



TREK THE SAHARA FOR ST CHRISTOPHER'S

Venture into the heart of the Sahara on an unforgettable trek across golden dunes and diverse desert terrain, with the magical experience of sleeping under the stars.

19 - 24 November 2026



fundraising@stchristophers.org.uk



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This trip is operated by The Different Travel Company (ATOL 6706) on behalf of St Christopher's (Registered charity no: 210667). The ATOL scheme financially protects the flights in this brochure. When you pay you will be supplied with an ATOL Certificate. Please ask for it and check to ensure that everything you booked (flights, hotels and other services) is listed on it. Please see our booking conditions for further information or for more information about financial protection and the ATOL Certificate go to: www.caa.co.uk.



Trip overview

The Trek

This trek in the Moroccan Sahara gives you an insight into this vast and diverse landscape as well as the Berber way of life. You will spend two full days and two shorter days trekking across ancient dried-up river beds, sand dunes and vast sun-baked plains. Camping each night gives you a chance to experience the stunning stars in the night sky (weather permitting) and the traditional Berber cuisine cooked by the team is second to none.

Morocco

Situated in Northwest Africa, the Kingdom of Morocco is a country with a population of over 35 million people. Morocco has a diverse geography with both Atlantic and Mediterranean coastlines in addition to a rugged mountainous and desert interior. The mighty Atlas Mountains and the vast Sahara Desert make Morocco an adventure lover's paradise, and Marrakech is a wonderful place to visit with its spicy aromas, peaceful mosques, diverse entertainers and a cacophony of merchants in the bustling medina.

Sahara

The Sahara spans over 3.6 million square miles, making it the third-largest desert on Earth, after Antarctica and the Arctic. It stretches from the Mediterranean and Atlantic in the north to the Red Sea in the east, and as far south as the Niger River. As the hottest desert in the world, the Sahara can reach temperatures above 50°C. Despite its extreme conditions, it is home to resilient plant species like acacia, palms, and grass that have adapted to its dry environment.

Berbers

The Berbers (or Amazighen – 'free people') are an ethnic group indigenous to North Africa whose culture can be traced back over 4,000 years. Traditionally, Berber men take care of livestock and Berber women take care of the home and make handicrafts for use around the home and to sell. The lifestyle is generally nomadic or semi-nomadic and there are large Berber communities in the rural parts of the country.

What is the experience like?

Who accompanies us?

You will be accompanied by professional English-speaking Berber guides with excellent knowledge of the region's culture and hiking. The guides are first-aid trained and will support you throughout your journey. You will also be accompanied by a team of support staff, including cooks and camel handlers, and a Different Travel Company UK tour manager.

How tough is it?

The trek is rated moderately challenging for someone of a good fitness level. The terrain is a mixture of hard, flat sun-dried plains, dried-up ancient riverbeds, wide sandy dune fields and hard rocky outcrops. Temperatures pose a specific challenge, with temperatures historically reaching 35°C. You must be of a good fitness level before departure to ensure a fast recovery each day.

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What is the climate like?

Temperatures can range from 25°C to 35°C during the day and can drop to around 0°C at night; however you must be prepared for variations to this which are out of our control. The weather during the trek will be dry, but there may be some strong winds. Rain, although very rare, is not impossible. Please note: the temperatures and conditions above are historically accurate, but climate change can impact the seasons, so you may experience uncharacteristic conditions during the trip, which are out of our control. The guides will assess the situation and make decisions to ensure the best enjoyment and safety of the group.

How do we get to the desert?

To get to and from the desert requires long drives (approx. 9 hours including breaks) along winding mountain roads, which offer stunning views of the snow-capped peaks and lush valleys. If you suffer from motion sickness, you are advised to bring your usual anti-nausea medication with you. Regular stops are taken.

What is camping like?

During the trek, you will sleep in tents (two to a tent), or if the weather is good, you can sleep outside under the stars; highly recommended! Foam sleeping mats are provided, but you will need to bring a sleeping bag. Toilet facilities consist of a small toilet 'tent' covering a hole in the ground. There are no showers or bathing facilities in the desert, so you must bring a pack of baby wipes.

