



8-DAY ADVENTURE

CLIMB MOUNT TOUBKAL IN WINTER

Morocco

In the winter months, under a blanket of snow the High Atlas mountains are a magical place for some fantastic winter trekking. The peaks and high passes that looked spectacular in summer are now even more enticing as they glisten with ice and the promise of crisp, cold mountain air on windswept summit ridges. If you have a craving to hear the crunch of snow under your boot and the feeling of your crampons biting into the ground as you kick steps upwards to reach a distant peak, you have come to the right place.

On this adventure we will climb Ouanoukrim (4088m), the second highest peak in Morocco and Toubkal (4167m) the highest peak in north Africa. You will be accompanied by expert mountain guides every step of the way and all your technical gear is provided.

TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

- Experience the spectacular High Atlas in winter conditions
- Climb two mountains over 4000m including the highest peak in north Africa
- Explore vibrant Marrakesh



ITINERARY

DAY 1

ARRIVAL IN MARRAKESH

Arrive in Marrakesh and transfer to your hotel. transfer to your hotel. We provide transfers at 5.30pm and 7.30pm. After clearing immigration and collecting your luggage, exit the arrivals building and look out for one of our team holding a KANDOO sign.

Transport: **Private transfer (0.3 hour, 8 km)**

Accommodation: **Hotel**

DAY 2

MARRAKESH – IMLIL

This morning we will take a guided tour of the old town and souks followed by lunch in a local restaurant. The souks of Marrakesh are renowned as one of the most exotic marketplaces in the world.

In the afternoon we will transfer to the village of Imlil, passing through the Moulay Brahim Gorge. Imlil is a beautiful High Atlas village at an altitude of 1800m where we will be staying in a local cottage for the next two nights.

Transport: **Private transfer**

Accommodation: **Local cottage**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 3

TIZI N'MZIK

Today will be a warm up to get us prepared for the climb ahead. From the village we will climb up the valley to a col called Tizi n'Mzik at 2500m.

The track is steep, rocky and snow covered so it will provide a good impression of what we will face in the coming days. This will be a good opportunity to try out your crampons provided the conditions are suitable. We return to Imlil in the afternoon.

Hiking time: **4 - 5 hours**

Ascent: **800 m**

Descent: **800 m**

Accommodation: **Local cottage**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 4

IMLIL – NELTER REFUGE

Leaving Imlil, using mules to carry our luggage, we follow an easy track out of the village passing irrigation channels and cultivated terraces often under the shade of walnut trees. The trail takes us through the village of Aremd and continues up the left hand side of the valley to Sidi Chamarouch where we will stop for lunch. From here the trail is more difficult as the track becomes steep and rocky and we cross the snowline. Depending on the amount of snow at this point, we may need to leave our mules behind and take porters to transport our luggage.

At Sidi Chamarouch, we cross the river and continue up the right hand side of the valley until we reach the Nelter Refuge at 3210m. The refuge sits at the foot of Mount Toubkal and Ouanoukrim and has a lounge, dormitories, bathrooms and a fireplace. This will be our base for the next three nights.

Hiking time: **6 - 7 hours**

Ascent: **1400 m**

Accommodation: **Refuge**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 5

OUANOUKRIM

Leaving the refuge between 4am and 5am, we set off up the Ait Mizane valley on a gentle slope that becomes steeper as we reach Tizi n'Ouagane at 3750m. Once we have reached the col most of the hard work is behind us and it will be roughly 2 more hours before we reach the 4088m peak.

At roughly 3850m, there is a rocky section which will require some scrambling to make progress. After this rock band a steep snow slope leads to a ridge which we will follow to the first summit, Timeguida n'Ouaoukrim. There is the option of continuing to the second summit, Ras Ouanoukrim (4083m), which will require some more scrambling.

From the top we have spectacular views of the High Atlas, the Anti Atlas and the summit of Toubkal. Don't forget to pack your camera! After some time to relax on the summit we return to the Nelter refuge for a well earned rest

Hiking time: **6 - 7 hours**

Ascent: **1100 m**

Descent: **1100 m**

Accommodation: **Refuge**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 6

TOUBKAL

Leaving the refuge before 5am again, we start climbing with head torches up the steep and rocky west flank of Toubkal. The trail zigzags as we gradually gain height before reaching the large depression known as the South Cwm where the angle eases off a little.

We continue upwards on easy angled snow slopes before the route again becomes steeper on the approach to the south col. At the col, the mountain drops away down the east face and we take a break before turning north to follow the ridge to the summit. The final part of the route feels more exposed and care is needed on the steep ground.

