

## Morocco - 11 Day Trip

Morocco Chefchaouen, Fez & The North

11 Day Trip

Itinerary:

### Day 1

Arrival in Tangier in the north of Morocco &ndash; Meet at airport and transfer to our Hotel - 1st night Hotel Inter-Continental (B/B)

### Day 2

A city somewhat apart from the rest of Morocco, Tangier's history has been one of foreign occupation. European powers have long envied the city's strategic position at the entrance of the Mediterranean; the first invaders were Romans, followed by a succession of European powers of the last 200 years, including Portuguese, British and French. In its 1920 heyday it was considered one of the most international cities in the world, a place where writers, artists and socialites met to indulge in activities forbidden in most other countries at the time. Today Tangier is a long way from the crazy fleshpot of the 20's, now a growing port and making its mark on the tourist industry.

An ideal city from which to start our Journey through Northern Morocco. A chance to explore the Grand Socco and Petit Socco of the old Medina.

Late morning we head south along the coast to the beautiful coastal town of Asilah. The small port has had its own tumultuous history, far out of proportion to its size. Today, it has found its niche as a bijoux resort town. A chance to soak up the peaceful calm of the white walled Medina, while the ocean laps away at its walls. After sunset we head back to our Hotel in Tangier &ndash; 2nd night Hotel Inter-Continental (B/B)

### Day 3

We start our journey south and our route takes us up into the Rif Mountains and to the town Chefchaouen. The landscape of the Rif Mountains is unlike any other in Africa &ndash; lofty peaks hidden by cloud, lush green valleys, jagged rocky outcrops, it's a wild and unpredictable region, once ruled by fierce tribes. 1st night Hotel Paradour (B/B)

## Day 4

A whole day Chefchaouen. Its dramatic setting beneath the twin peaks of Jebel Chaouen (Chaouen means 'the horns' in Berber) is a delightful maze of white and blue-washed buildings making Chefchaouen an attractive town to amble through at leisure and enjoy. 2nd night Hotel Paradour (B/B)

## Day 5

Leaving the Rif Mountains we head south to the city of Fez. The oldest of the Imperial cities, and one of the holiest cities in the Islamic world, Fez is steeped in ancient charm.

Fez is divided into three distinct parts. Fez El Djede (Fez the New), established in the 13th Century, is where you'll find most of the royal palaces, gardens and museums. The Ville Nouvelle, the modern city built by the French in the 20th Century, which has tree-lined avenues packed with cafes, juice shops, patisseries and restaurants -

But the real Morocco is captured in Fez el Bali (Old Fez) - founded in 800 BC by Moulay Idriss II this labyrinth of over 900 narrow, twisting and turning lanes will not fail to enthrall. Wandering through the local souks is like taking a step back into the Middle Ages, as the locals go about their work the same way they would have 1200 years ago. 1st Night Hotel Les Merenides (B/B)

## Day 6

Whole day in Fez, guided through the Medina. The copper smiths, the tanneries with their powerful aroma, colourful yarns in the dyers souks, children carrying trays of bread balanced neatly on their heads and cries of 'balak balak' (meaning Attention) - will send you scrambling to hug the walls - well out of the way of the heavily laden mules. Combine all this with the enchanting architecture of intricate mosaic tiles, carefully carved stucco and elaborately decorated cedar wood ceilings. 2nd night Hotel Les Merenides (B/B)

## Day 7

We leave Fez and travel the short distance to the Roman city of Volubilis. The western most city of the Roman Empire, this ancient civilisation is set in a picturesque valley. We take out time exploring this ancient site and see the wonderful mosaics and ruins of the Roman villas and temples.

We visit the hilltop town of Moulay Idriss. The resting place of Moulay Idriss 1, direct descendant of the Prophet Mohammed, this town is a major pilgrimage destination for Moroccans. Until 1920,

non-Muslims found here would be executed, but today you can wander through the white streets and make your way up for a wonderful panorama overlooking the tomb and town below. We then make our way down, arriving this evening in the city of Meknes &ndash; 1 night Hotel Transatlantique (B/B)

## Day 8

A morning in Meknes. Founded in the 10C by the Meknass Berber tribes, Meknes's glory days came some 700 years later when Sultan Moualy Ismail decided to build a new capital at Meknes. Regarded as one of the most ruthless sultans in Moroccan history, a chance to visit his Mausoleum.

The opportunity to explore the Medina of Meknes, on a far smaller scale than Fez, it's the perfect place to wander at leisure through the traditional souks and soak up all the local activity of the market sellers and craftsman.

In the afternoon we will make the drive north to the Atlantic coast and the city of Rabat &ndash; 1st night Hotel Tour Hassan (B/B)

## Day 9

Whole Day in Rabat. Rabat is the capital and political nerve centre. First impressions are often of a bustling European city, with wide boulevards & open cafes, but that's the new town. We visit the Mausoleum of Mohammed V and see the great Hassan Tower &ndash; the unfinished minaret and the coastal fortresses of Kasah des Oudaisas, it's cannons still guarding against the pirate gangs that once ruled the River Bou Regreg. Inside the Kasbah walls, a different world again &ndash; with the blue and white painted houses that are a reminder of the Andalucian and Mediterranean influences that are so much a part of Rabat's History. 2nd night Hotel Tour Hassan (B/B)

## Day 10

We make a journey along the coast to Casablanca. The popular romantic image of Casablanca is based on scenes from the film with Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman &ndash; actually not shot in Morocco at all. In reality, Casablanca is much like any other modern European city, with office blocks, wide boulevards and suburban sprawl. We take a tour of the Hassan II Mosque. The Mosque was opened in 1993 a tribute to the vision of King Hassan. Inspired by the Koran, which says 'the throne of God lies on the water', the mosque's site is as stunning as its architecture, with Atlantic waves crashing up against its white marble walls. Third largest in the world, its minaret towers up 200m, the interior prayer hall can accommodate 20 000 worshippers with room for a further 80 000 in the exterior courtyard. 1 night Hotel Suisse B/B

## Day 11

Depart from Casablanca for home &ndash; or continue on to Marrakech for an extension to your trip.

#### N.B Flights

Royal Air Maroc operate a direct service from London to Taniger on a Saturday. They fly daily out of both Casablanca and Marrakech back to the UK

Links to Airlines .