

BERBER TOURS

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Tour 12, IMILCHIL MARRIAGE FESTIVAL* 4X4 TOUR PACKAGE

*The festival occurs once a year in late August and the dates of the festival vary with the cycle of the moon. This tour package is available “year round,” but will not include the festival if not booked for late August. If you are specifically interested in the festival, you should contact us to learn the appropriate dates for booking.

TOTAL DISTANCE TRAVELED: 855 miles (approx.)
ARRIVE ANY DAY IN CASABLANCA – PRIVATE 4X4 TOUR
1-6 PEOPLE PER 4X4. FOR PRIVATE PARTIES OF MORE THAN 6,
CONTACT BERBER TOURS FOR PRICING

15 nights – 16 day 4X4 Tour

4-star hotel accommodations

Transportation by **TOYOTA LAND CRUISER** 4x4

Breakfast (**B**) and Dinner (**D**) with room accommodations

Camping and lunch at Imilchil (Weather permitting)

Services of one English speaking driver for the ENTIRE tour

Tips/portage for Berber Tours Employees

Normal entrance fees

Airport transfers

OPTIONAL:

FANTASIA DINNER SHOW AT CHEZ ALI SUPPER CLUB:

\$75.00 USD PER PERSON. Arabian Nights-style entertainment: Chez Ali is the original, and is probably still the best. Catering for hundreds of guests each lunchtime and evening, it is a logistical phenomenon on the scale of a mini Disneyland. They may not be genuine cultural experiences, aimed as they are at the coach tour crowd, but the entertainments are fun and you can be sure children will love the *fantasia* horsemen and the camels, not to mention the laser projected girl on a flying carpet.

HIGH SEASON – September 1 to May 31

LOW SEASON – June 1 to August 31 – 30% Reduction in Price

**4x4 TOURS SOLD BY BERBER TOURS ARE OFFERED AS
"INDIVIDUALIZED OR PRIVATE GROUP TOURS"**

CLIENTS MAY NOT PURCHASE "PLACES" ON SOMEONE ELSE'S 4X4 TOUR

THIS PACKAGE DOES NOT INCLUDE AIRLINE COSTS

PRICES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT ANY TIME

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

Every region of Morocco possesses its own unique set of characteristics and cultural differences which contribute to Morocco's wonderfully dramatic contrasts. The annual festivities of the various regions are highly anticipated by the local population as well as visitors from distant lands. Music, dancing, bustling market places, religious ceremonies and delicious food ensure the popularity of these festivals will never wane.

Every year, in the late summer, the High Atlas Mountain Berber village of Imilchil comes to life with the Imilchil Marriage Festival. More than 25,000 people come to participate or observe in the lively festivities. The Aït Hdiddou tribe plays host as young women choose their future husband from the men presenting themselves as potential mates.

The Imilchil Marriage Festival is actually homage to two young lovers from enemy Berber tribes whose families prevented them from marrying. They each cried a lake of tears before committing suicide by drowning. Following this tragedy, the families granted freedom of choice to their children to marry whom they chose. The marriage ceremonies are followed by great feasting and the new couples are blessed with eternal happiness. This journey offers you an excellent opportunity to learn about Morocco's rich cultural heritage made up of a unique blend of cultures.

Day 1: Casablanca

Arrival at Casablanca Mohamed V Airport. Welcome and assistance; an orientation tour of Casablanca, including the Habbous quarter, the United Nations square, the exterior of the Royal Palace and an interior visit of the Hassan II mosque, one of the Islamic world's stunning monuments. Night at 4-star hotel. **(D)**

Day 2: Casablanca / Rabat (56 miles)

After breakfast we depart for Rabat for you to see some of the sights in the capital city. In the afternoon, you will enjoy a sightseeing tour of Rabat featuring the Mohamed V Mausoleum, the Hassan Tower, the outside of the Royal Palace and the Oudaya Necropolis. Night at 4-star hotel in Rabat. **(B, D)**

Day 3: Meknes (123 miles)

After breakfast we continue on to the Imperial City of Meknes which is called "the Moroccan Versailles." Meknes was founded at the end of the 17th century by Sultan Moulay Ismail. Highlights will include Bab el Mansour (perhaps the finest gateway in Africa), "Dar Jamaï" Museum, the old Medina, Moulay Ismail Mausoleum, old granaries and stables. Night at 4-star hotel in Meknes. **(B, D)**

Day 4: Volubilis / Moulay Idriss (25 miles)

After breakfast, continue on to Volubilis, a well-preserved remains of a Roman city. The Roman ruins of Volubilis, stretched out over 40 hectares (approximately 100 acres), are the most well preserved ruins in Morocco. Across the valley, about one mile is the town of Moulay Idriss. This town is named after the prominent Moroccan saint, Moulay Idriss. He was a descendant of Mohammad, of the fourth generation, and died by murder in 792. He had then spent five years in Morocco, in which time he had established a new dynasty that survived his death. Moreover, he had founded the cities of Fez, and the one that was named after him. Check in to the Volubilis Inn which sits on the crest of a hillside and overlooks the remains of Volubilis. **(B, D)**

Day 5: Fez (40 miles)

