

Are you living on the edge yet . . .
or are you still taking up too much room?



*Ferris
Wheels*

Classic Motorcycle Safaris

Moroccan Magic Safari 2010



Moroccan Magic Motorcycle Safari



Destinations and Places of Interest

- | | | |
|---------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Casablanca | 6. Taroudant | 11. Fes |
| 2. Marrakech | 7. Agdz | 12. Chefchaouen |
| 3. Essaouira | 8. M'hamid | 13. Ifrane |
| 4. Mirleft | 9. Ait-Benhaddou | 14. Afourer |
| 5. Tafraoute | 10. Gorges du Todra | |



Moroccan Magic Motorcycle Safari

Itineraries for Apr/May/June 2010

Day	Tour 1	Tour 2	Details	Distance
1	Apr 10 S	May 22 S	Arrange your international flights to arrive in Casablanca today / this evening	
2	11 S	23 S	Morning train to Marrakech, non-Express, afternoon motorcycle allocation	
3	12 M	24 M	A half day ride west to Hendrix's Essaouira, explore the town in the afternoon	180k
4	13 T	25 T	Along the rugged Atlantic coast through Agadir and Tiznit to Mirleft	320k
5	14 W	26 W	Heading away from the coast, inland to the almond town of Tafraoute	160k
6	15 T	27 T	North through the Anti Atlas mountains to Taroudant	200k
7	16 F	28 F	Flanked by the Atlas mountains on both sides, to Agdz	300k
8	17 S	29 S	Along the Draa Valley to M'hamid, camel trek into the Sahara for dinner	190k
9	18 S	30 S	* Rest day exploring M'hamid or simply relaxing by the hotel pool	
10	19 M	31 M	Ride back to Agdz then via Ouarzazate to Ait-Benhaddou, afternoon explore	300k
11	20 T	June 01 T	Heading east to explore the Dades and Todra gorges	310k
12	21 W	02 W	Further north across the Haut Atlas mountains to Fes, via Midelt and Sefrou	500k
13	22 T	03 T	* Day exploring the Imperial City of Fes and its fabulous ancient medina	
14	23 F	04 F	Further north into the Rif Mountains, to Chefchaouen	220k
15	24 S	05 S	* Exploring Chefchaouen; optional ½ day ride to the Mediterranean coastline	200k
16	25 S	06 S	Southward to Ifrane, via the Volubilis ruins and Morocco's largest winery	320k
17	26 M	07 M	Through the Moyen Atlas this time, via Azrou to Afourer	330k
18	27 T	08 T	The long way to Marrakech on small roads, night visit to Djemaa el-Fna	250k
19	28 W	09 W	* Day exploring Marrakech followed by our farewell dinner in the medina	-----
20	29 T	10 T	Tour concludes, morning coach to Casablanca to connect with flights home	3780k

* indicates consecutive night in same hotel, allowing for laundry, etc.

Departure Dates

For our Moroccan Magic Motorcycle Safari 2010, your recommended arrival date in Casablanca can be **Saturday 10th April** or **Saturday 22nd May 2010** as shown above, via European or Gulf cities. Please see further discussion on International Flights herein.

Tour Operator

This Motorcycle Safari is one of several itineraries offered by **Ferris Wheels**, Australia's only professional tour operator specialising solely in international motorcycle adventures. Mike Ferris pioneered the Himalayan Motorcycle Safari concept in 1994 with his first crossing of the world's greatest mountain range by an Australian group of riders. In 1995, by now a qualified travel agent, he took his first commercial safari to the Khardung La in Ladakh (India), at 5,602 metres the highest road in the world. Mike and Denise Ferris now operate and personally lead annual **Ferris Wheels** motorcycle safaris to diverse destinations such as Rajasthan, the Indian Himalaya, Nepal, Turkey, Bhutan, the Dalmatian coast and the Andes, as well as this one through Morocco, all of approximately three weeks in duration.

Be aware that this itinerary is a guide only and may need to change due to weather, road conditions or other factors. Please be flexible, but rest assured your Tour Leader will make the final day-to-day decisions only after consultation with our agent in Morocco, local authorities and group members.



Package Price

The Moroccan Magic tour price, excluding airfares and joining in Casablanca, is Aus\$8,500-00. Riders must have a valid and unrestricted rider's domestic licence. Pillions are welcome and we also have a limited number of passenger seats available in our support vehicle, which accompanies the riders for the length of the Safari – price for pillion or passenger is Aus\$7,500-00. Please note that our prices are subject to foreign exchange fluctuations and we reserve the right to alter any pricing, pursuant to Clause 9 of our Terms and Conditions herewith, up to the date of final payment.

