Day 1: Arrival Casablanca (D)

Our cultural tour of Morocco commences this evening in Morocco's largest city, Casablanca. After our welcome meeting we will head to one of our favourite restaurants where you will be introduced to the delicious flavours of North African cuisine.

Day 2: Casablanca - Oualidia – Essaouira (B) (L)

A trip to Casablanca wouldn’t be complete without visiting one of the only mosques in Morocco open to non-Muslims: the Hassan II Mosque. A relative new-comer (it was completed in 1993) this mosque is amongst the largest mosques in the world (the sheer scale of the courtyard is jaw-dropping) and the finest artisans from across the country were commissioned to carry out the intricate detailing on everything from glass to woodwork and marble. Later we’ll head south to Essaouira via the stunning seaside town of Oualidia where the golden sands and crescent-shaped lagoon make the perfect backdrop for a sumptuous seafood feast. After our leisurely lunch we’ll drive to the relaxed seaside town of Essaouira.

Day 3: Essaouira (B)

Originally an 18th century port town, Essaouira's waterfront locale and laid back attitude make it the perfect place to spend a day soaking up the atmosphere and strolling the picture-postcard ramparts and shopping for souvenirs in the laid-back souq. This afternoon why not enjoy a stroll along the soft sandy beach before settling in for cocktails from the rooftop bar with the best view in town as the sun sets into the Atlantic Ocean. This offers the perfect way to soak up Morocco's culture.

Day 4: Essaouira - Winery – Imlil (B) (L) (D))

A leisurely start this morning before heading to a local winery just outside of Essaouira. We’ll sample a selection of their wine before enjoying our lunch overlooking the vineyards. After lunch we’ll visit an argan co-operative where you’ll learn how argan oil is produced (yes, the same argan oil that is used in “Moroccan Oil!!) before arriving at the Kasbah du Toubkal, our home for the next two nights.
Day 5: Imlil (B) (L) (D)

There is the option today to go on an included trek of the surrounding foothills and villages where we’ll enjoy a picnic lunch in one of the verdant valleys. If you’re not feeling particularly energetic you can enjoy the serenity of the Kasbah and perhaps even a traditional hammam (bath).

Day 6: Imlil – Marrakech (B) (L)

Today we head to the chaotic city of Marrakech but first we will visit a small village on the outskirts of Marrakech where we’ll meet an extraordinary chef who will teach us the secrets of the Moroccan kitchen, including how to cook some of the delicious fare we’ll be eating throughout our trip. After all this hard work, it’s time to devour the fruits of our labours!

Day 7: Marrakech (B) (D)

Our first full day in Marrakech! This morning we will begin to explore the myriad treasures of the Marrakech medina including the Saadian Tombs and the Ali ben Youssef Medersa. This afternoon get lost amongst the snake charmers, musicians, street performers and henna artists in this quintessential Moroccan city. Later we’ll head to one of our favourite restaurants where we’ll sample more of those delicious Moroccan flavours.

Day 8: Marrakech (B) (L)

Such an exciting and intoxicating city as Marrakech warrants at least another day of exploration! Today we’ll see the Palais de la Bahia, an opulent palace constructed in the 19th century, before escaping the intensity of the medina for the serenity of the Jardin Majorelle, the lush gardens owned by designer Yves Saint Laurent. ‘Amal’ in Arabic means ‘hope’ and for lunch we will visit a very special restaurant called “Amal” which is also a training centre for disadvantaged women where the students train in Moroccan cuisine and hospitality. This afternoon, why not shop for keepsakes amidst the shops and stalls or simply enjoy our last evening at this stunning riad.

Day 9: Marrakech - Ait Ben Haddou (B) (D)

A bit of a ‘bus day’ today as we begin our journey through North Africa’s highest mountain range, known locally by Bebers as ‘Idraren Draren’ or ‘Mountains of Mountains’. This is some of the most spectacular scenery in Morocco and the pure
mountain air will leave you breathless. This afternoon we will reach Ait Ben Haddou where we will stop for the evening.

