



Essaouira and Marrakech: Sand and Souk Explorers



HOLIDAY TYPE: Small Group
VISITING: Morocco

BROCHURE CODE: 4026
DURATION: 7 nights

In Brief

Experience the best of Moroccan activities and culture on this spectacular family summer holiday. Enjoy a camel trek across the beach, quad biking or surfing, and an adventure day exploring the Atlas Mountains. You'll also gain an insight into the Moroccan way of life when you visit the local souks in both Essaouira and buzzing Marrakech.

Our Opinion

“ Much like the jam-packed souks to be found in Essaouira and Marrakech, this holiday offers an incredible selection of things to enjoy. You'll feel like true desert adventurers when you're riding about on camels or quad bikes, and it's just as exciting to get trekking around the Atlas Mountains. This is a trip that just bursts with culture: from Berber villages to Marrakech markets, there are new experiences wherever you turn. It's a must for food-loving families – whether visiting stalls piled high with gorgeous delicacies or making your own in with a professional chef, you will be in gastronomy heaven! ”

Jono Archer



What's included?

- **Transfers:** all transfers included
- **Accommodation:** 2 nights in a Caïdal Family Tent at Les Jardins d'Issil; 5 nights in a 2 bedroom riad at Rebal Riads
- **Meals:** 7 breakfasts, 4 lunches, 3 dinners
- **The following activities are included in the holiday:** Atlas Mountains day, Marrakech souk tour, camel trek and picnic lunch; Essaouira souk visit and cookery lesson; choice of 1-hour quad biking OR 2-hour surfing session; lunch in Berber village (order subject to change)
- Fully qualified guides and instructors during activities with all equipment provided
- **A note on flights:** while flights are not included in the holiday price, our team will happily provide a quote and arrange them for you. Simply ask one of our Travel Experts for details of the available options

Trip Overview

This outstanding seven-night family activity holiday will show you Morocco from all angles. Going everywhere from quiet Berber villages to buzzing city souks, you and the children will try out stupendous activities on both sand and sea. As well as this, you'll sample the local culture and cuisine along the way!

This family holiday begins in lively Marrakech. During your 2-nights here, you and your family will stay outside the busy city areas in the majestic tents of Les Jardins d'Issil – think more 'royal tent' rather than 'pop-up' accommodation!

You'll take a tour of the astonishing souks and experience an array of sights, scents and sounds as well as an insight into the people here. Then, you'll take a trip to the awe-inspiring Atlas Mountains, a must-see when in Morocco.

The second part of your holiday takes you close to the beautiful port city of Essaouira. You will stay in a luxurious villa at the Rebal Riads hotel, a marvellous place with a traditional Moroccan design.

Here, you will enjoy many different activities such as camel riding on the beach and either quad-biking over the nearby dunes or surfing the surging waves.

A hotel chef will take you around the Essaouira souks to pick up ingredients for a personal cooking class. You will also visit a traditional village of the Berber people, learning about their way of life and tasting a specially-made lunch.

In your free time, you will definitely want to enjoy the hotel's on-site facilities. Unwind in a traditional hammam steam room, splash about in the pool, or challenge each other to a spot of tennis.

Image credits: Alan Keohane

Agenda

Please note the order of activities is subject to change

DAY
1

ARRIVAL AND WELCOME

Upon arrival in Marrakech, your transfer vehicle will take you to your luxury tent accommodation at Les Jardins d'Issil, approximately 30 minutes away.

Along the way, keep your eyes peeled for the local goats found high in the argan trees, feasting on the nuts and leaves.

Once you have checked in, you and your family will enjoy dinner before going to your amazing tent accommodation for the night.

Included Meals: Dinner

DAY
2

DAY IN THE ATLAS MOUNTAINS

Fill up at breakfast in preparation for a lovely excursion exploring the Atlas Mountains.

A two-hour transfer will take you to your starting point, the village of Imlil, from where you will spend the day trekking in this scenic region with a mountain guide.