Price Includes

- Full motorbike rental for the duration of the Safari; see '**Our Motorbikes**' below
- Clean, friendly, mid-range accommodation throughout the Safari, nights 1 to 19 inclusive
- Twin-share basis; (single room supplement, additional Aus\$900) ¹
- All meals (breakfast, lunch and dinner), including coffee or tea
- Experienced guide, local agent and qualified mechanic
- Minibus support vehicle and driver, for luggage transport and assistance
- Spare parts, tools, medicines and first aid equipment
- All fuel costs, maintenance and third party insurance for the bikes
- Airport transfers if arriving & departing via our recommended flights
- Train fare from Casablanca to Marrakech, returning coach fare to Casablanca on scheduled tour dates
- Entry fees to selected destinations of interest and fees for local city guides
- Camel desert dune safari
- Tipping for local hotel portorage
- A complimentary *Ferris Wheels* long-sleeved Safari shirt, Moroccan map and luggage tags

¹ Accommodation is provided on a twin-share basis and if you're on your own we'll do our best to bunk you in with an acceptable roommate. But if you're the last person to book, there's obviously a 50-50 chance you'll have to take a room on your own and will therefore be liable for the single room supplement. So the moral of the story is, book early or bring your own roommate with you. Or preferably both!

Price Excludes

- Airfares to/from Casablanca (approx. Aus\$2600)
- Travel insurance policy covering use of motorbike (approx Aus\$247 for 24 days) ²
- Medical examination and vaccinations before departure (recommended)
- Expenses of a personal nature such as postage, laundry, souvenirs or alcoholic drinks
- Moroccan cooking class in M'hamid (EUR 25-00)
- Tips for support staff at completion; optional but always appreciated, AU\$100 suggested ³

² Please note that a motorcycle safari overseas must be considered one of life's more adventurous pursuits and therefore personal travel insurance is mandatory. If you already have existing travel insurance, we will insist on sighting a copy of the policy before you will be permitted to participate in this tour. Or if you prefer, we can arrange comprehensive travel insurance for you (Australian clients only) for approximately Aus\$247-00. **Be aware**, however, that any travel insurance ceases immediately on return to your own country, even if on-going medical treatment or surgery is required. Private health cover or government Medicare resumes at that point.



³ A note on tips. We recognize tipping is not generally part of the antipodean psyche, but it is an expected gesture in most other parts of the world. The daily tipping of hotel porters, for carrying your bags to your room, is included in your tour package price. However our mechanics, drivers and support staff anticipate reasonable tips to supplement their modest wages whilst on tour with us. We suggest something like Aus\$100 is affordable for your three weeks; we add generously to this collected pool and the resulting money will be distributed amongst our crew. If you've had a good time, we would encourage you to donate generously! If not, tell us why and we will contribute on your behalf.

International Flights

You will have to arrange your own airfares through your preferred travel agent, or Australian clients may wish to take advantage of an arrangement we have with our local agent, Press & James Travel Associates. Phone 02 9979 5235 or email natasha_dann@travel-associates.com.au and mention you're joining the ***Ferris Wheels 'Moroccan Magic' Tour***. They have a copy of this itinerary and they can arrange your route and flights as well as any stopovers or extensions you desire. Our recommended route from Australia is into Casablanca via Dubai with Emirate Airlines, but there are a number of other airline options, via various European capital cities. We recommend you book your airfare at least six months ahead, and full payment will usually be required six weeks before your departure.

If you are arriving earlier or leaving later than the schedule itinerary dates we can provide you with the details of our tour hotels to arrange your additional nights accommodation, at a favourable room rate. Your train tickets from Casablanca to Marrakech are pre-purchased in advance, so please notify us if you will not be requiring this booking. If you make changes to the standard tour arrangements, these changes are not transferable in lieu of the standard package (eg train tickets and hotel bookings).

Food & Health

Quality of food can obviously be a concern when visiting exotic foreign lands. We take care in selecting clean and reputable establishments for our meals and the local fare is not always as fiery and spicy as some people would have you believe. Our clients are often pleasantly surprised by the delicious meals available. Even so, an occasional upset stomach cannot always be avoided in remote areas, so we advise initial caution and we carry various medicines to ensure as much comfort as possible. Participants in any of our adventure activities are obviously expected to have a reasonably high level of health, fitness and capability, but **in all cases a consultation with your doctor is recommended** in order to identify necessary vaccinations and precautions, particularly if traveling overseas for the first time.

