



NOMADIC SKIES

SOUTHERN MOROCCO

**EXPLORE THE TRADITIONAL & MODERN LIFESTYLES
OF THE SAHARAWI AND BERBER NOMADIC PEOPLE
OF THE MOROCCAN DESERT**

DISCOVER TRAVEL WITH PURPOSE



DISCOVER REMOTE MOROCCO

Explore the High Atlas mountains
and the desert of Southern Morocco,
camel trekking with the Saharawi people
and Nomadic Berbers

TRAVEL WITH DESERT NOMADS

Exploring the Traditional and Modern Lifestyles of the Saharawi and Desert Berber People of Southern Morocco

This fascinating journey explores the dramatic contrasts of Southern Morocco, where vast landscapes meet enduring cultural traditions. Beginning in the vibrant city of Marrakesh, we cross the snow-dusted High Atlas Mountains and descend into the arid foothills that once supported ancient trade routes.


Passing through historic sites such as Ait Ben Haddou, we continue toward the desert fringes that mark the threshold of the Sahara.

Here, the experience becomes immersive. Travelling with camels and setting up temporary camps, we step into the rhythms of desert life. Alongside the Saharawi people and Berber communities, we gain insight into how traditional ways of life continue to evolve in a modern world.

Following remote off-road routes, we encounter ever-changing landscapes, from from dunes to rock desert, offering a deeper understanding of both the environment and the people who call it home.

12 days / 11 nights,
starting and finishing
in Marakesh.



A woman wearing a blue headscarf and sunglasses is sitting on a sand dune, looking out over a vast desert landscape. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds. The desert floor is covered in sand dunes, and the horizon is visible in the distance.

“The journey was extraordinary and so beautiful. The landscapes were incredible and ever-changing as we dropped from the Atlas Mountains through red and ochre hills to the incredible desert. The desert itself was a revelation and unlike anything I have been in before. Sitting on top of dunes watching the sun drop, walking with camels through, camping by fire and lantern light with a canopy of stars, and traveling along desert routes to hidden oasis. But I have to say that it is the people that made the trip so special. Being with our Berber and Saharawi guides and the people we met along the route gave me a real sense of the richness of the cultures and the warmth of the people. The blend of discovering landscapes, history culture and incredible people makes this trip so special”

RACHEL ANDERSON



HIGHLIGHTS OF YOUR JOURNEY

Travel from Marrakesh across the snow-capped High Atlas into the arid foothills that once supported ancient trade routes

- Journey through dramatic mountain scenery, where winter snow contrasts with the desert beyond
- Visit traditional villages and kasbahs that formed part of North Africa's historic trading network

Explore and stay within Ait Ben Haddou, the iconic UNESCO-listed ksar (a fortified village) and renowned filming location for productions such as Lawrence of Arabia, Game of Thrones, and Gladiator

- Discover its adobe and rammed-earth architecture while staying in a locally owned guesthouse within the 11th-century old town, helping preserve its heritage

Walk with local Berber guides from Ait Ben Haddou across striking desert landscapes to the palm-lined Asif Ounila Valley

- Enjoy a traditional lunch in the palm groves near Kasbah Tamdakhte, learning the art of tea-making over a fire while sampling local dishes and dates
- Visit the hidden cave dwellings of Tazaght, carved into the landscape

Undertake a four-day camel-supported journey led by local Saharawi guides, walking alongside camel trains and learning their vital role in desert life

- Spend four nights wild camping in beautifully prepared desert camps, with lantern light, campfires, and the option to sleep under the vast Saharan sky
- Experience authentic Sahara hospitality through shared meals, music, and conversation

Be hosted by a Berber nomad family, gaining insight into contemporary pastoral life based of herding goats and camels

Conclude the desert experience with a stay in a luxury camp in Erg Chegaga

- Climb one of Morocco's highest sand dunes to watch the sunset over the Sahara

Travel by 4WD across remote desert routes, witnessing ever-changing landscapes including dunes, rocky plains, fossil-rich hills, dried lake beds, palm oases, and sculpted sandstone cliffs



