SPICEROADS

CYCLING





MOROCCO GRAVEL BIKE CARAVAN

Tour Code MAR-MGC



O

Destinations

Tour Meets
Tour Ends

Fly in to Fly out of

PRICING

Group Size
Minimum Age

Morocco

Marrakesh, Morocco Marrakesh, Morocco

Marrakesh Menara Airport (RAK) Marrakesh Menara Airport (RAK)

2-14 riders

18 (on scheduled departures)

Price Bike Hire (Gravel Bike) Single Supplement

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- SpiceRoads jersey
- ✓ Water bottle
- ✓ Support vehicle
- ✓ Guide(s)
- Meals (as indicated)
- ✓ Accommodation
- Snacks and drinks
- Entrance fees

US\$ 2,900 US\$ 415

US\$ 480

WHAT'S EXCLUDED

- × International flights
- ✗ Domestic flights
- × Airport pick up
- × Airport drop off
- × Visa fees
- × Alcohol
- × Tips

ACTIVITY PROFILE



5 Cycling days

72 km Avg distance / day 359_{km} Total cycling distance

1027_m Avg climbing / day

DEPARTURES



22 March - 31 March 2026 26 April - 05 May 2026 06 September - 15 September 2026 11 October - 20 October 2026 15 November - 24 November 2026

TRIP PROFILE

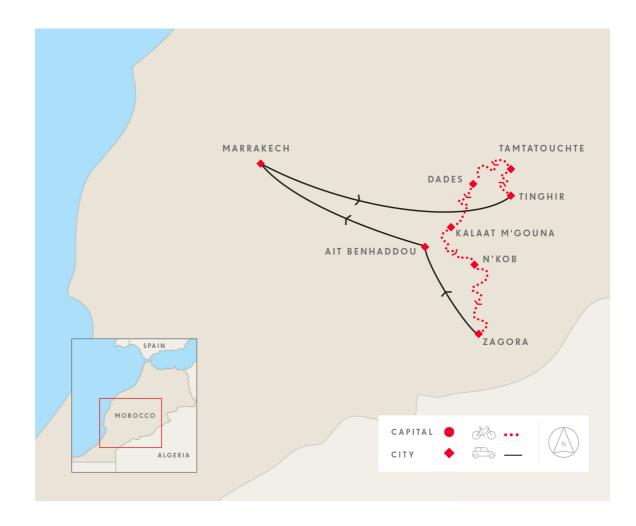
We ride a total of 359 km over 5 back-to-back cycling days. The cycling arena for this tour is located in the remote corners of southcentral Morocco, necessitating long transfers at the beginning and at the end. But it is more than worth it! Once we are on the bikes in Thinghir, we have a continuous, point-to-point journey all the way to Zagora. Our route is mixed surface riding at its best, leading us through Morocco's iconic landscapes of rugged mountains, barren, rock-littered deserts, lush palm groves, and valleys dotted with Berber villages and age-old kasbahs

The trip is fully supported, and your guide's expert knowledge of the area and terrain means that you always know what is coming up in terms of distance and difficulty. This makes a tremendous difference, as does the constant supply of water and refreshments along the way.

Suitability: The tour is suitable for cyclists possessing a good level of physical fitness as the average distance per day is more than 70 km and the average climb per day is more than 1000 m. Throughout all days, the terrain is hilly and changeable with flat sections and a lot of climbs and descents. Some climbs can be gradual while others are short but steep. Fitness will be a huge asset on those long days and challenging climbs. You should be comfortable on a gravel bike and have experience navigating on rocky roads for extended periods. There are no overly technical sections but good handling skills are required, especially on some bumpy descents. There are no rest days while riding, though we have the afternoons free to relax and recharge. A 4x4 vehicle follows the group at all times to carry supplies and provide refuge for weary riders but seats are limited so you should come prepared to complete the daily distances.

Biking Conditions: This route has been designed specifically for gravel bikers and so we ride on a mix of gravel and tarmac roads. The first two riding days are primarily on paved surfaces, some sections in excellent condition but most affected by potholes and road debris. Starting with the second half of day 3, the majority of riding for the rest of the tour then takes place on gravel roads whose conditions range from hard-packed and level to loose and bumpy. For the most part, you can expect very little traffic in the countryside but coming in and out towns, as well as near popular tourist attractions, we will share the roads with cars, buses, and motorbikes. Oh, and herds of goats or packs of mules and donkeys, of course! Morocco can get windy which, at different times, works in and against our favor. Rainfall is not uncommon in Morocco, especially at higher elevations, at the time we schedule our tours. We generally ride rain or shine, but based on the guide's discretion or your comfort level, modifications to the planned route can be made. It's all part of the adventure!

