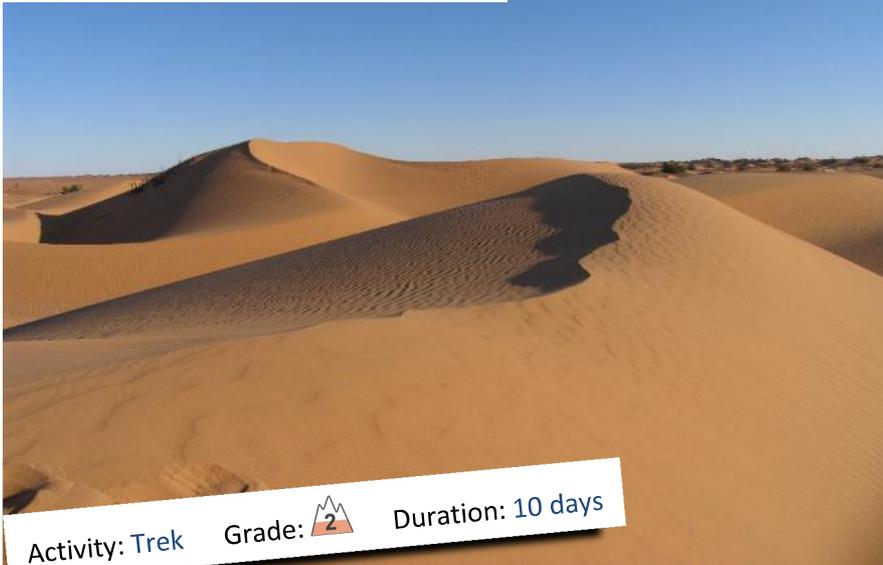


Morocco



Sahara Trek



Activity: **Trek** Grade: Duration: **10 days**

Trek a challenging 100km through the awe-inspiring Sahara Desert!

From flat desert floor scattered with ancient fossils, to perfect wind-blown sand-dunes, and salt-pans creating strange mirages, the trekking is diverse and demanding. A vast, unforgiving landscape, the desert is a truly beautiful place to discover, while the incredible star-strewn night skies are unforgettable.

Accompanied by Berber guides and a small caravan of camels, our remote night-camps with camp-fires and Berber singing are often a real highlight of the trip! A free day exploring the sights and souks of Marrakech provides a real contrast and a great way to celebrate!



Dates & Prices

2015

27 Feb – 8 Mar 30 Oct – 8 Nov

Fundraising Option

Registration Fee £199
PLUS Fundraising Target £2300

Self Payment Option

Registration Fee £199
PLUS Trip Cost £1150
Includes Fuel Supplement

2016

26 Feb – 6 Mar 28 Oct – 6 Nov

Fundraising Option

Registration Fee £199
PLUS Fundraising Target £2400

Self Payment Option

Registration Fee £199
PLUS Trip Cost £1200
Includes Fuel Supplement

Detailed Itinerary

Day 1: Fly London to Ouarzazate

Depart London bound for Ouarzazate via Casablanca; transfer to hotel. Ouarzazate (pronounced 'Wazzazat') lies just below the High Atlas Mountains and is on the edge of the desert. Night hotel.

Day 2: Ouarzazate – M'Hamid – Dune Camp

After an early breakfast, we have a detailed briefing and then leave for the five-hour drive to M'Hamid, our starting point. Our drive takes us over the low mountains of the Jebel Sarhro and down the 'Valley of a Thousand Kasbahs' into the desert. We have a brief stop in Zagora to buy a shmla (native headscarf) and have our last cold drink before the heat of the desert. On arrival at our start point, we have lunch while the cameleers load up the camels. Our late afternoon trek takes us firstly across flat open plain and then into Erg Lihoudi, our first taste of small dunes. We make camp at the edge of the dunes for the night. Night camp.

Trek approx 3 hours

Day 3: Dune Camp – Well Camp

The full colour of the landscape erupts as the sun rises. Hot coffee and a good breakfast set us up for a good day's trek. We break camp, load the camels and head



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Trekking Information

Our treks are graded from 1 (Moderate) to 5 (Extreme). This trek is Grade 2. We trek over stony, firm desert floor (hamada) and loose, soft, and in places steep, sand dunes. We are travelling through remote desert and through the occasional small oasis.

