



Tour: MOROCCO DESERT FIELD STUDIES
Itinerary: 9-days / 8-nights total trip
Location: Marrakesh & the Atlas Mountains
Availability: Year-round

MOROCCO - DESERT FIELD STUDIES & CULTURE

Day	Meals	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
1	In Flight	Travel overnight to Marrakesh, Morocco		
2	D	Arrive Marrakesh; transfer to Hotel	Welcome, Safety & Orientation Briefing	Traditional Moroccan Welcome Dinner
3	B, L, D	Full-day Guided City Tour of the History & Culture of Marrakesh Medina Historical District, Palaces, Monuments, Souks, Mosques & Local Artisans		Hotel Dinner Atlas Golf Observatory & Astronomy Master Class
4	B, L, D	Atlas Kinder Orphanage Service Project	Morocco Geography & Ecology Master Class at the Museum of Marrakesh Mohammed VI Museum for Water Civilization - Guided Tour	Local Dinner & Free Time
5	B, L, D	Argan Oil Cooperative - Methods / Chemistry / Sustainability Master Class	Travel to Imilil Village, Armed Village exploration, waterfall visit, tea with a Berber family and local school visit	
6	B, L, D	Field Studies Program - Flooding and Hazards in a Mountain Environment	Field Studies Program - River & Water Quality Studies	
7	B, L, D	Field Studies Program - Ecotourism and Rural Settlement Study	Field Studies Wrap-Up Session	Moroccan Cooking Class with Chef Tarik
8	B, L, D	SPANNA Marrakesh - Lecture & Volunteerism Animal Welfare Treat-Train-Teach	Camel Ride & Master Class Lifecycle, Diet, Anatomy & Behavioral	Agafay Desert Quad Bike Adventure Chez Ali Fantasia Farewell Dinner Show
9	B	Transfer to Marrakesh Airport; return trip Home		



As with all sample itineraries, please be advised that this is an 'example' of a schedule and that the activities and hotels shown may be variable dependent upon dates, weather, special requests and other factors. Itineraries will be confirmed prior to travel.



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 1200 SE 14th Street, Suite 8-150
 Bentonville, Arkansas 72712
 P: 984.223.9866
www.HammockExpeditions.com
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Day 1

Overnight flight; meals in flight

Depart on your journey to Morocco! Most groups will depart in the evening hours for an overnight flight, but it will depend upon your origination and your flight routing. Dependent upon your air carrier, meals may be available for purchase or may be included. Best practice is for students to plan to purchase meals until your flights are confirmed and all inclusions are stated.



Day 2

Lunch & dinner

MOROCCO... Morocco is a country of vibrant contrasts — where ancient medinas meet modern cities, desert landscapes stretch beyond the horizon, and cultural traditions are woven into daily life. From the bustling souks of Marrakesh to the quiet beauty of mountain villages and desert dunes, Morocco offers a rich tapestry of history, science, and human connection. Its geography spans coastlines, mountains, and arid plains, making it an ideal setting for both cultural exploration and environmental fieldwork.

For students, Morocco is more than a destination - it's a living classroom. This program blends immersive cultural experiences with hands-on field studies in ecology, sustainability, chemistry, and geography. Students engage with local communities, participate in service projects, and explore real-world science through guided workshops and outdoor learning. It's a journey that builds global awareness, scientific curiosity, and personal growth - all in one unforgettable adventure.

SAMPLE HOTELS

Marrakech:

[Almas Hotel](#)

Atlas Mountains Field Study:

[Hotel Aremd](#)

Welcome, Safety & Orientation Meeting – This is our group meeting to set your team up for success. Your Tour Director will go over everything from safety to weather, your itinerary, plus a fire drill. Have questions or want to add something to your itinerary? Your Tour Director is appointed to serve your group throughout your stay in the Morocco.



Day 3

Breakfast, lunch & dinner

Rise and shine Morocco! Today we'll spend getting to know Morocco – its culture and history. Today's activities include:



Marrakesh Guided City Tour - Full day discovering Marrakesh by exploring the bustling Medina, a vibrant labyrinth of narrow streets rich with history and culture. Embark on a guided walking tour to delve into the area's captivating past, meet local artisans whose skills remain uniquely unchanged, and visit historically significant palaces and monuments offering a fascinating insight into the history and culture of Marrakesh.