After breakfast, continue on to Fez. Fez was founded in 790 AD and is the religious center of Morocco. The beautiful city of Fez will dazzle as we view its visual details, haunting sounds and rich aromas. Fez is among the best known cities in medieval Jewish history. Indeed, it was once the home of one of the most influential Talmudic scholars of all times, Rabbi Isaac Alfasi, as well as of Maimonides in the years 1160 to 1165. Highlights will also include the Mellah with all its synagogues. Overnight stay at 4-star hotel in Fez. **(B, D)**

Day 6: Fez

Second day in Fez. The entire day will be devoted to sightseeing in the city of Fez, the spiritual capital of Morocco. Step back six centuries into the medieval Medina with its narrow and cobbled streets filled with

ancient mosques, towering green glazed minarets and crumbling fondouks. Narrow openings into private worlds reveal architecture of peaceful courtyards filled with carved cedar, brilliantly colored mosaic tiles and delicately carved stucco ornaments. Fez is also the leather center of Morocco and in the afternoon, we will visit the countless souks, and the famous leather tanneries. Overnight stay at 4-star hotel. **(B, D)**

Day 7: Fez / Sefrou / Ifrane / Azrou (100 miles)

Leave Fez and travel to Sefrou. Sefrou, rarely disturbed by tourists, was once a major center for Morocco's Jews and its walled white pedestrian medina is still characterized by their houses with wooden balconies. The medina is dissected by the River Aggai, that enters the town via a small waterfall above the separate walled ksar. Beside the Bab Makame, the Cooperative Artisanale offers good quality handicrafts at very reasonable prices.

Travel on to Ifrane. Ifrane, a short drive northeast from Azrou on the P24, is something of a shock. Cool and tranquil with manicured lawns and the outward appearance of a Swiss alpine resort, it seems out of place, particularly as it is overlooked by the grey hulk of the royal château. Scratch the surface of the town, however, and you soon realize that few of the hotels or services quite live up to Swiss standards. The population appears to be very young and very chic. The celebrated Al Akhawayn University (where courses are taught in English) is on the edge of town.

Azrou, the impressively clean French-era Place Mohammed V, is bordered one side by the Hotel Restaurant des Cedres and the Relais Forestier restaurant. The other side of the square gives onto a small souk. Night in at 4-star hotel. **(B, D)**

Day 8: Azrou / Midelt / Imilchil (150 miles)

After an early breakfast, we will depart for Imilchil through the Middle Atlas Mountain region. We will make a stop in Midelt to visit a Berber village known for its handicraft cooperative. In Imilchil we will be greeted by the tribal Chief under a Caidal tent and enjoy the festival activities and festival events. Tonight we will enjoy a Berber dinner with the local Berber tribe around the campfire. Night in a lakeside Berber tent, **weather permitting. (B, D)**

Day 9: Imilchil

This morning we will enjoy a light hike to the Plateau des lacs, before we return to our campsite for lunch. The rest of your afternoon will be devoted to the closing ceremony of the festival events with the Berbers. Night at your lakeside campsite, **weather permitting. (B, L, D)**

Day 10: Imilchil / Tinerhir (50 miles)

After breakfast, continue on to Tinerhir. You will travel to Todra's magnificent and narrow gorges where vertiginous cliffs of pink ochre frame a crystal clear and fresh river. At the end of the day, take a moment to appreciate the beauty and tranquility of these places. Stay at 4-star accommodations in Tinerhir. **(B, D)**

Day 11: Dadès Gorge / Ouarzazate (100 miles)

Your driver will leave you within a few feet of the fabulous rocky formations of the Dadès Gorge so that you can continue your trip on foot. In your own rhythm, you will discover intact and wild landscapes strewn with villages with flat roofs among almond and fig trees. Spend the night at 4-star hotel in Ouarzazate. **(B, D)**

Day 12: Ouarzazate

After breakfast, visit the Taourirt and Tifoultout Kasbahs, ancient residences of the Glaoui (The former Pacha of Marrakech). The rest of the day is for relaxation by the swimming pool or for further exploration of the city. Night at 4-star hotel. **(B, D)**

Day 13: Ouarzazate / Telouet Kasbah / Marrakech (126 miles)

Depart for Marrakech and on your way, you will visit the "seat" of Glaoui tribal power, Telouet Kasbah is now mostly in ruins, except for the magnificent state rooms of this once great Kasbah which can still be visited. You will travel there from Ait Benhaddou Kasbah over a dirt "piste" road which follows along rocky mountain cliffs (Weather and road conditions permitting; otherwise, access to Telouet Kasbah by the main black-top road). Upon arrival in Marrakech in the afternoon via the Tiz-n-Tichka pass (2260m), the

remainder of the day will be devoted to sightseeing in “The Red City.” The Saadian dynasty made Marrakech their capital, and converted the El Badi Palace to a Mellah, which became home to a thriving community of native and Spanish Jews famed for their rabbinical schools and scholars. Overnight stay at 4-star hotel. **(B, D)**

Day 14: Marrakech

The day will be devoted to sightseeing in Marrakech, the second oldest Imperial city known as the “Pearl of the South” and home to the Saadian tombs, the Koutoubia Mosque, the Bahia Palace and the Menera Gardens. In the afternoon, explore the souks (market) and the world famous Djemaa El Fna Square, the “heart” of Marrakech, which offers various entertainments (story tellers, acrobats, snake-charmers, magicians, etc.)

