



COMMUNITY ACTION TREKS LTD

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Tel: 01111111111G

Email: info@catreks.com Web: www.catreks.com



SOUTHERN DESERT TREK

- Grade:** Gentle / Moderate 
- Land-only duration:** 10 days Marrakech – Marrakech
- Trekking days:** 6
- Best season:** November until mid-April
- Minimum numbers:** Requires just 4 participants to guarantee these departures at the advertised price.
- Dates and prices:** Our latest dates and prices list is available at www.catreks.com or from the CAT office.



South of the High Atlas lies the desert mountain regions of Jbel Bani and Jbel Tadrart. In this area a 6-day camel-trek leads you through mountains, date-palm oases and sand dunes. This adventurous desert trek will take you back to ancient times of the desert caravans. You will be camping in the desert, watching the millions of stars in the sky and enjoying the silence of the desert night. The journey will begin near the town of Zagora and end at M'hamid, a large oasis. Camels will carry your luggage and you will be accompanied by an expert guide. The average distance covered per day is approximately 25 kilometres / 15 miles between 5-6 hours of walking.



Berber tent

Flights:

There are several budget airlines which fly to Marrakech, including Easy Jet, Ryan Air, Thomson fly, Atlas Blue and BA. You are welcome to book your own flights, or we can do this for you. We may also be able to get a flight for you with a scheduled airline if you prefer.

As airline prices are quite variable we do not now include flight prices on our list of dates and prices.

If you would like us to secure flights for you, we will require your name exactly as it appears on your passport, and full payment for the flight at the time of booking them for you.

If you prefer to look for alternative flights yourself, we can sell you the trek at the land-only price.

Important note – minimum numbers:

Before booking flights, please note that this trip requires a minimum of 4 trekkers before we can guarantee the departure at the advertised price. Please note that should you decide to book your own flights, it is essential that you check with the Community Action Treks office to ensure that the departure is guaranteed before committing financially to any flights or travel arrangements.

OUTLINE ITINERARY

Walking and journey times are approximate

Day 1. Marrakech

You will be met at Marrakech airport and transferred to the hotel.



Water sellers

Day 2. Marrakech – Ouarzazate – Zagora region (BLD)

A beautiful drive through the High Atlas Mountains takes you to Ouarzazate, a town which is well-known for its film studios and the ancient Kasbah Taourirt. In the afternoon you first cross an arid mountain region. Then the road follows the course of the River Draâ to Zagora, a quiet desert-town. On the way you will see lush date-palm plantations and numerous kasbahs. Camp will be set up in the oasis near Zagora where you will meet your camel-drivers. Camp.



Your luggage-bearers

Day 3. Trek: Zagora – Boujniba dunes (BLD)

In the morning the camels will be expertly loaded. Then the desert trek begins. Keeping pace with the camels you will leave the green Draâ Valley behind. Enjoying the vastness of the desert surroundings, you will cross a plain with mineral rocks. At lunchtime a big salad will be served with bread, fruits and mint tea. In the afternoon you will reach the dunes of Boujniba, a typical desert landscape. On top of a dune you can watch the sunset which turns the colour of the sand into a luminous gold. Camp.

Day 4. Trek: Boujniba dunes – Zaouiat Lambassu oasis (BLD)

Sunrise is also a special experience in the desert which should not be missed. After breakfast you will ascend the mountain-slope of Jbel Bani. On top you will have a great view of the desert surroundings. Then you will enter a region with table mountains and oases. You will be impressed by the contrast between the green oases and the barren desert landscape. The bivouac will be at the little oasis of Zaouiat Lambassu. Camp.



Day 5. Trek: Zaouiat Lambassu oasis – Erg Lâabidia (BLD)

Following ancient caravan trails amidst mountain scenery you will reach the sand dunes of Erg Lâabidia. It is interesting to see the many traces in the sand of beetles, lizards and birds. In the evening the camel-drivers will prepare a “pain de sable”, a delicious hot loaf of bread which is baked in hot ashes, covered with sand. Camp.

Day 6. Trek: Erg Lâabidia – Boutafroukht (BLD)

On your way to Boutafroukht you will pass a water source, which is one of the most important elements in the landscape for the local population. The surroundings are favoured by nomads who live in large tents made from woven goat's wool. The nomads' main activity is tending their herds of goats and camels. Camp.

Day 7. Trek: Boutafroukht – Mazonaria (BLD)

In the area you will cross today you will see many tamarisk trees growing on top of ancient river dunes, bearing witness that long ago the Draâ River crossed this plain before it vanished in the sands. At the place of the bivouac you will be able to find plenty of wood to make a camp fire. This will be your last night in the desert and a last opportunity to enjoy the sight of the millions of stars, the silence and the solitude. Camp.

Day 8. Trek: Mazonaria – M'Hamid. Transfer to Ait Benhaddou (BLD)

The high dune of Erg Lihouddi is on the last stretch through the desert. The camel-trek will end at the oasis of M'hamid in the Draâ Valley. In the

afternoon you will be transferred back up the Draa Valley to the kasbah village of Ait Benhaddou where you will spend the night. You have time to explore this stunning kasbah village. Hotel.

Day 9. Ait Benhaddou – Marrakech (B)

You cross back over the mountains via the Tizi 'n Tichka pass to Marrakech where you can spend the afternoon strolling around in medina. Hotel.

Day 10. Depart Marrakech (B)

Transfer to Marrakech airport for your international flight.



Date palm.

Important Note: Whilst we expect that the trek will run as per the itinerary, participants should accept that there is a possibility of changes being necessary subject to local conditions.



The Price Includes:

- Accommodation: 3 nights in hotels on a twin share basis; 6 nights camping in two-person tents.
- Airport transfers between Marrakech airport and hotel accommodation
- Transport: Minibus transfers day 2 and days 8 & 9.
- Meals: All breakfasts, 7 lunches and 7 dinners.
- Guides: Local English-speaking tour leader/mountain guide to accompany group throughout.
- Camels: Camels for carrying luggage and supplies during trek days 2-8.
- Staff: Chameliers and cook during trek. (If 4 or fewer trekkers, cooking will be done by the guide and chameliers)
- Equipment: All camping equipment (tents, foam mattresses, cooking and eating equipment) except sleeping bags.

Not Included:

- International flights
- Meals not specified above.
- Drinks, laundry, souvenirs and items of a personal nature.
- Sleeping bags.
- Tips and gratuities - see "Preparing for your trek" for our guidance on tipping
- Sightseeing guides in Marrakech.
- Entrance fees to historical sites.
- Travel insurance
- Moroccan visa, but please note that this is NOT required for holders of the following passports: United Kingdom, USA, Australia or Canada. All other passport holders should check the visa requirements with the Kingdom of Morocco visa entry website. All participants must check that their passport is valid for at least 6 months following the date of entry into Morocco.
- Items of a personal nature such as drinks, laundry, telephone calls and souvenirs (allow approximately up to £250 spending money)

Options:

- Extra nights can be arranged in Marrakech. For extensions to the Moroccan coast, or camel trekking in the Sahara, please refer to our Moroccan Extensions itinerary.