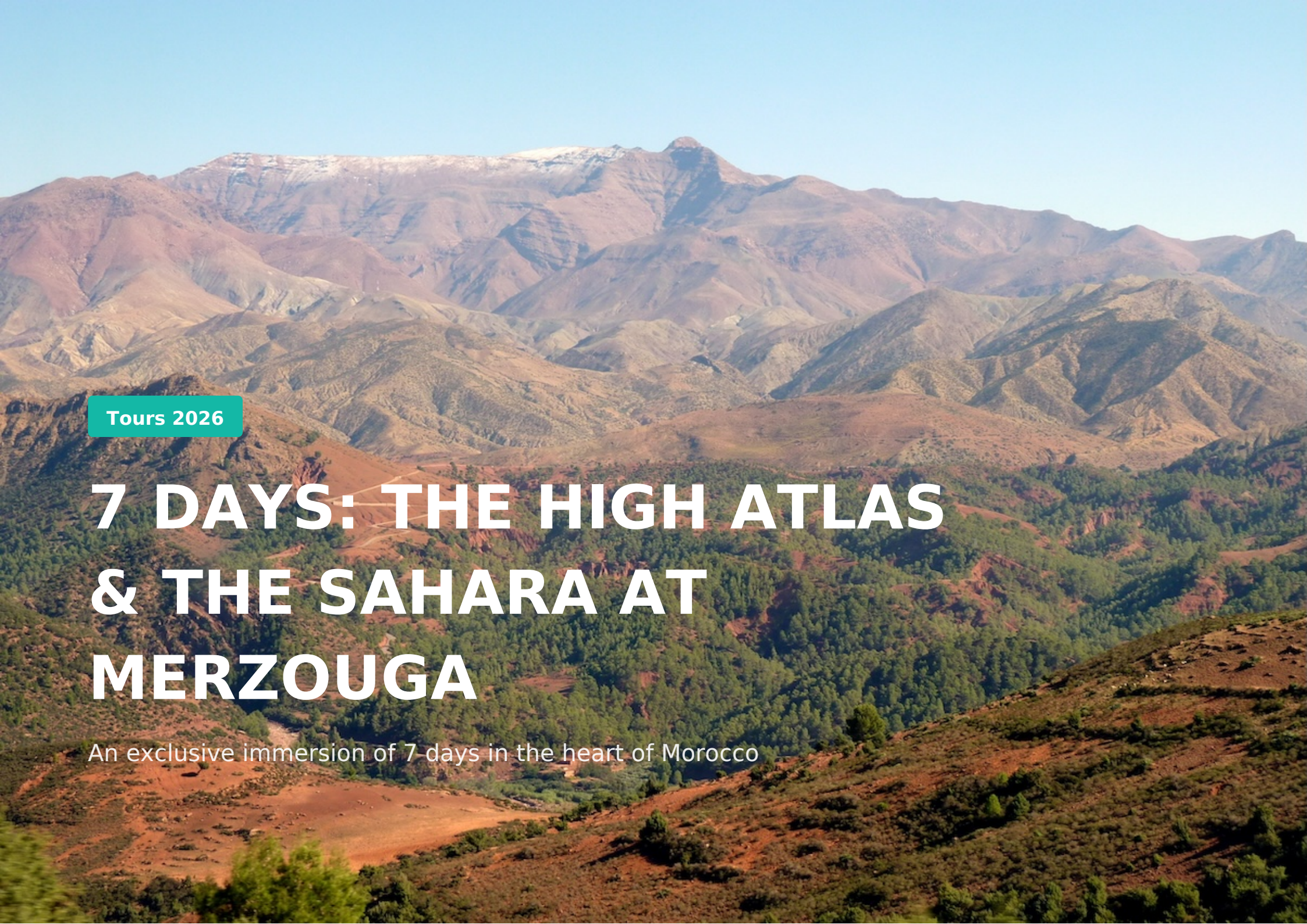


Tours 2026

7 DAYS: THE HIGH ATLAS & THE SAHARA AT MERZOUGA

An exclusive immersion of 7 days in the heart of Morocco

TRIP OVERVIEW & INCLUSIONS

This travelling tour includes many grand scenic and cultural highlights of Central and Southern Morocco. Continued wonderment is guaranteed on this week-long tour with every day opening up new vistas, wide horizons and contrasting cultures. Starting and ending in Marrakech, this tour is certainly full of wonderful sights and experiences. First you travel across the High Atlas and over the Tizi-n-Tichka Pass (2,260m). Once through Ouarzazate, the route continues along The Valley of a Thousand Kasbahs, along the valley of the Dadès river. After entering the stunning Todra Gorge, set amongst its landscapes of buttes, mesas and plateaux, the route then heads to the Sahara at Merzouga. By Merzouga, the vast classic sand sea of Erg Chebbi certainly brings a crisp and sharp reality to any mental image that you might have of the Sahara. With its extensive rolling sand dunes, clusters of palm trees and many camels, you know you are somewhere very exotic. From Merzoga, enter true wilderness