EXPLORE! Tour Notes

PRICE GUARANTEE 100% NO SURCHARGES

Toubkal Climb (MJ 2015)

WALK & TREK

TOURDURAT
8
DAYS

Tour Style: Classic
Tour Comfort: Basic

Tour Type: Small Groups
Trek Grade: Moderate to Challenging

tour Code: MJ

Tour Highlights - Toubkal Climb

- ✓ Jebel Toubkal - Ascend to the summit of the highest peak in North Africa
- ✓ The Atlas Mountains - Hike among the stunning landscapes of the High Atlas
- ✓ Berber Villages - Discover remote villages and learn about the tradition and culture of the friendly local people
- ✓ Marrakech - A chance to explore Morocco's captivating Red City

Tour Essentials

Accommodation:	2 nights Standard Hotel 3 nights Basic Village House 2 nights Basic Mountain Shelter
Included Meals:	7 breakfasts, 5 lunches, 5 dinners
Start Point:	Join tour: Marrakech
End Point:	Tour ends: Marrakech
Maximum Altitude on Trek (m):	4167
Transport:	Minibus
Countries:	Morocco

Toubkal Climb

This walking tour in the High Atlas culminates in the ascent of North Africa's highest peak, Jebel Toubkal (4167m). We begin in the valley of Imlil, trekking through juniper forests, past Berber villages and over passes climbing steadily to a refuge at Neltner. From Neltner we set out to nearby peaks including an attempt on Toubkal, a rewarding climb with views of the whole Atlas chain.

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: Basic

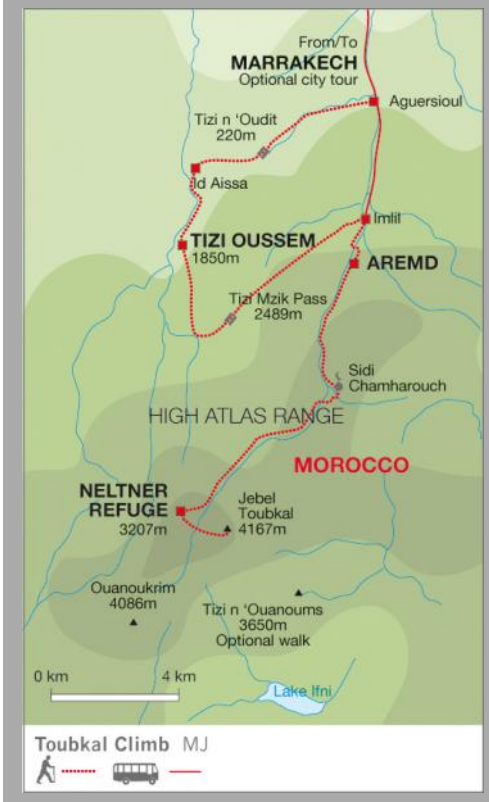
Our basic accommodation can offer the most rewarding and memorable places to stay. These are usually communal or camping style with shared facilities. Running hot and cold water may be unreliable and overall comfort levels are basic.

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.

Trek Grade: Moderate to Challenging

Combining moderate grade walks with some more strenuous hikes. This grade is ideal if you are fit and want to challenge yourself with a few longer, more demanding trekking days, possibly on difficult terrain or at higher altitudes.



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 Marrakech

Morocco's famous Red City, Marrakech is the spiritual heart of the country, a cultural melting pot of the mountain Berbers and the desert peoples of the south. Blessed with some of the most stunning architecture in Morocco, its mix of tradition, colour and history makes it the ideal starting point for this incredible journey into the High Atlas strongholds of the Berber tribes.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available **Swimming Pool Available**

Included Meals: None

DAY 2 Trek to Tizi Oussem via the Matate and Azaden Valleys

Leaving Marrakech behind this morning we drive south, towards the Imlil Valley and the craggy peaks of the Toubkal Massif. At the village of Aquersioul (1,700 metres) we begin our climb, hiking up into the Matate Valley and then on to Tizi n'Oudite (2,200 metres), where we stop to enjoy a picnic lunch. Descending through a juniper forest into the Azaden Valley, we then continue towards Id Aissa, enjoying the views out towards the colourful mountain villages of Tizi Zougaghen and Tizaine as we make our way towards our final stop in Tizi Oussem.

Overnight: **Basic Village House**

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 3 Trek to Aremd via the Tizi n'Mzik Pass

After breakfast this morning we continue walking along the valley, before beginning a steady ascent up towards Tizi n'Mzik (2,489 metres). From this high mountain pass we then begin our descent towards the village of Aremd (2,000 metres). Built on a moraine spur overlooking the valley floor, Aremd is the largest village in the valley and provides us with a fascinating insight into Berber life. This afternoon we have a chance to take a walk around the village, taking in its captivating mix of terraced farming, traditional gites and mountain landscapes.

