



TRIP DATES

2024

October 5-18, 2024 October 19-November 1, 2024 November 9-22, 2024

2025*

January 19-30, 2025
February 2-13, 2025
February 16-27, 2025
April 6-17, 2025
April 20-May 1, 2025
May 4-15, 2025
September 14-25, 2025
October 5-16, 20245
October 26-November 6, 2025
November 16-27, 2025
November 30-December 11, 2025

*Note: 2025 itinerary will be 2 days shorter than 2024

Morocco: Camels to Casbahs

Morocco has a unique allure—mysterious casbahs, labyrinthine souks, ancient medinas, and minaret-studded imperial cities. Influenced by Berber, Arab, Jewish, sub-Saharan, and Mediterranean cultures, its heritage is complicated and fascinating. We've designed an adventure that unlocks the country's secrets as we roam the mesmerizing bazaars of Fes—the 9th century walled city suspended in time like a medieval dream—cross the High Atlas to hike the craggy, redrocked Todra and Dades canyons, meet Berbers in their mountain villages,

and visit seaside Essaouira, an artists' haven. As a special treat, we'll enjoy our own private tented camp cradled in the sun-splashed dunes of the Moroccan Sahara. Along the way, our expert Trip Leaders bring the country's history and traditions to life as they introduce you to Morocco's welcoming people, sumptuous flavors, and often-astonishing natural beauty.



What Makes WT's Morocco Trips Special?









THE MOST DIVERSE MOROCCO ITINERARY

You'll explore Morocco's remarkable contrasts, from its minaret-studded imperial cities to the seaside artists' community of Essaouira; from the exotic, bustling bazaars of Marrakesh to the singular silence of the Sahara. Roam the labyrinthine medina of medieval Fes, meet nomads of the High Atlas Mountains, walk through the ancient red-brick settlement of Ait Ben Haddou, and visit the spectacular Todra and Dades gorges. Our itinerary brings you to the renowned highlights of Morocco, with insider connections for a full experience of this fascinating land. All our tours and activities are included—there are no hidden costs!

EXCLUSIVE LUXURY SAHARA CAMP

Step into another world in our luxury desert camp with spacious walk-in tents, white tablecloth-service, colorful Moroccan carpets, and cozy beds. Secluded from the noise and crowds of other camps, we've created an exclusive hideaway from which we explore the desert by camel, 4WD, and on foot before relaxing with sundowners on the dunes. Then watch as delicious tagines are prepared over an open fire—we even get a cooking demonstration from our phenomenal camp chef. In the evening, Gnaoan musicians enchant us with a private performance.

SUPERB TRIP LEADERS

Wilderness Travel has brought travelers to Morocco for over two decades. We work with Trip Leaders who are the most knowledgeable and experienced guides in the country, with a gift for bringing its history and culture to life. Their language skills (they all speak the indigenous Imazighen language), long-term friendships with locals, and deep knowledge and insights give you the privilege of authentic cultural exchange as they introduce you to the welcoming people, natural beauty, and rich cultural history of this magical country.

A WIDE VARIETY OF CULTURAL EXPERIENCES

We'll encounter nomads from the hill tribes of Morocco, explore an oasis as we visit with farmers who explain their water conservation techniques, sip mint tea with a family in their home, ride a camel with Tuaregs, visit seven UNESCO World Heritage Sites, and hear live Gnaoan music in our exclusive Sahara camp.

STAY IN A LUXURIOUS RIAD IN FES

You'll enjoy two nights of magical ambience at Riad Fes or Riad Maison Bleue, ideally situated in the heart of the medina. These superb boutique hotels feature a combination of modern and traditional decor, beautiful tilework, and intricate Moorish wood and plaster designs, with elegant rooms. The hammam (spa) is a relaxing oasis, and a rooftop terrace provides a panoramic view of the medina.

Highlights of WT's Morocco: Camels to Casbahs

AN EXCLUSIVE EXPERIENCE IN THE SAHARA DESERT

We've created a secret hideaway in a quiet part of the immense Sahara—a camp for our group alone, where you'll be immersed in the beauty of this vast sea of rolling sand. This unique experience is the highlight of the trip for many—you'll have the opportunity to watch the sunrise over rippling dunes, ride camels, savor delicious Moroccan dishes and learn cooking techniques from our phenomenal chef, hear live Gnaoan music, and stargaze under a brilliant nighttime sky.



WANDER THROUGH THE ANCIENT ARAB OUARTER OF MARRAKESH

Marrakesh's fabled 11th century medina and Djemaa el Fna Square are brimming with historical and visual delights. We bring you deep into souks—where everything from pottery and fabrics to silver and spices are on display—and explore the hauntingly beautiful Saadian Tombs, ornate Bahia Palace, and enchanting Majorelle Garden, a diverse botanical landscape restored by Yves Saint Laurent, who later added a museum dedicated to the rich culture of the indigenous Berber people.





THE INCOMPARABLE FLAVORS OF MOROCCO

We give you an experience of Morocco's renowned cuisine every step of the way, including a private cooking demonstration for our group alone. The country's rich spices—red paprika, vibrant yellow turmeric, delicate bay and hearty cumin—flavor the delightful dishes we'll sample, from melt-in-your-mouth tagines to delectable eggplant and the famously flavorful chicken bastilla.



EXPLORE ESSAOUIRA—AN ARTISTS' RETREAT

Ancient ramparts studded with old brass cannons give this 18th century walled town a decidedly medieval atmosphere, but these days Essaouira is known as a laid-back artists' haven of whitewashed houses with blue shutters. We take you to the bustling fish market and the harbor, as well as the port, where bright blue fishing boats lie at anchor. Our welcoming riad offers dramatic views of the Atlantic Ocean.

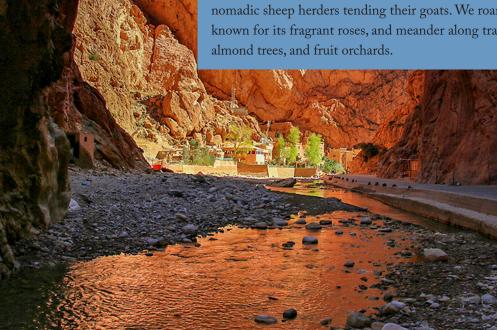
EXPERIENCE A 5-STAR RIAD IN THE HEART OF AN ANCIENT SOUK

Staying in a riad—a restored traditional estate with many rooms centered around a courtyard—is one of the iconic experiences of a visit to Morocco. We've chosen some of the very best to immerse you in the country's history and heritage. At your relaxing retreat—just steps away from the excitement of the souks—you can pamper yourself at the riad's spa or wander up to the rooftop terrace with its spectacular views of the medina.



