Meningitis now

Morocco - Toubkal Trek

Information Pack

5 - 9 September 2019



Climb the highest peak in North Africa



Trip duration: 4 days

At 4,167m, Mount Toubkal is the highest peak in the Atlas Mountains and Northern Africa. It is a non-technical summit requiring a reasonable degree of fitness and determination. Toubkal is easily reached from Marrakesh and offers striking high-altitude mountain scenery, lush valleys and relatively untouched Berber communities.

With fairly remote areas and higher altitudes than you might be used to, this trip is graded moderate / demanding and will require a moderate level of fitness.

Michaela Ifill - Toubkal Trek organiser



"I'm really excited to have a new overseas challenge in our events portfolio and I am absolutely thrilled to be involved with the trek in 2019."

"The Toubkal Trek will be a challenge of a lifetime. With remote areas and higher altitudes, your body and mind will be tested, but I promise it will be worth it. Seeing the breathtaking mountain scenery and stunning valleys, and having the chance to experience the culture and lives of the Berber community, will make the event one to remember."

"From taking your first steps in the Imlil valley to summiting Toubkal, the event will be filled with laughter, as new friendships emerge and team spirits become as high as the mountains themselves."

As Challenge Organiser, I am here to look after you, leaving you free to concentrate on walking, enjoying the stunning scenery and raising invaluable funds to help fight meningitis in the UK."

"Whether you have a question about fundraising, training or just fancy a chat, I am always here to help."

michaelai@meningitisnow.org
01453 769 024
www.meningitisnow.org/toubkal

FACT

£50

can provide someone suffering with the after-effects of meningitis with an hour of emotional support from a specialist counsellor or therapist

About the challenge

Total distance to conquer	Total height to climb	Total walking time
33 kilometres	2,700m	24hrs approx

This unique trek is exclusively for Meningitis Now participants, bringing tranquillity and greenery for all to see.

The highest point in the Atlas range, Mount Toubkal peaks at over 4000 meters altitude and is visible from Marrakesh! The landscapes of this region are rich and varied, with spectacular plateaus and valleys cultivated by the Berber population, who have lived here for thousands of years.

Toubkal is a leading tourist destination in Morocco and is a real paradise for lovers of trekking, with magnificent views from the summit.

There are a variety of steep ascents and descents and we will be trekking for up to 8 hours per day. It should be noted that the accommodation is quite basic and will consist of camping or mountain huts.

The fitter you are, the more you will enjoy this trek. We offer training walks and training plans and guides as required.

Our guides for the Toubkal Trek are highly qualified and experienced, first aid-certified professionals and don't ask you to do anything that they haven't done themselves!



Craig Saunders - Mountain Leader

"Morocco and the Atlas Mountains are definitely in the top ten of awe-inspiring places that I have had the pleasure of visiting. Marrakesh has so much charm and character, filled with colour and the scents of Argan oil and the many spices that frequent the air.

"The trek up to the Toubkal Refuge takes you from the village of Imlil, through small and sleepy Berber communities, with quaint stalls selling refreshments chilled by snow melt water. As you progress up the valley, the mountains beside you rise higher and higher; the Refuge is a pleasing sight. It's a hive of activity - tents and camps scattered, lots of climbers checking kit and prepping for their early start, the smell of lush home-cooked food filling the air. Food cooked up here is better than any 5 star restaurant!

"Summit Day starts super early, up in a flash and ready to rock! The sun has yet to rise, stars still fill the night's sky as we start our summit bid. Lots of scree slopes to tackle as we ascend, slow and steady! As we reach the summit ridge we stop to take in the view of the sun rising to the east, stretching out towards the Sahara. The final 100m to the summit is highly rewarding, with jubilation as the metal structure appears in sight; the final steps are filled with excitement and anticipation. The 360 degree view from the summit is like no other, it was earned and worth every step and the perfect place to reflect and share a snack with the chipmunks!"



How to join the Toubkal Trek team

To apply for a place on this unforgettable challenge, all you need to do is complete our online application form. If your application is accepted, you will need to pay a £150 non-refundable registration fee to secure your place and raise the minimum sponsorship amount of £1,000.

