

high atlas summit trek, morocco



This challenge offers a tough, yet incredibly rewarding trek combining unforgettable mountain scenery with the splendour and colour of Morocco and its traditional people, the Berbers.

Morocco is a country full of mysticism and mythology, a diverse and spectacular land. In the midst of it all lies the High Atlas mountain range, home to Jebel Toubkal one of the tallest peaks in North Africa, standing at 4,167m.

Reaching the summit of this awesome mountain signifies the peak of your long weekend trek. You will navigate your way, climbing and scrambling over huge, obstructive boulders and loose rock of Jebel Toubkal.

Trekking will be for 5 to 8 hours each day and will be strenuous yet incredibly rewarding as you trek through peaks scattered with remote Berber villages. A good degree of fitness will be required for this trip, however there is no technical climbing involved. The weather is unpredictable and can make the going very difficult.

The challenge ends in the vibrant city of Marrakech, where the southern tribesmen and Berber villagers bring their goods to the souks, providing plenty of excitement.

Day 1: Depart UK to Marrakech

You will fly with Royal Air Maroc from London to Marrakech, our Charity Challenge representative will be at the airport to help you to check in and answer any questions. The flight to Marrakech arrives later the same day where you will be greeted by your local guide & transferred to your comfortable hotel, for a relaxing dinner and overnight stay.

Day 2: Marrakech to the Atlas Mountains

You will need to wake early for a French buffet breakfast & tour briefing before setting off to the Atlas village of Imlil. The 2hr drive by minibus to the starting point for your challenge takes you alongside the colourful fields and tree-lined avenues surrounding Marrakech until the road gradually ascends into the foothills of the High Atlas range.

Eventually you will reach the village of Imlil nestling at 2,000m at the heart of the Atlas Mountains. Here you will meet the guides and muleteers and prepare for your trek ahead. After a glass of mint tea, you begin your trek firstly to the village of Aremd, 45 mins ahead. You will follow the riverbed then head upwards to the next village of Sidi Chamarouch. Its famous 'white rock mosque' can be seen from a distance, and is a place of pilgrimage for the sick as it is said that the spirits here heal illness. You will pause here for lunch and have time to meet some of the Berber inhabitants. From here you continue your uphill trek to Neltner Refuge (3,200m), your destination for the next 2 nights, where you can enjoy the beautiful views of the surrounding valleys. After a hearty meal an early night is recommended in anticipation for your summit attempt tomorrow.



Day 3: Neltner Refuge to Mount Toubkal

After a very early breakfast, you will depart with mountain guides and head for the peak of Toubkal. You can pause many times to enjoy the stunning views that surround you, and to catch your breath! Although the ascent of Toubkal is non-technical, it can be quite tough going in parts, especially across the scree. You will pause at the col for a snack with your end destination in sight. With a final push, you will be rewarded knowing that you have reached the summit of North Africa's highest peak. You can take a moment to take in the beauty before you and marvel at your achievements before taking a well-earned snack break!! From the summit you descend and return to Neltner Refuge. For those who wish, a shower may be available at the refuge to ease those aching limbs!

Day 4: Neltner Refuge to Marrakech

After breakfast, you will set off for the easy descent to Sidi Chamarouch (2,310m), where you will stop en route for a snack and upon reaching the village, a chance for tea & shopping. You arrive in Aremd approximately 2hrs later, and then make your last trek to Imlil only 30mins away. You then say goodbye to all your muleteers, re-join the vehicle and continue to Marrakech, where you will have a meal. The remainder of the day is free for shopping, sightseeing or relaxing! Tonight you will stay in a local hotel and savour the memories of your great climb.



Day 5: Tour of Marrakech

In the morning you will have a guided tour of the exciting city of Marrakech. In the New Quarter you will see Marrakech's most famous landmark, the stunning 70 metre high Koutoubia Minaret followed by the Saadian Tombs alongside the Kasbah Mosque. Sixty-six of the Saadians are buried in these tombs which date back to the late 1500's. The tour ends in the bustling Djemma El Fna square and souqs. After lunch in the medina you will have the afternoon free to explore the subtropical botanical gardens of Jardin Majorelle, which are a 20 minute walk from your hotel. Celebration meal and overnight in hotel in Marrakech.

Day 6: Arrive Home

You will be transferred to the airport for a flight back to the UK, arriving back at London in the early evening.

N.B. The itinerary is there as a guide and may change due to unusual weather patterns, wildlife movements, the strength of the group and so on. We will do our very best to keep to the set itinerary however we cannot be held responsible for any last minute changes that might occur. In all such circumstances, your expedition leader will have the final say.

Should you suffer from vertigo, it is worth considering that on most mountain treks there will be occasional exposure to sheer drops. Therefore you should discuss the particular itinerary of your choice with a member of our team.

Optional Essaouira beach extension

Day 6: Transfer to Essaouira

You will transfer by bus after breakfast to Essaouira on the Atlantic coast approximately 100miles away. Essaouira is a beautiful, unique and relaxed town. It has sunshine and bright blue skies nearly all year round. Your hotel is 100m from a kilometre long beach. You will have the afternoon to visit the Medina or relax on the beach. Overnight in the hotel.

Day 7: Essaouira

Essaouira was for centuries a key trading centre between Timbuktu and Europe, overseeing flows of manufactured goods streaming south in exchange for African salt, spices, sugar, feathers and gold. In recent years the exchanges have been more cultural in nature. In the 1950's Orson Welles famously shot "Othello" on Essaouira's streets and in Skala, while in the 1960s and 70s Essaouira and the pristine beaches just south of the town provided a haven and inspiration for musicians such as Jimmy Hendrix and Cat Stevens. Today you have the opportunity to relax at the pool, visit the Medina or go to the beach. Overnight in the hotel.



Day 8: Essaouira to Marrakech

Free morning in Essaouira and an afternoon transfer to Marrakech where you check into Hotel Moroccan House. Last night to check out the vibrant Moroccan night life.

Day 9: Marrakech to London

Free morning. Transfer back to Marrakech for an afternoon flight back to the UK

Cost: £210 per person sharing (based on 2 or more people in twin accommodation)
Single Supp: £40 (NB: there must be a minimum of 2 persons for this extension to run)

included

- 3 nights accommodation on B&B basis
- Transfers to Essaouira and to airport

excluded

- Lunch and dinner each day
- Personal expenses (ie: gifts, extra soft drinks or alcohol, laundry etc)

If you would like to book the above extension or have any extension enquiries please call the Charity Challenge office on 020 8557 0000 or email flights@charitychallenge.com All bookings are subject to availability and group booking limitations. We therefore ask you to consider your travel plans as soon as possible and if you want to extend your challenge, please put in your request immediately.