

Into Morocco with Mickey

Casablanca, Meknes, Fez, Dunes of Merzouga, Ouarzazate, Route of One Thousand Casbahs & Marrakech

Escorted by Mickey Huang, Marketing Manager, General Tours

Brochure Rate ~~\$3,499~~

Now only \$3,199

Including 18 meals, complete sightseeing, specially-arranged excursions,
exclusive private events, and all on-tour transportation

From Morocco's Imperial Cities across the Atlas Mountains to the Sahara!

December 5 to 13, 2009

Hurry! This departure is limited to 18 guests

Join Mickey Huang on this uniquely comprehensive journey into Morocco. We've designed this special departure with extra features, innovative sightseeing, our favorite restaurants, and handpicked accommodations to bring you the complete Moroccan experience.

Each day is carefully designed to engage you in the magic of Morocco... Sample fine wines at our private tasting in Meknes... Pause to savor bread at a bakery tucked away among the spice vendors of Fez... Ride a camel across the Sahara as the sun dips behind the golden dunes... And feast on couscous and tagine at some of the finest restaurants in the country.

Memorable experiences await you in Morocco, and Mickey is there to make sure that this is one of the best vacations you've ever had!

Our Concierge Service

For special assistance, additional travel planning, or even help finding a travel mate, Melanie is pleased to help. Call her anytime at 800-678-7942.

>>Meet Mickey Huang, your Tour Escort

Mickey Huang, our Marketing Manager

Mickey was bitten early on by the travel bug... taken by his parents on trips to Taiwan, Japan, Canada, England and Russia before he finished 5th grade. In college, he spent six months studying at the University of Strasbourg, taking the opportunity to travel nearly every weekend into all the neighboring countries.

After graduating, and failing to achieve fame as a puppeteer, he decided to pursue a career related to his other passion – travel. He joined Japan Travel Bureau in 1986 – and except for a brief stint helping friends with their Asian antique gallery in Chicago – he's been in the travel biz ever since.

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Mickey has lead trips to Japan, Central Europe, India, and South America, and he loves escorting for the opportunity to engage the world through the perspective of other curious, intrepid world travelers. He's excited to join you in Morocco and will be there everyday to make sure this is one of the best travel experiences of your life.

>>A Note from Mickey

This promises to be an amazing journey, a single voyage filled with so many different kinds of experiences. We'll enrich our minds as we delve into the history of Morocco's ancient kingdoms, tempt our palettes with wonderful cuisine, engage our senses as we dive into the colorful, spice-laden souks of Marrakech, and awaken our spirit amidst the ethereal beauty of the Menara Gardens.

We'll listen to Berber music under the star-filled Saharan sky, awake to sunrise over the golden dunes, and travel through mountain canyons and along the Route of 1,000 Casbahs.

Working carefully with my colleagues, we've crafted what just might be the perfect trip to Morocco... A leisurely voyage that explores deeply through all the natural and human wonders that make this country such a captivating place.

Mickey Huang
Marketing Manager, General Tours
Chicago, IL

PS: The souks of Morocco offer great prices on leather goods, ceramics, jewelry, textiles and more... A fun and inexpensive way to shop for the Holidays!

>>Our Unique Features and Itinerary

The Finest Accommodations * Fabulous Dining In-depth Sightseeing

- Led by Mickey Huang, Marketing Manager, with professional English-speaking Tour Guides
- A terrific price and unmatched value! We include 18 meals, in-depth sightseeing throughout, specially-arranged events, and all-on tour transportation
- Visit a renowned vintner in Meknes and sample fine Moroccan wines
- Our full-day exploration of Fez includes a walking tour into the artisans' quarters, a visit with a local baker, and time to shop... We finish the day with dinner and tattoos from a skilled Henna tattoo artist
- Journey into the Middle Atlas Mountains with lunch in a tranquil farming town set in the high mountain plains
- Travel in 4x4 vehicles over the golden dunes of Erg Chebbi to our comfortable tented camp in the Sahara Desert
- Enjoy an amazing overnight in the desert with camel rides across the dunes, wonderful food, and festive Berber music and tales around the campfire
- Journey through the spectacular Todra Gorges and along the Route of 1,000 Casbahs

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- Step into history and enjoy traditional Moroccan hospitality at two specially chosen hotels... one the former palatial residence of the Grand Vizier of Jamaï, and the other an elegant 18th century courtyard home in the heart of the Medina in Marrakech
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The Imperial Cities... Across the Atlas Range... And a Night in the Sahara!

