



## Morocco: Magic of the Orient

11 Days



**Kesher Tours invites you to enter a world of mystery. Morocco is an initiation into the magic of the Islamic, Arabic, African world of medinas, minarets, desert and mountain, and yet retains a European patina. Imbibe the spirit of Morocco; wander the streets of the great cities. Fez is a stunning array of medieval buildings; the world-famous souk of Marrakech sells a bewildering array of goods; Casablanca, is a thriving commercial center, and Rabat reflects its modern French origins. The snow-capped Atlas Mountains lie inland. Beyond them are the fringes of the parched Sahara. Whether scaling distant ridges, haggling for exotic artifacts, gazing at ancient wonders or marveling at the pink of a desert dawn, in Morocco, you will be mesmerized**

### **Day 1 Monday: Casablanca - Meknes – Fes**

Arrival to Casablanca the most important city in Morocco - Casablanca. We will travel to the city Meknes which was built by Sultan Mulai Ismail in the 17th century and which is fondly known as the "Versailles of Morocco." Meknes was a lively Jewish center until its Jewish inhabitants made aliyah with the founding of the State of Israel. We'll tour the many sites that adorned the city in the times of Sultan Ismail, including the famous Mansur Gate. After our visit we will continue Fes for overnight.

### **Day 2 Tuesday: Fes**

Today will be mostly devoted to the religious and cultural capital of Morocco, which combines old and new. There will be a guided tour with a local English-speaking guide. The area of Fes is today a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Its narrow lanes with their workshops remain as they have been for hundreds of years. We'll visit the square of the Royal Palace, which is alongside the Jewish quarter – the oldest Melah in Morocco, as well as the Jewish cemetery and the Abu Danan Synagogue in the Melah. We'll view the Dynastic Tombs and city as a whole from the green roofs and walls of Fes. From the rooftops we'll see the tannery quarter where hides are treated, and we'll visit a ceramics factory where we'll learn about this unique local craft. The city's ramparts surround a maze of winding alleys and a bustling market divided according the guilds of its artisans.

**Day 3 Wednesday: Fes - Ifran- Midelt – Erfoud**

After breakfast we travel to Ifran, a Swiss-type Moroccan town, located at 1600 meters above sea level. The entire area is surrounded by magnificent monkey-inhabited cedar forests. The town also hosts the Peace University, where members of the three monotheistic religions were supposed to have studied together. Follow the old caravan trail south. Stop for lunch in Midelt, a market town set in the high plains between the Middle and High Atlas mountain ranges. Continue along the palm-fringed Ziz Valley, famous for date cultivation, to the Tafilalt oasis on the edge of the Sahara Desert. Your day ends in Erfoud, where beautiful views across the shimmering Sahara have made this a popular location with filmmakers.

**Day 4 Thursday: Erfoud - Merzouga dunes - Todra Gorge - Ouarzazate**

We'll get up very early this morning and head out by Jeep to the Merzouga dunes, the largest dunes in the world, part of the western Sahara, from where we'll view a fantastic desert sunrise (weather permitting), and then return to Erfoud for breakfast. After breakfast we travel to the Todra Gorge at the southern edge of the High Atlas Mountains. We'll see some magnificent scenery, dotted with orchards and Berber villages. We'll examine how the locals store water for the long dry season. We will continue to Tinghir, one of the most beautiful oases in southern Morocco. Toward evening we'll arrive to the French built regional city Ouarzazate. We'll see the **traditional** villages and picturesque Kasbahs which are often used as backgrounds in the production of Hollywood movies.

**Day 5 Friday: Ouarzazate – Aït Benhaddou- Marrakesh**

Today we will visit Aït Ben Haddou in the High Atlas Mountains. Continue through the Tizi-n-Tichka Pass to Marrakesh - the 'Red City'. Like many other former imperial cities in Morocco, Marrakesh is comprised of an old fortified city - the médina - and an adjacent modern city. Marrakesh is home to Morocco's largest traditional market ('souk') where you might like to do some shopping...we'll arrive to our hotel and start preparing for Shabbat.

**Day 6 Shabbat: Marrakesh**

After Shabbat services and lunch we'll take a walking tour. In the evening, we'll all go out to see "Fantasia" - a Berber folklore show.

**Day 7 Sunday: Marrakesh - Ourika valley - Marrakesh**

"The Red City" or the "Pearl of the South" are but two of the names given to Marrakesh - the most beautiful city in Morocco that lies at the foot of the Atlas Mountains. The city is divided in two: the new and the ancient. We'll visit the Almanara Gardens and the city center with its lively markets. We'll pass through the Melah, and stop by the Koutoubia Mosque, visit a Berber pharmacy and the Bahia Palace. We'll visit a Melah where Jews no longer live, but where there is an ancient synagogue that is more than 500 years old. We'll tour the "medina" - the market quarter of the city. The market is a mass of colors, voices and smells, a polyglot of all the treasures that exist in this country. The "medina" is divided according to type of product: an area for silver houses silversmiths and silver dealers, while gold is dealt in a different area, and rows upon rows of stalls sell leather, copper and jewelry. We'll end the day with a visit to the Ourika valley also known as 'Valley of the Jews' where we enjoy the view of the red wild scenery and the picturesque villages among the mountains. We'll return to Marrakech for dinner and overnight.

