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MOROCCO



CASABLANCA ROUNDTRIP
APR 28-MAY 14, 2025 | 17 DAYS | 30 MEALS
JOURNEY LEADER: BRIAN GALLIGAN

Atop a camel, watch the sunset blaze over endless amber sands

Nestled at the intersection of Africa and Europe, where Christianity and Islam converge, Morocco beckons with its alluring blend of cultures and timeless charm. On this journey, we will unravel the secrets of Morocco's walled imperial cities, labyrinthine alleyways and bustling souks.

We will stay in charming riads, traditional boutique hotels that offer a glimpse into Morocco's storied past. Venturing beyond the city walls, we will push the boundaries of exploration to the very edge of the mesmerizing Sahara desert. As twilight descends, we will find ourselves surrounded by the ethereal beauty of the desert landscape, indulging in an overnight stay at a deluxe -tented camp under a sky glittering with stars. Thrilling 4x4 rides over the undulating dunes will awaken our spirits, tracing the enduring path taken for centuries by the resilient Berber people.



Book With Confidence

For peace of mind, your deposit for this journey is fully refundable until **January 22, 2025**

Inclusive Features

- Return economy group airfare from Canada
- 15 nights in first-class hotels and comfortable riads, as indicated or similar
- 30 meals (B -15 breakfasts, L-3 lunches, D-12 dinners)
- Bottled water on the coach (daily) and at all included lunches and dinners
- Transfers, and baggage handling (where available)
- Gratuities, taxes, and fees for included services
- Services of our journey leader and local guides
- Airport transfers in Canada or equivalent value with purchase of group airfare

Journey Leaders

Brian Galligan is a seasoned Journey Leader and retired Anglican priest who had a successful international career in biomedical sciences before his ordination. He developed a passion for travel in his early years while living in the UK and has since visited numerous countries throughout Europe, the Middle East, Africa, the Caribbean, Australia, and New Zealand. His wife, **Karen**, a retired teacher, shares his extensive travel experience. Together, they have led tours for Craig Travel for over a decade, always eager to embark on new adventures with both new and familiar faces.



Tour Highlights

- Experience the four imperial cities of Morocco: Rabat, Fez, Meknes, and Marrakech
- Overnight in a deluxe tented camp under the stars
- Venture to the edge of the Sahara with 4x4 excursions
- Discover Kasbah Country, the old Berber trading route
- Visit Hassan II Mosque in Casablanca
- Tour the impressive Hassan Tower and the tranquil Chellah Necropolis in Rabat
- Enjoy Volubilis, a UNESCO World Heritage Site
- Journey across the Middle Atlas Mountains
- Explore the Dades Gorge and the ancient fortifications of Ait-Ben-Haddou, a UNESCO World Heritage Site
- Participate in a cooking class, creating traditional Moroccan dishes

APR 28, Monday

DEPART CANADA

Tour members from across Canada gather in Toronto and Montreal for the overnight flight to Casablanca.

APR 29, Tuesday

CASABLANCA / RABAT

Welcome to Morocco! On arrival in Casablanca, we will meet our local guide and transfer up the coast to our hotel in Rabat. In the evening, we gather for dinner at our hotel. **La Tour Hassan Palace** (2 nights) D

APR 30, Wednesday

RABAT

Explore the city of Rabat, which features the exquisite Hassan Tower, the busy Kasbah des Oudayas, the impressive mausoleum of Mohamed V, and the imposing Royal Palace, Chellah. Balance of the day at leisure. BD

MAY 1, Thursday

MEKNES / VOLUBILIS / FEZ

This morning, we travel further inland to Fez, the world's oldest and largest medieval city. En route, we shall visit Meknes, which once rivalled Versailles in its beauty and opulence. Built over a fifty-year period as an imperial city by Moulay Ismail, Meknes is a treasure trove of palaces and gardens enveloped by 40 km of mighty walls. Enter through the monumental gates of Bab Mansour to find the

exquisite mausoleum of the city's builder. Nearby, we explore the Roman ruins at Volubilis. This UNESCO site dates back to AD 40 and was the capital of the Roman province of Mauritania. Later this afternoon, we arrive in Fez where we will spend two nights in the heart of the Medina with its bustling markets and heady mix of aromas, sounds and sights. **Hotel Les Merinides** (2 nights) BD