What is the food like?

During the trek, meals are cooked by a chef who will prepare Moroccan dishes. Breakfast and lunch will be eaten alfresco, and evening meals will be in a mess tent at camp. Plates, mugs, cutlery and other equipment are provided. While staying in Marrakech (and Ouarzazate if applicable), meals will be at the hotel, the project or at local restaurants.

Practical information

Who can take part?

The minimum age is 18. It may be possible to participate if you are 16 or 17 years old but you must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. There is no upper age limit. The ideal candidate would be fit, healthy, determined, open to adventure and adaptable to unexpected changes.

Medical Declaration

We require a medical form to be completed by everyone upon registering, and any pre-existing conditions, medications used, and other medical issues must be specified.

All your data, including medical details, is treated in the strictest confidence. The information will be securely screened by a qualified medical professional, and details provided to your tour manager and local guides, so our staff are adequately informed and prepared to support you during the trip. It is a condition of your registration that you give full and accurate details. If any details change, you must update us. By completing the booking form, you are giving consent for us to contact you confidentially with any follow-up questions regarding your health. If your medical issues at the time of booking



represent a concern for your safety and wellbeing, or the safety and wellbeing of others in the group, it may be recommended that you do not take part. If this happens, your deposit will be refunded. If you develop a new medical condition after making a booking, and this results in your withdrawal from the Event, this will be treated as a cancellation by you. Please refer to the terms and conditions at the time of booking. Please note that we will never unreasonably deny participation on a trip nor contravene the Equality Act 2010.

Health and Safety Assurance

Your health and safety are our highest priorities, and we are committed to ensuring your trip is not only memorable but also safe.

We closely monitor guidance from the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), which provides up-to-date travel advice and recommendations. All adventure travel involves an element of risk. We will **never operate a trip in an area against the advice of the FCDO**, whether due to health concerns, political instability, natural disasters, or any other safety threat.

If travel restrictions in the destination country prevent the trip from going ahead safely, we will offer the option to postpone or cancel your booking **at no cost to you**.

We will keep you fully informed of any updates relevant to your travel arrangements.

If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to reach out to us at info@different-travel.com.



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Trip cost

A **£395 registration fee** is payable at the time of booking and then, with the support of the fundraising team, you are asked to **fundraise £1,990 for St Christopher's**. 80% of this (£1,592) must be raised by 27 August 2026 and the remainder due by the date of departure. A flexi-option is also available.

What is included?

- ✓ Return flights from the UK (inc. current taxes and fuel surcharges),
- ✓ Transfers and transport in Morocco
- ✓ Accommodation in hotels (4 nights)
- ✓ Tents and sleeping mats on trek (3 nights)
- ✓ All meals as specified
- ✓ Local guides, camels and camel handlers on trek
- ✓ Project co-ordination and materials
- ✓ Different Travel UK tour manager

What is excluded?

- ✗ Travel insurance
- ✗ Tips (£40-45pp)
- ✗ Personal expenses (e.g. drinks, souvenirs etc.)
- ✗ Vaccinations

Is the trip ATOL protected?

St Christopher's is acting as agent for The Different Travel Company, ATOL 6706. The flight-inclusive trip in this brochure is financially protected by the ATOL scheme. When you pay your registration fee you will be supplied with an ATOL Certificate and ATOL Confirmation Invoice. Please ask for it and check to ensure that everything you booked (flights, hotels and other services) is listed on it. Please see our booking conditions for further information or for more information about financial protection and the ATOL Certificate go to: www.caa.co.uk.



Itinerary

Day 1 (Thursday 19 2026):

London to Marrakech

We fly together to Marrakech, where we are met by our guide and transferred to our hotel for the night. Depending on flight arrival times, we may start the journey to the desert today and stay in Ouarzazate tonight (approx. 4-5 hours).

