



Gite 59
37 d'été



How to Plan the Perfect Student Trip to Morocco Brought to you by Evolve Tours

Welcome! Evolve Tours has designed this guide as a helpful resource for those interested in organizing a trip for their students to Morocco. In the following pages, you'll discover how to decide on the type of trip for you, the right destination, some of the activities your students can enjoy in Morocco, where to sleep, where to eat, an explanation of travel insurance, travel tips and more! Our goal is to make the trip planning process as seamless and as stress free for you and your colleagues as possible

Why should my student group visit Morocco?

A trip to Morocco can be an amazingly educational and cultural experience for students. Considering the various destinations of potential trips can seem overwhelming, but the best first step is to decide where to travel. You'll want to determine the intended focus of the trip, then you can then decide which Morocco trip best suits what you and your group are looking to experience. For example:

History- Are you a history teacher who would like to immerse your students in twelve centuries of varying and intense history? Morocco has all of that and more nestled into one little country. Try Fez, Tangier, and Marrakech.

Language - Are you a French language teacher who would love for your students to partake in language workshops? Explore the cities of Casablanca and Marrakech to help your students experience real-life conversations.

Outdoor Adventure- Do you want your students to experience both ancient history, and outdoor activities? The Atlas Mountain Range has all of your hiking and stunning view needs, and you'll get to interact with Berber communities that have been living there for thousands of years.

Community Service- From just a morning or afternoon to a full community service trip, Morocco provides many opportunities to engage and help the local communities and people. Your students will see the world in a whole new light.

Mixed Focus- A balance of educational activities, outdoor activities, and entertainment. Think half Atlas Mountains, half major cities, maybe a pinch of desert tours, and some coastal surfing lessons from the best.



Morocco is a fantastic destination for students of the following subjects: Geography, History, French Language, Social Studies, History, World Religion and more! Whatever subject your student group is interested in, there's sure to be a Moroccan trip perfect for your students.

Cities of Morocco

Morocco is a small but mighty country, with a large variety of areas complete with their own unique geography, culture, history and travel incentives. Therefore, there are many different possibilities for your Morocco trip. Here is a list of great student travel options divided by city and/or region:

- Marrakech
- Fez
- Atlas Mountain Range
- Casablanca
- Tangier
- Essaouira
- Agadir
- Rabat (the capital city)
- Sahara Desert



What time of the year should my student group visit Morocco?

The best time of year for student trips to Morocco is October through April. Most Moroccan trips are 7 to 14 days long, although the trip length varies depending on countries visiting, activities planned, and budget. Morocco typically has great weather during the fall, winter, and spring, allowing the potential to walk around cities and explore comfortably. The summer gets a little hot, and that means the trip can't have as many activities in it. If you're planning on visiting the coast, make sure to pack that bathing suit!

Check the following links for more information about Moroccan weather throughout the year and some tips on deciding when to travel.

Lonely Planet's 'When to Go and Weather':

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/morocco/weather>

Frommer's 'When to Go', detailing holidays: <http://www.frommers.com/destinations/morocco/642764>

What are The Best Student-Friendly Activities in Morocco?

Check out this list for some of Evolve Tour's favourite and most popular activities for school groups in various Moroccan cities:

Marrakech

Guided walking tour of the Souks

Jemaa-el Fnaa

Koutoubia Mosque

El Badi Palace

Saadian Tombs

Bahia Palace

Majorelle Gardens

La Mamounia

Marrakech Museum

Fez

Leather Tannery

Bou Inania Madrasa

Cooking Tour through the market

Nejjarine Museum of Wood Arts and Crafts

Casablanca

Hassan II Mosque

Casablanca Cathedral

Kasbah

Rabat

Mausoleum of Mohammed V

Hassan Tower

Chellah

Andalusian Gardens

Rabat Beach



Tangier

Dar el Makhzen

Essaouira

Elizir

Essaouira Beach

Medina

Skala du Port

Agadir

Souss-Massa National Park

Souq al-had

Musee du Patrimoine Amazigh

Palm Beach and the Port



The Fez skyline will take your breath away

Sahara Desert

Camel Trek through the desert

Traditional dinner and dancing

Atlas Mountain Range

Hikes ranging from 1-7 days

Visits inside real Berber huts for

A traditional tea ceremony

Have one day in a city and looking to make the most of it? In most large cities with a tourism industry, you'd be hard pressed not to find a guide to give you a walking tour.

Walking tours are a great way to orient yourself in a foreign place, and learn about the history from a local.

For more information about all of the above attractions and more, visit:

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/morocco/things-to-do/top-things-to-do-in-morocco>

Morocco is full of pleasant surprises. From sprawling beaches to bustling markets where you can learn to barter like a local: Morocco has many different sides to show. The colours, architecture, different languages, cultures, and always delicious homemade food make for a guaranteed incredible trip. Morocco may not come first to mind when thinking of the next place to take a trip, but it is a better and more popular option than you'd think. Think of Morocco like a hidden gem, yours for the taking.