Hotels: Accommodations on this tour consist of riads, guesthouses, and kasbahs. Riads are traditional Moroccan homes converted into boutique hotels, characterized by an interior courtyard or garden, and rooms surrounding it with authentic décor. Kasbahs are historic fortified citadels, offering unique architectural elements and often located in rural areas of the Atlas Mountains and Pre-Saharan desert. Guesthouses, which tend to serve as overnight stops for people in transit, are more utilitarian and modern, though still with plenty of Moroccan charm. While all selected accommodations on this tour offer a clean room, hot water, and AC/heating, please note that extras like a swimming pool or English-speaking staff are not always available (though often they are!). Room sizes may be smaller, and beds can be firmer than you're used to. For larger groups, we may need to use more than one accommodation and, in case of limited availability, switch to an alternative property from the one listed in the itinerary.



Day 1 Meet in Marrakesh

Welcome to Marrakesh, the 'Pearl of Southern Morocco'! The best way to experience this spirited city is to get lost in the labyrinthine alleys of the medina — the UNESCO World Heritage-listed heart of the city, brimming with life. Wander through spice markets, leather workshops, and endless rows of red-clay shophouses where you'll find just about everything under the Moroccan sun. Don't miss Jemaa el-Fnaa, the city's bustling main square, or explore the elegant Moroccan architecture of the Koutoubia Mosque, Bahia Palace, Ben Youssef Madrasa, and the Saadian Tombs. We meet at our tour hotel in the afternoon for a trip briefing, bike fitting and welcome dinner. Please let us know if you require assistance with airport transfers and pre-tour hotel bookings.



Riad Bahia Salam



Dinner

Day 2 Marrakesh - Tinghir

Time to hit the road! Departing from Marrakesh, we settle in for a 6-7 hour drive to the town of Tinghir, the starting point of our biking adventure located within an expansive, palm-filled oasis in southeastern Morocco. To get there, we cross the snow-capped peaks of the High Atlas Mountains and a vast terrain of stone-littered, semi-desert plateaus - a fine introduction to the landscapes we'll soon be biking through. We stop for lunch along the way and aim to arrive in Tinghir in the mid-afternoon for some to unwind and acclimate our senses to our new environment in the heart of the Todra Valley.



Hotel Dar Bab Todra

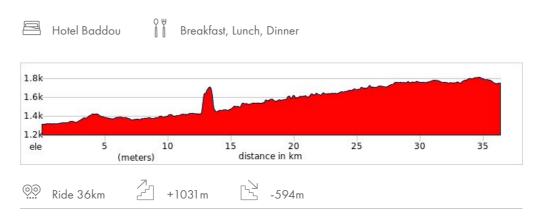


Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 3 Tinghir - Todra Gorge - Tamtatouchte

Our inaugural ride offers a challenging ascent through the Todra Valley. In under 40 km, we'll gain over 1,000 metres (5% average gradient), experiencing a dramatic shift in scenery. Starting from our hotel in Tinghir, we follow the well-paved N12 north, enjoying a gentle ride above the edges of the oasis where a sea of date palms stretches along the fertile river plain with mudbrick Berber settlements and crumbling kasbahs carved into the hillsides. After 13 km, we enter the

towering Todra Gorge, its sheer red limestone cliffs vaulting over the narrow valley where the river and road run side-by-side. In places, these colossal walls constrict to a mere 20 metres, yet soar beyond 300 - a truly mesmerising sight from the saddle! After exiting the gorge, we continue climbing at fluctuating gradients with the road surface now a little rougher as we wind through the sun-kissed, wind-swept, craggy foothills of the High Atlas Mountains. Around the 28 km mark, we arrive at the turquoise waters of the Todra Dam, from where the final leg leads us to the Berber village of Tamtatouchte where we spend the night at a simple yet cosy local auesthouse



