

Mellow Morocco

We are always looking for new and exciting places which would make great kayaking destinations. After our exploratory expedition four years ago, we are thrilled to be able to return after sampling some exhilarating rapids, crystal clear water and magnificent mountain scenery this is the perfect antidote for those wishing to shake off their winter coats and head south for some sun and wet fun! With a chance also to enjoy the charms of the imperial city of Marrakech, perhaps a visit to the Sahara, Morocco is certainly a land full of contrasts

Your Fun Filled Itinerary!

Day One

Flights generally arrive into Marrakech in the evening. You will be met at the airport by one of the guides who will take you to your hotel and make sure that you get settled in nice and comfy! Then it's out to explore the local restaurants and culture, (and believe us, there is plenty!)

Day Two

We enjoy a hearty breakfast at our hotel, and then board our 4 wheel drive vehicles bound for the heart of the Atlas Mountains. We drive from Marrakech with the sun rising over the Atlas Mountains, northward toward the middle Atlas Mountains. We stop in stunning olive groves for a sumptuous lunch and drive towards Tilouguite pausing to take in the view as we cross this picturesque mountain range. We cross the Hidden River just past Tilouguite and drive a little further to one of the fantastic campsites we have ever seen! We dine in style amidst some of the most stunning scenery you will ever see.

Day Three

We give you a thorough safety briefing should you make an untimely exit from your boat and we also practice our paddling techniques before tackling our first kayaking of the trip. We load the gear raft with the rest of our equipment and take on the rapids! Many of the rapids are as yet unnamed... perhaps a chance for your fame to be realized! Depending on flows this can be a fun technical river or big volume and bouncy!

We paddle through the narrows in Tilouguite with delighted locals jumping into the river and trying their luck to "hitchhike" down the river with us. We camp amongst cedar trees at "Barking Dog" camp. The afternoon is yours to explore the nearby mountains, write a few thoughts down or have a game of volleyball on the beach!

Day Four

Today sees more roller coaster rapids as we head down river and discover the majestic beauty of this land. Some great fun surf waves today... Our day is punctuated by a relaxing lunch, accompanied by the curious locals churning wheat at local waterwheels. The water here is generally crystal clear and we will pack our fishing rods to try our luck at catching a fresh fish dinner for tonight! We kayak around 4-5 hours per day, leaving plenty of time to go and explore nearby villages, or just sit around with your fellow paddlers and discuss the day!

Day Five

It is great to remember where we are on the edge of the Sahara, in this crystal clear river, tackling the best whitewater that Morocco has to offer. Rapids come thick and fast on this river, but what a great way, and a fantastic place to hone your skills! After a lunch full of the fresh foods Morocco has to offer, we walk up the valley to a nearby Kasbah, as we relax and sample Moroccan

hospitality! Farmers go about their everyday business and inquisitive locals marvel at our vast array of multi coloured equipment! We surf and play our way down to camp in the stunning last gorge of this river journey! It's great to sit around the fire watching the glow dance on the canyon walls and recount the day's tales, especially after sampling a Rum Punch or two! (Included: All meals Days Two to Five)

Day Six

On the last day we finish off with a few fun rapids and then paddle towards Lake Bin El Ouidane where we will load the kayaks on the gear raft and motor across the lake to our waiting vehicle. Great way to relax drinking a beer or two!

We drive back to Marrakech for the evening and enjoy our first chance to explore the souqs of Djema el Fna. Carpet shopping is made an art by some of these gentlemen! (Included: Breakfast and Lunch)

Day Seven

The focal point of Marrakech is the Djemaa el-Fna, a huge square in the old part of town. Although it is a lively place at any time of day (watch out for the Berber acrobats around 4pm) it really comes into its own in the evening reaching its peak between 7 and 9 pm. Rows of open air food stalls are set up and mouth watering aromas fill the square. Jugglers, story tellers, snake charmers, magicians, acrobats and retired river guides take over the rest of the space, each surrounded by jostling spectators who listen and watch intently, or fall about laughing and move onto the next act which is starting nearby. Truly a great fun place! (Included: Breakfast Day 7)

Day Eight

Time for the special Adventure Whitewater add on! We drive the two and a half hours to the famed Jimmy Hendrix Beach in Essaouira. We set up camp here on the beach and take our boards and kayaks out for a surf in the Atlantic. A chance in the afternoon to go shopping around the amazing food markets for some fresh fish for dinner. Truly a great town! Enjoy falling asleep to the sound of crashing waves! (Included: All meals Day 8)

Day Nine

A days surfing at one of the premier destinations in Morocco. Enjoy the day surfing with your kayak or bring the surfboard from home! (Included: All meals Day 9)

Day Ten

Flights normally leave Marrakech around midday, so a chance for a last surf and then we pack up and head straight back to the airport to catch our flights home. (Included: Breakfast Day 10)

Holiday Options

So, not quite ready to return to London and want to explore the wonders of Mystical Morocco a little further. Read on as we will send you to explore some exciting or perhaps more sedentary activities for you to top off your great adventure with us. If you would like further details on this please feel free to contact us here at the office or perhaps check out the Lonely Planet on Morocco.