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Atlas Golf Observatory & Astronomy Master Class - An evening passed in the sky awaits at the Atlas Golf Observatory. Begin with a lecture on space and the solar system before viewing the sky with the largest telescope in Morocco. (warm clothes and hats recommended)

Day 4

Breakfast, lunch & dinner

Today's activities include:



Atlas Kinder Orphanage - Bring smiles to faces this morning on a visit to Atlas Kinder, a non-profit organization dedicated to helping children who have been abandoned or surrendered due to social pressure, illness, or poverty. Plan and facilitate a language or fun sports activity for the children to share in with you. We'll have our lunch at the orphanage with the local children.



Museum of Marrakech: Morocco Geography Lecture – Explore the heart of Moroccan heritage. The Marrakech Museum, located in the old center of the city, offers a journey through the rich cultural and artistic heritage of Morocco. Housed in the Dar Menebhi Palace, a beautiful example of classical Andalusian architecture, the museum presents a diverse collection of Moroccan art, archaeological artifacts, and ethnographic objects. While here, students will participate in a master class lecture based on Morocco's geography, geology and ecology.



Mohammed VI Museum for the Water Civilization with Guided Tour – Enjoy exploring the science behind water conservation with an interactive and educational hydraulic adventure. This museum is a fascinating cultural site conveying the message of humans and water in Morocco through installations, mock-ups, new technology, historic reconstruction and a review of water management as it applies to this Moroccan desert region.

Day 5

Breakfast, lunch & dinner

Today we'll travel to Imlil, a small village in the high Atlas Mountains. Today's focus includes learning about the extraction and chemistry of Argan Oil, a guided waterfall hike, and time getting to know the **Berber** people and culture.



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IMLIL - Imlil is a typical mountain village located 90 km from Marrakech, in the High Atlas. It is the starting point for all hikes to the Toubkal, the highest peak in Morocco and North Africa (4167 m). The landscapes are of exceptional beauty whatever the season. For several months of the year the ridges around Imlil are covered in snow. Crystal-clear streams flow into the river that runs through the Berber villages along the valley offering views of the surrounding mountains, stone and adobe villages while giving a rewarding insight into the way of life of the local mountain people.



Today's activities include:



Argan Oil Comparative Workshop - Learn about the importance of Argan oil in Moroccan culture and its economic significance. We'll learn the traditional process used to transform argan kernels into luxurious oil, cherished for its beauty and culinary benefits, as well as essential techniques to create the "liquid gold" and understand its benefits. Prime study areas include methods of extraction (traditional and modern), chemistry of extraction with a process overview from argan nuts, and a sustainability discussion based on oil production and its impact on local communities and ecosystems



Guided Imlil Waterfall Hike - After lunch we'll take a [guided hike](#) where we can enjoy the scenic beauty of the area and learn about the local flora and fauna. Imlil Cascades is a small series of waterfalls just outside the small Berber village of Imlil. Located in the High Atlas mountains it is the starting point for trekking to nearby Mount Toubkal, the highest peak in North Africa.



Berber Village Visit & Traditional Tea Ceremony - When you visit the Berber villages of Morocco, you step into a world shaped by centuries of tradition, unique architecture, and welcoming hospitality. Exploring these communities lets you experience authentic daily life, from sharing mint tea with locals to witnessing how ancient customs continue alongside modern influences. Set amidst the dramatic landscapes of the Atlas Mountains, several villages offer a stark contrast to Morocco's bustling cities and showcase a vibrant culture that has endured for generations. Later, we'll visit a local school to understand the education system while interacting with students and teachers.

