

MOROCCAN ODYSSEY

Classic Tour | 19 Days | Physical Rating 1

RABAT – TANGIER – CHEFCHAOUEN – FEZ – ERFOUD – MERZOUGA – SKOURA – MARRAKECH – ESSAOUIRA – CASABLANCA

- Wander through Tangier's atmospheric medina
- Be inspired by the colourful city of Chefchaouen
- Discover the iconic Chouara tannery in Fez
- Embrace the hustle and bustle in Marrakech
- Enjoy a tea ceremony during your visit to the Ourika Valley
- Explore the seaside town of Essaouira

TOUR MAP



MOROCCAN ODYSSEY INCLUSIONS

Return international economy flights, taxes and current fuel surcharges (unless a land only option is selected)

- All accommodation
- All Meals
- All sightseeing and entrance fees
- All transportation and transfers
- English speaking National Escort (if your group is 10 or more passengers) or Local Guides
- Specialist advice from our experienced travel consultants
- Comprehensive travel guides
- Safe and secure with IATA

The only things you may have to pay for are personal expenditures e.g. drinks, optional excursions or shows, insurance of any kind, customary tipping, early check in or late check out and other items not specified on the itinerary.

CLASSIC TOURS:

These tours are designed for those who wish to see the iconic sites and magnificent treasures of Morocco on an excellent value group tour whilst travelling with like-minded people. Travel with the assurance that all your arrangements are taken care of. You will be accompanied by our dedicated and professional National Escorts and local guides, whose unparalleled knowledge will turn your holiday into an unforgettable experience.

PHYSICAL LEVEL 1:

Our tours come with a physical rating to guide you in selecting a holiday that suits your comfort level. Joining any of our tours involves independent mobility and the ability to stay active throughout the day, which is essential for fully enjoying the unique charm of each destination.

'Moroccan Odyssey' falls under a Physical Level 1 category. This indicates a level of fitness that allows you to comfortably remain on your feet with occasional rest. Expect to effortlessly navigate boarding and disembarking from various modes of transport, including coaches and boats. You'll be walking around remarkable sites and ascending steps to capture those awe-inspiring views!

Please consider:

- There will be sightseeing on foot for both short and extended periods of time.

Our National Escort provides a high level of service and support throughout your journey. However, their primary role is to manage the daily aspects of the tour. They are unable to offer extensive personal physical assistance. We kindly ask our travellers to be prepared for the physical aspects of the tour to ensure a comfortable and enjoyable experience for everyone.

JOINING YOUR TOUR:

The tour is 19 days in duration including international flights or 17 days in duration based on 'Land Only'.

Travellers booked on a 'Land Only' package, the price includes your arrival/departure airport transfers if arriving/departing on the start and conclusion date of your tour. Please advise your international flight times to our reservations team.

Join the tour on Day 2 in Rabat and end the tour on Day 18 in Casablanca. Please refer to your final itinerary for more specific meeting instructions pertaining to your departure.

ITINERARY CHANGES:

It is our intention to adhere to the day-to-day itinerary as printed; however, the order of events or sightseeing may change as we look to improve our tours or as local conditions dictate. In these circumstances we will make the best possible arrangements maintaining the integrity of your trip.

Days 1-2: Arrive Rabat — Meals: D



Fly to the coastal city of Casablanca. Upon arrival, you will be met at the airport by an English-speaking representative before transferring approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes to your hotel in Rabat.

Enjoy the rest of the day at leisure and start soaking up the local culture that surrounds you.

Please note: Early check in is not included. If your flight arrives in the morning and you wish to arrange this, please speak to your reservation's consultant.

Please meet your representative outside the airport terminal 1 exit, as they are not permitted to enter the building. Please look out for a name board with our Wendy Wu logo and your name written on it.

Destination Information

Rabat – Rabat is the capital of Morocco, and is one of the country's four imperial cities that rests along the shores of the Bouregreg River and the Atlantic Ocean. Founded in the 12th century by Abd al-Mu'min, the first Almohad ruler, Rabat is known for its stunning landmarks that speak to its Islamic and French-colonial heritage, including the Kasbah of the Udayas.

Day 3: Rabat — Meals: B, L, D



Today, you will spend the full day exploring Rabat. Discover the Hassan Tower, the Royal Palace and the Mausoleum of Mohammed V, all conveniently located within proximity of each other. Pause at the Oudayas Fortress, perched majestically atop a cliff. From this vantage point, soak in the wonderful views of Rabat's whitewashed buildings and the azure expanse of the Atlantic stretching into the horizon.

Enjoy your first lunch at a local restaurant, ideally located within the heart of Rabat city. Following on from this, enjoy some time at leisure to stroll along the old medina before transferring back to your hotel.

