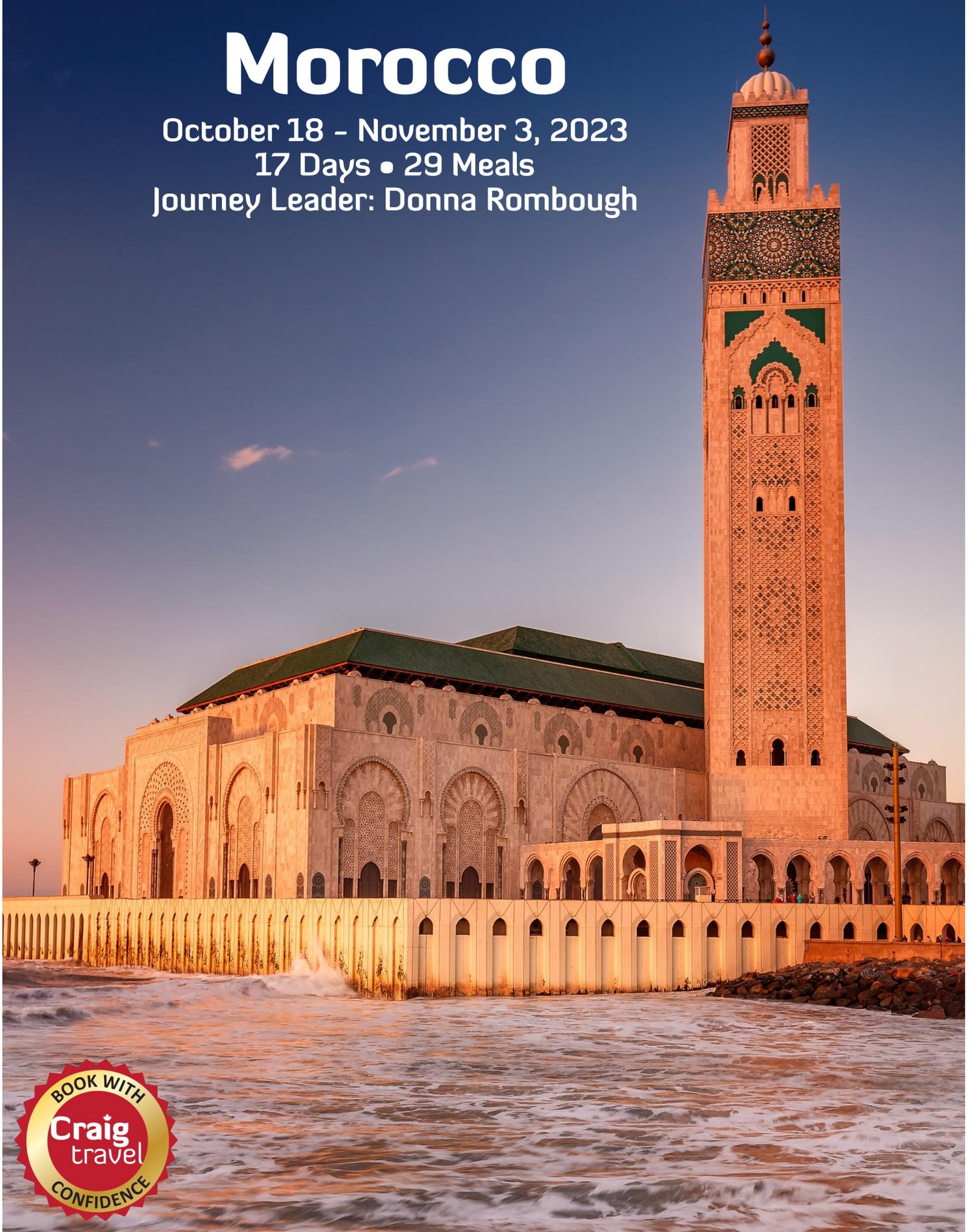


Morocco

October 18 - November 3, 2023
17 Days • 29 Meals
Journey Leader: Donna Rombough



The stunning Hassan II Mosque in Casablanca, Morocco

Located at the crossroads where Africa and Europe meet and where Christianity and Islam come face to face, Morocco transports us to another world and another time.

On this journey we will explore the mysterious walled Imperial Cities as we lose ourselves in the intricate alleyways and exciting shops of the souks, while staying in a number of quaint riads, the traditional boutique hotels of Morocco. We shall venture out to the very edge of the vast Sahara, with an overnight in a deluxe tented camp and riding 4x4s over the sand dunes. We shall follow the caravan routes of the Berbers and marvel at the physical beauty around us.

In Fez and Marrakech, we will stay in intimate riads, located in the heart of each city. Each offers a truly unique experience. Space on this adventure is limited so book early!



