

TREKKING IN MOROCCO

Morocco is an under-rated trekking destination with probably the most diverse variety of trekking routes within easy reach of the UK (under 4hrs flying time to Marrakech).

Summer routes, winter routes and the vast sands of the Sahara desert can all be found within Morocco's borders allowing trekking all year round.

All of our trips use Marrakech as your point of entry into Morocco, which is served by numerous scheduled and low cost airlines (see box below) making this a very affordable destination and in these times of the global financial downturn, the Moroccan Dirham exchange rate has been unaltered against the Sterling.

This document provides information on all of the treks that Travel and Trek operates in addition to offering tailor made trips for your self formed groups of 2 or more (dates can be adjusted to suit you):

- Toubkal Trek (8 day, 5 day and winter versions)
- Dades Gorge
- Dades - Mgoun Traverse
- Sahara Trek

Flights To Marrakech

Scheduled airlines:

Royal Air Maroc (direct)
Iberia (via Madrid)

Low Cost Airlines (all direct)

From Gatwick and Manchester
Easyjet and Thomsonfly

From Luton:
Ryanair

From Bristol:
Ryanair

Don't discount flying to other European countries (ie France) and connecting to Marrakech from there.

Excellent research websites:

www.low-cost-airline-guide.com
<http://www.skyscanner.net/>
<http://www.kayak.co.uk/flights>

At 4165m, **Mount Toubkal** is the highest point in North Africa and lies conveniently close to Marrakech (a 90 min drive). The one week Toubkal Circuit is probably the most popular trek in Morocco and with good reason. Notwithstanding the ascent to the summit, the scenery through the Berber villages and general countryside is wonderful; colours changing as you cross the Passes from lush green to stark brown and red rock.

Toubkal can be summited in 3 trekking days for those who are keen to 'bag' this peak and have no time to complete a week in the area.

For those that like crisp winter conditions or would like to experience them, why not try Toubkal during the winter season? Winter qualified Guides will ensure that you are safe and use your crampons where required. You will use the mountain Refuges and Gites as opposed to tents.

Just across to the east, there is **Mgoun** (4068m), the second highest peak in North Africa and an equally good trekking area. There are many options here:

The Dades Valley. The warm and fertile Dades valley lies to the south of



Mgoun and faces the Sahara desert. You can trek here throughout the year.

The Dades - Mgoun Traverse. Starting in the Dades valley, you can trek north across Mgoun ending up on the northern side of the Atlas mountains. An excellent point to point trek.

Finally, the **Sahara Desert.** A very different environment to the mountains, this trek takes you deep into the sands of the largest desert in the world. Although far less taxing than a mountain walk, there is still some distance to cover across a variety of sand based underfoot conditions including some pretty big dunes! The feeling of isolation, the lack of ambient light and sound at night is quite something.

All of these treks are camping treks so all of your kit will be transported on mules (or porters if required during winter); all you need to carry is your daysack containing items such as your camera, water, waterproofs, etc... Should you decide to book, you will be provided with **a comprehensive set of trekking notes and a kit list** to help prepare you for the trek.

Summary of Inclusion and Exclusions

(Applicable to all treks)

Included:

All hotel accommodation on a twin share basis in Marrakech and Ouarzazate (as appropriate; number of nights in accordance with your itinerary)

Return airport transfers

Return road transportation to/from trek

The services of an English-speaking qualified Moroccan Guide, full time throughout the trek.

Porterage on trek

All accommodation for the trek, twin share (tents, more likely Refuges or Gites for winter trips)

Ropes for trips under winter conditions

All meals on trek, breakfasts in hotels

Mineral water for Sahara treks (trekking phase only)

Not included:

International flights UK – Morocco - UK

Local trek staff gratuities

Personal safety equipment such as crampons and ice axes (treks under winter conditions)

International departure taxes should they be levied (currently they form part of the air ticket)

Marrakech

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.



CONTACT DETAILS

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Mt Toubkal Treks - all three of these treks summit Mt Toubkal

There are 3 trips on offer: the 5 and 8 day treks in the summer months and the 8-day winter version.

