



Magical Morocco Tour

Itinerary dates: October 8 - 20, 2024
Trip Leader: Beth Whitman

The adventure starts in Casablanca on October 8, 2024. If you'd like to arrive early, we can arrange additional hotel nights prior to the tour.

The tour ends in Essaouira. You can return home or to your next destination via Casablanca or Marrakech (see Day 13 for more info).

Day 1 – Casablanca Tuesday, October 8, 2024 Meals: Dinner

Upon arrival at Casablanca's Mohammed V International Airport, you'll be met by a driver and head to the hotel. You'll have a chance to relax on this day prior to our welcome dinner at **Rick's Café!**

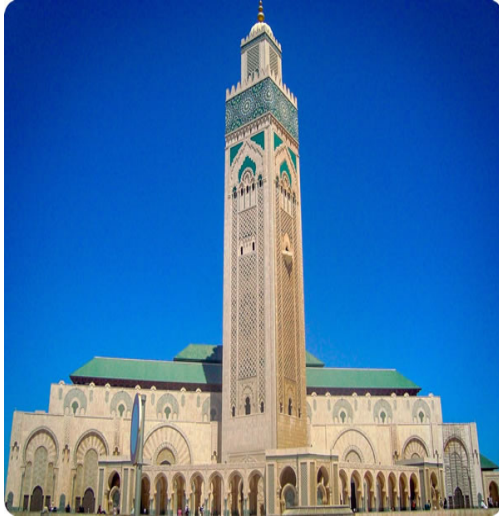
You might know Rick's from the iconic movie, Casablanca. Though this is not the original restaurant from the movie, it is **filled with details** reminiscent of the film—including the architecture and décor. The **food is great**, too!

Overnight at [Barcelo Anfa](#) or similar in Casablanca.



Day 2 – Casablanca – Chefchaouen
Wednesday, October 9, 2024
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today will be our first full day of touring. After breakfast, we'll visit the most spectacular mosque that non-Muslims are allowed to enter, the **Hassan II Mosque** on Casablanca's waterfront.



We'll spend time visiting both the exterior and interior of the mosque on a **guided tour**, with plenty of time for photos.

Afterward, we'll make the drive to **Rabat**, less than two hours away. There, we'll visit a **local female artisan** who creates beautiful leather goods including purses, bags and other accessories. We'll have lunch at a wonderful restaurant in Rabat and then drive onward to **Chefchaouen** (the Blue City), about a five-hour drive away.

We'll arrive at our hotel in time for dinner at Lina Ryad.

Overnight at [Lina Ryad](#) or similar in Chefchaouen.

Day 3 – Chefchaouen
Thursday, October 10, 2024
Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

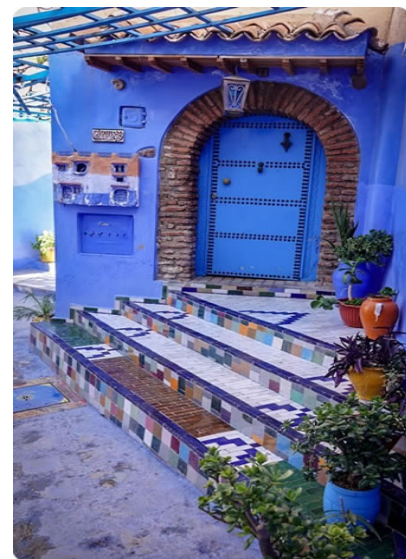
Today after breakfast, we'll take a guided tour of this beautiful city perched on the side of a hill. We'll meander through the alleys and (mostly) pedestrian streets to photograph the sea of blue walls, windows, doorways and steps.

Lunch will be on your own to give you time to **wander the streets** and to have time to **photograph this charming village**. This will also be a great chance to browse the shops tucked away down all the alleys.

In the late afternoon, we'll walk the slight uphill climb to the **Spanish Mosque** and enjoy the sunset there.

Afterward, we'll have dinner at a **fantastic local restaurant**.

Overnight at [Lina Ryad](#) or similar in Chefchaouen.



Day 4 – Chefchaouen – Fes
Friday, October 11, 2024
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



After a wonderful breakfast at our ryad, we'll start the drive to Fes. Along the way, we'll stop at **Nzala Women's Cooperative** for a **bread-making workshop**. It's here in the tiny town of N'zalat Bni Amar (pop. 2,000) that these women have also started an **embroidery cooperative** to help bring income to their families and to the village. We'll have an amazing **homemade lunch** with them and learn all about their projects.