You will spend approximately 6 hours touring today.

Destination Information

Hassan Tower - The minaret of an incomplete mosque, the Hassan Tower is widely considered the symbol of Rabat that was built during the reign of Yacoub El Mansour, a sultan of the Almohad Dynasty from 1184 AD.

Oudayas Fortress - The Oudayas Fortress is a charming medieval fortress district that was the first settlement in Rabat. It's full of Morocco's trademark blue-and white houses with their colourful flowerpots and hand-painted gates.

Day 4: Rabat – Tangier Meals: B, L, D



Today, you will board a bullet train from Rabat to Tangier. The journey time is approximately 1 hour and 20 minutes.

Upon arrival, you'll begin your journey through the city's highlights. The first stop will be Cape Spartel. Breathe in the salty sea air as you take in panoramic views from this iconic cape.

Next, venture to the charming forest of Rmilat, nestled amidst rolling hills and verdant landscapes. Here, tranquility reigns supreme, offering a serene respite from the hustle and bustle of urban life.

Your adventure continues with a visit to the historic Kasbah of Tangier, a labyrinthine maze of narrow alleys, ancient gates, and hidden courtyards steeped in centuries of history and culture.

After lunch at a local restaurant, immerse yourself in the vibrant tapestry of Tangier's medina. There will also be an opportunity to visit the Marina, offering a serene seaside ambiance of the Mediterranean shores.

Your sightseeing will last approximately 6 hours.

Your luggage will remain on coach so please take a small bag, if required, with you for the train journey. Snacks can be bought on the train or at the station if needed.

Destination Information

Tangier – Sitting just 20 miles from Spain, Tangier has acted as a gateway between Africa and Europe for centuries, holding much Spanish, Portuguese and French influences in its architecture, food and cosmopolitan way of life.

Cape Spartel - Where the Atlantic meets the Mediterranean, Cape Spartel is a mesmerizing display of nature's grandeur. Overlooking Gibraltar, Cape Spartel, formerly known as Cape Ampelusia is the site where the Battle of Cape Spartel took place and is now home to the iconic lighthouse that has been in operation since 1864, being the first of its kind along the Moroccan coastline.

Kasbah of Tangier - The Kasbah of Tangier dates back to the late 17th century and once served as Tangier's military and political centre.

Day 5: Tangier - Chefchaouen Meals: B, L, D



Enjoy a leisurely morning in Tangier, soaking in the ambiance whilst exploring the city at your own pace. In the late morning, you will be transferred to Chefchaouen. The journey time is approximately 2 hours.

Upon arrival, you'll enjoy lunch in a local restaurant, located in the heart of the medina.

Go on to embark on a guided tour around the renowned Blue City of Chefchaouen. Walk through the winding streets of the medina, adorned in shades of blue that paint a picture-perfect backdrop at every turn. Visit the historic Outta Hammam, a popular local gathering spot. Continue to the picturesque Ras El Ma, a tranquil spot nestled beneath the towering mountains.

As the sun begins to set, you'll be transferred back to your hotel. Upon arrival, you will be immersed in an ancient musical sufi tradition known as Hadra Chefchaounia. Performed exclusively by women from Chefchaouen, this stunning ritual, accompanied by hand drums or tambourines, involves hymns, incantations and prayers that offer a greater insight into the spiritual heritage of the region.

Dinner will be enjoyed at a local restaurant this evening.

Sightseeing will last approximately 3 hours.

Please note that on arrival in Chefchaouen, you will be taken by taxi to the medina, as coaches are not allowed beyond a certain point.

Destination Information

Chefchaouen - Located high in the Rif Mountains and commonly referred to as The Blue City of Morocco due to its numerous city walls and houses draped top to bottom in blue, Chefchaouen is instantly recognisable for its unique charm. Many believe the iconic blue painted walls and floors originated from the end of World War 2, as the Jewish community in the area grew, and painted the walls, floors and steps as a religious practise to represent the colour of the sky, connecting the city to heaven and God.

Outta Hammam – This is the bustling heart of the medina which is lined with cobbled shaded streets, cafes and restaurants. It is also where you'll find the kasbah and Grand Mosquée.

Day 6: Chefchaouen - Fez Meals: B, L, D



Today, you will venture to the city of Fez. Embark on a 6 hour drive to the bustling city of Fez, stopping to visit Volubilis enroute.

Home to the most ancient Roman site in Morocco, your time at Volubilis will allow you to trace the steps of the emperors and citizens of a bygone era. After exploring this archaeological gem, continue onto Moulay Idriss for lunch before journeying onto Fez.

Transfer to your hotel for check in before dinner.