You will trek approximately 100km on this trip overall. Because of the varied terrain and lack of accurate maps, it's impossible to give accurate daily distances; moreover these can vary year to year because of the natural movement of the dunes. It's also much more useful when training to think about the hours you need to walk for!

Vehicles take the group to the start of the trek and pick us up at the end. All luggage, food, water and camping equipment is carried by camels accompanied by cameleers, and some land-rovers.

Weather

Days in the desert are usually clear and sunny, and it can get very hot. Nights are colder and the temperature drops noticeably as soon as the sun sets. There may even be frost on the tents some mornings. It can rain in this part of the desert, though it is not common.

November – March 8 – 30°C

Detailed Itinerary (cont)

off across Erg Lihoudi. We walk across the small dunes and around the larger ones. Amongst the dunes are small tamarisk trees that manage to flourish in this harsh environment. Continuing through the small dunes, we can see the Jebel Bani Mountains to the north and dunes to the south. After a good four-hour trek we stop for lunch in the shade of large tree. During the afternoon we walk out of the dunes and onto a flat rocky plateau where we make camp near L'oued L'austruche close to a well. Night camp.

Trek approx 6 hours

Day 4: Well Camp – Bluff Camp

Leaving camp behind us, we walk across flat, open country with the camels not far behind. The surface is firm and stony with tough grass poking through in places. After around 4km we come to the edge of some low dunes. Skirting to the north of the dunes, we walk on both soft sand and stony plateau where you can find the occasional fossilised sea creature. The hottest part of the day is spent having lunch in the shade, time to relax and refill the water bottles. In the afternoon we head across lots of beautifully-formed low dunes to an area called Bougarnne, where there are several large dunes and clumps of palm trees. The walking is tough and tiring. Sand fills our boots and our feet sink into the small dunes. After an hour we see the large dunes in the distance and head for them. Distance is hard to gauge in the desert and it takes a further two hours to reach the dunes and our campsite perched on a bluff overlooking the dunes. Night camp.

Trek approx 7 hours

Day 5: Bluff Camp – Chgaga Camp

After a good breakfast we head off down a gully onto the desert floor. We spend the morning crossing hamada, or stony flat desert. We have several short climbs and cross dry and dusty plains. There is very little vegetation around but we manage to find the only tree for miles to have lunch under. When the hottest part of the day has passed we set off across more hamada until we cross a ridge and have a spectacular view of Chgaga, the largest sand dune of the region. We camp below the dunes for the night. Night camp.

Trek approx 7 hours

FITNESS WARNING: DESIGNED TO BE CHALLENGING!

This trek is designed to be challenging for those of good health and fitness, and is achievable for most people provided they train well in advance. We will supply you with a thorough training guide when you have registered. Training for the challenge is all part of the preparation and requires commitment! Without it, you will find the trek less enjoyable – and we want you to have the time of your life!



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What's Included

The tour cost includes flights and transfers, accommodation, all camping equipment (except sleeping bag and sleeping mat), all meals except three as specified in the itinerary, entrance to any sites visited as part of the itinerary. Any airline fuel supplement is also included in the tour cost.

Experienced Discover Adventure leaders and doctor (depending on final group size) are also included, along with a local support crew of guides, cooks, cameleers and drivers.

It does not include personal travel insurance, meals as specified, or tip for local crew. It also does not include any optional sites you may wish to visit. There is an optional city tour of Marrakech on your free day (not included.)

We strongly recommend you carry a credit card in case of personal emergency.

Passport & Vaccinations

A ten-year passport is essential and must be valid for at least 6 months after entry. There is no visa requirement for UK citizens. You must have had a Tetanus injection in the last ten years, and we highly recommend protection against Polio, Hepatitis A and Typhoid.

