



TRIP NOTES

BELIEVE ACHIEVE INSPIRE

**COPPAFEEL! SAHARA DESERT TREK
MOROCCO**

Sat 20 Mar - Sat 27 Mar 2021





In aid of CoppaFeel!

20 Mar - 27 Mar 2021



8 DAYS | MOROCCO | CHALLENGING

Rediscover true adventure in the awe-inspiring Sahara Desert.

This five day trek covers 100km passing through Morocco's forbidding landscape punctuated by peaks, gorges, dunes and oases. At night, sleep under Africa's star strewn skies and enjoy traditional Berber hospitality.

This challenge goes beyond the Jebel Saghro region, starting on the Maider El Kbir plateau, before ascending Jebel El Mrakib, and admiring the stunning views. Walking through palm gorges, the route joins the dry Rhris River and heads towards an oasis of tamarisk trees. The final days are spent trekking along the Tikertouachene River, before celebrating a successful end to the challenge in Ouarzazate.

This trek is challenging, unforgiving, and life-changing.

Please ensure before applying to this trek that you have read the trip notes in full. This challenge will test you physically as you trek for 5 days, 7-9 hours a day, but also mentally and emotionally. By reading the trips notes, you will be fully informed and should be able to enjoy and appreciate every aspect of the trip.

- Experience the land, the people and the wildlife of the Sahara Desert
- Cover 100km on this five-day trek
- Pass through valleys, gorges, plateaus, sand dunes and oases
- Raise life-changing funds for CoppaFeel!

YOUR CHALLENGE DAY BY DAY

DAY 1 Sat 20 Mar

-

International departure from London

The time has come to meet your team at the airport for the long-awaited departure to Morocco. Upon arrival into Marrakech, you will have a 5 hour transfer to Ouarzazate where you will stay overnight.

Accommodation: Hotel

DAY 2 Sun 21 Mar

-

Ouarzazate to Lahfira camp (approx. 5 hrs drive; then 3 hrs trekking)

Today you will take a mini bus transfer from Ouarzazate into the Sahara Desert (approx. 4-5 hours), enjoying the panoramic views of Saghro, a volcanic massif. You'll then start the trek at Ait Atta valley on a plateau, crossing small dunes and black mountains for around 3-4 hours trekking. Tonight you'll experience your first desert camp under the stars! (B,L,D)

Accommodation: Camping

DAY 3 Mon 22 Mar

-

Lahfira camp, to Boulaiedam dunes (approx. 8-9 hrs)

A traditional Berber breakfast will provide the much-needed fuel for a tough day of trekking ahead! Prepare for a true desert experience as you trek from Lahfira, across Chwirif plateau, to the dunes of Bouleiadam where we will camp overnight. (B,L,D)

Accommodation: Camping

DAY 4 Tue 23 Mar

-

Boulaiedam to Mharech Gorge (approx. 7-8 hrs)

Be prepared for another long and challenging day. We will walk through the plateau to Mharech Gorge, near small palm groves, where we will stay overnight. (B,L,D)

Accommodation: Camping

DAY 5 Wed 24 Mar

-

Mharech Gorge to Tafraout Camp (approx. 8 hrs)

Today we trek from Mharech and head to Tafraout, crossing Gris river and the vast dunes of Remilia plateau. After lunch we climb a black mountain, covered by sand then trek down to Tafraout Camp where we stay for the next two nights. (B,L,D)

Accommodation: Camping

DAY 6 Thu 25 Mar

-

Trafraout Camp to Bouziane Dunes (approx. 8-9 hrs)

Our final day of trekking follows the Bouziane dunes river, before heading back to Trafraout camp to celebrate the group's achievements! (B,L,D)

Accommodation: Camping

DAY 7 Fri 26 Mar

-

Return to Ouarzazate (approx. 7-8 hrs drive including stop for lunch)

Wave goodbye to the desert and rest those weary legs on the transfer back to Ouarzazate. The vehicle passes along the Tafilalet Road via Tineghir and the Kasbah trail, for a final night in Morocco. (B,L,D)

Accommodation: Hotel

DAY 8 Sat 27 Mar

-

Drive to Marrakech (5 hrs); fly to UK

Expect to feel elated and emotional as you drive to Marrakech and head for the airport for your international flight back to London, arriving later the same day. (B)

NB

B = Breakfast; L = Lunch; D = Dinner

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.

FUNDRAISING TARGET

Registration fee of **£275.00** when you book.

Raise a minimum of **£2,750.00** for CoppaFeel!.