Day 6

Breakfast, lunch & dinner

Today's activities include:

Morning Field Study: Flooding and Hazards in a Mountain Environment

- Introduction: Overview of mountain hazards, focusing on flooding and landslides
- Case Studies: Examination of past incidents and their impacts on the local environment and communities
- Field Observations: Visit areas prone to flooding and landslides, observing warning signs and mitigation measures



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Afternoon Field Study: River Studies

- Hydrology Basics: Introduction to river systems, hydrology, and the water cycle in mountain environments
- Field Measurements: Conducting measurements of river flow, sediment transport, and water quality
- Environmental Impact: Discussing the impact of river dynamics on local ecosystems and human activities

Day 7

Breakfast, lunch & dinner Cooking Class

Today's activities include:

Morning Field Study: Ecotourism and Rural Settlement Study

- Tourism Impact: Exploring the effects of tourism on the Imlil area's environment and communities
- Sustainable Practices: Identifying sustainable tourism practices that benefit the local economy and preserve the natural environment
- Rural Settlement Study
- Settlement Patterns: Examining traditional and modern settlement patterns in the Imlil area
- Cultural and Economic Factors: Understanding how geography, culture, and economy influence settlement and development in mountain regions

Wrap-Up Session - In the afternoon we'll spend have a recap & debrief, summarizing our key learning from the last two days. Afterwards, we'll travel back to Marrakesh via Tahanout.



Moroccan Cooking Class – Enjoy a traditional Cooking Class with Chef Tarik! Watch this [VIDEO LINK](#). Learn how to prepare and cook a Moroccan meal while enjoying the countryside relaxation. The Garden is located about 29 km from the city of Marrakech. Upon arrival, you'll have the opportunity to visit the organic farm and be able to enjoy a fabulous experience.

Day 8

Breakfast, lunch & farewell dinner

Today's activities include:



SPANA Marrakesh - Established in 1923, SPANA's goal is simple: to improve the welfare of working animals in vulnerable communities across the world. Through three key areas – treating, training and teaching – they're inspiring others to act in the best interests of working animals while also providing practical, professional and sustainable solutions today. Today we'll visit the care center, learn about working animals in the local community, and participate in a lecture on animal welfare in Morocco.



Camel Ride Adventure - Experience the thrill and beauty of Morocco on an adventure that combines tradition and excitement. Begin with an interactive talk led by an expert on camel anatomy and physiology. Learn about the unique adaptations that make camels suited for desert life, including their water conservation mechanisms, heat tolerance, and distinctive physical features then embark on a leisurely camel ride where you can soak in the serene landscape of lush palm groves and distant Atlas Mountains, experiencing the traditional mode of transport that has been used by Moroccans for centuries.



Quad Biking Adventure - After the calm of the camel ride, switch gears and ramp up the excitement with a quad biking session! These powerful all-terrain vehicles offer a more adrenaline-pumping way to explore the extensive network of tracks that wind through the palm and olive trees. The quad experience provides a perfect balance of speed and manoeuvrability, allowing you to experience the beauty of the Palmeraie with a thrilling twist.



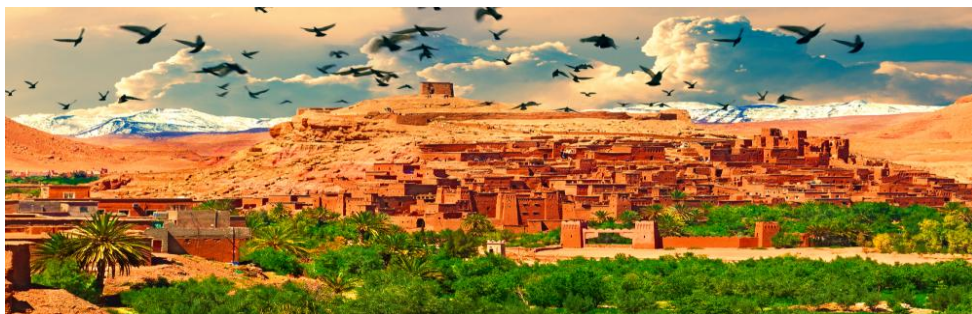
Dinner & Show at Chez Ali - Enchanted by the legendary Moroccan folklore, you will eat, listen and watch a recreation of ancestral Berber celebrations. Riders dressed in traditional costumes imitate the battles and demonstrations of battle between warring tribes. Dinner includes Moroccan Harrira soup, a barbecue, couscous with vegetables and a platter of fresh fruit. During dinner, the Berber tribes of Zaïanes and Kelaat M'gouna will perform choreographed dances that show the rich history of the Kingdom of Morocco, followed by a belly dancing and acrobatic games. You'll enjoy the horsemen reenacting scenes of war between the ancient Berbers and the desert knights, and to close the show, a fireworks display will light up the sky!

