



The Saffron Trail

MOROCCO

A **horseback trail ride** in the Siroua mountains, a volcanic range situated between the High Atlas and the Anti Atlas. The area is famed for its saffron production and is the ideal destination for spring/autumn when the desert is too hot for riding and the mountains too cold.

Trail Riding	8 days / 6 riding	From £750	
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Horseback riding in Morocco



Riding with the stunning backdrop of the Atlas Mountains



Enjoy spectacular riding in Morocco with Equus Journeys

ITINERARY

Highlights

- Long meadows for nice canters
- Siroua landscape : volcanic rock interspersed with small Berber villages, traditional sheep pens and saffron fields
- 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 : LONDON - MARRAKECH

Les 3 Palmiers hotel

You will be met on arrival in Marrakech and transferred to your hotel, usually in Marrakech but occasionally in Ouarzazate. If in Marrakesh then the hotel is situated in the Gueliz area and there are numerous possibilities for dinner (to own account tonight) . The Jemaa el-Fna square is a 5 minute drive by taxi or a 20 minute walk on foot.

Day 2 — 2 : MARRAKECH - TAMLLAKOUTE - 2-3 hours riding

Moroccan Camp

At 07:00 you will be collected from the hotel reception and transferred to Ait Marssid in the Siroua massif (c. 4h drive). Here you will be welcomed by your equestrian guide and the logistical team. After lunch you will be introduced to your horse and after a short ride to ensure everyone feels comfortable with their horses, you will set off on the trail. Follow the bank of the Anzal Oueds to the village of Tamllakoute where you spend your first night of camping.

Day 3 — 3 : TAMLLAKOUTE - AMEZRI - 5 hours riding

Moroccan Camp

The morning starts along a track which offers the opportunity for faster riding, before crossing the little town of Tinzaline. You then ride across rocky

terrain until reaching the village of Tizzawine which appears lost in the mountains. After lunch you continue to Merzoug and the vast Amezri plateau, from where there are beautiful views over the surrounding mountains.

Day 4 — 4 : AMEZRI - TALAT N'MDIST - 5 hours riding

 Moroccan Camp

Today, your trail takes you to the Siroua summits, crossing the Ait Tigga which towers above the valley of Ait Semgane with its saffron fields. You keep climbing up a path which offers views across the numerous Berber villages which are scattered along the valley. Lunch is taken above the sheep pens at Tisswatine.

In the afternoon, you ride up to the well known high pass of Tizi n'Anzommer (2,732m) for views of the surrounding mountains. Descend along old shepherding trails to your camp in Mdist valley.

Day 5 — 5 : TALAT N'MDIST - AZAZOUGZANE - 5 hours riding

 Moroccan Camp

During the morning you ride along a track which crosses a mountainous and desert landscape which is rich in medicinal plants. Berbers travel all over Siroua and collect several plants to sell in Moroccan souks. Descend along a scenic track until reaching the river with views over Ighighi gorges. There is time to rest and enjoy lunch at the foot of Djebel Tazoulte.

In the afternoon you ride along a trail which brings you to the sheep pens at Azib Azazougzane where camp is set up for the night.

Day 6 — 6 : AZAZOUGZANE - ANMID - 5 hours riding

 Moroccan Camp

After breakfast you continue riding through green meadows and sheepfolds in a magnificent rocky landscape. Lunch is taken amongst the sheep pens before climbing to Tizi n'Ait Qalla for a panoramic view over the large village of Anmid. Set up camp at the base of the village.

Day 7 — 7 : ANMID - AMASSINE - MARRAKECH - 2-3 hours riding

 Les 3 Palmiers hotel

After your final night of camping, ride out in the direction of Agrilaoune village. You will ride on a long track which towers above beautiful Berber villages which hang from the mountains steep sides. After a final canter, you say goodbye to your horses and board a vehicle for the transfer back to Marrakesh and your hotel (c. 4h drive).

Day 8 — 8 : MARRAKECH - LONDON

You will be transferred to the airport in time for your flight home.

