

# EXPLORE!

## Tour Notes



RMO 2014



TOUR  
DURATION  
**11**  
DAYS



**Tour Style:** Classic  
**Tour Pace:** Moderate

**Tour Type:** Small Groups  
**Tour Comfort:** Standard

**Tour Code:** RMO

### Tour Highlights - Moorish Spain to Marrakech

- ✓ Travel with the locals - A journey by train to discover the highlights of Andalucia and Morocco.
- ✓ Ronda - One of the original 'Pueblos Blancos' and El Tajo Gorge.
- ✓ Zahara de la Sierra, Setenil and Grazalema - Fortified Moorish villages and picturesque white washed buildings.
- ✓ Fes - The atmospheric medina also known as 'Mecca of the West'.
- ✓ Marrakech - The vibrant souks of the 'Red City' and the iconic Djemaa el Fna Square.

### Tour Essentials

**Accommodation:** 9 nights Standard Hotel  
1 night Simple Hotel

**Included Meals:** 10 breakfasts, 0 lunches, 0 dinners

**Start Point:** Join tour: Malaga

**End Point:** Tour ends: Marrakech

**Transport:** Bus, Train, Taxi

**Countries:** Spain, Morocco

## Moorish Spain To Marrakech

Travelling by train we visit Andalucian Hill Villages and explore the Imperial Cities of Morocco, including Rabat, Fes and Marrakech. From our carriage windows we watch as the architecture changes from whitewashed Spanish villages to the characteristic minarets and medinas of Morocco. Along the way we sample traditional Andalucian tapas and the best of Moroccan cuisine.

### Suitability

We've given each of our tours a comfort rating and a tour pace, walking or cycling grade to give you a general idea about the level of activity on each tour and the standard of accommodation you will be staying in at the end of your day's adventure.

Often you'll stay in different styles of accommodation during your tour; so we make an average rating across the entire tour. For more information on where you'll stay each night, please refer to the day by day tour itinerary.

### Tour Comfort: Standard

Our mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en-suite facilities.

### Tour Style: Classic

Packed with adventure, these tours offer inspiring destinations and authentic travel experiences at a reasonable price. Using all kinds of transport and accommodation, we'll take you off the beaten track to discover the true heart of the people and places you visit.

### Tour Pace: Moderate

These moderately paced tours provide some busy days with plenty of experiences to enjoy, as well as time to relax along the way.

## Your tour itinerary

### Tour itinerary notes

While our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day itinerary as printed below, a degree of flexibility is built in. Overnight stops may vary from those suggested.

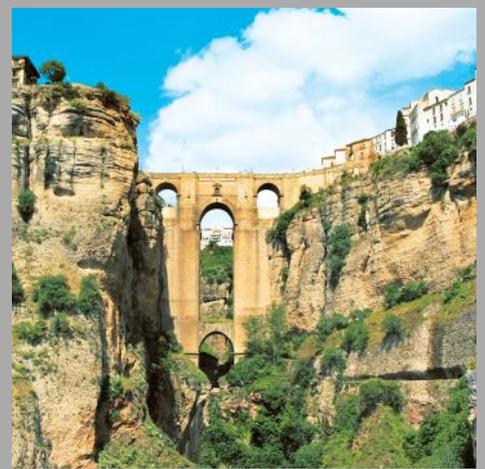
### Your Tour Leader

A Tour Leader is an integral part of any Explore tour and your tour will be led by one of our experienced tour leaders who have been handpicked and expertly trained. We believe that our Tour Leaders are the key to the success of our tours; they are passionate travellers who are bursting with first-hand local knowledge which they love to share. Your tour Leader will also take care of all the planning and organisation throughout your journey. Their passionate approach will make this tour fun and inspiring, bringing the destination to life whether you're travelling alone or with others.

### DAY 1 Join tour in Malaga

Our tour starts today in Malaga. Depending on the schedule of your flights you may want to spend some time exploring the city independently, before joining your group and Tour Leader.

 **Overnight: Standard Hotel**



## DAY 2 Train or bus to Ronda

This morning we travel to Ronda by train or bus depending on availability. On arrival in Ronda we transfer to our hotel and enjoy an afternoon in one of southern Spain's most attractive towns. Ronda is one of the original pueblos blancos (white towns). There will be time to wander the streets and marvel at the El Tajo gorge and visit the oldest bullring in Spain. Please note breakfast may be taken outside of the hotel.