8-Day Classic Toubkal Trek

On arrival in Marrakesh, you will be transferred to your traditional and comfortable Riad right in the heart of the old city and the famous Medina. After breakfast the following day, you will meet your English speaking Moroccan Guide and be driven the 90 mins to Imlil, which is your trek start point. After meeting your trek crew, you will begin the trek, which will take you through some very varied countryside dominated by Berber villages (mountain people). Many of the villages are literally dug into the hillsides and you can be sure of a warm welcome wherever you go.

The route goes over the Col de Tamatart (2227m) and continues to climb, camping at Assaro (2300m). A longer day and big climb on day 2; up and over the Tizi n'lkemt (3550m) before descending and camping at 2900m.

An easier 3rd day on trek, down through Berber villages, passing the cold, green lake of Lac d'Infni. You will camp here (2263m). Day 4 gets back into the climb, up and over the 3600m Tizi n'Ouannoms before reaching the Nelter Refuge (3200m); a large remote building which marks the entrance to the ascent of Toubkal. You will stay here the night in preparation for your ascent the following day.

It is, on average a 4hr ascent to the summit and you will therefore need an early start to ensure that you reach the summit during optimal weather conditions. The weather is never guaranteed so you will need to be well prepared for all eventualities; the conditions can change rapidly in this micro-climate. Although the descent will be much faster, there is a fair amount of scree on this route so trekking poles are a good investment to assist your footing and balance.

The height of the summit (4167m) is more than enough to catch those more susceptible to altitude sickness. A delayed headache might occur but it should subside as quickly as it appeared once you descend. You may have to rest a while if it persists.

On your descent, you will stop at the Refuge for a rest before moving on a little further down. On the final day, you will trek down to the start point, say goodbye to your trek crew and then return to Marrakesh by vehicle.

You should have enough time in Marrakesh on your return to get out into the Medina and/or perhaps experience a Hammam.



The Summit of Toubkal

8-Day Toubkal – Daily Itinerary

Cost: From £440 per person, based on twin share.

Dates: These treks depart weekly on a Saturday between June and September annually.

You can request other departure days if you wish, min group size is 2.

Days	Event	Remarks
1	Arrive Marrakech	You will be met at the airport by a Travel and Trek representative and taken to your hotel. What you are able to do for the rest of this day will largely depend on what time you arrive in Marrakech.
2	Depart for Imlil Begin the trek	Meet your Guide, 90 min drive in exclusive transport. On this first day, you will trek for about 4 hrs to the overnight stop.
3 - 7	Trek	The route: Imlil - Assaro - Tizi t'Ourai (foot of) - Lac d'Infni - Nelter Refuge - Sidi Chamharouch - Imlil (return to Marrakesh) On arrival at Imlil, you will be transported back to Marrakech to enjoy this ancient city once more.
8	Depart for UK	If you have an afternoon or evening flight, the hotel will gladly store your luggage until you depart. You will be picked up at the hotel and transported to the airport at an agreed time.

5-Day Toubkal

Designed for those perhaps with little time, this trek takes you up to the base of Toubkal (Nelter Refuge), summits the next day and then descends back to Imlil on the third trekking day. Please note that you are ascending to 4167m fairly quickly and although significant, any difficulties that may arise due to altitude can quickly be countered by descending.

5-Day Toubkal – Daily Itinerary

Cost: From £340 per person, based on twin share

Dates: These treks depart weekly on a Wednesday between June and September annually.

You can request other departure days if you wish, min group size is 2.

Days	Event	Remarks
1	Arrive Marrakech	You will be met at the airport by a Travel and Trek representative and taken to your hotel. What you are able to do for the rest of this day will largely depend on what time you arrive in Marrakech.
2 - 4	Depart for Imlil Trek to summit Return to Marrakesh	Meet by your Guide, 90 min drive in exclusive transport. Day 1, trek to Nelter Refuge (3200m), about 4 hrs Day 2, ascend and descend from the summit, overnight Nelter Day 3, descend to Imlil, return to Marrakesh by vehicle
5	Depart for UK	Transferred back to the airport for your flight to UK. The hotel will gladly store your luggage until you depart if you have late departure.