We are now standing on the highest peak in north Africa at 4167m. On a clear day the views extend as far as Marrakesh on one side and the vast Sahara Desert on the other. The sense of achievement as you gaze down on the surrounding icy peaks is enormous. After some time to soak up our success we carefully retrace our steps back down the mountain to the refuge.

Hiking time: **6 - 7 hours**

Ascent: **960 m**

Descent: **960 m**

Accommodation: **Refuge**

Meals included:

Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner

DAY 7

NELTER REFUGE – MARRAKESH

Today we head back down the valley, passing through Sidi Chamarouch and Aremd before arriving back in Imlil. At Imlil we will stop for lunch before transferring back to Marrakesh and checking into our hotel.

Hiking time: **4 - 5 hours**

Descent: **1400 m**

Accommodation: **Hotel**

Meals included: **Breakfast**

DAY 8

DEPARTURE

Transfer to the airport and flight home.

Transport: **Private transfer (0.3 hour, 8 km)**

Meals included: **Breakfast**

PLEASE NOTE

The details in this programme are regularly updated but unforeseeable and unpredictable circumstances may result in inaccuracies. In order to provide the adventure which is best suited to your demands, the weather and the operational conditions, changes to the itinerary may be made.

For safety reasons, we reserve the rights to interrupt your participation at any time if your technical level or fitness is deemed unsuitable or if you are seen as a danger to yourself or to those around you. Under no circumstances would this give rise to a refund or compensation.

TRIP INFORMATION

DIFFICULTY

Daily walking time: maximum 7 hours

Daily ascent: maximum 1400m

An ascent of Toubkal requires you to be in **good physical condition** and have some experience of walking for up to 6 hours a day for several days in a row. The trail will vary from easy trails at lower altitudes, to very steep and rocky terrain covered in snow and ice. There will be changes of altitude as you climb to 4000m and above, and a good amount of endurance is necessary.

It is important the personal equipment you bring with you is suitable for the conditions. Your clothing needs to protect you from very cold temperatures and winds. A good quality sleeping bag is essential as well as protection for your eyes and skin. Please refer to the equipment section below for more information.

Although some previous experience of trekking in winter conditions would be beneficial, it is not necessary. Your guide will provide training in the proper use of crampons and ice axe. If you have any questions about your suitability or how to prepare for this trip please do not hesitate to contact us.

FOOD & DRINK

During your trek you will be accompanied by a cook who will prepare all of your meals. At breakfast there is tea and coffee, bread, jam, cheese, cornflakes and hot porridge. A typical lunch will be a salad with fresh vegetables, corn, boiled eggs, tuna and rice or pasta.

Evening meals will always be made up of **delicious Moroccan cuisine** prepared with locally sourced ingredients. There will normally be a soup starter followed by a tagine or stew with salad and couscous. We can provide vegetarian, vegan or gluten free meals on request. If you have special dietary requirements please let us know when booking your trip.

In Marrakesh, at the start and end of your trip, you can purchase meals at the hotel or head out in to the city to find a restaurant. There is a wide range of international and local options and you will find most dietary requirements are catered for.

Drinks are not included in the cost of your trip. You will need to bring a water purification filter and at least two water bottles or flasks. During your trek you can refill your water at natural springs, in villages or at hotels / refuges. We do not recommend the use of plastic water bottles which must be carried out and recycled.

ACCOMMODATION

During this adventure you will be staying **hotels, local cottages** and **shelters**. In Marrakesh we use 4 star hotels but please be aware that in Morocco, 4 star standards are below what you may expect in Europe. In the village of Imlil we will stay in a local cottage which is clean and comfortable. Rooms will be either twin or dorm style with shared bathroom.

At the Nelter Refuge we will stay in dormitories with shared bathroom facilities. There is a communal lounge with an open fireplace at the refuge.

LUGGAGE

During the trek your luggage will be carried by mules or porters. To be suitable for carrying, your duffel bag must be flexible not rigid, maximum 100 litres and weigh no more than 15kg. You should also bring a small day pack to carry water, snacks and anything else you may need whilst trekking. This could be used as your hand luggage on your flight.

We recommend that you wear your walking boots to travel and pack as many essential items as possible in your carry-on luggage. If your luggage is delayed we can then do our best to kit you out to start the trek on time. In the event that your luggage is delayed or lost, our procedure is as follows:

Establish what items are missing and a contingency plan for each critical item

If it reaches 6pm on the evening before starting the trek and your luggage has not arrived we recommend buying and/or hiring items immediately as a precaution

We will take you to a shop where you can buy toiletry items, e.g. toothbrush. You will be able to find everything you

need in Marrakesh.