Detailed Itinerary (cont)

Day 6: Chgaga Camp – Chgaga – Jebel Bani Camp

The day starts with the spectacular dune climb and incredible views from the top of Chgaga – a 100m height gain. To the south are rolling dunes as far as you can see; to the north, hamada and the Jebel Bani. After taking in the view, we have fun descending the dune along one of the narrow ridges. Regrouping at the bottom and meeting up with the camels, we refill the water bottles and walk through low dunes. We spend the whole day in amongst the dunes, passing the occasional nomadic encampment and small clump of palm trees. In the late afternoon we finally reappear from the dunes and head out across flat desert and acacia trees to our campsite near a well and just below the Jebel Bani. Night camp.

Trek approx 7 hours

Day 7: Jebel Bani Camp – Saltpan Camp

Today is our day of mirages and flat salt pans. We firstly walk across several kilometres of hamada with dunes lying to the south. Gradually the acacia trees vanish and we are left in a spectacularly flat open saltpan. Once again distances are impossible to gauge and the views shimmer in the heat. There is no cover for lunch so we put one of the tents up to give us shade. We are getting close to our hundredth kilometre now; the last few are completed crossing this remote and desolate place. Our last night is spent on the saltpan with its (usually) incredible sunset. Night camp.

Trek approx 7 hours

Accommodation & Food

While trekking we camp in large tents for 6-8 people, though at least one night out under the stars is highly recommended! On trek, water is scarce and reserved for drinking – for obvious reasons. However there should be a couple of opportunities to wash when we camp near wells. Wet-wipes are recommended for other days! We use good hotels with en suite facilities at the start and end of the trip; rooms are twin-share.

All meals are included other than 3 as detailed. The food is great, very varied, and there is plenty of it. Please let us know any dietary requirements well in advance.





Crew & Trip Support

Your trip will be led by experienced Discover Adventure leaders. Our leaders are selected for their experience in harsh wilderness environments, knowledge of travel in remote areas, friendliness and approachability, sense of humour and ability to safely and effectively deal with any situation that arises. They are also trained in expedition first-aid. You are in very safe hands with a Discover Adventure leader. Depending on group size, an expedition doctor or medic will also accompany the group.

Our local support crew is made up of a friendly team of local guides and drivers. Local guides are a great source of knowledge about local customs and lifestyles. The Discover Adventure crew work closely with the local crew to ensure your trip runs smoothly and safely.

Detailed Itinerary (cont)

Day 8: Saltpan Camp – Foug Zguid – Marrakech

The day starts early for our sunrise walk towards the edge of the desert – an unforgettable experience. We load into landrovers and drive the last bumpy section across the desert piste to the tarmac road. The exciting journey is great fun if a little bouncy! On arriving at the tarmac road, we transfer to our bus and cross the stunning High Atlas Mountains to Marrakech, where we will celebrate in style! Night hotel.

(Dinner not included)

Trek approx 2 hours; drive approx 5 hours

Day 9: Free Day Marrakech

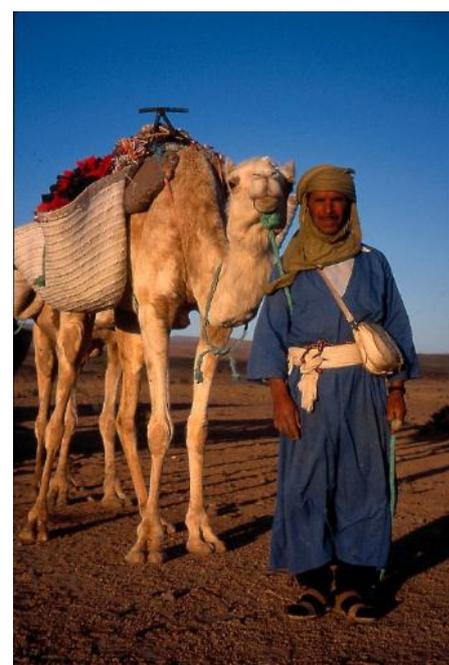
We have the day free to explore the amazing sights of the Jma El Fnaa, the main square, and shop for souvenirs in the bustling souks for which Marrakech is renowned.

(Lunch and dinner not included)

Day 10: Early transfer to airport; depart for London

Discover Adventure reserves the right to change the route or itinerary for safety reasons should local conditions dictate.

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