. Narrow gorges with ribbon-like oases in their depths. And the Kasbah? It's the word for fortress and a restored one from the Middle Ages is actually one of our hotels. The marvelous news is that, for all its surprises and adventure, Morocco travel also delivers everything you expect. We take in the vivid, noisy markets as we travel. Morocco offers warm hospitality from a culture accustomed to the diversity of Berber, Arab, Jewish, African and Mediterranean influences. You may also be surprised to know that the climate is moderate; this is the coolest and most welcoming of the African nations.

DAY 1

FÈS

- Explore the medieval labyrinth of the Medina
- Relax poolside before dinner

Begin your visit to Morocco with a day of spectacular contrasts, kicking off with a guided walk in the largest Medina in the western world. This walled city has changed little since the 9th century. In the labyrinth of narrow alleys, you'll see small workshops, craftsmen at work on copper and brass, and the tannery where leather is created and dyed as it has been for countless centuries.

You'll enjoy lunch at Nejjarine Square, before visiting the old Jewish Quarter and its 17th-century synagogue. Later, stroll in the ceramic district where artisans share how they create fine tiles and mosaics.

After the exotic clamor of this medieval district, your hilltop boutique hotel is a quiet respite. Recognized by Architectural Digest for its contemporary take on classic design, it's a wonderful look at the modern side of Morocco.

Overnight: Fès

Meals: L

DAY 2

FÈS

- Visit a small Berber village in the countryside of Fes
- Enjoy lunch at a family farm
- Celebrate over dinner in the finest restaurant in Morocco

After breakfast, join your guide for a memorable day in the countryside surrounding Fès. You begin at a tiny one-street Berber village and follow a forested footpath. You're likely to encounter locals carrying wood on their donkeys before your views expand to include apple orchards and olive groves, and you'll pass ochre-colored villages before arriving late morning at a friend's farm who welcome you into their home for tea, locally-grown almonds and homemade pastries. Lunch is served with fresh goat cheese and bread.

Continuing back to Fès where you'll have time on your own to relax at the hotel or shop in the medina before dinner. Tonight you dine at La Maison Bleue, one of the finest restaurants in Morocco, where the specialties are centuries-old recipes prepared nowhere else. The elaborate building is a perfect example of Arabo-Andalusian architecture with intricate floral and geometric patterns carved on plaster and beautiful fountains laid with colorful mosaics.

Overnight: Fès

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 3

MIDDLE ATLAS MOUNTAINS

- Walk through cedar forests past Barbary apes
- Spend the night in a Kasbah hotel

You're rewarded with some of the most spectacular scenery and views in Africa as you journey through the Middle Atlas Mountains through cedar forests, high plateaus and clay and cut stone villages.

As one of two days that combines a fairly long drive with scenic walks and visits, just outside Fès you enjoy a walk of almost a couple hours to view the cedar forests up close; Barbary apes and shepherds are your companions along the way. As you move into the High Atlas, the scenery shifts to tall peaks, deep gorges and pre-Saharan hills and sand dunes scattered with medieval Kasbahs and clay villages. In the afternoon, you'll drive across the canyons of the Ziz River between Midelt and Errachidia, which offers the opportunity to enjoy the stunning variety of the Moroccan countryside.

Your home for the night is a luxury boutique hotel surrounded by beautifully landscaped grounds at the very edge of the Sahara. In all the rooms and common areas of the hotel are permanently exposed paintings of European Orientalist painters who lived in Morocco, as well as contemporary painters of Morocco.

Overnight: Erfoud

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 4

MERZOUGA

- Land Rover to the world's highest sand dunes
- Ride camels to North Africa's highest dunes
- Sleep under the stars at your luxury tented encampment

Nearby is the 17th-century walled medieval city of Risani, where your explorations today begin with a morning walk. Pausing to chat with locals, a stop late morning is in the home of a Blue Man family. After the visit, lunch precedes a one-hour drive by Land Rover to explore an unparalleled sight—the soaring red sand dunes of Merzouga. In time to see the sunset over the dramatic landscape, climb aboard camels for a memorable ride to the dunes before continuing back to your own private Berber encampment.

The Berbers are the indigenous people of Morocco who have inhabited North Africa from as early as 3000 B.C. And you are staying in the home of the Blue Men, an ethnic group whose tribal territory stretches over a large part of the western edge of the Sahara. The camp consists of large nomadic tents made of hand-woven camel and goat hair, which make the tents cool and waterproof. Each tent is decorated with mattresses and colorful fabrics and carpets from different tribal origins. The area between the tents is covered with Berber kilims and decorated with lanterns-creating the feeling you have entered a magical world from another time.

