

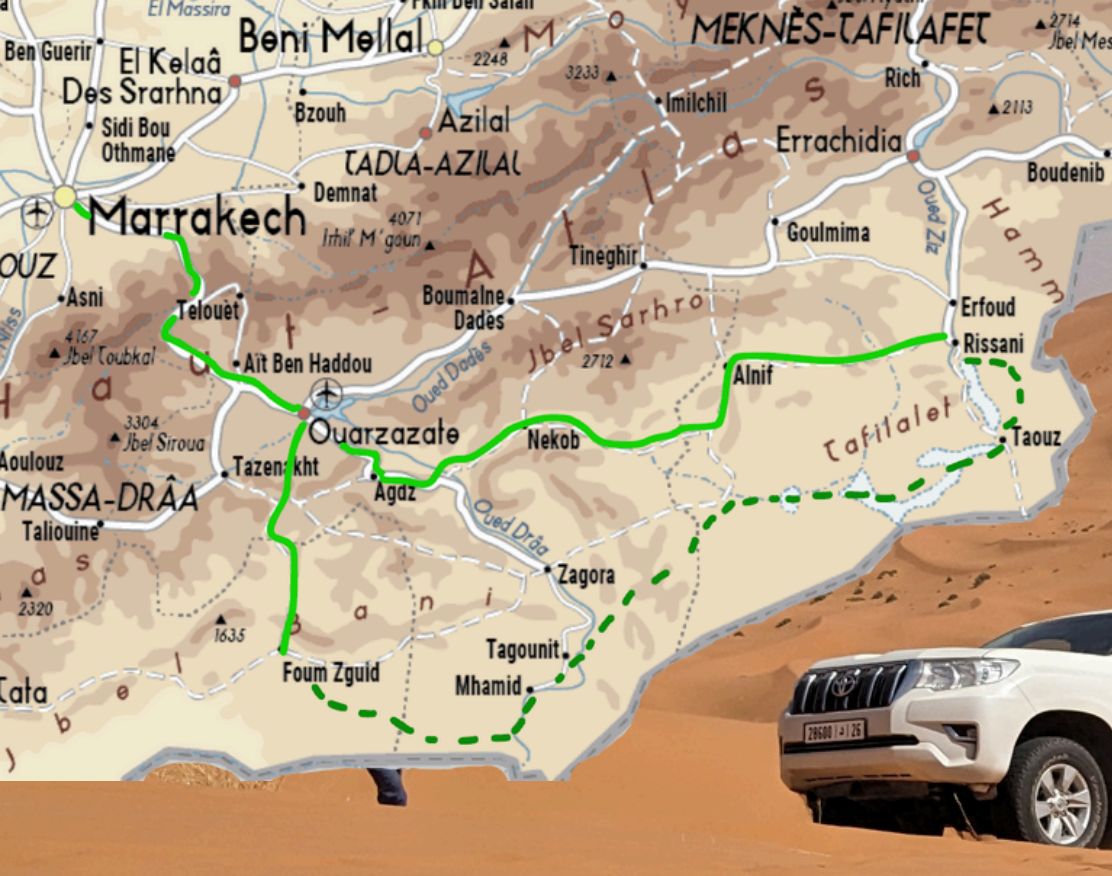
# SAND SEAS OF THE MAGHREB

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TRIP INFORMATION PACK: MOROCCO 03-11 OCT 2026

- **Self drive 4x4 vehicles supplied, shared between two people**
- **Not a tour: founder guide is there to teach you the ropes, not babysit you**
- **8 nights: 4 nights wild camping, 4 nights boutique hotel**
- **We cook & wild camp together**
- **Proper training, recovery equipment, radios & safety systems included**
- **Max 4 cars – real small crew dynamic**





## 1. Overview & Route

Sand Seas of the Maghreb is the original Scarab Adventure. Over the course of a week, you'll be at the wheel while you cross dried lakebeds, mountains, planes, and dunes that dot the Oued Draa valley. This region of Morocco, on the border with Algeria, is an adventure playground. Over the years it has hosted the Dakar Rally, Marathon de Sable, Rally du Maroc and many smaller events. It is a remote region of the country, but is actually the home of many Berber communities and villages.