Overnight: **Basic Village House**

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 4 Trek from Aremd to Neltner Refuge via Sidi Chamharouch

Continuing along the Mizane Valley we cross the flood plain and follow the mule tracks up into the high rocky cliffs above the valley. Crossing the river we eventually come to the pastoral shrine of Sidi Chamharouch, set beside a small waterfall and a jumbled cluster of village houses clinging to the rock face. From here the trail continues to climb steadily, snaking and zigzagging its way up towards the snow-line and the welcoming sight of the Neltner Refuge (3,207 metres).

Overnight: **Basic Mountain Shelter**

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 5 Trek to the summit of Jebel Toubkal (4165m)

Early this morning we make our attempt on the summit of Jebel Toubkal (4,167 metres). Our route takes us up the south cirque, a steep climb across scree and rock that leads eventually to the Tizi n'Toukbal (3,975 metres). Cresting the ridge it is then just a short walk to the summit. On a clear day the views from up here take in the Marrakech Plain and the High Atlas Mountains and stretch as far south as the Anti-Atlas and the Sahara. From the summit we head back down to the refuge for a second night.

Overnight: **Basic Mountain Shelter**

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 6 Optional ascent of Ouanoukrim (4086m) : trek to Aremd

If conditions proved unfavourable yesterday, we have a chance to make a second at-tempt on Jebel Toubkal this morning. Alternatively there is an option for us to try an ascent of Ouanoukrim (4,086 metres) or to take a short walk out to Tizi Ouanoums to take in the views of Lake Ifni. This afternoon we then head back down to Aremd to spend another night in the village before we leave these mountain landscapes behind.

Overnight: **Basic Village House**

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 7 Walk to Imlil and drive to Marrakech; free afternoon

Returning on foot to Imlil this morning, we then drive back to Marrakesh where, on arrival, we have some free time to explore the city's colourful souks and perhaps take a stroll around its celebrated Djemma El Fna Square. A feast for the senses, the square is a wonderful confusion of noise and colour, where you will find the streets alive with storytellers, musicians, jugglers and water-sellers: the perfect place to haggle for some last minute presents, or just sit at a cafe and watch the spectacle unfold before you.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Swimming Pool Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 8 Tour ends Marrakech

Your tour ends today in Marrakech after breakfast. Depending on the schedule of your flights, you may have some additional time to wander in the souks of Marrakech or buy your last souvenirs before departure.

Included Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation and Meals

Accommodation Rating

Morocco is a developing country and as such, the accommodation standards are not equivalent to those in Europe and can be more basic. We generally choose our properties because of their location, cleanliness, traditional style or for their welcoming atmosphere, as we endeavour to provide an authentic Moroccan experience. However, some of the properties might have some outdated or simple furniture and the level of service may vary depending on the location. You may find that availability of hot water is variable or limited in certain locations. Breakfasts are generally continental style. A swimming pool may be available in the cities.

Food & Drink

Included meals: 7 breakfasts, 5 lunches,5 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.

Food

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide.Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Morocco

Lunch £: 6.00

Dinner £: 8-10

Drink

The prices for drinks can vary greatly depending upon location and the prices detailed below are an average guide. In general you would expect that drinks purchased in a supermarket or local bar to be less expensive, whilst drinks in an upmarket bar or restaurant may be more expensive.

Morocco

Bottle of Beer £: 2.50

Water £: 0.60

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

Marrakech - A guided tour through the vibrant city of Marrakech, the iconic Djemma El Fna, the souks and medina £6 (dependant on the schedule of your flights).

Tipping - Tour Leader

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

Tipping - 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. Accordingly, you should allow approx. £12 for tipping of crew and local guides used.

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.

Foreign Exchange

Morocco

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.

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.

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

Customers who have chosen to book on the ‘Land Only’ arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific ‘Joining Instructions’ prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found on our website at www.explore.co.uk, in the tour specific dates and prices section.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer. For more information please refer to https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the ‘Land Only’ arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer please refer to https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of 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.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure 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. You will also need to ensure your travel policy covers you for all activities you intend to do whilst on tour.

We are delighted to include FREE travel insurance **for all qualifying customers** who book an Explore trip from 01 January 2015.

For more information about Travel insurance and to check whether you are eligible to receive free cover, please visit

www.explore.co.uk/insurance. Explore Worldwide Ltd are an Appointed Representative of Campbell Irvine Limited. who are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. The registration number can be checked by visiting the the FCA's website www.fca.gov.uk or by contacting them on 0800 111 6768.

Visa Information

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

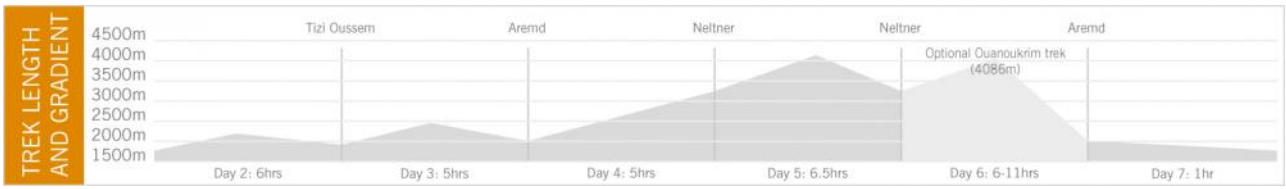
All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related questions with the relevant Embassy prior to departure

Vaccinations & Protection

Morocco

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

Preparing for your Tour



Maximum Altitude on Trek (m)

4167

Trekking Details

We trek for 5 days of this trip with an average of 6 hours of walking each day, with one optional day of up to 11 hours. Generally we walk on well defined but rocky mule tracks. We reach a maximum altitude of 4167m. We have graded this trek as moderate to challenging.