Winter Toubkal

This is a very different proposition. The snow is likely to be down and if you do get good conditions on summit day, there is nothing more satisfying than making your way up virgin, crisp, hard packed snow to the summit. 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 underfoot conditions; your walking path will be smooth! It will be cold of course, potentially very cold so you must ensure that you have adequate clothing and equipment. You must have or hire crampons and ice axes for safety. Your Guide will be winter qualified. The summit of Toubkal is attempted at the beginning of the weeks trekking rather than the end (as it is in the summer) to offset any delays due to weather. This is something very different and exhilarating; try it, you might like it!

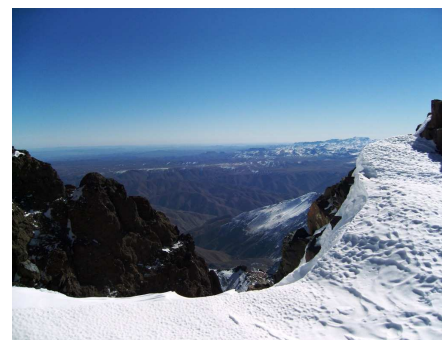
Winter Toubkal – Daily Itinerary

Cost: From £460 per person, based on twin share

Dates: These treks depart weekly on a Saturday between early November and early March annually.

You can request other departure days if you wish, min group size is 2.

Be aware that the itinerary below can change dependant on the weather to give you the best chance of summiting. The ultimate authority is your Guide.



Days	Event	Remarks
1	Arrive Marrakech	You will be met at the airport by a Travel and Trek representative and taken to your hotel. What you are able to do for the rest of this day will largely depend on what time you arrive in Marrakech.
2 - 7	Depart for Imlil Trek Return to Marrakesh	Meet by your Guide , 90 min drive in exclusive transport. Trek Day 1, trek to Nelter Refuge (3200m), about 4 hrs Day 2, ascend and descend from the summit, overnight Nelter Day 3, descend to Aroumd (~1800m) Day 4, climb to Tachedirt Day 5, Over the pass and down to the ski resort of Oukaimden Day 6, return to Marrakesh by vehicle to enjoy this ancient city once more.
8	Depart for UK	Transferred back to the airport for your flight to UK. The hotel will gladly store your luggage until you depart if you have late departure.

The Sahara Desert

And now for something completely different.....

This 10 day itinerary includes some time in the ancient city of Marrakesh, a wonderful drive to and from the desert and a trek of some quality in a very different and unique environment.

The drive itself is an eye opening experience with a mix of twisting mountain roads over the High Atlas and then continues on through the Draa valley; miles and miles of stunning desert scenery. Eventually you reach the Sahara desert where the road just stops!

In between is your overnight stop – Ouarzazate. This small town is the gateway to the desert and home to many famous films (most notably 'The Gladiator'). Your hotel is a typically Moroccan Oasis. Enjoy a tagine and a glass of wine before you reach the miles of glorious sand that await your arrival.

Despite the expanse of sand, the desert for real doesn't start until just a few kilometres before your final road destination at M'hamid. It is here that you will meet your support team, complete with camels and handlers and your trek begins.

**The feeling of isolation and the
lack of noise is just wonderful**

Once you begin trekking, it will not be long before you wonder how your Guide is navigating; it all looks so similar with no landmarks to speak of! Until that is, you meet Eric. Eric is a 300m high sand dune and you will sit on top of it (eventually!) at least once.

This 5 day trek takes you deep into the desert, experiencing what life there is (and there is more than you think) and the tranquillity that it can bring. With no ambient light and the desert to absorb all sound, the evenings and nights are just so dark and quiet. It is quite eerie even just to sit on a small dune overlooking the campsite and just look and listen. The stars are so bright and it is very easy to spot the orbiting satellites as they speed across the skies above you.