Dec 5 – Arrive Casablanca, Morocco

Upon arrival at the airport, we'll be warmly greeted and escorted by private, air-conditioned motorcoach to **Le Royal Mansour Hotel**. After time to refresh, we join our guide to discover the highlights of Morocco's largest city. We'll begin in the colorful harbor area and see the bustling Central Market. In the Habous District, we explore the many little squares, arcades and shops of the "new" medina.

The magnificent Hassan II Mosque is a memorable highlight of our afternoon. Completed in 1993 after great artistic labor, this is one of the largest and most beautiful mosques in the world. Its stunning location – built on a platform that extends over the Atlantic Ocean – is complemented by the soaring artistry of its design and the exquisite indigenous materials used in its construction – creamy marble from Agadir, Cedar wood from the Middle Atlas Mountains, and gleaming granite from Tafraoute. Only the white granite columns and Murano glass chandeliers were imported.

This evening we gather together for dinner at *La Mer*, selected by our Casablanca colleagues for its fine cuisine and superb setting overlooking the ocean. Meals D

Dec 6 – Casablanca – Meknes – Fez

This morning we journey to Meknes, one of the four Imperial cities and recognized by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site. Founded in the 11th century as a military settlement, Meknes became a capital 300 years ago under Sultan Moulay Ismail. Today, it remains an impressive city in the Spanish-Moorish style, surrounded by high walls and imposing doors, with architecture that harmoniously blends Islamic and European aesthetic traditions of the 17th century.

We'll tour a regional vineyard here and sample several Moroccan wines before sitting down to a lunch of regional specialties. We continue on to Fez for two wonderful nights at the beautiful **Sofitel Fez Palais Jamaï**, an historic landmark luxury hotel overlooking the Medina. Meals B,L,D

Dec 7 – Explore Fez

The legendary Imperial city of Fez is the most complete medieval city in the Arab world. Founded in the 9th century and home to one of the world's oldest universities, it reached the peak of its influence and glory in the 13th and 14th centuries when it replaced Marrakech as the capital of the Kingdom. Though the modern capital was transferred to Rabat nearly 100 years ago, Fez remains the cultural and spiritual heart of the country.

Our in-depth sightseeing begins in the historic Jewish Quarter, where we'll see the 17th century Synagogue and Royal Gates. We continue on a walking tour into the fascinating Medina, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Our guide will show us the artisans' quarters, 14th century Koranic school, and Al Karaouine Theological University. We'll admire the magnificent ceramic mosaics of the famed Nejjarine Fountain – pausing for a drink if you wish – before sampling fresh-from-the-oven delicacies from a local bakery. Amidst the tanners and merchants, we'll have free time to shop for gifts and souvenirs. Leather,

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ceramics, textiles, jewelry and spices are just a few of the many unique items to be purchased.

At dinner this evening, we'll witness a skilled Henna tattoo artist at work. Getting your own tattoo is a fun experience and offers a memorable token of the evening! Meals B,D

Dec 8 – Fez / Midelt / The Dunes of Merzouga

After an early breakfast, we embark on our scenic drive in to the Middle Atlas Mountains, a region of cedar forests, peaceful valleys, and sweeping mountain vistas. We'll stop in Midelt, a peaceful farming town in the high plains, for lunch at the *Kasbah Asma Restaurant*, known for its specialties of the Atlas region. In the afternoon we arrive in Merzouga, perched on the edge of the mighty Sahara desert. We'll transfer to 4x4 vehicles and journey across the famed golden dunes of Erg Chebbi. Our destination is *La Belle Etoile*, an enchanting tented encampment set amidst the golden dunes of the vast Sahara.

