



CLASSIC
EDELWEISS TOURS

MOROCCO TOUR

This motorcycle tour takes you through deserts, to oases, and across breathtaking mountain ranges.

RIDING DAY 1 : MÁLAGA - CHEFCHAOUEN

Standard Route (280 km / 174 miles)

Hotel Change "Route" (291 km / 181 miles)

MÁLAGA - MARBELLA - SAN PEDRO - ALGECIRAS - TANGER MED - KSAR ES-SEGHIR - KHEMISS ANJRA - TÉTOUAN - SOUK-EL-ARBA-DES-BENI-HASSAN - ZINAT - N13 (CHEFCHAOUEN-OUEZZANE) - CHEFCHAOUEN

Leaving Malaga to the southwest, we follow the Andalusian coast to Algeciras. Upon arrival, we enter the adjacent port area. Here we take the one-hour ferry to Ceuta, the most conveniently located ferry port in Morocco. We get the bikes through customs and before you know it, the adventure begins.

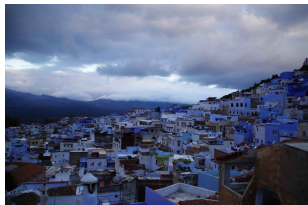
Crossing the border into Morocco usually involves some paperwork, and during the morning briefing, your tour guide will give you detailed instructions on what to do. Passport control will take place on the ferry, which saves time.

Right outside the port, we enter a completely different world. Everybody is trying to sell something on the street, many old, beat-up cars are moving around, and the people are admiring our motorcycles. We follow the Mediterranean coast where we have the first opportunity to get in touch with Moroccan daily life.

In Mdiq, we exchange our first Moroccan Dirhams, sample some mint tea, and have a bite to eat. Next, we take the direct country road inland to get to Chefchaouen, our first overnight stay in Morocco, a little sooner. Go along with the village's atmosphere and take a stroll through the colourful alleys or just enjoy the bustling main square of this little mountain village. Maybe you also want to take this opportunity to buy your first souvenirs.

Highlights:

#1: Chefchaouen



Chefchaouen, also called Chaouen (because of the mountains Djabal Ech Chaouen in the background), has 6 mosques and is a very pious town. Found by Moulay Ali ben Rachid in 1471, a descendant of the Prophet Mohammed, Christians were not allowed to visit this town until 1920. Since this time Chaouen was a part of the Spanish protectorate. Even today the Spanish language is more common than French. The small medina is well worth visiting, especially because of its tiny lanes with the typical white houses and the blue painted doors.

RIDING DAY 2 : CHEFCHAOUEN - AZROU

Standard Route (289 km / 180 miles)

After our first night in Morocco we leave Chefchaouen and continue through the beautiful Rif Mountains. We cross the “Pont du Loukkos”, the former border between the Spanish protectorate and the French part of Morocco. Until the city of Ouezzane we ride through fertile fields and thousands of olive trees accompany further to the west. Maybe you will recognise some of the very old olive oil mills along our way. There are also a lot of oak trees in this area and sometimes you can discover stacks of cork at the side of the road. After Ouezzane, we will leave the Rif Mountains behind us and our route leads us south direction Volubilis. We take the opportunity to visit the former Roman settlement, which are at the same time the biggest Roman ruins in Morocco.

Highlights:

#1: Volubilis



Volubilis is the largest Roman excavation in Morocco. This region was already settled under the Carthaginians. Afterwards, the Romans developed an important city here, which was inhabited by approximately 10,000 people. It was founded in the year 25 A.D. and was most prosperous during the government of the emperor Septimus Severus (193-211). The best-known sights of Volubilis are its

beautiful mosaics and the forum.

#2: Ifrane



Unexpected for the eyes of the visitor, Ifrane presents itself more like a European-looking city than showing the typical Moroccan style that you can find in the rest of the country. With its tiled saddle roofs and nicely edged roads, it reminds more of the perfection you would assume to find in Switzerland. This is why the town is fondly called the “Switzerland of Morocco”. During winter, wealthy

Moroccans enjoy downhill skiing here.