Destination Information

Volubilis - Amidst the ancient ruins, trace the footsteps of emperors and citizens of a bygone era, marvelling at the architectural wonders that have stood the test of time.

Fez – A northeastern Moroccan city often referred to as the country's cultural capital. It's primarily known for its Fes El Bali walled medina, with medieval Marinid architecture, vibrant souks and old-world atmosphere.

Day 7: Fez Meals: B, L, D



Start today's adventure visiting the old medina - a UNESCO World Heritage site, where history unfolds in the labyrinthine alleys. Visit renowned Medresas such as Madrasa Attarine, each a testament to the rich architectural and educational heritage of Morocco. Explore fountains and mosques that have stood the test of time, their intricacies revealing the cultural depth of Fez.

Go on to engage in a hands-on experience at a pottery workshop, where you will meet with skilled artisans who will share insights into the craft, guiding you in shaping your own piece of pottery.

Continue your journey to the Chouara Tanneries, where the age-old leather industry comes to life. Meet a skilled artisan and gain insights into the meticulous process of crafting Moroccan leather artifacts. Witness the vibrant colours and techniques that have been passed down through generations.

Following on from lunch in the medina, the afternoon is dedicated to exploring the bustling souks and markets of Fez. Take the opportunity to purchase unique souvenirs, from intricately woven textiles to traditional crafts that embody the essence of Moroccan craftsmanship.

This evening enjoy a dinner alongside traditional Moroccan music, adding a touch of enchantment to your dining experience.

Today's adventure will last approximately 7 hours.

Please note that you will be required to climb flights of stairs to access the viewpoint of the tanneries.

Destination Information

Madrasa Attarine - A madrasa in Fez, near the Al-Qarawiyyin Mosque. It was built by the Marinid sultan Uthman II Abu Said in 1323-5. The madrasa takes its name from the Souk al-Attarine, the spice and perfume market.

Chouara Tanneries - The largest of the medina's several tanneries, Chouara is one of the city's most iconic sights and smells. Operating since at least the 16th century, the area was heavily renovated in 2016, but the scene, viewed from the surrounding balconies, remains remarkably medieval.

Day 8: Fez — Meals: B, L, D



Today, you will take part in a cooking class, creating your own rendition of traditional Moroccan dish. First, join the chef on a visit to the market, where you'll immerse yourself in the vibrant colours and aromatic scents of fresh ingredients. After selecting the finest produce for your meal, spend time preparing a 3-course meal from scratch under the guidance of an expert chef. Sit down in the picturesque courtyard to savour the flavours of your own creation for lunch.

This experience lasts approximately 6-7 hours.

Destination Information

Hammam – A visit to a Moroccan hammam, or traditional bathhouse, is a unique and rejuvenating experience deeply rooted in the country's culture. Hammams are communal bathing facilities where locals gather for both socializing and cleansing rituals.

Day 9: Fez - Erfoud — Meals: B, L, D



Rise early this morning and depart Fez to embark on a scenic drive through the captivating landscapes of the Middle Atlas Mountains to Erfoud. Enjoy the picturesque views and keep an eye out for glimpses of Morocco's diverse wildlife along the way.

Upon arrival to Midelt, after 3 hours and 30 minutes driving, enjoy lunch in a relaxing tranquil oasis setting, savouring the flavours of local cuisine.

Afterwards, traverse the stunning Ziz Valley, marvelling at the dramatic scenery and taking in the natural beauty that surrounds you. Make a special stop to encounter Morocco's endemic species, the Macaque ape, observing these playful creatures in their natural habitat amidst the breathtaking landscapes.

Arrive late afternoon in Erfoud and check into your hotel.

Please note, this is a long day of driving, taking approximately 7 hours to Erfoud.

Destination Information

Middle Atlas Mountains - The Middle Atlas Mountains, located in central Morocco, form part of the larger Atlas mountain range, which stretches across North Africa. Known for their stunning landscapes and serene ambiance, the Middle Atlas Mountains offer a picturesque retreat from the hustle and bustle of Morocco's cities.

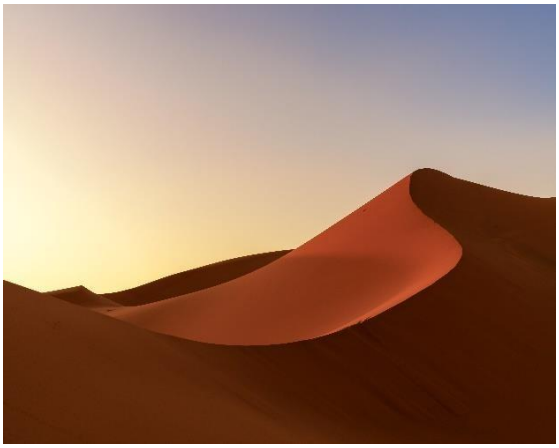
Midelt - This charming town nestled between the Middle and High Atlas Mountains in Morocco, serves as a serene retreat and a strategic stopover for travelers exploring the region.