**Day 8 Monday: Marrakesh - Essaouira- Safi**

Today our sightseeing will begin in Essaouira, ex Portuguese Mogador stronghold. In the 18th century, the Alaouite Sultan Mohamed Ben Abdallah charged some prominent Jewish families to promote international trade from the port of Essaouira. Essaouira's mellah covers over 10 percent of the town, but Jews constituted almost 40 percent of the population in the late 1880's. Jewish stars on the doors to the mellah show the degree to which Jews were accepted in Essaouira, to the point that some of the richer Jews did not even live in the mellah. Commemorative plaques indicate the buildings in which synagogues were located. Former inhabitants of Essaouira, most of them Jewish, formed a committee to rehabilitate the town. The Jewish cemetery, just outside the city gates, is extremely well-kept. Two historical synagogues should be renovated soon "Slat Rabbi Hajm Pinto and Slat Attias". Continue to Safi and visit the Mellah in the Northern part of the medina, the sanctuary of Oulad Ben Zmirou and the Portuguese fortress.

**Day 9 Tuesday: Azemmour – Casablanca**

This morning we will visit Azemmour and explore the historic Kasbah and the attractive Jewish quarter. After the tour we will continue to Casablanca. Upon arrival we'll take a panoramic tour of the city during which we'll see the newer part of this North African metropolis, including the United Nations Square, renowned for the Neo Moorish buildings that surround it, and for the fountain, which sprays water all around. From there we'll head to Great Mosque built half on land and half on water. Many of Morocco's finest artists and artisans worked for many years to create this magnificent edifice. In fact, every Moroccan citizen donated funds for the project in one way or another to ensure that the project's costs, which soared to over \$800 million, would be covered. The mosque's minaret rises to a height of 200 meters, and its central prayer hall can contain thousands of worshippers. This is a true architectural wonder. We'll visit the new and old cities, the colorful bazaars and the promenade along the ocean.

**Day 10 Wednesday: Casablanca, Rabat**

Today we will visit the capital of Rabat, where we'll visit the Tour Hassan, the yet to be completed mammoth mosque. Then it's off to see the King's Palace and the mausoleum of King Hassan V as well as numerous other important sites. After the visit we will drive back to our hotel in Casablanca

**Day 11 Thursday: Casablanca – flight back home**

After breakfast we'll bid a sad farewell to Morocco. Our tour is now over and we take our memories with us as we head to the airport from where we take our flights home.

**DATES, PRICES AND IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

Tour Code	Departs	Returns	Duration	Price	Single Supp.	Tour Guide
EMAR2006	20 JUN 2022	30 JUN 2022	11 DAYS	\$2650	\$950	Cindy Kline
EMAR2908	29 AUG 2022	08 SEP 2022	11 DAYS	\$2650	\$950	Dr. Yitzhak Askof
EMAR3110	31 OCT 202	10 NOV 2022	11 DAYS	\$2650	\$950	Cindy Kline

**Price Includes:**

- 5\* Hotels
- Entrance fees as per the itinerary
- Comfortable air conditioned touring coach
- Kosher half board & supplies for making sandwiches for lunch
- Tips for local service providers
- Professional experienced English-speaking guide

**Price does not include:**

- International flights and taxes
- Travel & Health Insurance
- Personal expenses
- Tip for our Tour Guide (Recommended: \$5 per person per day)

**Important to Know:**

- There may be changes to the order of places visited. We will make every effort to visit every place mentioned in the itinerary.
- The tour organizers have no control over airline services such as seating, special meal requests, changes in departure times or delays. These remain the sole responsibility of the airline company.

**Kashrut on Tours**

Kosher food is provided to our travelers on all our tours. We work with the local Rabbinates to provide Hashgacha for all local ingredients and fresh meat and poultry. In some cases, we fly in kosher food from Israel and other sources, depending on the destination of the tour. We do not guarantee Pat Israel and Chalav Israel for all destinations. In many destinations we have our own crockery and cutlery. Where we don't, we provide disposables at the meals. When we cook in Hotel kitchens, we ensure proper Kashering and we use our own kitchenware on kashered and covered surfaces. All this is done under the strict supervision of our trained staff/guides that function as our Mashgichim. Our travelers enjoy satisfying meals prepared by our team including fresh local fish, fruit, and vegetables. This is an integral part of Jewish travel. We make great efforts to assure that our travelers will experience local foods first-hand, while maintaining stringent observance of Kashrut laws on all occasions.

**Deposit, Cancellation Fees & Policy:**

A \$300 USD Deposit per person must be received at the time of booking in order to confirm your reservation. **Payment in full is due 30 days before departure.** A minimum number of participants are required to operate tour dates. If a minimum number has not been reached prior to tour departure and the tour is cancelled you will receive a FULL refund.

- 60 working days before departure bookings are refundable less a \$100 administration fee
  - 30-59 working days prior to departure 25% of total per passenger
  - 15-29 days prior to departure: 50% of total per passenger
  - Less than 14 working days prior to departure: 100% of total - no refund
- We strongly recommend purchasing Travel Insurance