

## THE MOROCCAN SOUTHERN HIGH ATLAS RANGES

### MOUNTAIN COUNTRY HIKES AND VALLEY RAMBLES


ANY DAY DEPARTURES


# The Wilderness Walk

## JBEL SIROUA



This 'Any Day' trek is definitely for those who seek something "off-the-beaten-track". Best trekked from *autumn to spring*; summer is for those who don't mind a bit of harsh sun.

6DAYS/5NIGHTS OBTJS01m




**LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: GRADE TWO TO THREE**  BETWEEN MODERATE TO SOMETIMES STRENUOUS. BOOTS REQUIRED. YOU NEED TO BE REASONABLY CONFIDENT OF YOUR FITNESS, PREFERABLY HAVING HAD SOME PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE OF TREKKING AND CHANGES IN CLIMATE. CLEARLY THERE ARE MANY DIFFERING FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE DIFFICULTY OF A PARTICULAR HIKE, INCLUDING LENGTH OF DAY, TERRAIN, ALTITUDE AND WEATHER CONDITIONS. SINCE THESE FACTORS ARE NECESSARILY VARIABLE, ANY SYSTEM OF GRADES CAN ONLY PROVIDE A GENERAL INDICATION. WE HAVE TRIED TO MAKE OUR SYSTEM AS CLEAR AS POSSIBLE, BUT IT CANNOT ACCOUNT FOR PERSONAL ABILITIES OR EXPERIENCE.

**DAY 1: MARRAKECH - AMERZGANE - ANEZAL - TAMLAKHOUT.** A reasonably early morning departure for our 178km drive towards the south from Marrakech, over the Tizi n'Tichka (2260m) of the Western High Atlas and along down the Assif Imini Valley to Taliouine d'Amerzgane, where we turn towards the south-west and the Assif Iriri Valley until we reach the village and important animal market of Anezal. Here we alight from our vehicle, take our field picnic and meet up with our mules and muleteers, always a fun part of our hiking holidays. We set off now towards the west for a 2hour hike to the oasis village of Tamlakhout (1700m), tucked away in the valley for our dinner and overnight accommodation in a Berber Gîte d'étape. **LD.** 






**DAY 2: TAMLAKHOUT - TAMAZIRRT - AÏT TIZOUÂD.** After breakfast we strike out towards the south-west for our 7 hour hike across the Oued n'Aït Ouissa'dane, through almond trees and a rolling, blasted stony plain with its occasional sparse fields of barley, corn, potato and wheat, until we reach the remote village of Tamazirt (1800m). Here we shall see few men, as they are off working in the distant towns in order to make ends meet. From here we shall follow a piste which leads us up to the Imghi Heights (2381m), where we shall stop around midday for our field picnic. Our afternoon is spent hiking along the now almost-flat piste to the Berber hamlet of Aït Tizouâd (2030m) where we shall stop for dinner and overnight accommodation, either in bivouac or in a basic Berber family's home. The homes in this region are of stone, and not of pisé (adobe), as is common to the Western High Atlas Berber homes. **BLD.**  



**DAY 3: TIZOUÂD - OUED IRIRI - TASSIROUÂT.** Once breakfast has been tucked away we set out further south-east for some 7 hours along a piste leading us across the wild, windswept plateau dissected by craters and numerous volcanic plugs up and through the stark Tizi (2300m) and down to the Oued Iriri, where we'll take a welcome pause for a field picnic near some rare fields of potato. The afternoon is spent hiking towards the west and the end of the oued through a chaos of black rock until we arrive up at the village of Asrir n'Tassirouât, where we'll dine whilst our camp for the night is being set up amidst a volcanic moonscape. **BLD.**   



**DAY 4: TASSIROUÂT - JBELSIROUA (SIRWA) SUMMIT - ÂAZIB N'IRIRI - AMMASSINE.** After breakfast, whilst our muleteers and mules set off for the Âazib n'Iriri, we strike out for a 2½ hour attack on the summit of this isolated, extinct volcanic twin-peak (3304m), with its strange columns of basalt, cones of petrified lava plugs and towers of sunblasted rock. The final metres involve scrambling, but the panorama from this summit bridging the High and Anti Atlas ranges of dramatic gorges, blasted plains, a cliff village and the nearby twin cones of Jbel Tikniouine ("The Twins") (2948m) (2905) to the north, Jbel Guiliz (2906m) to the south and of Jbel Talzougaght (2841m) to the west give one a good idea of previous volcanic activity and of Nature's implacable progress. When ready, we set off back down along a winding path for some 5 to 6 hours steady hiking towards the north-east through fields of saffron crocus to the Âazib n'Iriri (2340m), where we meet up once more with our muleteers and our field picnic. This afternoon we shall set off down through a chaos of black rocks, stones and pebbles towards the remote village of Ammassine (2000m). We'll take a stroll around this strange village with its large, bizarre storage places of wheat and hay, and back up to the Âazib n'Iriri where we'll have dinner and camp for the night. **BLD.**   