At Scarab Adventures we try to put together trips that maximise the feeling of adventure while minimizing danger and physical fitness requirements. The Oued Draa valley is perfect for this. Over the years, we have put together routes that make the adventure feel extremely remote by staying away from main pistes and focusing on dune driving. Despite this feeling, we aim to be within an hour's drive of human settlements and a few hours drive of hospitals at all times. This also allows us to explore and restock in desert villages, and meet people there. You're in for a treat.

This is not a tour, this is a Scarab Adventure. This means that when in the desert, we keep things as pure, self-sufficient and basic as possible - we wild camp, we buy and cook our own food, we dig our own cars out of the sand and collect wood for camp fires along the way. This trip is for people with an open mind, keen to try something different and willingness to give the desert experience the time it deserves. If you have never driven off-road, wild camped, or been to Africa you're in good company - a lot of our previous guests are the same.



The adventure starts in Ouarzazate (“the gate of the Sahara”) where your 4x4 vehicles, radios and recovery gear will be waiting for you. Our first day is spent figuring out what we need and buying those items in the last supermarket we’ll see for 5 days. We’ll sleep on the edge of the Sahara before setting off into the sand the next day for 4 nights in the desert.

The route is chosen so that you can get a gradual introduction to desert driving, and ends with a special day in the highest dunes of Morocco in Merzouga. From there we will make our way back to your starting point, sleeping in boutique hotels along the way.

As is the case in any adventure travel, the route may have to change based on flooding (we are driving along a dry river bed after all!), landslides, fuel availability or a variety of other potential spanners in the works. If so, that’s all part of the adventure (and the reason I’m not going into too much detail on what the desert route is).

### 3. Rough Itinerary

Date	Day		Main Activity	Drive time	Day start	Day end	Sleep
Oct 3rd	Sat	Day 1	Minibus RAK → OZZ Pick up 4x4s, shopping Drive to desert	5h30	Marrakech	Foum Zguid	Hotel
Oct 4th	Sun	Day 2	Desert		Foum Zguid	Lion Dune *	Camp
Oct 5th	Mon	Day 3	Desert		Lion Dune*	Oujrane dunes*	Camp
Oct 6th	Tue	Day 4	Desert		Oujrane dunes*	Ramlia dunes*	Camp
Oct 7th	Wed	Day 5	Desert		Ramlia dunes*	Erg Znagui*	Camp
Oct 8th	Thu	Day 6	Desert		Erg Znagui*	Merzouga	Hotel
Oct 9th	Fri	Day 7	Drive to Ouarzazate	5h	Merzouga	Ouarzazate	Hotel
Oct 10th	Sat	Day 8	Transfer to Marrakech	3h30	Ouarzazate	Marrakech	Hotel
Oct 11th	Sun		Fly home		Marrakech	UK	

\* Once we’re in the desert, we don’t have a fixed plan and we do what we want/what we have to. Driving times become meaningless because we’ll be in and out of the cars all day.

## 4. Accommodation & Food

Non-camping accommodation will be chosen based on what's available and on our experience in the area. We try to choose boutique-style accommodation which feels local yet luxurious and we try to make sure there's a swimming pool. When we stay in a hotel, meals are included. You'll be asked for dietary requirements when you sign the participant waiver close to your departure date.

While hotel accommodation is comfortable, wild camping is deliberately simple. There are no showers or running water in the desert. We carry sufficient water for drinking and cooking, but washing is wet-wipe based and part of the experience.

When doing our shopping trip on the first day, each driver pairing will be assigned a night where they will cook for the group. This means everyone gets 3 camping nights where they don't have to worry about food, and one night where they do. Your guide will help the show run smoothly every night.