Climate & Clothing

Our itinerary is designed to take advantage of the pleasant weather of the northern spring. However Morocco's geography varies greatly and therefore temperatures can range from very cold in the mountains to warm on the coast, with some chance of rain. At times there will be little shade available, so sunscreen, sunglasses, hats and long sleeves will also be required. Jeans and our long-sleeved ***Ferris Wheels*** shirts tend to be the norm, with strong boots and riding gloves. Helmets, full or open-faced as you prefer, should be brought from home.

Professional quality riding gear such as Rivet's Cordura jackets, overpants and other protective clothing is an excellent investment and will go a long way to ensuring your comfort in what may sometimes be adverse conditions. The Rivet jackets are particularly versatile with a zip-in / zip-out padded liner for extra warmth and protection. But if you're susceptible to the cold, then a good set of thermal clothing will also come in handy. A



couple of other products we've used for several years and are happy to endorse are the Kevlar-lined jeans and clothing from Draggin Jeans in Melbourne (www.dragginjeans.com.au) and those Velcro alternative to 'occy' straps from Andy Strapz (www.andystrapz.com).

And while we're giving plugs, we'd like to suggest you consider a Rider Improvement course, regardless of your experience or perceived ability on a motorcycle, to brush up on your skills prior to joining an international riding safari. Our personal recommendation here is the Australian Superbike School, which concentrates on correct cornering techniques rather than all-out speed, despite the name (www.superbikeschool.com.au).

Our Motorbikes

Our standard model bikes are the Honda Transalp 650, a well-mannered twin cylinder road bike, powerful enough and quite comfortable with two on board for long distances; and the BMW F650 GS a smooth and comfortable good all round single cylinder road bike; both are fully-faired and ideal steeds for traveling the Moroccan roads. Fuel, maintenance and third-party insurance are included in the package price.

Please note you will be required to sign a rental contract with our bike supplier in Marrakech, and leave a photocopy of your passport and a credit card imprint as security. Our package price includes third-party insurance but not comprehensive, and you will be liable for any damage your motorcycle sustains whilst in your possession up to the Eur1000 excess. If you have an accident or drop the bike, any broken levers, mirrors, lights, etc. will be payable by you. Your credit card imprint will be returned to you upon return of your undamaged motorbike.

Our Riding Policy

We will occasionally require riders to 'bunch up', particularly when navigating through large towns, but out on the open road we know that you will want a lot of freedom and time on your own (isn't that what riding is all about?) We allow plenty of time for people to set their own pace, and it's unlikely that you'll ever be pressed to keep up. We know of some motorbike tour operators who insist that everybody ride in formation every day and play 'follow the leader', but that's not our style at all. You'll be given maps and daily directions on how far we're going, the destination for the night (including hotel name and phone number), and where we are likely to stop for lunch, drink breaks, sightseeing and refueling along the way, etc. There is always plenty of time to take photos, chat to the locals, or just sit and soak it all in. Our support vehicle with our luggage will always be the last vehicle in the convoy, with our mechanic, spare parts and tools, etc. in case of bike problems.

But let's not pull any punches here. A tour such as this is potentially a dangerous undertaking; it's inherent in the very nature of the trip. You'll be on an unfamiliar bike, on unfamiliar roads in unfamiliar traffic conditions. It is important for you to recognize this and accept ultimate responsibility, firstly for joining and secondly for riding in a circumspect manner for the duration of the tour. Please read and acknowledge Paragraph 16 of our Terms and Conditions! (End of sermon)



Detailed Daily Itinerary

Day 1 will mainly consist of flying, and involves the logistics of us getting everyone to Casablanca at more or less the same time from several different locations.

Day 2 sees us all aboard the Marrakech Express! (although it's not). From *Casa-Voyageurs* train station in Casablanca we'll take a leisurely three-hour ride on the train immortalized by the Crosby Stills Nash & Young lyrics of the 1960's. In the afternoon we collect our motorcycles, get our gear organized and complete the necessary bike-related administration ready for our three-week adventure. There'll be time for a brief wander around Marrakech for those interested (remembering of course that we will be back here at the end of our safari, with more time to explore) or an afternoon nap for those still adjusting their body clocks to Moroccan time.

Day 3 This morning we head out of Marrakech in a westerly direction on our way to Essaouira, tonight's destination. We arrive in time for lunch and then the afternoon is your own to explore this wonderful Atlantic coastal town. Essaouira has several claims to fame, one of which is being the part-time home of legendary guitarist Jimi Hendrix. It is also a popular location for the movie industry and many films have been filmed and produced here (including Ridley Scott's *Kingdom of Heaven*). Essaouira is a popular destination not only with moviemakers and actors but also with many artisans and of course as a windy coastal location, with local and international windsurfers. At the end of the ocean boulevard the well-preserved maze-like *medina* is definitely worth a visit, with many tiny shops and eateries lining the labyrinth of laneways. It's a great opportunity to sit and observe the local culture while sampling the famous Moroccan mint tea.

