



Meetings
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Luxury Travel

Across Morocco

Destination Management Company

www.across-morocco.com

info@across-morocco.com

MARHABA!! This is the traditional greeting used in Morocco which conveys the meaning of a warm Hello & Welcome.

Together with this letter you will find enclosed the following:

- Travel tips in Morocco.

Please note that from now until the end of your journey with us, our operations team will be taking care of all your requests and will be happy to assist you. Please feel free to contact us any time on a 24h/7days service cell phone:

Our office hours and our afterhour's emergency numbers are as follow:

MOROCCO:	Marrakesh
Monday to Friday:	08h30 – 16h30
Saturday:	09h00 – 12h30
Telephone:	+212 (0) 5 24 43 42 43
Email:	info@across-morocco.com
Emergency Number:	+212 (0) 6 61 23 60 07

On behalf of the whole staff of **Across Morocco**, I would like to extend our very best wishes for a happy and truly memorable stay. If there is anything else I can do to make your trip more enjoyable, please do not hesitate to let us know.

Thank you for traveling with **Across Morocco**

Yours Sincerely;

.....

Arabic calligraphy logo for Across Morocco

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TRAVEL TIPS MOROCCO

Passport and Visa Information

Travel documents are your responsibility. On arrival in Morocco, you must have in your possession a signed, valid passport that will remain valid for at least 6 months beyond the completion of this trip.

On your first arrival in Morocco you will be given an Entry Number. Please keep it handy as it will be asked on arrival in every hotel you will stay in.

Airport Information

Due to the increase of air traffic worldwide, we are increasingly experiencing misrouted luggage that arrives in Morocco. 24 to 36 hours is the average time the passengers from all over the world can get their luggage back, especially for the incoming flights from Europe or Middle East.

For your own comfort, we recommend you take in your hand luggage some clothes and things alike we deem necessary to cover that risk. If that inconvenience was to happen, we would do our best to provide you with basic toiletry articles.

Staying Healthy On the Road

Some of the places you'll visit in Morocco are not easily accessible by vehicle. Sightseeing may require, at minimum, the ability to walk at a moderate pace for a mile or two, and the balance and agility necessary to climb stairs, enter and exit vehicles, and navigate uneven streets.

Some sightseeing stops do not have elevators or wheelchair access. High altitude may also be a condition of your journey. If you or any member of your party has high blood pressure or a heart condition, you should exercise extreme caution and carefully consider your participation in high altitude activities.

Please remember always to put your seat belt once you are in the vehicle.

For some activities such as camel riding, horse riding..., if you do not feel comfortable doing it, please let your guide or assistant know and stop it immediately.

Carry a simple travellers' first-aid kit containing items you feel may be required including remedies for minor stomach complaints and motion sickness. Carry an adequate supply of prescribed medications in your hand baggage, stored in their original, labelled containers.

Recommended health precautions:

1. While there is a limited risk of Malaria in some parts of rural Morocco (remote areas of the sub-Saharan desert), it's not recommended to take anti-malarial drugs for travellers following standard city-based itineraries.
2. No vaccinations are required for entry to Morocco.



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Food and Drinks

Moroccan dishes are flavourful including tajine, a thick vegetable and meat stew, djaja mahamara, chicken stuffed with couscous, almonds and raisins, mechoui, roasted or grilled mutton, and mint tea, available everywhere you go. Morocco is famous with its traditional served food besides the international cuisine which is incited from most parts of the world. Even if it is safe in most big cities, it is always advisable not to drink tap water or eat raw vegetables especially in Desert Areas. Bottled mineral water is available throughout the country.

Protections and Precautions

Valuable items are best left in your hotel's safe; don't take them on sightseeing excursions. It is common sense not to exhibit large sums of money in the streets. Security in Morocco is very good throughout the country. Nevertheless in big cities it is advisable in some areas to be more cautious and not to walk alone at late hours at night.

Communications

Telephone Service: As is common around the world, hotels in your destinations may impose a hefty surcharge on international calls placed through their switchboards. We urge you to check hotel policy before placing any call through your hotel. To avoid hotel markups use a calling card service. Another option is the use of a prepaid phone card, available in Morocco.

Cell phones: A number of cell phones manufactured today have the ability to operate overseas on the GSM (Global System for Mobile) standard. We recommend that you contact your cell phone service provider to determine if your phone operates on the GSM and what, if any, activation may be required. If your phone does not have the GSM feature you may find that renting a phone specifically designed for use overseas is the most practical option.