Sign up online at **www.meningitisnow.org/toubkaltrek**

Email **michaelai@meningitisnow.org** for more information

Contact Michaela by phone at **01453 769 024**

Why support Meningitis Now?

We put people at the heart of everything we do. We exist to save lives and rebuild futures by funding research, raising awareness and supporting people affected by meningitis.



Did you know?

- **Around twenty-two people a day contract meningitis in the UK***
- **Following bacterial meningitis, 1 in 10 will die**
- **Many are left with long-term after-effects such as deafness, brain damage and limb loss**

* We estimate that there are currently around 8,000 cases of viral and bacterial meningitis in the UK each year

By taking on the Toubkal Trek for Meningitis Now, you will help us fight this dreaded disease.



FACT

£500

could help pay for the materials needed to grow meningitis-causing bacteria in a lab so that our researchers can study how they work

Trip itinerary

Day 1

Travel to Marrakesh
Check in to hotel; meet the team.

Day 2

Imlil to Refuge du Toubkal
Team transfer by minibuses from Marrakesh to Imlil; trek to Refuge du Toubkal.

Day 3

Toubkal Summit
Early morning summit attempt of Toubkal.

Day 4

Second summit and Aremd
Second attempt of Toubkal, or optional summit of nearby Ouanoukrim. Trek to Aremd.

Day 5

Return journey
Trek to Imlil; minibus transfer back to Marrakesh for journey home (we aim to arrive back in Marrakesh by 2pm).

What's included?

We take care of all the arrangements throughout the challenge weekend, leaving you free to concentrate on enjoying the experience.

- Accommodation in Marrakesh the night before the trek*
- Transport from Marrakesh to the mountains for the start of the trek
- Food for the group at a guest house
- All food and cooking during the trek; breakfasts, lunches and dinners as noted on the itinerary
- Mules and muleteers for trekking
- Mess tents, small tents and all camping materials EXCEPT sleeping bags
- Gites and camps
- Two qualified UK mountain guides
- Transport from the mountains to Marrakesh at the end of the trek

**Please note, evening meal is not included*



One of the side effects of climbing to high altitude is a loss of appetite; you'll need plenty of snacks to replace the calories you burn. Your guide likes peanut M'n'Ms!

What isn't included?

- Flights and baggage
- Food and drinks before and after the trek
- Accommodation after the trek
- Sightseeing / local tours
- Travel insurance, passports, visas, inoculations
- Bottled water on the trek (this may be purchased at refuges but is limited; iodine tablets are recommended)
- Other ad-hoc costs such as tips, drinks, souvenirs and laundry

We recommend bringing some cash to cover meals not provided, snacks and other items. You can change GBP to local currency - Moroccan dirham (MAD) - at the airport and hotels, and cash machines are widely available.

We are here to help you - FAQs

What is the minimum age requirement?

Participants must be 18 years or over on Thursday 5 September 2019 to take part in the challenge.

Am I fit enough?

The Toubkal Trek includes 3 days of intense exercise at higher altitudes, with walking times of up to 8 hours at a time with only a few short breaks.

We recommend that anyone taking part - no matter how fit you already are - spends adequate time training beforehand and takes the opportunity to join us on one of our free training walks. The more prepared you are for the challenge, the more enjoyable the trek will be.

If you are in any way worried about your health or fitness, please consult your doctor before signing up to the challenge.

What do I need to provide?

- £150 non-refundable registration fee and a pledge to raise £1,000 in sponsorship
- Flights and transport to and from Marrakesh
- Your own hiking equipment (full lists will be supplied)
- Personal travel insurance (list of recommended insurers will be provided)
- Money to pay for meals (lunch and dinner on Thursday 5 September, lunch and dinner on Monday 9 September), plus any additional snacks for the mountains.

Where will we stay?

