Morocco Winter Skills
Information Pack

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Why Choose Earth's Edge

Our mission is to support you in exploring our incredible world and experiencing life-changing adventures in the safest way possible. We are passionate about protecting the planet and improving the lives of those we meet along the way.

- We are a **100% Irish-owned small business.** Our founder, James McManus, is passionate about climbing mountains, and his extensive experience is an invaluable source of support for our office team in our day-to-day operations.
- Our **exceptional guides and leaders** are fully trained in wilderness first aid, and true experts in their region. They are passionate about sharing their first-hand knowledge of the local culture, history, and geography, while ensuring we consistently deliver unforgettable experiences.
- Many of our high-altitude treks are supported by a **dedicated expedition doctor**. This is a bedrock of our service and our safety standards, giving clients an additional level of medical support where it's needed most.
- We keep **group sizes small** to minimise our environmental impact and foster a strong group dynamic. Whether you're traveling solo or with friends or family, our small group sizes provide the perfect opportunity to bond over shared experiences and create lasting friendships.
- For many of our expeditions, we run a **pre-departure training weekend** two months prior to departure, which includes a detailed expedition brief, two training hikes and expert advice from an experienced mountain guide.
- We're here to **support you every step of the way.** Our friendly office team is available to answer any questions you have by phone, e-mail or video consultations. Each team member participates in an expedition every year, ensuring they can share up-to-date advice and insights drawn from their own first-hand experiences.

- Booking an Earth's Edge expedition entitles you to a discount from our **equipment partners** at Great Outdoors to ensure that you get the best gear for your expedition.

- **Responsible travel** is at the core of what we do at Earth's Edge. As a Certified B Corp company, we are committed to using our business as a force for good; to support our communities both locally and worldwide as well as creating more environmental awareness.

We have a number of **environmental programmes and community projects,** including;

- A yearly scholarship that gives porters the opportunity to become guides on Kilimanjaro.
- Our clients in Nepal help to remove waste from Sagarmatha National Park through the Carry Me Back Program.
- We collect clothing and gear donations for our amazing porters on Kilimanjaro.
- We are striving to increase the number of female staff across our expeditions.

To read more about our sustainability practices please visit our responsible travel page.

Description & Detailed Itinerary

The Morocco Winter Skills course has been designed specifically around the **practical skills** you'll need as a member of a **guided expedition team on bigger mountains**. You'll get hands-on experience with the equipment, movement techniques and systems you're likely to encounter on these types of expeditions, helping you become a more capable and confident member of a guided expedition team. If you've climbed Kilimanjaro, trekked to Everest Base Camp or already have experience at high altitude, Morocco Winter Skills is **the perfect next step** toward bigger, more technical mountaineering expeditions.

The emphasis throughout the five days on Mount Toubkal is on **doing** rather than learning in isolation. You'll **learn and practise the winter and expedition skills** used on mountains such as Denali, Peak Lenin and Manaslu. You'll cover crampon and ice axe skills, fixed lines, simulated glacier travel and crevasse rescue, expedition load carrying, winter camp systems and managing yourself effectively in cold conditions and at altitude. You'll continuously apply these skills throughout the duration of the course.

The course culminates in a **winter ascent of Mount Toubkal (4,167m)**, giving you the opportunity to put what you've learned into practice on a significant mountain day.

The programme is kept **deliberately flexible,** allowing your instructors to adapt the order of sessions throughout the week, so the team can make the best use of the weather, snow and mountain conditions each day.

No previous technical mountaineering experience is required.

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Day 1: Arrive in Marrakech.

Arrive in Marrakech (RAK). Transfer to the hotel to relax or explore the city. There will be a full team briefing in the afternoon. Overnight hotel.

Day 2: Transfer Marrakech to Imlil, 1.5 hrs, and trek to Toubkal Refuge, 6 hrs.

After an early morning breakfast, we drive to Imlil (1,720m), the gateway to the Atlas Mountains. From here, we ascend to the **Toubkal Refuge (3,207m)**, our base camp for the next four nights, following well-established mountain trails through traditional villages and past the sacred shrine of **Sidi Chamharouch (2,300m)**, an important spiritual site for local Berber communities. The remainder of the day is spent resting and hydrating as our bodies begin to acclimatise. Overnight refuge. Altitude 3,207m.

Day 3: Winter Skills Training

Our first full day of practical winter mountaineering training in the High Atlas. We'll use the terrain and conditions around the refuge to begin developing and practising the fundamental skills needed to move safely and efficiently in winter mountain conditions. Overnight refuge. Altitude 3,207m.

Day 4: Winter Skills Training

A second full day developing our winter mountaineering and expedition skills. We'll continue to build on what we've learned and put those skills into practice on suitable mountain terrain. Overnight refuge. Altitude 3,207m.

Day 5: Winter Skills Training

Our final dedicated training day gives us another opportunity to practise and consolidate the techniques we've learned throughout the week and prepare for our planned ascent of Mount Toubkal. Overnight refuge. Altitude 3,207m.

Day 6: Summit Day – Mount Toubkal (4,167m) to Marrakech (10–12 hrs trekking)

We rise before dawn and put the skills we've developed throughout the week into practice as we ascend towards the summit of Mount Toubkal (4,167m). This is a long winter mountain day, climbing steadily as the sun begins to rise over the Atlas Mountains. After reaching the summit, conditions permitting, we return to the refuge before continuing all the way back to Imlil. From Imlil, we drive back to Marrakech for a well-earned celebratory dinner. Overnight hotel.

