

**Monday May 04 - Depart US.** Fly roundtrip Marrakech. We have great air price and connection times coming soon to you in Trip Tips. (Or fly RT Casablanca 2 hours transfer can be arranged.)

**Day 1 - Tuesday May 05 Arrive Marrakech 920A or 340P D**

You will be met at the airport and taken to our hotel, the Diwane Marrakech Hotel & Spa (or Le Semiramis Marrakech). Located just north of the city center, this hotel is the perfect place to call home for the next three nights! It's very close to the upscale Gueliz neighborhood which is filled with shops and galleries.

You'll have the afternoon to settle in before we all join in for a scrumptious Welcome dinner of Moroccan cuisine and get to know your fellow travelers.

Overnight: [Diwane Marrakech hotel & Spa](#)(3 nights)

Fab first-class property. [LINK](#)

**Day 2 - Wednesday May 06: Marrakech Sightseeing BD**

A full day lies ahead of us with a guided city tour of mesmerizing Marrakech. We start with the vast world-famous square of Djemaa El Fna. The name means "assembly of the dead," but this place is always alive with everything from snake charmers, soothsayers, acrobats and conjurers, musicians and slapstick acting troupes who help keep the old city's frenetic pulse.

We'll explore the towering 12<sup>th</sup> century Koutoubia Minaret, the sprawling Bahia Palace and gardens as well as the magnificent and ornate Saadian Tombs. And even if you don't consider yourself a shopper, you're going to be wowed when we head to the colorful medina where you will have free time to wander the endless corridors of souks where you can sightsee as well as bargain for treasures. Be sure to do a Hammam Bath & Spa.

For countless new things see [www.visitmarrekech.com](http://www.visitmarrekech.com)

We return to hotel in late afternoon for dinner.

Overnight: Diwane Marrakech hotel & Spa (3 nights)

**Day 3 - Thurs May 07: Day tour to Ourika Valley and Berber Village BLD**

This morning, we get away from the hustle and bustle of the city to Morocco's serenely beautiful Ourika Valley. Known for its seven waterfalls, the lush Ourika Valley sits just south of Marrakech in the foothills of the High Atlas Mountains. See, smell, and shop for the abundant essential oils and medicinal plants at the Aromatic Garden. You'll have the opportunity to visit a traditional Berber home and see how the locals live. We'll enjoy a Berber lunch at a local restaurant. A highlight of the tour will be a hike to Ourika's waterfalls where you can reward yourself with a refreshing swim in the pools of the falls.

We'll return to Marrakesh in the late afternoon and once more have dinner at the hotel.

Overnight: Diwane Marrakech hotel & Spa (3 nights)

**Day 4 - Friday May 8 - Marrakech / Ouarzazate / Dades BD**

After breakfast, we make our way to Ouarzazate along the magnificent Tizi In Tichka mountain pass through the spectacular High Atlas Mountains. The winding route is legendary and the vistas are breathtaking for epic Instagram pics.

The payoff is on the other side as we take part in the assault of the senses known as the Dades Rose Festival. Kalaat M'gouna means "Valley of the Roses" and the city itself is named after the nearby Mount Mgoun. During the 3 day festival, the streets are filled with local Berber musicians playing traditional instruments and dancing. There is also a parade and numerous booths set up by artisans and food vendors as local tribes taking to the stage and treating attendants with songs, dances, and sword maneuvers, snake charming and traditional musical instrumentals. Garlands of roses are sold by local children for a very small price.

We'll overnight at the beautiful Hotel Dades Xaluca Resort where our dinner is included.

Overnight: Hotel Dades Xaluca (1 night)

### **Day 5- Saturday May 9 - Dades, Merzouga and Sahara Sand Dunes. BD**

After breakfast, we'll take a hike through the famous Dades Gorges. Lying between the Atlas Mountains and the Jbel Sargho of the Anti-Atlas mountain range, the gorge is known for its rocky wadis. Then on to the desert village of Merzouga where you will climb aboard your camel and ride through the stunning dunes of Erg Chebbi. Be prepared to have your breath taken away as you watch the sunset over the desert.

Tonight, we are glamping in traditional Berber tents but the nomadic tribes never had it this good! We enjoy a traditional BBQ dinner with traditional dancing and drum music under the desert skies around the campfire before retiring to bed.

Overnight: Desert tent: Bivouac Palmyras Y Dunas (1 night)

### **Day 6 - Sunday May 10 - Merzouga / Tinghir / Roses Valley / Ouarzazate BD**

Watch the sunrise while taking a camel ride along the golden sand dunes in Merzouga. Then return to the inn for shower and breakfast before moving on to Tinghir. This desert oasis is situated on the plateau separating the High Atlas from the Anti Atlas Mountains and rises to an altitude of almost a mile above sea level. We get deep into the gorges of the Todra with their towering limestone walls. Our past groups loved this. Continue to the town of roses - Kelaat Mgouna.

The route is called the thousand kasbahs road for a reason. Berber villages and kasbahs dot the landscape. Kelaat Mgouna is the major access point to the breathtaking Roses' Valley. In the late spring months, the city is literally covered in roses. A pink carpet as far as the eye can see dots the otherwise brown landscape. This is Roses' harvesting season and we visit the local distilleries in Kelaat Mgouna to learn all about the distillation of the petals, the manufacturing of rose water and how it is used in cosmetics.

End the day at the boutique hotel Kenzi Azghor in Ouarzazate where we will also enjoy dinner and overnight.

Overnight: Kenzi Azghor (1 night)

### **Day 7 - Monday May 11: Ouarzazate / Ait Ben Haddou / Marrakech BD**

Start the day with a city tour of Ouarzazate, including the earthen built kasbahs of Taourirt and Tifoultout. Considered to be among the most beautiful kasbahs in Morocco, these are National Heritage sites and you will understand why as you explore the many rooms and buildings. Next, we visit the **Atlas Film Studios** where some of the most famous movie desert landscapes were and are still being shot. We'll tour the spectacular fortress of Ait Ben Haddou, the iconic landscape immortalized in such films as Lawrence of Arabia, The Mummy, Gladiator, and Alexander.

In the afternoon, we again cross the High Atlas Mountains via the Tiz In Tichka pass to Marrakech. Tonight, we enjoy a Farewell Dinner at Moroccan Restaurant

Overnight:: Diwane Marrakech hotel & Spa (1 night)

**Day 8 - Tuesday May 12: Depart Marrakech** **B**

Following breakfast, we make our way to the airport for our flights back to the States. Note – you can always arrange a post trip on own to see the Imperial Cities of the North.

**What is the Rose Festival?**

**Valley of the Roses: discover Morocco's floral festival**

Dawn is tinting the Atlas Mountains rust-red as the rose-pickers of Hdida set out for work. Dressed in flip-flops and djellabas (full-length hooded garments with long sleeves), they follow a dusty path down to the fields and before too long are lost in foliage.