Day 9

Breakfast (dependent upon departure time)

Rise and shine Morocco! After breakfast at our hotel and dependent upon flight times, we'll pack-up and wave goodbye to our new friends as we head to the airport to travel home, taking away memories that will last forever.

Ma'a Salama!



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DID YOU KNOW?

- ✓ Morocco's official name is the Kingdom of Morocco and it's the second oldest ruling dynasty in the world. The royal family has been in power since 1631 and claims descent of the Islamic Prophet Muhammad.
- ✓ Morocco has two official languages - Berber and Moroccan Arabic (aka Darija), plus plenty of regional dialects. Due to the French colonization, a lot of Moroccans speak French and, in the northern regions they often speak Spanish. English is also widely spoken due to tourism.
- ✓ Morocco has the oldest university in the world with a long history of civilization. The Kairaouine Mosque in Fes became the world's first university in 859. The University operated independently for a long time but became part of the state educational system in 1963. It is known today as the University of al-Kairaouine.
- ✓ Morocco has been rated as one of the top destinations in the world for food lovers. Traditional Moroccan cuisine is based on flavorful, fresh ingredients and balanced use of dried spices and herbs. Famous Moroccan dishes include tajine and couscous. Moroccan cuisine is also bread-based, and it is served with almost every meal, sometimes used instead of utensils (be sure to manage it with your right hand, as eating with your left hand is considered impolite).
- ✓ Morocco produces excellent wine. As a Muslim country, it might surprise you to know that Morocco has a thriving wine production. The Romans first brought viticulture to Morocco some 2,000 years ago. When Islam was established in the 7th century, the vineyards were mostly abandoned until Morocco became a French Protectorate and revived the vineyards. In the 1990s, French wine brand Castel took over the wine production in Morocco. The most popular Moroccan wine is a fruity rosé called Gris de Boulaouane.
- ✓ Morocco exports dates and argan oil, which comes from the fruit of the argan tree that's native to the country. Argan oil is rich in antioxidants and fatty acids and is used all over the world for cosmetic purposes.
- ✓ Not just writers and singers love Morocco; filmmakers do as well. Outside of Hollywood, Morocco is home to the largest film sets in the world. The Atlas film studios in Ouarzazate are nicknamed "Morocco's Hollywood." *Lawrence of Arabia*, *Gladiator*, Bertolucci's *The Sheltering Sky*, and Scorsese's *Kundun* were all shot in Morocco. As were *Mission Impossible*, *Babel*, *Kingdom of Heaven*, *The Mummy Returns*, and of course: *Casablanca*. Morocco also served as a film location for *Game of Thrones*.
- ✓ Moroccans love coffee, but worship tea. Traditional Moroccan tea is a blend of Chinese green tea and mint with a lot of sugar and requires several steps, or "washings," to brew. Real Moroccan tea is worth the wait and perfect in the heat. The sweet and fragrant drink is nicknamed "Berber Whiskey" and offered to guests upon visiting Moroccan houses and shops.



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COUNTRY INSIGHTS

Geography: Morocco is located in Northern Africa, bordering the North Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea, between Algeria and Mauritania; geographic coordinates 28 30 N, 10 00 W.

Climate: Most of Morocco, particularly along the coast, experiences a typical Mediterranean climate, with mild, wet winters and hot, dry summers. [CLIMATE DETAIL](#)

Population & Age Structure: Total population is approximately 37,387,585 with 18,664,263 males and 18,723,322 females as of a 2024 estimate. 0-14 years: 25.7%, 15-64 years: 65.9%, 65 years and over: 8.4%. The median age is 30.6 years.



Passports & Visas: US, Canadian & UK citizens don't currently need a visa to visit Morocco for up to 90 days if they have a valid passport and a return or onward ticket. You must have at least one blank page in your passport. The 90-day maximum stay begins on the date of the entry stamp. Visit the Embassy of the Kingdom of Morocco website for the most current visa information.

