

RMC Travel and the East Hampton Trails Preservation Society present:

# MOROCCO

The Imperial Cities of Fes and Marrakech,  
The Sahara and Atlas Mountains  
October 8-20, 2012



*The first feeling one has when entering Morocco is of pure enchantment. It remains a largely unspoiled and undiscovered destination, featuring a wonderful country-side, historic cities, good food and a multitude mixture of life of its peoples from the city lowlanders to the Berber nomads in the snowy heights of the Atlas, the country radiates splendor and mysticism.*

*From colorful dye merchants in the explosion of multicolored wools to the rhythm of the music and the idle talk of the merchants and in the skill of the jugglers in the cities. From the untouched landscapes, ancient Kasbahs, centuries-old customs, the dunes of the hot Sahara Desert or absorbing the otherworldly beauty of the Atlas Mountains you too will feel Morocco's inescapable air of being different.*



## This tour will focus on four wonderful areas of Morocco

**Fez:** It's the spiritual heart of Arabic Morocco. The city, one of the oldest medieval cities in the world, is one of the holiest in Islam. In fact, so precious is Fez's history, architecture, and culture that the entire city has been declared a UNESCO World Heritage site. It is, simply, the soul of the Moroccan kingdom.

**The Atlas Mountains:** Long the province of the Berber tribes, people of these extraordinarily beautiful, romantic mountains were, even until quite recently, wholly untouched by modernity. Two mountain passes cut through these mountains, past breathtaking vistas, spectacular rock formations, and river valleys in their beauty rivaling, if not surpassing, any others in the world. Hikers and climbers from around the world come to the Atlas.

**The Sahara:** The greatest desert in the world, rending Africa in two, with its endless mountains of sand, dunes that stretch beyond the imagination. Evenings of such clarity one can see the literal dome of the earth, and fall asleep counting the innumerable stars - one forgets how many there are. This is the land of camels, and nomads, of ancient songs and the great winds.

**Marrakesh:** The jewel of the south, one of the four Imperial cities of Morocco, and an important cultural and commercial center set at the foot of the High Atlas mountains. Marrakesh is a city of vibrancy and solemnity, souk and square, palace and riad, mosque and garden. It is a city wrapped in faded red, ochre walls, and dominated by the Koutoubia mosque, visible from throughout the city. It is also a crossroads - where ancient Arab culture of the valley and the Berber culture of the mountains meet. Pix #6

### Walking Program Note

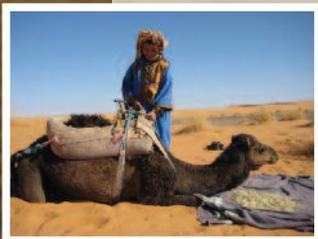
*The walking is not difficult and will allow you to enjoy the fascinating villages and fabulous views that highlight the area.*

### YOUR TOUR INCLUDES

- Round-trip transportation from Montauk to JFK
  - Round-trip airfare to Morocco
- Round-trip airport/hotel transfers
- Baggage handling at airports & hotels
  - Great hotels throughout
- Hotel taxes and service charges
  - Daily breakfast
  - 8 Lunches
  - 9 Dinners as per itinerary
- All guided sightseeing including entrance fees

### ADDED FEATURES

- Special Welcome to Morocco dinner.
- Sunset and Sunrise camel rides (easy and so special)
- A picnic lunch at the base of the Atlas Mountains
  - Viewing the drifting expanses of sand dunes reaching heights of more than 150 feet.
  - Overnight in the desert in a Berber tent
  - Free time for shopping & exploring
  - Special Farewell Dinner in Marrakech
  - Easy to Moderate walks



# ITINERARY

## Day 1 – Monday, October 8: Depart USA

Depart the East-end for JFK and our overnight flight to Casablanca

## Day 2 – Tuesday, October 9: Arrival in Casablanca and onto Fes (D)

Arrive in the morning in Casablanca, and after clearing Immigration and Customs, we board our coach for the drive to Fes. Time to relax and get used to the time change before our welcome dinner at the hotel, an authentic princely palace bordering the medina (old city), Fès El-Bali