Hiking and Trekking

With its four mountain Ranges, a dozen summits over 4000 metres high, 400 over 3000 metres, and all of them accessible to people in good physical condition, Morocco offers exceptional hiking opportunities.

The Moroccan mountains are beautiful and wild, yet they are well organized for hikers with qualified guides, should you require them, a fantastic network of huts to the hire of pack mules and cross country bikes!

Sporting Facilities

Whatever your sporting preference, whether it be a relaxing game of golf, perhaps a quiet horse ride, or even a windsurf on the Atlantic Coast, there are plenty of activities to satisfy the most avid sporting buff!

The Sahara

Perhaps we can tempt you with a trip to the sands of the Sahara desert.

Leave from Ouarzazate or Er Rachidia to discover the Moroccan Deep South. Burning sands and snowy peaks, plunging canyons and refreshing oases along the Draa, Dades and Ziz wadis, and everywhere the sumptuous Kasbahs, fairytale cities built of earth.

Life's A Beach!

Okay, so you've had the active part of your holiday and you just want to take it easy enjoying the gorgeous beaches that adorn the Mediterranean and Atlantic coasts of Morocco.

Agadir and the Souss is a great area for those who love holidays by the sea with all the extras! You will find a sublime beach 10 kilometres long in Agadir, with first rate hotels (cheaper options too!) and all the sports facilities and night time entertainment to conclude your trip to Mystical Morocco!

There are plenty of other activities from hot air balloon rides (doesn't that Branson guy start from there?) to relaxing in the soothing waters of Moulay Yacoub in a health spa. What ever you are interested in we will try and provide details and make reservations for you. Just remember that Moroccan tourist areas are very popular destinations and things do book up well in advance.

The Details

What Is Included

- Transfers to and from Marrakech Airport to the hotel. If you provide us with your arrival details we will be happy to meet you at the airport and ease that transition into Moroccan chaos! We request that you are there on Day One as chasing the kayaking bus over the Moroccan countryside is not a pleasant start to your journey!
- Accommodation the night before and for 2 nights after the river trip in a tourist hotel. This will be on a share twin basis with somebody else on the trip, but we will do our utmost not to hook you up with an axe murderer!
- All transfers to and from the river.
- All meals from breakfast on Day two to lunch on Day Six. We can cater for any dietary requests, just let us know!
- All kayaking equipment, including the best in buoyancy aids, helmets and spray jackets. Please let us know what kayaks you would like and we will do our best to make it happen. Alternatively, please feel free to bring your own gear.
- Tented accommodation whilst on the river and beach.
- All camping equipment including thermarest style mattresses and chairs (sleeping bags excluded).
- Qualified and experienced guides and safety kayakers. The crux of our trips, we have a mixture of local and overseas guides who are extremely professional and are some of the most experienced guides in the world. These guys and girls make every effort to make your

trip memorable and fun for you whilst at the same time ensuring your safety. They all hold advanced first aid qualifications and in the unlikely event of an injury they have the expertise and professionalism to deal with it.

- All necessary permits and licenses.

Please Note: Not included are visas, departure taxes, travel insurance, inoculations, sleeping bags, personal items or gratuities. You will also need to budget for meals in town which are not included in the price and any extra accommodation outside what is provided.

Getting There

In order to give you maximum flexibility with your holiday plans, you decide when you want to fly or travel to and from Marrakech and we then help make it happen. The flight option that we usually book for our clients is on Royal Air Maroc out of Heathrow or Gatwick. These flights leave around 4-5pm the night prior to Day One, arriving into Marrakech around 10.30pm the same evening. The return flight is a morning departure out of Marrakech with an afternoon arrival into Heathrow. However there are other options available so be it is a flight from another airport in the UK or Europe, or even an overland trip through Africa we will give you advice on what is the best deal around and help you with your booking.

Visa Requirements

Normally you can enter Morocco with a minimum of formalities, at your point of disembarkation. No visas are required for those of you from New Zealand, Australia, United Kingdom, Terre Adelie, Swaziland or Crozet Archipelago! South Africans, Zimbabweans and Israelis should apply beforehand for an entry visa to their nearest Moroccan Embassy. A passport valid for at least 6 months is required for entry. A return flight ticket makes life a great deal easier, however proving to the authorities that you have sufficient funds to buy one will also suffice. Contact us for the latest information regarding just who does and who doesn't need one and what the latest price is!!!