We'll then drive to **Fes** and check in to our hotel. (Total drive time is about five hours

from Chefchaouen to Fes.)

You may have some time to rest in the late afternoon before sitting outside at the rooftop restaurant/bar to enjoy a light meal and drinks for dinner.

You might also take advantage of the hotel's spa for a **massage** or **hammam** or soak in the hot tub.

Overnight at [Hotel Sahrai](#) or similar in Fes.

Day 5 – Fes
Saturday, October 12, 2024
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

We'll start this morning with breakfast and then a tour of Fes including the **Royal Palace**, the **Jewish Quarter** and the **Qarawiyyin**—the oldest existing, continually operating, higher educational institution in the world. And, it was **started by a woman** (YES!). We'll also visit a **pottery workshop** where we'll see artisans making pottery of all sizes and styles. (Bring your credit card because you won't be able to resist the work these folks do!)



Afterward, we'll take a **tasting tour in the medina**. This will be during lunch and may be all you need (and then some!) for a lunchtime meal.

After the tasting tour, we'll continue through the medina for a tour of the **tanneries, souqs** and **artisan quarters**, building in some time to shop.

Tonight dinner is on your own. You may not be hungry after the tasting tour but, if you are, you can always grab a bite (or more) to eat at one of the hotel's restaurants or bars. And if you didn't get a chance the previous night, consider a massage, hammam or a soak in the hot tub.

Overnight at [Hotel Sahrai](#) or similar in Fes.

Day 6 – Fes – Sahara

Sunday, October 13, 2024

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today there will be a long drive to get to the **Sahara** (approximately 10 hours), so we'll want to start early.



Along the way, we'll stop for lunch and other breaks to stretch our legs, take some photos, grab a drink and snacks, and use the restroom

We'll arrive at the **edge of the Sahara** in the late afternoon and then take a (optional) camel ride to our **Luxury Camp**. Your overnight bag, along with anyone interested, will be taken by vehicle. The **camel ride** will take about an hour and we'll have the chance to stop for photos along the way!

We'll settle into our tents and then have a fabulous meal in the **dining tent**. We'll then have a chance to sit by the campfire, **stargaze** and listen to the **drumming and singing** by the employees who are all quite talented!

Overnight at a luxury camp in the Sahara.

Day 7 – Sahara – Ouarzazate

Monday, October 14, 2024

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

This morning, we'll have a leisurely breakfast before taking the **short drive** (no camels this time!) back to the main road and town where we'll meet up with our vehicle for the **drive to Ouarzazate**.

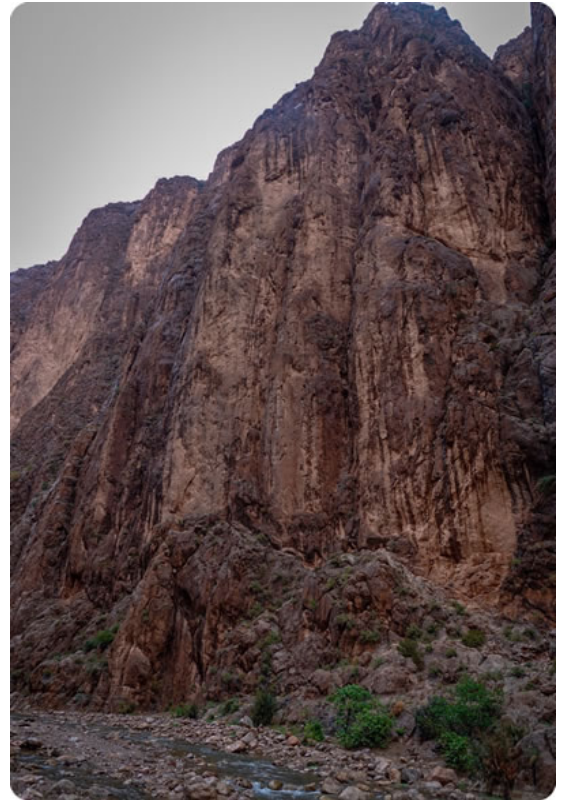
Along the way, we'll stop at **Todra Gorge**, where we'll be able to walk along the road and through the gorge and also have lunch.

