

Atlas Mountains Expedition - Information Sheet

Thank you for enquiring about our upcoming Atlas Mountains Expedition. Hopefully this document will provide you with sufficient detail about the trip and answer any questions you may have.

About the mountain

Jebel Toubkal is the highest peak in the Atlas Mountains and is the intended goal for our expedition. Toubkal stands at a height of 4167 metres and is the equivalent of over 3 ½ times the height of Snowdon. Our expedition route follows the Normal Route from the Berber village of Imlil to the Mouflon Hut and the South East ridge to Toubkal's summit.

Toubkal is an ideal first 4000m+ peak due to its location and technical grading; also experiencing the contrast between the rural Berber life and the hectic buzz of Marrakech with its souks, historic palaces and tombs.



Toubkal summit 'Pyramid' - 4167m

Toubkal should be on every walkers tick list be it summer or winter.

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About the Expedition



Crossing the dry river bed at Aremd

The expedition is five days long; 3½ days in the Atlas Mountains and 1½ days in Marrakech. As stated above, our expedition follows the Normal Route.

The expedition starts from the airport where you will be whisked off to the remote Berber village of Imlil at 1740m. After spending the first night at Imlil, we then begin the trek past the village of Aremd and begin the

ascent to the Sidi Chamharouch mosque (2350m); renowned for its mystical healing powers. Thousands of Moroccans each year make the pilgrimage looking for spiritual and physical healing. After a short break, we continue onto the Mouflon hut – which is our base for the next two nights. Situated at 3200m you may be experiencing the effects of altitude, but there will be ample time to rest and enjoy an evening meal before our attempt to summit Toubkal the next morning.



Aremd village

After breakfast, we venture out onto eastern slopes of the Toubkal massif, passing between the summits of Tete d'Ouanoums (3970m) and Gui Imlil (3560m). Eventually ascending the South East ridge and onto the

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Mouflons Hut

summit of Toubkal at 4167m. After photos at the 'pyramid' we return to the Mouflon hut for our evening meal and relax. The next morning we trek back to Imlil before meeting our onward transport onto Marrakech and our host Riad. That evening we eat out in the famous Jemaa el Fna square and experience the sights and sounds that Marrakech has to offer. The next day, time is your own to enjoy the souks and barter for gifts or enjoy a relaxing massage at the Riad before flying home.



Toubkal summit panoramic

Recommended Equipment - Summer



Clothing – basic layering principles apply; cotton trekking or softshell trousers and base layers with a softshell / fleece type jacket with an additional spare warm fleece / down jacket for any stops on the mountain. Quality waterproof jacket and trousers are essential.

Footwear – Decent walking boots and quality socks prevent blisters. You may also benefit from bringing ‘approach’ / trail shoes as the initial part of the trek in can be hard going in boots.

Other Equipment – a 25 to 30 litre rucksack is sufficient; a hydration system, ideally around 2 – 3 litres in capacity; walking poles - can prevent muscle damage, injury and claim to reduce loads on the joints of up to 25%; a head torch; hat; gloves; sunglasses and a camera are essential. A small lightweight sleeping bag is also required for our stay in the refuge. Any personal medication needed (please inform us of any pre-existing medical condition you may have as soon as possible).

Obviously, you will require additional clothing for the evenings and the last day in Marrakech.

If you are attending a winter Toubkal expedition, a separate kit list will be sent out.

If there’s any problems with sourcing any of the above kit, contact us first as we may have spares or be able to give you advice on purchasing the appropriate equipment. We would seek to leave any additional clothing and / or personal belongings at the Riad we stay

in on the first night to be collected on return from the mountain; this will mean that you will only need your daysack for the mountain days.

Altitude Sickness



As we start to ascend, the decrease in atmospheric pressure makes breathing difficult, as you are not able to take in as much oxygen. You may also experience headaches, nausea, dizziness, lack of hunger and general fatigue. In its mildest form, altitude sickness can occur at heights over

about 2500m above sea level; however, the more severe symptoms of altitude sickness tend to occur at altitudes of 3600m and above.

At the summit of Toubkal there is effectively 61% of the available oxygen compared to that at sea level.

There are no specific factors, such as age, gender or physical condition, that increase a person's likelihood of getting altitude sickness. Certain people are affected while others are less susceptible to it.

We would recommend keeping hydrated and eating regularly to help the body cope with the change in environment. There are some thoughts that taking a small quantity of aspirin each day for a few days prior to the expedition assists in thinning the blood, and thereby aiding the body's ability to absorb oxygen in the blood stream, however this is a personal decision and you may want to seek medical advice before starting this.

Travel Advice / Insurance



Please take time to read the Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice to travellers to Morocco. It is pretty much common sense stuff. – (<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/traveladvice-by-country/middle-east-north-africa/morocco>)

Morocco is a developing country and accommodation is basic but functional. Also, please note that there is no formal mountain rescue within the Toubkal National Park. There are no visa or inoculation requirements either.

Clients will need to supply their own insurance; specifically trekking up to 4167 m and including rescue and repatriation as a minimum. A lot of insurance companies do class Morocco as being within Europe, but please check this. We will suggest several insurance companies for you to consider.

Once we arrive in Morocco we will be required to complete a 'landing card' detailing information from our passports, where we are staying, etc. Once completed there is generally a lengthy queue to be processed through immigration.

Frequently Asked Questions

'Are flights included?'

Unfortunately, we cannot provide flights. Further information regarding preferred flights will be released at a later date. There are a number of low cost airline carriers that fly from a variety of UK airports to Marrakech.

'What is the currency in Morocco?'

The national currency is the Moroccan Dirham which you are unlikely to be able to obtain outside of Morocco. There are several foreign currency exchanges located within the airport and Euros are widely accepted.

'How much money will I need to bring with me?'

On past experiences, clients have changed / brought with them around £50 - £100 worth of currency and still returned home with plenty of change. Apart from ad-hoc drinks and snacks, all main meals whilst in the accommodation are paid for, leaving you only needing money for the day in Marrakesh.

'Will I have to carry all my belongings up the mountain?'

No, only essentials will be taken on the trek and there is the ability to leave luggage at the host accommodation in Imlil. Boots, sleeping bags and other spare equipment will be carried by mules to the Mouflon hut.

'What if I have special dietary needs?'

We can cater for vegetarians and people who are wheat intolerant. Advance notice would be needed so we can arrange meals in advance.

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How to book / Terms

Places on the expedition are on a first come first served basis - places are confirmed once we have received either the registration fee or payment in full. All payments will be acknowledged by either an email or telephone call to confirm safe receipt.

Please check your flights details and availability before committing to the expedition.

There are 15 places available for this expedition and we require a minimum of 7 clients for the trip to run.

If you are unsuccessful in obtaining a place on this trip we will maintain a reserve list.

Should for whatever reason we cancel the expedition you will be given a full refund including registration fee (i.e. minimum numbers not reached, etc).

Payment – an immediate non - refundable (if you decide not to attend the expedition) registration fee of £200.00 is required.

Once we have received the minimum number of 7 bookings we will contact you and then you can go ahead and book your flights.

Please check that your passport is valid for a further 6 months beyond the return date of the expedition.

Once we have confirmed your booking, we will send out a combined medical / consent form and also a provisional kit list.

We will keep you updated with any changes or developments should they occur.

Should you have any further questions or would like to clarify any points, please feel free to either email us at contact@aspire2summit.com or give either of us a ring –

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