 **Overnight: Standard Hotel**

## DAY 3 Visit Zahara de la Sierra, Setenil and Grazalema

We spend the day exploring by bus, the beautiful rolling landscapes west of Ronda. Arriving at the fortified Moorish hill village of Zahara is like stepping back in time. Its whitewashed terraces are dominated by an impressive Moorish tower and a Baroque church lies at the heart of the village. We also plan to visit Grazalema, nestled beneath the limestone peak of San Cristobal and the tiny pueblo of Setenil de las Bodegas, a wine producing village whose houses are built into the overhanging cliff.

 **Overnight: Standard Hotel**

## DAY 4 Andalucia Express to Algeciras and ferry to Tangier

We travel the attractive Andalucia Express route south from Ronda towards the coast through rolling countryside via the painted villages of San Roque, Castellar de la Frontera and Gaucin. On arrival at Algeciras, we transfer to the ferry port and catch an early afternoon ferry across the Straits of Gibraltar to Tangier in Morocco. We immediately immerse ourselves in the vibrancy and heady atmosphere of a Moroccan medina - a network of market squares and backstreets - with a guided walking tour. The contrast between the calm streets and squares of Ronda and the more energetic atmosphere of Tangier is quite incredible.

 **Overnight: Standard Hotel**  
**Single Room Option** available

## DAY 5 Morning train to Fes; afternoon in Fes

A journey by train takes us from Tangier to Fes, the cultural capital of Morocco. Its colourful history is full of wars, murders, intrigue and cloak-and-dagger politics. Fes has also played an important part in Moroccan trade, culture, religion and politics as well as having been the seat of learning and science. The old and new towns are adjacent but totally separate entities. Panoramic views of Fes El Bali (the old city), seen from the North Borj (tower), are very useful to help you orientate yourself for when you are in the narrow alleyways. Fes also has quite an active nightlife, centred around Avenues Hassan II and Mohammed V. We enjoy two nights here to take in all the city has to offer.

 **Overnight: Standard Hotel**  
**Single Room Option** available

## DAY 6 Guided walking tour of Fes; optional visit to Volubilis

This morning we take a guided walking tour of the Medina. We will explore the souks in the backstreets and wander through the craft areas, past the spice stalls, through the brass and copperware areas and look in on the tanners. Beautiful buildings include the Sanctuary of Moulay Idriss 2nd, the Kairaouine Mosque and the Al Andalus Mosque (viewed from the outside only). Craftwork made and sold in Fes medina is considered to be some of the best in Morocco. In the afternoon you have a chance to visit ancient Volubilis. The optional trip takes us into the hills and to the ancient site of Volubilis - the capital of the Roman province Mauritania Tingitana. The detailed mosaics here are still intact and the site gives a good idea of the layout of provincial settlements. If time allows we will stop off at the viewpoint overlooking the Holy City of Moulay Idriss. Named after Morocco's most revered saint and creator of the Arab dynasty, it is a great place of pilgrimage. We then return to Fes.

 **Overnight: Standard Hotel**  
**Single Room Option** available

## DAY 7 Train to Rabat

We catch the morning train to the modern capital, Rabat for a sightseeing tour. Although it was only established as the capital in 1912 by the French, Rabat's history stretches back to a settlement in the 8th century BC. We take a guided tour around the Hassan Tower

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and the Mausoleum of Mohammed V. We wander through the Kasbah des Oudaias, originally a fortified town now with a distinctly Andalusian influence. This afternoon there is an optional visit to the historical Chellah dating back to the 8th century BC. Once a prosperous Roman town and transformed by the Merinids into a cemetery, the Chellah is a fascinating and atmospheric place to visit.

 **Overnight: Simple Hotel**  
**Single Room Option** available

## DAY 8 Train to Marrakech via Casablanca

This morning we will take a train to Casablanca to visit the famous King Hassan II Mosque (optional entry), possibly the biggest religious monument for Muslims after Mecca. Finished in 1993, this magnificent building is covered in decorative zellij tiles and has beautiful cedar wood carvings - proof that the ancient crafts are still very much alive. This afternoon we will continue our journey by train to Marrakech, the spiritual heart of Morocco.