## Day 3 – Wednesday, October 10: In Fes (B/L)

After breakfast, we depart on foot from the hotel for a fascinating glimpse into one of the most complete medieval cities in the world. Fes is Morocco's third largest city and remains its most important intellectual, cultural, and religious Center. Its university is one of the world's oldest, and its handicrafts the finest; its monuments are among the most impressive. Highlights of our walking tour this morning include the Kairaouine Mosque and Medersa el-Attarine (one of several ornate medieval theological colleges). We also pass the shrine of Moulay Idriss II en route to the brass founder, (or Seffarine) square, where craftsmen hammer metal into urns and pots. A visit to the dyers' quarter offers a bird's-eye view of the tanneries. We will have an opportunity to shop the Souks for crafts such as jewelry, pottery, and Djellabas (the traditional dress). We will lunch in the heart of the Medina on traditional Moroccan fare, and continue through the Jewish quarter (or Mellah), and to the Royal Palace. Returning to the hotel late afternoon, we will have time to relax, swim in the pool, or stroll the gardens. This evening, dinner is on our own to explore some of the many wonderful restaurants. Walk: Easy city walk

## Day 4 – Thursday, October 11: To the Middle Atlas Mountains & Moulay Abdessalam & Ifrane (B/D)

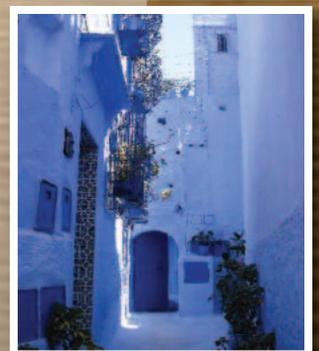
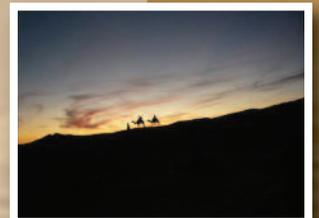
Bidding farewell to Fès this morning after breakfast, you trade city shoes for hiking boots as you depart by minibus for the Middle Atlas. Moulay Abdessalam is a 90-minute drive from Fès, and the first hills encountered as you travel south. Covered in forests of cork oak and giant cedar, the Middle Atlas is beautiful, tranquil, and surprisingly untouristed. The walk begins from the village and continues through a forest of cork oak along shepherds' paths. The initial portion involves a gentle climb, followed by rewarding views of the Atlas mountains. You make your way to one of many waterfalls that dot the area and then continue past farms and homes; farmers in this area continue to use traditional methods to cultivate a variety of crops from turnips to lentils. Upon reaching the King's reservoir, picnic lunches are unpacked as views open up on the Middle Atlas range. Afterward, there is an option to transfer directly to the hotel with the driver; upon check-in there is time to stroll the distinctly French-influenced alpine village built during colonial rule. Or take an additional two-hour walk leads directly into the town of Ifrane and the hotel, a recently-restored luxury property with spa and indoor and outdoor swimming pools. There is time to unwind with a Moroccan beer or a glass of mint tea before gathering for dinner in the hotel's elegant dining room. Walk: Easy to moderate- 5-7 miles.

## Day 5 – Friday, October 12: To Midelt, Er Rachida & Erfoud (B/L/D)

After breakfast you embark on a picturesque journey, crossing passes over both the Middle and High Atlas ranges to catch a first glimpse of the South's incredible pisé (mud and straw) architecture. After 2½ hours you reach Midelt, approached through a bleak plain of scrub and desert. The dramatic peaks of the High Atlas (12,000-foot peak of Jebel Ayachi), rising behind the town, provide a spectacular backdrop. A brief stop allows you to stretch your legs and use the facilities. After, you depart Midelt (most famous for its high quality Berber carpets) and continue south along a striking route that marks the transition to the desert. After crossing one of the lower mountain passes, the Tizi n'Talrhmeht (Pass of the She-Camel), you descend into a desert plain, beyond which you encounter the first of many Ksar (fortified strongholds) that dot the landscape along the Oued Ziz (Gazelle River). Lunch is in Er Rachidia, named for the 17th-century Alaouite leader Moulay Rachid. It is late afternoon by the time you reach your final destination of Erfoud, an administrative and garrison town built by the French to maintain control over the Tafilalt tribes of this oasis region. Our hotel is located just outside town, and is fashioned after the local kasbahs. After check-in, there is time to relax or swim in the outdoor pool before dinner.

