**Program (4)**

**Sahara Explorer Morocco 13 D.12N**

**Day 1 - Arrive in Marrakech**

Arrive at Marrakech airport where your driver will meet you and take you straight to your riad. After checking in and enjoying a mint tea, take a horse and cart trip around the city as a fun way to help you get your bearings. We have loads of fantastic riads, one of our favourites is Riad Nashira & Spa

### Day 2 - Half Day Guided Tour of Marrakech

Discover Marrakech by embarking on a private tour of the medina. Your guide will meet you at the Riad, & will then guide you to visit the most essential and charming sights of Marrakech.

You will have a chance to visit the Bahia Place, Ben Yossedd Medersa, and the largest theological college in Morocco as well as the Saadian Tombs.

The tour is fairly flexible so feel free to discuss your interest with your guide as he can tailor it to your requirements. Overnight at the Riad Nashira

### Day 3 - Visit the Magnificent Gardens

Marrakech is famed for its sunset-hued buildings and souks, steeped in history – but the extensive gardens found throughout the city are equally revered.  Discover the abundant courtyards in the Riads, alongside the more manicured grounds of Morocco’s palaces and museums.
A visit to Marrakech is not complete unless you’ve visited the stunning Majorelle Gardens (to be booked through internet by yourself, tickets are not sold in the spot) just outside the Medina – the colours are exquisite. Another favourite is the Anima gardens, found more toward the Atlas Mountains, which are a delightful respite from the bustling city, and offer a great stop for lunch at leisure. Overnight at the Riad Nashira

### Day 4 - Marrakech - Telouet Kasbah - Ait Ben Haddou - Skoura

Depart the city and head south east to the summit of the Tizi n’Tichka pass, and begin your extended visit to the desert, mountains and valleys. The summit of Tizi n’Tichka sits at a stunning 2260m, so your transfer may take slightly longer than anticipated because you’ll be asking the driver to stop every 10 minutes for another amazing photograph!
After marveling at the Atlas Mountains, continue south east on a spectacular route via the Telouet.  This is a historic Kasbah nestled in the Atlas Mountains, in the dramatic Ounila Valley.  Built by the powerful Glaoui family in the late 19th century, Telouet is a Kasbah that was never completed.  It’s one of the least touristy spots you’ll find, and full of Moorish architecture and ‘zellige’ tile works: you may well find yourself replanning your bathroom!
Further down the road is the Ksar of Aït Benhaddou.  This is the most visited Kasbah in Morocco – and exceptionally well preserved.  Some huge budget films and TV series have been filmed here, including Lawrence of Arabia, Gladiator and Game of Thrones.  No wonder, due to its UNESCO heritage status and incredible architecture.
This is a great Kasbah for a short visit, its prominence in modern screen productions.  Not to be missed, but perhaps not to be lingered at either.
Continue your journey to Skoura, and the L’Ma Lodge, where you’ll stay this evening.

### Day 5 - Rose and Dades Valley

Today explore the Rose and Dades Valley as well as the village of Sidi Flah and other secrets places.
Only 30km from Skoura, keen trekkers can hike in the paths of Mt M’Goum, a sanctuary of nomadic peoples.There is some further great trekking to be found in the Dades Valley, with deep gorges carved by water over thousands of years.  Depending on the time of year, rivers still run through the valley floor.Todra Gorge is a canyon in the eastern part of the Atlas Mountains and one of our favourite treks to complete in this dramatic landscape.  Hike up the mouth of the gorge and marvel at the overhanging cliffs, and stop at a local cafe if you choose.  Your driver will be able to recommend their favourite food stop!

### Day 6 - Skoura - Dar Hnini

Head back toward Ouarzazate.  After the city, you’ll experience another beautiful drive through centuries-old rock formations.  You are now headed towards Zagora, and will spend the night at the breathtaking Dar Hnini oasis.There are many things to see on the way to Dar Hnini, so the choice is yours whether to head straight to the poolside to lie with a cup of mint tea, or stop along the way at evocative kasbahs, the palmeraie, local cafes or rivers at the base of mountains.  Often referred to as the ‘route of the thousand Kasbahs,’ this transfer is one of the most scenic Morocco has to offer.