There are private telephone offices (téléboutiques) everywhere in the main cities and in most small towns, too. They work with coins or cards (télécarte). Some also have a fax machine. Faxes can also be sent from the post office, and are usually available in hotels.

Morocco's country code is 212. The outgoing international code is 00. Mobile phones work in most parts of the country through Moroccan operators.

Of Special Note

Although we will do our best to accommodate early arrivals, Abercrombie & Kent cannot guarantee that your first-day hotel room will be available for immediate occupancy if you arrive in Morocco on an early-morning flight.



General information for Morocco

Fast Facts

Country Full Name:	Kingdom of Morocco
Population:	33,000,000
Currency:	
• Name:	Moroccan Dirham
• Code:	MAD
• Symbol:	DH
Electrical Plugs:	127/220V 50Hz

Climate

Morocco has a diverse geography, from the cooler, wetter Mediterranean and Atlantic coast in the north, to the desperately hot, arid deserts and mountains of the south. You can encounter a wide range of climatic conditions and you should be prepared. Where ever you go in the country, you should carry bottled water with you, and drink as much as you can to ward off dehydration.

Best Season - March, April, May, part of June, September & October - perfect warm temperatures (25 to 35 degrees Celsius) in the south, very little chance of rain and warm evenings, except in March and early April where evenings and mornings can be cooler (13° to 17°C).

Peak Season – New Year and Easter

Shoulder Season (winter) - Mid November to Mid February - mostly warm (15 to 25 degrees Celsius), can be very chilly in evenings and it may rain but rarely for long periods.

Hot Season (summer) – Mid June, July and August - can be very hot in Marrakech and south (up to 45 degrees Celsius), more pleasant in mountains and on coast. We would suggest afternoons by pool or a siesta and make use of long days for sightseeing early and late and enjoy long warm evenings.

Public holidays

Secular Holidays are

- January 1st - New Year's Day
- January 11th - sign the declaration of Independence
- May 1st - International Labour Day
- July 30th - Coronation Day
- August 14th - Allegiance Day
- August 20th - King & Public revolution
- August 21st - Youth celebration: King's birthday
- November 6th - Green March Day
- November 18th - Independence Day

Then there are the festivities associated with the Islamic (Lunar) Calendar which vary from year to year; back through the Gregorian (Solar) Calendar by 11 days approx. each year.

Some holidays based on lunar calendar are validated by the religious authorities the night before and may vary from the above dates by one or two days.



Dealing with problems

In the unlikely event of dissatisfaction with accommodation or other local arrangements made by **Across Morocco** it is essential to bring the matter immediately to the attention of senior hotel management (preferably in writing) and our local representative, so that practical action can be taken. There is clearly no benefit in waiting until after your return home to issue a complaint where local assistance might have helped to put matters right.

Aircrafts

Flights operate on a weight system in Morocco, not a piece system. A maximum of 23 Kgs of luggage per person, 10 Kgs in hand luggage, and camera equipment or laptop is allowed.

Local customs

As in all foreign countries, it is considered polite to adhere to and show respect for local customs.

Urban culture is greatly influenced by Western culture, but in rural areas traditional values and crafts continue. You should always ask permission before taking photographs of local people as offence may easily be caused.

The People & Culture

Morocco is an Islamic country. The religion is an integral part of the culture. The holy book is the Koran based on the teachings of the Prophet Mohammed. Each observant Muslim practices the five tenets, called the Pillars of Islam. These require that the faithful profess their faith, pray five times a day, practice charity, fast during Ramadan, and make a pilgrimage to Mecca. Morocco is a land of Tolerance, where Jewish, Christians and Muslims lives together in peace. The main restriction a tourist will encounter is the prohibition on visiting mosques, unless you are Muslim. This is unfortunate since much of the most beautiful artistry in the country is inside these mosques. There are certain historic mosques which allow visitors and you should check for these wherever you visit. The story of prohibition for non Muslims to enter mosques goes back in history to the French Resident- General Lyauty who made that compulsory in 1912 in fear that the French authorities would abuse the heritage.

If you visit during the month of Ramadan when most people fast each day until sunset, you are likely to have a somewhat different experience than a visit at other times of the year.

However, you won't be expected to fast and in almost everywhere you'll find places to eat during the day.

It is also a mark of respect to avoid smoking, drinking and eating in the streets during Ramadan fasting hours.

