

Sahara Desert Trek

 gac-brochures.com/brochures/sahara-desert-trek

36 - 48km approx.

Approx. Distance

Challenging (1)

Challenge Grading

6 Days

Challenge Duration

Morocco

Challenge Location

Challenge Highlights

Explore the world's most famous desert, guided by traditional berbers

Summit the Chigaga Dunes – the largest dunes in the Sahara Desert

Watch the sunrise over the desert – a once in a lifetime experience

Explore the lively city of Marrakech before returning to the UK

The Challenge

This long-weekend charity challenge takes us on a four-day trek across the ever-changing landscape of one of the world's largest deserts – the Sahara! Our adventure will take us on a climb to the top of the enormous Chigaga Dunes where we'll witness the sunrise over the desert. The days will be hot and the trekking will get tough but with our unrivalled support plus the dramatic backdrop of the Anti-Atlas Mountains to keep everyone going, the sense of achievement we'll feel as we complete our trek will be worth all the hard work!

Challenge Itinerary

Day 1 - Depart UK

We depart the UK for our flight to Morocco and upon arrival, we transfer to our hotel in Ouarzazate. South of the High Atlas Mountains, Ouarzazate is a town created by the French in 1928 but is now the film centre of Morocco – the base for such films as ‘Gladiator’ and ‘Alexander the Great’. As a relatively new town it does not have a city centre, but has a large Glaoui Kasbah which is well worth visiting. We have an early start in the morning so an early night is recommended!

Day 2 - M’Hamid to Bougharn Dunes

Following a very early breakfast, we transfer from our hotel and set off for the desert. Our driving route goes along the Draa Valley – a long, stunning palm filled oasis with rocky mountains and Hamada (rock desert) on each side. After approximately 4 hours drive (discounting photo and tea stops and our lunch at Ouled Driss) we arrive at M’hamid – the gateway of the desert. We’ll then don our trekking boots before setting off into the dunes for the beginning of our challenge! To get us into the spirit of trekking in the desert we will have a short trek of about 2-3 hours today which will finish at our camp in the Bougharn Dunes.

Trekking distance – approx. 4 – 8km / 2 – 3 hours

Day 3 - Bougharn Dunes to Chigaga Dunes

Today we set off with our camel trains and begin trekking through the dunes – there is no path to follow as they continually change in the wind. Our camels will find the best way through the dunes and in the event of a sandstorm we can protect ourselves by wearing a Seche (headscarf). This is part of the traditional costume worn by the nomadic Tuaregs that covers the face, ears and neck and provides protection from the wind-driven sand – they are also ours to keep as souvenirs from our challenge. Towards the end of our trek, we’ll try and find the nomads’ encampment and pay a visit to experience their unique way of life – they are very hospitable people and we may be asked to partake in a strong cup of mint tea or coffee. Tonight’s camp is at the foot of the stunning Chigaga Dunes.

Trekking distance – approx. 14 – 18km / 6 – 7 hours

Day 4 - Chigaga Dunes to Erg Aghoual

A very early start today before the sun rises – after waking, we’ll have a very quick snack and then commence our climb up to the top of the Chigaga Dunes (100m). Our climb will be in the dark, but the moon and stars should be enough to light our way. Upon reaching the top, we’ll rest and wait for the sunrise over the Sahara, then watch the colours of the dunes

change in the sunlight – a truly breathtaking sight! After watching the sunrise, we descend in the heat of the morning sun back to our camp, where we will have our breakfast. After a short rest, we push on with our desert challenge towards our camp at Erg Arghoual which is around 7 hours away on foot.

Trekking distance – approx. 14 – 18km/7 – 8hrs

Day 5 - Erg Aghoual to Ouarzate

Following breakfast at camp, we push on to the end of our trekking challenge – it's a short walk to our waiting transport at Sidi Ab Nbi. We'll wave goodbye to our camels and the breathtaking Sahara and then transfer back to our hotel. This evening we will toast our achievements at a celebratory dinner!

Trekking distance – approx. 4km/ 2hrs

Day 6 - Return to UK

We take an early morning transfer back to Marrakech, which gives us the afternoon free to explore before catching an evening flight back to the UK.

