

## Mount Toubkal Ascent, 4,167m/13,671ft, Morocco

An excellent short trek in the High Atlas to the summit of Jebel Toubkal.



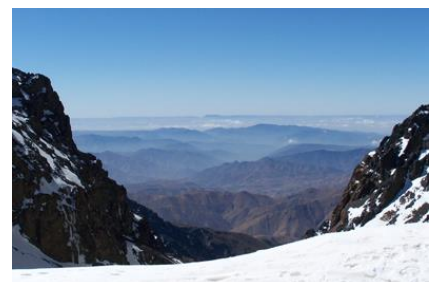
### Group departures

See overleaf for departure dates

### Holiday overview

Style	Trekking Peak
Accommodation	Hotels/Riads, Camping
Grade	Vigorous
Duration	8 days from London to London
Trekking / Walking days	On trek: 6 days
Min/Max group size	5 / 12. Guaranteed to run for 5
Trip Leader	Local Leader Morocco
Land only	Joining in Marrakesh, Morocco
Max altitude	4,167m/13,671ft, Toubkal Summit, Day 6

**Private Departures & Tailor Made itineraries available**



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# Departures

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## Group departures

### 2022 Dates:

Sun 22 May - Sun 29 May

Sun 21 Aug - Sun 28 Aug

Sun 28 Aug - Sun 04 Sep

Sun 25 Sep - Sun 02 Oct

### 2023 Dates:

Sun 21 May - Sun 28 May

### Will the trip run?

This trip is guaranteed to run for 5 people and for a maximum of 12. In the rare event that we cancel a holiday, we will refund you in full and give you at least 6 weeks warning. Many trips do fill up quickly - we advise you to book early if you want to secure a place(s) on the dates of your choice.

### Group prices and optional supplements

Please contact us on +44 (0)1453 844400 or visit our website for our land only and flight inclusive prices and single supplement options.

### No Surcharge Guarantee

The flight inclusive or land only price will be confirmed to you at the time you make your booking. There will be no surcharges after your booking has been confirmed.

### Insurance

We offer a travel insurance scheme - please contact us for details.

### Private Departures

We can also offer this trip as a private holiday. A Private Departure follows exactly the same itinerary as the group departure but at dates to suit you (subject to availability) - please contact us with your preferred dates.

### Tailor Made service

We pride ourselves on the level of quality and choice we provide for our clients who want a fully tailor made holiday. A holiday will be created especially for you by one of our well-travelled experts. They will be able to advise on the accommodation best suited to your needs, the sights you should visit (and those to avoid!) and the best walks and activities matched to your ability. In short, we will work together with you to create the holiday of your dreams.

If you would like to explore the idea of a Tailor Made holiday with Mountain Kingdoms then please call us on +44 (0)1453 844400 or see the Tailor Made pages of our website for further inspiration.

## Your trip highlights

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- Carefully planned route offering excellent acclimatisation and cultural interest
- Comfortable camping with good quality tents, chairs and dining table, tasty locally sourced food, plus a hot shower en route
- Highly experienced and fully qualified Berber guides
- Centrally located riad hotel in Marrakesh

## At a glance itinerary

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Day 1	Fly to Marrakesh. Transfer to overnight riad.
Day 2	Drive to Oukaimden. Trek to Assaro.
Day 3	Trek to Azib N'Ououraine.
Day 4	Trek to Azib Imi N'ouassif, via Lac D'ifni.
Day 5	Trek to Refuge Neltner, via Tizi n'Ouanoumss.
Day 6	Ascent of Jebel Toubkal, 4,167m/13,671ft.
Days 7-8	Trek from Refuge to Imlil. Drive to Marrakesh. Fly to London.

## Trip summary

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How can somewhere so close to Western Europe be so different? From the moment you awake to the sound of the call to prayer, the history, art, culture, religion and way of life the Kingdom of Morocco beguiles you, long after you've arrived back home. The diverse landscapes too offer a feast for the traveller boasting high mountains, deep gorges, rugged coastline, fertile river valleys and the sweeping sands of the Sahara.

At 4,167m/13,671ft high, Jebel Toubkal is the main, but by no means the only, objective on this great new shorter trekking holiday. Whilst some may be content just to try to bag North Africa's highest peak in two or three days, our itinerary offers careful acclimatisation and immerses you in the land of the Berbers.

