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Dar Itrane, the Berber Star

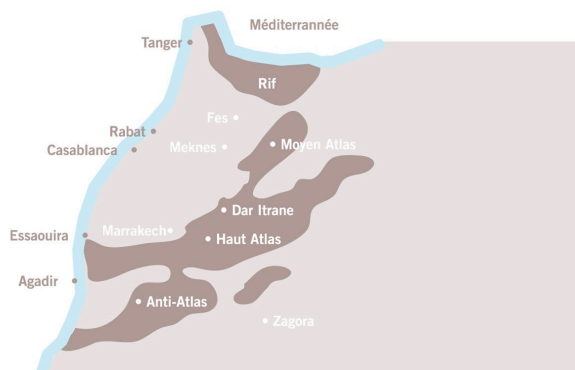
Discovering the Moroccan High Atlas culture

Only four hours from Marrakech, at the heart of the Central High Atlas, the Origins Dar Itrane lodge participates to the preservation of a genuine culture. This original concept of traditional lodging will lead you to fuse with a magic site: Ait Bougmez in the High Atlas.

An innovative and unique concept of traveling at the heart of the Berber culture.

Much more than a classic hotel, Dar Itrane is a new kind of accommodation, promoting the Berber culture. The lodge is an ideal start for visiting the villages and the surrounding mountains.

The casbah is today a unifying element in the life of the village. Indeed, a well furnished library, cultural excursions and different local actions for sustainable development generate an interesting cohesion in the valley.



In the heart of the Central High Atlas and the M'Goun mountain range, the high valley of the Ait Bougmez's opens on an outstanding environment.

ITINARY (8 day package Paris/Paris)

Please note that this package can also be organized without flights and on a customized basis.

D1 – Arrival at Marrakech airport and hotel transfer. Free time for visiting and independent dinner in a restaurant of one's choice (suggestions can be provided to this effect). Overnight in Marrakech.

D2 – Minibus transfer to Dar Itrane (about five hours from Marrakech). Picnic lunch on the road to Dar Itrane. Arrival at the lodge in the after-noon. Free time to meet the team and to get settled.

D3 to D6 – “Autonomous journey”: you will be free to organize your journey in the Ait Bougmez Valley. Full board accommodation at Dar Itrane.

D7 – Transfer to Marrakech and overnight in Marrakech.

D8 – Airport transfer to Marrakech Menara Airport.

COMFORT

In harmony with the authentic architecture of the Valley, Dar Itrane was built in adobe (rammed earth) and natural materials in order to promote and respect the traditional way of building the region. Local craftspeople and experts in traditional architecture created a unique lodge, combining authenticity and a high level of comfort.

The rooms

We are concerned in keeping less than 20 rooms in order to maintain intimacy and a guesthouse atmosphere. This is why Dar Itrane has only 17 twin-rooms, with private bathrooms.

Rooms and bathrooms have been individualized with an original decoration.

The water mainly heated by solar energy.

Inside settlement

Two living rooms / dining rooms and open corridors surround:

- A library, including many different documents about traveling and the Berber culture, but also music and videos.
- Traditional hammam in taddelakt (traditional lime coating with natural pigments).

Outside settlement

Roof terraces offering a stunning view over the valley while maintaining intimacy (in order to respect your privacy of course, but also in order to respect local customs).

Open patios for leisure and relaxation.

CATERING

Dar Itrane proposes refined and tasty menus, exclusively local gastronomy.

LOCATION

The village of Imelghas is a four-hour drive from Marrakech through a good asphalted road, and can be reached with a tourism vehicle. The Dar Itrane lodge is nestled in the village, standing at 1850 meters, at the foot of the M'Goun range that soars at 4071 meters.

THE TEAM

French and English-speaking Berbers, native from the Valley, and a French manager represent the Dar Itrane team. They will warmly welcome you with their traditional hospitality, and will gladly share their knowledge referring to the local customs and traditions.

DIFFERENT ACTIVITIES PROPOSED AT DAR ITRANE

Your stay in the ORIGINS Dar Itrane lodge will bathe you in the magic of the Berber culture. The lodge is an ideal base for discovering the region as well as the customs and traditions of the inhabitants.

The package includes a number of activities or excursions, all of which are meticulously detailed and can be easily done by one's self.

- Two excursions to discover architectural and decorative traditions.
- Four excursions to explore and understand the Berber way of life.
- Four hiking excursions to discover the amazing landscape of the mountains and valleys.
- There is an extensive library with different type of documentation concerning the life and traditions of the Berber people: books and music but also videos.
- A hammam (Moroccan bathhouse)

NB: A financial participation is expected when welcomed in the valley's families and invited for tea or for a meal.