Meals: Dinner

Day 2 (Friday 20 November 2026):

Marrakech to the Sahara

If staying in Marrakech, we set off early, crossing the Atlas Mountains and following ancient caravan routes into the Sahara, stopping for lunch in Ouarzazate on the way (journey time approx. 9 hours including stops). If starting in Ouarzazate, the journey to the desert takes approximately 4-5 hours. This afternoon, we will arrive in the desert and be welcomed by the rest of the trek team and the camels before commencing our trek, stopping overnight to camp under the stars of the Sahara.

Approx. trek distance: 5km

Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner



Days 3–4 (Saturday 21 – Sunday 22 November 2026):

Sahara Desert

Our trek continues through the desert as we traverse dunes and rocky, lunar landscapes for the next two days. We are aided by our local Berber team comprising the guides, a cook and camel owners (the camels are our porters, carrying our luggage and equipment). Each day, you enjoy the varied Saharan landscape and learn about how important it is to respect and comply with the forces of nature in the desert. On average, we will cover 15-20km per day, **but this will vary**. As the trek progresses, we learn how the nomadic people of the Sahara live: from cooking to sleeping out under the stars and reading the magnificent Saharan night sky.

Approx. trek distance: 15-20km

Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Day 5 (Monday 23 November 2026):

Sahara to Marrakech

This morning it's the final leg of the trek to a small village where we bid farewell to the trek team and head back to Marrakech (approx. 9 hours' drive). We will end the day with a celebratory dinner.

Approx. trek distance: 5km

Meals: Breakfast, lunch, dinner

Day 6 (Tuesday 24 November 2026):

Marrakech to the UK

Depending on flight times, you may have some free time to explore Marrakech before your flight back to the UK.

Meals: Breakfast

N.B. This itinerary may change due to unusual weather, the ability of the group and so on. We will do our best to keep to the itinerary, but we cannot be held responsible for changes that occur outside of our control. In all circumstances, your guide and tour leader will have the final say in the interest of the group's health and safety.



Before you go: Information to prepare you for the trip

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Travel practicalities and country information

Visas

British passport holders do not currently require a visa to enter Morocco, but you will need to complete a landing card. Travellers of other nationalities must check the entry requirements at the Moroccan Embassy. You must have at least 6 months' validity on your passport from the date of entry. Please note that immigration queues at Marrakech airport arrivals area can lead to long delays upon arrival.

Travel insurance

The Different Travel Company will do everything possible to ensure a safe and enjoyable trip; however, unexpected things can occur, such as delays, medical problems, baggage loss, cancellation by you etc. The purchase of travel insurance is mandatory; you are advised to organise it at the time of booking to ensure you are covered immediately. Different Travel is an Unregulated Introducer of Campbell Irvine Ltd, which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

You can find out more here: <http://www.campbellirvine.com/DifferentTravel>

Please note: most travel insurance policies protect you before departure too, so it is advised to buy insurance as close to booking as possible, as it may protect you against the loss of your non-refundable, non-transferable registration fee if you cancel due to injury, illness etc.

Your insurance must cover: Trekking (not at altitude) and medical evacuation.

Phone and Wi-Fi access

Morocco is served by several mobile networks, including Orange, Maroc Telecom, Wana and Inwi. Coverage is widespread, even in the desert, but your access to phone reception will vary depending on your home network, roaming capabilities, contract type and mobile handset. In general, most people should have reception while in the cities and possibly during some of the trek route. Wi-Fi is available in hotels (although it may be very slow and unreliable). Please contact your phone provider to find out details about costs, and remember to turn off data roaming on your phone to avoid incurring high data charges.

Electricity

Electricity in Morocco is 220V-240V. The plugs used are European two-round pin plugs. Electricity is only available at the hotels. Please bring the necessary plug adaptor, ideally one which has USB ports so you can charge multiple devices at once. Charging is not possible in the desert, but if access to electricity during the trek is important to you, you are advised to bring a portable power pack (power bank or battery pack) which, when fully charged, allows you multiple charges of USB-powered devices such as phones. You should buy a power pack with a minimum capacity of 15,000mAh (max. 20,000mAh due to airline regulations), and these are widely available online. Solar-powered chargers are usually fairly reliable for this trek due to the high possibility of sunny conditions however, they do not usually store power, so devices need to be plugged in while the solar panel charges.