Should I work with a travel company?

Our next step is deciding whether you will plan the trip on your own, or use the help of a student travel provider. Some teachers are used to planning the trip themselves, but many enjoy the less stressful and time consuming route of hiring a travel company that will expertly take care of all the pre-trip planning. To make the decision easier, we've made some comparison charts, comparing the pros and cons of doing a trip on your own vs. with a tour provider.

ON YOUR OWN

| Pros | Cons |
|--|---|
| ✓ Cheaper | ✗ A lot of stressful planning. Organizing the hotels, transportation, meals, activities and more. |
| ✓ Plan exactly what you want, without sticking to a schedule | ✗ Missing out on professional, time-tested itineraries. |
| | ✗ No on-ground tour director with local knowledge who oversees the trip. |

WITH A TOUR COMPANY

| Pros | Cons |
|---|--|
| ✓ Having a guide(s) with local knowledge. As with any form of travel, whether it be museum hopping or outdoor activities, you're bound to learn more, gain a greater understanding of the local community, and just get more out of the whole experience when following a knowledgeable expert. | ✗ Set itinerary: although some travel companies like Evolve Tours are flexible and dedicated to customizing their trips, many others offer no customization. |
| ✓ Safety and Security- A travel provider will ensure all supplier companies (restaurants, hotels, activities) are safe, reputable and provide quality services. As well, emergency protocols and first-aid trained tour staff. | |
| ✓ No details to worry about! You're free to focus fully on the ride, and have someone else sweat over the small, yet paramount details. | ✗ Generally, planning with a tour company is more expensive than doing it on your own. |
| ✓ Allergy, food restrictions communicated to all the suppliers (hotels, restaurants and activities) | |
| ✓ Group rates on transportation and accommodation since they work with suppliers year round with many student groups | |
| ✓ Years of expertise | |



How to choose the perfect student travel company

(Adapted from "How to Choose a Reputable Adventure Travel Company or Guide" at <http://gadling.com/2011/08/05/a-guide-to-choosing-adventure-travel-companies-and-guides/>)

There are many student travel companies that run Morocco trips; not all are created equal. There are some key things you should look for when choosing a company to plan and run your student trip. Here are tips on what to look for or avoid when choosing a company or guide.

Reputation and Safety

Even a brief online search will bring to light any serious breaches in safety or conduct. Safety doesn't just apply to those who plan to scale the Andes or kayak the Zambezi. Even the tamest "adventures" require guides who are knowledgeable about the area and activity. Make sure you have someone on hand that is currently certified in emergency first aid and rescue procedures. Ensure that the company has emergency protocols and risk management policies in place and that they truly value safety over all else.

Client Communication

How clear and accurate is the company's literature or website? How long does it take them to respond to your emails or phone calls? A few days is standard, but if you find yourself having to follow up repeatedly, move on. A reputable travel company will detail exactly what is included and what is not for the price. All services should be clearly spelled out and agreed upon.

Customized Itineraries

A legitimate student travel provider will have trip itineraries that they have successfully run time and time again. They know what works and developed what they believe to be a flawless itinerary. However, there is a big plus when finding a travel company who is flexible with their itineraries. Find someone who will work with you to create the best possible custom itinerary for your group's needs.

Guide qualifications

Are their guides knowledgeable about the region you are visiting? Do they have experience leading trips there? Ideal guides will have experience travelling in the cities you are visiting and will be energetic, informative, entertaining and organized.

Ask for referrals

We suggest asking a tour company for referrals of other schools who they have run Morocco trips for before. You can also look at reviews on sites like TripAdvisor.com, or search travel blogs.

"In the end, sometimes it just comes down to how comfortable a person feels with the company and their interactions with them."

Where should my student group stay in Morocco?

When choosing where your group will stay, it's important to keep a few factors in mind. Depending on your group, some factors may be more important than others. For example: location and proximity to activities, price, room types and sizes or youth hostels vs. hotels, or volunteer housing. In Morocco, the best place to stay is usually local Riads, which are re-done houses to be hotels. They are medium in size, very friendly, and always gorgeous inside.

What are the best student-friendly restaurants in Morocco?

There are a wide variety of different restaurants in Morocco. The most important thing for your student group is to make sure the venue can accommodate a large number of people. There should be plenty of options for students to choose from. Ensure the restaurant knows about any allergies or dietary restrictions your students may have. For large groups, it's best to reserve well in advance and not leave it until the last minute. Breakfast is often included at hotels, or a light breakfast at hostels. This will vary, so ensure to check with your accommodation when booking. For lunch, we recommend giving students free time in a popular area with many options to choose from.



