

# Morocco Road Bike

Cycle from Marrakech to the High Atlas Mountains



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# Marrakech to the Atlas Mountains

## An epic 3 day road cycling challenge

Charged with the exotic, but with its roots in Africa, Morocco represents the closest truly “different” destination to the UK. Twice our size, but with only half the population, much of Morocco is a desolate desert and a vast wilderness of towering mountains, where rural life has changed little over centuries. Add to this superb hospitality and an incredible network of roads, and all the ingredients are there for a fantastic road bike challenge! Morocco is a land of enduring fascination and enchantment.



Our tour starts from the 1000 year old city of Marrakech. A fascinating ride across the old Medina towards the mountain range of the High Atlas Mountains. Cycling on the flat Haouz plains, you will be quickly challenged by the imposing Atlas Mountain slopes, climbing Morocco's highest roads. You will have the opportunity to discover Berber lush valleys and rugged high plateaus to discover the traditional local way of life, an authentic architecture and landscapes of a rare beauty.

We finish our epic challenge in Marrakech where we have an evening of celebrations.



# Detailed itinerary

## Day 1: Depart London to Marrakech

Depart London for our flight to Marrakech. Upon arrival we will be met by our guides and transferred to our hotel. This afternoon we will have a bike fitting and briefing about the challenge ahead. Overnight Marrakech.

## Day 2: Marrakech to Ourika

**Distance: 64kms**

**Max Altitude: 1,130m**

After an early breakfast we get on our bikes and start the day riding through Marrakesh along the quieter roads of Sidi Abdellah Gheyat. We then continue across the Haouz Plain on a flat direct line to the foothills of the Atlas Mountains. Here we have our first climb of the day with a challenging climb of 10km to reach the high plateaus of Iguer. The views are amazing with the snow capped mountains contrasting with the green terraces of barley and almond trees. The stone built Berber villages naturally melt into the landscapes. After a last demanding uphill, the road follows the contours of the mountain before a big and endless winding downhill section towards the Ourika Valley and our lodge for the night.

## Day 3: Ourika to Asni

**Distance: 50kms**

**Max altitude: 1,175m**

Today our ride starts by following the Ourika River for about 10km. The road then leaves the lush valley and starts snaking up west. For the next 14km, we will climb steadily along the mountainside and gently gain altitude enjoying some impressive views across the Atlas Mountains and the Berber villages. Once we reach our highest point at the Tizi n'Tadmamt (1813m), we will have a more relaxed section following the contours of the mountain hillsides overlooking the superb views stretching towards the Haouz Plains far north. After Sidi Fares, we will enjoy an amazing downhill section for 10km towards Asni, our finish point today. Overnight and dinner at a lodge.

\* For those who still have some energy left there will be an optional ride up to the ski resort of Oukaimden, an epic 18km climb – cycling the highest road in Morocco!

## Day 4: Asni to Kik Plateau to Marrakech

**Distance: 32kms**

**Max altitude: 1,046m**

Our final day in the saddle! Today will lead us to the heights of the superb Kik Plateau.

## Day 4: Cont.

After a good breakfast, we start snaking up towards the shrine of Moulay Brahim. This is a holy place where a well-known Moroccan Sufi saint was buried. At the highest spot of the ride we will cross the magnificent limestone plateau with the often snow capped Toubkal peaks in the background. From now on, it's a long descent to reach Takerkoust lake where our cycling adventure ends. After loading our bikes we will have a short transfer back to Marrakech where we will be dropped at our Riad in the Medina of Marrakech just a short walk from all the main attractions. Tonight we will have a well deserved celebration dinner in Marrakech.

## Day 5: Marrakech to London

Transfer to the airport for our return flight to London.

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*This itinerary is complex and subject to change*

**Challenge grade**

Tough

**Best time of year**

All Year