## Day 6 – Saturday, October 13: To Rissani & Merzouga (B/L/D)

This morning you explore the Ksour and Kasbahs of Rissani. The first capital of the Tafilalt and the last stop on the caravan routes south, Rissani has a special place in Moroccan lore. It was here that the ruling Alaouite dynasty (from whom Morocco's current ruler, Mohammed VI, is a descendant) launched its bid for power before triumphing finally in Fès and Marrakesh. Passing through the town's famous gates, you come into contact with schoolchildren, who enthusiastically greet every tourist, and pass women dressed in the traditional black "haik" (robe) carrying freshly baked bread atop their heads. The walk takes you to a number of surprisingly ornate mud-and-straw structures, including the 19th-century royal Ksar d' Akbar, the Ksar Oualed Abd el-Helim, and Zaouiet El Maati. Today, a quarter of Rissani's population still inhabit a large 17th-century ksar in the center of town. Following lunch, you depart on a one-hour drive, trading the minibus for Land Rovers, as you travel to Merzouga. The Erg Chebbi (literally, veins of Chebbi) are one of the greatest sights of Morocco. This is a magical landscape, with huge drifting expanses of sand dunes reaching heights of more than 150 feet. Their color shifts from pink to gold to red to white depending on the time of day. After a sunset camel trek, you are treated to a delicious meal accompanied by traditional musical entertainment. Before retiring to your desert tent, you may wish to linger under the mesmerizing star-filled sky. Walk: Easy – 4 miles PLUS 1 ½ hour camel trek (very easy) to the dunes of Merzouga.



### Day 7 – Sunday, October 14: To Ouarzazate via the Todra Gorge (B/L/D)

You rise early in the crisp desert air to find your camels saddled and ready for a sunrise trek. Guided by the Tuareg nomads or “blue-men” (descendants of the Berbers named for the indigo-dyed tagelmoust, or scarf, they wear), you traverse gently sloping dunes, dismount, and hike up to watch the sunrise. From seemingly out of nowhere, a magical ball of fire quickly peeks over the horizon before stretching itself out against an intense blue sky. Descending from this perch, you remount your camel and return for a breakfast of steaming hot coffee, freshly baked bread, and fruit. The road west to Ouarzazate, today’s final destination, is marked by one of the harshest and most desolate of the southern valleys, The Dadès. Along much of its length, the river is barely visible above ground, and the road and plain are hemmed in between the parallel ranges of the High Atlas and the Djebel Sarhro, broken, black-red volcanic rock and limestone pinnacles. This makes the oases, when they appear, all the more impressive. After a two-hour transfer by minibus, you reach the bustling town of Tinerhir and the spectacular Todra Gorge. En route to the gorge proper, the road climbs along the Todra palmery (a last fertile shaft of land with date palms, terraces of olive, pomegranate, almond and fruit trees, with grain and vegetable crops planted beneath), narrowing at points to a ribbon of palms between the cliffs. There are more or less continuous villages, all of them the pink-grey color of the local rock, and the ruins of Kasbahs and Ksour dotting the surrounding area. The narrowest point is also the most dramatic, with canyon walls rising over 900 feet on both sides. Time permitting, you may stop to explore the gorge briefly before lunch. The route continues past the town of El Kelaâ M’Gouna, renowned for the cultivation of pink Persian roses, which according to legend were brought from Persepolis by the Phoenicians. You arrive in the early evening at your hotel, modeled after the famous kasbahs and ksour that adorn this region, with all the amenities of a luxury hotel.