HIKE IN SPECTACULAR GORGES OF THE HIGH ATLAS MOUNTAINS We get you out of the vehicle to walk amidst the towering carryon walls of the

We get you out of the vehicle to walk amidst the towering canyon walls of the Todra Gorges and sculpted red-rock formations of the Dades Gorges in the eastern reaches of the High Atlas Mountains. Follow trails where we may encounter farmers or seminomadic sheep herders tending their goats. We roam through a magnificent valley known for its fragrant roses, and meander along trails flanked by oleander hedges, almond trees, and fruit orchards.













Itinerary

TRIP DETAILS AT-A-GLANCE

Length: 14 days

Arrive: Casablanca, Morocco

Depart: Marrakesh, Morocco

Lodging: 11 nights first-class hotels

and riads, 2 nights luxury

tented camp

Meals: All meals included except

1 lunch and 3 dinners (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch,

D=Dinner)

4WD vehicle

Activity: Cultural Adventures,

Walking

Trip Level: 1 2 3 4 5 6

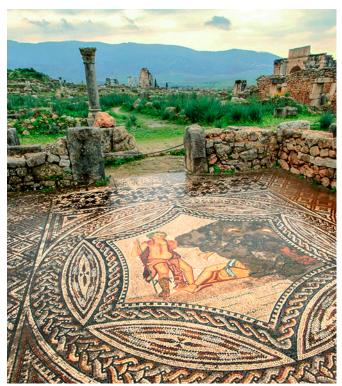
Cultural exploration, village and walking tours, optional camel rides and day hikes from desert camp, travel by DAY 1 CASABLANCA

We begin in Casablanca, which is the the best gateway for Morocco, with many direct, inexpensive flights from the US. You'll be met at the Casablanca Airport for a transfer to our hotel. For those arriving from our Chefchaouen extension pre-trip, your driver will bring you to the hotel in the late afternoon. The name "Casablanca" evokes timeless romance, but unfortunately the the city is rather industrial; Hollywood's Casablanca lives only in the imagination, although the city did play a crucial part in the transit of European refugees during WWII. Meals today are on your own. Overnight at the Sofitel Casablanca Tour Blanche Hotel.

DAY 2 HASSAN II MOSQUE / ROMAN RUINS OF SALA COLONIA

This morning we explore a most remarkable site, the Hassan II Mosque, dramatically set along the waterfront. A blend of ancient craftsmanship and modern technology, every inch of the mosque is exquisitely detailed—the tiles, marble, metal, and woodworking were all handcrafted by traditional Moroccan artisans. Boasting the world's tallest minaret, the mosque is unique in Morocco because it allows visitors of all faiths to come in and appreciate its wonders. Heading north along the coast we reach Rabat—in contrast, a delightfully low-key, walkable city that is the country's capital. After lunch on the waterfront, we visit the intriguing Chellah, a walled and towered necropolis built atop the ancient Roman town of Sala Colonia. Its elaborate brickwork and royal tombs make this one of the most beautiful ruins in all of Morocco. Our Welcome Dinner and overnight are at Villa Mandarine, an enchanting oasis set in an orange grove and run by a French family who have lived here for generations...BLD

Driving Details: Approximately 1.5 hours (Casablanca to Rabat)



THE BERBERS / IMAZIGHEN / AMAZIGH

Two-thirds of Moroccans are Imazighen (the singular is Amazigh), a word that translates roughly to "free people." Often referred to by outsiders as Berbers, the Imazighen have a mixed origin that includes European and Saharan peoples. Today they retain a distinctive tribal culture consisting of three major groups: the Sanhaja, the Masmouda, and the Zenets. The blue-robed Tuaregs of the Sahara are also a branch of the Imazighen family.



DAY 3 A PILGRIMAGE SITE / ROMAN RUINS AND MOSAICS / FES

Our morning in Rabat incudes a stroll through the picturesque Oudaya Kasbah, a 12th century fortress partly enclosed in

ramparts, and a visit at the Mausoleum of Mohammed V, with its brilliant white marble surface and red-costumed royal guards. Departing the coast, we travel to Morocco's inland valleys of gently rolling terrain dotted with wheat fields, vineyards, and olive groves. Our first stop is the hill town of Moulay Idriss, named for Morocco's most famous saint, a direct descendant of the Prophet Mohammed. Until 2005, non-Muslims were not allowed to stay in the city, and even today it is largely untouched by Western influence. After exploring on foot, we head to Volubilis, a massive and magnificent Roman ruin surrounded by farmlands, olive groves, and cacti. A walking tour of this World Heritage Site, which was Rome's largest

city in North Africa and its provincial capital in Morocco, takes us by structures dating to the 2nd and 3rd centuries, as well as an impressive array of stunning, well preserved mosaics.

We stroll among the towering Corinthian columns and 30-foot porticoes, with views back to the whitewashed buildings of Moulay Idriss as they glow in the late afternoon sun. We continue to Fes and check in at the hotel. This evening we

savor a dinner of traditional Moroccan cuisine...BLD

Driving Details: 2.5 hours (Rabat to Moulay Idriss); 1.5 hours (Volubilis to Fes)

"I knew this trip would be great but it was beyond my wildest dreams! What an exciting, exotic, beautiful, and diverse country. I loved the High Atlas Mountains, so exceptionally scenic, the cities, medinas, and the sights, sounds, and aromas. The people were very friendly and gracious. Marrakesh is a happening, fun city and coastal Essaouira is

pretty and peaceful. I loved it all!"