Ziz Valley - Located in southeastern Morocco, it's renowned for its lush palm groves, dramatic gorges, and picturesque oases that stretch along the Ziz River. This fertile valley is a verdant contrast to the surrounding arid landscapes, offering a serene and scenic route for travellers heading to the Sahara Desert.

Erfoud – Nestled in the southeastern Morocco near the edge of the Sahara Desert, Erfoud is known for its vibrant marketplaces filled with spices and traditional crafts. This desert town also serves as a gateway to nearby stunning landscapes, including the Erg Chebbi dunes, where visitors can experience the magic of Morocco's desert scenery.

Day 10: Merzouga Meals: B, L, D

Today, you will explore Rissani, a town with a rich history and home to the oldest Koranic school. Explore the cultural heritage of the region as you immerse yourself in the atmosphere of this ancient town.



Enjoy a cooking demonstration, learning the art of crafting Medfouna, also known as "Berber pizza" or "desert pizza." This traditional Moroccan delicacy features a round, filled dough that's soft on the inside and crispy on the outside.

Later this afternoon, take a 4x4 drive into the desert of Merzouga. Once there, explore the sweeping dunes of the Sahara on foot.

This evening, enjoy dinner at your desert camp accompanied by the sounds of the Sahara performed by a troupe of local Gnawa musicians. Spend the remainder of the evening stargazing around the campfire, surrounded by the enchanting ambiance of the Sahara Desert.

Please note: As you will be transferring in 4x4's to Merzouga there is limited luggage space. Please pack a small overnight bag for this 1 night stay. Your main luggage will remain on the coach.

Destination Information

Rissani - Located in southeastern Morocco, Rissani is famous for its bustling souks, where locals gather to trade spices, textiles, and traditional goods. This historic town is also known as the birthplace of the Alaouite dynasty, with its ancient ruins and the impressive Mausoleum of Moulay Ali Cherif attracting visitors interested in Moroccan history and culture.

Merzouga -This small village in southeastern Morocco is renowned for its towering Erg Chebbi dunes, which offer visitors a breathtaking desert experience.

Day 11: Merzouga - Skoura — Meals: B, L, D



After enjoying breakfast at your desert camp, you will journey from Merzouga to Skoura. The approximate journey time is 7 hours, which includes lunch at a local restaurant and a visit to Todra Gorge.

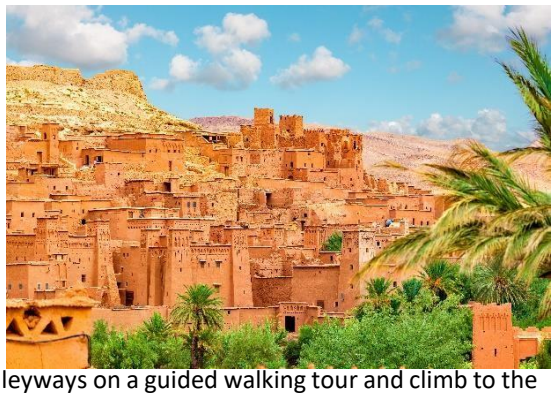
Upon reaching Skoura transfer to taxis for the final leg of the journey, as the bus cannot reach the town. There are no roads here, so this short journey is on gravel roads.

Check into your hotel and take some time to relax and rejuvenate after your travels. Dinner will be served at the hotel this evening.

Destination Information

Skoura – Located in the Ouarzazate Province of Morocco, Skoura is famous for its expansive palm groves, ancient kasbahs, and serene atmosphere. This stunning oasis once served as an important stopping point for caravans making their way through the Sahara.

Day 12: Skoura - Marrakech — Meals: B, L, D



Today, depart for Marrakech, a vibrant city known for its bustling souks and historic landmarks. Your journey will be an approximate 5 hours from Skoura to Marrakech.

Make a stop at Ouarzazate. Marvel at the desert landscapes and historical sites that make Ouarzazate a unique and enchanting destination.

Continue towards Ksar Ait Ben Haddou, a UNESCO World Heritage site renowned for its ancient, fortified city and stunning Moroccan earthen architecture. Explore the narrow alleyways on a guided walking tour and climb to the top of the Kasbah, where panoramic views of the valley await.

As the day draws to a close, make your way back to Marrakech, where you'll check into your hotel and freshen up before dinner. Tonight, dine at a local restaurant in Marrakech, immersing yourself in the vibrant culinary scene of the city.