Optional dinner at World Famous “Chez Ali” with night at 4-star hotel. **(B, D)**

Day 15: Marrakech / Casablanca (150 miles)

Morning is free time. In the afternoon we depart back to Casablanca and will stay at 4-star hotel near the Mohamed V International Airport. **(B, D)**

Day 16: Flight home

Berber Tours will accompany you to the airport and make sure that you arrive in time for your flight home. End of services. **(B)**

INCLUDED IN TOUR:

16 Day Program from arrival in Casablanca to departure from Casablanca
Includes all transportation in air conditioned Toyota Land Cruiser 4x4
All 4-star hotel accommodations
Dinner and breakfast accommodation with hotel rooms
Camping and lunch at Imilchil (Weather permitting)
Services of one English speaking driver for the ENTIRE tour
Tips/portage for Berber Tours Employees: Five percent (5%) of the TOTAL TOUR COST
Normal entrance fees
Airport transfers

Optional:

FANTASIA DINNER SHOW AT CHEZ ALI SUPPER CLUB:

\$75.00 USD PER PERSON. Arabian Nights-style entertainment: Chez Ali is the original, and is probably still the best. Catering for hundreds of guests each lunchtime and evening, it is a logistical phenomenon on the scale of a mini Disneyland. They may not be genuine cultural experiences, aimed as they are at the coach tour crowd, but the entertainments are fun and you can be sure children will love the *fantasia* horsemen and the camels, not to mention the laser projected girl on a flying carpet.

Note: Breakfast and dinner are included in the in the cost of this package. However, if the clients wish they are not obligated to have dinner or breakfast "when or where" Berber Tours says that they must. The clients are free to go somewhere else if they choose, but there will be NO REFUND or DEDUCTION to the base price should the clients choose to have dinner or breakfast on their own and that is not supplied by Berber Tours.

NOT INCLUDED IN TOUR PRICE:

Additional entrance fees: Not able to quote, depends on where you go. However, the "average price" is \$2.50 to \$6.00 USD PER PERSON.

Additional Guide Services: Cost depends on what is required. For example, a guide in Marrakech averages approximately \$40.00 USD - \$50.00 USD per day for a 7 hour day. Due to restrictions by the Moroccan Government, **ONLY** those guides who live and work in the city visited are allowed to guide any clients and they set their own rates. This is the reason why Berber Tours does not include guide services in the cost of a

4x4 tour. However, if given prior notice, Berber Tours will arrange for a guide but it is the responsibility of the client to pay for the guide services themselves.

Lunches unless provided by Berber Tours: \$7.00 to \$13.00 USD PER PERSON. This is considered a "free time" for the clients to explore the towns and villages that we visit.

Incidentals: such as soft drinks, wine or beer with meals; personal purchases, or tips.

Single room supplement: \$50.00 USD per room, per day

Airline costs are not included and Berber Tours does not supply other information such as airline cost; hotel costs; transportation not directly supplied by Berber Tours.

RATES FOR THE IMILCHIL MARRIAGE FESTIVAL 4X4 TOUR PACKAGE:

HIGH SEASON: SEPTEMBER 1 TO MAY 31

OFF SEASON: JUNE 1 TO AUGUST 31 - 30% REDUCTION IN PRICE, EXCLUDING OPTIONS

Prices are based on 4-star hotel accommodations with double occupancy:

\$7,948.00 USD total package cost: 1 person, 4-star hotel accommodations or a combination of 4-star hotel/riad - 4-star hotel tour rates will be charged

\$7,571.00 USD total package cost: 2 people, dbl. occ. w/1 room, 4-star hotel accommodations or a combination of 4-star hotel/riad - 4-star hotel tour rates will be charged
For a 3rd person add \$300.00 USD total

\$7,203.00 USD total package cost: 4-6 people, triple occ. w/2 rooms, 4-star hotel accommodations or a combination of 4-star hotel/riad - 4-star hotel tour rates will be charged

A SECOND 4X4 WITH AN ADDITIONAL 4-6 PARTICIPANTS – 20% REDUCTION IN PRICE

Hotels in Morocco:

Berber Tours uses a variety of different 3-star and 4-star hotels around the country for our 4x4 tours. While we cannot guarantee a specific hotel, we can guarantee that ALL of the hotels we use are clean and comfortable and will have many of the amenities you would expect to find in any hotel. The hotels we use also offer either breakfast or dinner, but usually both, as part of the hotel stay. Where available, as in Marrakech, we can also offer at the 4-star hotel package rate, the option of staying at one of the many quaint and comfortable riads within the Medina. However, at a riad, usually only breakfast is offered as part of the cost for staying there.

Hotel standards in Morocco and Europe DIFFER from those in the United States; in most cases, a "3-star" hotel by U.S. standards is the same as a "4-star" hotel in Morocco and Europe.

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