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

BEFORE YOU GO

- Support materials (itinerary, kit list, visa information, travel insurance, health notes, travel tips, responsible travel policy and guidance)
- Fundraising advice
- Fitness training notes
- 16 and 20 week trek training schedule
- Risk assessment and emergency management planning
- Warm up exercise routines
- Access to your own password protected account including support materials and training schedules
- Public liability insurance

ON YOUR CHALLENGE

- International flights to and from the UK (including all known UK air taxes, and fuel surcharges, at the time of costing)
- Full back-up support including first-aid qualified staff and first-aid supplies
- Entrance fees to national parks or other places of interest visited on the itinerary
- Three meals a day (unless otherwise stated in the itinerary)
- Accommodation during the challenge (usually in twin share)
- UK-based 24-hour emergency support line
- Internal transfers (unless otherwise stated in the itinerary)
- An English speaking first aid trained challenge leader and full local support team
- Drinking water on challenge days
- Equipment as per the challenge activity
- A Charity Challenge T-Shirt

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED?

BEFORE YOU GO

- Visa (if required)
- Travel to and from the UK airport of departure
- Vaccinations (please check Trip Notes for requirements)
- Travel insurance

ON YOUR CHALLENGE

- Tips
- Departure Tax (if applicable)

THE DETAILS

FUNDRAISING DEADLINES

You will need to send your sponsorship money to the charity as you raise it. At least 80% of the minimum sponsorship required must be sent to the charity 10 weeks before departure (by 12/09/2020), and the remaining 20% within 4 weeks of completing the challenge (by 26/12/2020). If you have raised the necessary funds, the charity will then pay the balance of your challenge costs. The charity benefits by keeping the remaining sponsorship money and every pound over and above that you raise.

TYPICAL GROUP SIZE

The typical group size is 80 - 101 participants

OPTIONAL EXTRAS

- Business class upgrades*
- Single room supplements*
- Extensions at end of trip*

(*subject to availability)

Level of Difficulty

The Sahara Desert Trek is graded as challenging. During your Sahara Desert Trek you will be:

- Trekking between 17-20km per day.
- Trekking a total distance of 100 kms over 5 days.
- Suffering exhausting temperatures during the day and freezing at night.
- Punishing your feet over hard, rocky terrain and hot sand.
- Camping each night with very basic facilities.

Typical day

You will be woken early each morning at approx. 6:30am, and given a basic but hearty breakfast. After breakfast you will pack up with the help of all the tour leaders and begin the first trek of the day for about 4 hours. A long and early lunch will be taken to avoid trekking during the hottest part of the day. We set off to walk again for another 4 hours (approx.) and then we establish camp late afternoon for dinner and a well-deserved rest.

Safety

Charity Challenge considers the safety of all of its participants and staff to be a top priority, and as such we have set up one of the most advanced and thorough safety management systems in the industry. In a nutshell, Our Challenge Safe brand formalises our ethos when it comes to safety, and brings together the procedures and risk management strategies that we use to audit all aspects of our challenges, from vehicles to accommodation to the activity itself. Your welfare is paramount!

In terms of your Sahara Desert Challenge, there are a couple of important points that you should be aware of:

- Trekking in the heat of Morocco is a major challenge in itself so make sure you are well hydrated throughout..
- Blisters are very common during this challenge due to the heat of the terrain and the rocks underfoot. Compeed blister plasters and zinc oxide tape are essential.
- There are a lot of flies around during the trekking days. Our local team will make sure that all the food and utensils will be covered and away from them.

Responsible Tourism

At Charity Challenge we are committed to sustainable and responsible tourism, and work closely with bodies such as the International Porter Protection Group and Climate Care to ensure that our challenges benefit the local environments and communities in which they take place. We ensure that all rubbish is disposed of responsibly, and following local guidelines on cultural and environmental protection and respect, we aim to limit our impact on the natural environment. In addition to taking these practical steps to ensure that our challenges are sustainable, we also make a contribution each year to a number of local community projects, so as to give something back directly to the communities that we visit. Since 2000 we have donated almost £200,000 to such projects, supporting a range of initiatives, including schooling for children in Africa, shelter for street children in Brazil, and Orang-utan conservation in Indonesia. We recommend that any gifts brought over for children are given to the UK challenge leader and distributed where needed by them and our local Ground Agent. If you wish to do more, you should consider buying drinks, postcards and souvenirs from the local vendors. For many, it is their sole source of income. For more information, please visit our [Responsible Tourism](#) pages, where you will be able to view a list of the projects that we currently support.

Flights

You will be flying from London to Marrakech and returning to London. The flight will take approx. 4 hrs. Your flight tickets will be e-mailed to you before departure. Exact times will be confirmed closer to departure.