Inclusive Features

- Return economy group airfare from Canada to Casablanca
- 14 nights in first class hotels and comfortable riads, as indicated or similar
- 29 meals (B-15 breakfasts, L-3 lunches, D-11 dinners)
- Bottled water on the coach daily and at all included lunches and dinners plus tea/coffee at dinners
- Transfers and baggage handling
- Gratuities, taxes and fees for included services
- Services of our journey leader plus a professional guide in Morocco
- Airport transfers in Canada or equivalent value with purchase of group airfare

Tour Highlights

- Visit the four Imperial cities of Morocco, Rabat, Meknes, Fez and Marrakech
- Two days in the world's largest medieval city, Fez
- Overnight in a deluxe tented camp
- Venture to the edge of the Sahara with 4x4 excursions
- Visit Kasbah Country, the old Berber trading route
- Marrakech (4 nights) Churchill's favourite Moroccan haunt
- Inside visit of Hassan II Mosque in Casablanca

Journey Leader

Having spent her entire career in various management positions within the travel industry, **Donna** has an insatiable love for travel. Retired from Craig Travel several years ago, she continues to be involved as a consultant and group escort and is always thrilled at the prospect of discovering yet another new destination. She has led countless tours and cruises to many parts of the world and delights in sharing new experiences and cultures with her travellers. Join her on this thrilling Moroccan adventure!



OCT 18, Wednesday

Depart Canada

Tour members from across Canada gather in Toronto and Montreal for the overnight flight to Casablanca.

OCT 19, Thursday

Casablanca / Rabat

Welcome to Morocco! On arrival in Casablanca, we shall be met by our national guide and transferred up the coast to our hotel in Rabat. In the evening we gather for dinner at our hotel. **La Tour Hassan** (2 nights) D

OCT 20, Friday

Rabat

Enjoy an exploration of the city of Rabat, which features the exquisite Tower of Hassan, the busy Kasbah des Oudayas, the impressive mausoleum of Mohamed V and the imposing Royal Palace, Chellah. The late afternoon and evening are at leisure. BD

OCT 21, Saturday

Meknes / Volubilis / Fez

We travel further inland this morning to Fez, the oldest and largest medieval city in the world. En route, we shall visit Meknes, which once rivalled Versailles in its beauty and opulence. Built during a fifty-year period by Moulay Ismail as his Imperial City, the city is a treasure trove of palaces and gardens surrounded by 40 km of mighty walls. Enter through the massive gates of Bab Mansour to find the exquisite mausoleum of the city's builder. Nearby we explore the Roman ruins at Volubilis. This UNESCO site dates back to AD 40 and was the centre and capital of the entire Roman province of Mauritania. Later this afternoon, we arrive in Fez where we will spend two nights in the

heart of the Medina with its bustling markets and heady mix of aromas, sounds and sights.

Riad Dar Bensouda (2 nights)

BD

OCT 22, Sunday

Fez

This is a day of enchantment as we visit the Medina, the ancient walled city of artisans, craftsmen and bustling markets. We then descend into the souks of Fez and enter yet another world filled with mingling odours of cedar, leather and spices, as we discover the districts of tanners, engravers and merchants. You may want to visit the Kairouine Mosque, the Bou Jeloud Gardens, and the Sultan's Palace, each offering displays of classical Islamic art.

BD

OCT 23, Monday

Midelt / Erfoud

Departing Fez, we cross over the Middle Atlas Mountains, into the heart of Berber country. En route, we pass Ifrane, a charming ski resort, and Azrou, an important handicraft centre. Midelt is a pleasant town surrounded by huge pine trees and a tranquil mountain setting. Take in magical scenery as we head to the edge of the Sahara via the palm-fringed Errachidia and Ziz Valley.

Hotel Palm's Club (1 night)

BD

OCT 24, Tuesday

Erfoud / Merzouga

After breakfast we continue to Merzouga and switch to 4x4 vehicles for the last part of our journey to the Erg Chebbi dunes and the remote frontier. Our destination is to the Sahara and Marhaba, our deluxe tented camp surrounded by sand dunes. Each tent offers comfortable beds, a private en suite bathroom with hot and cold water and all the comforts of a well appointed desert camp. There will be an opportunity to go for a camel ride after which we will enjoy a desert sunset, a traditional meal with music and an amazing evening under the Saharan stars.

Saharian Luxury Camp (1 night)

BD

OCT 25, Wednesday

Merzouga

Enjoy a morning at leisure followed by an afternoon visit to a local village and a school on the edge of the sands.

Kasbah Xaluca Tombouctou (1 night)

BD

OCT 26, Thursday

Todra Gorge / Dades

Following an early call to enjoy the sunrise over the dunes, we drive to Rissani, the holy city where Moulay Ali Cherif, ancestor of the Alaouite dynasty is buried. We will be able to view the remains of a 17th century Kasbah and the palace of Ksar Abbar. We continue our way to Tinghir to visit the magnificent Todra Gorge with limestone cliffs reaching 1,000 feet in height. Following lunch, we continue to Dades via the Dades Valley, which is famous for its roses and the yearly Moussem (Rose Festival).

Xaluca Dades (1 night)

BD

OCT 27, Friday

Dades Valley / Aït Benhaddou

Today we head to the Gorges du Dades in the Dades Valley famous for its extraordinary red rock formations. Known as "Kasbah Country" for the imposing forts that line the valley, this is the route followed by caravans of another century, from deepest Africa to the Moorish cities of the north. After lunch we tour the famous Aït-Ben-Haddou Kasbah, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, where Lawrence of Arabia was filmed.