Day 10: Ait Ben Haddou - Boulmalne Du Dades  (B) (D)

This region is the film capital of Morocco and the World Heritage site of Ait Ben Haddou has certainly starred in a few of Hollywood’s blockbusters. Explore the narrow streets of this ancient fortified city, climbing steadily to reach the top for magnificent views of the surrounding palmeraie and the unforgiving hammada (stony desert). After lunch, there’s the opportunity to shop for authentic Berber carpets and antiques before arriving in Boumalne du Dades for the evening.

Day 11: Boulmalne Du Dades - Todra Gorge - Desert Encampment (B) (D)

This morning we’ll visit the spectacular limestone cliffs of Todra Gorge before making our way towards the desert. We’ll escape the heat of the day and enjoy a leisurely lunch before heading east to the mighty Sahara. Our camels await us to take us to our desert encampment where we’ll reach as the final rays of the afternoon sun sink below the horizon. After a traditional dinner we’ll fall asleep beneath a blanket of stars.

Day 12: Sahara – Midelt  (B) (L) (D)

We’ll jump in 4WDs this morning for our jeep safari through the dunes. Legend has it that the sand dunes appeared as punishment from God burying a wealthy local family who refused hospitality to a poor woman and her son. In reality, the dunes of Erg Chebbi certainly look divine, rising up to 160m and glowing rose-gold, then orange and finally pink-and-purple as the light changes. We’ll enjoy lunch at an Oasis in the shade of date palms before making our way to Midelt where we’ll get a taste of the region’s rich Berber heritage with a traditional Berber ceremony.

Day 13: Midelt – Fes  (B) (D)

Today we head north from Midelt to the imperial city of Fes. On the way we’ll stop in the alpine-style village of Ifrane and you’d be forgiven for thinking we were in Switzerland and not North Africa! This evening we’ll dine in a beautiful converted riad whilst enjoying a sumptuous Moroccan feast.
Day 14: Fes (B)

The city of Fes is, in our opinion, like no other city on earth. The medina is the largest living Islamic medieval city in the world and as you step through Bab Bou J'loud (the main gate into the old city) you’ll feel as though you’ve stepped back in time. Amongst the more than 10,000 streets you’ll find all you could ever want and more: silver- and coppersmiths moulding metal into submission, weavers, artisans, food stalls, everything.

Day 15: Fes - Meknes - Volubilis – Chefchaouen (B) (D)

Meknes reached its' pinnacle during the 17th century when Sultan Moulay Ismail set out to make the city the equal of its' European counterpart, Versailles. We'll visit the granaries that stabled the Sultan's 12,000 horses before we head to lunch. Later we will visit the UNESCO World Heritage site of Volubilis, considered to be the best-preserved Roman ruins in Morocco and home to a number of stunning mosaics before making our way to Chefchaouen.

Day 16: Chefchaouen (B)

Located beneath the raw peaks of the Rif Mountains it is here in Chefchaouen that you will notice an unmistakably Spanish influence. This morning we will explore the delightful medina with its' blue-white walls and terracotta tiles, small and uncrowded it is easy to explore. There's the option this afternoon to go for a fairly easy walk to the springs of Ras el-Maa and the ruined Spanish Mosque where you will find some of the most spectacular views of the town below.

Day 17: Chefchaouen - Rabat – Casablanca (B) (D)

We leave Chefchaouen and head to Morocco's capital city, Rabat. We'll search for lunch down narrow streets lined with whitewashed walls that open out to a breathtaking vista over the ocean. There's free time to explore the laid-back souqs and stalls before transferring to Casablanca. It's our last evening together so perhaps we'll "play it again Sam" and finish with dinner at Rick's Cafe.

Day 18: Departure Day (B)

This morning we will bid farewell to new friends as our cultural tour of Morocco concludes after breakfast.