We will spend Thursday evening at Riad Hiba and then we will be transferred by minibus to Imlil on the Friday morning. The rest of the day will be spent trekking to Refuge du Toubkal, which will be your home for the next two evenings. After the second day of reaching the summit, we will be staying in a traditional hostel in the Berber village of Aremd before heading back to Marrakesh on Monday morning. You are more than welcome to book a further night's stay in Morocco or fly straight home.

FACT

£4,500

can pay for an action-packed Believe and Achieve weekend, giving teenagers and young adults affected by meningitis the opportunity to rebuild their self-confidence and self esteem.

Do I need specialist kit?

The most important item of kit is a good pair of sturdy, well broken-in walking boots. If you are buying new boots for the challenge, you **must** break them in well beforehand.

The weather in the mountains can change quickly; it can be unpredictable and therefore you need to come equipped for all conditions. Further information about the required kit is included in your registration pack.

Will I have to carry my kit?

Your kit should be split into two bags: a 30+ litre rucksack that you will take with you up the mountain containing any kit that you may need, drinks and snacks; and a sturdy waterproof 90 litre duffel bag containing spare clothing, food etc, which will be carried by the mules. It's a good idea to walk with a pack on your back during your training to get used to the extra weight.

What kind of support will I receive?

Our Events team will be supporting you in the run-up to the challenge, offering practical advice to prepare you for the trek and fundraising tips and ideas. Two members of our Events team will be joining you in Morocco to support you every step of the way.

During the challenge, a fully qualified Safety Team will accompany the group at all times. The Safety Team will be made up of two Mountain Leaders who have supported Meningitis Now for a number of years and are experienced mountaineers, and two mountain guides who live in the Berber Village in Toubkal. These guides know Toubkal in great detail and have worked with our Mountain Leaders for many years on various overseas treks. The team are only too happy to answer any questions you may have, address any concerns and provide advice throughout the challenge.

What if I get an injury on the mountains?

Our Safety Team are all first aid qualified and will carry the appropriate safety kit for the challenge. The team's primary role is to ensure your safety, but it is your responsibility to listen to their guidance and instructions at all times.



We are here to help you - FAQs

How will I raise the £1,000 minimum sponsorship?

It is ok to feel a little anxious about raising this amount, but do not worry. Once you start, fundraising has a habit of gathering speed and most people are usually pleasantly surprised at people's generosity.

Fundraising can be fun too! There are many ways to raise money - through your family, friends and colleagues, by organising fundraisers, or by asking companies and businesses to support you. You may have to do more than ask for names on sponsor forms, but don't worry, we will provide you with detailed fundraising advice and materials.

Does Gift Aid count towards my fundraising target?

Unfortunately, the tax claimed on Gift Aid donations cannot be used towards your fundraising target. This is because the payment comes from the government and cannot be guaranteed. However, you should encourage your sponsors to tick the Gift Aid box if they are UK tax payers, as this is an important source of additional income for us.

Please remember that we can only claim Gift Aid if people have filled in their full name, home address and postcode.

What happens if I can't raise the pledged amount?

You need to think carefully about how you will raise the amount. Your signed pledge is a commitment to raise the money. There are many costs involved in running the event so, as a charity, we need to ensure we not only raise as much as possible for those we support, but also cover costs.

Remember, we are here to help and won't leave you on your own. Whether you need fundraising advice or experience unforeseen difficulties, please let us know. It is often easier to raise sponsorship online through Just Giving or Virgin Money Giving. This means you can email the page to lots of people and don't have to collect cash, as sponsors donate by credit or debit card.

How do I apply?

To apply for the challenge, visit

www.meningitisnow.org/toubkaltrek

If you have any further queries about signing up, please call Michaela on **01453 769 024** or email **michaelai@meningitisnow.org**





I hope to welcome you to our team
Find out more today:

01453 769 024

michaelai@meningitisnow.org

www.meningitisnow.org/toubkaltrek

www.MeningitisNow.org

© Meningitis Now 2018
Registered charity number (England & Wales) 803016 (Scotland) SC037790
Company Registration Number 2469130.

Registered with FUNDRAISING REGULATOR