Mount Toubkal, the highest peak in the Atlas Mountains, looms in the background as you take to the trail. You will walk through small hamlets and woods filled with walnut trees, weaving up to higher ground along the mountain track.

The views are incredible and this is a marvellous way to show off the natural side of Morocco, which is easily missed when just sticking to popular urban attractions.

There will be the chance to visit at least one village in the area for a sense of life in these rural parts of the country. The trip can be tailored to the needs and abilities of the group and includes lunch.

You will return to Les Jardins d'Issil in the late afternoon and enjoy dinner in the evening.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY
3

THREE-HOUR SOUK TOUR

You will all be whisked away for a fabulous tour of Marrakech's impressive souks. Potters, olive-sellers, tanners, dancers, magicians...the list of people and stalls you will encounter here is endless.

Cameras should always be at the ready, and given the wild mix of life, every photo opportunity is likely to be as remarkable as the next.

After this bustling day, you can sit back and relax on your transfer to Essaouira. Tonight, you will enjoy dinner in your new hotel before relaxing in your private villa.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY
4

CAMEL TREK AND PICNIC LUNCH

Tuck into a breakfast feast before a mid-morning treat: the camel trek! Board your own 'ship of the desert' and take a guided tour north of the beach which sits close to the hotel. You'll be lost in the rhythms of the creatures as they move you across the sand. A Moorish picnic lunch will be served at a hidden stopping point in the shade.

The afternoon will be yours to spend as you wish. Why not cool off in the pool or try your hand at a game of boules back at the hotel? Parents will definitely want to visit the hammam facilities for an invigorating steam session. There's also an on-site tennis court, as well as a table tennis set and various board games for your family to make use of during your time here.

Dinner is not included for the following 4 nights, so that you can decide how you wish to enjoy your evenings. You can either dine at the riad, or there are several local restaurants nearby, as well as options in Essaouira, which is easily reachable by taxi.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY
5

ESSAOUIRA SOUKS AND COOKING LESSON

After breakfast, you will be taken to the vibrant souks of Essaouira by one of the hotel chefs to collect ingredients for a colourful lunchtime cooking class, choosing a recipe from the chef's suggestions. Just imagine: you'll soon be winding your way between stalls piled high with spices of every description, alongside shops offering exotic vegetables and fresh meats. Not only that: these open markets have just about everything, so you may even pick up some jewellery, household items, or other souvenirs along the way.

Back at Rejali Riads, you'll watch the master at work and help out at different stages. Parents and children alike will love this gastronomic experience, preparing anything from flavoursome tagines and soft couscous to gorgeous fish dishes and artistic salads. All in all, you'll be set for an unforgettable lunch.

The rest of the day has been left free for your own interests. You might wish to book an activity through the hotel or return to the poolside. In the evening, you can put your new cooking knowledge and local ingredients to the test making your own dinner in the riad kitchen. Alternatively, you may want to walk to one of the nearby cafés or restaurants, which are only a few minutes away in the village square, next to the beach.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY
6

QUAD BIKING OR SURFING

Today is packed full of action and you get to decide whether to spend it on sand or sea. You will have a choice between an hour of quad biking on the nearby dunes with a guide to show you around, or a two-hour surfing lesson with an instructor to teach you the best tricks and tips. Sidi Kaouki is renowned as a water-sports haven, while its beaches and countryside are great to explore. All equipment will be provided, and the time will be confirmed on arrival.

After this, you will have the day free to relax after the morning's excitement or to keep the adrenaline going with further bookable activities. Lunch is not included today, so why not try one of the nearby restaurants - The Surf Club, Pergola and Le Kaouki are three great options, offering tasty local food and welcoming atmospheres. Seafood pizzas, sumptuous burgers and fresh salads are sure to keep everyone happy.

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY
7

BERBER VILLAGE VISIT

This day takes you and the children closer to Morocco's indigenous heritage. At lunchtime, you will head to a Berber village - either on foot or by donkey, depending on your choice. You'll journey into the countryside behind Sidi Kauoki, past farmhouses, riads and countless argan trees. Upon arrival, your family will be warmly greeted and then served a simple but delicious lunch, filled with flavour and years of cooking experience. It is a truly unspoilt location and our group is likely to be the only one there, making the experience all the more personal. Although your hosts can't speak English, they will make sure your family are given a true Berber experience.