Morocco is a Muslim country and thus has limited access to alcohol in more remote areas. Calculating how much beer to bring from the supermarket in Ouarzazate is always a tense moment! We would advise you to bring spirits from duty free in the UK and buy beers and soft drinks in Morocco. Alcohol is not included as part of the package price.



## 5. Vehicles & Driving

One week before departure you'll receive a detailed briefing document that explains the basics of desert driving, radio protocols and safety precautions. For now, suffice to say:

- You will be provided with vehicles capable of desert off-roading
- Scarab Adventures will handle payment for this, but you will sign the rental contract with the rental company and be responsible for any damage to the vehicle
- In general, 2 guests will occupy each vehicle and be allowed to drive that vehicle.
- The group is welcome to rotate passengers in the desert - part of the fun!
- The night before we set off into the sand, Tibet will run a briefing which will reinforce the principles of desert driving and give the group the opportunity to discuss any concerns.

## 6. Packing List

We recommend your desert clothes are generally of light colour, thin, and not your favourite clothes. We also recommend trousers have deep or preferably zipped pockets because once something falls out and into the sand it's most likely gone.

You will need to bring your own sleeping bag, but we can supply tents, camping mats and camping chairs.

### Essential Documents

- Passport (6 months validity)
- UK/EU Driving Licence
- Travel insurance details
- Digital copies of the above

### Clothing

- Swimming stuff
- Hat against sun
- Light coloured, thin T-shirts
- Light long-sleeved tops for sun protection
- "Buff"-style scarf
- Shorts (zipped pockets recommended)
- Thin light coloured long trousers
- Fleece or light down jacket for evenings
- Sturdy shoes for hot weather. Can be sandals ([recommendation](#)) or light sneakers
- Flip flops

### Optional

- Ski goggles in case of high wind
- Ski underwear (if cold sleeper)
- Real pillow (can make a big difference)
- Camera (the desert is amazing for pictures but the sand can ruin expensive zoom lenses)
- Power bank & cables for charging
- Thermos if you want a hot drink during the day
- Screen protector for phone to stop sand scratches

### Toiletries

- Manual toothbrush
- Any regular toiletries you require
- SPF50 suncream ([recommendation](#))
- SPF lip balm and/or chapstick

### Camping equipment

- Sleeping bag (rated for 10C)
- Head torch ([recommendation](#))
- (Optional) - Tent ([recommendation](#))
- (Optional) - Camping chair ([recommendation](#))
- (Optional) - Sleeping mat ([recommendation](#))

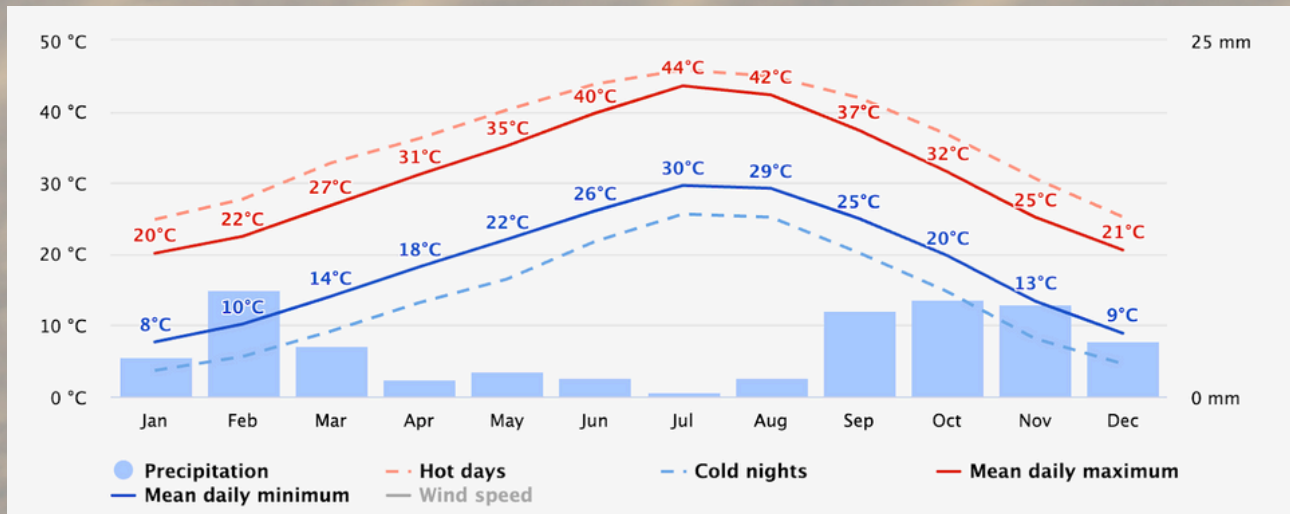
Let us know ahead of time if you want to borrow any of the optional equipment above or if you are using your own.