Day 4 Today it's south along the wild and rugged Atlantic coast. We'll ride through some relatively developed coastal surfing towns, 'out in the middle of nowhere', where surprisingly, you'll observe the presence of many familiar Antipodean surfing brands. The Atlantic winds blow us further south, bypassing Agadir the principal port of southern Morocco on our way towards Tiznit at the end of the Anti Atlas, in the corner of the Souss Valley. Before reaching Tiznit we turn off the main road and make our way about 70 kms southwest to the small village of Mirleft, where we can relax for the night and watch the sun setting over the Atlantique.

Day 5 This morning we head back to Tiznit and then we are Tafraoute bound, through the remote and beautiful Anti Atlas landscape. After an exhilarating morning's ride through the mountains we arrive, via the high or the low road, in Tafraoute. This modestly sized village is nestled in the peaceful and delightful Ameln Valley, best known for its pink-hued rock faces and lush palm groves (*palmeraies*). The afternoon is your own, to explore Tafraoute and surrounds, on foot or by bike, or maybe visit one of the town's traditional bathhouses and cleanse and relax amidst the sociability of an authentic *hammam*.

Day 6 has us passing through the eastern half of the Ameln Valley and over Tizi (mountain pass) Mlil for the ride northwest to Agadir. It's another beautiful Anti Atlas ride and then we take the highway for the last 70 kms to Taroudant, our destination for tonight. We'll probably arrive mid afternoon, in time for a good explore of this traditional-looking Berber market town and its *souqs*, usually abuzz with activity.

Day 7 Today, sorry it's more picturesque riding on great roads, through the Atlas Mountains on our way to Agdz. We pass through Aoulouz and Taliouine before taking the road less traveled at Tazenakht, over Tizi-n-Taguergoust to the small town of Agdz (Ag-a-dez). We stay here tonight practicing our pronunciations, in the middle of the luscious *Vallee du Draa*. The Draa river is one of the longest in Morocco. Our accommodation tonight is a delightful local Dar (private hotel). Life is good.

Day 8 It's 190 kms today along the Draa Valley on the way to our evening desert destination of M'hamid. The valley offers lovely sweeping riding roads and an opportunity en route to appreciate and purchase, if desired, some of the local Moroccan ceramics. You can't have too many olive bowls or tagine dishes! We will embark



on an afternoon adventure, this time on four legs rather than two wheels, our camel safari taking us out to the Chigaga dunes of the Saharan desert. Algeria is less than ½ hour away from where we take to the dunes. After watching the sunset over the Sahara Desert, we'll have dinner and drinks around the campfire before retiring to our Saharan bivouac for the night. The rest of the world seems so far away !

Day 9 sees us heading back to civilization from the Saharan desert via 4WD. We have a rest day to explore the town of M'hamid and the surrounding desert and plenty of time to relax by the pool with a good book or a cold beer or both. Alternatively you can have a chat with Madonna (our hotel's resident donkey) or catch up on those postcards back home. Signing up for the cooking class on offer is highly recommended; when else will you have the chance to cook in an authentic Moroccan kitchen with Moroccan chefs and learn their secrets?!

Day 10 This morning we farewell M'hamid, re-tracing our steps back along the Draa Valley to Agdz and then on to Ouarzazate (Wah-zazat) for lunch, maybe pausing to meet one or two of the local Bedouins and sample some of the best dates found anywhere in the world (for a small donation). This afternoon's destination is Ait-Benhaddou, an incredibly spectacular *kasbah* (citadel) 30kms from Ouarzazate. We spend the remainder of the day with a local guide, exploring the dramatic mud-walled *medina* and *kasbah*, resembling a Hollywood film set, which is why it has been chosen as the setting for such blockbusters as *Lawrence of Arabia* and more recently *Gladiator*. Any mention of Australian heritage will be greeted with cries of "Russell Crowe shopped here" from the local vendors. And yes, we know, he's a Kiwi.

Day 11 Today we head off for the exhilarating ride of the two gorges; *Gorges du Dades* and *Gorges du Todra*. We visit these purely for the pleasure of riding some awesome switchback corners. We'll take lunch at the top of the Dades Gorge then immediately turn around and enjoy it again in the opposite direction. Our destination tonight is in the heart of the Todra Gorge where we will enjoy the unique ambience and stunning scenery.

