Moroccan Discovery from the Imperial Cities to the Sahara

This land of dramatic contrasts invites us to encounter its ancient ruins and sacred mosques, endless desert and storied mountains, imposing kasbahs and spirited souks. As we travel from the imperial cities of Rabat, Fez, and Marrakech to the High Atlas and vast Sahara, we open our eyes, and hearts, to a truly foreign land, an age-old culture, and genuinely hospitable people.

Day 1: Depart U.S. for Casablanca, Morocco

Day 2: Arrive Casablanca/Rabat Upon arrival this afternoon in Casablanca, the commercial center of Morocco, we transfer by coach to Rabat and our hotel located near famed Hassan Tower. We have time to relax and refresh before dinner tonight at the hotel. D

Day 3: Rabat One of Morocco’s four ancient capitals, or imperial cities, Rabat is again the country’s capital, at once historic and contemporary, as we discover on today’s tour. We visit the necropolis of Chellah, built on ancient Roman ruins, and the Mohammed VI contemporary art museum then have lunch in a private home. On tap this afternoon: the 12th-century Kasbah of the Oudaias, the peaceful Andalusian Gardens, and Rabat’s medina, a UNESCO site. Tonight we enjoy a welcome dinner of traditional Moroccan fare at acclaimed Dinarjat in Rabat’s Old Town. B,L,D

Day 4: Rabat/Meknes/Volubilis/Fez This morning we depart Rabat for Fez, stopping along the way in Meknes, Morocco’s youngest imperial city (and UNESCO World Heritage site). Here we visit the Dar Jamai Museum, housing a collection of traditional Moroccan handcrafts. Then we continue on to the ancient Roman ruins at the UNESCO site of Volubilis, known for its intricate and colorful mosaics. Late afternoon we reach Fez and our elegant hotel overlooking the medina. B,L,D

Day 5: Fez Today we explore Morocco’s oldest imperial city, considered the “Athens of Africa” for its wealth of cultural, educational, and religious institutions. We begin with a comfortable walk through the Fez medina, where we see some hidden treasures, including the Blue Gate, the most picturesque of the Old City’s historic gates; the medieval school of Bouanania; the 12th-century home of Jewish scholar Maimonides; and the authentic food market. We also visit the traditional quarter where we watch artisans craft the acclaimed Fez pottery and ceramics. After lunch together in the medina, we tour the old Mellah (Jewish quarter) and its 17th-century synagogue and the royal gates. B,L,D

Day 6: Fez We begin today with a visit to the Al-Attarine Madrasa, whose highlight is a small courtyard showcasing intricately detailed tilework and carving decorations dating to the early 1300s. We then continue our discovery on a walking tour of the medina focusing on the artisans’ quarters, the 14th-century Koranic schools, and Al Karaouine, the medieval theological university. The remainder of the afternoon is free for independent exploration and lunch on our own. Tonight, we enjoy a private dinner at an intimate family-run riad in Fez. B,D

Your Small Group Tour Highlights

Private Sahara sunset excursion and camel ride on the dunes
• Visits to five UNESCO World Heritage sites • Ancient ruins of Volubilis • Scenic “Route of a Thousand Kasbahs” • Dramatic Todra Gorge and Atlas Mountain scenery • Kasbah of Ait ben-Haddou • Fez touring • Marrakech’s medina and Djemaa el Fna Square • Storied Casablanca and Hassan II mosque • Outstanding accommodations

Ratings are based on the Hotel & Travel Index, the travel industry standard reference.

Map Legend

- Destination
- Motorcoach
- Entry/Departure

We encounter many of Morocco’s age-old kasbahs on our journey.