### Day 7 - A night in the Sahara Desert under the stars

The next day you continue towards Zagora.  After Zagora, the scenery starts to change to become more desert-like.Stop off at the local pottery of Tamegroute and, if you dare, visit the ferociously hot kilns.  There are plenty of locally made ceramics to purchase here decorated with the famous green glaze, which was developed by a religious brotherhood with help from the craftsmen of Fez.The tarmac road ends at M’Hamid, before the off-road journey to the desert camp begins.Before off-roading, stop for a coffee at M’Hamid’s palmeraie – an oasis in the harsh landscape, kept green through traditional irrigation systems. Tonight, you’ll stay at a nomadic camp.  This is a basic desert camp found nestled at the base of stunning yellow sand dunes.

### Day 8 - Desert Luxury

From the nomadic camp at Erg Chigaga, you will be transferred to the luxury camp, where plenty of activities await.

You can go sand boarding, camel riding, visit the oasis, but you don’t have to… if you prefer, chill with your favorite book and enjoy the phenomenal surroundings.

You can do as much or as little as you like, and the friendly staff is on hand to cater to your every need. This luxury camp is a true oasis in the sand.  It can be hard to think what ‘luxury’ might look like in such a challenging environment, but imagine plush tent decor, Egyptian cotton sheets, a huge comfortable bed and attentive staff. And did we mention the sky?  You’ll never look at the stars the same way again.  Watching the universe from the depths of the Sahara desert is a transcendental experience. If you’d prefer to take some rest after a busy few days and stop moving for a short while, ask our Morocco expert to change your booking to two nights at the luxury camp.

### Day 9 - Chiggaga Dunes - Taroudant

Today you will take a long transfer through the ‘badlands’ of Erg Chigaga… through scorched desert plains, dry lake beds (Lac Iriki, made famous by the Paris-Dakar rally) and soft dunes that take some skill to navigate. Your driver will whisk you through this off-road trail, but again, you may find yourself asking to stop to take photographs along the way of the extreme landscapes.  It’s a ‘middle of nowhere’ experience, and not to be missed – the sense of humanity’s scale amidst this unforgiving route is something else.

Just at the point where you’ll wonder if you’ll ever see human settlements again, you’ll find the tarmac road again to Tazenakht, the carpet-making centre of this part of Morocco.  If you’re after a beautiful handmade rug, this is your chance to do some serious shopping.

En route to your accommodation at Dar Al Hossoun, stop by Taliouine, the saffron-producing hub of Morocco.

### Day 10 - Explore Taroudant

In the middle of the Sous Valley lie the ramparts of Taroudant.  You’ll find them between the High Atlas and the Anti-Atlas mountains.Boasting gardens and patios galore; this is a beautiful city that has not yet been exposed to large volumes of tourism.  Trading in indigo, sugar and cotton, there’s a long history of conquest behind this city and not much has changed over time, with European influence clearly visible.

This is often referred to as ‘little Marrakech,’ and is well worth the visit.

### Day 11 - Off to the beach

Travel from Taroudant up the winding coast road to Essaouira to relax for 4 days after a packed itinerary.

There is loads to do around Essaouira: camel trekking or quad-biking on the massive beaches, multiple water sports to try out and the town itself has fabulous souks and many delightful places to eat.You can stay in one of the riads in the centre of Essaouira or, if you need some peace and quiet, choose somewhere like Rebali Riads, located on the beach just a short taxi ride to the south of the town.  This is the perfect place to wind down after the days on the road.

### Day 12 - Explore Essaouira

The chances are, you’ll still be exhausted from your travels, so why not book a spa treatment at Rebali Riads before visiting Essaouira to wander through the souk, food markets and small shops lining the streets.
Enjoy meals prepared at the riad on your rooftop terrace, overlooking Sidi Kaouki.

### Day 13 - Home

On day 13 your driver will take you back to the airport to catch your plane home.  The airport at Essaouira is less than 30 minutes away, or takes one last transfer to Marrakech international.
We’ll be here to help plan your next off-the-beaten-Moroccan-track adventure when the wanderlust hits again!

**Package Price on TWIN Sharing Basis  at 4\* hotels 🡪  Price starts from US$ 3075 per person**

**INCLUSION**

* Meet and assist by our driver
* Accommodation at the hotels & riads listed above or similar on bed & breakfast only
* Transportation: A/C vehicle Mini Van 6 seats
* Monuments admission as listed in the itinerary
* Dinner at L’Ma Lodge, Dar Hnini, the deset Cheggaga and Dar Al Hossoun in Taroudant
* Bottled Mineral water onboard
* City sightseeing with our local guides in Marrakech, Taroudant & Essaouira

**EXCLUDES**

* Flights
* Entry visa to Morocco
* Meals & drinks not listed in the itinerary
* Drinks
* Tipping
* Travel Insurance
* Personal expenses