Leaving Marrakesh, you make a short drive to Oukaimden in the heart of the High Atlas to begin your trek to the Toubkal Massif. Your trek will take you through isolated valleys, crossing high passes and camping in high pastures or by rushing streams. After warming up with a trek around the eastern and southern flanks of the Jebel Toubkal, it's a straightforward climb to the summit, which rewards you with views over the High and Middle Atlas and occasionally the Sahara beyond. Finally you return to Marrakesh with time to experience the sights and sounds of this most atmospheric of cities.

Typically you can expect to be trekking for 6-7 hours each day, but there is also time to rest and relax. You will trek with a local Berber guide, a cook and a crew of muleteers, whose mules will carry the camp equipment and your kit bags. The route you will follow takes you through a number of Berber villages and small settlements, so there's plenty of opportunity to gain an insight into the local culture and way of life.

## Your guide



The trip will be led by a qualified Berber guide who is ideally placed to give you an insight into and information about their country, especially as much of this tour runs through the Berber or Tachelhit speaking parts of Morocco. The Moroccan government closely controls the appointment of both mountain and town guides. Your guide will have completed a year of training at the Centre for Mountain Guides in Tabant in the Central High Atlas. During their training guides complete courses in first aid, geography, history and the natural science of Morocco as well as testing their fitness.

Our Moroccan leaders are selected on the basis of their experience, levels of spoken English and helpfulness. Like the Berber culture from which they come they are all very welcoming and have a love of showing you their country.

### Special notes

#### Climbing Mount Toubkal

What it is?

North Africa's highest mountain - at 4,167m/13,671ft

What it entails:

Mainly walking on good but rough and stony paths

Steep ascents and descents as you cross a number of high cols

On the summit day, a steep walk on a good path up scree/rocky slopes

What experience and skills are required:

Experience of walking in the UK's high mountains, e.g. Snowdonia, Lake District, Western Highlands.

Good degree of physical fitness and stamina

Technical gear needed:

None - you just need regular hill walking gear

Trekking poles may be useful on steeper terrain

Good quality head torch for the final ascent

#### Summer temperatures

In the June to August period there is a possibility of very hot weather even at altitude, so precautions should be taken to keep cool and hydrated and the guide may, in exceptionally hot days, change the route for one with more shade.

#### Animal welfare

We work with an excellent partner in Morocco who care about the mules and horses that they use for portering gear on the trek. They apply strict weight limits and have specially designed harnesses to distribute weight evenly and to prevent saddle sores. They do not use metal mouth bits and make certain that the mules and horses are well fed and watered. All the horses and mules are regularly checked by a vet.

#### An extra mule

On this trek an extra mule is taken that can be occasionally used as a riding animal or as a back up for emergencies.

## Your trip itinerary

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### Day 1: Fly London to Marrakesh.

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Marrakesh airport is only 7km from the old city centre and it's therefore just a short transfer to your overnight hotel.

**Overnight: Riad Palais De Princesses or Riad Challa or Similar, Marrakesh**

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### Day 2: Drive to Oukaimden, 2,600m/8,530ft - 1-1½ hours. Trek to Assaro, 2,314m/7,592ft - 4½ hours.

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Your trekking guide will meet you this morning and together you will make the 1-1½ hour drive to the trailhead near the village of Oukaimden. You will meet your muleteers here and when all of your kit bags and the camping equipment have been loaded up, you set off on trek, contouring round the grassy valley of Assif-a-Ait Irene.

The first objective of your trek is the Tizi-nou Addi (2,957m/9,702ft). Tizi is the local name for a col or mountain pass and you will climb to cross a number of these on your trek to reach Toubkal. From the Tizi there is a steep descent through rocky terrain to reach the Berber village of Tacheddirt. You'll camp outside the village at Assaro. Today's trek typically takes around 4½ hours and involves approximately 360m/1,181ft of ascent.

**Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)**

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### Day 3: Trek over Tizi n' Likent, 3,350m/10,991ft, and descend to near Tizi t'Ourai, 2,900m/9,514ft - 6 hours.