Overnight: Merzouga

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 5

TINEGHIR

- Sleep in or watch sunrise over the dunes
- Follow your guide on a walk through a lush palm oasis of almond trees

It's not until you awake in the morning you see in full light how stunning your desert setting truly is. Sleep in, or if you like, join your guide to see the sunrise over the dunes. After an open-air breakfast, return to paved roads for an hour-long scenic drive along the mountainous edge of the desert to Tineghir, where a morning walk leads past fields of alfalfa, henna, barley and mint in the shade of palm and almond trees.

Wrap the afternoon with another fairly long drive to Ouarzazate, where your hotel is designed as a ksar, a typical walled Moroccan village. The historic kasbah is surrounded by private gardens, hammam and an outdoor swimming pool.

Overnight: Ouarzazate

Meals: B, L

DAY 6

AIT BEN HADDOU

- Explore a famed Kasbah
- Settle into luxurious hotel in Marrakesh

Start your day with UNESCO World Heritage Site, Ait Ben Haddou, one of the most exotic and best preserved Kasbahs in the Atlas region. As you walk up the hill, you welcome a view of the magnificent structure, a striking example of southern Moroccan architecture. If this Kasbah looks familiar, that's because it's appeared in almost 20 movies, including *Gladiator*, *Romancing the Stone* and *Lawrence of Arabia*. The fortress was also a rest area for the caravans that traveled from Marrakesh to Timbuktu, and you'll walk on the same paths as those travelers did centuries before.

You'll embark on the last segment of your caravan route this afternoon as you continue your way towards Marrakesh, an original imperial city turned modern cultural oasis. Look forward to some time at leisure to relax and explore the grounds of your hotel right in the heart of the medina, or arrange for a spa treatment such as the traditional Moroccan hammam before enjoying a welcome dinner featuring Morocco's best cuisine.

Overnight: Marrakesh

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 7

MARRAKESH

- Ride a horse drawn carriage to Yves Saint Laurent's gardens

• **Take a guided city walk through souks and famed Djemaa el-Fna square with its amazing performers**

Marrakesh, the fourth of Morocco's imperial cities, has long been a center of African Islamic civilization. The world's most famous scholars and philosophers converged here in the Middle Ages, and the wealth that flowed into the city helped create outstanding architecture and public gardens. After breakfast, you'll take a horse and carriage ride to the Yves Saint Laurent botanical gardens to explore the two and a half acre grounds and Berber museum.

Midday, make your way to Djemaa el-Fna square. This is the heart of Marrakesh—where you can see an exhilarating mix of snake charmers, monkey tamers, storytellers, magicians, acrobats and other performers. You have the remainder of the afternoon for a guided tour of the souks, where you'll be able to shop for Berber carpets, tribal jewelry and other Moroccan crafts. The city is at your fingertips for an evening at leisure.

Overnight: Marrakesh

Meals: B

DAY 8

OURIKA VALLEY/MARRAKESH

- **Continue your adventures in Marrakesh....OR**
- **Follow a valley walk among clay villages and in foothills of the Atlas Mountains**
- **Celebrate over a farewell dinner**

Today, choose your own adventure! Either spend your day continuing to dive into Marrakesh's countless wonders, or opt to leave the flurry of city life for a day in the country exploring the picturesque Ourika Valley.

Reaching the Berber hamlet of Tamzenddirt to begin, you follow the river and then up along a winding hillside path surrounded by fields of corn appears the village of Anins. Very possibly, your favorite experience of the week will be visiting a countryside school. Meet the students and teacher and see how class here compares to the ones at home. It would never happen if you were traveling on your own or with a large group, and it's one of those experiences you'll remember forever.

Tonight, enjoy your farewell dinner in legendary La Maison Arabe, a favorite of the likes of Hemingway and Churchill. Sit back, relax and enjoy the memorable meal as you soak in the dazzling hallmarks of traditional Moroccan craftsmanship featuring tadelakt walls and cedarwood ceilings, a perfect blend to provide an exotic yet refined atmosphere.

Overnight: Marrakesh

Meals: B, L, D

DAY 9

MARRAKESH / DEPARTURE

- **Transfer seamlessly to the airport in Marrakesh for flight home**

You'll end your Classic Journeys' explorations through Morocco after breakfast with a transfer to Marrakesh airport.

Meals: B



Tour Hotels



Hotel Sahrai

On a hill between the Fes Medina and the New Town, this boutique hotel has unparalleled views. Light-flooded rooms are decorated with a contemporary twist on Moroccan design. Facilities include an infinity pool, fitness center and Givenchy spa.

OVERNIGHT: Fès | **NIGHTS:** 2



L'HOTEL by Château de Sable

Featuring an outdoor swimming pool and fitness center, L'Hotel by Chateau de Sable is located in Erfoud, 22 miles from the Celestial Ladder Hannsjörg Voth sculpture. All rooms have a flat-screen TV, garden view and terrace.

OVERNIGHT: Erfoud | **NIGHTS:** 1



Madu Encampment

The luxury Madu encampment is situated in the dunes of the Sahara and offers accommodation in large nomadic tents made of hand-woven camel and goat hair. Tents include en suite bathroom, mattresses, colorful fabrics, Berber kilims and lanterns.