DATES & PRICES

DEPARTURE	RETURN	PRICE WITHOUT FLIGHTS	PRICE INCLUDING FLIGHTS	STATUS
20/09/2020	27/09/2020	£750		Open
27/09/2020	04/10/2020	£750		Guaranteed departure
04/10/2020	11/10/2020	£750		Open
16/05/2021	23/05/2021	£750		Open
23/05/2021	30/05/2021	£750		Open
30/05/2021	06/06/2021	£750		Open
19/09/2021	26/09/2021	£750		Open
26/09/2021	03/10/2021	£750		Open
03/10/2021	10/10/2021	£750		Open

10/10/2021

17/10/2021

£750

Open

Price details

- Flights to your destination (international/domestic) 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 confirm for two riders on payment of a supplement of c. €280/£240 per person. Once the group has reached three 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, but to request single accommodation for the whole trail, the supplement is c. €120/€105.
- 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

SUPPORT TEAM

1 English-speaking horse guide
1 groom

SUPPORT TEAM

1 vehicle and driver
1 cook
1 horse equipped with saddle and bridle per rider

INLAND TRANSPORTS

2 people in a 3 man tent and foam mattress
Double room in hotel standard 3/4* in Marrakech

ACCOMMODATION

Full board from breakfast D2 to last breakfast D8 except dinner on D7
Filtered or bottled water

MEALS

First aid kit

Price doesn't include

MEALS

Beverage (except during the trek) and personal extra
Free dinner on day 7
Free lunches on D1 and D8 depending on your departure time

TRANSPORTS

International flights

EXTRA

Small group supplement. See above the price details.

EXTRA

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

ACCOMMODATION

Single room/tent supplement

EQUESTRIAN INFO

Horses

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 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.

Minimum riding ability

MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY

You need to be a competent rider, capable and in control in all paces. 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

There is a lot of walking on this trail because of the long hours and steepness of the tracks, 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

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

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. 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.

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

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 nights are in a 3 star hotel in either Marrakech or Ouarzazate, in twin or triple rooms. There is the option to upgrade to a riad for extra cost.

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.

One bottle of water is provided per person each day but you may wish to take some micropur or similar purification tablets with you in case you require more than this.

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).

GUIDE AND LOCAL TEAM

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.

TIPS

It is customary to tip the local team as a gesture of thanks and we would recommend c. £30 for the week, but you should give what you feel is right.

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

VISA & HEALTH

Formalities

It is your responsibility to ensure you have the valid visa requirements for entry.

We will endeavour to keep this section up to date, but please visit <https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country/morocco.htm> (US citizens) or <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/morocco/entry-requirements> (UK citizens) for further information.

To enter Morocco, a passport valid for the duration of your stay is required by all British, American, Canadian and EU nationals. However, the Moroccan Consulate General in London advise that your passport should be valid for at least 3 months on your date of entry to Morocco. If your passport does not meet this requirement you may face difficulties and you should check with the Moroccan authorities and your travel provider before travelling.

Passport note:

You should ensure that your passport is stamped when you enter the country. Some tourists have experienced difficulties leaving the country because their passport bears no entry stamp. Your passport should be valid for the proposed duration of your stay in Morocco. No additional period of validity beyond this is required.

Visas

Visas are not required by British, American, Canadian and EU nationals for stays in Morocco of up to three months.

ADDRESSES OF CONSULATES

- Paris | Ambassade du Maroc
5, rue Le Tasse
75116 Paris
Tél. : 01.45.20.69.35
Fax :
info@amb-maroc.fr
- Ambassade de France au Maroc
1 rue Aguelmane Sidi Ali Agdal BP 602
Rabat - Chellah

Tél. : +212 5 37 27 66 00
Fax : +212 5 37 27 67 11
webmestre@ambafrance-ma.org
- Moroccan Consulate
Diamond House
97-99 Praed Street, Paddington
W2 1NT London
Tél. : +44 020 7724 0624
Fax :

Health

There are no legal requirements regarding vaccinations. Still, it's a good thing to get your vaccinations in order before travelling to Morocco. The general vaccination against Diphtheria, Tetanus and Polio (DTP) is recommended. Also both hepatitis A as well as typhoid would be recommended. Malaria is very rare and present only in a few remote areas. Don't underestimate this tropical disease and take precautions. Buy repellent (preferably with 50% DEET), and sleep under a net.

Insurance

It is a condition of your booking with Equus Journeys that you have travel insurance which covers you for the riding activities to be undertaken. Your travel insurance should cover you for medical expenses and repatriation. Your guides will require your travel insurance details before they allow you to ride and may refuse to let you ride if you cannot provide them. You should take your insurance documents with you.

Voltage

127/220 volts AC, 50Hz, depending on age and location of building. Plugs usually have two round pins or the standard three pin UK.

Budget and money

The official currency is the Moroccan Dirham (MAD). One dirham is equivalent with 100 santimat (singular: santim).

- Banknotes 10, 20, 50, 100, 200 dirham
- Coins 1, 5, 10, 20 santimat; ½, 1, 2, 5, and 10 dirham

Telephone and jetlag

The telephone dialling code is +212.

Roaming agreements exist with international mobile phone companies. Coverage is good in towns and cities, and across the west of Morocco, but a little more erratic east and further south.

Time zone: GMT