

Topdeck

DELVE DEEP: MOROCCO



TRIP CODE:
TMEMM3



TOPDECKER, meet Middle East & North Africa (TD)

TRIP VIBE = iconic sights and in-depth adventures with a local Trip Leader. Thought Morocco was all #wanderlust pics of bazaars, riding camels and a whole lot of couscous? Well yeah, there's that... but in 11 incredible days with us you'll see the side of Morocco your Instagram feed can't do justice. Delve deeper into a unique culture, throw yourself into new experiences and discover a world unlike any other with a small group of absolute legends. Yalla!

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



Delve Deep



Nights



Download app



Meals

Thanks for choosing to holiday with Topdeck

Ready for the time of your LIFE?

The countdown's on...

ABOUT YOUR TRIP NOTES

These Trip Notes contain everything you need to know before your trip departs – from where to meet your Topdeck fam to what we suggest you bring.

Read them on the train, in the supermarket queue or on the loo – we don't mind, just look through them carefully so you know what to expect on your trip. We recommend you download this document so it's with you when you travel (and give a copy to your MVPs so they know what you're up to).

IMPORTANT: please refresh this doc as close to your departure as possible. This means you'll have the most up-to-date info available.

INCLUDED EXPERIENCES

- Airport transfers
- Orientation walk of Chefchaouen with Trip Leader
- Orientation walk of Moulay Idriss with Trip Leader
- Traditional lunch with a local family in Moulay Idriss
- Walking tour of Volubilis archaeological site with local guide
- Walking tour of Fes with local guide
- Travel through the Atlas Mountains
- Sunset camel ride
- Traditional campfire dinner
- Overnight stay at a desert camp
- Visit Todra Gorge
- Visit Ouarzazate
- Visit UNESCO World Heritage-listed Aït Benhaddou Kasbah
- Walking tour of Marrakech with local guide

YOUR TRIP WILL START

PICK UP:

Casablanca
Morocco

YOUR TRIP WILL FINISH

DROP OFF:

Marrakech
Morocco

TRIP CURRENCIES

- Morocco - MAD

YOUR ITINERARY

DAY 1 | CASABLANCA (MOROCCO)

Touch down along Morocco's Atlantic Coast. Ready to experience the new and exotic? This is the place to start. Feel the first blast of Moroccan sunshine as you spot your Topdeck Rep outside the arrival terminal (hint: they're holding a placard with our logo on it), then brace yourself for Casablanca's mix of sparkling waters, palm-fringed avenues, street art and colonial buildings. Yep you're finally here. Dump your stuff at the hotel, meet your fellow explorers and get pumped for our first group dinner. Name a better way to start the trip.



MEALS:

- Dinner



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Airport transfers

DAY 2 | CASABLANCA – CHEFCHAOUEN

Swap glittering blue coasts for bluer-than-blue cities – we're rolling onto Chefchaouen. Nestled between the looming peaks of the Rif Mountains, this enchanting city is totally out of this world. Brilliant blue buildings. A maze of narrow alleyways. And authentic local vibes. We'll get our bearings on a stroll with our Trip Leader, then choose to tuck into dinner at a local restaurant with the gang or head off and do your own spontaneous this-is-what-I-came-for thing. It's 100% up to you.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Orientation walk of Chefchaouen with Trip Leader



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Group dinner at local restaurant: from prices available locally

DAY 3 | CHEFCHAOUEN

You wanted freedom to explore. So here's 24 hours to just do you. Our suggestion? Kick things off with a city tour. Your local guide will give you low-down on the city's historic past, point out all the hidden gems and tick off the 'Blue City' must-sees. Check out the Spanish Mosque. Stock up on souvenirs in the medina. Relax at a local hammam. Or strap on the Nikes and head out into the mountains for some incredible waterfalls and panoramic views – there's some of the best hiking trails in Africa here, just sayin'. Then, get the gang together for some delish street food at the city square. This is living!