If you choose to book your own flights you must confirm with the Charity Challenge office before paying otherwise you may be liable for your included group flights (please contact flights@charitychallenge.com for further assistance).

Visa

For UK passport holders a full passport is required but no visa. You must have at least six months to run on your passport from the end of the challenge. Ensure your passport is stamped on arrival. Non UK passport holders should consult their nearest Moroccan embassy regarding visa requirements.

Insurance

Your safety when travelling with Charity Challenges is our main concern which is why it is a booking condition that you have a suitable travel insurance policy that will cover you for the adventurous nature of your challenge. We have chosen to partner with specialist travel insurance providers Campbell Irvine, who offer cover for an extensive number of adventurous activities. Cover is available directly from Campbell Irvine for most European residents and includes cover for emergency medical and repatriation and for your cancellation or curtailment of the challenge. Full details including costs may be found by clicking [here](#).

For more general travel insurance questions, please refer to our main [FAQs page](#).

Vaccinations & Medicines

For up to date vaccination information please visit Travel Health Pro at: https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/country/154/morocco#Vaccine_recommendations

Charity Challenge team are not medical experts and we would encourage you to visit your GP or travel nurse to discuss vaccination requirements. Your GP may ask questions about the specific locations that you are visiting, and as such it may be useful to take a copy of your itinerary with you.

Medication

- Carry medicines (including those bought over the counter) in their correctly labelled original packaging, as issued by the pharmacist. These should be carried in your hand luggage.
- Consider packing a spare supply of medication in the hold luggage in case of loss of hand luggage
- A letter from the prescriber detailing the medicines with the generic names for the medications can be helpful for border control checks, and in case medicines have to be replaced or medical help is required
- Carry a note from the prescribing physician on letterhead stationery for controlled substances and injection medications
- Take out an appropriate level of travel health insurance including repatriation and specific cover for any pre-

existing illnesses

N.B. Some medications are banned abroad so please check. You can find further information at <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/factsheet/43/medicines-abroad>

Climate & Terrain

Climate

After chilly nights, the early mornings will immediately warm up as soon as the sun rises and the days will be warm and hot depending on the season. As the desert temperatures are unbearably hot from June to September we do not offer trips at this time. From October to May, there can be a difference of 20°C in the desert between day and night, with highs of approximately 25-35°C and lows of 2-7°C.

Terrain

The terrain is incredibly varied, with some days being hard, rocky and flat, with others taking on rolling sand dunes, which can be very hot and very hard going.

Training

A good level of fitness is definitely required. Anyone who leads a fairly active and moderately healthy lifestyle should be able to complete the challenge, as long as they train regularly over a period of at least three months leading up to it. Don't forget that the temperature and climate will be different from the UK, and that you will be exercising constantly for a number of days.

In your Charity Challenge account you will find more comprehensive Fitness Training Notes. You can also look to join one of our [training weekends](#).

Challenge Training

If you would like to get a feel for our challenges ahead of your departure, why not consider booking on a 1 or 2 day UK Challenge?

We have a variety of challenges, covering all levels of difficulty, taking place in stunning National Parks across the UK that are led by highly qualified and experienced expedition and mountain leaders. These challenges will give you the perfect opportunity to monitor fitness levels, test out your kit, meet people in the great outdoors, share fundraising stories and gain valuable advice and support for the challenge ahead. We encourage participants to make use of our highly knowledgeable leaders and ask them any questions you may have about clothing and equipment, expedition health and wellbeing, trekking skills, walking techniques and teamwork!

We are offering all participants **50% off** the registration fee when you book on one of the UK challenges listed via the link below. Just use the code **TRAINING** when booking. T&C's – you must have an active booking on a challenge to avail of this offer. Discount cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. Find out more [here](#)

Luggage allowance & valuables

As no formal clothes are needed whilst trekking, luggage should be kept to the absolute minimum – details of what to pack are provided in your [Kit List](#). Your rucksack / soft bag (suitcases are not appropriate) must not exceed 20kgs in weight. On your outward journey, please wear your hiking boots, and carry a spare change of clothing in your hand luggage. Please ensure you take your sleeping bag and basic trekking & toiletry items on the plane as hand luggage. During the challenge, your bags will be transported by vehicle. You will not have to carry your main bags.

While we will do everything to provide adequate safety for the group and security for your possessions, the general rule is that if you don't need it, don't bring it. This includes jewellery, necklaces, rings and even watches. Your passport and money should be kept on you at all times.