### Day 8 – Monday, October 15: In Ouarzazate via the Todra Gorge (B/L/D)

Ouarzazate is another garrison and administrative Center built by the French. As the gateway to the south, its biggest draw is the Kasbahs that lie outside of town. After a copious buffet breakfast, you embark on a 30-minute drive to the village of Tasslmant to undertake a four-hour walk along the Ounila river to the magnificent kasbah of Ait Benhaddou. Piled upon a dark shaft of rock, its collection of kasbahs are among the most elaborately decorated and best preserved. Restoration has been carried out under UNESCO auspices. You eat lunch in a restaurant overlooking this famous Kasbah and return to Ouarzazate where there are several afternoon options. You may choose to join a two-hour walk to the Kasbah Tiftout. Others may wish to visit the Kasbah of Taorirt, a ten-minute walk from the hotel, and a former Glaoui dynasty stronghold that was once the largest of all Moroccan kasbahs. Ouarzazate also offers good shopping opportunities with outdoor Souks as well as small boutiques. This evening all reunite for a buffet dinner served on the outdoor terrace of the hotel. Walk: Easy to moderate – 6-7 miles.



### Day 9 – Tuesday, October 16: To Ouirgane: (B/L/D)

This morning you travel to the High Atlas, and an area known for breathtaking views of Jbel Toubkal (the highest peak in North Africa at 13,650 feet). The drive goes over the Tizi n’Tichka pass, at approximately 7,230 feet, the country’s highest mountain pass. At the summit, a remarkable scene unveils; the lunar landscape of the Anti-Atlas and desert to the south give way to green fields and dense woods. The landscape continues to be a source of awe and inspiration as you travel through country marked by steep-sided valleys adorned with flat-topped Berber villages clinging to the hillsides. Green-stepped terraces are interspersed throughout, cultivated by Berbers whose traditions have changed little over the centuries. A stop for a scenic picnic lunch is followed by a three-hour walk. Today’s walk follows an easy dirt path along dry river beds into a landscape that is reminiscent of the American Southwest. You pass dramatic pinkish red sandstone formations, traversing villages that take their names from the salt mines dotting this valley to your charming retreat. Roses adorn the grounds of your hotel, which also features a pool, Hammam (Turkish bath), and horseback riding. There is time to relax before dinner in the hotel’s restaurant, famous for its cuisine, which incorporates fresh produce grown on the property. Walk en route – Easy to Moderate 5 miles.



### Day 10 – Wednesday, October 17: In Ouirgane: (B/L/D)

After a leisurely breakfast, you depart on foot from the hotel for the neighboring village of Agni. Crossing pine tree forest, the trail climbs gradually, reaching an area with wonderful views of the surrounding countryside. You are welcomed for lunch in a local Berber home, followed by a visit to the local Jewish synagogue before returning on foot to your hotel, through a landscape thick with olive, walnut, and plum trees. Some may choose to spend the remainder of the afternoon relaxing, while others may opt for a horseback ride. The hotel’s spa beckons to those seeking a massage or the unique experience of the Hammam. This evening you gather for another sampling of the hotel restaurant’s renowned specialties. Walk – Easy to Moderate 6-7 miles

### Day 11 – Thursday, October 18: To Marrakech: (B/L)

Following a poolside buffet breakfast, you drive 45 minutes to Ijoukak, the starting point for today’s walk. It is an easy four-mile walk along the river (Oued Nfiss) to the isolated village of Tin Mal. Here stunning views of the surrounding valley and the High Atlas accompany your exploration of one of the most secluded historic sites in Morocco, the Tin Mal Mosque. This impressive structure, the spiritual home of Morocco’s third dynasty, was built in 1156 by the Berber Almohads in honor of their founding father. It was from this area that the Almohads worked to place Morocco and Spain under their control late in the 12th century. Return to the hotel for a poolside lunch, following which a (1½-hour) transfer transports you to the red-earthed walls and palm-lined streets of Marrakesh. After checking into your hotel, a deluxe property in the heart of the medina, your guide(s) take you to experience the city’s pulse. The square Djemaa El Fna (literally, Assembly of the Dead) is perhaps the greatest open-air theater in the world, where snake charmers, storytellers, and acrobats all compete for attention. Dinner is on your own this evening, and whether your preference is to dine at a simple café or experience a refined dinner at one of the many luxurious palace restaurants, your guide(s) will offer recommendations. AM Walk – Easy to Moderate 4 miles.