 **Overnight: Standard Hotel**  
**Swimming Pool** available  
**Single Room Option** available

## DAY 9 Walking tour of Marrakech; PM free

Marrakech is a feast for the senses. Like many North African towns, Marrakech is divided into two distinct parts, the Gueliz (or modern French built city) and the Medina (the old city). It has always been a meeting place for the mountain Berbers and the desert peoples of the South and the colourful souks perfectly illustrate this fact. This morning a local guide will take us for a walking tour of the old city. Taking a closer look at the maze of narrow streets filled with the sounds, colours and smells of the exotic and an opportunity to visit the Ben Youssef Medersa. The afternoon is left free for you to further explore the city. Well worth visiting are the Saadian Tomb, the Dar Si Said Palace (now Museum of Moroccan Art), the Menara Gardens or the Majorelle Gardens including the Museum of Islamic Art a short taxi ride away. No visit to the city of Marrakech is complete without a visit to the celebrated Djemaa El Fna Square and a spectacle not to be missed at dusk are the many street performers presenting a scene straight out of the pages of Arabian Nights.

 **Overnight: Standard Hotel**  
**Swimming Pool** available  
**Single Room Option** available

## DAY 10 Free in Marrakech; optional visit to High Atlas

For a complete change of scenery, you may choose to go on an optional visit to a nearby High Atlas village today. The High Atlas is North Africa's greatest mountain range. Populated by Berber tribesmen, it has always been an area culturally removed from the rest of Morocco, a barrier between the northern plains and the pre-Sahara. Alternatively you may choose to stay and extend your exploration of Marrakech.

 **Overnight: Standard Hotel**  
**Swimming Pool** available  
**Single Room Option** available

## DAY 11 Tour ends Marrakech

The tour ends today in Marrakech after breakfast. Depending on the schedule of your flights, you may wish to spend some additional time exploring the souks and buying the last souvenirs.

## Accommodation and Meals

### Food & Drink

Included meals: 10 breakfasts, 0 lunches, 0 dinners included in the price of this tour. Please be prepared to pay for non-included meals. Please note that costs for drinks and meals can vary depending on location.

## Budgeting for your Tour

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the tour price, any optional sightseeing, souvenirs and items of a personal nature such as laundry.

### Other Sightseeing & Activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations.

Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

### Optional Excursions

Casablanca - Hassan II Mosque €12

Rabat - Chellah €1

Fes - Half day visit to Volubilis by bus, with specialist guide including ents approx €25 (depending on group size).

Marrakech - Full day excursion (from Marrakech) to village in Atlas Mountains, with Berber lunch approx €40.

### Tipping - Local Crew

Local Crew: Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour. Accordingly, you should allow approx 20 Euros for tips for the guides, drivers and other local staff. In Spain tipping is discretionary.

### Tipping - Tour Leader

Tour Leader: At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

## Foreign Exchange

### Spain

**Local Currency:** Euros

**Recommended Currency for Exchange:** We recommend you take the majority of your spending money in Euros cash.

**Where to Exchange:** Your tour leader will advise you on arrival.

**ATM Availability:** Your tour leader will advise you on arrival.

**Credit Card Acceptance:** Visa and Mastercard are generally accepted in larger restaurants and some shops.

**Travellers Cheques:** Not recommended.

### Morocco

**Local Currency:** Moroccan Dirham (MAD).

**Recommended Currency for Exchange:** US Dollars, Sterling and Euros are readily exchangeable. We recommend you take a mixture of cash and credit cards. Scottish bank notes and Australian dollar travellers cheques and cash are NOT normally accepted in Morocco.

**Where to Exchange:** Most major towns - your Tour Leader will advise you.

**ATM Availability:** ATMs are available in main towns/cities, though can be unreliable.

**Credit Card Acceptance:** Not all places.

**Travellers Cheques:** Travellers cheques are difficult to exchange and are not recommended.

## Joining your Tour

### Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

### Booking a land only package with Explore

For passengers making their own travel arrangements, please ensure you join the group as described on day one of the tour itinerary. If you are considering purchasing your own airline tickets, you can book these through any travel agent, directly with an airline or through an online flight consolidator. In all cases, we would be happy to arrange transfers to and from the joining point of your tour if required.

### Joining Tour Abroad

Clients booked on '**Land Only**' arrangements should make their own way to the joining point. Please refer to separate '**Joining Instructions**' for time and place of rendezvous with tour leader

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## Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a huge selection of competitive flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport to ensure you get the very best priced flight at all times.

On our website we do display a UK flight inclusive package price which is usually based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure the best available fare for your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

## Important Information

### Travel Insurance

It is a condition of joining **any** of our tours that you must have valid travel insurance. It must indicate that you have cover for (at least) medical expenses and emergency repatriation in the event of illness or injury. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling in England and Scotland. We also strongly recommend your policy includes curtailment, personal effects and cancellation protection as all deposits paid are non-refundable.

