

Winter Toubkal Trek Information and itinerary



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Introduction

For some, there can potentially be nothing more satisfying than trekking on (or through!) crisp, virgin hard packed snow on a cold winter's morning.

With nice warm mountain Refuge's and Gite's to sleep in at night, this trek can be very exhilarating.

Unlike the summer version, this trek heads straight for the summit of Toubkal at the beginning of the trek. This to allow more time to summit should you be prevented from doing so due to the weather.

On arrival in Marrakech, you will be met by your Guide at the airport and transferred to your Riad within the Medina for your overnight stay.

If it is your first visit to Marrakesh, you will enjoy the sights, sounds and smells of both the Medina and the famous Djemaa el Fna square.

After breakfast the following day, you will drive to Imlil (90 mins), which is the start point of your trek.

Your first overnight stop is the Nelter Refuge, which sits at 3200m and about 5 hrs away. It is an imposing building and sits at the entrance to the ascent of Toubkal. You may already have encountered snow.

It is, on average a 4hr ascent to the summit, longer if conditions are not favourable. Early starts are used to make best use of the optimal weather conditions, primarily the wind. The weather is never guaranteed so you will need to be well prepared for all eventualities; the conditions can change rapidly.

Although the descent will be much faster, there is a fair amount of scree on the upper part of this route so trekking poles are a good investment to assist your footing and balance. This is even more important with the snow down; it can also be so much more fun sliding down!

You will need to be carrying crampons and an ice axe and they will be used if and when necessary to aid your safety. Some may reasonably argue that it

is easier than in the summer as the snow and ice will take out all of the nooks and crannies of the under-foot conditions; your walking path will be smooth!

Once you have summited, you will descend back towards Imlil and then proceed over to Tachedirt before continueing on to the Oukaimden, Morocco's ski resort.

Should the weather delay your summit attempt, the final 2 days will be adjusted to ensure you get back to Marrakesh on schedule.

When you do return to Marrakesh, you should have enough time to see more of the city. The Medina is always an exciting place to be (day or night) and if you have yet to try one, perhaps experience a Hammam.

Marrakesh is a walkable city but equally, the taxi's are not expensive.

Details
Duration: 8 days UK - UK
Min/Max pers: 2/12
Max altitude: 4167m/13,672ft
Accommodation on trek: Camping/Refuges
Dates: See website
Cost: £550
Our trips formally begin and end in Marrakesh

When to go
In general terms: Nov - early Mar inclusive

Travel and Trek Limited is a truly independent company specializing in adventure trekking and touring. We pride ourselves on the personal touch and whether you are travelling solo or in a big group, we can adjust itineraries to suit you.

Important information

Costs

Costs are based on 2 people sharing and are per person (singles see below)

Fully Bonded

Your money is safe. We are protected by Insurance Passenger Protection (IPP), which protects YOU against OUR insolvency.



Trek Dossier

On booking, you will receive a comprehensive Trek Dossier, which includes:

- Clothing and equipment list
- Medical notes (including vaccination requirements)
- What to do on arrival in Marrakesh
- Food, money and more...

Airport arrivals

We pick you up on arrival and transfer you back on departure.

Passports

Passports should be valid for a minimum period of 6 months on the date on entry into Morocco.

Tourist Visa

A tourist visa is not required for UK Nationals.

Itineraries

Day 1 of your itinerary is deemed to be your departure day from the UK.

Hotel Accommodation

We use typical Moroccan Riads (hotels), which are of 3* standard with very friendly staff to attend to your every need. Our costs are based on a B&B basis, twin share. All rooms are en suite. If you wish to use a higher grade hotel, then please ask us for details.

Accommodation on Trek

You will be accommodated in Refuges and Gites.

Food on Trek

All food is included and prepared by a very skilled Camp Chef. Please inform us if you have any dietary requirements such as vegetarian.

Singles

Travel and Trek does not believe in penalising single travellers unnecessarily. If you are a single traveller and do not request sole occupancy of a room, you will be accommodated with another member of the group of the same sex.

If there is an odd number travelling and you happen to be the odd one out then you will be allocated sole occupancy. You may be charged a small additional cost for this, typically £20 per hotel night (not for nights in tents!).

If you do wish to request sole occupancy throughout all or part of the trip, then call us for advise.

Extended Stays

You are free to extend your stay in Morocco with extra days before or after the trek. We can assist you with accommodation if you wish or you are free to make your own arrangements.

Our Guides

Our personable Moroccan Guides are all qualified, licenced, English speaking Guides with a wealth of experience and knowledge.

Fitness

Walking in the Moroccan mountains does require a certain amount of fitness, primarily endurance. Bear in mind that activities in winter usually involves carrying more clothing that is bulkier and heavier.

A reasonable level of fitness based on the ability to walk at a comfortable pace for 6 - 7 hrs a day (with rest stops), for several consecutive days carrying a day sack weighing approx 7 - 8 kg is all that is required.

High Altitude

High altitude also brings its challenges for some. This trek sleeps no higher than 3200m although it does summit at 4167m, which is well into altitude sickness territory. Due to the base altitude being relatively low, any discomfort you may experience should be short lived.

Clothing and equipment

A comprehensive list is provided on booking.

Medical/Vaccinations

You are advised to consult your GP if you are in any doubt about your physical condition to undertake your chosen trek. Whilst we do provide information on vaccinations, you should also seek professional advice on what vaccinations you require for Morocco and other locations should you have an extended trip. For planning purposes you should need: Hep A, Typhoid, Tetanus, Polio and Meningitis.

Local Payments

Travel and Trek does not charge any local payments.