Breastfast; L – Lunch; D – Dinner

Visit us at alumni.unc.edu/travel
Day 7: Fez/Midelt/Erfoud  Traveling inland today, we cross the fertile plains beyond Fez and continue through the Middle Atlas mountain range. We stop in the small town of Midelt for lunch. Continuing on we cross the Ziz River, passing rows of sky-scraping palm trees and fortified villages before reaching our kasbah-style hotel in Erfoud late in the day. Dinner tonight is at our hotel. B,L,D

Day 8: Erfoud/Rissani/Merzouga  This morning we visit the city of Rissani, with its 18th-century ksar, a virtually impenetrable warren of alleys. We enjoy a tour highlight this afternoon as we set out on a sunset excursion to the breathtakingly beautiful sand dunes at Merzouga on the edge of the Sahara. In the enormous silence we watch the sun set over the desert as we take a camel ride along the erg. Following this experience, we’ll have dinner together in this desert setting before returning to our hotel tonight. B,L,D

Day 9: Erfoud/Tinehir/Todra Gorge/Ouarzazate  Our destination today is in the snow-topped High Atlas. The day features one beautiful scene after another, including the village of Tinehir, a stunning mountain oasis rising on a series of riverside terraces lush with palm trees; and the spectacular 984-foot Todra Gorge, home to a variety of rare bird and plant species. Following lunch here we visit El Kelaa des Mgouna, known for its roses, then set out on the fabled “Route of a Thousand Kasbahs” ancient caravan route, a region of fortresses with elaborately decorated façades. Late afternoon we reach the town of Ouarzazate (the “door of the desert”) where we spend the night. B,L,D

Day 10: Ouarzazate/Ait ben-Haddou/Marrakech  En route to Marrakech today, we stop first at uninhabited Ait ben-Haddou, a UNESCO World Heritage site and one of southern Morocco’s most scenic villages that is often used as a location for fashion and film shoots. Its old section consists of deep red kasbahs packed together so tightly they appear to be a single unit. Then as we begin our descent from the High Atlas, we pass through typical villages with fortified walls and stone houses with earthen roofs. In Tizi N’Tichka, we traverse the Pass of the Pastures (alt. 7,415 feet), where life is much as it was centuries ago: shepherds bring their flocks to the high pastures every summer, then return with them to their villages in autumn. We arrive in Marrakech late this afternoon and dine tonight at our hotel. B,L,D

Day 11: Marrakech  Once the capital of southern Morocco, the imperial city of Marrakech is an alluring oasis with a temperate climate, distinct charm, and fascinating sights. Our day-long tour includes the beautifully proportioned Koutoubia Mosque with its distinctive 282-foot minaret visible from miles away; the lovely Andalusian-style El Bahia Palace (part of which is still used by the royal family); and the ruins of 16th-century Palais El Badii. After lunch at our hotel, mid-afternoon we embark on a walking tour of the medina, ending at Djemaa el Fna Square, a UNESCO site and the heart of Marrakech, crowded with snake charmers, entertainers, storytellers, musicians, barbers, and sellers of fruit, water, and spices. Dinner tonight is on our own in this exotic city. B,L

Day 12: Marrakech  This morning we travel by horse-drawn carriage from Menara Park to Majorelle Gardens, a private botanical garden with some 15 species of birds native to North Africa and known for its cobalt blue accents. Following a tour of the gardens we visit the nearby Yves St. Laurent Museum, housing a vast collection of the designer’s haute couture and design works. The afternoon is at leisure before dinner tonight at a local restaurant in the city’s Old Town. B,D

Day 13: Marrakech/Casablanca  We leave Marrakech this morning by coach for storied Casablanca, Morocco’s largest and most cosmopolitan city. After a brief orientation tour of the city, we visit the magnificent Hassan II Mosque, Morocco’s only functioning mosque open to non-Muslims. Sitting on the Atlantic shoreline, the mosque boasts a prayer hall the size of London’s St. Paul’s Cathedral. Tonight we celebrate our Moroccan adventure at a farewell dinner at a local restaurant. B,D

Day 14: Depart for U.S.  After breakfast this morning we transfer to the airport for our return flight to the U.S. B

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"There were so many wonderful experiences it is hard to pick just one."
— Tar Heel Traveler

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For questions, call the GAA’s Tar Heel Travel office at 1-877-962-3980

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Tour Departs: October 6, 2024

Prices include international airfare and all taxes, surcharges, and fees

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<td>Orlando, Phoenix, Portland (OR),</td>
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<tr>
<td>Raleigh-Durham, San Francisco, Seattle, Tampa</td>
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Land Only (transfers not included) $5,095

Please call if your city is not listed. Prices are per person based on double occupancy and include airline taxes, surcharges, and fees of $784, which are subject to change until final payment is made.

