

# *The 4 valleys of High Atlas*

*(5 days and 4 nights or 4 days and 3 nights)*



## **Day 1**

The journey from Bab Zouina to the Berber village of Imlil takes about 1h and 30 minutes. The road leads us to enter the High Atlas by Asni village, renowned for its apple orchards. We then join Aremd (1'900 meters above sea level), the starting point of our trekking. We meet the muleteers who load the mules with our luggage and food for the next few days.

We leave the village behind to cross walnut trees forest that borders several small hamlets. The path leads us through a pine forest to the Tamatert pass (2'300 meters above sea level), where we have lunch in the middle of a spectacular landscape overlooking the adjacent Imenane valley.

Descending this vast valley with its terraced mountain agriculture, we can see the ancient village of Ouanescra, one of the oldest Berber villages in the region. We dine and stay under the tents at the top of Tacheddirt (2'400 meters above sea level), the culminating village of the High Atlas dominated by the impressive Likemt massif.

Route: Bab Zouina – Aremd – Tacheddirt (1 hour and 30 min drive, 4 hours 30 min to 5 hours' hike)



## Day 2

After breakfast, we follow the old mule track that crosses the mountain's hillside and leads us through Berber villages built with rammed earth or stone. Daily life has been going on here for centuries at a medieval pace and we meet the shepherds patiently watching over their goats and sheep flocks.

The path takes us to the lower fertile parts of the valley. We have lunch by a small stream and then slowly start our ascent to Aguersioual pass (2'000 meters above sea level). At this altitude, the vegetation is scarce; the colors of the mountains vary from red, brown to gray. We descend in a zigzag and after a last short climb, we reach the village of Matate (1'800 meters above sea level), where we set up camp, dine and spend the night.

Route: Tacheddirt – Matate (6 hours and 30 to 7 hours' hike)



## Day 3

After breakfast, we walk through a beautiful and wide plateau where juniper trees sprinkle the reddish soil. We pass stone enclosures where shepherds shelter their animals during the summer nights. We reach Tizi Oudid pass (2'000 meters above sea level) where we have lunch while admiring the surrounding mountains.

Beginning the descent into the valley, small villages appear in the greenery. After the village of Ait Aissa, we turn south and head to Tizi Oussen pass (1'800 meters above sea level), where we set up camp and share dinner. We have time to relax and enjoy the peace and serenity of this wonderful place.

Route: Matate – Tizi Ouseen (4 hours and 30 to 5 hours' hike)



## Day 4

After breakfast, we go into the beautiful Azadn valley. The nature becomes wilder, and we don't encounter any more villages until the end of our hike. We enjoy lunch in the middle of a spectacular landscape with terraced cultivated slopes surrounded by arid mountains.

We now head to the sheepfold of Azib Tamsoult (2'500 meters above sea level) and from there to a waterfall located about 45 minutes uphill. Back at the sheepfold, we dine and stay under

tents. The sheepfold is beautifully surrounded by the terraces and offers a panoramic view of the countryside.

Route: Tizi Ouseen – Azib Tamsoult (4 hours and 30 min hike)

## Day 5

After breakfast, we leave Azib Tamsoult; the downhill path fades away as we cross a steep and impressive slope. Our last ascent leads us to the Mzlk pass (2'488 meters above sea level), where magnificent new panoramas appear. In distance, we can see the Tamatert pass that we climbed on our first day of trekking.

The last part of our circuit brings us again to a steep slope from where we soon see the villages neighboring Aremd. The pleasant and welcoming Dar Toubkal guesthouse in Aremd is our very last stop. Here we sip a last tea on the terrace with an impressive view of Mount Toubkal (4'167 meters above sea level), the highest mountain in Morocco and North Africa, which we might be tempted to climb another time. From there we return to Marrakech.

Route: Azib Tamsoult – Aremd – Bab Zouina (4 hours and 30 min hike, 1 hour and 30 min drive)



### Equipment and gear:

You will need good hiking shoes and possibly your own sleeping bag. The rest of the equipment, such as tents, mattresses, food, etc. will be provided. However, you can bring nuts and dried fruit (which can be purchased in Marrakech) as well as chocolate which provide good energy for the hike.

In principle, we sleep in tents during the whole hike and the camp will always be set up near a watercourse (stream, spring) in wonderful places. It is also possible to stay in mountains shelters; however, sleeping in tents offers a stronger connection nature.

### 4 days / 3 nights Alternative:

Those who have less time can, on the 3rd day, continue directly to the guesthouse of Azib Tamsoult. The 4th day will then be dedicated to the return to Aremd.