

TREK MOUNT TOUBKAL

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How fit do I need to be?

This trekking challenge is all about **endurance** fitness rather than speed and it is certainly not a race, however a good level of fitness and **determination** is required! Sticking to our training plan will really pay off. The best form of training is to start walking for good lengths of time on undulating terrain, where possible following this up with a similar length trek the next day. Try to train with your day-pack on your back and get used to drinking and carrying water during your training. You will be up early in the mornings and trekking for approximately up to 8 hours each day so good fitness is very important. Distances are misleading in this type of terrain, and it's more useful when training to think about the hours you need to walk for! This trek is achievable for most people provided they **train well in advance**.

Keep in mind that this is a **tough** trek and many people will find elements of the trip difficult at times, whether it is the physical trekking, changing weather, the difference in culture or something else. It is great if you can work as a team and help each other out during any difficulties. While there are challenges, the enjoyment and rewards that come from trekking in this region are unforgettable!

What will the trekking be like?

You will be trekking **on dry, rocky tracks**. Days are either **uphill** or **downhill**; there is very little flat or undulating. There are some shale and scree sections which are loose underfoot, some large boulders, and there may be some leftover snow. Some sections are steep and arduous, and some paths are narrow and quite exposed. If you are unsteady on your feet or suffer knee problems you will find trekking poles invaluable, but do make sure you use these in your training. It will get much cooler the higher you trek, and can be very cold at the summit. The extremes of temperature add to this challenge. There's a reason this challenge is graded as **tough**!

How will the altitude affect me?

Trekking at altitude can make even the simplest tasks feel like hard work, and along with feeling cold and fatigued, there will be tough times for everyone. The highest point we trek to is 4167m. The trip is designed so that there is time to acclimatise to the altitude, but you may still feel effects such as headaches and shortness of breath when on the move. Altitude affects people differently and being super-fit is no guarantee of being less likely to feel the effects. Where a participant is suffering from the effects of altitude, it may be necessary to walk them back down to lower elevations. There is no way of predicting how you will feel at altitude, even if you have been at similar elevations before. Our recommendations are to have **trained properly, to not drink alcohol** in the days leading up to the trip and to **listen to your leaders/guides** if they try to slow down the trekking pace. The slower you trek, the more it helps fending off feeling poorly.

What is the accommodation like?

At the start and end of the trek you stay in a good standard hotel (2-3*) on a twin-share basis. If you are travelling alone, you will be paired up with someone of the same sex and similar age – please let us know if you wish to share with a particular person, if you have not already done so. Whilst on the trek itself you'll be **camping** in 2- or 3-man tents in the grounds of a refuge. We will have a large dining-tent to gather in, and can use the refuge facilities. It's a great position for our base camp, and you'll be really happy to see it again on the descent!

Can I request single accommodation?

There may be a limited number of single rooms in the hotels at the start and end of the trip, subject to request and at an additional cost, on a first-come, first-served basis. It is not possible to have your own tent on the trek itself, as this is a tough challenge at altitude and there are weight limitations. Sharing a room is a really good ice-breaker if you don't know anyone else on the trip, so don't worry too much about it!



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Who accompanies us on the trek from Discover Adventure?

Your trip will be led by **experienced Discover Adventure leaders**. Our leaders are selected for their experience in harsh wilderness environments, knowledge of travel in remote areas, friendliness and approachability, sense of humour and ability to safely and effectively deal with any situation that arises. They are also trained in expedition first-aid. You are in very safe hands with a Discover Adventure leader.

Will there be a doctor trekking with us?

Depending on **group size**, an expedition doctor or medic may accompany the group. Our medics are there to provide first aid and promote day-to-day welfare on the trip; they carry a robust medical kit, but cannot possibly be equipped with everything needed to counter any given situation. They also provide crucial support to our leaders and, as they are usually found at the back of our groups, are also experts at encouraging you when things get tough.

Who else will accompany the group on this challenge?

Our local support crew is made up of local guides, drivers, muleteers and cooks. Local guides know the area well, and are a **great source of knowledge about local customs and lifestyles**. The Discover Adventure crew work closely with the local crew to ensure your trip runs smoothly and safely.

What are the transport arrangements for the group and our kit?

When you arrive in Morocco you will travel on a coach or minibus, depending on the group size, which will take you to the start and the end of the trek. When trekking, your **luggage will be transported up to base camp by mules**, so you cannot access your main packs during the day and will need to make sure that you carry a day-pack containing extra layers, waterproof, sun-cream, hat, camera, water and so on. Discover Adventure Kitbags are specially designed for the rigours of our challenges and are very affordable, please ask for details.

What will the weather be like?

The days are usually **warm, clear and sunny** at lower elevations with average temperatures from 18-32°C, though it gets much **cooler higher up**. Early mornings and evenings **can be very cold**. Though rain is unlikely, there is always a possibility of a wet or stormy day, and it can be very windy on **exposed ridges or peaks**, and on **summit day**. Never underestimate the power of the sun's rays, even when it feels cool, is cloudy or windy. Ensure that you bring at least Factor 30 sun-cream, along with a high SPF lip salve. A sun hat, which covers your neck, and quality sunglasses are also a must, though you'll need a warm hat at higher elevations.

