



# Equus Journeys

HORSEBACK TRAVEL & EQUESTRIAN TRADITIONS SINCE 1972

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## Valley of the Roses

### MOROCCO

Within the High Atlas mountains, this **horseback trail ride** takes you to the gorges of M'goun and Dades, famous for their rose blossoms, oases and kasbahs, which are considered to be amongst the most beautiful in Morocco. An ideal ride for spring and autumn when the desert is too hot for horse riding.

Trail Riding	 8 days / 6 days riding	 From £1,010	
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### ITINERARY

## Highlights

- Varied landscapes - canyons, snow-capped mountains and valleys full of flowers
- Traditional architecture of the kasbahs (fortified buildings) and ksours (castles), amongst the most beautiful in Morocco
- Experience traditional Berber culture, villages and rose essence industry.
- Ride traditional Moroccan Barb and Arabian stallions which are well schooled and well balanced.
- High level of service whilst camping during the ride

## Day 1 — 1 : ARRIVE IN OUARZAZATE

 Fint hotel

International flight to Marrakech or Ouarzazate from London. If you fly into Marrakech then an additional transfer to Ouarzazate will be arranged at extra cost (c. 4hrs drive) so you need to arrive in time for this.

You will be met on arrival at the airport and transferred to your hotel in Ouarzazate for dinner with the group. If everyone arrives early enough you may leave for Skoura in the afternoon and spend your evening in a riad in Skoura, near the stables.

## Day 2 — 2 : OUARZAZATE - SKOURA - AGHBALOU - 4 hours riding

 Moroccan Camp

You will be met in the reception area of the hotel at c. 7am for the transfer to Skoura where the horses are based. After a short introductory ride to check that everyone is happy, you set out on the trail, crossing the palm groves of Skoura and the desert plateau of Ait Saïd Oumanssour. Camp will be set up beside the Atlas massif.

## Day 3 — 3 : AGHBALOU - AGUERD - 5 hours riding



Today you ride through the Tamassent plateaus to Toundoute, with magnificent views across valleys full of almond trees. The afternoon offers great canter on a plateau until reaching the beautiful village of Tiflit. Ride up some steep gorges to reach camp which is close to the village of Aguerd.

## Day 4 — 4 : AGUERD - TAOUJGALT - 5-6 hours riding



Set out on horseback along Nait Tounert passing several villages with cultivated terraces next to the river. After lunch, you ride up to Azaghar N'aiguer pass which towers over the valley. Follow a narrow track until reaching your camp for the night at 1900m.

## Day 5 — 5 : TAOUJGALT - AGOUTI - 5 hours riding



Today's ride takes you through Assif el Qati valley which is famous for its magnificent Ksours (castles) with traditional Berber architecture. The view is superb with the green gardens and red cliffs. Camp is set up close to Agouti.

## Day 6 — 6 : AGOUTI - BOUTAGHRAR - 6-7 hours riding



Today's trail through El Qati valley involves crossing numerous Berber villages. This valley on the south side of M'goun mountain is famous for its roses. The perfume of rose petals fills the mountain air of Ait M'Gouna - the rose essence is exported worldwide and celebrated each May with a rose festival. Camp close to Boutaghrar.

## Day 7 — 7 : BOUTAGHRAR - TIMSTIQUITE - OUARZAZATE - 5 hours riding



This morning you descend through the valley of roses following the river along a small mule track until reaching Timstiquite. After lunch in the valley you say farewell to the team and horses before being transferred back to Ouarzazate. Dinner and night in a hotel in Ouarzazate.

## Day 8 — 8 : OUARZAZATE

Transfer to the airport for your flight home. If departing from Marrakech then you must allow time for the transfer (c. 4 hours) so morning flights are not possible.

### DATES & PRICES

DEPARTURE	RETURN	PRICE WITHOUT FLIGHTS	STATUS
05/05/2024	12/05/2024	£1,045	Guaranteed departure
12/05/2024	19/05/2024	£1,010	Guaranteed departure

## Price details

- Flights to your destination are not included, but can be booked on request - please contact us for rates.

- Rates are per person, based on two riders sharing a twin or double room/tent.

- Groups are composed of a minimum of 3 international riders and a maximum of 10 riders, plus guides.

- Please note: the ride will also confirm for 2 riders on payment of a supplement of c. €545/£475/\$580 per person. Once the group has reached 3 people, we will remove this supplement from your invoice and refund you if you have already paid it.

- There is no single supplement if you are willing to share a room/tent with another guest of the same sex. To guarantee your own room/tent there is a

single supplement of €115/£100/\$125.

- Transfers: transfers are included from Ouarzazate. If you decide to stay longer and require a transfer a day earlier or a day later, there is a supplement of €20/£15. If you prefer to fly to Marrakesh then there is an additional transfer cost of €140 each way (per vehicle and split between all guests arriving/departing Marrakech) payable on location. If flying into Marrakech your flight must arrive before 15:30 on day 1 and leave after 14:00 on Day 8.