RIDING DAY 3 : AZROU - BIN EL OUIDANE

Standard Route (288 km / 179 miles)

From Azrou, we head back into motorcycle country: real nice roads first take us into the cedar woods. Once again, we are in an area that looks not Moroccan or even African at all. After Khénifra, we take the well-maintained main road all the way to Beni-Mellal and then cross another mountain range into Bin El Ouidane, our destination today.

Highlights:

#1: Cedar Forest



The little trip through the Moroccan Cedar forests is a special experience: You would have never expected so many and such tall trees. Fully grown trees easily reach up to 100 ft., the tallest tree supposedly was 130 ft. high. Hopefully, we will also see the very rare Barbary Apes. Thousands of years ago, these tailless and “winter-proof” monkeys lived throughout Morocco and also across the

strait in Europe.

#2: Bin el Ouidane



Before we reach the village of Bin-el-Ouidane, we pass by the water reservoir of the same name. At a surface of 3,755 ha, its blue waters represent a beautiful contrast to the surrounding mountains. The 133 m high and 285 m long retaining dam was built to facilitate the electricity supply as well as the irrigation of the adjacent plains of Tadla. The course of the river will open out into the Ouzoud waterfalls and from there into the Wadi El Abid gorge. Along the road, there are some nice photo opportunities .

RIDING DAY 4 : BIN EL OUIDANE - MARRAKECH

Standard Route (248 km / 154 miles)

Today is a fairly easy day. In the morning we head into the mountains again for a while, then leave the foothills of the Middle Atlas behind us and reach the wide plains around Marrakech. Already long before we can see the impressive profile of the Atlas Mountains in the background. Marrakech - we already know this name from our school days. Stories like "Aladdin" or "1001 Nights" run through our heads. We are really here, we enter the pearl of the south!

Highlights:

#1: Ouzoud Falls



Ouzoud Falls in the Middle Atlas are considered the highest and most beautiful waterfalls in Morocco. Down in the gorge, fig trees grow along the riverbank and monkeys swing from tree to tree at dusk. With a small ferry, you can even get very close to the waterfalls or cross the river. By the way, 'Ouzoud' means 'olive' in the Berber language.

RIDING DAY 5 : MARRAKECH

Standard Route (170 km / 106 miles)

Today is the day. We get to know the breathtaking Medina of Marrakesh. The best time to explore the famous souq of Marrakesh is in the morning. Experience the various sections of the souq. You will find the trades separated into textile markets, leather markets, or carpet markets and you will even find the workshops of the coppersmiths and the woodcarvers. It is a good place to find some nice souvenirs or just to admire the simple methods of work of the locals. After you have brought your purchases back to the hotel and relaxed a little at the pool, you should go back to the center and stroll around the Djemaa al-Fna square. This is where oriental life rages and offers a feast for all the senses.

For those who would rather spend half a day on the motorcycle, we recommend the motorcycle loop to the Oukaïmeden Ski area.

Highlights:

#1: Marrakech



Without any doubt, the largest attraction in Marrakech is the Jemaa el-Fna square, the "Square of the Beheaded". According to legend, the heads of the executed were placed on wooden spears and exhibited until only the bare skulls were left over. In the afternoon, this square is nowadays occupied by acrobats, dancers, snake charmers and musicians. The bells of the water vendors, which are everywhere to be found, add to the spectacle. In the evening, the scene changes: the entertainers give way to small booths with large kettles, tables and benches. Soon you can smell the kebabs, the spicy sauces and sugar cakes. If you want to try the local cuisine - this is the place!

But during a Marrakech-visit you should not miss a walk through the narrow and colorful streets of the Medina either!