Jan J., Gilford, NH

DAY 4 EXPLORING FES, AN ANCIENT IMPERIAL CAPITAL

The most evocative of Morocco's imperial capitals, Fes is nestled in a high valley and resplendent with soaring minarets and dazzling domes. We'll enjoy a full day tour, beginning at the seven stunning brass gates of the royal palace, Dar al-Makhzen. We visit the mellah—the old Jewish Quarter—and continue to the South Borj Overlook for a lovely panoramic view of the city. We also visit a pottery workshop before

entering Fes' 12th century medina—one of the most perfectly preserved medieval cities in the world—with its mile-long network of souks, open-air cafes, courtyards, hammams, and

gardens. After lunch our guide takes us through a honeycomb of twisting alleys of Arabic-Moorish architecture with bluetiled facades. We savor the scent of spices, orange blossoms, sizzling lamb kabobs, and sweet honey cakes, and see scenes unchanged for centuries, from donkeys laden with leathers to children carrying boards of bread dough to communal ovens. Some of the finest Berber carpets in Morocco are found in these lively souks. We visit Fes' famous tannery, where men process leather in an open-air courtyard lined with knee-deep vats of dye in every shade of red, blue, and gold; a madrasa

(Koranic school); and the Qaraouyine Mosque, formerly home to one of the first universities in the world, predating both Oxford and Cambridge. Walking along the narrow lanes, we peer into the medieval foundouks—roadside inns built around open courtyards. Most are worn with age, but one 18th century foundouk has been beautifully restored and is now the Nejjarine Museum of

Wood and Carpentry, with displays of everything from tools and musical instruments to decorative woodworking. Dinner is at our hotel; this evening we're offered international cuisine as a change of pace from Moroccan dishes. Overnight at hotel... **BLD**

DAY 5 THE ATLAS MOUNTAINS / A DESERT FRONTIER **TOWN**

This morning we drive through the cedar forests and deep valleys of the Middle Atlas Mountains, stopping to visit the old hill station of Ifrane, built as Morocco's "Little Switzerland" and now a university town. Along the way, we may see some of the rare "Barbary apes"—actually endangered macaque monkeys—that inhabit the area. (Legend has it that the macaques are descended from a disrespectful family who threw couscous at each other during a meal,

> and, as punishment, were turned into monkeys and forced to live forever as wild animals.) Our lunch stop is in the remote town of Midelt, with its wonderful views of the High Atlas. Crossing the mountains, we descend a winding road through the stunning canyon of the Ziz Gorge, passing by dramatic stratified cliffs curving and

pushing into the river's ancient channel.

We follow the gorge through an oasis of date palms to the desert frontier town of Erfoud, whose dates are renowned as the sweetest in all of Morocco. Dinner and overnight are at the stylish Kasbah Xaluca hotel...BLD

Driving Details: Approximately 6.5 hours (Fes to Erfoud)

RIADS AND HAMMAMS

No visit to Morocco is complete without a stay at one of its riads—traditionally the estates of the country's wealthiest citizens, merchants, and courtiers. Centered around an open-air courtyard, they contained numerous rooms and showcased exquisite Moorish tiles, architecture, and woodwork. These days, many have been converted to boutique hotels where visitors are warmly welcomed as family guests; we've chosen some of the finest in Morocco.

Hammams are traditional baths that originated in the Roman Empire. They've been enjoyed here ever since by people from all social classes, who go for a body scrub and massage—or just to relax in the steam.



"This trip was well thought out with

an itinerary that captures the spirit

of the country. It was everything I

had hoped for, and Morocco had

Cindy B., St. Louis, MO

been on my list for years!"





DAY 6 CAMEL TREK IN THE SAHARA

Switching to 4WD Land Cruisers, we head off road into the Sahara for a rendezvous with our Berber crew—a picturesque caravan of blue-robed Tuareg men and their herd of camels in the golden desert. Continuing by camel, on foot, or by 4WD (the choice is yours), we take in the Moroccan desert in its

varied forms, from immense dunes and high mesas to dry washes fringed by tamarisk. We avoid the Erg Chebbi desert camp area, which has become crowded and noisy, and head to a more secluded region where our private Sahara camp features spacious, walkin canvas tents with comfortable beds covered by cozy duvets. The tent floors are layered with a mosaic of colorful Berber carpets, and meals are served

in a large, airy dining tent. This comfortable Sahara desert camp is exclusive to just our group, and tonight we'll feel as if we have the whole desert to ourselves as we savor the silence, watch the sunset, and gaze at stars blazing in the night sky. Overnight in camp...BLD

Driving Details: Approximately 2.5 hours 4WD (Erfoud to Sahara desert camp crew)

Camel Trekking Details: Approximately 1.5 hours to our

Sahara desert campsite in the morning and approximately 1.5 hours exploring the dunes in the afternoon.

DAY 7 LUXURY SAHARA CAMP / EXPLORE THE DESERT / GNAOUA MUSICIANS

From our camp, we head out to experience the breathtaking

beauty of the Moroccan Sahara, with its ochre dunes, cobalt sky, and jagged volcanic peaks. We'll appreciate why the Arabs called the Sahara "bahr bila maa," an "ocean without water." In the morning, we explore our surroundings by camel, with options to walk or ride by 4WD. On our return to camp in the afternoon we can learn to play ronda, Morocco's most popular card game; have a cooking demonstration of

traditional Moroccan fare; or relax with a refreshing beverage and enjoy the vast desert expanses. Evening brings a glowing sunset and festive dinner, with Gnaoua musicians performing for us. It's incredible music, and we're more than welcome to join in, dancing and drumming along with the musicians! Overnight in camp...BLD









"This was the most fascinating

trip we have been on with WT.

The Sahara, the gorges, and the

the visit with the nomad family."

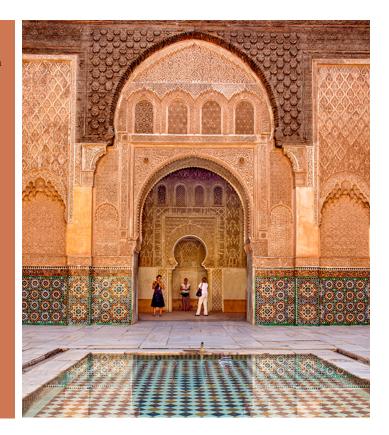
mountains were my favorites, also

Margaret J., Charlottesville, VA

MEDINAS, SOUKS, CASBAHS, AND KSOUR:

A medina (the word means "town" in Arabic) was a pre-20th century city—often enclosed within defensive walls—with a mosque at its heart. Craftsmen work in the areas of the medina known as souks, which were laid out according to the commodities being made and sold, with the most valuable products (such as gold and manuscripts) in the center and lesser goods radiating outwards. Today, little has changed, with each souk still named after its products.

A casbah is a fortress-style building with crenellated defensive towers. In rural Morocco, representatives of the ruler lived in and governed from casbahs; a casbah can be inside a ksar (the plural is "ksour"), which is a fortified rural village surrounded by walls. Ait Ben Haddou, which we explore on Day 10, is a spectacular example of a ksar.