Please note this is a long travel day.

Destination Information

Ouarzazate - Often referred to as the “Hollywood of Morocco”, Ouarzazate has played a prominent role within the filming industry and has been a popular filming location for various movies and TV shows due to its stunning landscapes.

Ksar Ait Ben Haddou – A UNESCO World Heritage site situated in the foothills of the High Atlas Mountains in Morocco. Known for its impressive mud-brick architecture, this ancient fortified village offers a glimpse into traditional Moroccan life and has served as a backdrop for numerous films and television series.

Day 13: Marrakech Meals: B, L, D



Enjoy taking in all the sites of Marrakech today, where you will see some hidden gems as well as all the notable highlights.

Navigate the labyrinthine alleys as you become introduced to Fondouks or caravanserais, where the air is infused with the history of traders and travellers from days gone by.

Witness the ancient Ferran, a public traditional bakery, and gain insight into the intricate process of baking Moroccan bread.

Go on to explore the Furnace, where the steam of a Hammam, meaning 'spreader of warmth' in Arabic, is heated, offering you a glimpse into the age-old practices of relaxation and rejuvenation.
Your tour continues, as you visit the Dar El Bacha Museum, a beautiful palace dating back to the 18th century, which remains a symbol of the city's plentiful history and culture.

Continue to immerse yourself into the hustle and bustle of the local markets, known as souks before an encounter with a local wood turner.

This evening, enjoy dinner at a traditional restaurant in the heart of the city.

Sightseeing is approximately 5h30.

Destination Information

Marrakech – Home to a rich collection of traditional Arabic structures, bustling souks and invigorating flavours, Marrakech remains as the country's cultural hub, perfectly blending a mixture of African, Middle Eastern and European influences in day-to-day life.

Fondouks – The fondouks in Marrakech refer to the ancient caravanserais or inns that were once used to accommodate traders and travellers during their journeys. These inns would also act as a source of storage for the individual's goods. Today, the fondouks have been transformed into shops, art galleries, restaurants and more, whilst maintaining their traditional architecture, usually consisting of an interior courtyard.

Ferran – Available in each district of Morocco, is a ferran or public oven. Available to locals looking to bake or cook dishes they have prepared at home, the ferran was a response to public demand, with many households having no oven facilities readily available. The ferrans continue to play a pivotal part in present-day Morocco despite the rise in technological advances.

Dar El Bacha Museum – Built in 1910, the Dar El Bacha Museum, made up of seven buildings, is a prime example of traditional Moroccan architecture and is a symbol for the people of Morocco. Finished with fountains, traditional salons and a courtyard filled with orange trees, the museum's courtyards are intricately decorated with mosaics and colourful tiles.

Souks – The markets of Marrakech, with each stall selling its own unique ware, from food and drink to jewellery, leather and art, no visit to Marrakech would be complete without getting lost in the souks.

Day 14: Day trip to Ourika Valley — Meals: B, L, D



After breakfast, enjoy your day's adventure to Ourika Valley. Your journey to Ourika Valley will take approximately 3 hours.

Make a stop enroute to Anima Garden before continuing to the Jardin Bio Aromatique d'Ourika. After a traditional home cooked lunch, enjoy a tea ceremony with a local tea specialist.

Return to Marrakech for dinner.

Today's experience lasts approximately 6 hours.

Destination Information

Ourika Valley – One of the most accessible valleys in the High Atlas, the Ourika Valley is filled with luscious fields that appear in stark contrast to the rocky foothills of the mountains in the distance.

Anima Garden – Created by renowned artist, André Heller, the Anima Garden is the perfect display of art and nature coming together. The garden is made up of over two hectares, filled with colourful sculptures and installations by Pablo Picasso, Keith Haring and more, surrounded by over 250 different plant species.

Day 15: Marrakech - Essaouira — Meals: B, L, D



Today, you will make your way to Essaouira, a picturesque coastal town known for its charming medina, vibrant arts scene, and stunning beaches. Your journey will be approximately 3 hours.

Begin with a guided walking tour of the medina, a UNESCO World Heritage site. Wander through the narrow streets lined with blue and white buildings, soaking in the vibrant atmosphere and admiring the unique architecture.

After lunch, continue your exploration of Essaouira at your own pace. You may choose to stroll along the picturesque beach, visit the historic Skala de la Ville (ramparts), or browse the shops and art galleries in the medina for souvenirs and local handicrafts.

Destination Information

Essaouira – An exceptional example of a late 18th century fortified town, Essaouira offers a considerably more relaxed atmosphere for visitors when compared to the hustle and bustle of Marrakech. Built according to the principles of contemporary European military architecture, the city once played an integral role in international trading, connecting Morocco with Europe and the rest of the world.