Money

The currency of Morocco is the dirham. At the time of writing, there were approx. 12.7 dirham to the pound. You need to bring money for tips (approx. £40-45), drinks and souvenirs; around £150 should suffice, depending on how much you wish to buy.

Accessing cash

You can buy dirhams in the UK, but the exchange rate is very poor, so we recommend that you withdraw cash from ATMS or exchange cash locally. There are many ATMS in Marrakech, and it may be possible to stop at an ATM during the journey to the desert if required.

Please note that most banks charge for overseas withdrawals and transactions, and some block cards when they are used abroad, so please inform them of your travel plans before departure. You may prefer to use a prepaid currency card loaded with pounds to withdraw cash instead of using a bank card.

If you prefer to exchange cash locally, you are recommended to take pounds Sterling and change them to dirhams. There will be a bureau de change in the arrivals area of Marrakech airport. Please note that you cannot exchange dirhams back to pounds after security at Marrakech airport.

Tipping

Tipping your trek team is welcomed and expected, and we would recommend allowing around £40-45 in total for tips per trekker.

Photocopies

Remember to photocopy all your documents (insurance details, passport, credit/debit cards etc.) and take a copy with you during the trip, stored separately from the original copies. You should also scan and email these documents to yourself and leave a copy with a trusted family member or friend. If you lose any of your documents, you will then have access to a copy with you and online. You may also wish to upload your documents to cloud storage such as Dropbox or Google Drive.

Photography

When taking photographs of the local people, you must ask their permission. Taking a photograph of someone without their permission can be offensive. In contrast, taking photographs of someone you have become friendly with is usually very welcome.

Religion

Islam is the established state religion of Morocco. Almost the entire population is Sunni Muslim. The monarch is the supreme Muslim authority in the country. About one percent of the population is Christian, and less than 0.2 percent is Jewish.

Language

Arabic is Morocco's official language, spoken by about three-quarters of the population. The various Berber dialects are still spoken in rural areas but with less frequency. French is also a common second language among the urban educated classes.

Some helpful phrases in Arabic include:

Hello: As-salaamu alaykum
Welcome: Marhaban
My name is.../I am...: Ana...

Response: Wa alaykum as-salaam
Thank you: Shukran

Trek knowledge

Accommodation and campsite facilities

You will stay in a hotel with en-suite facilities while in Marrakech (and Ouarzazate if flight arrival times permit us to start the journey to the desert upon arrival), and you will camp during the trek. You will stay in hotel rooms on a twin or triple-share basis, and there will be two people per tent while camping. A single-occupancy hotel room may be possible, subject to availability and payment of a single supplement.

During the trek, weather permitting, there may be the opportunity to sleep outside under the stars; this is strongly recommended. Tents and sleeping mats are provided, but you must bring a sleeping bag and a sleeping bag liner. A dining tent, cutlery and crockery are provided.

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Hygiene and toilet facilities

Hotels feature en-suite bathrooms with flushing toilets and hot showers. Always place toilet paper in the bin, not the toilet.

At camp, a private toilet tent covers a pit in the sand. After use, cover waste with sand and pack used toilet paper into a nappy sack or sanitary bag—then dispose of it in the main trek bin. Bring your own bags.

There are no showers during the trek, so bring baby wipes and hand sanitiser for hygiene.

If you need to go during the day, find a private spot off the trail. Never leave toilet paper behind; pack it out and dispose of it at camp. Bring 1–2 toilet rolls for personal use.

Altitude

This trek does not take place in an area of high altitude. During the drive between Marrakech and the desert, you will cross a high mountain pass at Tizi n'Tichka (2260m). You are extremely unlikely to notice any effects of the altitude as you approach and pass this point.

Food and drink

Water

Tap water is not safe to drink in Morocco, even at the hotel. You must not brush your teeth or rinse your mouth with tap water, only use purified, boiled or bottled water. It is best to avoid ice in drinks. Mineral water is provided during the trek, and you must start the day with at least 3 litres of water in your daypack. Mint and verbena teas will be served during breakfast and dinner, and soup will be served at dinner. At breakfast, you can also make yourself coffee, tea or hot chocolate. If you have any preferences (e.g. decaff, herbal tea etc.) you should bring a supply from home.