MEALS:

- Breakfast



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- City tour of Chefchaouen: from 300 MAD

DAY 4 | CHEFCHAOUEN – MOULAY IDRIS AND VOLUBILIS – FES

Glue your face to the coach window as we take the scenic route to Morocco's sacred heart: Moulay Idriss. This place is considered to be so holy, it was pretty much inaccessible for non-Muslims until 2005. Meaning? It's the definition of off-the-beaten-track. Take in the relaxed local vibe on an orientation walk – before we tuck into a DE-licious home-cooked lunch with a local family. Then: put on your archaeology hat, 'cos we're off to Volubilis to check out the Roman ruins with a local guide. Want more history? Good! Tonight we'll be heading deep into the heart of old Morocco on our journey to Fes.



MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Lunch



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Orientation walk of Moulay Idriss with Trip Leader
- Traditional lunch with a local family in Moulay Idriss
- Walking tour of Volubilis archaeological site with local guide

DAY 5 | FES

Mausoleums, mosques and medinas are on the cards today as we hit the streets on a full-day whip around the city with a local guide. The 9,000 narrow cobbled streets in Fes el-Bali are lined with spices, food stalls and tanneries, so don't waste a second – get exploring! Visit a local tannery (hint: say yes to the mint, you're gonna need it). Head over to the Ruined Garden for Moroccan tapas in an awesome setting. Hike up Mount Zalagh for all the views. Or hunt down a hammam for a body shine and polish. It's a tough life. Tonight, tuck into a camel burger (or chicken couscous if that's not your jam) at Café Clock.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Walking tour of Fes with local guide

DAY 6 | FES – IFRANE AND MIDELT – ERFOUD

Truth bomb alert: you've got a bit of a drive from Fes to Erfoud today. Plug in the AUX cord and glue your face to the window as we wind our way through acres of cedar forests and stunning scenery. We'll stop in Ifrane (Morocco's take on Switzerland) and Midelt for some breathtaking views of the High Atlas Mountains. Then, it's time to adjust to the altitude in alpine-fresh Erfoud: the 'Door to the Desert'. Dinner tonight is on us, but you gotta try madfouna: authentic wood-fired Berber 'pizza'.



MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Travel through the Atlas Mountains

DAY 7 | ERFOUD – MERZOUGA DESERT CAMP

Endless stretches of blazing red dunes. A kaleidoscope of burning colours at sunset. Vast clear skies filled with dazzling stars. Welcome to the Sahara Desert. After a free morning in Erfoud, we'll make our way into the sandy abyss – stopping at the dunes of Erg Chebbi before reaching our isolated desert camp*. Merzouga looks as if it might be engulfed by the surrounding dunes at any moment – so sit back and enjoy the view. Later, you can jump aboard Alice the camel for a sunset joy ride to remember. Tonight, we'll gather round the campfire and dig into a traditional dinner with the gang. This is what you came for. *Reality check: we'll be staying in modest tents whilst in the Sahara. And no, there's no air con or power plugs for your hairdryers – you're in the middle of the largest hot desert in the world after all...



MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Sunset camel ride
- Traditional campfire dinner
- Overnight stay at a desert camp

DAY 8 | MERZOUGA – TODRA GORGE AND OUARZAZATE – AÏT BENHADDOU

Step into your own Roadrunner cartoon today as we make our way to Aït Benhaddou. First up? Todra Gorge. With a 3D landscape of imposing orange sandstone peaks, trickling streams and the odd camel playing outside your window, this place will take your breath away. Then: yell lights, camera, action as we roll into 'Ouallywood'. The sprawling Taourirt Kasbah of Ouarzazate has played backdrop for plenty of big-budget blockbusters – try and name them as we walk around with our in-the-know Trip Leader. Later, hunt down some tagine in ancient Aït Benhaddou – the maze of clay buildings in this ksar (aka fortified village) is just waiting to be explored.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Visit Todra Gorge
- Visit Ouarzazate

DAY 9 | AÏT BENHADDOU – MARRAKECH

Gladiator. Lawrence of Arabia. Game of Thrones. The thousand-year-old Aït Benhaddou has a few famous friends – and we'll take in allllll the otherworldly vibes on a walking tour of the UNESCO protected kasbah with our Trip Leader. Afterwards, we'll wind our way through the spine-tingling Tizi n'Tichka mountain pass to Marrakech. Then? The rest is up to you. Head to Jemaa el-Fnaa square for all the night-stall craziness. Wander the narrow streets of the medina. Or head to Gueliz for stylish restaurants and live music. This is your chance to embrace it all.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Visit UNESCO World Heritage-listed Aït Benhaddou Kasbah