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After breakfast, you leave the Imenane valley and begin the long climb up to cross Tizi-n-Likemt at 3,350m/10,991ft. Although less frequented than yesterday's trail, the path is well graded and clear, passing initially through scrub and then a barren rocky landscape to reach the col after about 4 hours. Views from the col are impressive and from here your guide will be able to point out the route for subsequent days. Lunch is usually taken before beginning the long 800m/2,624ft descent to the valley floor below at Azib Likemt, 2,550m/8,367ft, an area of summer pastures for Berbers living lower down the mountains. You now make the last ascent of the day, crossing then walking alongside a pleasant stream. There are rock pools along the way and on a hot day these may tempt you into a discreet dip! The small pasture of Azib n'Ououraine where you will camp tonight appears suddenly. There is plenty of space and some pleasant grassy patches, though they are grassy because they are permanently damp (be warned). A short distance up the path through the scree beyond takes you to the pass you will cross tomorrow. You are now quite high 2,900m/9,515ft and it can be cold and windy once the sun has gone down. Today's trek will take around 6 hours and involves approximately 1,250-1,390m/4,101- 4,561ft of ascent (depending on site of overnight camp).

**Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)**

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### Day 4: Trek to Azib Imi N'ouassif, 2,700m/8,858ft, via Amsouzerte and Lac D'ifni, 2,312m/7,585ft - 6-7 hours.

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This morning it will only take around 15 minutes to reach the col, Tizi t'Ourai, 3,120m/10,236ft, above your camp, from where you finally enter the southern side of the High Atlas. In clear weather there are fine views south over Jebel Sahro and the desert. Toubkal lies to the right and villages with their vibrant green terracing nestle in the valley below. It is 1,300m/4,265ft of descent, but the path stays on the crest of the ridge all the way affording great views throughout. The descent can be done in 2½ hours, but it is worth taking time to enjoy it. Tagounite is the first village you descend into and in June the roofs of the houses will be covered in swathes of grass laid out to dry. Women will be busy carrying bundles through the fields and the men will be out ploughing the fields. You may be offered walnuts or find bags of cherries for sale. You will find yourselves on a track leading into Amsouzerte where the ability to get fruit out to market has brought relative wealth to the valley.





The houses in Amsouzerte are substantial compared to the surrounding areas: often three or four storeys high with fine views. They are still basic however, with little more than carpets on the floors, a squat toilet and shower, and some electricity. There are basic stores in town and you will find fizzy drinks, fresh orange juice, and whatever fruit is in season.

After lunch and a refreshing mint tea, you will trek gradually up and out of Amsouzerte to Lac d'Ifni. The first hour out of Amsouzerte is wonderful walking through busy villages up the Ait Tissili valley. The well graded track passes through Takatert, Tisgouane and finally Tirhaltine. Well-kept terraces are fed via water channels from the Lac d'Ifni hidden from view by what appears to be a dam of rocks. Poplars and willows thrive in this climate, as do the walnut and chestnut trees. Later in the season you can pick blackberries as you walk. Takatert is reached in just over an hour and there are several kiosks here that will sell you cold drinks in the shade of the nut trees. After this the path is in the open, and hot! There is a large track that zigzags up the face of the massive rock wall ahead. More interesting is to follow the little path up through the village of Imhiliene joining the zigzags higher up. The path up to the top of the rocks that have created the lake is longer than it looks and it is a good hour before the terrain begins to level off. There are paths up the left and right sides, but ultimately they join, as the path around the lake only follows the right bank. It is a strange sight, the turquoise blue lake glinting in the sunshine. Current thought is that it was created not by moraine, but by massive rockslides. On the gravel plains on the far side are a few small stone shacks which are reached in the best part of another hour. It is possible to camp by the lakeside, but better to head up into the gorges for a while to make the ascent tomorrow easier. Mouflon (wild mountain sheep) have been seen here in the past. Today you trek for 6-7 hours, with around 735m/2,411ft of ascent.

**Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)**

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**Day 5: Trek to Refuge Neltner, 3,207m / 10,522ft, via Tizi n'Ouanoumss, 3,664m/12,021ft - 4-5 hours.**

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It is a strenuous climb to the Tizi n'Ouanoumss, 3,664m/12,021ft, but ultimately this is a short day reaching Neltner in time for lunch.