Single travelers please add $1,695. All tour prices above (excluding airline taxes, surcharges, and fees) are guaranteed.

Airline upgrades on round-trip Trans-Atlantic flight: Business Class - $3,995 per person; Premium Economy $1,395 per person (upgrades are subject to availability and pricing is subject to change).

Please note: This trip involves considerable walking – between 1-3 miles per day, unassisted – up hills or stairs and full days of touring. You should be in good physical condition to enjoy the tour to its fullest.

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Your Tour Price Includes

- Round-trip air transportation from listed cities
- 12 nights’ accommodations in Deluxe, Superior First Class, and First Class hotels
- 31 meals: 12 breakfasts, 8 lunches, 11 dinners
- Extensive sightseeing as described, including all entrance fees
- Services of an Odysseys Unlimited Tour Director
- Private motorcoach transportation throughout your trip
- Luggage handling for one bag per person
- Gratuities for local guides, dining room servers, airport and hotel porters, and all drivers
Tour Prices
Tour prices quoted are guaranteed through December 31, 2024, and include accommodations based on double occupancy; airfare from your departure city; airline taxes, surcharges, and fees, and port charges and cruise line fees (where applicable), which are subject to change until final payment has been made; internal air, rail, and motorcoach transportation; meals, sightseeing, and transfers as described; hotel taxes; entrance fees for included sightseeing; the services of an Odysseys Unlimited Tour Director; luggage handling for one bag per person; and all gratuities as described below. Please note that the cost of air upgrades is subject to change.

Gratuities
Tour prices include all gratuities for local guides, dining room servers, airport and hotel porters, and all drivers on base tours and on optional extensions when accompanied by an Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. representative. Please note that gratuities for the Odysseys Unlimited Tour Director and shipboard personnel (if a cruise is included in your tour) are not included unless otherwise noted. These tips are optional and should be extended on a voluntary basis. Gratuities are not included on “On Your Own” optional extensions.

Not Included in Your Tour Price
Airfare from your hometown to your departure city; costs of passports and visas; personal expenses such as beverages, laundry, room service, and meals not specified; immunizations, inoculations, and COVID-19 testing; communications charges; airport transfers when purchasing a land-only package; gratuities to your Odysseys Unlimited Tour Director and shipboard personnel (if a cruise is included in your tour) unless otherwise specified, which are at your discretion (suggested gratuities: $10-$15 per guest, per day); and a Travel Protection Plan. Please contact the UNC General Alumni Association (UNC GAA), for travel insurance information. Additional baggage fees levied directly by the airline(s) may apply and are subject to change at any time. You should confirm directly with your airline(s) prior to departure.

Registration and Payment
A deposit of $500 per person confirms your reservation. Full payment is due at least 95 days prior to departure and may be made by personal check or credit card. Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. reserves the right to cancel any reservations that are not paid in full at any time after final payment is due. If you make your reservation after the final payment date, payment in full will be required upon reservation.

Cancellations and Refunds
If you must cancel your tour, the effective date of cancellation will be upon our receipt of your notification. Refunds for cancellations are subject to the following per person charges:
For all tours in this catalog (except as noted)

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<td>29-0 days:</td>
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For Egypt & the Eternal Nile, Journey through Vietnam, Machu Picchu to the Galapagos

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Please note that we will not refund the cost of any unused portion of your tour package, should you or your travel companion cancel your participation during the tour. If due to unforeseen circumstances Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. cancels your tour, you will receive a complete refund of all payments you have made to us.