Returning to Rejali Riads, make the most of your last night in this lovely hotel before the next day's transfer. Perhaps another visit to the splendid hammam or a dip in the pool? All yours to choose!

If you'd like to visit Essaouira again this evening, speak to Mohamed or Fatima, who can easily arrange taxis back and forth and provide you with restaurant recommendations for your family, as well as pointing out the best place for a freshly-pressed pomegranate, lime and sugar cane juice, which

are sublime!

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY
8

DEPARTURE

Tuck into a last Moroccan breakfast before being transferred to Marrakech Airport for your journey home. Please note that the transfer time is around 3 hours.

Included Meals: Breakfast

Included Accommodation

Les Jardins d'Issil (Nights: 1-2)



Ten miles outside Marrakech and close to the base of the immense Atlas Mountains, 'The Gardens of Issil' offer luxury colourful tents and based around a large swimming pool. 'Tent', however, is an understatement. Canvas covers the top half of the walls and roof but a sturdy and traditional Tadelakt plaster makes up the rest. Each is fully furnished, with en-suite facilities and individual decorations.

The main building has an excellent restaurant and bar, as well as a wide rooftop terrace overlooking the surroundings. The grounds also boast a tropical plant courtyard and a hammam, a traditional steam room.

Hotel facilities

- Enjoy a session in the central pool or repose by the side with a freshly prepared breakfast
- Take a tranquil break in the hammam and book one of the calming traditional treatments
- The children will love trying their skills on the mini-golf course and badminton court
- Pick up Moroccan candles, cosmetics, and jewellery at the on-site shop, which also sells locally-produced argan oil – delicious with fresh bread and salad and also great for the skin!
- There's free Wi-Fi in the restaurant, terraces and pool area, so all your family and friends will

be able to share your adventure updates.

Room Type

Caïdal Tents for four people (included as standard in our holiday price): There are 15 of these 50 m² tents, all of which are perfect for a family of four – one can also accommodate five. They contain either four single beds or one double and two single beds; a silk curtain separates the sleeping areas. They also have an ensuite bathroom and a living room, in addition to a terrace, air-conditioning and heating and a safe.

Caïdal Tents for two people: Each of these tents has a brilliant interior – one with cooling blue curtains and cushions, some with regal reds and golds, another with elegant black and silver walls. All are 30m² and come with a double bed and an ensuite bathroom, lined with Moroccan Tadelakt plaster. They also have a cosy living room and terrace, heating and air-conditioning, and a safe.

Rebali Riads (Nights: 3-7)



White walls and bright interiors meet gleaming swimming pools and scattered greenery in this hotel, which takes after a 'riad', or traditional Moroccan house. 'Paradise' might be a better word, because it's a place of sun-soaked luxury. There are seven private villas, each with fully-furnished kitchens, dining courtyards, and personal gardens. Four of these are larger and come with their own pool, while the three smaller buildings share two inter-connected pools between them. All have inviting roof terraces with all-round views of sand, sea and countryside. The main hotel has hammam and spa facilities, a tennis court, and a service kitchen with a full-time chef.

Hotel facilities

- With a full-time chef available on-request, you can look forward to gorgeous Moroccan specialities and European favourites served fresh in the dining area or by the pool
- Challenge the kids on the tennis court or try out a game of boules in the large shared garden. There's also a table tennis set and plenty of board games to keep the family entertained
- Get fully refreshed in the Moroccan hammam steam-room or go for a continental spa treatment. There is also a small gift shop in the reception building
- Read up on your next activity or look for something to book with the free Wi-Fi, which is

available in reception and at certain hotspots around the riads

Room type

Each of the seven riads is uniquely designed, based around a dining courtyard area which is covered with a remote-controlled sliding glass roof. Each also has a fully decked-out kitchen and a roof terrace with 360° views of the surroundings.