#2: Oukaïmeden



Maybe the slopes next to Morocco's highest mountain, Mount Toubkal, won't quite meet your expectations of a first-class skiing area. But this is not the most impressive thing to see up here anyways. The actual sights up there in Oukaïmeden, as you will surely get to see, are the fantastic mountain landscape, the magnificent views, and the remoteness. Only a few tourists take the 55 miles drive

from Marrakesh upon them. Quite contrary to the bustling city of Marrakesh, you will find and enjoy the relaxed quietness of the mountains.

RIDING DAY 6 : MARRAKECH - AÏT BENHADDOU

Standard Route (184 km / 114 miles)

The High Atlas, which forms the natural dividing line to the Sahara, is almost uninhabited. We leave Marrakesh and climb up the spectacular pass road to the Tizi-n-Tichka. Along our way, we have wonderful views of the beautiful valleys with their terrace fields, used for fruit and grain cultivation. Once on the top of the 2,260 m (7,414 ft) high Tizi-n-Tichka Pass, we are in the fantastic scenery of the Moroccan mountain world. On the southern side of the Atlas Mountains, the vegetation changes and we feel the proximity of the Sahara. We ride through a dry, desert-like landscape and there are only a few villages around. In some of them, we can find very old Kasbahs, which once served Prince Glaoui of this area as a domicile. The most important Kasbah in Telouet is a hidden gem, which, of course, we will visit. After countless turns and a perfect riding day, we reach Aït Benhaddou, a small village that became famous with the film industry.

Highlights:

#1: Tizi n'Tichka



The wonderful Tiz-N-Tichka pass leads us over the High Atlas at an altitude of 7,415 ft (2,260 m). Enjoy your time of free riding into the valley and up the pass road. You are free to choose your own places to stop for a picture or for a chat with one of the locals who are standing alongside the road. But be aware of the type of stone you want to buy, some of them are only fake... but maybe still worth it for you to

bargain simply for the sake of bargaining? In any case it will be a rare souvenir.

#2: Telouet Kasbah



A small excursion leads us into the valley of the Oued Imarene and an amazing, strongly fissured, and highly eroded mountain world. In beautiful weather, we have wonderful views of the mountains of the High Atlas. Here we find the most important Kasbah of El Glaoui, surrounded by reinforced walls. El Glaoui was the most powerful clan of the Berbers. The Kasbah of Telouet was built in the 19th century by Thami El Glaoui (1879-1956). It used to be an artfully equipped Moorish-style residence with stucco ornaments, wood-carved and wonderfully painted ceilings, and multicolored faiences. Today, only part of the beauty has survived but still is worth a visit! From the roof terrace, we have a marvelous view of the sometimes snow-covered Peaks of the High Atlas.

#3: Ait Benhaddou



Should you arrive early enough, we recommend you to take the opportunity and visit this historical village. Perhaps you know the ancient Berber village already from the movie "Sodom and Gomorrha". It is very interesting to walk up the hill, passing by those ancient houses, and enjoy the great view. It is an unbelievable labyrinth of numerous houses and towers. One old Berber castle seems to grow out of another. Visiting this village is only possible from the entrance at the only bridge and the only main door leading you inside. It is definitively a fantastic photo motive.

RIDING DAY 7 : AÏT BENHADDOU - BOUMALNE DADES

Standard Route (263 km / 163 miles)

Today we ride our bikes through a very dry region. On the famous “Route of the Kasbahs”, we follow the unique Dades valley, direction Er Rachidia. As the name says, along this road are numerous fortress-like earthen castles, some of which have fallen more or less into ruins, but many are still in good condition. Some of them have already installed television aerials on their roofs to announce modern times. The road itself follows the River Dades and we pass by numerous Kasbahs and beautiful oasis villages with palm trees.

Don't miss out on the loop into the spectacular “Gorge du Dades” at the end of the day - it's worth it!

Highlights:

#1: Route of the Kasbahs



Like in a different world we are cruising along the beautiful road, surrounded by fascinating desert landscape and marvelous oases. Many of the small villages are ideal for a break and for having a “the a la menthe” with the locals.

