

## High Atlas & Mt Toubkal Trek



Duration: 6 days

The High Atlas Mountains run south-west through Morocco. They are remote, barren and absolutely stunning. Our challenge is to climb their highest peak – and the highest in North Africa: Mount Toubkal, at 4167m.

Our ascent is tough, steep and rocky, and the effects of being at altitude add to the challenge. However, the magnificent views from the summit – reaching across to the Sahara Desert – and our sense of achievement more than compensate for our efforts.

We also witness the local way of life as we pass through colourful villages, where Berbers farm in the river valleys and herd goats and sheep in the mountains. The ancient city of Marrakech, with its labyrinthine streets and intriguing souks, provides the perfect contrast.

### DETAILED ITINERARY

#### Day 1: Fly London to Marrakech

We fly direct to Marrakech and, after collecting our luggage and passing through customs, we transfer the short distance to our hotel. Depending on flight arrival time there may be an opportunity to explore a little of this fascinating city before a trip briefing and dinner. Then it's off to bed for a good night's rest before our trekking adventure begins in earnest tomorrow! Night hotel.

#### Day 2: Marrakech – Imlil – Aremd

After an early breakfast we load up and drive into the mountains to the small village of Imlil (1740m), where we meet our local team. This first day of trekking is the perfect introduction to the mountains. With undulating terrain, we take it steady and give our bodies a taster of the altitude but then descend again to richer air. We spend the night in a simply guesthouse in Aremd where we are welcomed with fantastic hospitality. It's an immersive experience that feels both tranquil and welcoming with a laid-back atmosphere and wholesome yummy food. Definitely more than just a night in a guesthouse, almost everyone who stays rates it as a true trip highlight! Night Guesthouse

Drive approx 2 hours; trek approx 8km / 4-6 hours

#### Day 3: Aremd – Refuge Camp

After saying a fond farewell to our lovely hosts it's time to get into the main element of the challenge. Our route today takes us uphill through walnut groves before emerging into a flood plain which gives us a brief respite from the climbing. Our path then rises again through a winding valley into remote mountains; the views are beautiful. We pass through the tiny hamlet of Sidi Chamharouch (2200m), which has grown up around a Muslim shrine, then zig-zag more steeply into the valley. It's then not long before we arrive at camp, below the refuge at the base of Toubkal. Night camp (3200m).

Trek approx 9km / 6-8 hours; height gain 1460m

## DETAILED ITINERARY (cont.)

### Day 4: Toubkal Summit

Our summit beckons: Mount Toubkal, the highest peak in North Africa at 4167m. We rise early, to allow plenty of time for our ascent, and after a good energy-boosting breakfast we set off. It's cold on the mountain this early in the morning but the exercise warms us nicely! Armed with head-torches, we trek along well-trodden rocky boulder-strewn tracks that twist their way up the mountain. We stop to admire the sunrise illuminating the spectacular landscapes around us as we ascend. We gain altitude steadily as we climb up slowly through a hanging valley with dramatic landscapes all around us; there are some steep shale sections here and we may start to find some snow underfoot. We come to a col with fabulous views; we can see the Sahara Desert from here. We can also see the last section of the climb ahead of us, with tantalising views of the summit. This last hour is tough, but then we are standing at the summit – a real achievement. We have enough time to savour the sensation of being on top of North Africa's highest summit, before we descend the same way, zig-zagging quite steeply and then crossing the large rocks and boulders of the lower section. We can see the refuge and our tents from quite high up, and feel euphoric as we return to it. We have time to relax with a mint tea, enjoying the views from camp. Night camp (3200m).

**Trek approx 8km / 6-8 hours; height gain / loss 967m**

### Day 5: Refuge Camp – Imlil – Marrakech

After breakfast we trek downhill, back to Imlil, admiring the landscapes of this beautiful hanging valley. Our legs are tired and we take it easy, but the tracks should feel much easier than they did on the way up! On arrival in the village we have lunch, then meet our transport and head back to the buzzing city of Marrakech. We have time to explore the fascinating Jma El Fnâa, the main square, with its food stalls, snake charmers and musicians, and haggle for souvenirs in the fascinating souks – a real contrast to our remote mountains paths and a memorable way to end our adventure! We meet again in the evening for a slap-up dinner to celebrate our achievements. Night hotel.

**Trek approx 10km / 5-7 hours; height loss 1460m; drive approx 2 hours**

### Day 6: Fly Marrakech to London

Transfer to the airport for our flight back to London. *(Lunch not included)*

*Discover Adventure reserves the right to change the route or itinerary for safety reasons should local conditions dictate.*

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## CHALLENGE GRADING

Trips are graded Yellow, Orange or Red, in increasing level of challenge. This trek lies within the **Orange** range.

The grade is determined by factors such as terrain, distance, climate, altitude, etc. Each colour grade has a **spectrum** which reflects the difficulty of these factors; trip duration, accommodation and living conditions are also taken into account.

The Challenge Factor icon shows the most challenging aspect – the terrain, which is rocky and tough-going even without taking the altitude into account.

The grade reflects the overall trip; some sections will feel more challenging than others. Unusual weather conditions also have a significant impact, and not all people are tested by the same aspects.