



## MOROCCAN CARAVAN, LLC.

### MARRAKECH & SOUTHWESTERN MOROCCO TOUR ITINERARY

#### **DAY 1: ARRIVE TO MARRAKECH**

Today, participants arrive and spend one night in Marrakech. (B, L, D)

#### **DAY 2: EXPLORE MARRAKECH**

We will have an official tour of the city including the souk or market. Marrakech was the capital of Morocco during the 11th century, since then, continued to play an important role as a center of trade. Visits include various historical monuments, such as the 12th century Koutoubia Mosque, which is a classic example of Moroccan-Andalusian architecture, the 19th century Bahia palace, and more. Participants have the option to spend the evening at the dynamic Jamaa el Fna square, an open area where both locals and visitors go to be entertained by actors, musicians, and acrobats. After sun goes down, the sounds made by the performers go up. Many food vendors light their gas lamps. The light from their lamps illuminates the smoke coming from their grills making for a surreal atmosphere. (B,L)

#### **DAY 3: AIT BEN HADDOU**

Today we begin our adventure by crossing the High Atlas mountains. We make stops to enjoy the scenery and visit women's argan cooperative, a good place to buy argan oil and argan products. Our drive is stunning as we have a chance to see typical Amazigh adobe villages with their lush green terraced gardens. When we arrive at the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Ait Ben Haddou, we learn about its unique architecture and the diversity of people who live there. Ait Ben Haddou is also a famous location for the many movies filmed in Morocco. Dinner and overnight at Ait Ben Haddou. (B, L, D)

#### **DAY 4: TAROUDANT**

Today we ride southwest to of Taroudant, an 11th century walled city in the Souss Valley and the Anti-Atlas mountains. This charming city once served as a capital of Morocco for a short time when the Saadian Dynasty ruled the country during the 16th century. Saadians rebuilt this city to use as a base to carry on attacks against the Portuguese who had infiltrated the Atlantic coast. We will explore the museum and gardens of the artist Claudio Bravo and the charming markets of this walled city. Dinner & overnight in Taroudant. (B, L, D)

#### **DAY 5: TAROUDANT AND OUTSKIRTS**

We use the first half of the day to leave city life and enter the beautiful surrounding countryside, with a unique visit to Agadir d'Imchuguiln, a fortified granary located about 90 minutes from Taroudant. An

agadir is an ancient storage system used by Amazigh communities. Typically built against a cliff, they were difficult to access and defended by guards in case of enemy attack. These multi-leveled stone structures have many storage units that were owned by individual families. We return to Taroudant and spend the second half of the day exploring the city. Dinner and overnight. (B, L, D)

#### **DAY 6: ESSAOUIRA**

Enjoy breakfast and then head to the Atlantic Ocean, passing through the city of Agadir, the capital of this southwestern province. Agadir is a city with a modern beach resort and has sweeping views of the ocean. We continue north taking a coastal road to Essaouira. Located on the Atlantic, this laid-back blue and white city has a long history. It was founded in 1764 to facilitate Morocco's trade between West Africa and Europe. Essaouira's fishing port is extremely active but, rather than large commercial fishermen, small, family-owned boats dominate. We might be lucky enough to see the fishermen return with their daily catch. In addition to its fresh seafood, Essaouira is also known for its wood carving and art galleries that feature a style of painting unique to this coastal city. Overnight in Essaouira. (B, D)

#### **DAY 7: ESSAOUIRA**

Today we have a leisurely day to lounge at the pool, take a walk on the beach, or explore Essaouira's charming market. You also have the option of scheduling a session at the hammam, or Moroccan sauna. We meet for sunset cocktail on a rooftop of a local restaurant overlooking the Ocean. Farewell dinner at our hotel. (B, L, D)

#### **DAY 8: MARRAKECH**

Transfer to Marrakech airport. Bon Voyage.