If you require travel insurance for your tour, Explore Worldwide is an appointed representative of Campbell Irvine Limited, who is authorised and regulated by the Financial Services authority. Our travel insurance policy is specially tailored to the needs of the adventure traveller and will cover you for any included activity on any Explore trip. You can either purchase this at the time of booking or call us on 0844 499 0903 after you have booked.

### Visa Information

Spain: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

Morocco: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related questions with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

### Vaccinations & Protection

#### Spain

Nothing compulsory. Tetanus recommended. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/> and from your local healthcare provider. Vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed before departure.

#### Morocco

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against malaria, tetanus, typhoid, infectious hepatitis and polio. Consult your travel clinic for latest advice on different prophylaxis available against malaria.

## Preparing for your Tour

### Climate

#### Spain

Overall, spring, early summer and autumn are ideal times for a Spanish trip - though the weather varies enormously from region to region. The high central plains suffer from fierce extremes, stiflingly hot in summer, bitterly cold and swept by freezing winds in winter. The Atlantic coast, in contrast, has a tendency to damp and mist, and a relatively brief, humid summer. The Mediterranean south is warm virtually all year round.

#### Morocco

The climate is both Mediterranean and Atlantic. The dry, hot season is from May to October when summer temperatures can reach 38°C and above (we will vary our sight seeing times as best we can to avoid the heat during this period). Temperatures may drop significantly at times during the night as the day's heat rapidly diminishes. From December to January snow can be expected on mountain passes and it can be wet. In winter, day temperatures will probably be around 18-25°C, dropping to perhaps 0-5°C.

### Footwear

Trainers or lightweight walking shoes with a good tread are ideal for exploring cities on foot, plus sandals for relaxing. If you intend on visiting the Atlas Mountains, we recommend walking boots with good ankle support.

### Clothing

Summer: Clothing should be lightweight. However, a sweater or fleece is also advisable for the evenings, as temperatures can drop sharply. Lightweight, wind/water proof clothing is advisable.

Winter: Warm days but much thicker clothing is essential for potentially cold days and nights (Nov-Apr). A waterproof and windproof

jacket is strongly recommended during the winter period. Please note that the High Atlas mountains can be cold and windy all year round.

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## Equipment

Personal water bottle and torch.

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## Luggage: On Tour

One main piece of baggage and daypack. Remember you are expected to carry your own luggage so don't overload yourself. We advise you pack light as porters can't always be guaranteed at train station or hotels and you will need to lift your luggage up to storage racks on the train. Luggage with wheels or a rucksack is most suitable for train travel.

Luggage allowance on tour: 20kg

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## General Information

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### Food

#### Spain

**Lunch:** 8.00

**Dinner:** 15.00

#### Morocco

**Lunch:** 8.00

**Dinner:** 15.00

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### Water

#### Spain

1.40

#### Morocco

0.60

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### Country details

#### Spain

**Size of Country:** 504,782 sq km

**Population:** 46,030,109

**Major Language:** Castilian Spanish, Catalan, Galician, Basque

**Religion:** Roman Catholic

**Time Difference to GMT:** +1

#### Morocco

**Size of Country:** 446,550 sq km

**Population:** 32,000,000

**Major Language:** Arabic, Berber, French.

**Religion:** Muslim and Christian

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### Electric Supply & Plugs

#### Spain

2 Pin Round

#### Morocco

2 Pin Round

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## Why Choose Explore

We've been creating award-winning pioneering adventure holidays for over 30 years, earning the trust of thousands of delighted customers, who feel safe in our hands. Our tour leaders have expert local knowledge and our tours are designed to take you off the beaten track to see the most exotic, inspiring and dramatic places in the world.

- With over 30 years experience, we are passionate about what we do.

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- Pioneering small group adventures & tailor-made holidays.
- Award-winning tour leaders who you can trust.
- Responsible travel is and always has been one of the driving principles of Explore.

Our adventure holidays are full of exciting things to see and do, exploring in small groups travelling by bus, boat, plane, rickshaw, camel, elephant, or any number of unusual forms of transport. Often you will stay in family-run hotels and village houses and enjoy authentic local cuisine. In this way, it's easy to discover the true heart of the people and the place you travel to – and make some new friends along the way. Each tour is uniquely different, so please feel free to browse through our tours to see what may whet your appetite.

