

## **MOROCCO AND THE SAHARA**

**MAY 13 – 24, 2022**

**12 – DAY PRIVATE ESCORTED LAND TOUR**



**MOROCCO** is a mystical and fascinating country distinguished by its Berber, Arabian and European cultural influences. On our 12-day small group hosted tour you will experience the best that Morocco has to offer: from ancient imperial cities, to medinas, kasbahs and souks...from a blue coastline, to verdant fields and wine lands, and dry desert... Morocco has it all.

Visit Rabat, Fez, Marrakech, Casablanca... lose yourself in the twisting, labyrinthine streets of medinas teeming with aromatic spice bazaars, souks, and street food vendors... stroll down wide boulevards lined with palm trees and French colonial architecture... visit stunning palaces, mosques, and gardens... dine at Rick's Café in Casablanca... ride a camel... spend a night in a Berber tent under a desert sky....These are just some of the experiences that await you on our tour of Morocco....

## YOUR ITINERARY

.....

DAY 1	CASABLANCA – RABAT
DAY 2	RABAT – FEZ
DAY 3	FEZ
DAY 4	FEZ – ERFOUD – MERZOUGA
DAY 5	MERZOUGA – OUARZAZATE
DAY 6	OUARZAZATE
DAY 7	OUARZAZATE – MARRAKECH
DAY 8	MARRAKECH
DAY 9	MARRAKECH
DAY 10	MARRAKECH – CASABLANCA
DAY 11	CASABLANCA
DAY 12	CASABLANCA - HOME



### **DAY 1 CASABLANCA – RABAT**

**Fri, May 13th**

Arrive in Casablanca and transfer to the Moorish city of Rabat, capital of Morocco. Check-in at your luxurious accommodations and enjoy a leisurely afternoon in this beautiful setting. Join us in the evening for a Welcome Dinner at the hotel restaurant.

**Accommodations:** Hotel Sofitel Jardins de Roses, or similar (1 night)

**Meals:** D

### **DAY 2 RABAT - FEZ**

**Sat, May 14th**

Begin your day this morning in the seaside capital city of Rabat, a beautiful blend of Arabic and European influences. Wide boulevards, elegant French colonial buildings, Moorish palaces...take it all in. Our tour will take us to the **Mohammed V Mausoleum**, dedicated to the founder of modern Morocco, grandfather of the current king, **the Mauresque-style Hassan Tower** and **Oudaya Kasbah** with its palm-dotted Andalusian garden.

We will then journey overland to a winery outside **Meknes** for wine tasting followed by lunch. Take in the flavours and aromas of Moroccan wines and its traditional cuisine.

After, we will leave for Fez, stopping to explore **Volubilis**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site that houses some of the best - preserved Roman ruins in North Africa. We will arrive in Fez in the early evening and after hotel check-in, we will rejoin the group for dinner at the hotel.

**Accommodations:** Hotel Riad Palais Faraj Suites and Spa, or similar (2 nights)

**Meals:** B, L, D





**DAY 3 FEZ**

**Sun, May 15th**

Explore **Fez el-Bali (Old Fez)**, the cultural heart of Morocco. Founded in the eighth century by **Moulay Idriss I**, this imperial capital was a renowned center of medieval learning. Stroll the labyrinthine old quarter, with its 9,000 narrow lanes, alleys and **souks**, on a market visit of exceeding authenticity. Watching local craftsmen in action — working with bronze and pottery — makes for an engaging artisan visit as well. Proceed to the intricately detailed **Karaouine**. Built in 859 AD, it is one of the oldest still-functioning universities in the world. Our tour will be followed by a free afternoon and we will join the group again for dinner at the hotel restaurant, accompanied by a local academic who will talk to us about the role of women in today's Morocco.

**Meals:** B, D

**DAY 4 FEZ – ERFOUD – MERZOUGA**

**Mon, May 16th**

Today we will leave the bustle of the city behind and head for the spectacular snow-capped **High Atlas Mountains**. Pass through **Ifrane** before reaching the great cedar forests of **Azrou**. After stopping for lunch at **Midelt**, continue through the magnificent **Ziz Gorges**...Our destination is **Erfoud**, where the red sand buildings contrast against the patches of greenery and surrounding desert. After the day's scenic drive, settle into your luxurious tent in the village of **Merzouga** in the **Sahara Desert** before gathering for dinner at the desert camp. Tonight's dinner will be accompanied by live folkloric **Gnaoua** music troupe.

