

# MOROCCO

## SAHARA TREK

### OPEN CHALLENGE ITINERARY

---

9 Days / 8 nights

**Depart** Saturday London Heathrow  
– Ouarzazate; transfer to hotel

**Return** Sunday Ouarzazate –  
London Heathrow

---

#### INTRODUCTION

**The Sahara desert stretches from the snow capped mountains of Morocco in the west, to the Red Sea coast 4800km to the East.**



**Its landscape varies from a stony flat expanse to perfect wind blown sand dunes, broken only by the occasional oasis. The feeling of space and of solitude is awesome.**

**With proud Berbers as our guides and a small caravan of camels to carry our supplies we will trek 100km through this varied and stunning landscape.**

---

#### ITINERARY

**Day 1:** Depart London bound for Ouarzazate via Casablanca; transfer to hotel. Ouarzazate lies just below the High Atlas Mountains and is on the edge of the desert.

**Day 2:** After an early breakfast we have a detailed briefing and then leave for the five-hour drive to M'Hamid, our starting point. Our drive takes us over the Jebel Sarhro Mountains and down the 'Valley of

a thousand kasbahs' into the desert. We have a brief stop in Zagora to buy a shash (native headscarf) and have our last cold drink before the heat of the desert.

On arriving at the starting point we have lunch while the cameleers load up the camels. Our late afternoon trek takes us firstly across flat open plain and then into Erg Lihoudi, our first taste of small dunes. We make camp at the edge of the dunes for the night.

**Walk 3 hours**



**Day 3:** The full colour of the landscape erupts as the sun rises. Hot coffee and a good breakfast set us up for a good day's trek. We break camp, load the camels and head off across Erg Lihoudi. We walk across the small dunes and around the larger ones. Amongst the dunes are small tamarisk trees that manage to flourish in this harsh environment. Continuing through the small dunes, we can see the Jebel Bani Mountains to the north and dunes to the south. After a good four-hour trek we stop for lunch in the shade of large tree. During the afternoon we walk out of the dunes and onto a flat rocky plateau where we make camp near L'oued L'atruche close to a well.

**Walk 6 hours**



**Day 4:** Leaving camp behind us we walk across flat open country with the camels not far behind. The surface is firm and stony with tough



grass poking through in places. After around 4km we come to the edge of some low dunes. Skirting to the north of the dunes we walk on both soft sand and stony plateau where you can find the occasional fossilised sea creature. The hottest part of the day is spent having lunch in the shade, time to relax and refill the water bottles. In the afternoon we head across lots of beautifully formed low dunes to an area called Bougarnne, where there are several large dunes and clumps of palm trees. The walking is tough. Sand fills your boots and your feet sink into the small dunes. After an hour we see the large dunes in the distance and head for them. Distance is hard to gauge in the desert and it takes a further two hours to reach the dunes and our campsite perched on a bluff overlooking the dunes.

**Walk 7 hours**



**Day 5:** After a good breakfast we head off down a gully onto the desert floor. We spend the morning crossing hamada, or stony flat desert. We have several short climbs and cross dry and dusty plains. There is very little vegetation around but we manage to

find the only tree for miles to have lunch under. When the hottest part of the day has passed we set off across more hamada until we cross a ridge and have a spectacular view of Chgaga, the largest sand dunes of the region. We camp below the dunes for the night.

**Walk 7 hours**



**Day 6:** The day starts with the spectacular climb and incredible view from the top of the 300-metre dune. To the south are rolling dunes as far as you can see and to the north hamada and the Jebel Bani. After taking in the view we have fun descending the dune along one of the narrow ridges. Regrouping at the bottom and meeting up with the camels we refill the water bottles and walk through low dunes.



We spend the whole day in amongst the dunes passing the occasional nomadic encampment and small clump of palm trees. In the late afternoon we finally reappear from the dunes and head out across flat desert and acacia trees to our campsite near a well and just below the Jebel Bani.

**Walk 7 hours**

**Day 7:** Today is our day of mirages and flat salt pans. We firstly walk across several kilometres of hamada with dunes lying to the south. Gradually the acacia trees vanish and we are left in a spectacularly flat open salt pan. Once again distances are impossible to gauge and the views shimmer in the heat.



There is no cover for lunch so we put one of the tents up to give us shade. We are getting pretty close to our hundredth kilometre now and the last few are done crossing this remote and desolate place. Our last night is spent on the salt pan with its incredible sunset.

**Walk 7 hours**

**Day 8:** The day starts early for our sunrise walk as we near the edge of the desert - an unforgettable experience. We load into the trucks and Land Rover and drive the last bumpy 1 - 2 hours across the desert piste to the tarmac road. The exciting journey in the back of the open trucks is great fun if a little dusty. On arriving at the tarmac road we transfer into the bus and travel back to Ouarzazate where we will have the afternoon to relax before the evening's festivities!

**Travel time to Ouarzazate 3 hrs  
Celebration Meal (dinner not included)**

**Day 9:** Early transfer from Ouarzazate to airport; depart for London.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### Tour Cost

The tour cost includes all accommodation and food other than one evening meal as specified in the itinerary (hotel 2\*-3\*). All camping equipment is provided apart from your sleeping bag and sleeping mat.



There is full support with local guides and cooks as well as a Discover Adventure leader.

### Personal Money

A max of £50.00 - £100.00 is needed for personal expenses in Morocco. Please note that it is normal to tip the Berber crew if you feel they have done a good job; this can be in the form of money (max £10) and/or unwanted clothing/equipment.

### Flights

Group flights usually leave from London Heathrow and are booked through Discover Adventure Ltd ATOL number 5636.

### Food & Accommodation

All food and accommodation is included other than one evening meal as specified in the itinerary. The food is excellent and there is plenty of it. We use good hotels with shower and toilet in each room when in Ouarzazate.



When camping, water is scarce and primarily for drinking. However there will be a couple of opportunities to wash.

### Passport, Visa & Vaccinations

A valid ten-year passport is essential and there is no visa requirement for UK citizens.

We insist that you have had a Tetanus injection in the last 10 years and highly recommend Hepatitis A, Typhoid and Polio.

### Weather

Days in the desert are usually clear and sunny, and it can get very hot. Nights are colder and the temperature drops noticeably as soon as the sun sets.

November - March 8 - 30°C

## TREKKING INFORMATION

Walking is over stony firm desert floor and loose soft, and in places steep, sand dunes.



Vehicles take the group to the start of the trek and pick us up at the end. All luggage, food, water and camping equipment is carried by camels and accompanied by cameleers.

It is essential that your luggage be carried in either a soft expedition kitbag or soft rucksack. These are easily loaded onto the camels.

In addition you should bring a small daypack for items needed during the day.

We are travelling through remote desert and through the occasional small oasis. The aim is to walk 100km through the desert finishing near Foum Zguid.

Please phone the office with any questions.

**Discover Adventure Ltd**  
**Throope Down House**  
**Blandford Road**  
**Coombe Bissett**  
**Salisbury**  
**SP5 4LN**  
**ATOL 5636**

**Tel: 01722 718444**  
**Fax: 01722 718445**

**info@discoveradventure.com**  
**www.discoveradventure.com**

**Copyright DA 1998**  
**Updated 2005**