## 7. Practicalities & FAQs

### What's the weather like?

This varies by time of year - but this gives a good indication of desert temperatures during the day (red) and night (blue):



### Are we just in the car all day? What activities are we doing?

Self-driving a 4x4 is the best way to experience desert adventure in relative comfort. The majority of the day we will in some form be moving through the desert in cars, but do not confuse this with long hours on the highway. Once off the road, we'll rarely spend more than 30 minutes driving in one go - we'll pop out to explore some fossils, stop to gather wood, make lunch, push a car out, spot others through obstacles and finally, set up camp. In the evenings or over lunch, go have an exploration on your own, help make cocktails or dinner, make the fire and of course set up your tent. The days are packed and while it is a driving adventure, you will not get bored in the car.

### Wild camping, what is that?

Once in the desert, we will pitch our tents in sandy areas with incredible views. Your guide, Tibet, is a perfectionist when it comes to finding Nat Geo-worthy wild camp sites! We will be very much on our own with nobody else around and you get to pick where you pitch up and what view you want to wake up to! The next morning we pack everything up (including all garbage) and all we leave behind is our footsteps and tyre tracks.



### **If we're wild camping, how do you go to the bathroom?**

People often don't even think of this one! In the desert, there are no toilets. Our route generally passes through desert villages and the like which means that on average once a day there is access to a toilet. However, this is not something to plan around.

At camp, it's up to you to find a suitable location to do your business in private (just pop over the next dune or two). A shovel and some toilet paper is all you need. We'll provide small plastic bags for you to discard used toilet paper in, which you can then put in the rubbish so we don't leave it behind.

During the day, you can take bathroom breaks whenever you need them. For added privacy, you can just warn the convoy you're stopping for a bathroom break and we'll stop further up the road.

### **Do we get to see any cultural things?**

Yes! If your trip begins or ends in Marrakech, we advise you add on some days on your own to explore the incredible city. We will also spend at least one night in Ouarzazate, where you can explore the palm plantations, local farms and the world famous Atlas Studios.

But if it's real culture you're after, you'll absolutely love the little desert villages we stumble through in the middle of the Sahara. These villages are the "real" Morocco and navigating them to find someone who might sell us petrol or some fresh vegetables is always a highlight of the trip.



### **I'm worried or confused about the gear I need to buy**

If there is anything you don't understand in the packing list, do not hesitate to message Tibet directly, who can advise on what is needed.

### **Is there phone signal in the desert? Can I even charge my phone?**

Once we leave the paved road, you should assume you will have no phone signal until 5 days later when we exit the desert. However, we often pop in and out of signal and on average get a patch of signal (and data) every day. You should treat that as a bonus and you should not rely on it.

The cars are equipped with USB charging (usually USB A) so you can charge during the day if you bring the right cable.

