

MOROCCAN MAGIC

YOUNG ALUMNI TOUR 2021
BE PART OF THE TRADITION



AUGUST 14 - U.S. DEPARTURE DATE | AUGUST 15 - LAND TOUR START DATE

AUGUST 22 - RETURN HOME

BASE LAND PACKAGE FROM: \$ 2,498

UH HOUSTON
ALUMNI
ASSOCIATION

COUGARS ON TOUR

START YOUR ADVENTURE.

Dear Young Alumni and Friends!

Can you think of a better way to travel than with fellow Cougar Young Alumni?

The University of Houston Alumni Association young alumni travel program offers you this opportunity by bringing you together with individuals in the same age range, with similar backgrounds and experiences, while enriching you on well-designed, hassle-free tours of the world.

Travel with young alumni and friends of peer institutions, ages 20 – 35. These programs provide social, cultural, and recreational activities and many opportunities for learning enrichment and enjoying a connection back to the University of Houston. They are of great quality and value, operated by a travel company with over 40 years of experience in the young professional travel market.

In this brochure you will find a detailed itinerary, travel dates and pricing. Visit our website www.aesu.com/uh for details on all tours and to book online.

If you have any questions about our young alumni travel program, please contact our tour operator, AESU Alumni World Travel, at alumni@aesu.com or call 800-638-7640.

Sincerely,



Mike Pede '89
Associate VP for Alumni Relations
University of Houston

 HOUSTON
ALUMNI
ASSOCIATION
COUGARS ON TOUR



TRAVEL INSURANCE

We highly recommend travel insurance. (Some schools or alumni associations may offer travel insurance to you at a reduced rate.) If not, AESU also offers group travel insurance. Ask our reservations agent for details or click on this link:
<https://www.tripassure.com/main/?welcome=AESU3922MD>

MOROCCAN MAGIC

9 DAYS



PLACES VISITED:

Marrakesh | Essaouira | Casablanca

ABOUT THE TRIP:

If Marrakesh is not on your wish list of travel destinations, you have not paid attention to social media trends.

While the 'Red City' soared to the top of the world's bucket list, it has retained its original character.

Castle ruins sink into the sand where ocean waters wrap around historic embankments. Whitewashed walls of coastal cities shine brightly against cobalt water and the golden desert sand. Legendary storytellers tell tales of flying carpets and mysterious princesses. Discover snake charmers and camel caravans, enchanting palaces, and mouth-watering Moroccan cuisine. The country's mystique is endless and always fascinating.

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS:

Welcome dinner and orientation * Marrakesh sights * Guided visit to Palais Bahia * Guided visit to Palais Badii * Camel ride in the Agafay Desert * Majorelle Gardens * Yves St. Laurent museum * Berber museum * Tagine cooking class * Lunch with Moroccan wine tasting * Essaouira's walled medina, UNESCO World Heritage site * ATV ride on Essaouira beach * Casablanca sights * Hassan II mosque and plaza

WHAT'S INCLUDED:

The 9-day land package includes:
7 nights at 4-star hotel or better, 2-share rooms with private bath/shower * 7 breakfasts * 5 specialty dinners * 3 specialty lunches * Half-day city tour of Marrakesh, guided by a local historian * Excursion to the Agafay desert * Camel ride * Tagine cooking class with an expert chef * Private tour director for the entire duration of the land tour * All scheduled sightseeing * All ground transportation as per itinerary * All service charges and local taxes *

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DAY 1 TRAVEL TO MOROCCO

Embark on your overnight flight to begin your Moroccan experience.

Meals: In-flight

DAY 2 MARRAKESH – LAND TOUR START DAY

Travelers, who booked a group flight with AESU, will be met and transferred to the hotel. Tonight meet in the hotel lobby for a welcome dinner and orientation with your tour director and fellow travelers.