Clothing

Morocco is a very tolerant country but remain a Muslim country, as a courtesy to Moroccan people we recommend to keep a conservative dress code.

It is courteous for women to cover their head with a scarf when entering a Holy Muslim site (only Hassan II mosque in Casablanca and some Mausoleum in the country are open to non Muslims)

When out of the hotels and away from the pool area, we suggest that women cover their shoulder and avoid tight shorts and miniskirt.

For men, casual clothing is fine and we only suggest to avoid removing shirts or t-shirts when away from the beach or the pool.

Sun is quite strong and we recommend sun glasses, hats or caps and sun cream all year long.

Because South of Morocco is close to the desert, we experience some large variation of temperature during the day and we recommend to carry several layers of clothes to be removed or added according to the temperature.



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Money Matters

The local currency is the Dirham, roughly 8.3 Dirhams to the U.S. dollar. Foreign currencies can be converted at most banks, but it's not wise to carry too much. The big hassle is finding an ATM machine that takes your card outside big cities. So be sure you get enough cash to carry you until the next major city. Don't put your card in an ATM unless you see the symbol that matches your card on the machine.

It is illegal to import or export Moroccan currency so we advise using the following methods:

1. ATMs are installed in most towns so this is a secure and cost-effective way to retrieve money from your bank account or credit card (usually up to maximum of 2000 Dhs) - please check costs involved with your bank or card issuer. Best stick to debit cards if possible.
2. UK Sterling cash, US Dollars or Euros are perfect as you can change into local currency when you wish at any hotel, airport or bureau de change. The exchange rate is fairly fixed and commission rates low or non-existent.
3. Credit cards (MasterCard, Visa and American Express...) are relatively widely accepted, even in some shops in the souks, particularly for carpets, however, it is advisable to have cash for petrol/diesel.

NB: keep your exchange receipts to change money back at the airport for your return journey, useful but also technically compulsory.

Time

Morocco is generally on GMT and one 1 hour ahead on summer.

Banking Hours

Banks are generally open Monday to Friday from 08H30 to 16H00.

Chemist

These are open all week but they do close on Saturdays and Sundays. In case of emergency, contact the reception who will give you the number for the emergency chemist.

Bargaining

It is an essential part of Moroccan business life to bargain over the cost of the goods and services.

Taxi

- Grands taxis or shared taxis (minicabs, longer Mercedes). They provide a transport service between towns at slightly higher prices than the coaches (Up to 6 passengers).
- Petits taxis or small taxis (only 3 passengers allowed) are ideal for short journeys.
- The small taxis are not allowed to leave the town limits. At night, there is a compulsory make up of around 50% on the fare shown on the meter.
- Petits taxis are usually "Shared". Unless you specify out at the beginning that you want the taxi just for yourself and have agreed a fee BEFORE sitting in, the driver may stop to take other people. In that case, the driver must set his meter once starting the journey.

Postal service

Although the postal system is fairly reliable, it's not terribly fast. It can take up to a week for a letter to reach (or be received from) European countries and perhaps two weeks for other destinations. Post offices are called: "la Poste" and are open from 8.30 am to 2 pm (Mondays to Fridays)



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Gratuities and portorage

You are travelling on an independent itinerary, and the cost of your program does not include gratuities. The following guidelines are general local standards per person.

1. An amount equivalent to approximately 150MAD (US\$20) per full day of sightseeing is suggested as a tip for your local guide, with 100MAD (US\$13) suitable for your driver. For half day excursions, equivalents of 100MAD (US\$13) and 50MAD (US\$6) are appropriate for guide and driver respectively.

2. Taxi drivers don't expect tips, but it's polite to round up the fare

3. A charge for service is often added to restaurant checks but, if it's not, a typical gratuity would be equal to 10% of the total

These tipping guidelines are suggestions only and decisions involving tipping rest entirely with you.

Tips to airport and hotel porters are included on private airport transfers.

Service charges are not automatically included on the bill.

Language

Official language is Arabic; French is widely spoken in the whole country and Spanish in the North. English is commonly spoken in most touristic areas.

Departure information

Morocco requires departing travellers to complete an Exit form, and display their currency exchange and purchase receipts.

All countries forbid the export of their "national treasures". Generally, trade in bona fide antiques is illegal, antique items will be confiscated and their buyers open to prosecution.

Responsibility rests only with the purchaser.

Morocco bans the export of Dirham in any amount. To export any merchandise, which has value as an art item, you must obtain a certificate from Morocco's Department of cultural Affairs.