

# A DROMEDARY RIDE INTO THE SAHARA'S ERG CHEBBI

'Meharée': Trek with 1 dromedary per person



2DAYS/1NIGHT. OBTADS01

**DAY 1: ERFOUD - MERZOUGA - ERG CHEBBI.** From our rendezvous point at the Hotel Tizimi in Erfoud at 2pm during the winter months, 3pm in summer, we set out half an hour later 1½ hours' drive in our air-conditioned 4x4 towards the south, crossing the Oued Ziz, first along an asphalt road for some 16km, then another 35km of sandy piste trails carved out of the sandy crust by motorbikes and other adventurous vehicles to the tiny desert town of Merzouga in an enormous palmeraie. According to one legend, the dunes of Erg Chebbi were created by God as a punishment to the locals of nearby Merzouga after they refused to give shelter to a woman and her child during a local festival. A sandstorm came, and buried the village of Merzouga as it was then. We shall see, in a dramatic line almost perfectly from north to south, the incredible panorama of the sea of sand dunes of the Erg Chebbi, the highest and longest stretch of dunes in the Moroccan Sahara. Once we've arrived at Merzouga, we alight to enjoy a traditional welcoming glass, or two, of mint tea at the Auberge Du Sud whilst your baggage is being loaded onto the pack animals. At around 4pm (winter) (5pm summer) we set off, one person per dromedary, for some 2 hours across this sea of golden dunes. This is the only 'true' desert area of the kingdom of Morocco and an area where meteorites continue to be found, as were crocodile teeth, shark, pterosaur and spinosaurus fossils. We stop in the middle of nowhere to witness, from the high dunes, Nature's incredible light show of sunset over ever-changing colours of dunes, to continue on under the star-filled heavens to our bivouac site of a carpeted Berber tent in a small oasis. First things first, a glass of mint tea once our packs are being unloaded. Our tagine dinner is prepared and, after dessert, tea or coffee, we sing and chat to our heart's content. **D.**



**DAY 2: ERG CHEBBI - MERZOUGA - ERFOUD.** Our last brilliant sunrise, equal almost to last night's unforgettable sunset, our Bedouin breakfast of tea, 'sand' bread, jam and cheese tucked away, our dromedaries having been saddled up for the return stage, we set off back across the plain around half past eight for our final Méharée of some 2½ hours to the Auberge Du Sud, where we'll take a shower before boarding our 4x4 and an 1½ hour drive back to Erfoud and our original starting point at the Hotel Tizimi. **B.**



**OUR PRICES FOR THE STANDARD VERSION WILL INCLUDE:** Transfer by air-conditioned 4x4 Erfoud-Merzouga-Erfoud; meals\* (*BYOB recommended*) and tented accommodation (maximum 4 persons per tent) as detailed; trained dromedary & cameleer. Chemical toilet. Medical and Accident insurance. \* Those **vegetarians or vegans** amongst us need to pre-advise at time of reservation.

**OUR PRICES FOR THE DELUXE VERSION WILL INCLUDE:** Transfer by air-conditioned 4x4 Erfoud-Merzouga-Erfoud. Meals\* and tented accommodation (maximum 4 persons per tent); trained dromedary and cameleer; chemical toilet. *Folklore music & dancing around camp fire*; lanterns and candles; dinner includes hors d'oeuvres, 2 main courses of tagine and couscous or kebabs\*, fruit basket, mint tea, Moroccan pastries, 1 bottle of wine between 2. Medical and Accident insurance.

**OUR PRICES WILL NOT INCLUDE:** Accommodation pre & post nor transfers from/to Fes', Marrakech's or Ouarzazate's airports. Gratuity to driver, cameleer and camp headman. Any expenditure of a personal nature. Bottled or gaseous water, nor anything not specifically mentioned in the itinerary.

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**IT IS RECOMMENDED YOU BRING WITH YOU:** Trousers and sweater; day pack; trainers or sandals; windcheater (seasonal), broad-brimmed hat (or you may purchase a 'Chèche' before you set out from Erfoud); change of socks; personal toiletries and towel; hygienic 'Wipes'; small First Aid kit; torch with batteries (non-essential); filled water bottle; water purification drops - usually iodine; sunscreen, sunglasses; penknife – do not pack in hand baggage for flights; nibbles and/or dried fruit. Drinking chocolate if preferred. Camera, film and plastic bags for lenses; extra toilet rolls could come in handy! For those who wear contact lenses, it could be a good idea to bring along a spare pair of glasses.