Excursions and optional services

Possibility of renting mules or vehicles (depending on availability)

Initiation to the Berber Tamazigh language

According to availability, trekking and hiking in the Atlas Mountains with a trained guide of the Ait Bougmez Valley. This is not a sine qua none condition, but being accompanied represents definitely an interesting advantage when meeting people. Depending on the season, booking a guide can appear either easy or very complicated (depending on the high touristic season in Marrakech or the harvest season).

Our commitment considering sustainable tourism

Through the Dar Itrane lodge, Origins is involved in sustainable development projects, either in the lodging concept or in its general activities. One of its major concerns is to promote a different concept of tourism, factor of sustainable development.

The following actions illustrate our commitment:

- The protection of a cultural heritage, and endangered traditions.
- We aim at implicating the local population in the administering of the lodge
- Improving the working conditions of the locals (protection of heritage both directly and indirectly).
- Limiting the lodge's impact on the natural environment (control of the water consumption in quality and quantity, renewable energy sources...)
- We actively participate in local actions of sustainable development, thanks to your participation ("Your choice can make the difference"). We will regularly inform you of our projects by mail.
- We finally aim at informing and sensitizing the travelers considering environmental and cultural issues.

RATES

8-day package Paris/Paris, departures every Sunday.

Rates from 670 euros per person + 10 € per person for the responsible tourism participation.

PERIOD	Rates
4th February – 31st March 2007	750 euros + 10 €
1st – 8th April 2007	895 euros + 10 €
8th – 22nd April 2007	970 euros + 10 €
22nd – 29th April 2007	895 euros + 10 €
29th April – 20th May 2007	850 euros + 10 €
20th May – 3rd June 2007	750 euros + 10 €
3rd – 24th June 2007	670 euros + 10 €
24th June – 8th July 2007	750 euros + 10 €
8th - 15th July 2007	795 euros + 10 €
15th - 29th July	895 euros + 10 €
29th July – 12th August 2007:	970 euros + 10 €
12th - 19 August 2007:	850 euros + 10 €
19th - 26 August 2007	795 euros + 10 €
26th August – 2 nd September	750 euros + 10 €
2nd – 16th September 2007	670 euros + 10 €
16th September - 28th October 2007	750 euros + 10 €
28th October - 11th November 2007	895 euros + 10 €
11th November - 23rd December 2007	750 euros + 10 €

Single Room extra: 50 € per person + 25 € in Marrakech.

Please refer to us if:

- You would like your flight to leave from another city than Paris,
- You would like to take a regular flight instead of a charter flight,
- You plan to modify your stay (advancing your departure, renting a car, staying longer in Morocco, sleeping in a hotel or a Riad...)

THESE RATES INCLUDE

- Return flight Paris/ Marrakech,
- Check-in and transfers to the Marrakech airport,
- Return transfers to Dar Itrane (by minibus),
- “BB” accommodation in a “three star” hotel in Marrakech,
- Accommodation at the Dar Itrane lodge,
- Full board stay, except in Marrakech (includes only breakfast),
- Linen (sheets and towels) in Dar Itrane,
- Participation to actions for sustainable development: 2 euros per night and per person at the Dar Itrane lodge,
- All activities described in the road books (information about the hiking routes available at the lodge), and access to the library and videos,
- One hammam session per person (5 person minimum per evening and per session)

COST DO NOT INCLUDE

- Airfare: between 70 euros and 130 euros per person (exact fare specified when booking, likely to be modified by the air company),
- Meals in Marrakech (lunch and dinner),
- Drinks and personal expenses,
- Extra fee if your flight departs from another city than Paris (charter or regular flight),
- Extra fee for a single room,
- Extra hammam sessions, charged 60 dirhams per person (public fee). Minimum invoice per evening when the hammam has been used: 300 dirhams.
- Canceling insurance – baggage, searching, interruption (2.25%)
- Traveler assistance – optional repatriation (0.75%).

Language, religion, behavior

The spoken language in the Ait Bougmez Valley is Berber, but they generally also speak dialectal Arabic. Not all speak French, but you can communicate via interpreters or by the universal language of signs!

Islam is the official religion in Morocco. When traveling abroad, it is important to consider that one should adapt itself to the local customs and behaviors. Furthermore, in a Muslim country, beware to dress decently, with non revealing clothes (avoid shorts, short shirts or skirts), and to have a decent behavior in the lodge as well as in the villages.

Alcohol

Dar Itrane cannot sell alcohol and you will not find any in the Valley's villages, but we may deal with it for groups. It is possible to bring your own alcohol along with you, but take care of returning the empty bottles.

Water

We recommend you to only drink bottled water.