DAY 10 | MARRAKECH

Ok, nobody panic: this is our last full day. So, don't waste a second! We'll kick things off with a locally guided walking tour. Stroll through the old medina, past vibrant stalls of buzzing souks, check out the famous Koutoubia Mosque minaret, and wriggle past the snake charmers in Jemaa el-Fnaa square. Then make the most of your free time with an optional lunch at the Amal Association restaurant: empowering disadvantaged local women with training and job placement. Or don your chef hat at a tagine cooking class. Want to delve a little deeper? Get on your bike and explore the palm groves on the outskirts of the city. Relax and unwind with a massage and hammam experience at a local spa. Or escape the city chaos with afternoon tea in the riad of Le Jardin Secret. Tonight, we'll swap stories over our last group meal. What. A. Trip.



MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Walking tour of Marrakech with local guide



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Group lunch at Amal Association restaurant: from prices available locally
- Hammam and massage in a local spa: from 750 MAD
- Tagine cooking class: from 640 MAD
- Food tour: from 605 MAD
- Palmery cycling tour: from 730 MAD

DAY 11 | MARRAKECH

Just like that, it's all over. Get down to breakfast and swap those Insta handles – you're going to need them for next year's reunion trip. Where to next? Asia? Africa? Europe? All the above? HECK YES!



MEALS:

- Breakfast

OTHER INFORMATION

TOPDECK APP

Feeling appy? Download the Topdeck app and get PUMPED for the adventure ahead. Best bit is: from 45 days before departure you'll be able to chat with your soon-to-be tripmates.

Plus, get your itinerary at your fingertips – so you know where you'll be going and what you'll be doing on each day of your trip. Nice!

Links:

Apple <https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/topdeck/id994727866>

Android <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.FlexiTechSolutions.TopDeck&hl=en>



YOUR SAFETY

NIGHTS OUT

We love a good night out – experiencing the nightlife and entertainment places have to offer is a big part of travelling. But alongside the fun it's important to be aware of your surroundings and personal safety.

When you're out late, remember to avoid walking alone – particularly through deserted areas like beaches and back streets. Always stick together, take a registered taxi where possible, and keep a note of your accommodation so you can find your way back to your fellow Topdeckers if you become separated. Make sure you have your trip mates' mobile numbers in case you need to get hold of them while out and about.

In some countries, alcoholic measures can be considerably larger than what you may be used to. Try to keep track of what you're drinking – and if you see one of your trip mates looking a little worse for wear, take them back to your accommodation. Never leave your drink unattended.

It's also important to be aware that what you might consider harmless flirting may be interpreted differently in some countries. Be yourself and have fun, but stay savvy – you don't want to find yourself in an uncomfortable situation.

DRUG USE

Topdeck has a strict zero-tolerance drug policy. Customers should not bring any illegal substances onto the Topdeck coach or into any of the accommodation we stay in on our trips. This includes marijuana – even if it is legal in some of the states your trip passes through. If you are found in possession of drugs, you will be removed from the trip immediately. All instances of drug possession will be reported to Topdeck Head Office, who may consider alerting the relevant authorities.

REMEMBER: if you are found in possession of drugs, not only do you risk getting in trouble with the local police, but our Driver will also be held responsible if they are found on the Topdeck coach. Trust us, you don't want that to happen to any of our Drivers – they're awesome.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Culture shock, homesickness, random periods of feeling down – these things happen and are totally normal. You can rest assured that if you're feeling low, your Topdeck crew will do their utmost to cheer you up.

Measures you can take to look after your mental health and wellbeing while on the road with us are:

- Call home. Sometimes it's nice to hear a familiar voice and have a good old-fashioned catch up with your loved ones
- Eat well. Never underestimate the power of a good, wholesome meal. Nobody feels at their best when they're hungry!
- Drink responsibly. Not only will you swerve the dreaded hangover, but by keeping an eye on what you drink you could also avoid getting into any potentially uncomfortable situations

- Talk to your Trip Leader. Don't forget, they're probably far from home too – so they're sure to know some tried- and- tested ways to beat the blues
- Integrate with your fellow Topdeckers. This one is key! The more fun you're having on your trip, the less likely you are to feel homesick (fact!)

