

THE MOROCCAN HIGH ATLAS RANGE

MOUNTAIN COUNTRY AND VALLEYS

Escape the

heat

NICE 'N EASY PRIVATE ONE DAY ANY DAY EXCURSIONS FROM MARRAKECH.

THE DELIGHTFUL OURIKA VALLEY

OBTRAK09. 9 HOURS

MARRAKECH - OURIKA VALLEY - AGHBALOU - SETTI FADMA CASCADE - MARRAKECH. Departure from Marrakech around



9 o'clock for an exciting 1½ hour drive south through to one of Morocco's longest and most beautiful, refreshing valleys - the Ourika Valley - teeming with lush vegetation, palmeriaes and Berber hamlets. Having crossed the Haouz Plains with its olive-groves and citrus-tree orchards, some 33km from Marrakech this valley really starts at a small Berber village of Dar Caïd Ouriki. With its kasbah and mosque this charming little township is the region's nerve centre, thanks to its Monday *souk* when inhabitants from neighbouring hamlets meet there to negotiate their precious harvests, purchase essential items and the all-important gossip, all in an unequalled atmosphere of a mixture of peddlers' shouts, hold-ups caused by old donkey-drawn carts and rousing good humour.

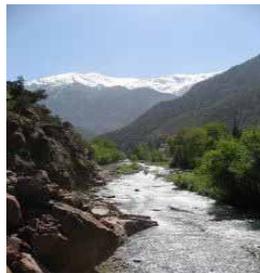


We reach the Berber village of Tiguemi n'Oumzilet Tnine and on through the midst of olive groves and terraced, irrigated plots of land, some are generously shaded by poplar trees and other weeping willows - unusual at this latitude - to the ochre-red villages of Akhlij and Tafza until we reach the Berber hamlet of Tamzenddirt (**1150m**), all villages clinging to the mountain slopes and whose homes have been built from the soil clawed from mountain. We continue on up alongside the now narrow road in the midst of fields of corn or barley towards Anins to arrive at Aghbalou (1148m) where we you may see the Berber womenfolk in their simple homes weaving their colourful, intricately-designed carpets. The local inhabitants are fond of saying "*Here there is a lot of water but not much land, whereas as lower down, it's the water that's lacking, not the land.*"



We continue up through this beautiful valley to the riverside hamlet and trailhead of Setti Fadma (**1740m**) with its groves of ancient walnut trees and rickety little bridge. On our return to Marrakech, we stop for lunch at the village of Aghbalou overlooking the oued before continuing on to the Ourika Safranière where you may learn more of saffron and other spices and their use in flavoured cooking and where you will be seduced by the rich scents of the bio-aromatic garden, possibly with a short talk on aromatherapy. Time permitting, we may also visit the striking gardens of Timalizene, designed by the inventor Rémi Aubrée on ten terraces with Moroccan plants and trees in a poetic garden so full of surprises set between the mountains and the river before arriving back at

Marrakech around 6 pm at the latest. **L.**



OUR PRICES WILL INCLUDE: Private transportation Marrakech - Setti Fadma - Marrakech. A light lunch. Bottled or gaseous water. Medical and Accident Insurance.

OUR PRICES WILL NOT INCLUDE: *Accommodation pre & post, nor transfers from/to Marrakech's' airport.* Gratuity to chauffeur. Any expenditure of a personal nature, nor anything not specifically mentioned in the itinerary.

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IT IS RECOMMENDED YOU BRING WITH YOU: Good trainers, hat, sunscreen, sunglasses; hygienic 'wipes'. Walking socks; day pack 'bum bag', insect repellent, camera and possibly some biros and sweets for the local mountain Berber children.