as you travel between the Jbel Ougnat and the Jbel Sahro mountains towards Ouarzazate. Before returning to Marrakech, Aït Benhaddou Kasbah, a World heritage Site, is an excellent visit. This ancient fortified settlement is well preserved. Aït Benhaddou was once lay on the busy camel train route between the Sahara and Marrakech. On this tour, by experiencing city life in Marrakech, mountain life with the Berbers of the High Atlas and Bedouin of the Sahara, plus an array of widely varied sceneries, then this tour should certainly satisfy.







DETAILED ITINERARY

1 Arrival Into Marrakesh

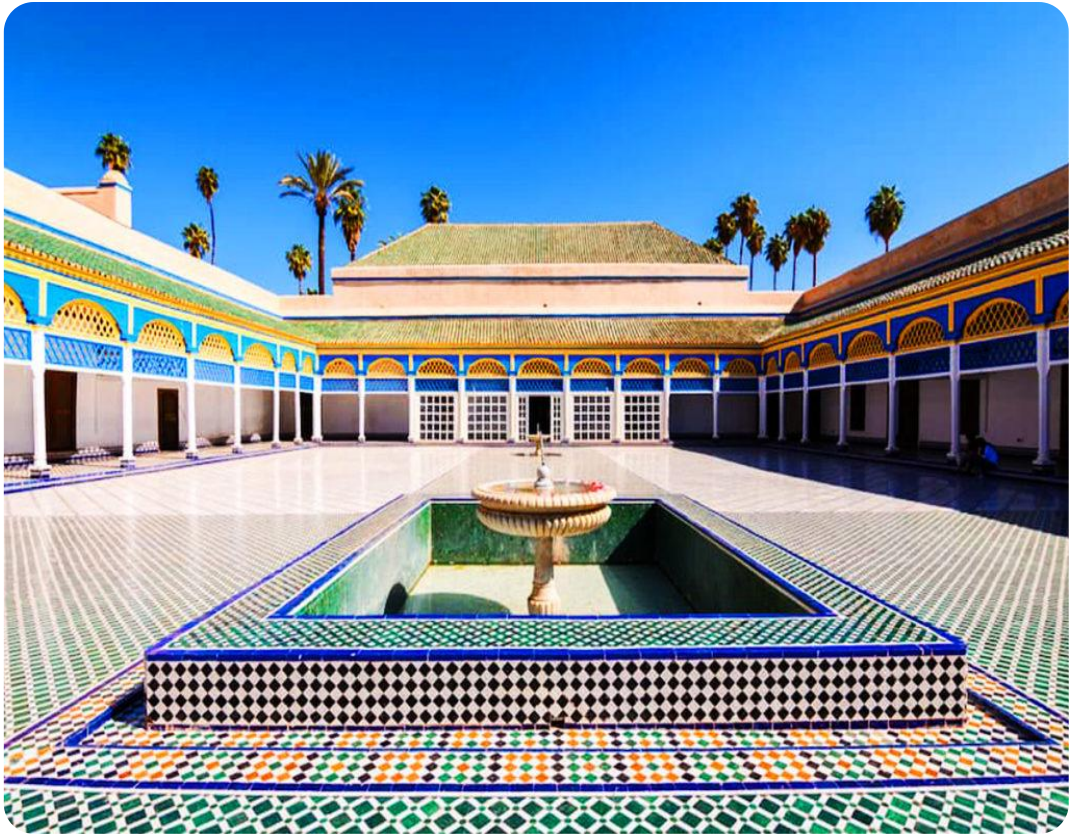
Arrive into Marrakech Menara Airport and be met with private transport and driver to transfer you to your accommodation. Depending on your time of arrival, you may wish to take a first informal visit to the Old Medina. In the Old Medina the city bustles and fascinates in equal measure. Take in a view of the Koutoubia Mosque, move across the Jemaa el Fna entertainment square and enter the Souks. Depending on your time available, perhaps enjoy viewing the sunset behind the Koutoubia mosque from a rooftop terrace cafe. Overnight Marrakech