Day 4 Tamtatouchte - Dades Valley

This morning, we make our way out of the Todra Valley via a challenging 26 km ascent (5% average gradient) to the Tizi N'Uguent Zagsaon Pass, reaching 2,600 metres above sea level. The road is mostly in good condition, so endurance and battling potential headwinds will be our primary challenges! Carving into the mountainside, the route exposes the beautifully layered stratification of Earth's ancient seabed, uplifted millions of years ago by the collision of the African and Eurasian plates that forged the High Atlas Range. After a breather at the top of the pass, we relish in the reward: a near continuous and smooth 18 km winding descent with stunning mountain views leading into the Dades Valley. While a popular destination in its lower reaches, these upper parts of Dades are well off the tourist path and a joy to ride through with a photoreel of breathtaking gorges, mountain peaks, weathered escarpments, mudbrick Berber villages, and farm-studded oases along a peaceful, unevenly paved highland road. We end our ride in the village of Ait Hammou Village for another night of authentic Moroccan hospitality in the remote foothills of the High Atlas.



Day 5 Dades Valley - Kalaat M'Gouna

Today, our ride continues south through the Dades Valley, following the gentle flow of the river as it carves through a raw landscape of craggy bluffs and stone-littered slopes. At the 7 km point we arrive at one of Morocco's most picturesque series of switchbacks, coiling gracefully down the steep slopes of the Dades Gorge. Following this short yet iconic descent, the road continues to trend downhill for around 20 km, though with plenty of uphill bursts to keep our pedals spinning. We pass the unique "Monkey Fingers" rock formation before veering onto a secluded gravel path radiating across a hilly shrubland. A fairly steep, 2 km climb brings us to a plateau with views of the snow-dusted High Atlas to the north and the bone-dry Jbel Saghro south. The trails then lead us into Boulmane Dades, from where we switch to narrow village paths weaving through mudbrick settlements and time-worn kasbahs on the edge of the fertile oasis. The final 15 km along a wide gravel road brings us to our hotel on the outskirts of Kalaat M'Gouna, a town famed for its economy of roses which are processed into fragrant water, perfume, and oil.



Day 6 Kalaat M'Gouna - N'Kob

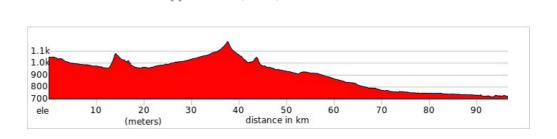
Leaving the Dades Valley behind, today we embark on a gloriously challenging stretch of gravel biking as we join a long track winding through the Jbel Saghro Mountains, an ancient range with weathered peaks. Within around 15 km of darting off from Kalaat M'Gouna, we begin to pass through desolate, rock-strewn hills with only the crunch of the gravel beneath our wheels to break the silence. The terrain gets more and more mountainous as we push further, culminating in a 6 km ascent (5-6% average gradient) to the top of a pass sitting at 2,000 metres above sea level. The second half of the stage then takes us on a fun series of downhill blitzes interspersed with a few 1-2 km climbs, ultimately bringing us back to 1,000 metres above sea level on the other side of the Jbel Saghro. It is spellbinding to observe the gradual transformation of the landscape from rugged mountains to pre-Saharan semi-desert plateaus. The final 15 km take us along a straight secondary road all the way to the oasis town of N'Kob where we spend the night amidst the town's facade of rammed earth kasbahs.



Day 7 N'Kob - Zagora

Riad Dar Sofian

On our last stage we transition from the frontiers of Morocco's mountains into the beginnings of the vast expanse of the Sahara Desert. The first 10 km are a gentle warm-up along the main road from N'Kob before a short climb over a ridge brings us into a dry valley where the presence of irrigated farms speaks to the agricultural ingenuity of the region's Berber inhabitants. At the 36 km point, a 3 km climb (4% average gradient) elevates us to the top of a remote pass which overlooks a canyon framed by colossal rock walls. We take it slow on the subsequent rocky descent and then join a paved provincial road which, over a downhill trending distance of around 30 km, guides us through a barren semi-desert plain into the contrastingly lush Draa Valley. On small rural paths we ride through date palm groves, fields of barley, and adobe villages before joining the road to Zagora which, historically, was the last major staging post for caravans embarking on the arduous journey across the Sahara to Timbuktu. But for our gravel bike caravan, the journey ends here, and we relax at a charming hotel nestled in the oasis.



Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Day 8 Zagora - Ait Benhaddou

With five epic days of cycling behind us, we begin our relaxed return to Marrakesh. In the morning, we drive around 30 minutes to the Tinfou Dunes for a taste of the Sahara with a short walk across the powdery sands. From there, we transfer around three hours to Ouarzazette, the so-called "Hollywood of Morocco," where we have lunch. The final hour's drive leads us to Ait Benhaddou, a UNESCO World Heritage site famed for its striking and well-preserved mud-brick architecture. Traditional kasbahs and narrow alleyways cling to a steep hillside above a seasonal river, creating a dramatic backdrop seen in major productions like Gladiator and Game of Thrones. After a leisurely afternoon tour of this magnificent site, we settle into a nearby riad where we spend the night, saving the last leg of the road trip to Marrakesh for the next morning.



Riad Maktoub



Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 9 Ait Benhaddou - Marrakesh

We leave Ait Benhaddou in the morning with the aim of arriving in Marrakesh in time for lunch. The total driving time is around 3-4 hours with a few rest stops to stretch our legs. The drive takes us back over the High Atlas Mountains, with particularly stunning views along the famous Tizi n'Tichka Pass (2,260 meters above sea level), one of the highest motorable roads in North Africa. Once we arrive in Marrakesh, you have free time to get lunch (not included) and spend the afternoon ticking off any remaining sights or bargaining your way through the medina for some last-minute souvenirs! We reconvene in the evening for a celebratory farewell dinner.



Riad Bahia Salam



Breakfast, Dinner

Day 10 Marrakesh Departure

Our tour has come to an end, but feel free to extend your stay in Morocco and explore even more of what this captivating country has to offer. Consider heading to the Atlantic Coast to discover the charming seaside cities of Essaouira or Casablanca, or immerse yourself further in the historic allure of Fes to the north. For those seeking something more adventurous, a trek up Mount Toubkal, North Africa's tallest mountain, offers a rewarding challenge just outside Marrakesh. Please let us know if you need assistance with post-tour hotel bookings or airport transfers.



Breakfast

Disclaimer: The adventure cycling tours we operate often go beyond the beaten track, and the countries where we ride are not always predictable. Due to these reasons, it is occasionally necessary to reroute or update itineraries. Our guarantee is that we will not change a trip unless for safety or to improve it. Our listed hotels are always accurate at the time of writing, but should we have to change any hotel, it will always be for a similar or better one.

NUTS & BOLTS

Bikes

Because some people can't imagine going on a trip without their own beloved bicycle, we do not provide them as part of this tour. However, you can hire bikes locally for the price listed in the tour pricing section. We provide high-quality Cannondale (or similar) gravel bikes ideally suited

for the conditions and terrain on this tour. If you bring your own bike, please make sure it is a gravel bike in good mechanical order. We also have E-Bikes available for hire, but they are limited in number & size - please send an email to us to check on availability.

Bike Repairs

Basic spares and tools are carried by the guide and on the support vehicle, though we cannot guarantee having spares for every conceivable problem. Carrying a basic tool kit, a spare tube and a pump while riding is recommended.

Safety

Wearing a helmet is required on all our biking adventures and is non negotiable. If you do not wear a helmet you will not be allowed to cycle. Your tour leader is trained in first aid and emergency rescue, but to a large degree you must be responsible for your own safety while riding. It is therefore compulsory that you take out travel insurance that will cover you for a mountain biking tour.

Guides

You will be led by a local English-speaking guide and if the group is 9 people or more we will add another guide to the tour. All our guides are well informed in the history, culture and religions of the area where you are biking and are skilled at passing that knowledge on to you. Your guide is also medically trained and an experienced cyclist, able to handle most minor repairs en route.

THE NITTY GRITTY

Passports and Visas

Please make sure you have a passport valid for at least six months beyond your departure date from Morocco. Morocco has visa exemption agreements with many countries, including the United States, Canada, most European nations, United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand. For the full list, please see here. If your nationality is on this list you do not need to prepare anything in advance and you may stay in Morocco for up to 90 days. You may be asked for your return flight details so make sure you have that. If your nationality is not on the visa exempt list or you require a different kind of visa for any reason, please see here for more information.

Health

There are no compulsory vaccinations although it is strongly recommended that you are vaccinated against: Typhoid; Hepatitis A and B. Tetanus and polio vaccinations should also be up to date at the time of travel. See here for more recommendations to help you prepare. Please speak to your doctor/physician for the most recent information.