We will do everything we can to help if your luggage is lost or delayed. Be sure to check your insurance policy coverage for lost luggage cover.

HOW DO I GET THERE?

You will need to arrive in Marrakesh on day 1 of your itinerary and the tour will begin the following morning. For UK travellers there are direct flights with BA, Easy Jet and Ryan Air from Heathrow, Gatwick, Luton, Stansted and Manchester. With a short stop in Europe, you can travel from virtually any major UK airport. The flight time from the UK is roughly four hours.

There are no direct flights to Marrakesh from the USA but, it is only necessary to have a short stop of less than 3 and a half hours somewhere in Europe. Delta Airways operate convenient flights via Paris from New York, Boston and Los Angeles. TAP Air Portugal, American Airlines and United provide further options.

Menara Airport is located 9km outside the city of Marrakesh and the transfer to your hotel will take between 20 and 30 mins. As nearly all flights to Marrakesh arrive later in the day, Kandoo Adventures will provide two airport transfers on your arrival day at 5.30pm and 7.30pm. If you would like to make use of this service please let us know in advance so we know to expect you.

Once you have cleared immigration and collected your luggage please exit the arrivals area and look out for a Kandoo team member holding a big sign reading "KANDOO". On the final day of your trip we will provide return transfers at 7am and 12pm Remember for international flights you need to arrive at least 2 hours before departure. Delays can occur, and making your flight is your responsibility.

Please bear in mind that meals in Marrakesh are not included in your tour. This means if you arrive on a very late flight you may struggle to find somewhere to eat by the time you have reached the hotel. We recommend booking a flight that arrives in Marrakesh no later than 1730, allowing you to use our 1930 transfer and reach the hotel with plenty of time to have a relaxed meal before bed.

BUDGET & CHANGE

The local currency is the **Moroccan Dirham (MAD)**. For the most up to date exchange rate please visit www.xe.com.

TIPS

Tipping is common in Morocco but not mandatory and should be based on the level of service you feel you have received. The below amounts will give you a rough idea of how much you should tip (per person per week).

Guide: 100-160 Dirham

Cook: 85-110 Dirham

Mule drivers: 160-210 Dirham

FORMALITIES & HEALTH

PASSPORT

Your passport must be valid for at least 6 months after your return date. We recommended you keep a colour photocopy of your passport with you at all times.

VISA

UK and USA passport holders do not require a visa to enter Morocco for a period of up to 90 days, however, you should check the latest information with the Moroccan authorities before travelling.

VACCINATIONS

The World Health Organisation (WHO) recommend the following vaccinations for travel to Morocco. It is your responsibility to check the latest health information before departure.

Hepatitis A / Hepatitis B / Typhoid / Polio / Tetanus

INSURANCE

Before you can join any Kandoo Adventures trek / climb, you will need to insure yourself against accident, injury, and illness. Your insurance must cover the cost of helicopter evacuation and repatriation if necessary. Make sure your insurer knows of your travel plans, and verify that your policy fully covers your trek / climb, and any other activities you will participate in. Specifically for all our adventures in Morocco, you need to be covered for trekking above 4000m. It is your responsibility to ensure that you are fully and adequately insured for the duration of your trip. Please ensure that all activities, excursions and destinations in your itinerary are included in your travel insurance policy, in addition to your regular cover for cancellation and medical expenses.

We ask that you keep a copy of your policy summary (containing policy number and the emergency contact number for your insurer) in your day sack at all times, so that we can access this information should we need to contact the insurer on your behalf. You will also need to bring details of your insurance cover to the pre-trek briefing.

MEDICATION

Your guide carries a first aid kit at all times but we recommend you carry the following items : - Painkillers - Anti-diarrhoea tablets - Sunscreen (high factor) for lips and skin - Moisturising cream (for sunburn) - Elastic bandage and regular bandages - Sanitary products - Water purifying tablets or filters - Mosquito spray - Blister bandage

OTHER INFORMATION

Alcohol

Although Morocco is more liberal than many other Muslim nations you do need to be careful when purchasing or consuming alcohol. Morocco does allow the consumption of alcohol and you can buy beer, wine and spirits in licensed hotels, bars and supermarkets. In supermarkets there will often be a separate alcohol room which is out of sight. If you attempt to purchase alcohol outside of one of these licensed areas then you may find yourself in trouble with the police.

Bars with a licence to sell alcohol will not usually have windows. This is because although it is legal to purchase and drink alcohol on the premises, you are not allowed to be seen by the general public outside. Officially only tourists are allowed to drink outside but to avoid causing any offence it is best avoided. You are allowed to bring alcohol in to the country with you, but only a maximum of 1 litre.