We'll enjoy a camel ride over the dunes, watch the sun set over the desert, and dine on fine Moroccan fare served under a canopy of desert stars. Later, before retiring to your private tent, enjoy Berber music and tales around the campfire. Meals B,L,D

Dec 9 – Merzouga / The Route of One Thousand Casbahs / Ouarzazate

Early risers will be rewarded this morning with a spectacular sunrise over the Saharan dunes. After a traditional Berber breakfast, we leave behind the rolling sands of the desert and journey toward the snow-topped High Atlas Mountains. We'll stop in the small oasis town of Tinehir and continue onward through the Todra Gorges, with majestic canyon walls that soar 900 feet. Traveling through the equally scenic Dades Valley brings us to El Kelaa and the Route of One Thousand Casbahs, an ancient caravan route dotted with these old fortified towns and even some 19th century single-family compounds built with the distinctive crenulated walls of a medieval casbah. We continue on to Ouarzazate where we'll enjoy dinner and restful overnight at the lovely ***Berbère Palace Hotel***. Meals B,D

Dec 10 – Ouarzazate / Marrakech

Our visit this morning through the casbah will reveal why this captivating town has been the setting for so many films, including *The Gladiator*, *Lawrence of Arabia*, and *The Sheltering Sky*. We experience Ouarzazate's magical beauty and then depart across the 7,400-foot Tichka Pass en route to Marrakech, where we check-in to the lovely ***Riad Kniza***. Meals B,D

Dec 11 – Explore Marrakech

We'll enjoy a comprehensive guided exploration of this marvelous city, founded 800 years ago by the Almoravides Dynasty. First we visit the lavishly decorated Saadian Tombs, dating to the late 16th century. The complex includes two grand mausoleums with 66 tombs and more than 100 more tombs outside the gardens. The gravestones of these Saadian princes and members of the royal household are embellished simply and elegantly with colorful ceramic tiles, each with a short epitaph and a quote from the Qur'an. The next stop is the Dar Si Said Museum, an unparalleled collection of Moroccan art exhibited in an exquisite former palace.

Our sightseeing continues to the 12th century Koutoubia Mosque and the lovely Bahia Palace, built in 1880. Then we immerse in the exotic atmosphere of the city's famed souks; we'll follow our guide into this fascinating maze of shops and vendor stalls to emerge in lively Djemaa el Fna Square, undoubtedly the heart of the Marrakech medina.

Tonight, we'll enjoy the finest of Moroccan cuisine at *Palais Soleiman*, an elegant restaurant set in an opulent 19th century palace. Meals B,D

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Dec 12 – Marrakech at Leisure

Enjoy a full day in lively Marrakech to explore at your own pace, shop for the holidays, or just relax in the tranquil setting of the **Riad Kniza**. This evening, we'll step aboard horse-drawn carriages for a romantic ride into the heart of town - to a 17th century Moroccan Palace in the Medina. We'll enjoy live music, meet the skilled chefs, and sit down to an extraordinary meal of traditional Moroccan dishes, from couscous and pastilla to savory tagines. Meals B,D

Dec 13 – Marrakech Departure

This morning, we'll be escorted to the airport for our homeward journey. Meals B

Our Concierge Service

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>>Our Carefully Selected Hotels and Desert Camp

Le Royal Mansour Méridien Hotel - Casablanca

Overlooking Casablanca's harbor and the magnificent Hassan II Mosque, Le Royal Mansour Méridien enjoys a privileged location in the heart of the city. Through a grand entry under towering columns and graceful arches, guests step into a gleaming lobby of marble and brass.

Spacious guestrooms are beautifully appointed with refined Moroccan styling and 21st century amenities. Each light-filled, air-conditioned room features satellite & cable TV, high speed Internet access, direct dial telephone with voice mail, mini-bar, in-room electronic safe, bathrobes, and hairdryer. Complimentary newspaper, fruit basket, and 24-hour room service are also provided.

Onsite, guests can enjoy a well-equipped fitness center and spa treatments. Although we'll enjoy a wonderful dinner in the city and a full breakfast, the hotel does offer early morning to late night dining in several elegant restaurants and lounges, including *La Douira* for Moroccan cuisine and *Le Jardin d'Hiver* for Mediterranean-inspired dishes.

Hotel Palais Jamai – Fez

Built in 1879 in the finest Moorish style, this historic landmark was once the residence of the Grand Vizier of Jamaï. Surrounded by lovely gardens in the heart of the city, our luxury hotel towers above the Fez Medina – a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Spacious guestrooms feature traditional Moroccan styling, elegant furnishings, and 21st century guest amenities, including satellite TV, mini-bar, in-room safety deposit box, WiFi Internet access, and hairdryer.