Time Zone: During the month of Ramadan, Morocco apply GMT and GMT+1 the rest of the year.

Health & Safety: Apart from universal vaccinations, no additional vaccination is required to visit Morocco. Please check with your personal physician for any recommendations for travel to Morocco. In case of a medical emergency, please call the single national toll-free number "141".

Currency: The official currency unit of Morocco is the Moroccan dirham (DH) which is abbreviate (MAD). You can generally pay by cash or credit card. In establishments that don't give the possibility to pay by credit card, it is preferable to pay in dirhams. The best places to change your currency are the exchange offices that are located in the tourist squares of each city in Morocco. You can change your currency at the airport or in hotels as well.

Internet: Generally, all hotels in Morocco have a high-speed connection, and many establishments offer free WI-FI connection: restaurants, cafeterias, airports, etc.

Drinking Water: Generally speaking, it's best to drink filtered water. In the major cities, the tap water is chlorinated and will usually cause no harm, but it's still wise to either purify this water yourself or choose another water source, as your body may react to unfamiliar bacteria in the water, causing sickness or diarrhea. Brushing your teeth with this water should be fine. In remote or rural areas, stick to treated water. If you wish to drink tea, it is best to check if this has been made using filtered water.



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MOROCCO DESERT FIELD STUDIES

Minimum Booking Numbers: 20 students

What's Included:

- ✓ Roundtrip international flights
- ✓ 7-nights' accommodation in Morocco
- ✓ Breakfasts, lunches and dinners daily starting with dinner on arrival and ending with breakfast on departure (dependent on departure time)
- ✓ Airport transfers & transportation to all activities
- ✓ Full-day Guided Tour of Marrakesh – Historical Districts, Palaces, Monuments, Souks, Mosques & Local Artisans
- ✓ Atlas Golf Observatory & Astronomy Master Class
- ✓ Atlas Kinder Orphanage & Service Project
- ✓ Morocco Geography & Ecology Master Class
- ✓ Museum of Water Civilization – Guided Tour
- ✓ Argan Oil Cooperative – Chemistry, Extraction & Sustainability
- ✓ Imlil Waterfall Hike
- ✓ Armed Village & Berber Family excursion & School Visit
- ✓ Field Study: Flooding & Hazards in a Mountain Environment
- ✓ Field Study: River & Water Quality
- ✓ Field Study: Ecotourism & Rural Settlement Study
- ✓ Moroccan Cooking Class with Chef Tarik
- ✓ SPANA Animal Lecture & Volunteer Project
- ✓ Camel Ride & Master Class – Lifecycle, Diet, Anatomy & Behavioral
- ✓ Agafay Desert Quad Bike Adventure
- ✓ Farewell Dinner & Show at Chez Ali
- ✓ Personal Tour Director
- ✓ 24-hour emergency cover

What's Not Included:

- ☒ Fully comprehensive insurance (mandatory)
- ☒ Transfers to/from home airport
- ☒ Baggage costs, pay directly to airline if required
- ☒ Baggage handling - each student should be able to pull their own suitcase
- ☒ Transportation for activities not shown in the itinerary
- ☒ Meal selections other than ones provided for the entire group (we are generally able to cater for allergy conditions, vegetarians, halal and in some cases vegan)
- ☒ Snacks & beverages other than what is shown above at mealtimes
- ☒ BEVERAGES –table water is provided at restaurants; each participant will be able to purchase independent beverages at meal times
- ☒ Cost of personal passports, visas or visa waiver fees
- ☒ Cost of inoculations or medication required for travel
- ☒ Sightseeing / Entertainment / Transportation options not shown in itinerary
- ☒ Hotel incidental deposits & bills – mini-bar, convenience mart, etc.
- ☒ Any gratuities – drivers, hotel services, local guides, tour director (suggested budget \$60 USD pp)
- ☒ Credit card fees if individuals wish to pay via credit card instead of ACH (online check)
- ☒ Additional taxes, fuel surcharges or fees levied by governments / suppliers

As always, our staff are always available to you to answer any questions you may have regarding programming.
If we may serve you in any way, please do not hesitate to contact us.



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