What will I be eating?

It is amazing what the local crew produce in this environment! The food is **freshly-cooked and plentiful** so it is important that you make sure you are eating well for the long days of trekking. It's typical to lose your appetite at altitude, so you may have to make yourself eat at times. The meals are usually high in carbohydrate content, and you will eat foods like porridge, bread, stews, soups, potato, meat dishes, pastas, fruit and vegetables.

I have a specific dietary need; will there be enough for me to eat?

Being vegetarian, gluten free, dairy free or having other dietary requirements is usually not a problem provided you **let us know well in advance** (airlines need to know at least 8 weeks prior to the departure). Please do not expect the variety you would have at home – we will be among people of a different culture who may not understand your requirements, however willing they are to help, and in some regions certain foods are hard to access. If you feel you aren't getting enough energy because of your dietary requirements please talk to the leaders on the trip – they can't help unless they know there's a problem. If you know there are plenty of foods you cannot eat you may wish to bring extra snacks from home so you can top up your energy supply. Please feel free to ask us for advice.



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Do I need to bring snacks?

Bring enough snacks to keep you going each day - around **3-4 tasty treats a day will suffice**. We recommend a combination of slow and fast release snacks such as cereal bars (e.g. Tracker), flapjacks, salted nuts, chocolate bars, and a packet of sweets. Bringing a combination of treats will keep you interested in snacking as consistent energy levels are important.

How much do I need to drink?

Drink, drink, drink! Due to the nature of the challenge and the heat, you will need to drink significantly more in Morocco than you would trekking in the UK. You will be provided with plenty of drinking water at breakfast for the day ahead, and in the evenings at dinner, so ensure that you keep topping up your bottles and hydration systems. When it's colder, drinking is less appealing, but it's vital that you avoid dehydration. You will need to drink at least 3ltrs of water a day; get used to carrying at least 2ltrs on you when training so you get used to the weight.

What is the celebration meal?

At the end of your challenge, there will be a final meal together as a group to **celebrate your achievements**. Please check your trip itinerary to confirm whether you will need to set aside funds to pay for this on the night.

What about toilets?

Toilet facilities won't be like home. There are rarely toilet facilities during the day, so please be prepared. You will need to take baby wipes, nappy sacks and paper in order to make sure you **leave no trace** whilst out on your trek. These can then be discarded in the nearest bin. The toilet facilities in your accommodation may not be up to the standard that you are used to; please remember that you are in remote, fairly poor regions that are not in typical tourist areas.

What can I do to prevent illness during the challenge?

Illness can spread through the group very quickly when you are living closely together so it's important to bring **antiseptic hand sanitiser** for use after the toilet and before eating to minimise the spread of germs. Also, avoid sharing water bottles and sharing each other's food or sweets as this spreads germs very easily, even if you are being careful.

What if I have any issues during the trip?

Our leaders are very experienced and work very hard to ensure your trip runs as smoothly and enjoyably as possible, and we're sure that you'll have a wonderful time. If you do have any concerns or problems during the trip **please talk to the crew and give them the opportunity to explain or rectify things while they are able**. They are all very approachable!



What will happen in the case of an emergency on this challenge?

The crew will have phones, emergency satellite phones, extensive medical kit and other safety apparatus where necessary. If you are feeling unwell on this trek, tell your leaders and listen to their advice as **your health and safety is our top priority**.

Do I need travel insurance?

As part of your booking conditions, it is **compulsory that you ensure you have adequate travel insurance cover** to cover you for trekking. Participants residing in the UK can purchase insurance through our website with Insure2Travel via [this link](#); otherwise you are able to source your own preferred cover with a company of your choosing.



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What if this trip does not meet minimum numbers?

Every group needs a minimum number of bookings for it to be feasible to run. Cancelling a trip is rare, and we do our utmost to avoid it. You will be contacted in plenty of time if we are concerned about the group size, and we will discuss options with you.

How much money will I need to bring with me?

We usually recommend that you take approx £100-150 spending money in Sterling but of course it depends on how much you might want to buy! The Moroccan dirham is a closed currency, so you cannot obtain it in the UK. You can change money on arrival; £20 is usually plenty for the challenge itself, and you can tip in sterling. Out of this spending money, you will need to set aside approximately £30-50 for the meals not included as part of your itinerary. Once back at the hotel, you will be able to change further money. Do make sure you spend it before you go through security at the airport as you cannot spend dirham once you are through to the departure lounge area.

If you struggle to acclimatise to the altitude and need to descend to lower elevations for your own safety, you must ensure you have enough funds to cover **any resultant costs** – for example, extra hotel accommodation or meals. Some of these may be recoverable through your travel insurance, depending on your cover. The same applies if you have to **depart from group arrangements** for any other reason, such as fitness, illness or any unforeseen circumstances.