DAY 8 DESERT SUNRISE / WALK IN TODRA GORGE OASIS

After enjoying a desert sunrise across the dunes of the Sahara and another chance to walk on this "sea of sand," we bid farewell to our Tuareg cameleers. Meeting up with our 4WD vehicles, we set out for Tinghir, a palm-fringed oasis at the entrance to the Todra Gorge. Time permitting, we'll stop

along the way at the desert town of Erfoud to visit a local workshop where marble and limestone with trilobites, ammonites, and other fossil inclusions are made into plates and decorative objects. Todra Gorge is one of the most impressive canyons in the world; in some places its steep walls are more than 1,300 feet high. In a palmeraie, or palm grove oasis, we hike along serene trails that wind through fields, learning about water-distribution techniques that

have been utilized for centuries. We arrive at our hotel in the late afternoon for our dinner and overnight at Hotel Xaluca Dades, with its expansive panoramas of the majestic Atlas Mountains...BLD

Driving Details: Approximately 4.5 hours Hiking Details: Approximately 1.5 hours

DAY 9 DADES GORGE HIKE / GARDENS OF THE ATLAS / TEA WITH LOCALS

Departing in the early morning we enter the Dades Gorge, a magnificent landscape of limestone cliffs, lush citrus orchards, and sculpted red-rock formations, with mud-built casbahs sitting high above on both sides of the valley. Our walk in a traditional village takes us past fig trees, almond trees, and

> the shining poplars that grow along streams of snow melt from the High Atlas Mountains. We may have the chance to visit with nomadic families. After lunch, we enjoy a scenic drive to the Gardens of the Atlas, where we walk in a magnificent valley known for its bright pink, honey-scented roses. We'll meander along trails flanked by orchards, then stop for mint tea with a

have enjoyed so many aspects of Moroccan life and culture had I been traveling on my own." Catherine F., Brooklyn, NY oleander hedges, almond trees, and fruit local family and learn about their lives and local agricultural practices. We continue to our hotel, the Ksar Ighnda, for dinner and our overnight. Set in a serene,

lushly landscaped oasis, it's a perfect place for a dip in the pool

or relaxing with a drink in the lounge as the sun slips behind

the mountains...BLD Driving Details: 3-4 hours

Hiking Details: 1-2 hours in the morning; 1.5 hours in the

Gardens of the Atlas

"This was my first group 'adventure

travel' trip and it exceeded all

my expectations. I could not





DAY 10 THE RED CITADEL OF AIT BEN HADDOU / SOUKS OF MARRAKESH

This morning we walk through the clay-brick hillside citadel of Ait Ben Haddou, the famously picturesque UNESCO

World Heritage Site that's been used as a setting for "Lawrence of Arabia," "Gladiator," and many other films. Then we cross the High Atlas Mountains and head for legendary Marrakesh, founded in 1070 and once known as the "red city" for its rose-tinted buildings. With Berber rather than Arab origins, it has been the central marketplace for Berber tribes for centuries. After lunch in the city's 11th century medina we wander its fascinating souks, taking in the scents of lemon and mint, brightly colored cones of spices, and the sounds of donkeys and merchants calling out

their offers. We end the day at the heart of Marrakesh in the Djemaa el Fna, the legendary central square, replete with musicians, snake charmers, fire-eaters, and fortune-tellers. Our dinner and overnight are at the Hotel Es Saadi, with its excellent location just a short walk from the bustling medina... BLD Driving Details: Approximately 3 hours (Ait Ben Haddou to Marrakesh)

DAY 11 MARRAKESH: SECRET TOMBS / A PALACE

We discover more of the secrets of Marrakesh this morning. Our urban hike takes us to the Saadian Tombs, a hauntingly beautiful royal necropolis dating from the 16th to 18th

century that was purposely sealed off and hidden for over two hundred years, and only rediscovered in 1917. We visit the Bahia Palace, a masterpiece of Moroccan architecture built in the late 19th century and intended to be the largest and most luxurious palace ever built. After lunch in the medina, we have several options: choose a Moroccan cooking class or go shopping in the medina with a local guide, who can help you find brass, leather goods, textiles, and other crafts. Or take a guided walk through Jewish history, with visits to a cemetery, a 15th century synagogue and

its small museum, and an opportunity to meet people who live and work in the Jewish Quarter. Dinner is on your own this evening. There is a wonderful variety of options—from Moroccan to international cuisine—close to our hotel, and your Trip Leader is happy to make recommendations to suit your interest. Overnight at the Hotel Es Saadi...BL

"An amazing range of sites, landscape, activities: the desert trek was a really unique experience that I'll remember always; the mountain landscape was gorgeous; visiting Essaouira gave us a taste of the coast; everything was well organized but allowed flexibility."

Heather J., Washington, DC

DAY 12 MAGICAL ESSAOUIRA, AN ARTISTS' RETREAT

A scenic drive through farmland brings us to Essaouira (pronounced essa-weera), a charming city on the Atlantic Coast that's been occupied since prehistoric times. The Portuguese built a fort here in the 16th century, and much of the city we see today was laid out by a French architect in the mid-1700s, at the request of Sultan Sidi Mohammed ben Abdallah. Essaouira's whitewashed houses, with their blue

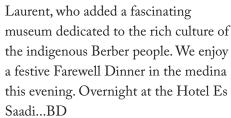
shutters and ornate doors, give it an enchanting Mediterranean atmosphere. After a seafood lunch we head out on foot to explore the bustling fish market and the port, where bright blue boats bob in the harbor. We walk up to the old fort—with its ancient ramparts, cannons, and battlements—and discover quirky little artisan shops lining narrow lanes. Now known as

an artist's colony, the city has cast its spell on many creative souls over the years; Orson Welles filmed scenes for "Othello" here, and musicians from Eric Clapton to Jimi Hendrix were inspired by their stays in the 1960s and 1970s. Dinner tonight is on your own. Overnight at the Riad Mimouna, an intimate, atmospheric, and well located riad overlooking the Atlantic Ocean...BL

Driving Details: Approximately 3 hours (Marrakesh to Essaouira)

DAY 13 MARRAKESH / MAJORELLE GARDEN

After breakfast at the hotel we return to Marrakesh, with time for lunch on your own before we head out to visit the enchanting Majorelle Garden—a diverse botanical landscape punctuated by wildly vibrant architecture and ceramics, with pools, fountains, and burbling waters that welcome songbirds. Designed by a French painter in 1923 and built over a period of nearly 40 years, the garden was later restored by Yves Saint



Driving details: 3 hours (Essaouira to Marrakesh)



Transfer to the Marrakesh airport for homeward flights, or continue to Casablanca to join our Chefchaouen extension...B



Trip Details DATE AND PRICING INFORMATION

TRIP COST

Prices are per person, valid through 2024

\$6495 (11-15 members) \$6795 (5-10 members) Single supplement: \$1495

2025 Trip Costs: Call for Pricing

To offer the lowest possible cost, our trips are priced according to the number of participants on the trip. All costs are per person, based on double occupancy. If you wish to have a single room, you must pay the single supplement fee. Please note that Wilderness Travel staff, or guests of Wilderness Travel such as travel writers, photographers, or leaders-intraining, are not included in the tier pricing count.