This will be another longish day of driving (7.5 hours), so we'll continue on to our hotel to relax this afternoon and evening. This town is really just a **stopping-off point** for us so we can break up the long drive from the Sahara to Marrakech.

Dinner and overnight at [Ksar Ighnda](#) or similar in Ouarzazate.

Day 8 – Ouarzazate – Marrakech
Tuesday, October 15, 2024
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

After breakfast, we'll visit another UNESCO World Heritage Site, **Kasbah Ait Benhaddou**. This area consists of a group of earthen dwellings once used as a stopping point for caravans between the Sahara and Marrakech. If you like, you can make the **easy walk to the top**—via windy alleys and shops—to a **viewpoint** looking over the entire valley. From here, you can look down and perhaps recognize some of the scenery from the movie, *Gladiator*, as part of it was filmed here!



We'll continue on our drive and stop for lunch along the way before arriving in Marrakech in the late afternoon.

At night, we'll tour the **Djemaa el-fna**, Marrakech's main square, and enjoy a bit of a tasting tour as we go. It's unlikely you'll be hungry for dinner but, if you are, you can eat at one of the city's many restaurants.

Overnight at [Villa des Orangers](#) or similar in Marrakech.

Day 9 – Marrakech
Wednesday, October 16, 2024
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today, we'll take a guided tour of Marrakech's highlights including the **Koutoubia, Bahia Palace and Saadian Tombs**—all centrally located. We'll stop for lunch in the medina and then continue with a **guided tour through the medina and souqs**.

For dinner, we'll be taking part in a lively **tagine cooking class** at a nearby cooking school.



Overnight at [Villa des Orangers](#) or similar in Marrakech.

Day 10 – Marrakech
Thursday, October 17, 2024
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Today, we'll drive to the **Atlas Mountains** (about 1.5 hours away) to see the countryside, take in some **fresh air** and see how communities outside of the cities live.

Once we arrive in the village of **Imlil**, we'll take a (optional) guided hike to a **Berber village**. The hike will be about an hour. While it won't be too difficult, consider wearing hiking or walking shoes with some tread and ankle support. Alternately, you can take a vehicle (or a donkey!) up to the village.

We'll then have a **traditional lunch in a Berber home** with spectacular views of the surrounding mountains.

Afterward, we'll return to Marrakech where **dinner is on your own** to give you some flexibility and to discover food and restaurants of your choosing. You might also schedule a massage or hammam at the hotel, or just take a break from all the delicious food!

Overnight at [Villa des Orangers](#) or similar in Marrakech.

Day 11 – Marrakech – Essaouira
Friday, October 18, 2024
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch



Today after breakfast, we'll go back to the medina to visit a **cooperative that helps women with disabilities**. These very talented women create and sell their own products, from clothes to purses to table linen.

After our visit to the cooperative, we'll drive west toward **Essaouira**, the last stop on this magical trip! Along the way, we'll stop at a **local winery** for a quick tour as well as lunch and a wine tasting!

are numerous restaurants nearby where you can grab a light bite or a full meal.

Dinner is on your own tonight. There

Overnight at [Villa de l'O](#) or similar in Essaouira.

Day 12 – Essaouira
Saturday, October 19, 2024
Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Today is, sadly, our **last day of touring in Morocco**. We'll make it easy on you and include just a morning of touring the **medina, harbor** and **sqala** (the city's fort from the 18th century).

You'll then have lunch on your own and an afternoon free to **eat, shop, relax, walk** or **pack**.

This evening we'll have an **unforgettable farewell dinner** at a wonderful local restaurant.

Overnight at [Villa de l'O](#) or similar in Essaouira.

Day 13 – Essaouira – departure
Sunday, October 20, 2024
Meals: Breakfast

Today is departure day! It is recommended that you schedule your flight for later in the day or early the following day so that you don't have to leave too early on this morning (because of the late-night dinner the previous night).

There are a number of options for leaving Morocco. We can book a car/shuttle to Marrakech for you (preferred option and included if you depart the hotel for the Marrakech airport after 10 a.m.), we can book a car/shuttle to Casablanca for you, or you can fly from Essaouira to Casablanca (note that flights are limited).

In our experience, most people return to Marrakech and either fly out late that day or early evening, or they overnight in Marrakech for their early morning flights out the following day. But this will all depend on flight availability and your preferred airline.

Read more about departing Morocco [in the FAQs](#).

**** Itinerary subject to change without notice.**