### Day 12 – Friday, October 19: In Marrakech: (B/D)

After breakfast, a guided tour provides a wonderful overview of this vibrant city, unmistakably African in feel, and very different from its northern counterparts. You begin with a visit to some of the major attractions, including the 12th-century Koutoubia Mosque, the Palais de la Bahia, and the Maison Tiskiwin, home to a fine collection of items related to Moroccan rural culture and society. You take a break for lunch at a popular local restaurant. After lunch, you stroll through the Majorelle Gardens, a peaceful haven in an otherwise bustling city, and then venture back to the Place Djemaa El Fna, where you are free to continue your exploration of the Souks or take in some of the activities from a balcony seat at one of the upstairs cafés. Some may prefer to relax poolside at the hotel before a farewell feast at a special restaurant tucked away in the medina.

### Day 13 – Saturday, October 20: To New York: (B)

Transfer to the Airport for your connecting flights back to JFK

## HOTELS (or similar)



#### FES: Hotel Palais Jamaï

A gem among luxury Moroccan hotels, the Sofitel Fès Palais Jamaï is an outstanding example of Moorish and Arabic architecture. This palace, located in the heart of the lively imperial city of Fes, Morocco's spiritual and cultural capital, dates back to 1879. The breathtaking views over the medina and riads, and patios in the lush Andalusian garden make this hotel an ideal stopover. This 5-star hotel will offer you an unforgettable experience with a personalized welcome in keeping with Moroccan tradition. An architectural gem, this luxury hotel in Morocco towers above the Fez Medina, which is on UNESCO World Heritage List.



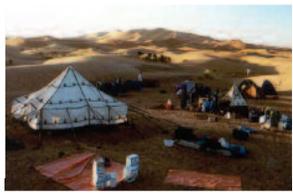
#### IFRANE: Michlifen Ifrane Suites & Spa

Hotel Michlifen Ifrane Suites & Spa is located at one of the most privileged sites in the most attractive regions of Morocco: The Middle Atlas...an extremely fertile land with water and pastures, which makes it often described as "the little Switzerland" of Morocco. The Michlifen Ifrane Suites & Spa offers 70 air-conditioned rooms and suites. Each guest room has a balcony overlooking the pool or surrounding forest area. Three restaurants & Spa inviting one to a world of relaxation and pleasure dedicated to the well-being of body and mind, in order to live a unique experience of sensuality with a range of 100% natural and traditional treatments, hammam, beauty salon, massage rooms and Jacuzzi.



#### ERFOUD: Hotel Kenzi Belère

Kenzi Belere Hotel has 150 comfortable simple guestrooms, all designed with guests' comfort in mind. Air Conditioning, hair dryers, mini bar, Coffee/Tea maker are among the amenities guests will find in every room. The hotel blends expert service with state-of-the-art facilities to provide guests with a memorable stay. It's sort of a rather a spacious "Kasbah" like hotel with beautiful gardens and windows that can actually open. It clean, comfortable and quiet.



#### MERZOUGA: First Class Tented Camp

Overnight in a First Class tented camp. Experiencing the dunes as a nomad Prince or Princess, like "Lawrence of Arabia". Your tent is furnished with your own bathroom and beds that are raised off the sand.



#### OUARZAZATE: Le Berbère Palace

Overlooking the Ouarzazate Valley towards the Atlas Mountains, the Berbere Palace hotel is built in the Kasbah style with a mix of Berber and traditional crafts. It has an ambience of space and charm within its 240 rooms, each with private terrace/patio, satellite, TV, mini bar and phone. Great restaurants and fitness center.



#### OUIRGANE: Hotel La Roseraie

In the heart of Berber country, among the tranquil foothills of the High Atlas Mountains, nests the Domaine de La Roseraie. Its altitude of 1000 m will offer the perfect climate. Secretly hidden in the middle of sixty acres of natural parkland, far away from stressful city life, it will be the ideal retreat for nature lovers. The Domaine de La Roseraie was created 35 years ago by Mister Abdelkader FENJIRO, one of the early pioneers in Moroccan hospitality and hotel industry. The hotels 44 rooms are dispersed throughout a floral park in harmony with nature and local architecture that are surrounded by thousands of rose bushes and beds of wild flowers.