This is a camping trek so all of your kit will be transported on camels; all you need to carry is your daysack containing items such as your camera, water, sunscreen, etc... The terrain is not all soft sand; some hard baked surfaces (mainly river beds) and even rocks are never too far away.

The food supplied and prepared for you is superb even without considering where you are. It is very well presented and served to you in true Moroccan style; in a Bedouin tent sat on the floor cushions. They even bake bread in the sand to keep the supplies up!

Should you decide to book, you will be provided with **a comprehensive set of trekking notes and a kit list** to help prepare you for the trek.



Ever made bread in the sand?

Sahara Desert Trek – Daily Itinerary

Cost: From £460 per person on twin share basis

Dates: These treks depart weekly on a Friday and return to UK Sundays between December and March annually.

Other departure dates can be requested, min group size is 2.

Days	Event	Remarks
1	Arrive Marrakech	You will be met at the airport by a Travel and Trek representative and taken to your hotel. What you are able to do for the rest of this day will largely depend on what time you arrive in Marrakech.
2	Depart for Ouarzazate Overnight Ouarzazate	There is enough time for a leisurely breakfast and a little time to walk around the centre of Marrakech before the departure. Total journey time 5 – 6 hrs, lunch en route
3	Ouarzazate – M’Hamid Begin the trek	Depart after breakfast for this 5 hr journey to M’Hamid. There will be a stop en route to pick up some supplies. Lunch is just beyond M’Hamid where you will meet the support team. Trek for up to 2 hrs to your first night’s camp.
4 - 7	Trek	Trek deep into the desert with mixed and varied terrain showing all that this unique environment has to offer. There are no official place names for the overnight stops; just go with the flow!
8	Final trek day– pick up by 4 x 4 Transported to Ouarzazate Overnight Ouarzazate	It is possible that you may be picked up by 4 x 4 at the camp-site. There may also be an opportunity to ride the camels for a short period. There is a 15km 4x4 drive through the desert back to M’Hamid where you will be transferred to another form of transport for the drive to Ouarzazate. You will likely stop in a town en route to Ouarzazate for a leisurely lunch.
9	Ouarzazate – Marrakech Overnight Marrakech	Return journey across the High Atlas, lunch en route Enjoy your last night in this ancient city in or around the square.
10	Depart for UK	Transferred back to the airport for your flight to UK. The hotel will gladly store your luggage until you depart if you have late departure.

Dades - Mgoun Traverse

This great 9 day trip packs a lot into the programme and pound for pound is one of the best value for money treks in the Travel and Trek portfolio.

On arrival in Marrakech, you will be met by a Travel and Trek representative before enjoying a wonderfully scenic drive over the High Atlas. This drive alone will show you the beauty of this country before you descend to Ouarzazate, nicknamed 'Gateway to the Desert', for your overnight hotel stop.

This small town is home to many famous films (most notably 'The Gladiator'). Your hotel is a typically Moroccan Oasis where you can enjoy a traditional tagine and a glass of wine before you head off to the start of your trek the following day.

From Ouarzazate, you will drive into the beautiful Dades area to begin your one way trek from south to north across the Mgoun Massif (summitting the 2nd highest point in North Africa). The first days trekking is short.

The route follows the valley of Oued l'mgoun (via the Gorge) and slow ascends with the summit of Mgoun in the far distance. This area is still quite lush due to its southern facing slopes and you should see grazing camels with their nomadic owners up here for the summer months. You will pass through several valleys, still slowly ascending. The final ascent day to Mgoun begins early; at 4068m, Mgoun is the 2nd highest mountain in North Africa. From the summit, you will have glorious 360 deg views (weather permitting), including Toubkal itself. Although less well known than Toubkal, the views and the trek itself are arguably better than its more popular counterpart.

Due to a quirk of geology, you can also find fossils on the summit ridge, so keep your eyes open!

On completion of the trek, you will be transferred back to Marrakech where you are free to enjoy the sights, sounds and smells of both the Medina and the famous Djemaa el Fna square. Your traditional Riad will be just 2 mins walk away from the action.