Altitude Description

This trip goes to an altitude where there is a risk of being affected by Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS), a common and usually harmless condition caused by reduced air pressure and a lower concentration of oxygen. Whilst the itinerary has been specifically designed to allow your body to acclimatise gradually, the speed of onset and severity - as well as the height at which AMS develops can vary greatly between individuals; being physically fit affords no special protection. If symptoms occur while on tour you must let your tour leader know immediately. For further advice when travelling at altitude we recommend visiting the medical advice website of "Medex" and downloading their information booklet: http://medex.org.uk/medex_book/english_version.php

Travellers with heart or lung conditions, anaemia, asthma, high blood pressure, or taking the contraceptive pill must seek the advice of their GP and specifically mention the maximum altitude the trip reaches (please refer to Tour Essentials box on front page of your Tour Notes). Please take these to your medical appointment so that your doctor has the full details of your trip.

You must have adequate travel insurance for your trip. Please ensure that your insurance policy covers you to the maximum altitude indicated above. If you have Explore insurance you will be covered to this altitude.

Walking Boots

Well broken in and stout walking boots with good ankle support are essential.

Climate

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 (if sight seeing is included we will do our best to avoid the heat of the day 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.

Clothing

Morocco is a Muslim country and it is important to dress with respect for local customs. People may be offended by shorts or revealing dresses, which can attract unwelcome attention. We advise that in general both men and women should cover shoulders, upper arms and knees. Transparent, plunging necklines and tightfitting clothes should be avoided. Women should also cover their heads when entering a sanctuary, though in general, mosques are forbidden to non-Muslims. For those clients on a cycling holiday please bear this information in mind for times that you are not on the bikes. While cycling it is no problem for both men and women to wear your regular cycling gear, tight fitting or not.

In the highlands conditions are generally dry and sunny during the day but bring warm clothing such as a warm fleece, thermal underwear, warm hat and gloves for cooler nights in the mountains when temps drop dramatically. You will also need to bring waterproofs in case the weather changes, particularly at the start and end of the season.

Equipment

Bring a 3-season sleeping bag (during May and Sept you will need a 4 season bag), torch, high factor sunscreen and sunglasses.

Footwear

Trainers or shoes are useful for relaxing of an evening.

Luggage: On Tour

One main piece of baggage and a rucksack which will be used for a daypack. It is preferable to bring your luggage in soft holdalls rather than a large suitcase - as it is easier to pack them on the vehicles and the mules. It will be possible to store unrequired and additional luggage at the hotel or with our agent in Marrakech during the trek.

Luggage allowance on tour: 15Kg

General Information

Country details

Morocco

Population: 32,000,000

Size of Country: 446,550 sq km

Major Language: Arabic, Berber, French.

Religion: Muslim

Electric Supply & Plugs

Morocco

2 Pin Round

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.
- Pioneering small group adventures, self-guided, private journeys & tailormade holidays.
- Award winning tour leaders who you can trust.
- Responsible travel is and always has been one 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 traditional, 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: Toilet Twinning (helping to flush away poverty), Lone Buffalo Foundation (a community project based in Laos providing creative skills for young people), Dekamer (a turtle rescue centre in Turkey) and Kids Saving the Rainforest (a wildlife rescue centre in Costa Rica supported through the LATA foundation). We also care passionately about the world's wildlife. We are patrons of the Born Free Organisation and Friends of Conservation.

Cool Earth

Explore are proud to support Cool Earth in their effort to reduce global carbon dioxide levels through the prevention of deforestation in the South America rainforest. Cool Earth focus on areas in immediate danger of deforestation, supporting local communities to be forest guardians. To date 350,000 acres of rainforest has been protected. Saving rainforest also protects rare animals and plants, allows local forest communities to maintain their way of life, and protects a major source of oxygen and fresh water. When you travel on an Explore holiday we make a donation to Cool Earth that exceeds the impact of our customers flights each year.

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

Know before you go

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety andÂ security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. ForÂ UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Advice follow the link atÂ http://www.explore.co.uk/essential-travel-information/travel-resources/travel-safety

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 LicenceÂ granted by the Civil Aviation Authority.Â 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.

For Self-Guided holidays and Private Journeys simply choose your date of travel and let us know so we can confirm all ground services.

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

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 2014 and 31st December 2015.

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: 2015 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing in 2015. 2016/17 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing from 1st January to 31st December 2016.

These tour notes were printed on 02/06/2015 17:05:54