Ksar Ighnda (1 night)

BD



Aït-Ben-Haddou Kasbah, Photo credit: Jon and Sue Gurr



Traditional ceramic Moroccan bowls



Enjoy a camel ride in the Sahara



Explore Morocco's bustling souks

OCT 28, Saturday **Ait Ourir / Marrakech**

Today we travel through the Atlas Mountains. On our way, we will visit the village of Ait Ourir where we hope to meet the local Imam (head man) and visit the small school which serves about 90 children. You may wish to bring a small gift for the school (school visit subject to confirmation). We continue to Marrakech, our final Imperial City and a favourite of Winston Churchill for his painting holidays. We are staying in the heart of the city in a riad, close to all of the action.

Riad Luzia (or similar) (4 nights) **BD**

OCT 29, Sunday **Marrakech**

Explore Marrakech begin with a stroll through the Jardin Majorelle, a tranquil retreat from the bustle of the souks. Visit the Museum of Islamic Art before we take a break at La Maison Arabe (or similar) for a truly unique experience - a cooking class and lunch. Step back in time as we explore the timeless world of Medina, its narrow streets leading to bazaars offering a bewildering array of goods. Highlights will include the Koutoubia Minaret, the Saadian Tombs, with their magnificent carvings, the Kasbah and the Jemaa el-Fna, the central square around which the city revolves.

BL

OCT 30, Monday **Marrakech**

Delve deeper into this fascinating city as we visit the Tiskiwin Museum, a traditional palace dedicated to Berber artifacts and culture, discover the art and architecture of the Bahia Palace, dating from 1880 and still used by the Royal Family. A special highlight will be our visit to the Amal Centre, founded in 2012 by Nora Fitzgerald to support local women with disadvantaged backgrounds.

BL

OCT 31, Tuesday **Toubkal National Park / Imlil**

A short drive from Marrakech is the mountain-top National Park of Toubkal. We begin our day with a drive up the mountain to the Berber village of Imlil where we will be taken on a gentle mountain walk exploring the park and the village, using country roads and local paths. Returning to Imlil we will be treated to lunch with a local family where we will experience and learn about traditional Berber lifestyles in the country. We will return to Marrakech in the late afternoon, with the evening free.

BL

NOV 1, Wednesday **Marrakech / Casablanca**

This morning we make our way to legendary Casablanca, made famous by Humphrey Bogart. We will explore this port city, highlighted by the eclectic Medina, the Royal Palace, and the magnificent Ain Diab Corniche. Our farewell dinner will be at Rick's Café, recreated to fit the theme of "Casablanca," set in 1942.

Le Palace d'Anfa (2 nights) **BD**

NOV 2, Thursday **Casablanca**

Today we visit the stunning Hassan II Mosque which is the seventh largest building of it's kind in the world and truly iconic. After a visit we shall enjoy some free time to explore the area.

B

NOV 3, Friday **Homeward Bound**

This morning we catch our flights to Montreal and Toronto with connections to our homes across Canada.

B

CT Rating 3.5 / 5 - Challenging: Members should be prepared for crowded cities and busy souks (bazaars). In the countryside services and facilities can be basic, especially in remote areas. This is a fast paced itinerary with several one night stays. This journey includes long walks, uneven surfaces, stairs and crowded bazaars. Members must be in good health and physically fit to fully appreciate this journey. A Riad is a traditional Moroccan house or palace built around a central courtyard that has been converted into a private boutique style hotel, with atmosphere and great locations, but often with limited restaurant and other facilities, no elevators or direct coach access.

Tour Cost in Canadian Dollars per person

Land Only* (Join / Leave at hotel)	\$4,865
Montreal	\$6,115
Toronto.....	\$6,285
Halifax	\$6,595
St. John's	\$6,625
Winnipeg	\$6,595
Regina / Saskatoon.....	\$6,695
Calgary / Edmonton / Vancouver.....	\$6,665
Victoria	\$6,695
Single Supplement.....	\$1,555

Airfares from other gateways are available on request. Air inclusive prices are estimated (subject to confirmation).

*Land only excludes flights and airport transfers. Final pricing will be advised once flights are confirmed. Tour price is based on sharing a twin room at hotels and on a minimum of 20 members, based on rates, taxes and fees effective January 2023 and are subject to change due to factors beyond our control. Group to be escorted from Canada with a minimum of 20 group members.

Insurance is NOT INCLUDED but is highly recommended. Premiums are calculated based on the individual's age, destination (country), trip length, and trip booking window – please contact our staff to receive a quote. Your coverage starts on the effective date of your confirmation of coverage. Please discuss your insurance coverage prior to booking. Check our website for the most current information. Refer to the enrollment form for terms and conditions.

Final payment will be due June 30, 2023

Deposit is \$700 per person

To reserve your spot on this tour, complete the enclosed enrollment form, indicating the tour you wish to join and your home city, and forward it with your deposit to:



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