#### MARRAKECH: Hotel Les Jardins de la Koutoubia

The Hotel Les Jardins de la Koutoubia is in the heart of the Medina with its thousand and one perfumes and colors of Marrakech. It is located right next the fabled Djema-el-fna Square. This 5 hotel features 72 rooms with all the amenities of a 5 star hotel. Known as a prestigious establishment, it is both elegant and authentic with a renowned reputation for the quality of its service. Several restaurants, Spa, swimming pool, lounges and bars make this one of the best hotels in the city.

## PRICE PER PERSON

**Double Occupancy \$3,399**

*Add to above costs:*

**U.S. airline facility, security, taxes and Fuel Surcharge \$495**

(This is the current charge but is subject to change by airline at time of ticketing)

**Prepaid Gratuities \$130**

(for guides, escort, drivers, wait-staff, hotel staff, baggage portorage)

**Single room supplement \$995**

## REGISTRATION APPLICATION MOROCCO – October 8-20, 2012

Please make the following reservations.

Make travel deposits checks payable to RMC and mail to:

RMC Travel, P.O. Box 448, Montauk, NY 11954

Need assistance or have questions?

Call Raymond at 668-5327 or e-mail at Rcartell@aol.com

Name(s): 1: \_\_\_\_\_ 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Day Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Evening Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please reserve: ( ) Double ( ) Single Room

I will be rooming with \_\_\_\_\_

DEPOSITS: (note: \$100 of initial \$300 deposit is non-refundable airline deposit)

[ ] Enclosed is my deposit of \$300 per person for  
( ) passengers.

I understand that the balance of the trip must be paid as per  
Terms & Conditions.

[ ] Please charge my credit card as follows:

Card Number \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code \_\_\_\_\_

NOTE: credit card payments will have the 4.75% charge added

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Make a copy and keep one for yourself.**

## TERMS & CONDITIONS

**Reservations & Payments:** A completed application must be submitted with your reservation including a deposit of \$300 per person to RMC right away to hold your reservation. Final payment due on or before August 7, 2012.

**Cancellations & Refunds:** Cancellation fees are as follows: \$100 non-refundable airfare fee. Additional 25% if cancellation is between 70 and 60 days; From 59 to 45 days, there is a 50% charge. Under 45 days, the charge is 100% of the tour price.

**Trip Cancellation/Interruption Insurance:** Trip Cancellation/Interruption/Medical insurance is NOT included in the package and a brochure will be sent with your confirmation.

**Revisions/Changes:** There will be no charge for an initial revision. There will be a charge of \$20 for each additional revision. This charge is over and above any charges imposed by airlines, hotels and/or ground operators unused transfers, meals and sightseeing tours cannot be refunded. Unused hotels nights are refunded only if they cover a minimum of three nights and only to the extent the operator receives refund from the hotels, after deducting cancellation charges levied by the hotel, if any. Requests for refund must be submitted in writing along with written proof from the hotel, to RMC within 30 days after return from trip.

**Accommodations:** The tour operator reserves the right to substitute hotels of similar category.

**Air:** All airline tickets are subject to each carrier's Terms & Conditions as to passage and cancellation fees. Tours are sold in conjunction with these approved carrier.

**NOTE:** Trip price based on a minimum of 25 participants. If less than 25 participants, a shortfall surcharge will be invoiced as follows:  
16 to 20 travelers @ \$175  
21 to 24 travelers @ \$100

**Consumer Disclosure Notice:** RMC and/ or their agents act only in capacity as agents for the passenger in all matters connected with hotel accommodations, sightseeing tours and transportation, whether by air, rail, bus, motorcar, boat or any other means and as agent holds itself free of responsibility for any damage occasioned from any cause. RMC and/or its agents will not be responsible for any damages or expenses or inconveniences caused by late departures or change of schedule of or strikes or to their conditions, nor will we be responsible for loss or damage to baggage or any of the passenger's belongings. All prices quoted are correct at time of brochure printing. Rates are subject to currency and airfare changes. Prices for payments by check include and reflect a 5% discount. Any disputes arising out of these tours will be settled via Arbitration through the American Arbitration Association. Valid 5/1-11/21/2012 and subject to change without notice.

**NOTE:** A full color version of this brochure can be found on RMC's web site at WWW.RMCTRAVEL.NET