- Please note that the horses are only c. 15hh so if you weigh over 90kg or are taller than 6ft 5inches then please contact us before booking so that we can check there is a suitable mount for you.

Please Note

The itinerary may be modified at anytime for security reasons, meteorological or events beyond our control such as blocked roads, rivers in flood, drought, strikes and local holidays. Equus Journeys, our local partners and their local guides will always strive to find the best solution and will alter the itinerary as needed.

The names of the hotels and accommodation are given for information only and depending on availability, they may be modified without notice and replaced by another of a similar standard.

## Price includes

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### SUPPORT TEAM

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1 English-speaking horse guide

1 groom

### LOGISTIC

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1 vehicle and driver

1 cook

1 horse equipped with saddle and bridle per rider

### INLAND TRANSPORTS

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Transfers from Ouarzazate if your arrival date is matching the rest of the group

Private bus or Landrover

### ACCOMMODATION

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Double/triple room in hotel standard 3/4\* in Marrakech

2 person tents and foam mattress

### MEALS

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Filtered or bottled water

Full board from dinner on day 1 to breakfast on day 8

### ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT

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First aid kit

## Price doesn't include

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### MEALS

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Beverage (except during the trek) and personal extra

Lunches not included on day 1 and day 8 depending on your departure time

### TRANSPORTS

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International flights bookable on request

### EXTRA

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Small group supplement. See above for the price details.

### INSURANCE

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Cancellation and travel insurances are not included. Please note that insurance is mandatory. We recommend to take out an insurance policy as soon as your travel is booked in case of cancellation.

# Optional

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## ACCOMMODATION

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Single room/tent supplement

## TRANSPORT

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Airport transfers - outside of the normal dates or if you prefer to fly to Marrakech.

## EQUESTRIAN INFO

### Horses

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The horses are all Barb Arabs or Arabian stallions. They are tough and keen but sensible and sure-footed across the varied terrain. As they are stallions, they do need to be handled with softness and you do have to maintain distance from the other riders, but they are well schooled. Their average height is 15 hands.

### Guide & local team

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You will be guided by local Moroccan's who are familiar with the horses and the landscape. They will be accompanied by grooms. At least one of the guides will speak English but the grooms may only speak French and Arabic.

### Minimum riding ability

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#### MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY

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You need to be a competent rider, capable and in control in all paces in open spaces. You must be able to rise to the trot and canter in a forward seat. It is also important to be a confident rider as you will be riding stallions.

Please note that the horses are only c. 15hh so if you weigh over 90kg or are taller than 6ft 5inches then please contact us before booking so that we can check there is a suitable mount for you.

#### PACE

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There is a lot of walking on this trail because of the mountainous landscape, however there are opportunities to trot and canter each day where the terrain allows.

Please note that canters are always in single file due to the fact you are riding stallions.

#### TACKING ABILITY AND PARTICIPATION

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You will be expected to assist with grooming, tacking up and untacking your horse each day whilst out on the trail. It would also be appreciated if you could help with camp tasks such as putting up tents or watering and feeding the horses.

#### TRIP CONDITIONS AND REQUESTED EXPERIENCE

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You need to be physically fit for long hours in the saddle (c. 6 hours) in the African sun and at high altitudes. The terrain is varied to include steep ascents/descents and there may be holes to avoid. You need to be able to mount and dismount your horse whilst on rocky paths so as to assist your horse during hard climbs and tricky descents. Temperatures are cooler in the mountains than in Marrakech because of the altitude but it can still be hot and very sunny in summer. Please remember that there is always a level of unpredictability when riding in the mountains and you may experience wind, cold or even storms.

Having previous experience of riding a trail of several days would be an advantage but it is not compulsory. Guests who do not ride regularly are requested to get fit prior to the ride. It is of particular importance to ensure you are comfortable and balanced when riding at speed across rough terrain and open spaces. You also need to be fit enough to walk on foot and lead your horse in the mountains.

Visiting a new country offers the opportunity to meet other cultures with different mentalities, therefore it is important to accept these differences and respect the local way of life.

#### EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT

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Forestier trail riding saddles and comfortable tack.

Saddlebags are provided.

We recommend our riders to wear a helmet to the correct standard and you should bring your own to ensure a proper fit.

## TRAVEL INFO

### COMFORT

The first and last night are spent in a 3 star hotel, either in twin or triple rooms with bathrooms.

Whilst camping, you stay in two person tents with mattresses (you must bring your own sleeping bag). There is a communal tent for dining, a shower tent with hot water (morning/evening) and a toilet tent.

### MEALS

A cook travels with you and prepares all of the meals. You will usually have a cold lunch and a hot evening meal when camping. Meals are typical Moroccan cuisine.

Water is provided but you should bring your own bottle.