CURRENCY EXCHANGE RATE

Due to the volatility of currency markets, we can only offer the most competitive pricing on our trips in Morocco by partially tying the trip cost directly to the value of the Moroccan Dirham. In the late spring of 2023, when we set the rates for our 2024 program, the US Dollar equaled 10.4 Moroccan Dirham. While in most years, no price changes are ever necessary, if there were to be a significant change in exchange rates, we may be forced to raise or able to lower our trip cost; if so, your final invoice, sent two weeks before your final payment is due, will reflect the difference. Please note that the calculation will not be a straight proration. While most of the trip cost is paid in Moroccan Dirham, the remainder of our expenses are paid in US Dollars. The overall effect is to moderate any change; thus, if the Moroccan Dirham were to rise in value, the trip cost would rise less than might be expected, and if the Moroccan Dirham were to fall, the drop in land price would also be less than might be expected.

TRIP COST INCLUDES

- Expert leadership of a Wilderness Travel Trip Leader and local guide(s)
- Accommodations: from a 5-star riad to our luxury Sahara desert camp to first-rate hotels
- All meals included except 1 lunch and 3 dinners
- · Activities, guiding, and sightseeing as scheduled
- Full-day tours in Rabat, Fes, and Marrakesh with local guides
- Sahara desert camp crew (camel handlers, cooks, etc.)
- All tips (luggage handling, hotel staff, waiters, desert staff, etc.) except Trip Leader and bus/4WD vehicle drivers
- Entries, taxes, and fees
- Airport transfers

TRIP COST DOES NOT INCLUDE

International airfare to Casablanca and from Marrakesh, any meals not specified after each itinerary day, bottled water other than what is served at meals, airport departure taxes, optional tipping or gratuities to leaders or staff, additional hotel nights that may be necessary due to airline schedule changes or other factors, cost of medical immunizations (if any), travel insurance, and other expenses of a personal nature (alcoholic beverages, laundry, etc.).

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

At time of reservation: \$600 90 days prior to departure: Balance

CANCELLATION AND TRANSFER FEE SCHEDULE

Up to 91 days prior to departure: No charge! 61-90 days prior to departure: 25% of trip cost 46-60 days prior to departure: 50% of trip cost

45 days or less: 100% of trip cost

Our Guides MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE

Our Morocco Trip Leaders are the best and most experienced guides in the country, with a gift for bringing history and culture to life. Their language skills—they all speak the indigenous Berber language, long-term friendships with locals, and deep knowledge and insights give you the privilege of authentic cultural exchange as they introduce you to the welcoming people, natural beauty, rich cultural history of this magical country.



ALI AIT ICHOU

Ali Ait Ichou was born in the heart of Morocco's High Atlas and spent his childhood in the high mountains of Amazigh country. Descending to the urban side of the Moroccan kingdom, he attended high school in Marrakesh, and majored in English at the University of Marrakesh. Ali began working in tourism when he was 18 years old, serving as a trekking guide in the High Atlas of his Amazigh homeland during summer holidays from school. He has guided for Wilderness Travel throughout Morocco and says, "It was always my dream and is still my passion to share everything I have learned about my culture with travelers." Ali is an extremely knowledgeable guide and a fun Trip Leader. He lives in Marrakesh; in addition to English he speaks French, Amazigh, and Arabic, and is currently learning Spanish.



MOHAMED HJIRA

Mohamed Hjira was born in the classic Amazigh town of Azilal in Morocco's High Atlas. His hometown, the gateway to the Central High Atlas, was often visited by travelers because of its proximity to the spectacular Ouzoud Waterfalls, so during his childhood he met people from all around the world, which led him to want to make a career as a guide. Mohamed moved to Marrakesh and graduated from the University of Marrakesh with a degree in economics, then obtained his guide license. He has guided for us in the High Atlas as well as many other regions of Morocco since 2010, and has a wide knowledge of and an infectious passion for the ancient cultures and natural beauty of his home country. He speaks fluent English as well as French, Amazigh, and Arabic.











Wilderness Travel's Exclusive Luxury Desert Camp

"The Sahara camel trek/camping

Heather J., Washington, DC

was definitely the highlight!

absolutely beautiful."

The Wilderness Travel experience that sets your journey apart is our private luxury camp in the Sahara. Spacious tents are hung with richly-hued Moroccan fabrics, and there's a comfortable outdoor sitting area where we can watch the sunset and stargaze beneath a spectacular nighttime sky.

Far from the noise and crowds of other camps, we'll feel as if we have the desert all to ourselves.

DESERT LUXURY—CAMP IN COMFORT

Our exclusive camp will immerse you in the Sahara in absolute comfort: mouthwatering meals arrive with whitetablecloth service, and walk-in

tents feature real beds covered by cozy, handwoven hill tribe textiles. There is a private washstand, a shower and a toilet within your tent, which is separated from the sleeping room by traditional white curtains, and the tent floors are layered with an exuberant mosaic of Berber carpets. This is Sahara Desert camping, WT style!

TREK THE DESERT ON YOUR OWN CAMEL

Feel like a caravansary traveler of yore as we journey through the breathtaking beauty of the Moroccan Sahara, with its ochre dunes, cobalt sky, and jagged volcanic peaks. We have the flexibility to explore by camel, on foot, or in 4WD vehicles

> as we step back in time and lose ourselves in the mystical desert.

WELCOMING CAMP STAFF Our top-notch camp staff are Waking at sunrise on the dunes was

personable and professional, and will make your stay unforgettable. They'll teach you to play ronda, Morocco's most popular card game, and you can savor aromatic spices as you participate in a

tagine cooking demonstration with the head chef. Then enjoy a magical Gnaouan musical performance—drumming and dancing are encouraged! The cultural connections and fun you'll have with these folks are a highlight of the trip.