Day 12 is our longest day in the saddle, 500 kms heading north. First stop this morning is a visit to a wonderful open-air Berber museum en route. We then cross the *Haute Atlas*, offering sensational views of snow capped mountains before stopping for lunch in Midelt, a convenient midway point. Then it's across the contrasting landscape of the *Moyen Atlas* mountains via Boulemane and the small Berber town of Sefrou, before arriving in Fes, Morocco's oldest imperial city and our destination for the next two nights. We know we're now in northern Morocco by virtue of the completely different forested landscapes.

Day 13 Fes is a very large and busy city with a population of more than one million people, bursting at the seams. Commonly known as the religious and spiritual capital of Morocco, the city is divided into three main areas and today is our opportunity to discover and experience one of them; the medina of Fes-el-Bali. You may be hassled by the local shopkeepers, touts and informal guides on the streets offering services you don't need; just ignore them and be firm with the persistent amongst them. Enjoy the ambience, architecture and sights of this wonderful city rich in Moroccan history, tradition and culture.

Day 14 Today it's even further north, a half day's ride, this time via the Rif Mountains to delightful Chefchaouen, our northernmost destination for the tour. After the hustle and bustle of Fes, Chefchaouen by comparison is a quiet, less-populated medina village nestled in a valley encircled by the peaks of the Rif; somewhat lower than what we have become accustomed to in the Atlas ranges. Our accommodation for tonight and tomorrow night is an intimate and delightful hotel, offering us a lovely vista of this beautiful town and its surrounds. A visit to the silly hat shop of Chefchaouen is a popular diversion !

Day 15 is an opportunity to explore this charming blue-washed town with its obviously Hispanic influences, yet to be fully discovered by the ever-increasing number of tourists to Morocco. Today, wander around the thriving and engaging medina. You have time to collect some Moroccan mementos or sought-after gifts for those at home or maybe some postcard writing in a local café while you enjoy a Moroccan mint tea. Alternatively for



those craving yet more riding, there is an optional half-day ride, with packed picnic lunch, out to the Mediterranean coast. More exhilarating riding and spectacular scenery ... sorry if it's becoming repetitive!

Day 16 sees us beginning our pilgrimage south. We ride via Moulay-Idriss, the town named in honour of Morocco's most revered Muslim saint and great-grandson of the prophet Mohammed, then Volubilis, the largest and best-preserved Roman ruins in Morocco, worth a visit if we have time. We'll be stopping for lunch today near Boufakrane, visiting Morocco's biggest wine producing vineyard before continuing on to tonight's destination of Ifrane, nestled in a stunning ancient cedar forest.

Day 17 Continuing south through the *Moyen Atlas*, we head off in the direction of Marrakech as the clock starts to wind down on our tour. We cover ground rapidly through one of the main agricultural breadbaskets of Morocco, via regional centers such as Azrou and Khenifra, before detouring onto a magnificent back road, reminiscent of the Morocco landscape depicted in the 2006 Brad Pitt/Cate Blanchett movie *Babel*. Tonight's accommodation is in a small town called Afourer.

Day 18 Leaving Afourer this morning we have time for a sidetrip to view the Cascades de Ouzoud, the most impressive waterfalls in Morocco. After lunch in Demnate we'll finish our ride on the gentler smaller roads back to Marrakech, where it's time to hand back the keys and part company with our trusty steeds. This evening around dusk, we visit the amazing Djemaa el-Fna, where we'll enjoy the wonderful array of street theatre and entertainment and dine in one of the ubiquitous open-air food stalls.

Day 19 gives us a final day to have a good look around Marrakech and complete our last minute shopping at the *souks*, leaving ourselves time to get freshened up for our farewell dinner in an exotic and salubrious restaurant within the buzzing old town center of Djemaa el-Fna.

Day 20 Completing our circuit of Morocco and drawing the curtain on our tour, it's an early coach departure back to Casablanca for those lengthy flights home. Some may wish to stay on a bit longer in Marrakech or spend another day exploring Casablanca. Swap addresses with your fellow riders so we can all keep in touch, share photos of your happy memories and don't forget to tell 100 friends how much fun you've had with us in Magical Morocco! See you somewhere else in the world, sometime soon, on two wheels.

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Further detailed trip notes, including a list of essential clothing and equipment to take, health considerations, visa formalities, etc, will be sent upon receipt of a completed Booking Form and deposit. Contact our office any time for further information on (02) 9970 6370 or email safari@ferriswheels.com.au.