Please note this is a complex itinerary and subject to change, including the timings and distances detailed.

Challenge Inclusions

What's Included

- Return flights from a London airport to Marrakech
- All accommodation
- All meals from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 6
- Luggage transfers
- Local English-speaking guide/s
- Global Adventure Challenges leader from the UK
- Comprehensive first aid/medical kit
- Tents and other camping equipment
- Challenge Medal

What's Not Included

- Personal trekking kit (trekking boots, poles, etc)
- Personal travel insurance
- Alcoholic drinks
- Tips and gratuities

- Sleeping bag
- **Please note that for bespoke challenges, inclusions and exclusions may differ**

Frequently Asked Questions

I'm interested... What do I do now?

You can register online below – payment of the registration fee is due at time of booking. All payment options and costs are explained below.

Once your registration is received we will get in touch with further information on what to expect from this awesome adventure! Your charity will also be in contact to discuss your fundraising.

Is this trip for me?

Absolutely! The trek is suitable for all abilities with the correct training. The minimum age for this trek is 18 years old (if you are aged between 14 – 17 years you must be accompanied by a parent or guardian). The one thing everyone will have in common is a great sense of adventure and the desire to help a charity. Whether you are taking part as an individual or as a team with friends, team spirit will be flying high on the challenge.

How fit do I need to be?

This challenge has been graded as challenging (1) on our challenge grading scheme, meaning the trek has been designed to push your boundaries – however it is achievable by most people as long as you fitness train beforehand. You will be trekking for 4 consecutive days and in hot temperatures so good cardiovascular fitness is required – the fitter you are the more you will enjoy the challenge! We will provide you with a full training guide once you register and this is also available to download via our website. Why not join one of our challenge training weekends – it's a great opportunity for you to meet our team and other participants and train together prior to the event.

Our policy is to encourage and support as many people as possible to take part in our challenges. But they may not be suitable for all people due to restriction posed by limitation in mobility, physical or cognitive disability, pregnancy or other various medical conditions. If you have any doubts regarding your suitability for your challenge please contact our office to speak to one of the team.

What is the challenge grading scheme?

All our challenges are graded on a scale from 1 to 3 to indicate the level of difficulty, 1 being the lowest challenge grade and 3 being the most challenging. (1 = Challenging, 2 = Tough and 3 = Extreme).

Do I need specialist kit?

We will supply you with a kit list of what to take once you register to take part. Apart from some broken in trekking boots and possibly trekking poles you do not need any specialist kit.

Where will we stay?

On the first and last night we will stay in a hotel; twin share with en-suite washing facilities. Whilst on trek we will be camping – all tents will be provided but participants are expected to bring their own sleeping bags.

Do I have to carry my own luggage?

No. All participants will only have to carry a day pack (for items such as sunscreen, water, sun hat, camera etc) and whilst on trek your main piece of luggage will be transported by camels, and in Ouarzazate it will be transported by vehicle. Remember, this challenge is only 6 days in total so travel light!

Food Matters...

All meals will be provided whilst on trek as well as breakfast whilst staying in Ouarzazate. Bottles of water will be provided free of charge on trekking days. We can cater for most dietary requirements as long as we know in advance – just fill in the appropriate section on your registration form. Moroccan food is very varied and nutritious with plenty of vegetables.

What support is there on the challenge?

There will be a strong support team with a professional Global Adventure Challenges leader from the UK, as well as local guides and Berbers. Full, comprehensive first aid kits will be taken and mobile telephones will be used to ensure your safety and security at all times.

Can I stay in Morocco after the challenge?

Yes you can, but you would need to amend your booking from our flights inclusive package either before or after you have registered to our ground only package. For further information on prices and how our ground only packages work please contact events@globaladventurechallenges.com.

What happens if I get tired?

There will be regular rest stops for drinks and snacks – there is no problem with you taking more rest stops should you need them. A guide will be bringing up the rear of the group ensuring no-one is left alone. Remember this is not a race!

How do I go about raising the sponsorship?

Once you have signed up you will receive a fundraising pack from your charity in order to make your fundraising as easy as possible. You will also receive a few tips and ideas from Global Adventure Challenges to help you on your way.