### **What if something goes wrong?**

We do everything to make sure nothing serious happens on our adventures but if it does, we are actually almost always within a few hours of a hospital and within an hour of phone signal. We are usually within 30 minutes of a dirt track with daily traffic. We are also equipped with satellite communications devices linked to local contacts.

Emergency protocol is briefed the night before entering the desert.

### **Should I be afraid of desert wildlife?**

In short, no. There is a surprising amount of life in the desert but almost all of it is nocturnal and almost none of it is interested in humans with one exception: the scarab!

Scorpions do exist but you will almost definitely never see one. The main precaution is: be careful lifting random rocks and check your shoes in the morning. We will also avoid camping in areas with vegetation for this reason.

### **How fit do I need to be?**

You do not need to be an athlete, but you should be comfortable walking short distances on soft sand, setting up your own tent, sitting on low chairs, sleeping on a mat, pushing a vehicle or digging under one.

### **Culture, Dress & Conduct**

Morocco is a Muslim country, but one that is very much used to Western tourism. We always recommend being aware of how you dress, especially in places like souks (markets). But to be clear, for the majority of our trips, everyone is in a T-shirt and shorts regardless of gender - especially out in the desert. During ramadan, it's worth paying a bit more attention.

Alcohol is sold in larger Moroccan cities in special sections in supermarkets or certain hotels and restaurants, so it is not a dry country. However, please refrain from "waving around" the alcohol you're carrying and do not drink it in public.



## 9. What You Need to Do

We'll take care of a lot of the admin, but here are some things you have to do.

- Visas - if you require a visa for Morocco, it is your responsibility to obtain one
- Passport validity - you must ensure your passport is valid for 6 months after the date of return
- Flights - book your flights to Marrakech on the dates agreed with the trip leader
- Travel insurance - it is your responsibility to purchase travel insurance that covers medical treatment, evacuation and off-road driving
- Bring your drivers licence (UK/EU licence is OK for Morocco)
- SIMs / connectivity - SIMs can be bought locally but we recommend using an eSIM such as Airalo for simplicity.
- Money - while cars, hotels and food is paid for, people should still have cash for anything they wish to buy locally (snacks, souvenirs) and petrol. We will make an ATM stop on the first day in Ouarzazate.
- Buy any items that you don't have but are on the pack list
- Offline Maps - It is useful if at least one person per vehicle downloads offline Google Maps for the Ouarzazate region of Morocco to aid navigation on the arrival day.

You will be asked to sign a participant waiver, a medical declaration and rental agreement before departure.



## 10. Pricing & Booking Information

**£2,595 per person** based on two sharing a vehicle  
(3<sup>rd</sup> person or children at 50% off)

### **Includes:**

- 4 nights hotels, 4 nights wild camping, 5 full days in the desert
- Desert capable 4x4, recovery equipment, radios, tyre compressors & deflators
- Transfers from Marrakech to Ouarzazate (where the 4x4s are and where we will stock up)
- All meals in hotels, all shopping for meals in the desert
- Communal camping equipment, and optionally tents and camping chairs if you don't have them
- All instruction, briefings, guiding and navigating & guide vehicle
- Satellite comms for safety & local contacts for emergency response

**Excludes** flights to Marrakech, petrol, and alcoholic beverages.

Deposit of 30% required at time of booking, remainder due 60 days before departure.

Book [here](#)

Booking conditions [here](#)



## Note from the founder

**I'd love to have you with us on this adventure.**

There's no reason to be intimidated or nervous - it is totally normal that you haven't done something like this before and the adventure is designed with that in mind.

As long as you walk in with some flexibility, an open mind, and curiosity, you will have the time of your life. What you *should* be worried about is catching the desert bug and wanting to come back immediately!

Any questions or concerns, please contact me directly on +447572345701 via WhatsApp.

See you in the sand,

*Tibet Fonteyne*

Founder & your desert guide



**SCARAB**  
ADVENTURES