

Argan Trail

Weight limit: 90kg

Nearest airport: Marrakech / Essaouira

8 days / 7 nights / 6 riding days



Delve into the hinterland of the Essaouira region on this 8 day trail through the largest area of Argan and cedar forest; trees that have created the area's reputation for craftsmanship. Cross canyons along the Ksob river and ride among the great dunes of Cap Sim, the very long beach that connects Sidi Kaouky to the city of Essaouira, where you can gallop in serenity and experience the feeling of freedom on your faithful Arab Berber steed.

The Riding

The trail is at all paces throughout the week, with plenty of opportunities to canter.

Guides & Group sizes

The ride is accompanied by two local guides while out on trail. Omar and his team are knowledgeable, friendly & calm, with a lifetime experience of riding, training horses and looking after customers.

The group size is 3-10 riders, but will confirm for 2 riders with a small group supplement.

Horses and Tack

The horses used on this trail are local Berber-Arabians. The breed was created as the perfect warhorse nearly a 1000 years ago by crossing refined Arabians and Barb (Berber) bloodlines. It is the ideal breed for the hot desert environment, being tough and robust with the speed of an Arab. The horses stand at approx. 15hh.



Level of riding and fitness

This trail is suitable for intermediate and experienced riders. The riders should be comfortable and confident in all three paces and have previous experience in riding out in the open. Good riding fitness is required as you'll be spending 5 hours in the saddle each day.

Accommodation & Dining

The first and last night of the trail is spent in a hotel in Essaouira. While out on trail the accommodation will be in bivouac camps, sleeping in collective tents of 6 to 7 people (please bring your own sleeping bag). There is also the option of having your own small dome tent, which is perfect if you are travelling as an individual and want your own space. Your bivouac is equipped with a warm water shower.

You will spend evenings sitting around a campfire and enjoying traditional Moroccan meals prepared by a chef.

Allergies and special dietary requirements can be catered for with advance notice.

Itinerary

Day 1

Arrival at Marrakech or Essaouira airport, meet your driver and transfer to Essaouira. Meet the rest of the group and have a short briefing on what to expect from the trail. Dinner and overnight at the hotel.

Day 2-6

After meeting your horse you will begin your trail ride, heading off to discover the Essaouira region with 5 hours a day on horseback, during which you will walk, trot and gallop.

After leaving the city of the trade winds towards the beaches and the dunes you will cross the wadis (rivers), agricultural lands and fields of Argan trees to meet unspoiled and wild landscapes. This ride is a succession of hills, gorges carved by the river, where the water allows the presence of olive trees and oleanders. During the trail you will have the opportunity to visit the ruins dating back to the Portuguese era, an Argan oil cooperative run by Berber women, and ancient villages built in stone. At the end of each day you will find yourself in the heart of a nomadic bivouac.

The bivouac is an established camp sheltered from the wind, where you can enjoy a typical Moroccan meal before spending the night in a Berber tent. Dinner and overnight in the bivouac.



Day 7

Your last day in the saddle is dedicated to the discovery of the coast: the dunes, fishing villages and some cliffs and headlands to ride around.

Lunch is at your host's ranch and is followed by a free afternoon dedicated to shopping in the Medina of Essaouira, or for relaxing with a massage in a hammam (Turkish bath, massages and other treatments are at your expense). Dinner and overnight at the hotel in the city of Essaouira.

Day 8

After breakfast transfer to Marrakech or Essaouira airport for your departing flight.

Price includes

- 6 full days trail riding

- 2 nights hotel accommodation
- 5 nights camping
- Trail riding horse, tack and saddlebags
- All Breakfasts
- All Lunches on trail
- All Evening meals
- Airport transfers
- All arrangements for duration of holiday

Not included

- Flights
- Tips

International flights & Airport transfers

You can arrive/depart from either Essaouira or Marrakech airport. Please book a flight that arrives before 2pm on the day of arrival. Transfers can be arranged after this time for a supplement.

What to bring

- Soft and non-rigid suitcase
- T-shirts, cotton clothes, a long sleeve shirt to protect you against the sun, a fleece for cool evenings, two or three pairs of riding pants, waterproof poncho
- Hiking boots or shoes, gaiters or leggings, hat, sunglasses, sunscreen.
- Sleeping bag
- Night light
- Tissues
- Medication to prevent intestinal infections
- Water bottle
- Charging bank to charge your phone and camera

Each horse is equipped with a trekking saddle and saddlebags that will allow you to carry your lunch and personal effects necessary for your day on horseback. Sensitive people are advised to wear sheepskin as protection over the saddle, which is readily available in horse riding shops in Morocco and abroad.



Climate

The weather in Morocco is warm all year round with very little rainfall. Winter temperature from December to February are generally at 20°C during the day and dropping below 10°C during the night. March - May and October – November are usually very pleasant with daytime temperatures at 20-23°C and above 10°C at night. The summer from June to September is the hottest time when you'll experience temperatures of 25°C and above during the day and 15°C and above at night.

Health

For health and vaccine recommendations, please consult your healthcare provider at least 8 weeks before your trip.

Country specific information can also be found at National Travel Health Network and Centre website: <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>.

Travel documents

For entry requirements to Morocco for UK citizens, please visit the Foreign Travel Advice website:

<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/morocco>

For any other nationalities, please contact your local embassy to check entry requirements.

Having the correct travel documents is entirely your responsibility.

Currency & Tipping

The local currency in Morocco is the Moroccan dirham. Your holiday is fully inclusive so we recommend not to bring too much cash with you. At the end of your holiday you will have time to look around Essaouira where the shopping is great. Bring cash for any souvenirs you may wish to buy and get ready to haggle!

Tipping your guide and the local team is much appreciated but at your discretion.

Cancellation policy

Payment & Cancellation Terms

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Holidays are confirmed with a 20% non-refundable deposit. The full balance is due 56 days before the start date.

If you cancel your booking less than 56 days before the start date of your trail we are entitled to receive full payment, less refunds as follows:

42 days or more before booking date - 50%

30 days or more - 30%

less than 30 days - nil

Book with confidence – Covid Guarantee:

If the ride operator is closed or you are unable to travel due to lockdown:

1/ The deposit is reissued as a rebooking voucher to rebook anytime.

2/ Any balance payment will be refunded to you in full within 1 week of departure date.

Insurance

All saddletravel.com customers are required to take out appropriate travel insurance that covers horse riding and holiday cancellation. Proof of insurance details will be required during the booking process.

Contact details

+44 1497 888 228 WhatsApp
trails@saddletravel.com

saddletravel.com
The Coach House
Clyro Court
Clyro
Hereford
HR3 5LE
Wales

CN: 05411320

<https://saddletravel.com>