Day 16: Essaouira at leisure — Meals: B, L, D

Enjoy today at leisure soaking up the local life in Essaouira.

Lunch today will be at a local restaurant. Don't miss out on the opportunity to explore the medina of Essaouira at your own pace.

Enjoy dinner this evening at your hotel.



Day 17: Essaouira - Casablanca — Meals: B, L, D

Today, you will journey to Casablanca. The approximate journey time is 5 hours. En route, make a stop at El Jadida and have lunch at a local restaurant.

This afternoon, visit Hassan II Mosque before proceeding to the hotel for check in.

Tonight, bid farewell to your newly acquainted travel companions whilst you enjoy your farewell dinner.

Please note: Your visit to Hassan II Mosque is time sensitive and if missed you will not be able to enter. You will have the opportunity to take photos afterwards.



Destination Information

Hassan II Mosque – A stunning display of hand-carved stone and wood, Hassan II Mosque remains as one of two Moroccan mosques open to non-Muslim individuals and is one of the largest mosques in Africa, holding up to 105,000 worshippers (25,000 inside) at a given time.

Days 18-19: Depart Casablanca, Morocco — Meals: B

This morning is free at leisure before transferring to the airport for your return flight home, arriving the following day. Please note, only breakfast is included today.



MOROCCAN ODYSSEY INFORMATION

VISAS:

New Zealand passport holders are currently permitted entry to Morocco without a visa for stays of up to 90 days.

Please be advised that your passport must have at least six months validity left on it when you arrive back in New Zealand.

Please note the visa procedures and requirements may change at any time. These changes are often made by the relevant embassy or consulate; Wendy Wu Tours acts as a third party and has no influence on the process of a visa.

INSURANCE:

We strongly recommend that you take out a policy as soon as you pay your deposit. Wendy Wu Tours cannot in any way be made liable for any additional cost incurred by the customer on any tour due to the customer not having adequate travel insurance.

We also encourage all customers to take a copy of their travel insurance documents (especially relevant international contact numbers) with them while on tour. We advise that you check the inclusions and procedures for lodging claims prior to your departure. These documents should be stored separately from the original.

EATING IN MOROCCO:

Moroccan cuisine is a vibrant tapestry of flavours, aromas, and colours, reflecting the country's rich cultural heritage and diverse influences. From the bustling markets of Marrakech to the coastal towns of Essaouira, Morocco offers a culinary adventure that promises to tantalize your taste buds and leave you craving more.

Central to Moroccan cooking is the masterful use of spices. Expect to encounter fragrant blends like ras el hanout, a complex mix of over a dozen spices including cumin, coriander, cinnamon, and cardamom. Saffron, paprika, and turmeric also play starring roles, adding depth and warmth to many dishes.

Dishes served in restaurants on our group tours are varied. Some will be vegetable-based with meat mixed in, whilst others will be meat-based. Our restaurants are aware of the western palate, with various non-spiced options available.

When eating lunches and dinners, you will usually be seated around a large table with other Wendy Wu Tours members. Dishes will be served in the traditional ‘family style’; meaning that various dishes will be laid out in the centre of the table. These dishes are intended to be shared amongst the group – there is always more than enough to feed everyone.

Typical dishes to expect in Morocco, include tagine, featuring slow cooked meat with an array of vegetables and spices that perfectly blend sweet and savoury flavours inside a tagine pot where the dish gets its name from. Another notable dish is couscous, made up of small, steamed granules of rolled semolina (coarsely-grounded wheat flour) and is often served with a stew on top.

On some days where lots of sights are covered, dinner times may be early and your tour group may head directly to the restaurant after sightseeing without stopping at your hotel to freshen up.

All beverages will be at your own expense and are readily available. Please note: if you have any dietary requirements, you must inform us before your tour starts, and please be aware that restaurants may not always be able to accommodate these. We also recommend only drinking bottled water during your time in Morocco.

ACCOMMODATION

All hotels have private western bathroom facilities, a TV and telephone. Plumbing and electricity supplies can be erratic and quite often the power in hotel rooms is turned off while guests are out of the room. If you experience any difficulty, please speak to your Local Guide or National Escort.

Desert Camp (Berber Tent): During your time in Merzouga, you will be staying in a berber tent in the heart of the desert. The desert camp is equipped with Wi-Fi, electricity as well as ensuite western-style bathroom in each tent. You will be sleeping on conventional beds, allowing for a comfortable stay amidst a stunning location.