## Our commitment to the environment

We are passionate about sustainable travel and work hard to create tours where your holiday delivers real benefits to the local communities. We minimise our impact by travelling in small groups, respecting local cultures and traditions, reducing waste and offsetting 100% of the CO2 from our flights.

When you travel with Explore, you are directly contributing to local economies and helping empower the people you meet. We currently support a range of charities and good causes, including: The Sunshine Orphanage (which cares for abandoned children in Luxor, Egypt), Education for All (sponsoring children through their secondary education in Morocco), The Hope Foundation (helping an Indian Village to recover from the 2004 Tsunami) and the Mufindi Orphanage, which supports AIDS orphans in Tanzania.

We also care passionately about the world's wildlife. We are patrons of the Born Free Organisation, Travel Operators for Tigers (helping save the Bengal Tiger from extinction) and Friends for Conservation. We have also adopted a beautiful Sri Lankan Elephant called 'Serendip'.

We are delighted to have received a Five Star sustainable tourism status from the Association of Independent Tour Operators in recognition of our on-going commitment to sustainable tourism.

## Cool Earth

Explore are delighted to support Cool Earth to reduce carbon emissions through preventing the illegal deforestation of the South America rainforest. One of the top sources of global carbon emissions, rainforest deforestation equivalent to the USA's annual emissions, it also destroys flora and fauna, sometimes to the point of extinction. It also degrades the lives and communities of the 350 million residents of the rainforest.

Cool Earth prevents the deforestation through its support of local communities as forest guardians and by focussing on areas in immediate danger of deforestation. It has so far protected over 350,000 acres of rainforest, with each acre saving an emission of 260 tons of CO2, as well as protecting rare animals and plants. When you travel on an Explore holiday we make a donation to Cool Earth that exceeds the impact of our customers' flights each year. In addition to mitigating emissions, when you travel with Explore, you are helping to protect the source of 20% of the world's fresh water and oxygen, as well as the livelihoods of the 1.6 billion people who are reliant on the rainforest.

[www.coolearth.org](http://www.coolearth.org)

## Earth Matters

- [The Travel Foundation](#)

Explore are active members and supporters of the Travel Foundation which has established a variety of sustainable tourism projects in destinations and works with industry to improve practice. Visit their website [www.thetravelfoundation.org.uk](http://www.thetravelfoundation.org.uk)

- [Tourism Concern](#)

Explore support the work of Tourism Concern who campaign for fairly and ethically traded tourism, and are part of its Ethical Tour Operator Group [www.tourismconcern.org.uk](http://www.tourismconcern.org.uk)

- For further information on responsible travel go to <http://www.explore.co.uk/ResponsibleTourism/>

## Booking Your Holiday

### Peace of mind - book with confidence

You can book your Explore holiday with confidence, as all monies paid to us for your trip are fully protected. Explore is a fully bonded tour operator licensed by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and by ABTOT.

The air holiday packages (Tours including flights) that we advertise are ATOL protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's Licence granted by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is ATOL 2595. In addition, As a member of the Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited (ABTOT), Explore has provided a bond to meet the requirements of the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992. Please note that packages booked outside the UK are only protected when purchased directly with Explore.

### Reserving your place

To reserve your place on this tour you will need to check availability on the Explore website or through our dedicated call centre based in the UK where you can. Our tours can fill up quickly so you are advised to book as early as possible. If your chosen date is 'Available' or 'Guaranteed' we will be able to provisionally hold you a space for up to 48 hours.

The easiest way to confirm your booking is through our website. When you are ready to book, we normally require a 10% non-refundable deposit, but for some holidays this may be more to cover such items as permit fees, internal flights or other non-refundable services. If your travel starts within 60 days of booking, full payment will be required at the time of booking

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### **100% No Surcharge Guarantee**

The price paid for our holidays is no longer subject to change. Once booked and confirmed we will guarantee the price you pay will not increase, whatever the circumstances. You will not be approached to pay fuel surcharges unlike the vast majority of other adventure tour operators. The price guarantee applies to all new bookings departing between 1st January 2013 and 31st December 2014.

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### **Tour Itinerary Versions**

Itinerary details may vary depending on departure date and alternative itineraries for this tour may exist. Please refer to the dates and prices page on our website to check which itinerary operates on each departure date.

Please ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of these tour notes immediately before you travel, as from time to time our itineraries may be amended, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers. You will be informed of any major changes to your tour but small changes may just be added to these tour notes.

Please note: 2014 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing in 2014. 2015/16 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing from 1st January to 31st December 2015.

These tour notes were last updated on 06/12/2013 01:38:33