800-368-2794 | 510-558-2488 | info@wildernesstravel.com

Accommodations



SOFITEL CASABLANCA TOUR BLANCHE

Casablanca, Morocco Day 1 (1 night)

This large modern hotel is set in the business district opposite the Hassan II mosque, an ideal location for walkers. Hotel amenities include two restaurants, one serving traditional French brasserie dishes, a rooftop bar, indoor pool, and a spa offering massage services.



VILLA MANDARINE

Rabat, Morocco Day 2 (1 night)

Set in three acres of beautifully landscaped gardens laced by walking paths, this 36-room riad, a former private home, is an oasis in Rabat's residential district. Rooms are spacious and furnished in traditional decor, and each has its own terrace or private garden. The heated swimming pool is a great place to cool off after a day of exploring, and there is also a spa, fitness center, and bar.



RIAD FES

Fes, Morocco, Days 3 to 4 (2 nights)

A member of the Relais & Chateaux hotel group, the 26-room Riad Fes is tucked away behind the medina and close to one of its main gates. The common areas are comfortable and inviting and feature traditional Moroccan tile work, carved wooden screens, and intricate plasterwork. Like most riads, it has its own hammam where you can get a relaxing massage.

Accommodations (cont'd)



KASBAH XALUCA

Erfoud, Morocco Day 5 (1 night)

Surrounded by desert sands on the edge of the Moroccan Sahara, this newly built kasbah-style hotel is very atmospheric, with its numerous adobe courtyards and stylish guest rooms decorated to resemble nomads' tents. The main interior courtyard centers around a lovely swimming pool and bar shaded by palms. Breakfast and dinner are buffet style.



PRIVATE SAHARA DESERT CAMP

Sahara Desert, Morocco Days 6 to 7 (2 nights)

Our luxury tented camp, exclusive to our group, is set in the majestic dunes of the Sahara. The canvas interiors are hung with bright fabrics and carpeted with richly-hued Moroccan rugs (you'll forget you're in a tent—this is more like a sheik's hideaway). Comfortable beds are covered by cozy duvets—perfect for cold nights in the desert—and you'll have a private washstand, a shower and a toilet within your tent, but separated from the sleeping room by traditional white curtains. Meals are served in a large dining tent, complete with tables with white tablecloths, china, silver, and wine glasses, and there is also a comfortable sitting area outside. Our camp is quiet and you'll appreciate the tranquil solitude of the desert.



HOTEL XALUCA DADES

Boumalne Dades, Morocco Day 8 (1 night)

This 110-room hotel is situated between the Todra and Dades Gorges at an altitude of 5,290 feet. Spacious guest rooms feature a unique African decor, while the hotel terrace overlooks the beautiful Dades Valley. An outdoor swimming pool, Jacuzzi, hammam, spa, and fitness room are among the hotel's amenities.

Accommodations (cont'd)



KSAR IGHNDA

Ait Ben Haddou, Morocco Day 9 (1 night)

Set in the heart of the desert within close proximity to the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Ait Ben Haddou is Ksar Ighnda. The exterior of the riad features stunning carved arches and traditional architectural details. Inside, spacious guest rooms have air conditioning and en-suite bathrooms. You can enjoy a drink in the cozy bar or play cards in the game room. The hotel also has a beautiful garden with palms, citrus trees, and flowers that surrounds a swimming pool. It's the ideal place to watch the color of the sky change during sunset.



HOTEL ES SAADI

Marrakesh, Morocco
Days 10 to 11 (2 nights), Day 13 (1 night)

With a convenient location in the new section of the city, the Es Saadi is a 15-minute walk from the bustling medina. A five-story hotel built in the 1950s and still managed by its original owners, a local Moroccan family, the Es Saadi offers spacious, updated rooms and a swimming pool perfect for a cooling dip. Lunches can be enjoyed in the terrace restaurant opening onto the pool and gardens.



RIAD MIMOUNA

Essaouira, Morocco Day 12 (1 night)

This traditional riad, set on the town ramparts right above the beach, is known for its friendly and accommodating staff. The 33 guest rooms and suites are clean and comfortable, and decorated in traditional Moroccan design. Start the day with breakfast on the sunny rooftop terrace—with its 360-degree views of the sea and town—and end it with a massage at the hotel's spa center.

These are our signature accommodations for this trip. Although it is highly unlikely, we may make substitutions when necessary. To see more photos and descriptions, please visit our Morocco: Camels to Casbahs webpage and click on "Accommodations."

Chefchaouen Extension

Inside the ancient gated medina of this dramatic "blue city," nearly every building is whitewashed or painted some shade of azure, contrasting with the terracotta rooftops and red-walled casbah. Leather and textile workshops line the city's twisting cobblestone streets, and the souks are filled with colorful wares. The Berbers who live in the surrounding villages are also known for their ironwork and textiles. This Chefchaouen extension can be added either before or after the main trip. Below is a description of this extension when done pre-trip. If you would like to do it post-trip, please contact us for details.

DAY 1 CASABLANCA

Meet your private guide and driver this morning, either at the hotel or at the Casablanca Airport. A scenic five-hour drive brings you to the dramatic "blue" village of Chefchaouen (pronounced shef-SHA-wen). Arrive in the late afternoon and check into the Lina Ryad or Riad Cherifa. The city is filled with atmospheric restaurants offering both international cuisine and delicious Moroccan dishes. Many offer al fresco seating with views of the grand mosque, the medina, and the majestic Atlas Mountains. Dinner is on your own this evening...L

DAY 2 CHEFCHAOUEN

After breakfast, enjoy a walk up to the Spanish mosque by way of the Ras el-Maa springs for a panoramic view across the mountains. Your guided tour of the medina includes the casbah, Outa el Hammam square, and several souks, with an optional visit at a local weaving workshop. Enjoy lunch with a local family, with the rest of the day at leisure so you can absorb the sights and sounds of Morocco's "Blue Pearl" city. Overnight at Lina Ryad or Riad Cherifa...BLD

DAY 3 CHEFCHAOUEN

This morning we take a side trip to the natural wonder of Akchour Falls in the wild, rugged Rif Mountains, with an optional challenging hike to God's Bridge—a natural red rock formation high above a series of sapphire pools and sparkling waterfalls. We may return to Chefchaouen in early to midafternoon, giving you another opportunity to soak up the atmosphere of this artistic, laid-back retreat. Overnight at Lina Ryad or Riad Cherifa. Dinner is on your own...BL

DAY 4 CASABLANCA

After breakfast, drive back to Casablanca through the Rif Mountains and the Berber town of Ouezzane (a spiritual capital for Sufis and Moroccan Jews), then cross the fertile plains of the Loukkos valley to arrive back in Casablanca. Your guide is happy to share his knowledge and insights as you chat with him on the return drive of approximately five hours. You'll join your group trip in the late afternoon...BL

2024 EXTENSION COST

\$1595 (3-6 members) \$1895 (2 members) Solo Traveler: \$2595 Single supplement: \$295

Prices are not guaranteed until services are confirmed.