OVERNIGHT: Merzouga | **NIGHTS:** 1



Berbere Palace

Considered the best in the desert, this hotel is designed as a typical walled Moroccan village. Rooms are scattered throughout the beautifully manicured gardens, while the main building houses props from the many movies shot in and around Ouarzazate.

OVERNIGHT: Ouarzazate | **NIGHTS:** 1

Tour Hotels



Les Jardins De La Koutoubia

In the heart of the Marrakech medina, this hotel is both elegant and authentic. In graceful Moroccan style, most rooms face an inner patio that contains a gorgeous pool. The hotel also boasts a serene Clarins spa.

OVERNIGHT: Marrakech | **NIGHTS:** 3

Tour Dates & Prices

To see the full list of dates and prices for this tour, go to our website by clicking [here](#).

Want to travel with just your group on a date of your choosing? Visit [CLASSICJOURNEYS.COM/PRIVATE](https://www.classicjourneys.com/private) to learn more about Private Journeys.

Trip Essentials

TRIP LENGTH	9 Days, 8 Nights
START	Lobby of Hotel Sahrai, Fès, Morocco
END	Lobby of Les Jardins De La Koutoubia, Marrakesh, Morocco
TERRAIN	Easy to moderate.

What's Included

- Award-winning boutique hotels that provide you unlimited access to the people and places, culture and history you came to experience
- 8 breakfasts, 7 lunches and 5 dinners
- Full-time experienced guide(s) who are with you throughout the trip, handle behind-the-scenes logistics
- Admissions to sites and other scheduled events as noted in the detailed daily itinerary
- Gratuities for hotels, meals and baggage
- All land transportation during the trip

Above & Beyond Benefits

- Invisible Check-In
- Privileged Access Events

READY TO BOOK?
CLICK TO MAKE A RESERVATION

Or give us a call

1-800-200-3887

Mon-Fri 8:00AM – 5:00PM PST

moreinfo@classicjourneys.com

AMBASSADOR CLUB

As a Classic Journeys guest, you are invited to join the Ambassador Club after your first Classic Journeys tour. As a member, you'll have access to [a whole suite of Ambassador benefits](#) you can use immediately and as often as you like.

ENJOY THE UNEXPECTED

When you travel with Classic Journeys, you can expect handcrafted surprises built into every trip, but some things just can't be anticipated. Unusual weather, a once-a-year festival or an unscheduled site closing will inspire us and your local guide to improvise and modify this itinerary. Likewise, the hotels named here are used on the majority of our trips, but occasionally one of them can't accommodate us. If that happens, you can count on us to let you know before departure and make sure you're in a hotel of equal or better quality. It's our goal to make your trip exceptional!

**Any discount offered cannot be combined with other offers, and only applies to published (regularly scheduled public) departure dates in our catalogs or on our website.

THE Classic Journeys Difference



HANDCRAFTING TRIPS OF A LIFETIME.

At the end of the day, we fundamentally believe that every guest on every departure of every trip should have a trip of a lifetime. We're fortunate to play the role of well-connected friend, linking our guests with amazing guides, artisans, winemakers, hoteliers, restaurateurs, naturalists, and too many others to list here.

That's what motivates me and our team — in our La Jolla HQ and around the world — every day. Join Us!

Samuel
President & Founder



You can expect the highest standards:



Luxurious Lodgings:

Ours include coveted properties that appear in "World's Best" and "Gold List" rankings.



Included Activities:

You'll never be surprised with add-on fees on your activities that include snorkeling to cooking lessons.



Local Guides:

Your guides are locals who are always at your side like well-connected friends.



Small Group Travel:

With an average of just 10-12 guests, it's a small footprint that guarantees you access that's off-limits to larger groups.



Amazing Cuisine:

From Michelin-starred restaurants to lunch in a farmhouse kitchen, you'll have a seat for the region's signature dishes.



Unmatched Value:

"Excellent value" and "unbeatable access" are two of the reasons that Travel + Leisure has consistently voted us a World's Best Tour Operator.

You'll enjoy these handcrafted travel experiences in Morocco...

- Riding a camel in the Saharan sunset, then spending an unforgettable night in a luxury Berber encampment amid the dunes
- Dining on an over-the-top dinner at one of the leading restaurants in the heart of Marrakesh
- Walking a maze of grassy dikes in a date-palm oasis
- Overnighting in accommodations like Hotel Sahrai, featured in Architectural Digest and with unparalleled views of the Fes Medina
- Joining your own personal caravan led by amazing guides who coordinate an entourage of local experts to handle everything for you

"Jiali and Saida were simply amazing! We truly couldn't have asked for better guides. They were knowledgeable, professional, and personable. We learned so much and felt honored to have them showing us around their beautiful country."

-Carolyn S., Walnut Creek, CA,