From camp it is still almost 1,000m/3,210ft to the col, but the height is gained quickly over a short distance. The path keeps well to the right of the valley avoiding the deepest parts of the gorge and as such the lac remains out of view for most of the ascent until just before reaching the col. The top is reached in 2½ to 3 hours. There is a direct route on up the ridge to the summit of Toubkal from here, but it involves abseiling and is best left to the experts! The views from here are impressive: Up to the left at the head of the valley is Jebel Ouanakrim, 4,088m/13,413ft, and the second highest peak in the Atlas. Directly opposite is the ridge of the Clochetons with the prominent pinnacle of Tadat, 3,755m/12,320ft, in the middle.



The descent from the col down into the upper Mizane Valley is short and steep, but on a well built zigzag path. It takes about half an hour down to reach the valley bottom and then another half an hour along the valley floor to the Neltner Mountain Refuge, 3,207m/10,522ft.

A second refuge has been built here in recent years alongside the original French Alpine Club hut. This brings capacity in the huts alone to well over 200 people and the place always seems busy. There is also a new building for muleteers and even for their mules downstairs for when it gets cold.

We choose to camp on the terraces in front of the new hut. This allows you to enjoy the privacy of your tents (rather than large dormitories). Depending upon how busy the refuge is you may be able to take a shower or to use their toilets. The afternoon can be spent relaxing ahead of tomorrow's summit bid. Today you trek for 4-5 hours and ascend approximately 1,350m/4,429ft.

**Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)**

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**Day 6: Ascent of Jebel Toubkal, 4,167m/13,671ft - 4-5 hours.**

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Your goal today is the ascent of Jebel Toubkal, 4,167m/13,671ft, the highest mountain in North Africa. It is traditional to make an early start before 7am, not just to avoid ascending in the heat of the day, but also because clouds tend to build up around the mountain after midday, frequently obscuring the views. The route up via the south cwm is the normal route and is predominantly scree and boulder although reasonably firm underfoot. The route reaches a col, the Tizi n'Toubkal, 3,940m/12,927ft, in just over 2 hours from where there are fine views south, and continues up just below the ridge summiting normally in just over 3 hours.

The most notable feature of the summit is a large iron pyramidal structure. The views extend well south towards Jebel Sahro and Siroua and whilst in mid-summer they are usually restricted by heat haze, the spring and autumn are generally much clearer with cloud inversions common in September and October. The mountain can be descended in a couple of hours, returning the way you ascended. However, unlike many other groups on the mountain we have time to make a far more satisfying traverse of the mountain, descending via the north cwm. This is a much quieter route and passes the satellite peak of Tibherine, 4,010m/13,157ft, on which still lie the scattered remains of a light aircraft that crashed back in the 1970s. Owing to the early start, lunch will be back at camp followed by an afternoon relaxing. There will be a shower available for you to use. Depending upon the route of descent you will be trekking for between 4 and 5 hours today, with an ascent of 960m/3,150ft.

**Overnight: Camp (Meals: BLD)**

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**Day 7: Trek from Refuge to Imlil, 1,750m /5,741ft - 5-6 Hours. Drive to Marrakesh.**

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Your last day on trek now leads you down from the high peaks. From the refuge you follow the track used by the overwhelming majority of trekkers to reach the foot of Toubkal. At various points along the way you come across stalls selling Berber tea, cold drinks and souvenirs. This is especially true around Sidi Chamharouch where a large white-painted boulder marks the burial plot of a local saint. The descent to the road-head at Imlil takes around 5-6 hours. Lunch will be taken during the trek. Transport will await you in Imlil, from where you make the short 1-1½ hour drive back to Marrakesh.

After freshening up at your Riad/Hotel you can take a stroll around the Medina before dinner. As the evening draws in, the Djemma el Fna - an enormous open area at the edge of the souks - begins to fill with open air food stalls, story tellers, snake charmers and dancers. This nightly ritual of exotic sounds and smells draws locals and tourists alike. Take a wander through the crowds or enjoy people watching from one of the cafes overlooking the scene.

