

Bird Watching & Cultural Holiday in Morocco
December 12-19th 2018
Led by Said Ahmoume



Escape the British weather to enjoy sun, good food, an exotic culture and environment stay at our award-winning, comfortable, sustainably-run traditional guest house in an ancient walled market town nestled in the fertile Souss Valley between the High Atlas and the parched Anti-Atlas bordering the Sahara and an hour's drive from the coast in Southern Morocco. Our highly experienced birding guide Said will lead the birding outings. More at www.holidays-with-heart.co.uk

"I am full of admiration for your enterprise in Morocco and the work you have done to ensure a visit to Morocco makes you feel on leaving that you have begun to get to know the flavour and character of the country in a way impossible with a conventional holiday."

"If only there were more places like this, a medina house run by locals offering a rare glimpse into Moroccan life. They offer skilled guides, exciting cultural experiences and delicious Moroccan meals."

Lonely Planet

- Support of 8 charming Moroccan staff experienced in running successful group holidays
- A wide choice of other authentic activities including involvement with charitable projects
- Substantial pre-visit information and support in the UK
- A chance to buy some beautiful handcrafted items, food and other delights in the souks
- Explore the fascinating culture with the help of delightful guides; option to trek, laze in the sun
- Feel safe thanks to the care of the staff, good medical facilities nearby, safe water as well as the town being small, relaxed and friendly with few tourists.

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"I wanted to thank you once again for the wonderful week. I found it a real privilege to be in Morocco with such a dedicated team who care for the country and people so deeply."

"I just want to tell you that the holiday was completely magical and LOVED EVERY MINUTE.! The staff were just amazing with nothing too much trouble and such fun."



Read more about our bird watching holidays here [bird watching](#)

Your Guide

Saïd Ahmoume has a real passion for the environment and an exceptionally detailed knowledge of wildlife, especially birds. He has been escorting bird watching tours for foreign visitors since 1999 & was chosen recently to accompany Stephen Moss of Springwatch fame. A native Berber, he has a degree in biology and geology and speaks fluently in English, French, Arabic and, of course, Berber. He is a real gentleman. He's also a mine of information about most things Moroccan including a beekeeping and permaculture project which "La Maison Anglaise" supports. One day will be guided by our lady guide Dounia.

The Region and its Scenery and Habitats

Remarkable contrasts of geology, scenery and wildlife are to be found all within one to two hours' drive of Taroudant. The itinerary includes estuarine, sandy and rocky coasts, contrasting mountainous regions of the ancient Anti Atlas Mountains (including areas of marble and igneous rocks) and the High Atlas Mountains

There are 3 Protected Areas in the region each of which has contrasting scenery:

- The Argan Forest Biosphere reserve
- The Tamri National Park, where the critically endangered Bald Ibis is often seen
- The Souss Massa National Park, renowned for its wetland habitats and birdlife

Birds Your visit is timed to coincide with the peak of spring migration, so you may also see many familiar species as they return north to Britain from their winter quarters in equatorial Africa. There are over 400 species of bird seen in Morocco, so you stand a good chance of seeing a good variety of species.

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Unique to this part of the world are species such as Black-shouldered Kite, the very beautiful Moussier's Redstart and the Bald Ibis, one of the rarest birds in the world. White Stork, Common Bulbul, Spotless Starling and House Bunting, as well as a wide range of migrants including warblers, swallows and swifts. Shorebirds such as waders, terns and the rare Audouin's and Slender-billed Gulls.

The Souss estuary attracts many waterbirds, including flamingos, herons and egrets, spoonbills and a large range of waders, gulls and terns – including Royal and Lesser Crested. You may also see Bluethroat, Black-crowned Tchagra and many kinds of raptors including fishing Ospreys.

The Massa Lagoon is packed with waterbirds, including Common Crane, Glossy Ibis and the elegant Black-winged Stilt, plus a good range of other waders, along with Marbled and Ferruginous Ducks. The area around the estuary is excellent for Barbary Partridge, Laughing Dove, Southern Grey Shrike and a range of smaller resident and migrant birds including Sardinian Warbler, Spanish Sparrow, Pallid Swift, Plain Martin and Serin.

In the mountains species such as Thekla Lark, Bonelli's Eagle and the distinctive North African races of Blue Tit and Chaffinch; on the higher slopes you may see Chough, Rock Sparrow, Golden Eagle and Blue Rock Thrush.

Cost includes: £182 per person sharing a double or twin room for 7 nights; singles available for a £120 supplement, substantial breakfasts. **Optional extra activities** include live music and dancing with local Berber Women's band, wildlife, crafts, cookery, massage & hammam therapy.

Cost excludes: Inexpensive direct flights from London Gatwick to Agadir (**from £70 return** if booked early), travel insurance (must include cancellation cover), trek and meals or activities and tips (which are important in Moroccan culture)

Flights from Gatwick, Manchester or Stansted on Tuesdays and Manchester on Wednesdays

Wed Day 1: The Souss Massa National Park south of Agadir: resident and migrant birds of the Souss and Massa estuaries

Thurs Day 2: The Souss Valley: the Argan forest, Tioute Palmery and the Anti Atlas Mountains. A patchwork of dryland, oases and irrigated land

Fri Day 3: The Atlantic Coast North of Agadir: Coastal habitats. The Northern Bald Ibis and the Tamri National Park

Sat Day 4: The Atlas East of Taroudant: Tiz n Test Pass and the Aoulouz Gorge

Sun Day 5: guide's day off

Mon Day 6: The Western High Atlas North of Taroudant – terraced irrigated valleys, ancient olive groves, mountain slopes and mountain streams.

Tues Day 7: Optional Taroudant town: Relaxation and birds in and around the town or flight home

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To reserve your place or make enquiries about the holiday, go to www.ceu.co.uk/bookings

Please Note: We can only accommodate a maximum of 7 clients in this group, so it is essential to book early to ensure your reservation.

PRICES Current exchange rates are about 12.5 MAD/£

MEALS Dinner including several dishes (various dishes including soup or salad, a main course, a dessert, water and choice of hot non-alcoholic drinks. You are welcome to bring your own alcohol): **Vegetarian 110 Dh; Meat or Fish: 130 Dh. Picnics: 50 DH. Lunch** (salad and soup with bread and fruit and water): **60 DH.** Wheat, gluten, dairy and meat-free options. See more about our meals and special diets [here](#).

EXCURSIONS Prices quoted are **guideline prices per person** based on cost of transport, fuel, tips we pay to local people who contribute and expert guiding.

To places within approx. 30 minutes' drive: Tiout Oasis and the Anti Atlas Mountains, High Atlas Berber Villages: community projects in the Souss Valley (The Pigeon House – Argan oil, embroidery projects; the Permaculture Bee Orchard; the Busy Bee Centre) **250 dh**

To places within approx. an hour's drive: the Atlantic Coast near Agadir (camel rides; Polizzi's medina, Souss estuary; Mentaga valley trek (near Afensou); Tamsoult or Imoulass (both very high in the High Atlas) **260- 280 dh**

To places within approx. an hour and a half's drive: Massa Estuary (National Park); Tamri National Park; Tiz n Test Pass (High Atlas); Anti Atlas Paradise Valley;) **300 dh**

CULTURAL EXPERIENCES Prices are mostly 50- 80 dh per person. No minimum group size except where indicated. Duration of activities 1 hour – 1 hour 30 mins except where indicated otherwise.

Caleche Ride (at Sunset if desired) around Ramparts and Town: in a horse-drawn taxi with our guide: **80 dh**

Cookery lesson -either prepare an evening meal (including recipes) **80 dh**