The Dreaded Jabs

Anything involving Africa usually requires BIG needles, resulting in a temporary third butt cheek! However Morocco is relatively disease free, although Certificates of Inoculation for Cholera are required by those travellers arriving from infected areas. No other vaccinations are compulsory, although we would recommend consulting your GP or specialist vaccination centre. They may suggest that you get up to date against Polio and Tetanus.

You should take care when drinking water especially ice. Reputable brands of sealed bottled water are usually fine, just make sure they are sealed! All the water on the rafting trip is treated so you won't have to worry there, but just keep an eye on it when we are in towns!

Anti malarial prophylactics are not necessary.

Exchange Rates

The current rates for the American dollar to the Moroccan dirham is around 9:1 and for the Pound to the Moroccan dirham is around 16:1. So the place remains quite good value. However prices generally vary between the local and tourist price. To give you idea how far your money will go, a meal in a medium range restaurant will cost around Dr70 and a more up market place for around Dr150 including wine. You can easily exchange money in banks. There is no benefit in changing on the "Black Market" as you will receive no better rate!

Tipping and bargaining are an integral part of Moroccan life. Generally a 10% tip should be left after a meal. Bargaining is great fun and generally a very social event in Morocco, with the merchant generally sitting down and enjoying a cup of the traditional mint tea with you.

Retail Therapy Options

Strolling through the souqs is a wonderful feast for the senses. And the pleasure is all greater when you decide you are looking for a ring, a sword stick, a carpet (available from most uncles or cousins in town!), and a pair of slippers, a wicker basket or rare and fragrant spices.

Every region has its specialties. Before buying anything look around. Generally the most useful tool when hunting for crafts is patience. Morocco is teeming with craft souqs and tourists often find themselves subject to heavy sales pressure. Before you get to shops you may have to deal with "guides" of different types! Enjoy it, it's actually great fun!

Climate

The geological variety of Morocco also gives a wide range of climatic conditions. Be prepared, because almost anything can happen. As we are rafting in the Atlas Mountains, it can get cool in the evening and it is a good idea to bring a reasonably warm sleeping bag and also a fleece jacket and some long pants.

During the day temperatures are relatively warm whilst we are on the river and normal rafting attire with sandals and shorts will be fine! We provide you with a warm spray jacket which you can also put a Helly Hansen on if you are susceptible to feeling the cold. On average at this time of year you can expect temperatures of 24 - 32 degrees Celsius.

Rain is also a possibility although not likely. You can bring a light jacket if you wish although many of our clients use our spray jackets!

Most of the coastal hotels have swimming pools in order to cool off in as well.

Fitness and Safety

There are no special fitness requirements for this Moroccan Expedition; the main thing recommended is a sense of adventure! The minimum age for this trip is 16 years and there is no upper age limit providing that you are in reasonable physical shape and you are aware of the rigors of a whitewater expedition in a foreign country. Please make a point of telling us (quietly if you wish) if you have any medical condition or are on any medication that you think we should be aware of. Any known allergies are also useful before you turn 3 shades of blue and phase in and out of consciousness! Safety is our foremost consideration at all times whether on or off the river. We are out there for a great time on the river and we want you to feel comfortable in your environment.

Dress Code

Apart from the Black Tie and Ball gown requirements of our evening meals on the river - ha, ha, the dress code in and around the town of Marrakech remains fairly casual. Lightweight casual clothes are recommended during the day. On the river you require little more than a bathing costume and or a pair of shorts (which should be tied on WELL). We also recommend a pair of Teva or Chaco sandals or the like that will stay attached to your feet.

Women should be aware that in country areas they should keep their legs, shoulders and upper arms covered and avoid skin tight clothing as this will attract unwanted attention and is considered inappropriate wear in the Muslim religion.

Personal Equipment

After years on the river the guides have found exactly what is necessary to feel comfortable kayaking by day, cosy around the camp at night and totally in style in town before and after trips! Therefore our equipment list will mean that you will be perfectly attired and outfitted for your whole trip and well under the baggage allowance - river guides are famous for being light travellers (one has to be when a kayak is often in tow!). A full list of what we recommend will be sent to you upon booking confirmation. We find that most people already have in their

possession what is needed for a kayak trip and very little if anything in specialized equipment is needed to be bought.

Finally

Please remember that things do change, prices go up and down, activities stop running or change format and weather can send the best laid plans out the door. Splash White Water Rafting will do it's best to provide what is described above but please take into consideration the nature of the journey that you are embarking on and the country that you are travelling in and understand that a certain degree of flexibility is necessary!

Mystical Morocco has something to offer everybody, great whitewater, gorgeous scenery all topped off with the charming people and history of this fascinating land - See you there!

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