Your accommodation has been selected for convenience of location, comfort, or character, and can range from a business hotel in one city to a family-run guesthouse in a smaller town or a heritage-type hotel. In remote areas, accommodation may be of a lower standard and may not have western amenities. Hotels are generally rated as local three to four-star standard but please do note that there is no international classification system for hotels and differences in facilities and quality do exist between New Zealand and Morocco. Rest assured that all hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly inspected by our staff and our partners to ensure that standards are met.

TRANSFERS:

As we offer our customers a variety of airlines to suit your needs, passengers will arrive/depart in Morocco at various times during the day. Depending on the number of customers arriving/ departing on the same flight as yourself, the type of transfer to your hotel/ airport will vary.

On the departure day, all passengers will be met by English-speaking staff at the hotel and transfer by one of the four ways above. For those passengers using a shared bus or shared bus plus taxi to the airport, the guide services end when they drop you off at the bus stop, and you will need to check in at the airport on your own. If you have paid extra for a private transfer, the above does not apply.

Please ensure your Wendy Wu Tours luggage tag is visible on your suitcase/hand luggage, as this may also assist your guide in identifying you. If at any stage you are unable to locate your representative, please contact our Morocco operator on the number included in your final documents.

TRANSPORT:

Coaches: Coaches with air conditioning are used on our group tours for city sightseeing, short excursions to the countryside and longer transfers where necessary. Marrakech is famous for its chaotic traffic, involving not only cars but scooters, mopeds, bicycles, carriages and pedestrians. Main and inner-city roads have a reputation for being very congested. For this reason, it may not always be possible to return to your hotel after sightseeing to freshen up before going to the restaurant for dinner.

Roads in Morocco have generally been improved over recent years, but traffic and/or weather conditions may extend driving times. Road construction work usually covers an enormous section of road - not just one or two kilometres as you may be used to. For this reason, the timings listed in the sections above are approximations only.

Trains: The Al Boraq bullet train ride included on "Moroccan Odyssey" is a morning train, in economy class, air-conditioned chair carriages. The journey will take approximately 1.5 hours. There is a restaurant carriage onboard where you will be able to purchase drinks and snacks.

Please note, the train carriages are shared, so we ask that you are mindful of your personal belongings. There will be overhead storage compartments above your seat for any hand luggage.

Each train coach has Western toilet facilities, located at either end of the coach, however we recommend you carry tissues/toilet paper and hand sanitisers with you.

DEVELOPMENT IN MOROCCO:

Morocco has made significant strides in its development, creating a welcoming environment for travellers. The country's road infrastructure is impressive, with a network of well-maintained highways and expressways connecting major cities like Casablanca, Marrakech, and Tangier, making road travel smooth and efficient. Public facilities have seen substantial improvements, with modern airports, reliable public transportation, and a growing number of accommodations ranging from luxury hotels to charming riads. Tourist-friendly amenities, such as clean restrooms and accessible ATMs, are widely available, ensuring a comfortable and convenient travel experience.

Morocco is generally considered a safe destination for tourists, with a welcoming atmosphere and a strong focus on hospitality. The government prioritizes the safety of visitors, resulting in a noticeable police presence in major tourist areas and cities. Ensure to take standard precautions, such as being mindful of personal belongings and avoiding isolated areas at night, contribute to a secure travel experience. Petty crime, such as pickpocketing, can occur in crowded places, but by staying vigilant and taking standard safety measures, you can enjoy Morocco's vibrant culture and stunning landscapes with confidence.

GROUP SIZE:

Most of our groups consist of 10 travellers or more and will be accompanied by a national escort. There will usually be no more than 18 travellers in each group although you may encounter other Wendy Wu tour groups while you are travelling.

All our departures are guaranteed to operate with a minimum of 8 travellers booked (unless cancelled due to factors beyond our control). A national escort will accompany each group of 10 or more. However, at our discretion we may operate departures with a smaller group size as we try to operate advertised departures wherever it is viable to do so.

TIPPING POLICY:

Tipping while on holiday is common in most parts of the world and Morocco is no exception. However, it is not always clear who it is appropriate to tip and how much. Furthermore, travellers may not have the right amounts of cash available at the right time. To avoid any inconvenience Wendy Wu Tours operates a tipping policy where a stated amount is given to your national escort at the beginning of your tour and tips are disbursed to local guides and drivers throughout your tour. The amount is designed to be at a reasonable level for travellers while being fair to the local people and includes a gratuity for the national escort.

If you are travelling in a smaller group with local guides only, then tipping is paid at each destination. To be fair to the guides we ask for slightly higher amounts per traveller with small groups.

We generally find that most customers appreciate the convenience of our tipping policy but we do recognize that it may not suit everyone. However, as this is a group tour we ask that everyone follows the same protocol to be fair to other group members and to ensure smooth operation of your tour.