EXTENSION COST INCLUDES

- English-speaking tour leader for 4 days
- English-speaking city guide in Chefchaouen
- Accommodations
- Sightseeing as noted
- Private transport with driver, bottled water for drives
- Meals as indicated
- Airport transfers
- Tips for luggage handling and local city guides

EXTENSION COST DOES NOT INCLUDE

Optional activities, meals not specified (BLD), soft drinks, alcoholic beverages, items of personal nature such as laundry, telephone, and optional gratuities to tour leader.



What the Trip is Like

TRIP LEVEL

This trip is rated Level 2+, Moderate. It combines overland travel and cultural exploration with a two-day camel trek. Each participant should be in good physical condition, since most days include light/leisurely walking, especially when we're exploring the souks. In addition to "urban hiking" in the cities there is also light hiking, mostly on small paths that are a mix of dirt and rocky terrain; the trails are not steep or exposed. On Day 9 we hike for a total of about 3 hours.

Camel Trek

On the camel trek, we enjoy two days of exploring the desert landscape around us. On the first day, we drive into the desert to meet our camels and Tuareg cameleers, then begin the walk, with a picnic lunch en route. You can walk or ride camels, or you can opt to ride to camp by 4WD vehicle. The next day, several options are available, with lunch at camp. You can explore a small mountain called M'ifis and the dunes of Erg Znagui by camel, enjoy a walk and visit a nomad family, or simply stay in camp and enjoy the surroundings. At camp, meals are served to us around a table in our dinner tent, and breakfast is often served out on the dunes. The desert walking is not difficult but covers a variety of terrain with no trails, from hard-packed desert to vast sand dunes. Our camels are roped together in groups of three or four and led by a cameleer. Most people alternately ride and walk, as camel riding for long periods can be uncomfortable. You can walk if you don't want to ride a camel at all, or relax in the camp instead. Please note: Camels can be unpredictable animals. It is possible for the camel to stumble on rough terrain or make a sudden erratic movement. Since camels cannot be saddled as securely as horses, the possibility of a fall is increased. It's important to follow the instruction and guidance of your Trip Leader, and to stay alert while riding. Anyone participating in this optional activity must acknowledge the inherent risks in

riding and perhaps falling from the saddle, and agree to accept responsibility.

Accommodations

For lodging, we enjoy first-class hotels in the cities, a luxury desert camp on the camel trek, and mountain lodges in the mountains. Transportation is by minibus and 4WD Land Cruiser. Bottled water is carried on board our vehicles at all times for your use.

GETTING IN SHAPE

Each participant should be in good health, since most days include light/leisurely walking on mostly flat paths that are a mix of dirt and rocky terrain; the trails are not steep or exposed.

Being in good physical condition is important for your enjoyment of the trip. The best way to get accustomed to walking and being on your feet throughout the day is by incorporating exercise into your schedule leading up to your departure. We recommend walking, hiking, and engaging in physical activities; stair-climbing machines are excellent preparation for walking uphill.

WEATHER

Morocco has climatic variations but the weather is largely moderate, with a cooling influence from the Mediterranean and Atlantic.. In the summer months, daytime temperatures are in the 90s in the valleys, but cool down to the 70s as we gain elevation. Highs in the coastal cities are in the high 70s and low 80s. In the spring, average daytime temperatures in coastal cities range from the mid-60s to the low 80s. The Dades Valley is in vibrant bloom in early spring, from late February through March, and has cooler average highs in the 40s, dropping to lows in the 30s at night. In the north, light

Average Daily Max/Min °F												
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Fes	61/43	64/45	66/46	70/48	77/54	84/59	93/64	93/66	88/63	77/55	68/48	63/43
Erfoud	59/37	64/41	70/48	75/52	82/59	93/68	100/75	99/73	90/66	79/55	68/46	59/37
Marrakesh	64/43	68/46	72/48	75/52	81/57	88/61	97/68	97/68	90/64	81/59	72/50	66/45
Rainfall - Inches												
Fes	2.4	2.8	2.7	1.4	1.5	0.6	0.0	0.1	0.5	1.7	2.6	2.6
Erfoud	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.8	0.5	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.4	0.8	0.7	0.5
Marrakesh	1.3	1.4	1.2	1.1	0.6	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.9	1.5	1.4









rains may stretch to mid-March. During the fall months, Morocco's weather is mild and dry —highs range from the 60s to the high 80s. In the north, light rains begin in November.

ACCOMMODATIONS TRANSPORTATION

We enjoy first-class hotels and high-end riads in the cities and smaller, quainter lodges in the more remote areas. We spend two nights at a private Sahara desert camp while on the camel trek, where we provide all the comforts you would want in a luxury tented camp. Canvas interiors are hung with bright fabrics and carpeted with Moroccan rugs. Comfortable beds are covered by cozy duvets. You'll have a washstand, shower, and toilet within your tent, separated from the sleeping room by traditional white curtains. Meals are served in a large dining tent with a comfortable lounging area outside.

CUISINE

Meals will be a mix of à la carte and family style at local restaurants, cafés and hotels. Tajine (a slow-cooked meat stew often made with chicken, seafood, vegetables, olives, prunes, or almonds) is an important staple of Moroccan cuisine, as is

The majority of your transportation is provided in a comfortable air-conditioned minibus. On some of the smaller, more remote roads where larger vehicles cannot easily access, we use Toyota 4WD Land Cruisers. Filtered water is carried on board our vehicles at all times for your use.

couscous, kebab, and harira, a rich, spiced bean soup. We will

also be eating dishes with a more French influence as well as

REFERENCES

seafood.

We'd be happy to put you in touch with a past client that has traveled with us on this or a similar trip.

Arrival & Departure

Upon confirming your trip reservation, we will send you a Welcome Packet that includes a list of documents (passport, visas, etc.) required for your trip. Please feel free to call if you would like this information before making your air arrangements.

