

# 15 DAYS IMPERIAL CITIES AND SAHARA DESERT

15 DAYS / 14 NIGHTS



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## Day 1: Casablanca – Rabat

14 days Morocco Imperial Cities via Merzouga desert from Casablanca, We will pick you up at the Casablanca airport and begin our trip with a tour of the city. We will visit the mosque Hassan II, the biggest religious building in the country (with a 210m high minaret). It is one of the few mosques open for non-Muslims, so here you will have the option to visit inside and see the amazing work of more than 10.000 handicraftsmen. From here we will drive you to the capital of the country Rabat to see the beautiful yard of the royal palace and Challah, Roman ruins, and remains of 14th century Merinid tombs.



## Day 2: Rabat – Chefchaouen

In the morning we will see the unfinished mosque of Hassan and the mausoleum of Mohammed V, as well as OudayaKasbah, a fortress used by the Almoravides to prepare troops before they launched their attacks on Spain.

After this we will drive to Chefchaouen, passing through the picturesque forested area of SidiKasim. We will get you situated in your hotel and you are free to explore the town in the evening. Dinner is provided.

## Day 3: Visit Chefchaouen

On our third day of 14 days Morocco Imperial Cities and Sahara desert, we will visit Chefchaouen as it is a lovely town located in between two mountains. The name is Berber, and in English means “horns”. It was recently added to the world’s heritage sites by UNESCO in 2010. Today will be spent exploring the town and surrounding areas.

Chefchaouen is sometimes referred to as “The Blue Town” because all of the buildings in the town are painted a vibrant blue with white. Built on a hillside with small winding streets, this combination with the color blue makes for some amazing photography opportunities. The local people are welcoming and dress in clothing styles special to this area. Very close to town is a spring, water mill, and some hiking that we can explore if you are interested!

In the evening we will take you to the main square to enjoy dinner at a local spot and watch the evening life.





#### Day 4: Chefchaouen – Volubilis – Meknes

Departure to Meknes in the morning. We will drive throughout green hills and cereal fields. Along the way, we will stop in Volubilis, the best-preserved Roman ruins in Morocco. A guided tour inside the roman site will take you back to the myths of Rome through the stunning mosaic, streets, columns, and baths.

Nearby there is an old village of Moulay Driss Zerhounne where the founder of the first Arab Islamic dynasty in Morocco is buried. If time allows, we will break for mint tea in this village before we head to Meknes. Here you will check into your hotel and then enjoy dinner in the evening

#### Day 5: Meknes – Fez

This morning we are going to explore the Ismaeli city of Meknes, notable by its beautiful gates and massive city walls. Bab Mansour, the most impressive gate of Meknes was built in 1732. The facing square of Lahdime is an animated place where the townspeople come together for coffee and conversation. We will also see the mausoleum of Moulay Ismael and other local sites.

After lunch, we head to Fez. Once here we will take you to the northern tower to give you a nice panoramic view of Fes so you are oriented for your full-day tour the following day. We can use the remaining time in the afternoon to see more sites in Fez and of course enjoy a local dinner in the evening of the 5th day of Our 14 days Morocco Imperial Cities.



#### Day 6: City Tour of Fez

the 8th-century city. You will travel in time back to the medieval period of the city and see that people still work in small narrow streets, using tiny stalls to sell their traditional crafts. Along the way, you'll pass donkeys loaded with supplies, making their way down the cobbled walkways. Lunch will be taken in one of the many cafes in town.

The medina of Fez is rich in its Islamic monuments: the fascinating old mosques, the University of El-Karaouiyine, and its libraries. All These elements made Fez the intellectual and cultural capital of the country of the past, and now make it a wonderful city to explore and learn from.

#### Day: 7 Fez – Ifrane – Medelt – Erfoud – Merzouga desert

Today we will head towards the Middle Atlas mountains. We will take a driving break in Ifrantown, a famous ski resort in Morocco that was established during the French protectorate. Lunch will be in Medelt, known for its best productions of apples in Morocco. After a photo stop in Zizvalley (the start of palm groves and dates), our day ends in Merzouga, the gate to the desert. As it can be hot here in the afternoons, this will be the perfect time for swimming at the hotel!