CULTURAL DIFFERENCE:

Moroccan society and culture are built on intricate social etiquette and customs. As foreigners, we are not expected to be knowledgeable about all etiquette, but it will make your time in Morocco more enjoyable if you are respectful of local customs. Some examples of scenarios you may encounter include greeting individuals with "Salam" (hello), especially during periods/public holidays of religious significance e.g. Ramadan. Your National Escort will advise you of some of these other customs at the beginning of your tour.

The consumption of alcohol in Morocco is generally allowed in hotels and restaurants. Please note, it is important to respect local customs and norms, and whilst alcohol is available, consumption of alcohol during Ramadan, may be frowned upon more than usual.

APPROPRIATE DRESS

When visiting Morocco, comfortable, light and breathable clothing is recommended for the day, keeping in mind the cooler evenings where a light jacket may be needed. The average temperature in Morocco typically sits at 20°C, with an average of 28°C during the Summer months (July-August) which can go as high as 40°C with almost no rain and on the rare occasion, sandstorms may be present. During Winter (December-February) the average temperature sits at 13°C and can drop to 6°C or so.

It is important for tourists to dress modestly as a sign of respect for the local culture and traditions, particularly in places of worship or rural areas. For women, it typically means wearing clothing that covers the shoulders, arms, and knees. Long skirts, dresses, or loose pants paired with tops that aren't too revealing are ideal. Men should also opt for longer shorts or trousers and avoid sleeveless shirts.

When visiting mosques and places of worship, both men and women should ensure their arms and legs are fully covered. Women are also required to cover their hair with a scarf. Loose-fitting clothing is preferred, and shoes must be removed before entering the mosque.

While swimwear is acceptable at the beach or by the pool, it's best to cover up when leaving these areas. By dressing modestly, you not only show respect for local customs but also enjoy a more comfortable and culturally immersive experience. Please also ensure to bring with you, sunscreen and sun hats.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

If you are travelling within the below Morocco public holidays, please note that celebrations can last a couple of days and during these times some businesses and tourist attractions may be closed or crowded. Public transport, including coach, air and train travel may also be affected. New Year's Day on 1st January, The Proclamation of Independence of Morocco on 11th January, Labour Day on 1st May, Throne Day on 30th July as well as Oued Eddahab Day on 14th August and more. Please contact our Reservations Team for more information.

SOUVENIRS:

We want to be able to give you an opportunity to buy souvenirs, so we include some stops at museums or exhibitions which demonstrate a craft or product unique to that region with pieces available to buy. We understand that souvenir hunting is not for everyone, so we aim to take you to places, which hold local interest. We trust you will enjoy these opportunities to learn about local arts and crafts and understand their historical and cultural importance.

LUGGAGE:

All travellers are limited to two items of luggage each: a suitcase with a maximum weight of 20kg and one piece of hand luggage with a maximum weight of five kilograms. It is essential that your luggage is lockable.

PERSONAL EXPENSES AND OPTIONAL TOURINGS:

You will need to take some extra money to cover drinks, laundry, and souvenirs, plus any additional sightseeing that may be offered to you.

It is highly recommended that extra care and attention is paid when exchanging money outside of the larger cities. We suggest exchanging your money before travelling to smaller towns, as exchange facilities can be very limited. Your National Escort will remind you to do this before departure.

CLIMBING STEPS:

Sightseeing at nearly all the palaces, fortresses and some mosques involves climbing quite a number of steps. These palaces were built to provide defence against potential invaders so nearly all of them stand on top of a hill, while the interiors have layers of narrow hallways and steps to slow down the advance of enemies once they were inside. The steps tend to be quite large, not level and sometimes without handrails.

People with knee or hip injuries who have poor balance or are otherwise unable to complete these activities independently should consider the suitability of this itinerary carefully.

VACCINATIONS AND YOUR HEALTH:

Wendy Wu does not give specific health advice, but we do recommend you see your doctor at least six weeks prior to travel for advice and to allow time for any necessary vaccinations. Please remember to take your itinerary with you. Safe travel has a comprehensive website that you may also find useful www.safetravel.govt.nz

BEFORE YOU LEAVE:

We strongly recommend registering your travel plans with www.safetravel.govt.nz as in the event of an emergency, New Zealand Consular assistance will be more readily available.

Up until the day you travel, it is vital you keep up to date and familiarised with the entry requirements as these can change at short notice. You are personally responsible for completing any entry forms, conducting any covid tests (if necessary), etc and adhering to countries' specific entry requirements. You can also access the New Zealand Government's travel advisory service for up-to-date information about your destination on the same website.

AFTER YOUR BOOKING:

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation invoice along with a link to our website where you can find your visa information (if applicable) and other important information. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approximately 2 weeks prior to departure.

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