MAY 2, Friday

FEZ

This is a day of enchantment as we visit the Medina of Fez, the ancient walled city of artisans, craftsmen, and lively markets. We then descend into the souks of Fez and enter yet another world filled with mingling aromas of cedar, leather, and spices, as we discover the districts of tanners, engravers, and merchants. You may want to visit the Kairaouine Mosque and University, the Bou Jeloud Gardens and the Sultan's Palace, each offering displays of classical Islamic art. BD



Fez's historic leather tannery: a timeless craft captured in the heart of Morocco

MAY 3, Saturday

MIDELT / ERFOUD

Departing Fez, we cross over the Middle Atlas Mountains into the heart of Berber country. En route, we pass by the charming ski resort of Ifrane and the handicraft centre of Azrou. Midelt is a pleasant town surrounded by verdant pine trees in a tranquil mountain setting. Take in the scenery as we head to the edge of the Sahara via the palm-fringed Errachidia and Ziz Valley. BD

Kasbah Xaluca Arfoud (1 night)

BD

MAY 4, Sunday

RISSANI / MERZOUGA

After breakfast, we depart for Rissani, the holy city where Moulay Ali Cherif, an ancestor of the Alaouite dynasty, is buried. We'll visit the ruins of a 17th-century Kasbah and the imposing remnants of the 19th-century castle, Ksar Abbar. We continue to Merzouga and the remote Erg Chebbi dunes. Nestled among these undulating dunes is our deluxe tented camp, featuring comfortable beds, private en suite bathrooms with hot and cold water, and all the amenities of a well-appointed desert retreat. As the sun sinks low, casting the dunes in rich amber hues, we have the opportunity to ride camels and witness the sunset. At night, we gather for a traditional Berber meal, with music filling the air as we dine under a canopy of stars. BD

Golden Camp Luxury or similar (1 night)

BD

MAY 5, Monday

MERZOUGA

We'll take a 4x4 off-road journey through the stunning desert landscapes of Dort L'erg to visit Khamlia, a nomad village with roots in sub-Saharan Africa, before returning to Merzouga. **Kasbah Xaluca Tombouctou** (1 night) BD

MAY 6, Tuesday

TODRA GORGE / DADES

Following an early morning call to admire the sunrise over the desert, we continue to Tinghir to explore the Todra Gorge, where magnificent towering limestone cliffs soar 1,000 feet overhead. After lunch, we travel through the rugged Dades Valley to Dades, renowned for its blooming roses each spring. **Hotel Xaluca Dades** (1 night) BD

MAY 7, Wednesday **DADES VALLEY / OUARZAZATE**

Today, we travel through the Dades Valley, where the Dades River nourishes a variety of colourful fruit and nut trees and extraordinary red rock formations, to reach the stunning Dades Gorge. This area is often referred to as "Kasbah Country" due to the impressive forts that grace the



Exquisite Moroccan tiled fountains grace the cityscape of Rabat



Vibrant Moroccan slippers, a colourful find amidst the bustling souks



Ait-Ben-Haddou, a UNESCO World Heritage Site

valley, evoking memories of ancient desert caravans travelling from Africa's depths to the Moorish cities in the north. **Oscar Hotel by Atlas Studios** (1 night) BD

MAY 8, Thursday AIT-BEN-HADDOU / MARRAKECH

After breakfast, we will explore Ait-Ben-Haddou, the UNESCO World Heritage Site where the timeless masterpiece Lawrence of Arabia was filmed. We then continue onward to Marrakech, the fabled imperial city that once served as a painting retreat for Winston Churchill. Later, we settle into a riad in the heart of the city and close to all the action. Tonight we gather for dinner.