YOUR JOURNEY

YOUR SUMMARY ITINERARY



DAY	DESCRIPTION	NIGHT
Day 1	Arrive in Marrakesh	Marrakesh hotel
Day 2	Drive through the High Atlas to Ait Ben Haddou	Ait Ben Haddou Hotel
Day 3	Explore Ait Ben Haddou and hike with Berber guides. (About 12 km / 7.5 miles)	Ait Ben Haddou Hotel
Day 4	Drive to Mhamid (start of the desert), then a short hike to temporary wild camp at Ras Enkhal	Wild Camp 1
Day 5	Hike with camel train to Sidi Naji oasis	Wild Camp 2
Day 6	Hike with camel train to Erg Ezahar	Wild Camp 3
Day 7	Hike with camel train to Erg Ess mar	Wild Camp 4
Day 8	Walk and then 4WD to Nomad Family	Nomad Family Camp
Day 9	4WD exploration and to Chegega Erg	Luxury fixed camp
Day 10	4WD off road travel through the desert to Fouguid and then by car to Agdz town	Agdz Hotel
Day 11	Travel by car back to Marrakesh	Marrakesh hotel
Day 12	Potential departure day	





YOUR DETAILED ITINERARY:

DAY 1: ARRIVAL IN MARRAKESH

Marrakesh is a vibrant and bustling centre of commerce and culture. You will stay in a high-quality guest house within the Medina (walled old town), ideally located close to the maze of souks, cafés, and restaurants.

For those who wish to arrive early, additional nights can be arranged to allow time to explore the city at leisure. In the evening of the first official day, the group will gather for a welcome dinner.

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DAY 2: CROSSING THE HIGH ATLAS TO AIT BENHADDOU

Departing Marrakesh, you will travel by vehicle along a winding road that climbs through the snow-capped High Atlas. Descending the far side, the route shifts onto smaller back roads weaving through colourful chalk and salt-lined hills, dotted with villages and kasbahs (fortified dwellings).

En route, you will visit the evocative Kasbah Tamdakte—a crumbling yet imposing stronghold of the Glaoui dynasty often used as a location for films such as *Gladiator*.

By late afternoon, you arrive at Ait Benhaddou, a UNESCO-listed ksar (fortified village) rising above the often-dry Asif Oumila. Avoiding tourists, you will cross via a small private causeway with your luggage being transported by animals, and you enter through one of the original gates directly into your guest house,

Staying in the heart of the ancient old town, your visit contributes to the preservation of this remarkable guest house that has been family-owned for generations. As evening falls, the red adobe buildings glow in the changing light—best enjoyed from the guest house balcony or the hilltop above.

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DAY 3: HIKE ABOVE AIT BENHADDOU TO TAMDAKTE & THE TAZAGHT CAVES

After a relaxed morning and breakfast overlooking the ksar, local Berber guides will lead a 12 km (7.5 mile) hike through dramatic terrain. Leading from the main gate, trails wind above Ait Benhaddou, across hillsides, dry riverbeds, and rocky desert landscapes to a high pass with stunning views of patterned sandstone hills and distant snow-capped peaks of the High Atlas.

Descending to Tamdakte, you will lunch beside the palm-fringed Asif Oumila river in the gardens of the ancient Kasbah, where your guides prepare traditional food and herbal tea over open fires.

In the afternoon, you will explore the hidden Tazaght Caves—an extraordinary network of around 40 interconnected chambers built high into the rock face, once used for dwelling and storage. You return to Ait Benhaddou by vehicle.

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DAY 4: INTO THE DESERT - MHAMID & FIRST WILD CAMP

After breakfast, you will undertake an approximately five-hour (280 km) drive through the beautiful hills of the Anti-Atlas, passing villages and kasbahs along the way. You will stop for a traditional lunch, and by mid-afternoon arrive in the frontier town of Mhamid, where the paved road ends among sand and palm trees.

Here you meet your Saharawi guide, Ali Boudha, your camel team and the camels themselves! After lunch, your luggage will be loaded onto the camels, and you begin a gentle one-hour walk through palm groves to your first desert wild camp at the edge of the oud - an area of green vegetation.

As night falls, lanterns and a fire illuminate the camp. During dinner in a beautiful communal tent, you can hear more from Ali about desert life, and afterwards relax under a vast desert sky. You can choose to sleep in a tent or take a mat and sleep beneath the stunning desert stars.

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DAY 5: TREK TO SIDI NAJI & EXPLORE DESERT LIFE

Breaking camp in the morning, you walk approximately four hours with the camel caravan to Sidi Naji, an oasis sanctuary established by a revered holy man. Arriving around lunchtime, the camp is set and the afternoon is yours to explore or simply absorb the stillness of the desert.

By now we have left all other tourists behind, and the day offers time to engage with your guides and learn about Sahrawi and Berber desert life. As evening approaches, the shifting colours of the landscape create an unforgettable atmosphere in the low light of the desert.

DAY 6: TREK TO ERG EZAHAR

A further four-hour trek leads you to the elegant dunes of Erg Ezahar. These wind-shaped sand formations create sweeping ridges and intricate textures, especially beautiful in the early morning and evening light.