Why not try a special group cooking class to learn how to make some delicious local dishes?

What kind of transportation should we take while in Morocco?

The best combination of transportation for your student trip to Morocco will depend on a number of factors, such as number of destination cities, distance apart, budget, group size, etc.

How Should my Student Group Travel Between Cities?

Plane

Of course, you will be initially travelling to Morocco on a transatlantic flight. Typically these are scheduled overnight if traveling from North America, as this allows you to sleep on the plane, and arrive in the morning for a full first day. If you are planning on visiting multiple cities over a long distance, this is the fastest option that allows the most time to spend in each destination. However, this is the much more expensive option. Remember, you will also have to arrange inner city transportation, such as public transport.



Bus

The most popular option for student groups planning on visiting multiple cities is to rent a coach bus or van. This is the most economical method for large groups as you can rent the coach for the duration of the tour to use for transportation between cities, within cities and from activity to activity. Standard coach buses have approximately 56 passenger seats and buses can hold up to fifteen people.

Train

Travelling Morocco by train is a bucket list item for many, and for good reason. It often provides a beautiful, scenic trip and allows travelers to really admire the scenery of the region. In terms of value, taking the train is often between the cost a plane ticket and using a coach bus. A good tip is to take an overnight train ride if you are traveling a far distance, as many train cars are equipped with overnight cabins. That way you can save a night of hotel expenses, and spend your daylight hours exploring your new favourite city.

Morocco's Rail Department: <http://www.oncf.ma/Pages/Accueil.aspx>

How should my school group travel within cities?

This question is directly related to what city you are staying in, their transit system, where your hotel is, and so on. For the most part, public transport in Morocco is not very reliable, nor does it have the capacity for a group. That is why your choices are a little more limited here, but a bus or vans will be able to get you everywhere you need to go. Trains can be used in between cities, or to travel long distances, but unless your hotel and all of your activities are in close vicinity to the train station, be prepared to order a bus.

Should We Purchase Travel Insurance?

Purchasing the correct travel insurance can help in the event someone becomes sick or injured before or during a trip. Most travel insurance providers' coverage includes cancellation, trip interruption, and lost baggage. If families purchase travel insurance and the student falls ill before the trip, they may receive reimbursement for costs paid towards the trip. You can either order insurance for everyone in the group and include this in the trip cost, or provide it as an optional addition to families who would like to purchase.

Visa and Entry requirements

Canadian or American citizens using Canadian passports do not require a visa to enter Morocco for tourism or business stays under ninety (90) days.

That being said, it's important to do your research and check the most up to date visa requirements for your destination. Here are a couple of great resources on entry requirements for countries around the world:

Visa HQ: Select your country of citizenship and then the site will update the country list with requirements for your citizenship. Make sure you click on the country/countries you're visiting to get complete information (such as passport validity requirements).

<https://www.visahq.ca/>

Project Visa: simply select the country you're traveling to and then read the information provided.

<http://www.projectvisa.com/>



Vaccinations

Morocco doesn't require vaccinations, however it is important to be up to date with all of your routine vaccinations at the time of travel. Most travelers are also recommended to get Hepatitis A and Typhoid vaccinations. You should double check that there has been no change to the vaccination rules when planning your student trip. One of the best resources for health-related information and vaccination advice for travelers is the **Centre for Disease Control (CDC) website**. Their site gives country and region-specific information for travelers like common diseases, recommended vaccinations and tips on how to prevent illnesses while travelling. For the best and most-up-to date information, however, we recommend you visit a local travel clinic and speak to a doctor about your specific trip details like areas you are going to and the type of traveling you're doing.

Your Next Steps to Making this Dream Student Trip a Reality!

1. Deciding on working with a tour company, or commit to organizing the trip on your own
2. Promote the trip!
 - o Send letter home to parents, make announcements, tell you colleagues, put up posters (available from Evolve Tours) and think creatively to get the word out!
3. Hold a Parent information night
4. Distribute a Registration package to students- Waivers, Packing lists, other forms
5. Decide on a payment schedule
6. Collect deposits, registration package and payments
7. Complete rooming lists and other lists
8. Finally, board the bus or train and get the show on the road!



Evolve Tours

At Evolve Tours, we've been running student trips around the world since 2006 and have been perfecting the trip planning process ever since. After deciding you want your students to experience educational travel, there's a lot involved in organizing a trip before hopping on that bus. There's the logistics of accommodations, transportation, meals, activities and more- when planned properly they come together to ensure an incredible and memorable student trip.

If you have any questions about any of the content in this guide, please email us at info@evolvetours.com, or call us at 1.888.222.5066 (Toll Free)

You can also check out sample itineraries of our trips online at www.evolvetours.com

We'd be happy to work together to plan your student trip, or just talk travel!

Happy Travels!

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