**DAY 5: AMMASINE - TACHAKOUCHT - TAMMELAKHOUT.** Breakfast tucked away, we're off today on an 8 hour hike down to the Oued Tachakoucht and along a winding piste through isolated groves of almond, olive and orange trees until we come to the village of Tachakoucht and, after a brief visit, we'll carry on to the Tachakoucht Reservoir and sudden fields of corn to picnic by a spring. Later we continue down a stony piste skirting the hamlet of Tamazirrt to arrive at Tammelakhout, a market town of terraced fields and gardens of saffron crocus, our Gîte d'étape for dinner and evening's entertainment provided by our merry band of muleteers. **BLD.**



**DAY 6: TAMLAKHOUT - ANEZAL - KSAR AIR BEN HADDOU - TADDERT - MARRAKECH.** After breakfast, we rejoin our vehicle to take us back to the northeast to the magnificently exotic Kasbah and Ksour of Ait Ben Haddou, declared, and rightly so, a World Heritage Site. Here we alight from our vehicle to visit these various kasbahs, so closely-knit that they appear to be but one complete building, backed up against the looming mountain in a stretch of unforgiving Hamada. The thick, high, sheer, elaborately decorated pisé walls, stepped-up housing, turreted, crenulated ramparts, and balustrades and arched 'babs' are a sight not to be missed. One of the more spectacular sights in the Atlas ranges, set upon a rock above a reed-strewn assif, commanding the area for miles around, this kasbah controlled the route to Marrakech until the French blasted a road through the Tizi n'Tichka in the late 1920s up to which we drive to stop at Taddert (1650m) for our lunch high up in the High Atlas mountains, to arrive at Marrakech around 2 in the afternoon. **BL.**



*Please ensure, **at time of reservation**, you advise us of your choice between bivouac or Berber house accommodation in Tam lakhout and Tizouâd.*

**OUR PRICES WILL INCLUDE:** Private round trip transportation from your hotel or riad in Marrakech to trailheads and return to the hotel or riad or airport in Marrakech. An experienced English-speaking licensed mountain guide throughout. Tents and undermats; cook and equipment; all meals and accommodation as detailed; mules and muleteer/cook. Medical and Accident Insurance. Clients are always requested to check their own personal travel insurance to see if any adrenaline activities are precluded.

**OUR PRICES WILL NOT INCLUDE:** Accommodation pre & post, nor transfers from/to Marrakech's' airport. Gratuities to guide/cook/muleteers. Personal gear. Any expenditure of a personal nature. Bottled or gaseous water, nor anything not specifically mentioned in the itinerary.

**To choose you hotel or ryad, please close this page and go to [Find a Hotel](#) or [Find a Ryad](#)**

**IT IS RECOMMENDED YOU BRING WITH YOU:** Stout mountain walking boots; change of socks, sleeping bag (3-4 seasons); rucksack, windcheater or duvet jacket (seasonal); lip balm; LED head lamp or torch with batteries (optional); earmuffs, ski cap or balaclava, slickers, thermal underwear, gloves (all seasonal Nov-Apr); filled water bottle (bottled water or water purification drops - usually iodine); rambler pole(s); penknife - do not pack in hand baggage for flights; personal toiletries and towels; hygienic 'Wipes'; insect repellent; sunscreen, nibbles (muesli or dried fruit) drinking chocolate if preferred. Extra toilet rolls and a trowel would come in quite handy.

N.B: Meals during the hike are normally:-

Breakfast - mint tea, coffee, chocolate powder, milk, bread, butter, jam, cheese, cereals.

Picnic lunch - fresh Moroccan salad, cheese, tinned tuna fish\*, mint tea, bread.

Dinner - Tagine (chicken or mutton\*), couscous or spaghetti rotated according to the duration of the trek; bread, coffee, mint tea, cake, fruit. \* **Those vegetarians or vegans** amongst us need to pre-advise at time of reservation.