Pre-Departure

Upon reservation, you will be able to access all information regarding your tour in My Odyssey, our secure on-line portal. This material includes your invoice, a detailed day-by-day itinerary, visa requirements (if applicable), and more. Your final tour documents, including airline itineraries (with e-ticket numbers), will be available in the portal two to three weeks before departure.

Single Travelers

We welcome single travelers, and offer a limited number of single accommodations on each tour. Because hotel and cruise rates are priced by the room or cabin, the per person cost for accommodations occupied by one person is higher than that shared by two people. We endeavor to keep single supplements at a reasonable cost. Please note that single rooms in many foreign hotels may be smaller than those to which you are accustomed.

Changes to Your Reservation

We will not charge a fee for any changes made to your reservation outside of 95 days before departure. From 94 to 30 days before departure, if you make any changes to your reservation, a $100 per person administrative fee will apply, in addition to any fees or penalties imposed by airlines, hotels, or other third parties. Changes are subject to availability and cannot be guaranteed. If your reservation changes from double occupancy to single occupancy for any reason or at any time, you will be charged the single supplement.

Please note that no changes to your reservation can be made within 30 days of departure.

Required Information

Upon reservation, we will need to obtain from you the following, in accordance with the Transportation Security Administration’s (TSA) Secure Flight program (for details, please visit www.tsa.gov), as well as for our travel partners:

for international tours – your full name as it appears on your passport, date of birth, and gender; for domestic tours – your full name as it appears on the accepted form of government-issued photo identification that you plan to use, date of birth, and gender. In addition, airlines may require that we provide them with your contact information prior to departure. In the event an airline ticket is issued with incorrect information you have provided, or if you use a different passport (international tours) or other form of government issued photo identification (domestic tours) than originally cited, you will be responsible for charges associated with the ticket’s reissue.

Travel Documents

A passport valid for at least six months after the completion of your tour is required for U.S. citizens on all international tours. For all domestic tours, where we fly into a U.S. city to begin the tour or out of a U.S. city at the end, you must present a valid U.S. government-issued photo identification. Starting on May 7, 2025, your government-issued photo ID must be REAL ID-compliant (or you can present an alternate form of ID, such as a passport). Visit www.dhs.gov/real-id or contact your local DMV for more information. If your tour requires a visa(s), we strongly recommend that you have at least six blank visa pages available; for tours not requiring a visa(s), we recommend that your passport have at least three blank visa pages. We will send you specific visa and entry requirements after you make a reservation. You are responsible for obtaining these documents.
If you need to obtain a visa, we recommend our preferred provider G3 Global Services. If you are traveling with a minor, please contact us for special entry requirements. If you are not a U.S. citizen, please contact your embassy or consulate to ensure you obtain the proper documentation.

**Smoking**

For the convenience of the majority of our travelers, Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. has a No Smoking policy (including e-cigarettes and vaping) on all tour buses. We will arrange sufficient rest stops so those who wish to smoke may do so.

**Health and Medical Issues**

We welcome all travelers, but request that you be in good health to participate in an Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. tour. All of our tours involve a reasonable amount of walking (typically two to three miles per day, unassisted), often uphill or on uneven or cobblestone streets. **You must be able to get on and off motorcoaches and boats on your own.** We regret that we cannot provide individual assistance; in such cases you must be accompanied by a companion who will assist you. Please note that many of our itineraries, for reasons beyond our control, do not accommodate wheelchairs. Please call or e-mail us to inquire, and we will do our best to answer any questions you may have. We reserve the right to remove anyone whose physical condition or behavior, in our opinion, compromises the operation of the tour or detracts from the enjoyment or safety of the other tour members. In that event, the UNC GAA and Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. assume no financial responsibility for any unused portion of the tour. While we do our best to accommodate food allergy concerns, we cannot guarantee zero cross-contamination.