Keeping hydrated

During the trek, you will need to drink at least 3 litres of water per day to stay hydrated, *plus* any soups or hot drinks served. Electrolyte tablets (e.g. Nuun, High5, PowerBar etc.) are flavoured effervescent tablets which contain salts and minerals which are naturally lost from your body when you sweat. Adding these tablets to your water not only offers flavour to your water but can help prevent dehydration before it begins. Electrolyte tablets are widely available in outdoor stores and online for around £8 for 12 tablets. You may also wish to bring a small supply of rehydration salts (e.g. Dioralyte), which treat dehydration.

Water bottle

You will need to bring bottles to carry at least three litres of water per day. Some people will bring a 2-3 litre CamelBak hydration system (for effortless access to water while you trek) plus one 1-litre water bottle (e.g. plastic Nalgene or metal Sigg bottle). Some people prefer to bring three 1-litre bottles. The choice is yours. If you're bringing a CamelBak hydration system, a separate 1-litre bottle is essential as it can be used as a backup if your hydration system fails. **Please write your name on all your bottles in a marker pen.** Please note that 'own brand' and cheap hydration systems are notorious for splitting, leaking, or valves not functioning properly. CamelBak and Platypus are the leaders in this market because their products are of significantly better quality and more reliable.

Dietary requirements

The majority of special diets, such as vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free, etc., can be catered for if we are notified in advance. Please ensure that you notify us of any dietary requirements at the time of booking or as soon as possible. Please note that we cannot guarantee that food preparation will take place in a contamination-free environment.

Food

Breakfast, lunch and dinner are included throughout the trip as specified on the itinerary. Typically, breakfast will comprise bread, pancakes, jams, soft cheese and hot drinks, lunch tends to include fresh salads, pasta, and bread and evening meals begin with a soup, followed by tagine (a traditional chicken, beef or lamb stew with vegetables served in a clay pot) served with vegetables, bread and couscous, and a dessert of fresh fruit. A cup of mint or verbena tea is commonly used to end the meal. Please notify us of any dietary requirements at the time of booking.

Snacks

You may wish to bring a selection of snacks for energy, a pick-me-up or a little taste of home. Please bring snacks you have tried before (and enjoy!) so they are appetising to you. Items such as sweets, individually wrapped cake bars, protein bars and dried fruit are ideal but don't forget to bring savoury treats also such as salted nuts, Cheddar biscuits or salted crackers.

Kit tips

Discount

When you book you will receive a discount vouchers booklet. Please check the documents section of your online profile.

Clothing

Choose technical fabrics like merino wool, nylon, polyester, bamboo, or polypropylene—these wick sweat, dry quickly, and resist odour, so you can wear them for multiple days without discomfort. Avoid cotton, as it traps moisture, causes chafing, and gets smelly fast.

You likely own suitable kit already—sports, gym, or running gear often does the job. Pack smart, not heavy.

Nights and early mornings can be chilly, so bring warm layers such as a fleece, hoody, insulated jacket, and a hat to stay cosy when the temperature drops.

Top clothing tips

A loose-fitting, non-cotton long-sleeved shirt is ideal—it keeps you cool by shading your skin, protects against sunburn, and lets you roll sleeves up or down as needed. T-shirts work too, but you'll need to be diligent with sunscreen. Shoulders must be covered when passing through desert villages.

Lightweight, non-cotton zip-off trousers are great for comfort and sun protection. Sports leggings and shorts are also fine, but ladies should carry something to cover their legs when visiting villages.

Marrakech dress code

In Marrakech, the local people are familiar with visiting foreigners, but it is respectful to pay attention to what you wear to avoid causing offence or attracting unwanted attention. Legs and shoulders are considered 'private' body parts in many parts of Morocco, and women must keep these areas covered in Marrakech to avoid unwanted attention and to avoid offending. Lightweight trousers with a loose shirt or maxi dresses teamed with a pashmina are ideal outfits. Men should avoid shorts higher than knee length, vest tops or going topless.