Electrical Appliances

Electricity is supplied at 220V. Therefore, you may need an adapter.

Telephone

From your country to Morocco dial 00 + 212 + the Moroccan number (without the 0).
Cell phones can be used when international option subscribed.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ait Imi : Morocco of the Heights, Michel TEULER

The berbers of Morocco, Alan Keohane

Culture Shock! Morocco: A Guide to Customs & Etiquette, Orin Hargraves

The Berbers (The Peoples of Africa), Michael Brett

In Morocco, Edith Wharton

The Conquest of Morocco, Douglas Porch

History of the Arab Peoples, Albert Hourani

Berber village: The story of the Oxford University Expedition to the High Atlas Mountains of Morocco, B. C Clarke

PHOTOGRAPHY, ARCHITECTURE, ARTS

Splendors of Morocco, Izza Genini, Jacques Bravo, and Xavier Richer

Amazigh Arts in Morocco: Women Shaping Berber Identity, Cynthia Becker

OVERNIGHT RATES AT DAR ITRANE

You may book single nights. The rates are therefore presented here per night and per person, in a double or twin room.

For a single room, an extra fee is required: 10 euros per night and per person.

As we are involved in substantial actions in sustainable tourism, a financial participation of 2€ per person and per night will be required.

DEPARTURE - 2007	Half board overnight	Full board overnight
February 4 - March 30, 2007	30€ + 2€	40€ + 2€
March 31 - April 27, 2007	40€ + 2€	50€ + 2€
April 28 - May 11, 2007	35€ + 2€	45€ + 2€
May 12 June 01, 2007	40€ + 2€	50€ + 2€
June 02 June 29, 2007	30€ + 2€	40€ + 2€
June 30 July 13, 2007	35€ + 2€	45€ + 2€
July 14 August 17, 2007	40€ + 2€	50€ + 2€
August 19 August 31, 2007	35€ + 2€	45€ + 2€
September 01 October 26, 2007	30€ + 2€	40€ + 2€
October 27 November 09, 2007	40€ + 2€	50€ + 2€
November 10 au December 21, 2007	30€ + 2€	40€ + 2€
December 22 January 5, 2008	40€ + 2€	50€ + 2€

CUSTOMIZED JOURNEY

You would make a specific request? You wish to travel with your group? We can handle it. As we are specialized in tourism, our professional experience and our serious partnerships with our Moroccan partner allow us to design customized tours, including overnights at the Origins' Dar Itrane ecolodge.

Financial estimations on request.

BOOKING PROCEDURE

Please send us the pre-registration form enclosed in the brochure, with a 30% payment of the total fees. We will confirm your registration by mail.

EXTRA INFORMATIONS

The lodge is opened during the whole year.

Climate

From spring to autumn, the High Atlas is preserved from extreme temperatures, but nights can get chilly. Summers are pleasant and winters can be cold, with frost and eventually snow in January and February. But days are generally sunny during the whole year. The lodge is heated during winter.

What are the flight arrangements from Paris for package tours?

The Paris-Marrakech-Paris flight is a charter and is approximately a three-hour flight. Departures and arrivals on Sundays. Please note that the flight schedule is imparted a week prior to departure. It is possible to fly from Lyon or Marseille. In that case, an extra fee might be required. To your request, or if extra seats are not available, it is possible to fly through Royal Air Maroc, depending on availability. Extra fees will be requested.

When must one arrive at the airport, before the flight?

For organized tours, you will receive complete information and tickets (concerning regular flights) ten days before your departure, or five days for charter flights. We are not liable for any changes to flight timings. Should you be coming from another city ensure sufficient travel time.

What is the required procedure to enter in Morocco?

Unexpired passport. Visa is not necessary for French citizen. However, please refer to the closest Moroccan Consulate according to your country.

What is the standard of accommodation in Marrakech?

The accommodation in Marrakech will be in a three star hotel when arriving in Morocco, and when leaving. Half board accommodation.

On request, we can arrange accommodation in a higher standard hotel, or in a Riad in the heart of the medina (extra fee).

How does one pay at Dar Itrane?

Dar Itrane does not accept credit card payments, and there are no cash machines/ATMs in the neighboring villages (only at Marrakech and Azilal). The best exchange rate is in Marrakech. Travelers-cheques are not convenient for little amounts (you must first be in town when banks are open and then find one which accepts the travellers-cheques).

Moroccan currency is the Dirham. It is illegal to import or export the Dirham. € 1 = 11 Moroccan Dirham (MAD), 100 MAD = € 9.

What is the time difference between France and Morocco?

Morocco corresponds to the GMT time. Therefore (considering France): -1 hour in winter and -2 hours in summer.