**Air Transportation**

Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. includes in its tour price round-trip economy air from designated gateway cities as shown and contracts with those airlines they feel provide the level of service, routings, and value necessary for your entire trip. While another airline may offer more direct service, it may be at a price unavailable at the lower group rates that enable us to offer you the best possible travel value. You will receive your preliminary air schedule approximately 2½ months prior to departure.

Please note that seat assignment on your flight is usually done at airport check-in. Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. is unable to guarantee any seat assignments. Due to the nature of tour operator tickets, other restrictions apply, including, but not limited to, frequent flyer mileage accrual, stopovers, alternate travel dates, upgrades, and airline taxes and fees. If you prefer to make your own travel arrangements, booking the tour “Land Only” is available on most tours. Since international and domestic air schedules are subject to change at any time, we recommend that if you choose to make your own airline reservations, you do not purchase non-refundable tickets or those with high penalties for changes. In addition, we recommend that you not purchase your tickets until final payment is due. If you choose to make your own air arrangements, Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. shall not have any liability for any loss resulting from cancellation of this tour or changes in this tour.

**Responsibility**

The liability of the UNC GAA as sponsor, and Odysseys Unlimited Inc., as tour operator, is strictly limited. Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. purchases transportation, hotel accommodations, and restaurant and other services from independent suppliers not under our control. We serve only as agents for these suppliers in securing tour arrangements, and therefore will not accept responsibility for wrongful, negligent, or arbitrary acts or omissions of these independent contractors, or of their employees, agents, servants, or representatives. The UNC GAA and Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. are not liable for injury, damage, loss, accident, or delay that may be caused by events not within our control, including, without limitation, acts of terrorism, war, strikes, the defect of any vehicle, or the negligence or default of any third party. All coupons, receipts, and tickets issued are subject to the terms and conditions specified by the air carriers, cruise lines, and other independent suppliers.

We will make every effort to operate our tours as planned, but we reserve the right to make itinerary changes as necessary. If unforeseen circumstances require us to change a hotel, we will select alternative accommodations of the same or better quality. Cruise itineraries may change due to factors such as government regulations, water levels, or weather conditions.
UNC GAA RESERVATION FORM

To reserve your place on tour, please complete UNC GAA’s online reservation form at alumni.unc.edu/reserve or scan the QR code below; complete this Reservation Form and mail it to the GAA at the address below, or email it to enrichment@unc.edu; or call the GAA at 1-877-962-3980.

Once this request is received by Odysseys Unlimited, a Travel Counselor from Odysseys Unlimited will contact you to securely take your credit card information for the deposit. Your reservation is not confirmed until your deposit is paid and processed. Payment may be made by American Express, Discover, MasterCard, or VISA, or by personal check. If paying by check, please make check payable to Odysseys Unlimited, Inc. and include with the form. Final payment is due at least 95 days prior to departure.

Send to: General Alumni Association
University of North Carolina
PO Box 660
Chapel Hill, NC 27514-0660

Scan QR code for online reservation form.

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I/we would like to request _________ place(s). (Deposit amount is $500 per person.)

Full Passport Name_________________________________________ Date of Birth ______________ Gender ______

Full Passport Name_________________________________________ Date of Birth ______________ Gender ______

Address _____________________________________________________________________________________________

City __________________________________________________________ State ____________ ZIP __________________

Home Ph. (_____)_________________________ Alternate Ph. (_____)_________________________

E-mail ____________________________________________________________________________________________

E-mail ____________________________________________________________________________________________

Badge name(s) ________________________________________________________ UNC Class Year(s) ____________

Please book my/our air from ______________________ I/We request an air upgrade to ______________________

I will share a room with ________________________________ I request a single room (limited availability) ☐

I/We request an upgrade to a Highland Villa (Machu Picchu to the Galapagos only) ☐

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UNC GAA MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENT

Tour participants who are not members of the General Alumni Association must join the Association ($50 for singles; $60 for couples). Please pay by separate check made payable to the General Alumni Association and mail with this reservation form or visit alumni.unc.edu/join to renew or join online.