Palais Sebban (4 nights) BD

MAY 9, Friday MARRAKECH

Today, we immerse ourselves in the sights, sounds, and crafts of Marrakech. Our day begins with a peaceful stroll through the Jardin Majorelle, offering a tranquil escape from the city's hustle and bustle. Next, we'll visit the Berber Museum and then dive into a special cooking class at Palais Sebban. In the afternoon, we journey back in time exploring the Medina's labyrinthine streets, alive with local handicrafts. Highlights include the iconic Koutoubia Minaret, the intricately adorned Saadian Tombs, the historic Kasbah, and the vibrant Jemaa el-Fna Square. BL

MAY 10, Saturday MARRAKECH

Delve deeper into the fascinating city of Marrakech with a visit to the Ben Youssef Madrasa, an iconic landmark renowned for its exquisite Islamic architecture and rich heritage. Marvel at the striking artistry of the 19th-century Bahia Palace, with sections still reserved for the Royal Family. A special highlight will be our visit to the Amal Centre, created to support local women from disadvantaged backgrounds. BL

MAY 11, Sunday TOUBKAL NATIONAL PARK / IMLIL

Just outside Marrakech lies Toubkal National Park. We drive up the mountain to the Berber village of Imlil, followed by a gentle walk along country roads and local paths. A graciously hosted lunch with a local family offers insights into rich Berber traditions. As the day ends, we return to Marrakech, leaving the evening open for leisure. BL

MAY 12, Monday MARRAKECH / CASABLANCA

Legendary Casablanca awaits, made famous by Humphrey Bogart. Explore this vibrant port city, highlighted by the eclectic Medina, the Royal Palace, and the magnificent Ain Diab Corniche. Our farewell dinner will be at Rick's Café, recreated to capture the ambiance of the 1942 film "Casablanca." **Le Palace d'Anfa** (2 nights) BD

MAY 13, Tuesday CASABLANCA

Today we visit the iconic Hassan II Mosque, the seventh-largest building of its kind in the world. After a visit, we shall enjoy some free time to explore the area. BD

MAY 14, Wednesday HOMEWARD BOUND

This morning, as we bid farewell to Morocco, we catch our flights to Montreal and Toronto, with connections to our homes across Canada. B

CT Rating 3.5 / 5 - Challenging: Members should be prepared for crowded cities and busy souks (bazaars). In the countryside, services and facilities can be basic, especially in remote areas. This is a fast-paced itinerary with several one-night stays. This journey includes long walks, uneven surfaces, and stairs. Members must be in good health and physically fit to fully appreciate this journey. A Riad is a traditional Moroccan house or palace built around a central courtyard that has been converted into a private boutique-style hotel, with atmosphere and great locations, but often with limited restaurant and other facilities, no elevators or direct coach access.

Tour Cost in Canadian Dollars Per Person

Land Only* (Join / Leave at hotel)	\$5,235
Montreal	\$6,465
Toronto.....	\$6,645
Halifax / St. John's / Winnipeg	\$6,885
Regina / Saskatoon	\$7,055
Calgary / Edmonton / Vancouver.....	\$6,985
Victoria.....	\$7,055
Single Supplement.....	\$1,675

*Land-only price is based on joining at the hotel in Rabat and leaving at the hotel in Casablanca and excludes flights and airport transfers.

Airfares from other gateways are available on request. Airfares and air carriers are subject to change and will be confirmed prior to final payment. Refer to inclusive features for details.

Tour price is based on sharing a twin room at hotels and on a minimum of 20 members, based on rates, taxes and fees effective June 2024 and is subject to change due to factors beyond our control. Group to be escorted from Canada with a minimum of 20 group members.

Insurance is NOT INCLUDED but is highly recommended. Premiums are calculated based on the individual's age, destination (country), trip length, and trip booking window – please contact our staff to receive a quote. Your coverage starts on the effective date of your confirmation of coverage. Please discuss your insurance coverage prior to booking. Check our website for the most current information. Refer to the enrollment form for terms and conditions.

Final payment is due January 23, 2025
Deposit is \$700 per person

To reserve your spot on this tour, you can either book online through our website or submit an enrollment form along with your deposit to:



1092 Mount Pleasant Road
Toronto, ON M4P 2M6
416-484-0926 | 1-800-387-8890
tours@craigtravel.com
craigtravel.com

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Book by November 29, 2024
and save \$200 per person