**Accommodations:** Merzouga Luxury Desert Camp

**Meals:** B, L, D



**DAY 5                      MERZOUGA – OUARZAZATE**

**Tue, May 17th**

Rise early this morning to witness the magnificent **Merzouga** sunrise, and after breakfast transfer back on 4x4 WD to meet the bus and depart to **Erfoud**. Journey overland to **Ouarzazate**, nicknamed “the door of the desert” and once a stopping point for African traders travelling to the cities of Morocco and on to Europe. Drive along the scenic route of a **Thousand Kasbahs** and the **Dades River Valley** before entering **Ouarzazate**, where everything is calm, beautiful and fresh-the image of the authentic south of Morocco where time has stood still for centuries. Arrive at your delightful oasis of a hotel and after check-in, join the group for dinner at the hotel restaurant.

**Accommodations:** Hotel Le Berbere Palace, or similar (2 nights)

**Meals:** B, D



**DAY 6                      OUARZAZATE**

**Wed, May 18th**

Today we will meet the locals and enjoy a feast of an authentic **Berber Lunch** with a Berber family in traditional houses. We return to our hotel later and rejoin the group for dinner at the hotel restaurant.

**Meals:** B, D

**DAY 7                      OUARZAZATE/AIT BENHADDOU – MARRAKECH**

**Thur, May 19th**

We will journey over **the High Atlas Mountains** again this morning, but first we will stop at **Kasbah of Ait Ben Haddou**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site where many famous movies have been filmed. After, continue your journey towards the fascinating “**Red City**” of **Marrakech**. After hotel check-in and some free time, join us again in the evening for a dinner and show event.

**Accommodations:** Hotel Riad Dar Si Aissa, or similar (3 nights)

**Meals:** B, D

**DAY 8 MARRAKECH**

**Fri, May 20th**

Today, begin to unearth the secrets of Marrakech, starting with the 16<sup>th</sup> century **Saadian Tombs** and the fragrant **Menara Gardens**...marvel at its architectural jewels, including the soaring **Koutoubia Minaret**, and then visit **Bahia Palace** with its extraordinary tiles and opulent courtyards.

We will continue with a visit to the botanical treasures of Marrakech, including the famous **Majorelle Gardens**, designed by the French artist **Jacques Majorelle** in 1924 and then purchased by **Ives St Laurent** in 1980.

Afterward, visit **Djemaa el-Fna**, Marrakech's main square, which is filled with orange juice stalls and vendors, along with fire-eaters, acrobats, dancers and street musicians performing at every turn. Our tour will be followed by free time to stroll the city's fabled, labyrinthine *souks*.

We will join the group again this evening for dinner at a famous local restaurant.

**Meals: B, D**



**DAY 9 MARRAKECH**

**Sat, May 21st**

Today we will learn to cook with Moroccan spices. We will participate at a hands-on cooking class where we will prepare and enjoy a typical 3-course Moroccan meal.

The rest of the day is at our own leisure.

**Meals: B, L**

**DAY 10 MARRAKECH – CASABLANCA**

**Sun, May 22nd**

This morning we depart **Marrakech** for the "White City" of **Casablanca**. As we enter this cosmopolitan city, we will take in a panoramic tour of its sights to view the **Royal Palace**, the architecture of **Place Mohamed V**, **Anfa**, the residential area and the romantic beachfront with its world-famous shops, restaurants and nightclubs. We will visit the famous **Hassan II Mosque**, the largest in the world outside of Mecca.

We will end our sightseeing with a lunch at a local restaurant, accompanied by an academic who will share his thoughts and views on Morocco's current life affairs. We will check-in at our hotel after and the rest of the day is at our leisure.

**Accommodations:** Hotel Four Seasons

**Meals: B, L**



## CRUISE HOLIDAYS OF CLARKSON

### DAY 11 CASABLANCA

Mon, May 23rd

A real treat today---a day at leisure! Whether you spend the day in the medina for some last minute shopping, or you stroll along the **Corniche**, sometimes referred to as **Morocco's South Beach**, the day is yours to explore until we meet again for our Farewell Dinner at **Rick's Café**.

**Meals:** B, D

### DAY 12 CASABLANCA – TORONTO

Tue, May 24th

We say goodbye to Casablanca today as we transfer to the airport for our flight back home.



## YOUR HOTELS

### RABAT: HOTEL SOFITEL JARDINS DE ROSES, 1 NIGHT



*The Sofitel Rabat Jardin des Roses hotel occupies a majestic position in the heart of the capital city Rabat, close to the Royal Palace and Mausoleum of Mohammed V. A real palace with an international reputation, its history is closely tied to the great conferences and international events that have taken place within the kingdom. 229 rooms have been given the French touch by designer Didier Gomez, keeping to the spirit and design of the Moroccan palace. They offer the ultimate in luxury and are graced with views over the imperial city or the Andalusian gardens.*

### FEZ: HOTEL PALAIS FARAJ SUITES AND SPA, 2 NIGHTS



*Refined traditions and elegant art of living, stunning architecture, impressive craftsmanship and an outstanding view on the millennial medina of Fez await you.*