Day 7: Depart Marrakech

Enjoy breakfast at the hotel, and flight times permitting, some final exploring in Marrakech before heading to the airport for your departure.

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Expedition Costs

You can find our detailed expedition pricing on our website.

- A **deposit** of EUR/USD/GBP 199 is taken at the time of booking to secure your spot.
- The **final balance** can be paid in instalments, but is due 90 days prior to departure.

Flights

We'll share recommended flight timings to Marrakech Airport (RAK) that line up with our complimentary group transfers approximately 10 months pre-departure.

Please consult us before booking alternative flights to ensure you arrive in time for the expedition briefing on the first day. It is essential that you do not miss this meeting.

Expedition Inclusions & Exclusions

Expedition Costs Include:

- An Earth's Edge team jacket, buff and cap for you to keep
- Experienced Earth's Edge winter mountaineering course facilitator
- Highly experienced local guides
- Full mountain support team including cooks and mules
- Five mountain days of practical winter mountaineering and expedition skills training
- All accommodation based on twin sharing:
    - 2 nights riad (hotel) in Marrakech
    - 4 nights shared dorm at Toubkal refuge
- All meals and drinking water on the mountain
    - In Marrakech accommodation is based on B&B
- Celebratory dinner at the end of the course
- Planned group transport throughout the trip
- Airport transfers that match our recommended flights
- Permit for trekking Mount Toubkal

Expedition Costs Exclude:

- Flights
- Personal travel insurance
- Personal equipment
- Tips
- Personal expenses - e.g. laundry, phone calls, alcohol, or excess baggage charges
- Any costs arising out of unforeseen circumstances which affect the itinerary
  e.g. inclement weather, road conditions, and any other circumstances beyond our control

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Travel Insurance

Comprehensive travel insurance is mandatory for all travellers, and it is your responsibility to ensure that you have suitable cover in place for this course.

We strongly recommend arranging travel insurance as soon as possible after booking, so that you may be covered for unforeseen events, such as illness or injury, that could prevent you from travelling.

At a minimum, your policy must cover:

A. Emergency medical treatment
B. Winter mountaineering up to at least 4,167m, including the use of crampons, ice axe and ropes/fixed lines
C. Mountain search and rescue
D. Emergency helicopter evacuation
E. Repatriation to your country of residence

We recommend considering **TrueTraveller** as their policies can provide cover for the requirements outlined above and include cancellation cover.

We suggest providing your insurer with the full itinerary and obtaining written confirmation that all course activities are covered before you travel.

Spending Money and Tipping

Spending Money

We recommend that you put aside **EUR300** in spending money for this trip.

We recommend that you exchange your money to the local currency, Moroccan Dirham, either at the airport or in Marrakech, for purchasing small items like snacks on the trail. There are ATMs available in Marrakech where you can withdraw cash using a credit/debit card.

Tipping

Any gratuity is entirely at your discretion and based on your experience, level of satisfaction, and personal circumstances. If you are happy to tip, you can give it to your guide at the end of the trek, who will distribute it fairly among the local team.

We ask our clients not to tip any of the Earth's Edge team directly, as it's important that all of the team get their fair share of the tips.

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Safety Standards

At Earth's Edge, your safety is our top priority. Each Morocco Winter Skills course is led by an experienced mountaineering course facilitator, and supported by our team of local guides and support staff, all selected for their skills, experience, and excellent references.

Our teams are familiar with the locations of local medical facilities and hospitals in each destination. We ask all participants to bring a basic first aid kit as outlined in the equipment list. Always follow the guidance of your expedition leader to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience.

We recommend participants research local laws and customs before travelling to Morocco. Up-to-date travel advice is available on the DFA website.

On expeditions, one of the most common causes of illness is gastroenteritis, often caused by poor personal hygiene. The good news is that it is easily avoided by practising the following:

- Always **wash your hands** and apply **hand sanitiser** after going to the toilet and before touching food.
- Always **use drinking water** to brush your teeth and avoid ingesting water while showering or washing your face.
- Maintain a **healthy diet** and consider taking **multivitamins and probiotics** for one month before and during the expedition to help your body adjust to changes in your diet and keep you healthy throughout the expedition.
- **Drinking water** is provided by Earth's Edge each day on the mountain and is boiled and cooled. You may also wish to bring your own water treatment tablets. Electrolyte tablets/sachets or concentrated flavouring can be used to change the flavour of the water.

To read more about our safety standards please visit our safety page.

Special Offers:

- **Return Customer Offer** - If you have travelled with us before please visit our return customer page for details on what discount you are entitled to.
- **Refer a Friend Offer** - If you have a friend who wants to travel with us please visit our refer a friend page for details on our referral programme.
- **Group Discounts** - If you are booking as part of a group please visit our group discounts page for details on what discount you are entitled to.
- **Couples Offer** - If you are booking with a friend or partner please visit our couples offer page for details on what discount you are entitled to.

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Book Your Trip Consultation

You can now schedule a free trip consultation with a member of the Earth's Edge team! We're happy to talk you through the itinerary, preparation and training, equipment, and anything else you'd like to know. Book your consultation here.

Expedition FAQ

Do you have a question that wasn't answered in this information pack? If so, please visit our FAQ page for a full list of frequently asked questions. If you can't find your answer there please contact us.

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