During your time at the community project, you should bring old clothing you don't mind getting dirty or with splashes of paint, and you should wear trainers or boots – no sandals.

Cobber neck cooling wrap

A highly recommended accessory for the trek is a body-cooling neck wrap known as a 'Cobber'. When this neck wrap is submerged in water for 30 minutes the poly-crystals absorb it making them swell and turn cold. You wear it around your neck, and it cools the blood flowing through your carotid arteries and keeps your body temperature down. One 30-minute submersion in water keeps the crystals cool and moist for 3 days before they start to dry out; perfect for your time in the desert. They can be purchased for less than £10 from eBay or Amazon.

Footwear

You should bring lightweight, breathable trekking boots with good ankle support and a high-quality flexible sole such as Vibram; walking trainers are unsuitable. Please do not bring Army-style 'desert boots', normal trekking boots are fine. If you are buying a new pair of boots, please try on lots of pairs before you buy; don't buy online unless you've tried them on first. Please ensure you buy new boots well in advance of departure, so you have time to break them in properly. You are strongly advised to wear your boots on the plane (or take in your hand baggage) in case there are any problems or delays with your luggage. Comfortable boots are the most difficult item to replace at short notice. Trainers are best for the days at the project.

Gaiters

Ankle height gaiters are strongly recommended to keep sand out of boots and reduce the risk of blisters.

Headwear

A hat with a wide brim is essential or you could buy a local headscarf called a cheche (available to purchase en-route to the desert). An umbrella can also be useful to protect your head from the sun. You may wish to consider bringing a Buff – a useful multifunctional headwear item (see buffwear.co.uk or similar products).

Head torch

This is a vital piece of kit. Petzl is one brand which makes good quality headlamps but there are many head torches available from other companies. Please ensure you take an LED torch as the ones with bulbs are not bright enough. Bring your head torch with fresh batteries inside it and take a full set of spare batteries. Do not bring a wind-up head torch as these are unreliable. Keep your head torch in your backpack every day. Please ensure you put fresh batteries in before departure and bring some spare batteries.

Hiking poles

Hiking poles can be very useful on ascents and descents, particularly when carrying a heavy pack on uneven terrain. Poles are also very useful for stability. They are not mandatory but are recommended. You should use them on your training walks to familiarise yourself with how to use them. If you bring hiking poles they must fit inside your suitcase/kitbag for your flight.

Sleeping bag

The expected nighttime temperature is approx. 0°C so you need to bring a sleeping bag with a 'comfort' rating of 0°C or lower, not an 'extreme' rating of 0°C. There is a critical difference between the two ratings, as outlined here:

- Comfort — the temperature at which you can expect to sleep comfortably in a relaxed position.
- Extreme — the minimum temperature at which you can remain for six hours without risk of death from hypothermia.

Some sleeping bags with a comfort of 0°C or warmer:

Snugpak 'The Sleeping Bag' (comfort -2°C, £34.95);
Snugpak Tactical 2 (comfort 0°C, £129.95);
Snugpak Softie 6 Twilight (comfort 0°C £114.95);
Snugpak Travepak 3 (comfort -3°C, £54.95);
Snugpak 'The Navigator' (comfort -2°C, £34.95);
Ayacucho Sirius 200 (comfort 0°C £80);
Women's Starlight II (comfort -2°C £100)
Mountain Hardwear Lamina20 (comfort -2°C £135);
and many more.

Please note: that the temperature guidance is based on historical averages in the desert at this time of year and we cannot be held responsible if the weather conditions are different than expected.

Sleeping bag liner

A silk sleeping bag liner is recommended to complement your sleeping bag as it adds an extra layer of insulation to keep you warm if it's cool. If it's too warm you can sleep under your sleeping bag liner with your sleeping bag unzipped. A sleeping bag liner also protects your sleeping bag from dirt, sweat and damage. Silk sleeping bag liners are quite expensive if purchased on the high street, so consider eBay where you can purchase directly from the manufacturers (usually Vietnam or China) at a fraction of the price. Make sure you search for 'pure silk' sleeping bag liners, not 'satin' (which is usually low quality and synthetic).