Weather

Morocco is a large country with diverse landscapes, including mountains, deserts, and coasts, resulting in highly variable weather patterns across the region. Our Morocco cycling tours are primarily based around Marrakesh and the foothills of the High Atlas Mountains, where the weather is typically mild in spring (March to May) and autumn (September to November), with daytime temperatures ranging from 15°C to 25°C (59°F to 77°F) and cooler nights between 5°C and 15°C (41°F to 59°F). As we get closer to the summer months (generally starting from June), temperatures begin to rise, with daytime highs often exceeding 35°C (95°F) in lower elevations, while nights remain relatively warm. As we approach the winter months (usually from December onwards), temperatures gradually drop, particularly at higher altitudes, where conditions can become quite cold, with the potential for snow in the mountains. We do not offer tours during the hottest summer months and the coldest winter months, opting for the sweet spot conditions in the spring and fall. If you are cycling in the early spring or late fall, be prepared for layering up in the mountains and layering down at low elevations – sometimes all within one day! Having a combination of light clothes to stay comfortable in the heat and warm clothes to bundle up when it's colder is key. Rainfall is generally low, especially in the southern regions, but occasional showers can occur in the spring and autumn, particularly in the foothills and higher altitudes, so it's good to be prepared for a brief downpour here and there.

Food

Meals are included in the itinerary as B = breakfast, L = lunch, and D = dinner. Moroccan cuisine is halal, which means all food and drink adhere to Islamic dietary laws, ensuring that they are permissible and prepared according to religious guidelines. This includes the prohibition of pork and alcohol. Each day begins with a classic Moroccan breakfast which consists of crusty bread, crepes (baghrir), and flatbread (msemen), paired with butter, processed cheese, a selection of jams and honey. Fresh coffee and tea are almost always on hand, alongside freshly squeezed orange juice. Most lunches on tour are served picnic-style along the cycling route. The core

elements typically include cooked plain pasta or rice, bread, canned fish, and a large plate of lettuce, tomatoes, olives, peppers, onions, and cucumbers. Sauces, salt, pepper, and olive oil are also provided, allowing everyone to customise their plates to taste. Outside of Marrakesh all dinners are enjoyed at the hotels. The most common dish served is tagine, a slow-cooked stew made with a variety of meats, vegetables, and aromatic spices, traditionally cooked in a special clay pot with a conical lid. The tour provides a variety of snacks, including dates, almonds, peanuts, and a mix of walnuts, raisins, roasted chickpeas, and other similar items, to keep you energized during the ride. Where possible, we also include some local sweets for variety. Oranges and bananas are usually available as well. If you're accustomed to energy bars, granola, or electrolyte gels during rides, please come prepared, as these are not readily available in Morocco and are not included in our snack provisions. Most allergies or special dietary requirements can be catered for. Please let us know as soon as possible, if you have not already noted in your booking information.

Drink

Keeping you completely hydrated is a job we take very seriously. Water and tea are included while riding and during all meals. Soft drinks and other beverages during meals are not included. Beer and alcohol are NOT included in the price, and won't always be available unless you bring your own. Morocco is a Muslim country and most locals do not consume alcohol - if you like to have a beer after a ride or a glass of wine in the evening, please consider bringing your own provisions from Marrakesh, as they will be hard to come by in more traditional and remote areas.

Solo Travelers

SpiceRoads does not require you to pay a surcharge for travelling alone. We will arrange for you to share accommodation with another traveller of the same gender and if we can not match you up we will provide a single room at no extra charge. If you prefer not to share a single supplement is payable to guarantee your own room. The cost of the single supplement is listed above

Extra Expenses

Keep some cash on hand for souvenirs, incidentals, and tips. Included entrance fees are those for the listed sites that are part of the itinerary. Any other site fees are not included.

Money

Morocco's currency is the Moroccan Dirham (MAD). While some larger hotels and restaurants might accept EUR/USD, it's always best to use the local currency. You'll find ATMs and currency exchange shops readily available in Marrakesh but not elsewhere on the tour. We suggest exchanging/withdrawing enough cash on the first day in Marrakesh to last until returning again at the end of the tour. Credit cards are accepted at higher-end hotels and restaurants and some retailers but, for the most, part, you will need to have cash on hand for purchases along the way.

GENERAL BOOKING INFO

If this is the tour for you here's what you need to do to confirm your place:

FLEXIBLE BOOKING CONDITIONS

Booking a SpiceRoads cycling adventure is easy and we try to do everything possible to make sure you have full flexibility and peace of mind. We do not require a deposit to hold your place on a tour and once full payment has been made your money is protected in our client account and you have the flexibility to cancel or change your booking if needed.