Special diets can be accommodated, however please note that some foods can be difficult to find in Morocco. Certain diets may incur a supplement (gluten-free diets can be accommodated at a supplementary charge of €100/£90/\$110 for instance). All dietary requirements must be specified at the time of booking.

### CLIMATE

The Atlas mountains have a typical mountainous climate with cold winters and the rides don't run during the winter months.

During the summer months the mountains offer a good alternative to the heat of the desert or Marrakech. The nights are cool without being cold (9-14c depending on altitude) and the days are usually sunny with temperatures around 25c. In short, the climate is ideal from May to September, with temperatures dropping in March/April and October.

Marrakech has a Mediterranean climate which is usually hot summers and a clear blue sky, with cold winters. The best season to visit this city is Spring/Autumn when the temperatures are pleasant all day (22-30c).

### TIPS

It is customary, as a sign of thanks to tip the local team. We recommend a tip of €50/£45, but you should give what you feel comfortable with. We recommend giving the tips to your guide who can distribute them amongst all of the staff members.

### PACKING LIST

#### Head

- Equus Journeys strongly recommend that you wear a riding helmet and that you take your own to ensure a correct fit.
- Sunhat for when not riding
- Sunglasses - with a cord attached so they don't fly off when riding
- Buff or bandana

#### Upper body

- Long sleeved shirts provide protection from the sun and dust
- T-shirts
- Fleece, jumper or jacket - the evenings can be cold
- Waterproof jacket - the rains can be difficult to foresee and it's better to be prepared. Layering is key to cope with the fluctuations in temperature between day and night
- Casual clothes for the evening

#### Legs

- Lightweight, comfortable riding trousers or jodhpurs - we recommend riding in them at home before taking them on holiday to ensure they don't rub
- Shorts for lazy lunchtimes
- Casual clothes for the evening

#### Hands and Feet

- Comfortable riding boots. We recommend short boots with half chaps as long chaps/long boots can get very hot.
- Sandals, flip-flops or trainers for moving around the camp
- Gloves - your hands are particularly exposed to the sun whilst riding

#### Nightwear

- Thermals are a good option for sleeping in, or a t-shirt and shorts for warmer nights
- A woolly hat when camping (desert nights can be cold)

- Sleeping bag - we recommend a comfort factor of 2-5c (Oct-Nov and Feb-April) and minus 5 - minus 8 for Dec/Jan. We also recommend taking a silk or fleece liner for an extra layer

#### Our Recommendations

- Please don't take a hard sided suitcase. Your luggage should be soft sided and you should pack it into two bags if it weighs more than 15kg so it's easier for the team to transport between camps
- Take a second, smaller bag to pack things you may need during the day such as a book or sunscreen then you can easily access it during the long lunch break
- We recommend travelling in your riding boots and carrying your hat and some riding clothes in your hand luggage - then if your luggage goes astray you are still able to ride!

#### Other useful items

- Swimsuit
- Towel. Camping towels will pack lighter and dry more easily
- Sarong (for going to/from the shower tent)
- Water bottle (1.5 litre or two x 1 litre)
- Hand sanitiser
- Wet wipes for when showers aren't possible
- Camera and high capacity memory card. Spare battery
- Bumbag for carrying your camera and small items whilst riding
- Headtorch or small torch for moving around camp at night
- Toilet paper and small plastic bags for taking rubbish away

#### In your luggage

- Any liquids, such as shampoo, moisturiser, deodorant unless they are less than 100ml and all bottles can fit in a small, clear, plastic ziplock bag.
- Small penknife

#### In your hand luggage

- Any valuables, such as your camera, ipod, ipad etc.
- Your riding hat

#### Medical kit

- Sunscreen and lip balm - must be high factor
- Insect repellent
- Any medication you regularly take
- Blister plasters in case of any rubs
- Antiseptic cream, plasters, aspirin, anti-histamine, insect-bite salve etc...
- Rehydration sachets (dioralyte or similar)
- Spare prescription glasses/contact lenses
- Ear plugs, particularly if you are a light sleeper
- Micropur or similar water purification tablets

## SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

1. **Travel light.** It's a little known fact, but the lighter you pack, the better for the environment as heavy bags will produce higher emissions (when flying a plane or driving a car!).
2. **Reduce plastic waste.** Take your favorite reusable bottle with you. Avoid single-use bags, cups, or straws.
3. **Preserve nature.** Always take your rubbish with you during the ride and recycle them. Leave all the flowers or plants as you found them, and never get too close when observing wildlife. Make sure to use eco-friendly products such as body wash or laundry detergent (if camping) to protect both your skin and the environment.
4. **Choose your experiences carefully.** Respect animal life by not participating in any activities that abuse wild animals (shows, elephant rides, etc.).
5. **Support local populations.** Buy local handicrafts, be respectful of customs, and learn about the culture of local communities.
6. **Share!** Raise awareness among your family and friends about sustainable tourism.

For more information please [see this page](#).