**Overnight: Riad Palais De Princesses or Riad Challa or Similar, Marrakesh (Meals: B)**

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**Day 8: Group transfer to airport. Fly to London.**

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Depending on your flight times, you may have time to yourself to explore one of North Africa's most fascinating cities. Points of interest within easy reach of the medina include Les Jardins Majorelle - Yves St Lauren's celebrated gardens, the Saadian Tombs, the Tanneries and the Badii Palace. The medieval-style alleyways and squares of the old medina (walled city) immediately transport you to a different age. Across the main Djemma el Fna square lies Marrakesh's famous souk, filled with traders offering wood carvings, metalwork, clothing, carpets, and a myriad of other goods aimed at both locals and visitors.



Although the souk is the place for souvenir and gift shopping, if you have not already experienced in the art of haggling a visit to one of the city's 'fixed price' shops can be a good first step: as this will give you a rough guide as to the prices to expect to pay for the various tempting arts and crafts.

The transfer time to Marrakesh airport is between 20 and 30 minutes depending on traffic, but you will be transferred from your Riad in good time to check-in for your flight to London. **(Meals: B)**

## Our grading system

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Mount Toubkal Ascent is graded as a Vigorous trekking peak holiday, as described below.

### **Vigorous**

Typically these trips involve 8 to 14 days (occasionally more) trekking in relatively remote landscapes. High passes up to 4,900m/16,000ft may be crossed (sometimes snow-covered) and there may also be glacier travel and peak ascents. Walking days can be between 5 and 8 hours with considerable ascents and descents. This grade also covers some European treks of shorter durations. Overnight stops on trek could be in tea houses, mountain huts or camping.

These holidays would suit enthusiastic hill/mountain walkers.

## Trip altitude

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**Important** - please be aware that this trip involves travel at altitude. Whilst all our itineraries are carefully designed to optimise acclimatisation to high altitudes, participants on this trip are likely to experience some symptoms of being at altitude. The Dossier pack we provide when you book your holiday includes comprehensive advice on safe travel at altitude. If you require further information or advice on travel at altitude prior to booking please contact the office to speak to an experienced member of our team. Alternatively we recommend [www.medex.org.uk](http://www.medex.org.uk) as a good source of information.



## What the price includes

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**Mountain Kingdoms** aims to offer the best value for money. We do not charge extra for meal packages or apply local charges and try to ensure that all the key elements of your holiday are included.

### What's included:

- ✓ An English-speaking local leader/guide
- ✓ Economy class return air fares from the UK & UK Departure Tax (flight inclusive only)
- ✓ A single, timed group airport transfer on arrival and departure
- ✓ Comfortable B&B riad accommodation in central Marrakesh, on a twin share basis
- ✓ All camping facilities and all meals on trek
- ✓ Camp staff to carry out all camp work
- ✓ All road transport by private vehicles
- ✓ All meals on trek
- ✓ Costs of all portorage
- ✓ A free high-quality Mountain Kingdoms kit bag
- ✓ Carbon offsetting with the Ecoan Tree Planting Project (for clients taking our flight inclusive option)
- ✓ The opportunity to attend of our pre trip meets in the Cotswolds

### Airport transfers

The cost of a transfer to/from the airport is included in the price of your holiday. This is a single group transfer which is arranged to coincide with the timings of the group flights. If you book your own flights which arrive/depart at different times to this, or we book flights at your request that have different timings, we will be happy to provide a quote for a separate transfer. Please contact us should you require any further information.

### What's not included:

- ✗ Travel insurance
- ✗ Tips
- ✗ Lunch and evening meals in Marrakesh

### Water-to-Go Reusable Bottle Campaign

We have joined the campaign to help cut down on the use of plastics and, in particular, single-use water bottles. To do this we have teamed up with the revolutionary company, Water-to-Go who have developed a multi-use drinking bottle with a reusable filter that eliminates over 99.9% of all microbiological contaminants. This makes water from virtually any source safe to drink and significantly reduces the need for travellers to buy bottles of water wherever they are in the world.

Our clients who are not given a free Mountain Kingdoms kit bag for their holiday (these are required for certain treks), will instead receive a free Mountain Kingdoms Water-to-Go bottle. These unique Water-to-Go bottles can also be purchased from us at a discounted rate.

For further information about our campaign visit <https://www.mountainkingdoms.com/water-to-go-reusable-bottle-campaign>.