TRAVEL SINCE COVID-19

Travel looks a bit different since COVID-19. That's why we've put some new procedures in place to help keep you safe on the road.

What remains the same? Your Topdeck trip will be run hygienically, responsibly, and with your safety at the forefront of everything we do. End of.

Here's the info: <https://www.topdeck.travel/resources/travel-safely>

RESPECT ON THE ROAD

RESPECTING FELLOW TRAVELLERS

Our trips are for everyone. We're a family – and we want every Topdecker to have an incredible time.

What we're not about is excluding people or making them feel like they don't belong. That's why we always encourage Topdeckers to be kind and courteous to their fellow tripmates . The golden rules? Respect each other's space, be mindful of causing excessive noise in shared accommodation, and treat others how you'd wish to be treated. Easy!

HOW TO BE A RESPONSIBLE TRAVELLER

Responsible travel isn't difficult to achieve. With a little conscious thought and preparation, you can have an awesome adventure AND a positive impact on the places you visit. Sweet!

Here are five things you can do to ensure you're travelling responsibly:

- Conserve water. You know the drill – reuse your room towels, take short showers and remember to turn off the tap when you're brushing your teeth
- Reduce your waste. Ditch the plastic bag, refuse unnecessary packaging, dispose of your waste responsibly and recycle as much as possible
- Go local. Hunt down locally owned and operated restaurants and bars, shop in local markets, and book tours and activities run by local guides
- Consider the wildlife. Avoid any attractions that involve closely engaging with wild animals
- Respect local people and culture. Obeying local laws is a given – but also remember to dress and behave in a manner appropriate to the community. Be polite and keep an open mind!

INSURANCE

Before your trip departs, it's compulsory for all passengers to take out comprehensive travel insurance covering cancellation, medical expenses (including repatriation), loss or damage to baggage and personal belongings, money and personal liability.

Head to our FAQ for more info: <https://www.topdeck.travel/resources/faqs-0>

Got more Qs? Chat with our Customer Service team: <https://www.topdeck.travel/about-us/contact>

PASSPORTS AND VISAS

Please make sure your passport is valid for at least six months after the last day of your trip. Some countries will refuse entry if you do not have at least six months validity remaining on your passport after your departure date. Depending on your nationality, you may require a visa to enter certain countries.

It is your responsibility to obtain visas prior to your trip's departure. To determine which visas you'll need, you can consult either your own government's website or the government websites of the countries in which you will be travelling. Check out our handy interactive map showing global visa requirements:

<https://www.topdeck.travel/resources/latest-border-restrictions>

PLEASE NOTE: some visas can take up to six weeks to acquire, so don't leave it until the last minute. Also, bear in mind that the validity of a visa often runs from its date of issue rather than the date of entry into the country. Please check with the appropriate embassy/embassies prior to departure, as requirements do change periodically.

TIPPING

Basically: it's not necessary.

Your Trip Leader and Driver don't expect tips, and they won't ask for any either. Meaning? More dollar to spend on optional activities (and a souvenir for your nan).

WHAT TO BRING

Based on our experience, these items are key. Everyone's different though – so if you want to bring more or less, go for it (as long as you don't exceed your 20kg allowance, that is!).

Off to Japan? Your luggage must be no bigger than 160cm in total (height x width x length). So maybe leave the hairdryer at home.

Psst: this is a packing list for Topdeck trips in general. Obv you'd look silly splashing around the Greek islands in a snowsuit.

- 1 pair of comfortable walking shoes + 1 pair of smart casual shoes
- 1 pair of thongs/jandals/flip-flops
- 2 pairs of jeans/trousers
- 2 pairs of shorts/skirts
- 4 shirts/T-shirts
- 2 sweaters/jumpers
- Smart casual evening wear
- 1 warm jacket + 1 rainproof jacket
- Underwear and socks + swimwear
- Towel
- Toiletries
- Hat and sunscreen

- Basic medical kit (including plasters, aspirin etc)
- Adaptor plug
- Reusable water bottle
- Snow gear



THAT'S IT!