

## MOROCCO

With its lively souks, colorful casbahs, traditional handicrafts, and breathtaking nature spread between the Atlantic Ocean and Mediterranean Sea, the Atlas Mountains, and the Sahara desert, tourism agencies enjoy touting Morocco as the “land of contrasts.” In fact, the westernmost Arab country has a lot more than postcard images to offer in the way of extremes, largely because of its position between Europe and Africa.



The Kingdom of Morocco gets high scores for education, health, and the economy. However, the differences between the city and the country are striking and rural flight has created an explosion of shanty towns outside its cities. High unemployment and hopeless futures particularly affect young people. Some seek better prospects in

Europe, while others become easy prey for Islamist extremists, as shown by the attacks in Casablanca in 2003.

Since then, King Mohammed VI has concentrated on improving the economic and social situation in the slums in an effort to eradicate the breeding grounds for Islamist violence.

Morocco orients itself to the Arab East and the European West in equal measure. Located at the junction of ancient trade routes is a society shaped by Arab, Berber, French, Spanish and Sub-Saharan influences, and Muslim, Sufi, and Jewish traditions. These make an exciting combination of contradictions and tensions.





## Unsere Highlights

### Casablanca

The eventful history of Morocco's largest city and financial center is reflected in its eclectic architecture. While Casablanca features hardly any classically "oriental" attractions, many places brilliantly illustrate urban Morocco's political, social, and cultural upheavals. We visit the Hassan II Mosque, a city landmark and one of the world's largest mosques, and tour its various neighborhoods, each with a unique history.

### The Dadès Valley

We spend a few days in the impressive Dadès Gorges in the Atlas Mountains. Traveling through the constantly changing mountain landscape is an event in itself. We stay overnight in the gorge and visit local civil society initiatives. We also have plenty of time to take long hikes in our breathtaking surroundings.

### Marrakesh

One of the world's most famous squares, Jemaa el-Fna figures on UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage List because of its concentration of popular Moroccan cultural traditions. Every evening storytellers bring alive the Moroccan oral tradition, while jugglers and snake-oil salesmen make their mischief, and dancers and musicians perform. But Marrakesh also features old royal palaces, Islamic schools, and a fascinating, bustling medina that we'll visit together.

### Merzouga

We travel through barren land along the Moroccan-Algerian border, where the Sahara stretches as far as the eye can see. The first night we relax and acclimate ourselves, before rising before dawn the next day to climb the highest sand dune in the area. We spend that night under the awesome starlit sky in the middle of nowhere.

### Ourika Valley

After the desert, we crave lush green plants and a break. We spend two days in the Ourika Valley near Marrakesh, where we get a good rest and hike to its stunning waterfalls.

### Essaouira

The last stop on our trip is the small port city of Essaouira on the Atlantic, which has been a hip destination since the 1960s. Its medina, surrounded by massive ramparts built by the Portuguese, is a UNESCO World Heritage site. Here we explore the city's Barbary pirate history and meet with a representative of its large Jewish community. Our trip ends here. Travelers in need of a vacation can relax longer at Essaouira's picturesque beach.

## Useful country-specific information

### Local currency

The official currency in Morocco is the Moroccan Dirham (MAD). It is very easy to exchange money (Euros or US Dollars) anywhere in the country or to withdraw cash with a debit or credit card, as the banks have numerous branches. We recommend to take a part of the money in cash, and take a debit or credit card with you as well. Withdrawal fees might vary according to the regulations of your home bank.

### Visa

Visa are provided upon arrival at the airports. It is thus not necessary to apply for a visa at the Moroccan Embassy in Germany. To receive a visa upon arrival, you need a passport with a minimum six months validity at the time of travel. The visa is free of charge.

Visa regulations might change at any time. If so, we will inform you in time before the tour start. Please let us know as soon as possible if you have any Israeli stamps in your passport, and/or do not wish to travel with your German passport.

### Language

The official languages in Morocco are Arabic and Tamazight (Berber). Furthermore, French is being spoken in many parts of the country. English will also serve you well while travelling.

### Security

Although Morocco is deemed a very safe tourist country, the issue of security plays a big role.

In planning out tours, we follow the recommendations and statements issued by the German Federal Foreign Office. Our route only leads us through areas deemed safe by the Office. While doing so, we keep close contact with the German Embassy and local authorities on the ground. In case of any change of the security situation, the tour route might be subject to according changes.

## Health & vaccination

No special vaccinations are needed for a stay in Morocco. Medical facilities in the urban centers have a good standard and guarantee a basic level of medical care in rural areas. In order to prevent cases of diarrhea, however, we recommend to avoid drinking tap water.

When it comes to the **Corona virus** (COVID-19), we follow the recommendations made by the [German Federal Foreign Office](#) as well as the local authorities and the German Embassy on site. In case of any change of the health situation, the tour might be subject to according changes we will inform you about as soon as possible.

For general information on our tours please click [here](#)

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