## Your accommodation

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We will endeavour to secure the hotels named in the itinerary but if our first choice of hotel is not available we will book a suitable alternative of a similar standard.



### **Riad Palais De Princesses Or Riad Challa Or Similar, Marrakesh**

This exceptional riad is well located; it is just an easy walk from here to the main square and souks of Marrakesh. It was formerly a princely residence and was restored five years ago with great care and to a very high standard. It is a lovely example of 'old Morocco' and has won many awards. It has 23 rooms, a pool, spa, hammam and roof terrace overlooking the High Atlas Mountains. If this Riad is not available we will use Riad Challa or another riad or hotel of a similar standard.



### **Camp**

On trek you will sleep in good sized two-person ridge/dome tents equipped with foam mattresses. A dining tent with table and stools/chairs will be provided, along with a toilet tent and separate cook tent.

## Meal arrangements

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Bed and Breakfast in Marrakesh. Full board whilst on trek.

## Flight arrangements

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### **Flight inclusive from price**

Our 'Flight inclusive from' price is based on the best fare available at the time of printing. As airfares change on a constant basis, this should be used only as a guide price. Rest assured that, at the time of booking, we will endeavour to get the best possible price for the flights you need. Remember, the earlier you book the greater your chances of securing the best fare.

Flight inclusive packages booked through Mountain Kingdoms are protected through our ATOL bonding scheme.

### **Flight upgrades and regional Airports**

Please call us on +44 (0)1453 844400 for flight options from regional UK airports, Business Class upgrades, alternative airlines and stopovers. Please also check our website for the most up to date flight inclusive 'from' prices.

## Further information

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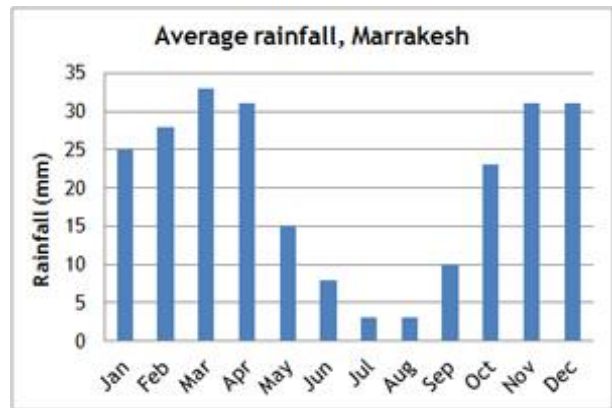
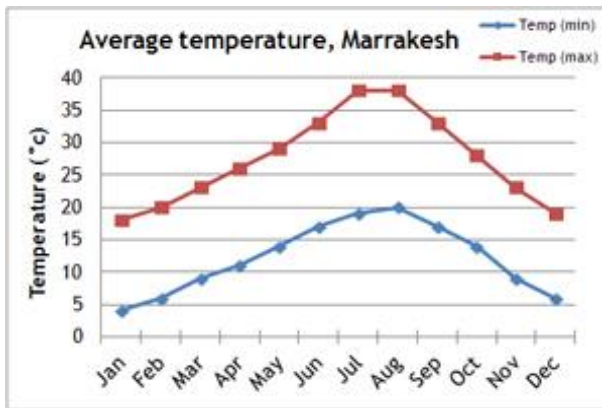
When we receive your booking, we send you a full Trip Dossier which contains details of any visas and vaccinations required, a suggested gear and clothing list and lots of useful information. If you do have queries at this initial stage do call us on 01453 844400 and we will be pleased to offer advice.

## The nature of adventure travel

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Every effort will be made to keep to this itinerary but we cannot guarantee that things may not change, either before you travel or while you are away. By its very nature, adventure travel involves an element of the unexpected, particularly in more remote areas. A variety of factors such as adverse weather conditions, changes to local schedules and difficulties with transportation can all contribute to the need to make changes to the itinerary, often at the very last minute. Our Operations Manager and your Trip Leader will make every effort to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary and minimise the impact of any changes, but an easy-going and flexible nature is a real asset! Please note that all timings and distances given are approximate.

# Climate information



## Extensions

### Extending your holiday

If you would like additional inspiration on how or where to extend your holiday please call us on 01453 844400. Alternatively, you can download a range of extension information sheets on our website, at [www.mountainkingdoms.com](http://www.mountainkingdoms.com).