#2: Gorges du Dadès (Dadès Gorge)



This is a fantastic excursion! Already after a few miles, we find some Kasbahs in very good condition close to Ait Youl. The Dades river itself is a wonderful contrast to the dry, rocky mountains. After approximately 10 miles, you can see "The Brains of Morocco", a beautiful rock formation on the eastern side of the valley.

RIDING DAY 8 : BOUMALNE DADES - ERG CHEBBI

Standard Route (315 km / 196 miles)

Today we go to Erg Chebbi, on the edge of the Sahara, the largest desert in the world! Before, however, we take another excursion into the Atlas Mountains. From Boumalne Dades, we ride to Tinghir and to the magnificent Gorge du Thodra. In comparison to the Dades canyon, this ravine is a lot narrower and after just a few miles you are right between the red-golden cliffs, steeply rising up into the blue sky.

Our destination for the next two nights will be near Merzouga. Here, we have various activities prepared for you. Erg Chebbi is Morocco's part of the Sahara desert, small but very impressive and worth a visit.

After the Thodra gorge, we leave the village of Tinghir and turn right, enjoying a smooth ride over the two barren, rocky passes Tizi n'Boujou and Tizi n'Tiferkhine towards Alnif. In Rissani, we keep going towards the desert town of Merzouga. In the distance, mighty sand dunes welcome us at our destination.

Depending on your ambitions you can either spend both nights at the hotel in Erfoud and pay the Erg Chebbi only a short visit by camel on the rest day, or you can even opt for an overnight stay (not included) in the desert. Please let your tour guide know well in advance if you want to spend one of the two nights in the desert. He will arrange it then for you.

Highlights:

#1: Gorges du Todra (Todra Gorge)



The Gorges du Todra is a popular place to visit, especially during summer. The river is winding through the ravine surrounded by palm trees and cactus plants. Following the river into the gorge we will stop at a typical teahouse to enjoy a 'Thé à la menthe' and the spectacular scenery of the Todra canyon. If you want to be alone, just go ahead and walk for some minutes into the canyon.

#2: Desert Overnight



For all the adventurers among you, we have a special highlight: Instead of spending the first night in the hotel, you have the option to swap your hotel bed for a bed in a Berber tent in the sand dunes. At our hotel in Merzouga we leave our bikes and mount some camels to ride into the middle of the big sand dunes of Erg Chebbi. Spend the night in a typical simple Berber tent and enjoy the unique starry desert sky while having a delicious dinner accompanied by

traditional Berber music. Enjoy the magnificent sunrise before our camels will bring us back to our hotel. After our excursion you can either spend a lazy afternoon at the hotel pool or, in case you are up for more excitement, come and join us for the surprise we have prepared for you in the afternoon.

If you want to spend the night in the desert, please let your tour guide know at the beginning of the tour, and s/he will arrange this for you.

RIDING DAY 9 : ERG CHEBBI

Standard Route (0 km / 0 miles)

After we have spent the first romantic night in our beautiful desert hotel you have the possibility to explore the sand dunes of Merzouga on the back of the typical desert transportation: A camel.

Like the caravans thousands of years ago we disappear behind the huge sand dunes. Should you be up for something completely off-the-wall, you can even slide down the mountain-like sand dunes on skis or on a snowboard.

Please coordinate the camel ride into the sand dunes with your tour guide. Everything is possible: either you schedule your camel ride early in the morning even before breakfast, to see the sunrise, or you make it a relaxed excursion in the afternoon. If you have enough energy left you can even plan a fun ride on an ATV directly from our hotel.

Should you be among those who stayed overnight in the desert, you might just want to return to our hotel in Merzouga and spend a relaxed afternoon.

Highlights:

#1: Sahara Desert



The Erg Chebbi is only a small part of the tremendous Sahara desert, which comprises much of North Africa. It stretches from the Atlantic Ocean in the west to the Red Sea in the east. With its 110 km² (43 mi²), Erg Chebbi represents a tiny part of the whole Sahara desert (over 9 million km²/3.5 million mi²). But once you find yourself

sitting on a camel amidst the mighty sand dunes, you might catch yourself feeling like you are on a trip through the big "bahr bila ma" - "the ocean without water". Don't sweat it! Walking up one of the sand dunes, which can rise up to 150 m (500 ft.) may be challenging but not impossible.