What do you recommend for crew tips?

The local Berber crew work incredibly hard and it is great if we can show our appreciation in the form of a tip. The guide is **\$35-40 per participant** which is split out between the local crew, but this is of course at your discretion. Please do not give out individual tips to any crew who you feel have helped you personally, as they work well as a team and those out of sight will be working just as hard as those with you on the trek. Your trip leader will give you further advice. Please do feel free to give away any unwanted kit on the last trekking day to the local crew.

Will there be Wi-Fi, phone reception and charging points?

The Wi-Fi in the hotel at the start and the end of the challenge may not be as fast as you're used to at home and there won't be any internet access when on the trek itself. The phone reception will be limited and there won't be access to power for charging devices. You may wish to bring your own solar charging device. Treat this challenge like a '**Digital Detox**' and tell your relatives that no news is good news, as the leader will have a satellite phone for emergencies only.

Will I need my flight ticket before the trip departure date?

Unless specified otherwise, you do not need to have your flight ticket prior to trip departure as this will be given to you by the trip leader or a Discover Adventure representative at the airport.

When will we know the flight details and meeting point?

Discover Adventure will usually confirm the main group flight details 5 months prior to the trip departure so you will know which airport you are travelling from and can arrange suitable transport. You will be sent your **Final Joining Instructions** in the month prior to the trip departure date, within which specific details of **where and when to meet your trip leader** and fellow trekking participants will be confirmed.

Can I make my own flight arrangements or alter my flight from the main group?

Flights are included on this trip and you will automatically be booked on to the main group flights, unless you let us know otherwise in good time (no later than three months prior to the trip departure). It is possible to make your own flight arrangements; a land-only discount will be applied when you return the '**Flight Arrangements Form**' (sent at the time of booking). It is also possible to extend your stay and deviate from the main group flight booking (fee applies); you will need to return the 'Flight Arrangements Form' with your request. Note that you will remain on the same flight path returning from the same airport. There is sometimes a supplement to pay if the flights are more expensive on your requested day; early requests have the best chance of avoiding this. We will always contact you if this is the case to check whether you are happy to proceed. If you are keen to upgrade your flight, this may be possible at a supplement and you can contact us for an approximate price but please note that this is often very expensive and we will require full payment upfront.



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What do I need to bring?

You will need to travel as lightly as possible as everything has to be carried by you and the mules. Refer back to the **Kit List** sent to you to ensure that you have all the essentials for this trip and take only small bottles of toiletries, sun cream, and half a pack of wet wipes for example. Doing a practice pack/weighing your bags before you leave home is very beneficial to make sure you haven't packed too much. Make sure your walking boots are lightweight, waterproof and well-worn in. Trekking tops of a wicking nature will be more comfortable to walk in than cotton. If you intend to trek with poles, ensure that you train with them. Don't forget your charity t-shirts too! If you are still to buy some kit don't forget that Cotswold Outdoor, Snow and Rock, Cycle Surgery and Runners Need offer all Discover Adventure participants **15% off** any purchases you make with them. Please ask us for the code if you do not have this already.

What is the luggage allowance?

Your main luggage limit on the plane is **20kg with a 5kg allowance for hand luggage**. Do travel lightly and take only small bottles of toiletries. If you stick to the kit list you will manage this with no problems and don't forget that suitcases are not suitable, soft rucksacks/kitbags only (with no wheels on).

Do I need to carry my own luggage?

Your main kit bags will be transported by mules between each overnight stop, you will only need to carry a day-pack yourself with your trekking essentials (i.e. water, spare layers, waterproof, sun-cream, hat, camera, snacks). We require that you bring a soft bag as your main luggage and not a suitcase.

What are the passport and visa requirements?

A valid 10-year passport is essential; with at least six months remaining before expiry. There are no visas required for Morocco for UK nationals currently, you can refer to the foreign travel advice given here for more information. If you do not have a UK passport, it is your responsibility to check the entry requirements with your own embassy, so please do so in good time. You will be asked to fill in an immigration form on arrival in Marrakech so please keep the information given to you at the airport by your leader which will include your hotel details.

How can I find out more about the requirement for vaccinations?

You will need to ensure that you have the vaccinations required for this trip prior to travel. You can find some guidance and information on the www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk website. Always consult your local GP or travel clinic for the latest health advice, as they are aware of any updates in World Health Travel requirements.

Passenger Portal

We have a **Passenger Portal** which will enable you to see any outstanding information we need, the countdown to your challenge departure, see your outstanding balance, make payments and update your contact details. You can access this via the following link - [Passenger Portal Log in](#).

Download the app!



We use the **VAMOOS travel app** that can be downloaded from the App store to your smartphone. The app can be used offline, and allows you to access all of your challenge documents from your phone. Just download the app and enter your unique code at the prompt (**please ask for your specific code if you do not have it**).



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