While in Marrakesh, if you want to have a drink with a meal, it is best to check with the restaurant if they serve alcohol before you sit down. You should also ask if they are happy for you to sit anywhere whilst drinking or if they would prefer you to sit at a corner table out of sight. While you are up in the mountains trekking, things tend to be a bit more relaxed than in the city. However, it is best to show some consideration for your cook and porters by checking with your guide before you crack open the whisky.

Dressing appropriately

Although Moroccan people are very tolerant of tourists it is always a good idea to be respectful of the local customs. We would advise female travellers to keep their knees, shoulders and stomachs covered while out in public to avoid any unwanted attention. You need to balance this conservative style of dress with the excessive heat that you may experience in Marrakesh. A long sleeved maxi dress will keep you covered while providing some airflow to keep you cool. Long sleeve breezy button up shirts, harem trousers or jeans are also good options.

For men it is best not to walk around topless despite the heat. Moroccan men do not tend to wear shorts, although there is certainly no problem with male tourists doing this, if you want to blend in with the locals then go for some loose fitting cotton trousers.

When you are in the mountains things are much more relaxed than in the city. You should wear clothing that is appropriate to the conditions and the activity you are engaged in.

Animal welfare

In the High Atlas Mountains the use of mules and muleteers (otherwise known as the Berber 4X4) is very common. The strong and sure footed mules have spent their lives up here in the mountains and they can transport your gear from A to B with ease. Mules are a big source of income for the local Berber people, as a result they are generally treated with great respect and consideration for their well being. However there are always exceptions and in some cases mules in the High Atlas have experienced terrible neglect and cruelty.

The main problems that cause suffering for mules are traditional bits, overloading, inadequate feeding, wounds, poor footcare and working unfit mules (lame, sick or injured).

Kandoo Adventures are committed to ensuring that the mules we use on our treks receive only the very best treatment. To ensure the animals are never overloaded we have placed restrictions on the weight of the luggage you can bring with you. Your main bag must always be flexible and not weigh more than 15kg. The maximum load a mule can carry is 80kg, this will ensure the health and comfort of the mule as well as a sustainable working life. We will not start trekking with mules who are obviously lame, sick or wounded. We will never condone the use of traditional bits which can cause terrible pain for the animals. We only work with a select number of muleteers who we know and trust to provide the very best level of care to their animals.

EQUIPMENT & CLOTHING

EQUIPMENT SUPPLIED BY KANDOO ADVENTURES

- 1 pair of crampons per person (suitable for all types of walking boots)
- 1 ice axe per person
- 1 Helmet per person
- Comprehensive first aid kit carried by guides at all times

CLOTHING TO BRING

- Hat for sun protection
- Hat for warmth
- Scarf or head scarf
- Sunglasses with good UV protection
- Long sleeve shirts or cotton t-shirts
- Jumpers, 1 light weight and 1 warm
- Insulated Jacket (very warm)
- Waterproof and windproof hard shell jacket
- Breathable fast drying thermal underwear
- Warm gloves
- Comfortable long trousers x 2 (fast drying)
- Waterproof trousers
- Trainers for the evenings
- Warm socks
- Hiking boots (B2 mountain boots are preferable but not essential, sturdy high rise boots with good ankle support)
- Gaiters (important if you encounter deep snow)

We prefer that you do not wear cotton clothing, including underwear, when participating in activities. When cotton gets wet from water or sweat it ceases to insulate and does not dry quickly. The best materials for outdoor activities are fast drying materials like polyester or materials which are warm when wet like wool. The most powerful materials against the wind and rain are 'breathable' materials like Gore-Tex or Nikwax.

EQUIPMENT TO BRING

- Sleeping bag, minimum rating of -20° C and sleeping bag liner
- 2 water bottles (minimum 1 litre each) or hydration sack
- Walking poles (if desired)
- Head torch with spare batteries and bulb
- Toiletries (including wet wipes)
- Container for any toxic rubbish (batteries, sanitary items etc)
- Duffel bag (80 to 100 litres), flexible and water resistant (must not exceed 15kg)
- Daypack (30 to 40 litres) to carry with you each day
- Water purification system (charcoal filter, chlorine tablets or similar)
- Camera

HOW TO BOOK THIS TRIP

1 CHOOSE YOUR DATE AND CHECK AVAILABILITY

A full list of available dates can be found on our website.

2 CONTACT US

Contact us by phone, email or through our website. We will answer any questions you may have and send you a personalized itinerary and quote.

3 COMPLETE BOOKING AND PAYMENT

When you are ready to book, we will send you a link to our online booking forms and participation agreements. We accept all major credit and debit cards and require a low 20% deposit to secure your place.