Thinking about the Sahara, most of us will have pictures of an endlessly sandy desert going through our minds. The largest part of the Sahara, in fact, encompasses a rocky desert. The Erg Chebbi, on the other hand, is a sand desert only. Various groups of people, such as Arabs, Berber, Moors or Touareg have settled along the edges of the Sahara desert. And up until the 19th century their main source of income was based on stock farming and on trading goods. Today, the majority of the people living in this arid area are permanent farmers cultivating oases. About 40%, however, still lead a nomadic or semi-nomadic life.

Even though the Sahara has always been a desert, researchers have found out that the Sahara desert, due to different climate changes over a period of the past 200.000 years, has been a green and fertile savanna for several thousand years.

#2: Camel Ride (short trip)



No problem, if you prefer to take it easy today. We will park the motorcycles at the foothills at the western edge of the Sahara sand dunes until we will come back from our short trip into desert. At our base close to Merzouga you can enjoy a relaxed time at the swimming pool while the camels, our means of transport for the next two hours, are prepared. But then you should be ready for our short two hour trip into the desert. Here in the sand dunes of the Erg Chebbi you will get a taste of the real desert feeling.

RIDING DAY 10 : ERG CHEBBI - FÈS

Standard Route (475 km / 295 miles)

Today is the longest riding day of our tour. We say goodbye to the desert of Morocco and continue our adventure along the beautiful Ziz Valley. After Er-Rachidia the Ziz river guides us through the Ziz canyon. We will pass by numerous palm oases limited by the steeply rising mountains of the High Atlas. In the oases dates and other fruits are cultivated and sold right at the side of the road.

The route then leads us through high mountain plains to Midelt. On a wonderful highway, we cross through the Middle Atlas. The vegetation is changing and lush green forests, home to the famous Atlas cedar, the typical tree of Morocco, again dominate the scenery. Continuing this beautiful riding day we soon reach the city of Fes, Morocco's center of arts/humanities.

Highlights:

#1: Vallée de Ziz



Our route takes us through the Grand Canyon-like Ziz Valley. The gorge is a result of the Ziz River cutting through the Atlas Mountains. The 650 ft. wide arid but extremely fertile canyon is lined by hills up to 1000 ft. The valley is defined by two artificial gates at both its southern and northern ends. At its southern end is the dam of Hassan Addakil and an artificial lake. At its northern end is the Tunnel de Légionnaire built by French colonial troops in the 1930s in order to create a passageway to the Ziz Valley.

#2: Tunnel Zaabal - Legionary's tunnel



At the end of the Grand Canyon-like Ziz Valley, we find the famous Legionary's Tunnel. Even though it is only a very small tunnel, it is, in fact, a true highlight. In the years 1927/28, the foreign legionnaires drove this tunnel into the solid red granite rock. The actual reason for the tunnel to be built was as simple as the River Ziz, which is running along the gorge. A sign at the northern end says: „The rocks have barred their way. The order says that they should make their way over the mountains nevertheless. And so the legionnaires did.“ At the southern end, another sign says: „This tunnel has been built by 40 legionnaires within 6 months, by the mere power of their muscles and by their indomitable desire to do so.“

RIDING DAY 11 : FÈS

Standard Route (0 km / 0 miles)

The narrow alleyways of Fès' ancient medina, protected as a UNESCO World Heritage site, can keep you busy all day. Especially if you get lost, in which case it will take quite some time and also some bakshish to find your way back out. There are countless little shops and stalls that sell anything you can possibly imagine. Feel free to buy, but don't forget to negotiate the price, this is part of the culture and fun as well.

Enjoy your rest day, stroll around the old town, relax in one of the numerous cafes, and watch what's going on around you. Fès is spectacular! And your motorcycle deserves a break, too!