*Incorporating the most luxurious décor elements in an authentic nineteenth century palace, extensively renovated with love and obsession of details by its owners Evelyne and Driss Faceh until opening in 2012, **Palais Faraj** is where guests step into the secret and sumptuous history of the most fascinating city in the Kingdom of Morocco.*



**MERZOUGA: LUXURY DESERT CAMP, 1 NIGHT**



**Merzouga Luxury Desert Camp** - situated in the quiet and idyllic sand dunes of Erg Chebbi, this splendid desert camp offers Ten spacious luxury tents. The Camp is designed for those who enjoy the peace that utter silence can afford. Enjoy your special night under the stars at this beautiful Oasis in a premium tented camp. Experience a camel ride at sunset and sunrise from the top of the dunes. Your desert experience includes an authentic Moroccan dinner under the stars and breakfast in the morning.

**OUARZAZATE: HOTEL BERBERE PALACE, 2 NIGHTS**



Located at the gates of the desert, **Le Berbere Palace** invites you to indulge in a colorful decor, inspired by the Ksours. You will be surprised by the authenticity of its comfort and the refined flavours of its haute cuisine. The hotel offers 235 rooms and suites decorated in a berber style. The Bérberé Palace has a swimming pool, sauna, hammam (Moroccan steam pool), 3 tennis courts, mini soccer pitch, mountain-biking or landrover rides, camel rides, bivouac evenings, excursions into the desert, night-club with evening entertainment... everything at the Berbere Palace invites you to relax....



**MARRAKECH: HOTEL PALAIS DAR SI AISSA, 3 NIGHTS**



Set in Marrakech and with Le Jardin Secret reachable within 300 metres, **Palais Dar Si Aissa ALL-SUITES** offers express check-in and check-out, a restaurant, free WiFi throughout the property and a bar. Boasting a shared lounge, the riad is close to several noted attractions, around 300 metres from Mouassine Museum, 500 metres from Djemaa El Fna and 500 metres from Souk of the Medina. The accommodation features a 24-hour front desk, room service and currency exchange for guests.

**CASABLANCA, HOTEL FOUR SEASONS, 3 NIGHTS**



Bathed in natural light, **Four Seasons Hotel** cascades down a hillside toward the Atlantic. Perched on a beach just 10 minutes from the heart of Morocco's largest and liveliest city, the sweeping views you'll find from your private balcony easily fulfill the romantic reputation that precedes Casablanca. With architectural marvels both historic and modern, a cutting-edge art scene and world-class restaurants, allow us to show off the best of our alluring port city, starting with a plate of fresh local seafood prepared à la minute at Bleu.

## **INCLUSIONS**

- 11 nights' accommodations at select hotels, breakfast included
- Private Guided tours for our group only
- Entrance fees for sites visited
- English speaking guide and driver throughout the trip
- Transportation in AC vehicle for all transfers and tours
- Meals as per the detailed itinerary
- Bottled water on the coach
- All taxes
- Gratuities for local guides and the driver
- Guaranteed departure with 10 guests

Please Note: Pricing does not include International airfare, Early or late check in at the hotel, additional excursions and meals other than those indicated, drinks during meals, travel insurance, items not mentioned above

## **FARES:**

\$8,800CAD pp in double occupancy

\$11,990CAD in single occupancy

- DEPOSIT: \$1,500 pp
- FINAL PAYMENT DUE: March 7, 2022

## **CANCELLATIONS & REFUNDS**

Cancellation prior to March 7: \$200 CAD pp

Cancellations after March 7: 100%

## **Terms and Conditions:**

All cancellations must be advised in writing and are valid on day of receipt at the office of Cruise Holidays.

Travellers must report any disability that would require special attention while on tour at the time the reservation is made. Cruise Holidays of Clarkson is not responsible for any denial of services by air carriers, hotels, restaurants, or other suppliers as a result of to such disability. A qualified and physically able companion must accompany travellers who need such assistance and must assume full responsibility for their well being. Travellers accept by virtue of this booking, that Cruise Holidays of Clarkson has the right and authority to accept or reject any tour participant and to remove such participant if in the judgement of Cruise Holidays of Clarkson the participant's behavior interferes with the well being and enjoyment by the other participants. CH Clarkson will not refund or cover any cost or expenses incurred for such termination of travel arrangements.

The tour participant agrees that CH Clarkson shall not be liable for any damage, loss (including personal injury, death, and property loss), or expenses occasioned by any act or omission of any supplier providing services. CH Clarkson shall not be responsible for any changes to the itinerary as outlined in the brochure by the tour suppliers. Cruise Holidays of Clarkson will escort a group with a minimum of 10 guests.

**CALL CRUISE HOLIDAYS OF CLARKSON TO BOOK YOUR TOUR NOW!!!**