Your camp is sheltered among the dunes, offering time for exploration, reflection, and shared moments around the fire.

DAY 7: TREK TO ERG ESMAR

A shorter walk (approximately two hours) brings you to your final wild camp at Erg Esmar. This quieter day allows time to slow down, explore the dunes, or assist with gathering wood for the evening campfire.

DAY 8: NOMAD LIFE EXPERIENCE

After breaking camp, a final short walk with the camels leads to your 4WD vehicles. You will then travel deeper into the desert to visit modern Berber nomadic communities and oasis North of Mhamid.

Staying alongside a nomadic family, you will gain insight into their daily life, traditions, and resilience.

Modern Berber Nomads are pastoralists who make a livelihood rearing goats and camels. They live in traditional and modern tents and structures comprising of wild twisting desert wood and patchwork fabric. From outside, a Berber Nomad homestead feels as if it could have been constructed by a wild Robinson Crusoe with their rough structure and rag-tag of fabrics, but inside the lined tents they are surprisingly comfortable.

In the evening, you will share a meal and stories with your hosts as livestock return to the settlement.



"A fantastic trek and so much more beside."

NICOLAS SINCLAIR



DAY 9: OASIS VISIT & ERG CHEGAGA

After breakfast, you visit a palm oasis and learn from a local how traditional sand bread is prepared. It will be served with a beautiful vegetable filling for a light lunch and a traditional herbal tea. Continuing onward, you travel towards the vast dunes of Erg Chegaga, watching for wildlife such as the Addax Antelope sometimes known as white or screw-horn antelope that are native to the Sahara.

Arriving at a luxury desert camp, you can enjoy hot showers and comfort after your days in the wild. In the evening, there is the option to ascend Morocco's highest dune—by camel and on foot—for truly spectacular views. As the sun drops your views of the surrounding dunes and distant sandstone hills are truly breathtaking!

Descending the dune at twilight you will your way back to our camp for an evening meal, bonfire and clean sheets and the luxury of a soft bed.

DAY 10: CROSSING THE DESERT TO AGDZ

Leaving the dunes, you will travel on the informal highways, traversing varied terrain by 4WD—sculptured rocks, mountains and cliffs, sand plains, fossil-strewn rocks, dry lakes, and oasis landscapes.

Reaching the tarmac road at the town of Fom Zgud for lunch. You will then change vehicles for the two-hour drive North to the town of Agdz for an overnight stay in a charming locally owned guest house.

DAY 11: RETURN TO MARRAKESH

A scenic drive of approximately 4.5–5 hours takes you back to Marrakesh. That evening, the group gathers for a final farewell meal—marking the end of a journey rich in contrast, culture, and landscape.

DAY 12: DEPARTURE

Departure from Marrakesh.

JOURNEY ESSENTIALS

12 DAYS (11 NIGHTS) STARTING AND FINISHING IN MARRAKESH

TRIP NUMBERS:

8 to 10 people (the trip will be confirmed when we have 8 participants)

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LEADERSHIP:

Led by an international guide from Nomadic Skies for the whole journey, Berber guides in and around Ait Benhaddou and our Saharawi guides in the desert

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ACCOMMODATION: 11 NIGHTS

6 nights in hotels: 2 nights in Marrakesh, 2 nights in Ait Benhaddou, 1 night in a luxury camp at Erg Chegega, and 1 night in a hotel in Agdz on our return journey.

5 nights wild camping: very comfortable camping, 4 nights in wild locations with our local team and 1 night beside a modern Nomad family who will host us.

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SUPPORTED CAMP TREKKING

During camping our luggage will be transported by Camel or 4WD and camps will be set up for us by our team.

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DIFFICULTY/ LEVEL OF FITNESS:

This journey involves some moderate trekking of 2 to 4 hours a day. A good walking fitness and willingness to camp is required for this trip

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FOOD:

The food in Morocco is great with an abundance of fruit and vegetables. We can accommodate special dietary requirements.

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TIME OF YEAR AND TEMPERATURES:

The trips will be organised in the Northern Hemisphere winter (Late November to early March). Expect warm days (up to mid-20s Celsius) but cold nights down to perhaps 8 degrees Celsius).

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EQUIPMENT:

All camping equipment is provided (including tents and sleeping mats). Participants are required to take their own warm sleeping bag. A kit checklist will be provided on booking the journey.

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“The trip was amazing, a masterpiece of organisation, you have a lot to congratulate yourself about.”

JEANETTE ARNOTT

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