### Additional accommodation in Marrakesh

If you would like to extend your trip to Morocco, we would be happy to arrange additional nights' accommodation in Marrakesh for you, either at the Riad Imlichil, or one of the more luxuriously appointed Riads that have opened up in recent years.

### Essaouira

If you would like some seaside relaxation after your trek why not head to the atmospheric town of Essaouira located on Morocco's wild Atlantic coastline. Essaouira has a laid back atmosphere, long sandy beaches, a picturesque fishing port and an impressive ancient fortified Medina. Our Essaouira extension includes hotel options by the beach or in the Medina and all transfers to and from Marrakesh.



## Why book this holiday with Mountain Kingdoms?

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- The extensive experience of our office team, combined with the knowledge, contacts and attention to detail of our local partners, means you are assured of a high quality holiday.
- In a country where there are many unqualified guides operating, we employ only trekking guides and city guides, as appropriate, who are fully licensed by the Moroccan authorities.
- We do not cut corners on our service and include many small touches that add greatly to a great trekking experience such as hot showers at the Toubkal refuge. Our camp equipment also includes chairs/stools and table for meals, making for more relaxing and comfortable evenings.
- Animal welfare is paramount to us and our local partners. The mules and horses used for portering gear on this trek are extremely well looked after and have strict weight limits, special harnesses and bits. They are also regularly checked by a vet. We also take an additional mule on trek.
- After making the classic ascent of Jebel Toubkal you have time to follow a different descent route from the summit and spend an additional night beneath the mountain. Many groups combine an ascent of Toubkal with a descent all the way to the valley floor and road-head - making for a very long and tiring day.
- We have a maximum group size of 12. This means we can use smaller vehicles, boutique hotels and offer a genuine small group adventure experience.
- We offer a flexible service and can extend your holiday with extra hotel nights, upgrades and time in the coastal town of Essaouira.
- As part of our commitment to 'Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency', we will be carbon-offsetting all international flights booked through us by donating funds to the Ecoan Tree Planting Project in Peru.
- We are an IATA accredited agent and work directly with some of the world's major airlines. If you wish to fly with a specific airline, from a regional UK airport or on alternative dates to the main group we would be happy to arrange this for you. Please contact our Flights Manager, April, for flight options, quotes and further information.

If we've tempted you to take your next holiday with us, we advise you to check availability and you can do this via our website: [www.mountainkingdoms.com](http://www.mountainkingdoms.com) or by calling the team on +44 (0)1453 844400. Bookings can be made online, by phone or by completing a booking form and returning it to us. We can also provisionally hold places if you need time to consider your options.

## What our clients say

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*Small company giving personal service. Beautiful and varied scenery, just what we wanted.*

*-Mr & Mrs W, Staffordshire*

*Excellent experience for the experienced walker. The climb is on scree and boulders throughout, with beautiful exceptions in the villages, the lake and running streams. The standard of food on trek was fantastic and beyond that experienced on other treks undertaken. Hussain, our guide was adaptable and knowledgeable and we could not have wished for better.*

*- M Hooson, Cheshire*



# Mountain Kingdoms - distinctly different

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## **Truly independent**

In an age where many so-called 'independent' travel companies have in fact been bought out by multi-national giants, we remain fiercely independent with all the benefits this offers our clients.

## **Value for money prices with an emphasis on quality**

We are not in the business of cutting our itineraries and services to the bone to offer eye-catching cheap prices. We use some of the best airlines, and typically 3 or 4 star hotels in cities. We include the majority of meals and private transport for road travel. We use excellent equipment and appoint well-trained staff and leaders. Last year, over 98% of our clients rated their Mountain Kingdoms holiday as 'excellent' or 'good'. We are members of AITO and bound by their quality charter.

## **Complete financial security**

You can book with us confident that your holiday has full financial protection. Flight inclusive holidays are financially protected by the Civil Aviation Authority under ATOL licence number 2973 and 'Land Only' holidays are covered by a bond secured with ABTOT.

## **No Surcharge Guarantee**

Your peace of mind is important to us so we have a No Surcharge Guarantee on all Land Only and Flight Inclusive bookings. This means that there will be no change to the price of your holiday once we have confirmed your booking, regardless of fluctuations in exchange rates or fuel prices.