ARRIVAL & MEETING PLACE

Casablanca, Morocco

Suggested Airport: Mohammed V International Airport (CMN)

Suggested Date & Time: Day 1, by 4:00 pm

Meeting Place: A complimentary transfer is provided from the Casablanca airport to the Sofitel Casablanca Tour Blanche for all trip members, no matter when you arrive. A Wilderness Travel representative will meet you inside the airport and will be holding a Wilderness Travel sign. Please note that checkin at the hotel begins at 3:00 pm. We will meet for a short orientation in the hotel lobby on the evening of Day 1, before dinner on your own.

To guarantee early-check in you will need to book a hotel room the night before. If you have booked extra services for early arrival through WT, an Extra Services Confirmation for your extra hotel nights will be sent with your Final Documents.

DEPARTURE

Marrakesh, Morocco

Suggested Airport: Ras Al Khaimah International Airport (RAK)

Suggested Date & Time: Day 14, anytime

No matter when you depart, a complimentary transfer will be provided to the Marrakesh airport for your departing flight. Please note that the hotel check-out time is 12:00 pm.

Note: If you decide to depart from Casablanca instead of Marrakesh, we can book a private land transfer from your Marrakesh hotel to the Casablanca airport. The transfer takes approximately 3 hours and costs \$190 per vehicle (subject to change).

INTERNATIONAL AIR TRAVEL

You are responsible for making your own arrangements for flights to and from Morocco. Airlines with the most convenient schedules for this trip include:

Delta Airlines (www.delta.com)

Air France (www.airfrance.com)

Air Canada (www.aircanada.com)

Tap Air Portugal (www.flytap.com)

Royal Air Maroc (www.royalairmaroc.com)

Easy Jet (www.easyjet.com)

Easy Jet is a British airline offering cheap fares from Europe to Morocco (Milan, Madrid, and Paris to/from Casablanca and Marrakesh).

There are many online consolidators for booking travel, but for more personal help arranging air transport, you can contact Exito Travel at 1-800-655-4053 in the US or 1-800-670-2605 in Canada. They are very adept at putting flight itineraries together, to even the most far-flung places. More information can be found on Exito's website at www.exitotravel.com.

Depending on your routing, it is necessary to depart from the US one or possibly two days prior to Day 1 of the trip itinerary. The name on your airline ticket must match the name on your passport exactly, and your passport must be valid for at least six months after your date of return to the US.

Please do not purchase your tickets until you are confirmed on the trip and have reviewed your proposed air schedule with our office. Once your tickets have been purchased, please send us a copy of your airline schedule so we can reserve your airport transfers.

EXTRA HOTEL NIGHTS

We are happy to arrange additional hotel nights for you at the group hotels in Casablanca or Marrakesh. Please see the Extra Hotel Services Request Form included in your Welcome Packet to book these reservations.

Toucan Club Rewards & Discounts

We are very proud to have one of the highest rates of repeat travelers in the business, and have established the Wilderness Travel Toucan Club to reward you for your loyalty. For more information, please visit the Toucan Club page of our website at www.wildernesstravel.com/toucan.

Here's how it works:

YOUR FIRST TRIP

As a first-time traveler, you receive a lightweight Wilderness Travel T-shirt and set of durable WT Luggage Tags. On subsequent trips, we're happy to send you a new WT T-shirt and set of Luggage Tags by request.

YOUR SECOND TRIP

A top quality Wilderness Travel insulated stainless steel water bottle by CamelBak and a cozy Wilderness Travel fleece vest by Patagonia (\$130 value).

YOUR THIRD TRIP

A versatile Wilderness Travel R-1 pullover by Patagonia (\$140 value).

YOUR FOURTH TRIP

Discounts on the cost of your trip begin! You receive a 4% discount on the tour cost.

FIVE AND MORE TRIPS

You receive a 5% discount on the base trip cost. On your sixth trip, you receive a 6% discount, and so on up to your 10th trip. The maximum discount is 10%, with a ceiling of \$500.

Note: Due to special pricing considerations, Toucan Club discounts do not apply to our Private Journeys or Special Events. However, your participation on these trips does count toward your Toucan discount on future departures of Wilderness Travel's regular adventures.

TERMS & CONDITIONS

Toucan Club travel discounts cannot be used in conjunction with any other discount, unless otherwise specified. Discounts are deducted from the base trip cost and shown on the final invoice. The base trip cost is the main land/tier cost and does not include single supplement fees, extensions, internal airfare, or other additional charges. Bonus gifts (T-shirts, luggage tags, vests, water bottles, and pullovers) will be mailed approximately three weeks prior to trip departure. Terms and conditions of Toucan Club bonuses are subject to change or cancellation at the discretion of Wilderness Travel, Inc.



MEN'S T-SHIRT



WOMEN'S T-SHIRT



PATAGONIA SYNCHILLA FLEECE VEST PLUS INSULATED CAMELBAK WATER BOTTLE



PATAGONIA R1 PULLOVER















WILDERNESS TRAVEL HAS BEEN AWARDED:

Best Travel Specialists in the World: Conde Nast Traveler, 2024, 4-time winner World's Best Tour Operators: Travel + Leisure, 11-time winner Best Wildlife, Hiking & Walking Trips: AFAR Magazine, 3 years in a row

Best Adventure Travel Companies: USA Today
Trip of the Year: Outside Magazine, 9-time winner

50 Tours of a Lifetime: National Geographic Traveler, 9 years in a row

Best Adventure Travel Companies: National Geographic Adventure, 3-time winner

Please be advised that California has established a Travel Consumer Restitution Fund under the California Seller of Travel Law that took effect January 1, 1996. This fund is designed to protect consumers from unscrupulous practices by discount airfare ticket sellers or air charter operators. Unfortunately, this law does not cover non-California residents and, even in the case of California residents, it does not cover any foreign travel where the foreign "providers of transportation or travel services" are not in compliance with the Sellers of Travel Law (compliance being defined as registered as a Seller of Travel in California and a participant in the Travel Consumer Restitution Fund). Thus none of Wilderness Travel's tours qualify and we are required by law to advise each client that they are not covered by the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires sellers of travel to maintain a trust account or bond. This business has a trust account. California Seller of Travel #100769640

While as accurate as possible at the time of printing, this itinerary should be considered an approximate indication of the schedule and scope of activities and trip routing, rather than an inflexible schedule of events; it is subject to change due to circumstances beyond our control. This trip is subject to the Limitation of Liability and all the terms and conditions as detailed in the General Information section of the Wilderness Travel Catalog.

Revised: September 18, 2024 1:59 PM $\,$



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