DETAILED ITINERARY

2 Explore The 'Red City' Of Marrakech

Marrakesh is an exciting, exotic city, full of colour and with non-stop activity. Spending time in the centre of Marrakesh, in and around the Medina and the old city walls, provides interest at every turn. Some hours spent here offer memorable sights, smells and experiences. Today you are led by an official City Guide for half a day. With discussion you can decide on your particular areas of interest. Options include Jemaa el Fna Square (a lively entertainment square), the Medina and its Souks, a Traditional Apothecary visit, the Koutoubia Mosque (outside only for non Muslims), Medersa Ben Youssef (Koranic School), Saadian Tombs, Bahia Palace. All easily reached on foot. Your official City Guide will take the most effiient routing for your choices. The Majorelle Gardens (once owned by Yves St Lauren) is about 30 minutes walking from the Medina (optional; not yet costed in). An enjoyable experience is a Caliche trip, a horse drawn carriage tour around central Marrakech (optional; not yet costed in). Afternoon and evening at your own informal leisure. You may wish some additional activities t be includsed e.g. a hammam and spa, massage, patisserie making class, rooftop afternoon tea experience (none yet included in the trip cost). Overnight in Marrakech



DETAILED ITINERARY

3 Marrakech, High Atlas, Ouarzazate, Valley Of A Thousand Kasbahs, Valley Of The Roses To Boumalne Dadès

Today you travel away from city life, deep into the countryside. The High Atlas contains dramatic scenery on a grand scale. Only an hour's drive south from Marrakech, you enter their foothills. High peaks and deep, water cut valleys abound. Look out for Mount Toubkal, the highest peak (4,167m). The High Atlas are home to the Berbers, who live in this beautiful but challenging land. Their villages cling on to steep mountain slopes, almost organically, so well do they merge with the landscape. Berber life is fascinating; on the upper slopes sheep and goats graze whilst, near the valley floors, the terraced fields show lush green as the river water irrigates the grains, vegetables, fruits and nuts. Here you can really begin to appreciate how a life is wrested from a harsh environment and how utterly invaluable is water for survival. You will pass through villages that are equally entracing as you observe daily activities. Paticularly interesting is a market day when such villages are crazy busy as buying and selling takes place. Many phtograph stops can be made, so fascinating is all that is around you. Coffee/tea stops too can be taken when the mood and need takes you. An Argan Oil Co-operative is visited. This is an example of rural development to help ladies gain extra income. The processing of the argan nuts into both culinary oils and