Highlights:

#1: Fès



Fes is the oldest of the four imperial cities and beside Marrakech the most interesting city of the country. It is the intellectual centre of Morocco. After the Azhar university of Cairo, the Kairaouine university of Fes is said to be the oldest university of the Islam. Only five minutes from our hotel by taxi and we are going back in time for some hundred years. We can visit the old part of town with an

official guide or we can explore it on our own. The most important building in Fes is the Kairaouine mosque, but unfortunately we can only admire it from the outside. Furthermore the visit of a Medersa (school of Koran) is recommendable, as well as the famous quarter of the tanners. Even just walking around and trying to find your own way is an unforgettable experience!

RIDING DAY 12 : FÈS - CHEFCHAOUEN

Standard Route (246 km / 153 miles)

With the Medina of Fez still in our minds, we mount our motorcycles and leave the city towards the north. Very soon we get into areas that have not yet been "spoilt" by modern life, but instead, offer us the authentic, beautiful Moroccan scenery. For a quick lunch, we pop out from the mountains in Ouezzane, but return right afterwards back into the remote mountainous areas. One of the most enjoyable motorcycle routes is "Moroccan little Andalusia". Among its olive trees, cork oaks, and interesting little villages we collect a last curvy riding impression before we approach the already familiar town of Chefchaouen in the afternoon.

Highlights:

#1: Ouezzane



This nice little town, close to the Djabal Hellal, is a holy place. A lot of pilgrims from northern Morocco come to visit the city. The most interesting building is the "Mosque de la Zawiya". It is a very good example of the fantastic Moorish architecture. Close to the holy part of this town you can find the Souks, where the local people make high quality "Djellabas" from the Rif-wool. Almost no foreign tourists visit Ouezzane – so our Motorbikes will be a great attraction for the local people.

#2: Little Andalusia in Morocco



This route makes all those riders giddy with pleasure who love it to chase one curve after another on this road through the Rif mountains. You will probably find all those curves you might have been looking for, accumulated on this leg of the tour. Enjoy 50 miles of pure riding fun through some of the most beautiful mountainous landscapes in Morocco.

RIDING DAY 13 : CHEFCHAOUEN - MÁLAGA

Standard Route (275 km / 171 miles)

Hotel Change "Route" (283 km / 176 miles)

CHEFCHAOUEN - SOUK-EL-ARBA-DES-BENI-HASSAN - ZINAT - TÉTOUAN - KHEMISS ANJRA - KSAR ES-SEGHIR - FERRY TANGER MED - ALGECIRAS - AP-7 DIRECTION MÁLAGA - ALGECIRAS - MARBELLA - MÁLAGA


From Chefchaouen we ride directly north, past the fairly large city of Tetouan and on through the sparsely populated hinterland. Once again, we see those small villages with their unique mosques on the side of the roads, perhaps one or two more photo stops, and we leave colorful Morocco again. Standing on the ferry, we enjoy the last views of the disappearing Rif Mountains. Morocco – what a country! In the afternoon we get back to the European continent and from Algeciras, we have a relaxed ride back to our base hotel in Málaga.

Highlights:

#1: Ceuta



Ceuta was already mentioned in the antiquity and even the Romans saw the importance of this area and made Ceuta to one of their most important ports. Christianity arrived in the 3rd century AD, Rome declined and in 711 it fell into the hands of the Arabs. Later it was conquered by Portugal and since the 16th century it belongs to the Spanish Kingdom. Since these sometimes troublesome times, Spain continued to hold this enclave until today.



We wish you a wonderful tour.

Worldwide the #1 in
guided motorcycle tours.



EDELWEISS BIKE TRAVEL // Sportplatzweg 14, 6414 Mieming, Austria
Tel.: +43 5264 5690 // Fax: +43 5264 5690 3
[facebook.com/edelweissbicycletours](https://www.facebook.com/edelweissbicycletours) // info@edelweissbicycle.com
www.edelweissbicycle.com