### Day 8: Merzouga – Erg Chebbi – Desert Camp

Erfoud is the capital of fossils in Morocco so you will have this chance to visit one of the workshops where they make beautiful articles out of marble. We will drive to Erg Chebbi, take some time for a cup of tea, and pack for our desert camping experience. In the afternoon we will meet our camels and head off on a camel ride in time to watch the sun set over the Saharan sand dunes. This evening you will sleep in the desert in a Berber tent.

### Day 9: Todra Gorges – Skoura Palmary – Ouarzazate

It's a quick trip over to Dades Valley to see more beautiful formations of the High Atlas mountains that surround green fields of figs, almonds, apricots, peach, walnut, and pomegranate trees. Next will be Rose valley, famous for rose water and beauty creams. It is extracted from Damascena Rose which you find in some perfumes, skincare, medicines, etc. Crossing the old palmary of Skoura, we will arrive in Ouarzazate to stay for the night.



### Day 10: Ouarzazate – Ait Ben Haddou – Taroudant

breakfast, we will visit the biggest Oscar Cinema Studios of Ouarzazate ( Hollywood of Africa). We then head towards the famous Kasbah of Ait Ben Haddou which is Declared by Unesco as a World Heritage Site. This Kasbah is a backdrop for so many international films including Gladiator, Lawrence of Arabia, Games of Thrones ...We will visit this unique kasbah. Afterwards, we continue our journey west enjoying the scenic beauty of atlas mountains and pass through small Berber towns of Taznakht where we'll stop for lunch. Then set off to Taliouine – Capital of suffran – if it coincides the harvest season, you'll have the opportunity to meet with locals in their fields. In the afternoon, we'll get to Taroudant known locally as " the grandmother of Marrakesh ". You will explore its ramparts and walk through its small alleys of the Medina that has a Berber and Arab souk, unlike other Moroccan cities. Overnight in a riad.

### Day 11: Taroudan- Agadir - Essaouira :

After breakfast, we will leave Taroudant and travel for Essaouira via Agadir. Agadir has a beautiful large beach and has been a popular destination for tourists for so many years. After lunch, we will have a walk along the promenade before we continue our journey to Essaouira through the coast road that offers beautiful scenery. The area is famous for argan, we can see herds of goats climbing the trees looking for argan nuts and leaves. After several stops along the coast, we will arrive in Essaouira known as " Jewel of the Atlantic". Overnight in a riad inside the medina.





### Day 12: Essaouira Sightseeing

After breakfast, we will start our explorative day by visiting the ramparts called Skalla fortress. Then walk inside the narrow alleys of the Medina- Unesco World Heritage Site – with beautiful arts and crafts including objects carved of local Thuya wood. Lunch in a Moroccan way, freshly bought fish ” cooked to order ”. Essaouira is also known as ” City of the wind ”, it attracts surfers from different parts of the world. Essaouira was occupied by Romans, Phoenicians and Portuguese. Thus, there is a big influence noticed in its architecture. It is a small town with much history. There is an annual festival of ” Gnaoua music ” where many musicians from Africa and the world come to perform. It takes place in the second week of June. In the afternoon, you’ll have free time to stroll around the main square and have a mint tea in one of its Cafés. Overnight in a riad inside the Medina.

### Day 13: Essaouira - Marrakech

After breakfast, we will travel for Marrakesh. On the way and since this is the region of Argan trees, we may see many goats climbing trees to eat Argan nuts and leaves. We may also visit a Women’s Cooperative of Argan oil where you will learn about the benefits and applications of the oil, from culinary and cosmetics to medicines. After several stops on the way, we will check into your riad in the Medina. In the afternoon, you will have free time to relax in your riad or to explore the busy square of Jamaa Lafna with its snake charmers, musicians, fortune tellers and acrobats. Overnight in a riad inside the Medina.



### Day 14: Exploring Marrakech

After breakfast, you will start your city tour exploring Marrakesh ( the red city of Morocco ). The guide will ensure that you see the most important spots with historical and cultural interest including The Bahia Palace, the Saadian tombs, Ben Youssef Koranic school as well as the largest traditional souk in Morocco. After lunch in one of the local restaurant near the main square, you can visit the Koutoubia tower and the Majorelle gardens. Overnight in your riad

### Day 15: Airport Marrakech or Casablanca

After breakfast, we’ll pick you up from your riad and drive you to the airport either Marrakesh or Casablanca for your flight. End of 15 Days tour from Casablanca via Sahara desert



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