The hotel offers a well-equipped fitness center, outdoor heated pool, Hammam, Jacuzzi and sauna. Our program includes breakfasts and dinners during our stay in Fez, but the hotel does also offer excellent dining options with both international and Moroccan fare.

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La Belle Etoile – Tented Camping in the Sahara

An extraordinary experience awaits us here at this enchanting desert camp. Surrounded by the golden dunes of Erg Chebbi, La Belle Etoile is an inviting retreat in the heart of the Sahara Desert. Cozy tented accommodations each have a separate private shower and toilet, and are comfortably appointed with Moroccan textiles, simple furnishings, a welcoming bed, and the warm glow of a lamps.

Fabulous meals, the star-filled desert sky, and entertainment around a campfire promise an unforgettable night in the Sahara.

Le Berbère Palace Hotel – Ouarzazate

Reflecting its unique location along the Route of 1,000 Casbahs, Le Berbère Palace Hotel is built in the style of a casbah, with jasmine scented pathways and date palms set against an impressive architectural backdrop of traditional Berber styling. Spacious, air-conditioned guestrooms feature satellite TV, telephone, and mini-bar. Explore the lovely gardens or relax on your private terrace or patio.

Riad Kniza - Marrakech

A *riad* is a traditional Moroccan home or palace, built around an interior courtyard garden. Dating to the 18th century, the Riad Kniza was lovingly restored by its current owner, Haj Mohamed Bouskri, using the finest traditional materials and craftsmanship. The result today is an exceptional luxury boutique hotel of just 11 rooms.

Set within the heart of the old Medina and just minutes from Djemaa el Fna Square, our stay here promises to be a highpoint of our journey, a true Moroccan experience. Our riad offers a swimming pool, cozy sitting rooms with traditional furnishings and magnificent fireplaces, and three open-air courtyards.

On our day at leisure here in Marrakech, the Riad Kniza's prime location makes it easy to step out for shopping and exploring at our own pace.

>> Cruise & Tour Fares

Act now... Space is limited! Save \$300 off our published rates.

All-inclusive fare with carefully selected hotels and a tented Sahara camp, 18 meals, comprehensive sightseeing in each city, special features, and all on-tour transportation

December 5 to 13, 2009

Published rate: ~~\$3,499~~

	Double	Single
Into Morocco	\$3,199	\$4,098

Add our attractively-priced air

Call your travel agent or us for international economy or business airfare.

A limited number of singles are available. Prices are per person, land only. Due to our specially-negotiated rates and exclusive features, we can not offer additional discounts or Member savings on this departure.

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>>Deposit, Payment & Visa Information

Deposit

\$250 per person deposit is due within 7 calendar days of booking.

Full Payment

Full payment is due by September 3, 2009

If The Traveler Cancels

- Up to 121 days (up to August 5, 2009) before departure: \$100 fee per person
- 120 to 91 days (August 6 – September 3, 2009) before departure: \$15% of price plus airline cancellation penalties
- 90 to 61 days (September 4 – October 2, 2009) before departure: 35 % of price plus airline cancellation penalties
- 60 to 31 days (October 3 – November 3, 2009) before departure: 50 % of price plus airline cancellation penalties
- Within 30 days of departure (November 4 – 0 days) before departure: 100% of price plus airline cancellation penalties

Contact for Deposits & Final Payments

General Tours World Traveler, 53 Summer Street, Keene, New Hampshire 03431

Email: info@generaltours.com

Transfers

Airport transfers on September 18 and September 30 are included for passengers who purchase their air from General Tours World Traveler and travel with the group on our designated flights. These transfers are available for separate purchase at \$50 per person, each way.

Passport & Visa

All US Citizens are required to have a United States passport valid for at least six months after their return to the USA.

>>Travel Protection Plan

We Highly Recommend Travel Insurance

If you cancel your trip for a reason covered under our Travel Insurance Plan, you will receive a money-back refund. Please see www.GeneralToursEvents.com/travelinsurance.pdf for complete coverage details.

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