Dades - Mgoun Traverse - Daily Itinerary

Cost: From £460 per person on twin share basis

Dates: These treks depart weekly on a Saturday and return to UK Sundays between May and September annually.

Other departure dates can be requested, min group size is 2.

Days	Event	Remarks
1	Arrive Marrakech	You will be met at the airport by a Travel and Trek representative and transferred by road to Ouarzazate (5hrs). Overnight in a typical and well appointed Maroc hotel. Brief on the following day.
2	Depart for Ouarzazate Begin trek	Depart Ouarzazate and drive through the beautiful Dades valley for your first nights camp - Agrolzga. It is here that you will meet your support crew. Overnight camp
3 - 7	Trekking	Route: Agrolzga - Imi Nirkt - Tighrimt - Oulilmt (2890m) - Tarkeddit (2930m, this is the Base Camp of Mgoun) - Ait Bougamez. Overnight at Ait Bougamez.
8	Short trek and transfer back to Marrakech	A short walk in the morning before your transfer back to Marrakech. There is no better place to finish your trip than here. The famous Square, which comes alive after dark and the Medina both await you. Dine in one of the many Moroccan restaurants or treat yourself to a meal in the French quarter.
9	Transfer to airport for flight to UK	Transferred back to the airport for your flight to UK. The hotel will gladly store your luggage until you depart if you have late departure.

Dades Trek

This more leisurely trek is available throughout the year due to its southern facing location. It meanders its way through the gentle hills of the southern Mgoun massif.

This trek may cross many water courses (including rivers) so a pair of sandals (or similar) suitable for getting wet will be extremely useful.

On arrival in Marrakech, you will be met by a Travel and Trek representative before enjoying a wonderfully scenic drive over the High Atlas. This drive alone will show you the beauty of this country before you descend to Ouarzazate, nicknamed 'Gateway to the Desert', for your overnight hotel stop.



This small town is home to many famous films (most notably 'The Gladiator'). Your hotel is a typically Moroccan Oasis where you can enjoy a traditional tagine and a glass of wine before you head off to the start of your trek the following day.

From Ouarzazate, you will have a short drive into the beautiful Dades area to begin your trek. Walking for no more than 5 - 6 hrs per day with nice long lunches, you will see plenty of local Berber village life, at times taking tea with them in their houses.

The terrain is quite rugged with distinctive coloured rock. You will meander along paths around cliffs and following many water courses, many used for the much needed irrigation. Some of the gorges are quite spectacular. Being on the sunnier south side of the mountains, it is also quite green in places.

On the final day, you will complete a short walk before transferring back over the mountains to Marrakech for a well deserved evening out to sample the delights of this unique city.

You will be transferred back to the airport for the flight home.

Dades Trek - Daily Itinerary

Cost: From £465 per person on twin share basis

Dates: These treks depart weekly on a Saturday and return to UK Saturdays all year round.

Other departure dates can be requested, min group size is 2.

Days	Event	Remarks
1	Arrive Marrakech	You will be met at the airport by a Travel and Trek representative and transferred by road to Ouarzazate (5hrs). Overnight in a typical and well appointed Maroc hotel. Brief on the following day.
2	Depart for Ouarzazate	Depart Ouarzazate and drive through the beautiful Dades valley to your trek start point. You then have a leisurely 2.30hrs trek across the desert of Timassinie to camp at Timtda. Overnight camp
3 - 6	Trekking	Route: El Keel M'Gouna - Timtda - Col Imdane (foot of) - 'El Hot - Timstiguite - Ait Gmat - Ifar
7	Short trek and transfer back to Marrakech	A short walk in the morning before your transfer back to Marrakech. There is no better place to finish your trip than here. The famous Square, which comes alive after dark and the Medina both await you. Dine in one of the many Moroccan restaurants or treat yourself to a meal in the French quarter.
8	Transfer to airport for flight to UK	Transferred back to the airport for your flight to UK. The hotel will gladly store your luggage until you depart if you have late departure.