Sleeping mat

A compressed foam mat is provided. You do not need to bring a mat.

Socks

Choose high-quality, non-cotton socks that stay in place—slipping socks cause blisters. Avoid cotton, as it absorbs sweat and increases friction. Look for socks with wicking fabrics like Coolmax or nylon to keep feet dry and comfortable. Reliable brands include Bridgedale, Smartwool, and Brasher.

Sunglasses

These are important even on overcast days. They must offer a minimum of 100% UV protection, and polarized sunglasses are ideal. Taking a spare pair is recommended.

Luggage

This trip is different to a standard holiday so you will need the following four luggage items:

1. A small daypack

You are responsible for carrying your daypack containing essentials for each day. We recommend you bring a 25-litre rucksack which **must** have a hip belt and a chest strap. High-quality brands to consider when looking for a suitable pack include Osprey, Berghaus and Lowe Alpine (amongst others) and you are strongly advised to visit a reputable store like Cotswold to have your backpack fitted, as they come in a variety of sizes, and some brands offer male and female specific fits. You can expect to carry your first aid kit, sun cream, three litres of water, snacks, toilet paper, wet wipes and a camera. It could weigh 6-8kg when packed, so you should make your backpack selection carefully and ensure it fits correctly and is comfortable. You will not have access to your main pack while trekking.

2. A kit bag/holdall

You will need a soft-sided kit bag to hold your trek-specific items such as your sleeping bag, change of clothes, toiletries and so on. This kitbag will be carried by the camels and must weigh no more than 8kg. This can be a holdall, duffle bag or large rucksack and it doesn't matter what size it is as long as all your kit fits inside. A suitcase or holdall with wheels is not suitable. If you wish you can use this bag to hold your checked luggage for the flights; just ensure you bring a small separate bag you can store items in not required for the trek at the hotel while you're trekking.



3. A suitcase (optional)

For the flights, you may be more comfortable packing all your items (including your empty trek kit bag) into a suitcase. This is entirely your choice. If you bring a suitcase, it will be stored at the hotel along with anything not required for the trek (e.g. toiletries, travel clothes, books etc.).

4. You should bring some **combination padlocks** to secure your luggage.

Responsible travel

We are environmentally conscious and aim to minimise our impact as much as possible. Key points:

- Never leave toilet paper or litter on the trail.
- Don't dispose of fruit peel, cores or seeds on the ground; although they decompose eventually they are unsightly and may attract animals.
- Turn off lights when not in rooms.
- Minimise your water usage by having short showers.

Relationships & LGBT+

Attitudes towards the LGBT+ community around the world can be very different from those in the UK.

In Morocco, homosexuality is illegal and can be punishable by law. However, in general, Moroccans tend to be tolerant people, and you are unlikely to face hostile reactions. Foreigners are not actively persecuted, but we advise you to err on the side of caution.

As a Muslim country, same-sex relationships and sexual relations outside of marriage are punishable by law. As such,

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we would advise couples, regardless of sexual orientation, to avoid public displays of affection.

Please note that handholding with the same sex can be seen as a sign of friendship, but in recent years, this has become less common in cities.

For further advice from the [FCDO](#) [click here](#).

Animal welfare issues

In J'maa el Fna you will find 'entertainers' trying to entice tourists into photo opportunities with chained-up monkeys or snakes. The animal welfare issues are plain to see, and you should say a firm 'no' (*La* in Arabic) if you are approached by these people. Please do not take photographs as this encourages this abhorrent animal welfare practice. We also request that you do not take horse-drawn carriages around Marrakech for the same reasons.

Begging

Begging is common in Marrakech and occasionally in the small villages before and after the trek. As part of our responsible tourism policy, we strongly advise against giving directly to beggars or offering gifts to children. Gift-giving can lead to individuals pestering other travellers as they believe begging is more profitable than searching for work or attending school. In particular, sweets should not be given to children, as dental care is difficult to obtain and tooth decay can lead to long-term health problems.