Travel Insurance

It is absolutely vital that you have adequate travel insurance. See the section in this document.

Expert Help

If you have any queries in the planning stage of your trip, call our experts on 01476 562763 or 07725 943108

How To Book

- Complete the booking form (downloadable from the website) and return it with a deposit of £150 pp.
- Booking forms can be completed electronically and returned as an attachment to an e-mail.
- Details of payment options are on the booking form.
- Balance payments are due 10 weeks prior to departure.

Trip inclusions and exclusions

Inclusions

- Return international airport transfers
- Hotel accommodation in Marrakesh, total 2 nights on a twin share, B&B basis
- Refuge and Gite accommodation throughout the trek (twin share)
- All food on trek, including plates, cups, utensils
- All ground transport required to and from the trek
- Services of an English speaking, qualified Moroccan Guide throughout the trek
- Porterage
- Comprehensive Trip Dossier and other associated documentation

Exclusions

- International flights
- Safety equipment (crampons, ice axes, etc.)
- Personal spending
- Staff gratuities, advice will be given if required
- Personal travel insurance

Marrakesh



No trip to Morocco would be complete without visiting Marrakech.

A city to whet your appetite; one that conjures up a picture of an ancient walled city within which traders ply their goods and find entertainment – it is still true today.

All Travel and Trek trips begin here.

You will be accommodated in a local, traditional Riad a few minutes away from a square full of entertainment - the Djemaa el Fna. This square comes alive after dusk with the bright burning lamps of the food stalls, the story tellers, the musicians all entertaining the tourists and locals alike.

The Medina is also on your doorstep; it is a myriad of lanes that lead to many Souks (markets) selling local crafts such as carpets, leather goods, metalwork, wooden crafts and specialist foods including spices

Itinerary

1 Arrive Marrakesh

Our trips formally begin and end in Marrakesh.

You will be met at the airport and transferred to your traditional Moroccan Riad (hotel) inside the Medina.

Once you have settled in, you will want to experience the famous Djemaa el Fna square. Your first experience of the square is one of a senses explosion; entertainers performing, a myriad of food stalls all lit up with the smells to accompany them, and the general melee of activity.

Enjoy your first traditional Moroccan meal.

2 Depart for Imlil, begin trekking to Nelter Refuge (3200m)

After breakfast, you will depart and drive into the High Atlas mountains to the town of Imlil. This is just a 90 min journey.

Once you have met your trek crew, you will be on your way.

It will take between 5 and 6 hrs to reach the Refuge; a steady climb throughout the day.

3 Toubkal (Summit Day) - Return to the Refuge

A pre-dawn start for the ascent of Toubkal (4167m).

The terrain varies and can be steep in places. Any ropes that are required will be carried by your Guide.

There are some great views from the infamous triangle that marks the summit.

The descent is by the same route.

Overnight at the Refuge.

4 Trek to Aroumd (1900m)

In the morning, it is a 4 hr descent to the village of Aroumd, which is about 30 mins short of where the trek begun.

You will overnight here in a Gite.

5 Aroumd - Tachedirt (2300m)

An easy climb out of Aroumd and through the village of Tamatert before crossing the Tizi n'Tamatert (2280m)

With most of the climbing out of the way, it is straight into Tachedirt.

About 4 hrs.

6 Tachedirt - Oukaimden

A final day's trek across the Tizi n'ou Addi Pass to Morocco's only ski resort - Oukaimden.

An interesting place to stay especially if the snow is down!

You will stay here the night.

7 Transfer back to Marrakesh

In the morning, you will be transferred back to Marrakesh to enjoy the city.

The afternoon is free.

8 Departure

You will be transferred back to the airport for your flight to UK at the appropriate time.

Travel Insurance

It is absolutely essential that you have adequate travel insurance. Be truthful to your insurance company about precisely what activities you are undertaking and to what altitude (max). Failure to do that may invalidate your policy.

To fly a patient back to the UK under any form of medical supervision (ie on a stretcher) is estimated to cost well into £000's.

In terms of activities for insurance purposes, you are trekking. There is no climbing involved although as you are carrying crampons and an ice axe, some insurance companies may deem it as such.

This Foreign & Commonwealth Office link is a useful reference and recommended read:
<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travelling-and-living-overseas/staying-safe/travel-insurance/>

So What Happens If I Have An Accident?

If you have an accident that requires professional medical help, the first priority is to get you to the nearest medical station (provided that you can be moved). Your Guide and his staff will do this as quickly as possible.

The Guide will have a mobile phone and will know where to obtain a signal and who to call. Vehicular access may be possible otherwise it may be on a mule!

All in cases, the fastest and most appropriate method will be used; common sense must always prevail.

Please be aware that mobile coverage does not reach all parts of these mountainous areas and therefore delays may occur in contacting the relevant people.

Any serious injury that requires a helicopter will require the immediate involvement of your travel insurance company. They will be contacted and informed of the situation if you are unable to do so yourself. The insurance company should do the rest.

A Little Preparation May Save Your Life

Some insurance companies provide a very handy credit card sized card with all of their contact details on it. If your company does not, then try using this very handy website Ucardit.co.uk. Travel and Trek clients get a 10% discount.

For about £5 (including P&P), you get a virtually indestructible credit card sized card with all of your important information on it. You can either use one of three pre-designed Travel and Trek cards or design your own. An example is shown below. You can literally put whatever you want on it from flight details, mobile numbers, addresses, insurance details, etc...

To try it, go to the Home page, click 'Travel'. Then scroll down, bottom left, click on the 'Travel and Trek' banner and either use a branded template or design your own. These are example cards from the website (not full size).