Leadership

There will be an English-speaking challenge leader who will be responsible for the logistics and co-ordination of your challenge. There will also be numerous local support guides and staff to assist them. The challenge leader will be ultimately responsible for the running of the itinerary and safety of the group. The itinerary is there as a guide and may change for a variety of reasons – unusual weather patterns, the strength of the group, and so on. While we will do our very best to keep to the set itinerary, we cannot be held responsible for any last minute changes that may occur. In all such circumstances, your expedition leader will have the final say.

Group Size

Your group will be made up of approximately 80-100 other trekkers. You will be split into 4 different teams to trek with daily, each group with a dedicated team captain.

We will camp together every evening, so there will be plenty of time to get to know the other teams!

Clothing & equipment

Good quality, durable kit could mean the difference between a fantastic challenge experience and an uncomfortable one. For this challenge, waterproof, well-worn in boots will be indispensable, particularly coupled with some really good quality walking socks. You don't need a clean pair every day, but enough to make sure you have dry socks each morning. The benefits of a comfortable day sack cannot be underestimated, so make sure that you train with this. Other essentials are high quality gore-tex waterproof and windproof jackets and trousers, and technical/wicking t-shirts rather than cotton shirts. Walking poles are also recommended, as a preventative as well as for anyone with any pre-existing leg injuries or niggles. A full kit list for this challenge can be found [here](#) and once you book you will have access to kit discounts with our partners The Outdoor Shop, Outdoorhire and Cotswold Outdoor.

Accommodation & Toilets

Accommodation

You will sleep in shared Bedouin tents (with 4-6 people from your trekking teams), which will be supplied to you. At the very beginning and the end of the trek, you will be staying in a hotel in Ouarzazate in order to relax and recover. If you are travelling with a friend or partner who you wish to share with, please let Charity Challenge know in advance.

Toilets

There will be a toilet tent and water supplied for washing (and possibly showering). Please keep in mind that water is life in the desert & should therefore be preserved.

Food & Drink

Each morning you will be provided with a very filling breakfast of hot sweet Moroccan coffee, hot chocolate and bread and cheeses. Lunch will be a packed lunch or buffet, while dinner will vary between Western and Moroccan fare. Food will always be ample and will provide heaps of energy.

Whilst our team in Morocco will do their best to meet any special requests, gluten free food is quite limited. We recommend you take a supply of gluten free bread, oats, and pasta that can be used for daily meals as well as gluten free snack bars during the day.

Please let Charity Challenge know prior to departure if you have any specific dietary requirements or allergies.

Money

Currency: The national currency is the Dirham, which is divided into 100 centimes. For up to date currency exchange, go to www.xe.com.

The Dirham is officially designated as a closed currency meaning it can only be traded within Morocco; however, Dirhams are being sold and bought in travel agencies and at major airports in several countries (notably the UK).

Cash: There are ATMs available at the airport and near to the hotel in Ouarzazate. This is the best source of obtaining currency when you are in Morocco.

Credit cards: Widely accepted in the larger urban centres, although a 5% charge is often charged.

Spending money: You will not need a large amount of money during this trip, as most expenses are included. Keep in mind that, other than at the start and end of the trip, you will be trekking in the desert and away from any foreign exchanges or banks. We therefore recommend that you carry a small amount of cash in small denominations. A credit card should be carried in case of emergencies. Please note that you can only obtain Dirham's in Morocco, you must not export them after the challenge. There is an ATM about 200m from the hotel in Ouarzazate where local currency can be obtained and the guide can take you there prior to your departure for the desert.

Tips: Tipping is discretionary but expected. However, we recommend GBPE40 per person (in Moroccan Dirhams) at the end of the event, which you should give to the tour leader who will then divide it among all of the support team. In addition, a small tip of around MAD100 per driver per transfer (shared between passengers) is sometimes suggested by the lead guide.

Phone & WiFi

You will have a good phone and WiFi reception while at Ouarzazate. On trekking days, there will be some phone signal at some points.

Emergencies

We endeavour to provide a trained expedition medic to follow you on this trek with a full emergency medical kit if required. If you are unable to continue, you will be transferred to seek additional medical attention at a local hospital if needed. Please be understanding of the fact that facilities in this part of the world will not compare to those that you are used to at home.



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It was a phenomenal experience, something which was way out of my comfort zone but I'm so glad I took on the adventure. The team was super supportive, and made the whole challenge a lot more enjoyable.

Aatteeqa Karim



“

The unforgettable vastness of The Sahara - the vivid red sunsets that covered miles on the western horizon and not forgetting the fun we had racing down the sand dunes!

Ali Cork



“

The best part of the day was the end; the camp fire, eating under the stars with good company. As clichéd as it sounds, an experience of a lifetime!

Faisal Khan

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Any more questions?

Contact us:

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