Etiquette

Always endeavour to be polite and respectful. If you show respect, then it will be reciprocated:

Keep noise to a minimum, especially early in the morning and late at night.

Be respectful to your guides and hosts; don't forget to say please and thank you.

Be considerate of the feelings of other group members.

Scams

Please also do your research on common scams in Marrakech. In particular, watch out for scammers telling you about a 'famous Berber leather market' or a visit to a tannery 'today only'.

Shopping/haggling

The souks of Marrakech sell a vast array of gifts and souvenirs; ornamental teapots, spices, tea, argan oil, tagines, clothing and shoes, soap, cosmetics, jewellery and even fridge magnets.

Haggling is expected when shopping and the first price is often three or four times higher than the true value of the item; you should engage with the vendor to encourage rapport then only pay what you think is a good price, don't try to get the price as low as possible.

Fitness, health and safety

Fitness training

Start training as soon as you sign up. The best prep is simply getting outdoors and walking. Begin with short distances and build up to full days—aim to walk comfortably for 8 hours over hilly terrain with only short breaks each hour.

Train with a fully packed backpack and your hiking boots to get used to the weight and conditions you'll face.

Hillwalking should be your main focus, but activities like running, cycling, gym sessions, or boot camps are great too.

Strengthen your legs and core with bodyweight exercises like squats, lunges, push-ups, and planks—no gym required.

Helpful free apps include MapMyWalk, C25K, and MyFitnessPal for tracking progress and staying motivated.

Note: Attempting the trek without training can put you and your teammates at risk. If your fitness isn't up to standard, local guides and your tour manager may advise you to leave the trek.

Vaccinations and travel health

Different Travel regrets that we cannot provide medical advice or recommendations. You are advised to seek medical advice at least 12 weeks before travelling to ensure that all appropriate vaccinations are up to date. For general information, visit www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk or www.travelhealthpro.org.uk, but your GP or travel health

professional should be the first stop for a consultation tailored to your medical history. Please note that failure to be adequately vaccinated or take necessary prophylactic medication can invalidate travel insurance policies, as it is considered that you have not taken necessary precautions.

First aid kit

You should bring a small first aid kit of essential items which is for your own personal use and keep it in your backpack. Suggested items to include are personal prescription medicine, Compeed blister plasters, painkillers, plasters, antiseptic wipes, anti-histamine tablets, indigestion remedy, Imodium (Loperamide), rehydration sachets, lip balm with SPF, antiseptic cream, zinc oxide tape etc. Please keep the contents to a minimum, as you have to carry it yourself.

Insect repellent

Mosquitoes can be a nuisance in Marrakech and the desert, so it's worth bringing a couple of bottles of repellent to share as a group for the best protection—never apply 100% DEET to your skin. In the evenings, cover up with long trousers and long sleeves to reduce the risk of bites.

Emergencies and evacuations

In the unlikely event of a serious illness or accident, the local team will ensure you are transferred as swiftly as possible to the nearest hospital. Please ensure your travel insurance covers you for airlifting/emergency evacuations as this can be required to reach casualties on more remote trails in an emergency. You are recommended to bring a credit card during the trip if you need to pay for medical treatment upfront in the event of an emergency.

Safety

Please take common-sense precautions while travelling to ensure your safety and the protection of your belongings. For example: leave flashy jewellery, watches and accessories at home; keep wallets out of sight stowed in a handbag or backpack rather than sticking out of a pocket; don't leave bags unattended at any time; carry cameras in their cases rather than carrying them openly with the camera strap; split cash into different pockets rather than carrying all your money in one place, especially immediately after you have used the ATM; and so on.

Zinc Oxide tape

This tape is really useful to prevent blisters. When you feel your boots start to rub against your feet, you should stop and remove any debris from your boots and check your feet. If a hot spot is developing (a red, sore area without broken skin) you can apply zinc oxide tape to the area, and it will stop (or slow down) a blister developing. If you are too late to prevent the blister, then you should clean the area and apply a Compeed blister plaster instead.

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