DETAILED ITINERARY

4 Dadès & Todra & Sahara (at Merzouga & Erg Chebbi)

Leaving Boumalne Dadès, and just after Tinerhir, the journey continues towards the deeply water cut chasm of the Todra Gorge. The semi-desert landscape of this area reveals impressive buttes, mesa and plateaux. Many dry riverbeds are seen, riverbeds that come alive with thunderous power during flash floods from the occasional storms that can occur here. Travelling in towards the Todra Valley offers a great views from your vehicle. In the lower Todra valley you can view traditional settlements that cling to the valley sides, high above the valley floor. The valley floor is covered in densely packed date palmeries. Dates are a very high value crop but their continued success depends upon the water from the Todra River. Taking a side road from close to Tinerhir, and climbing upwards into the upper Todra valley area is simply wonderful. The road twists and turns with fantastic views throughout the journey, the gorge's sides narrowing as you travel inwards. The Todra Gorge is 300m high and was made by the Todra river, cutting down through red stained limestones. A walk through the gorge is a most enjoyable (and easy) experience. Imagining the mighty flash floods that can sometimes pass through the gorge is very thought provoking. After time in the Todra Gorge and moving on, the ever-increasing aridity and parched landscapes are entered as



DETAILED ITINERARY

5 Merzouga, Jbel Sahro, Draâ Valley, Anti Atlas, Tizi-N-Tinififft Pass And On To Ouarzazate

This journey is truly spectacular, travelling through a very remote and empty land that borders the Sahara. Views are vast and extensive, with desert plains and high mountains and plateaux all around. This journey gives a real feeling of wilderness; it is awesome in its grandeur. The journey is truly wonderful. Stops can be made to “feel” this awesome wilderness, to the appreciate the wide skies and the lack of any human impact (other than the road!). Acacia forests are seen too, “umbrella shaped” trees, specially adapted to the harsh environments. Protected gazelle reserves too are passed. After Alnif, a possible lunch stop (and a place with fossil interest too), it is on to the Draâ Valley, a valley rich with date palmeries on the valley floor; very tasty too (many stall holders are seen, in the season, selling delicious dates). Then turning north in the direction of Ouarzazate, it is up and over the Anti Atlas and the Tizi-n-Tinififft Pass (1,693m); spectacular, of course, as ever. This area is almost bereft of any vegetation and no wonder; here “bare bones of rock” form the landscape with minimal soil. The multiple layers of rock that were once part of an ancient ocean floor have been uplifted to create a landscape that is almost like a contour map, so clear are the boundaries between each thin rock layer. After a fabulous day totally "away from it all", reach the city of



DETAILED ITINERARY

6 The High Atlas, Aït Benhaddou, The Tizi-N-Tichka Pass And On To Marrakech

Before the highest part of your High Atlas return journey today, about 45 minutes north from Ouarzazate, lies Aït Benhaddou, a grand fortified settlement, now a World heritage Site and well worth a stop and a stroll. Aït Benhaddou is the most famous Kasbah in Morocco (dating from the 11th century) and is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Aït Benhaddou kasbah was once a chief's stronghold and fortified village, a most impressive creation. It was an important part of the ancient trade route over the High Atlas between Marrakech, Ouarzazate, and the Sahara. Time is taken at Aït Benhaddou to leisurely wander within the well preserved and conserved fortified settlement. Perhaps climb to the high watchtower that once guarded the converging routes of the many camel caravans that met at this important transit point. The film industry of Ouarzazate often uses Aït Benhaddou for scenes e.g. Gladiator, Game of Thrones and, most recently, Odyssey (Director "Christopher Nolan). Then it is up and over the High Atlas once again (but seen from a very different perspective). The highest peak, Mount Toubkal 13,671 feet (4,167m) in this impressive mountain range should again be looked out for – perhaps it was cloudy on the outward journey. The N9 road continues to wiggle its way upwards to the Tizi-n-Tichka Pass before starting its slow descent to the



DETAILED ITINERARY

7 Departure Day From Marrakesh

In the morning, depending on your flight’s schedule, you'll perhaps have some final moments to explore the Marrakesh Medina before heading out to the airport for departure. Private transport and driver to Marrakech Menara Airport; end of your tour arrangments.



Ready for adventure?

Contact our experts to tailor this trip to your preferences.

DIRECT LINE

(+212) 659 966 335

AGENCY EMAIL

info@anzaltours.com

ANZAL TOURS

CM, Belbekar 1 N 617 Marrakech

(+212) 659 966 335