CONFIRMING YOUR BOOKING

Just complete our online booking form or send your booking details offline (email or post), and we will confirm your participation. No deposit is needed to confirm your place on a SpiceRoads tour.

You are advised to read our <u>Booking Conditions</u> in full before you make your payment and should you require further clarifications of any of the conditions below, please <u>email us</u> or call our office.

TRIP STATUS

There is a minimum number of participants (usually 2) required to enable the trip to go ahead. Once the minimum number is reached, the trip status will change from 'Available' to 'Guaranteed to Depart'. Once a trip is guaranteed to depart you are free to book your flights and make other travel arrangements. If the trip status is 'Limited' will mean we have only a small number of

spaces available for booking. If you are unsure about the trip status, please <u>email us</u> or call our office.

BOOKING ONLINE

From the tour page, click the 'Book Now' link. All departures for this tour will appear, just select the date you'd like to travel. For the next steps, you'll need to know the names of the people travelling. If you wish you can also provide extra details such as passport numbers, height (for bike hire), or you can add that later by logging into Manage My Trip (we'll set up an account for you automatically if you don't already have one). Our system will contact you from time to time to fill in the missing information, as it will be required before departure. However, if the trip that you are booking offers a child discount, you will have to fill out the date of birth of each rider (so we can calculate the appropriate discount).

If you are having any problems <u>please send us an email</u>, or give us a call (+66 026 3295) and one of our travel specialists will assist you with your booking.

BOOKING OFFLINE

Just call us or send an email indicating which trip you want to join and we will happily send you a list of questions and process your booking for you.

DEPOSITS AND PAYMENTS

We do not require a deposit or full payment to book a place for you on a tour.

The balance of the tour's cost (final invoice) will need to be paid 60 days before the departure date with fees for any bicycle rental(s), single supplement(s) and extra hotel nights.

In the case where a booking is made when there are less than 60 days until the tour departure date, the tour's cost should be paid in full within 72 hours of receiving an invoice from SpiceRoads. Payment can be made by credit card using our online payment gateway or by bank transfer. When making payment online you will need to confirm that you have read these booking conditions during the "checkout" process, which equates to agreeing to the terms of services and stipulations as indicated in this document.

In all cases, tour fees need to be paid "in full" before participation in a tour. No person(s) will be allowed to join a tour without fully settling their invoice and receiving a confirmation number from SpiceRoads.

The exception can be made for last-minute miscellaneous fees that can be paid locally (visas, additional local hotel bookings, etc.) can be settled on the day of arrival.

FULL FLEXIBILITY FOR TOUR CANCELATIONS

If the tour is cancelled or postponed by SpiceRoads because we didn't make the trip numbers and the tour can't run, we will make a full cash refund (by bank transfer or on your credit card).

If the tour is cancelled for any other reason, including due to Covid related travel restrictions, we will give you a full credit (with no deductions for admin or any other small-print item) to use on any SpiceRoads tour with no time limit. (Exceptions being flights, special permits and other non-refundable items and these will be advised when booking the trip).

Before paying for your tour, you can cancel your booking with no charge and up until 40 days before departure, you can change your booking to another travel date or move your booking onto another SpiceRoads tour with no charges.

If you need to cancel after you have made full payment, please see our cancellation policy.

Loyalty Riders Club

For those who have been on several long tours with us, we reward customer loyalty by offering repeat customers a special discount off the tour price (excludes single supplement and bike rental). If this is your fourth scheduled tour or more you will receive a 5% discount. If this is your eighth scheduled tour or more we will extend a 10% discount. The discount will be reflected in your online booking, but please contact us if any questions. Loyalty discounts cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. Note: Only tours of 7 days or more will be applicable for a loyalty discount.

International Flights

International flights, to and from the start and finish points are not included in the tour price. Once your tour is Guaranteed to Depart you can book your flight. Please contact us for advice before arranging flights for the best arrival and departure times. We would only cancel a trip for an extreme circumstance, but in that case, where we cancel your trip, we cannot be liable for losses incurred

relating to any flight booking you have made. Please claim any losses from your <u>travel insurance</u> that you acquired when you booked your holiday.

Newsletter

Our adventure travel <u>e-newsletter</u> is full of travel news, trip information, interesting stories and contests. To avoid missing out on special offers and updates from SpiceRoads, be sure to subscribe.

CONTACT US

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