Dar Azreq: This riad has two bedrooms with ensuite bathrooms, each containing two basins. The bathroom attached to the main bedroom has a marble-lined bath and twin showers. As well as a personal roof terrace, Dar Azreq has a garden with a gated entrance to the shared pool area.

Dar Etoile: This has one master bedroom and a snug room which can be converted into a bedroom. The bathroom comes with twin showers and basins and a bath topped with marble. There is also a downstairs toilet. It also has a kitchen, dining courtyard, and sitting room with a fireplace. In addition, Dar Etoile has a private roof terrace and garden with a gated entrance to the shared pool area.

Dar Jeseli: This two bedroom riad has two ensuite bathrooms with twin basins; the main bedroom bathroom has double showers and a marble-lined bath. There is a private roof terrace and a garden with a gated entrance to the shared pool area.

Dar Mevada: This riad has three bedrooms – one is a master suite with a four-poster bed and ensuite bathroom; the other two share one bathroom which contains a marble-lined bath and a shower. There is a kitchen and dining courtyard, bar area, and sitting room. Outside there is a private pool, as well as a private roof terrace.

Riad Sila: This riad has three suites, each having its own balcony and bathroom with a shower, marble-topped bath, and twin basins. In the master suite, there is a four-poster bed and open-plan bathroom. Downstairs is a grand, high-ceilinged sitting room; this sits next to a snug room which can be converted into a fourth bedroom. The snug room has an open fire and access to the downstairs shower room. Riad Sila has its own pool and a private roof terrace.

Riad Valmar: The largest of the riads, this is based around three courtyards: one with a sliding glass roof and dining area; another with orange trees, a water fountain, and open space; and the last meeting the three sides of the swimming pool. The courtyards link up with the sitting room and cinema room. Upstairs are four suites, each with private terraces and ensuite bathrooms – containing twin basins and walk-in showers. Two are master suites containing four-poster beds, marble-topped baths, and twin showers. The cinema room can be converted into a fifth bedroom and has access to the downstairs shower room.

Dar Jamila: This three-bedroom riad is a few steps away from the main hotel building, slightly closer to the sea. The riad has an open plan living room with kitchen, breakfast bar, fireplace, TV and dining table. Outside there is a large terrace and private pool, as well as a private roof terrace with views of the sea. The master bedroom has a four-poster bed with en-suite bathroom, walk-in shower and twin basins. The second bedroom has a king size bed and the third has two twin beds. Both rooms have en-suite bathrooms with walk-in showers and twin basins.

Please note that the images above show a variety of accommodation options.

The Specifics

Holiday group size (approximate)

Minimum 4; maximum 36 (approximately)

Group Size

We always try to provide an approximation of the group size you can expect to be with for the duration of each of our holidays. It may be that you are joined by others for parts of your holiday (such as transfers and particular activities) but the above number reflects those you can normally expect to be with from beginning to end. If group size is something which is particularly important to you, please speak to our Travel Experts and they can suggest the best holidays for you.

Tailor-made holiday group sizes will vary for all activities as will the group size for any additional activities you book.

Minimum numbers required for a holiday to operate

Some of our holidays require a minimum number of participants to operate (as listed in the 'Group Size' section). If your holiday departure has not yet reached the minimum number, you will be told at the time of booking. In the unlikely event that your chosen date is not guaranteed by nine weeks before your scheduled departure date, we will contact you to discuss the available options as per our booking conditions.

Minimum and maximum age

The minimum age for this holiday can be found in the 'Key Facts' section of the holiday overview.

Younger family members may be able to participate but may not be able to take part in all activities. Please contact one of our Travel Experts if you have any questions.

Itinerary amendments

The order of activities listed in this agenda is provided for guidance only, your final and detailed

itinerary will be provided either with your final travel documents (which are uploaded into your online account around a week prior to departure) or upon arrival.

Terms and Conditions

Our full booking terms and conditions can be found on our website: <https://www.activitiesabroad.com/booking-conditions>