## **Award winning Responsible Tourism**

We feel strongly that all our holidays should benefit local communities, protect the environment and respect local traditions, religion and heritage. You can read more about the charities we support and our Responsible Tourism commitments and initiatives on the following page or at [www.mountainkingdoms.com](http://www.mountainkingdoms.com).

## **Genuine small group travel**

Almost all of our holidays have a maximum group size of just 12, plus leader. This provides more contact with your leader, readier access to off-the-beaten-path areas, greater interaction with local communities and a reduced environmental impact.

## **Loyalty Discount**

If you have previously travelled with us we recognise your loyalty with a discount on future trips.

## **Booking your holiday - it couldn't be easier**

Once you've chosen your Mountain Kingdoms holiday you can book online, call the office or complete and post a booking form which can be found in our brochure or downloaded from our website. If you would like to hold a place on one of our trips, whilst you make up your mind, please give us a call to make a provisional booking. This is a no-obligation, no-cost booking and we will hold your place until space comes under pressure or we need your decision.

## **Comprehensive information**

When we receive your booking we send you a full trip dossier which contains details of visas and vaccinations required, a suggested gear and clothing list and lots of useful information. In fact, everything you need to know to give you peace of mind and allow you to prepare for your trip of a lifetime.



## RESPONSIBLE TOURISM STATEMENT CLIMATE EMERGENCY PLAN



For over 33 years, Mountain Kingdoms has been offering people the chance to visit amazing places on this extraordinary planet. We now offer trips to all corners of the world, but we are conscious that inevitably our holidays have a detrimental impact on the world around us, and we want to do all we can to reduce our carbon emissions. We are a signatory to Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency, along with a growing number of like-minded, reputable tour operators. For more information, please visit [www.tourismdeclares.com](http://www.tourismdeclares.com)

From 2020 onwards, we will be focusing on how we can reduce the carbon emissions that our holidays produce, and how to counterbalance this carbon by supporting carbon offset measures. Here are some of our current and future plans to minimise the impact of our business as a whole:

### **Carbon Offsetting**

#### **Already doing:**

- ✓ We have been offsetting carbon since 2007, but will be increasing our donations to the [Ecoan tree planting project](#) in Peru this year. This is with a trusted partner where the funds go directly to a project where the community plants trees on its own land.

#### **Will do:**

- ✓ We are working on making our carbon offsetting more accurate and targeted.
- ✓ In future, we will add to that a further estimate for carbon produced by hotels, local road travel, trains and internal flights to arrive at a carbon offset sum for each trip we operate.
- ✓ Carbon offsetting will be included in our holiday prices. For our Flight Inclusive holidays it will include the international flight and any emissions produced by inland travel and accommodation. Our Land Only prices will include the cost of offsetting emissions caused by inland travel and accommodation.

### **Reducing Carbon Emissions**

#### **Already doing:**

- ✓ We already offer the majority of our customers a free filtered water bottle which means they can instantly cut down on their single-use plastic consumption. This will be an ongoing project.
- ✓ We already predominantly use locally owned hotels, but will continue to ensure that, where possible, we use these rather than multinational chains.
- ✓ We have joined the Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency initiative to stand alongside like-minded travel companies, to work together to initiate best practices to make tourism as sustainable as possible.

#### **Will do:**

- ✓ We will re-evaluate our flights to make sure we are using the most fuel efficient airlines with the youngest fleets and, where possible, direct flights for each trip.
- ✓ We will stop offering unnecessary optional flights – for example our Everest sightseeing trip.
- ✓ We will eliminate unnecessary staff flights wherever possible.
- ✓ We will look at minimising internal flights.
- ✓ We will be asking all our worldwide agents and suppliers to look at their own carbon footprint and encourage them to reduce it.
- ✓ We will promote our more low impact trips to give customers an informed choice.

As part of our wider commitment to Responsible Tourism, we will continue to support a number of charities with whom we have had a long standing relationship over many years. These include: Shiva Charity in Nepal (Ginette Harrison School), Simien Mountains Mobile Medical Service and Porter Welfare, as well as setting aside a sum for emergency disaster relief should the need arise.