Inclusions: Transfer from airport to hotel included with purchased AESU group airfare; Welcome dinner and orientation

Meals: In-flight, Welcome dinner

DAY 3 MARRAKESH

Today, our local guide introduces us to exotic and enchanting Marrakesh. We see stunning sites such as the Palais Badii and Bahia Palace with its shady courtyards and blue mosaic walls as well as the city's main square Djema El Fna where one can find everything from snake charmers to acrobats. After a lunch of local specialties, explore the souk and shop for everything from leather goods to Moroccan lamps and traditional crafts made from metal and wood. Later, we continue our adventure with a camel ride on the rocky landscape of the Agafay Desert. Then, enjoy a gourmet Moroccan meal with stunning views of the Agafay hills, watching the sunset play with the changing colors of the scenery.

Inclusions: Half-day city tour guided by a local historian; Admission to Palais Bahia; Admission to Palais Badii; Excursion to the Agafay desert Camel ride in the Agafay desert; Gourmet Moroccan dinner with stunning desert views

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 4 MARRAKESH

French painter Jacques Majorelle created a marvelous garden in the early 1900s. The 'electric blue' garden is colored like a painting, featuring marble pools, raised pathways, plants, waterfalls and ponds. Sharing the museum grounds is a museum dedicated to the iconic designer Yves Saint Laurent. While Fashionistas will certainly enjoy the exhibition, the library houses a number of rare books that might interest others. Finally we visit Morocco's most beautifully curated museum, the Musee Berbere, exhibiting collections of jewelry and traditional dresses. This afternoon enjoy a traditional Tagine cooking experience. Learn how to cook local dishes and discover the secrets of some of the best Moroccan recipes in a professional, yet casual atmosphere. Afterwards, sit back, relax and enjoy your delicious home-cooked meal together with your new-found friends.

Inclusions: Guided tour of Majorelle Gardens, YSL Museum and Musee Berbere; Admission to the museums; Tagine cooking class with an expert chef; Home-cooked dinner

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 5 MARRAKECH

Today is a free day to explore Marrakesh on your own. If you prefer an intriguing excursion, you may like to join our optional hike in the Atlas Mountains or enjoy an exquisite Royal Hammam Spa experience. Tonight, we venture out to Djema El Fna, arguably the single most mythical location that comes to life at night. Enjoy a guided walking tour and discover the square's non-stop energy. You'll see fortune-tellers, snake charmers and acrobats and you can try a juice, camel milk or some grilled meats from the famous street vendors popular with locals and foreigners alike.

Meals: Breakfast

Optional activity: Hike in the Atlas Mountains, including tea at a local Berber family home and lunch at a Berber restaurant (all day, round-trip driving time 3 hours), Hammam Spa Experience (90 minutes)

DAY 6 MARRAKESH - ESSAOIRA

Bid farewell to Marrakesh as we make our way west towards the coast and the seaside city of Essaouira. Today might be your first time tasting



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Moroccan wine. The owners of Val d'Argan winery are of French origin and also own a winery in Chateauneuf-du-Pape. The wines produced in Morocco are not exported; therefore this is a unique opportunity to taste the Val d'Argan red, El Mogador rosé or the Orient's Blanc. Decide which one pairs best with your lunch of Moroccan specialties. If you have heard about the benefits of Argon oil for skin and hair, you will be very interested in our visit to an Argon oil women's cooperative. Learn how this miracle oil is produced and sample the magic essence of Argon. We continue to Essaouira with its atmospheric medina, a UNESCO World Heritage site, its colorful bazaars and a center that bustles with open-air restaurants and cafés. After a dinner of local specialties at our hotel, head out and explore the city's nightlife.

Inclusions: Visit and tour of a Moroccan winery; Lunch of Moroccan specialties including local wines; Tour of Argon oil women's cooperative; Argon oil sampling; Dinner of local specialties

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 7 ESSAOUIRA

Today we explore Essaouira's walled medina which dates from the late 18th century and is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site. Walk the narrow streets, admire white-washed buildings with decorative wooden doors and enjoy the serene atmosphere of this seaside village. Browse shops offering traditional Moroccan wares including wooden goods carved from local Thuya wood, and local spices. In the afternoon, we explore the beach on a quad bike tour. Ride through the dunes and alongside the ocean, then ride through a fishing village and discover the ruins of the old sultan's palace. After watching a stunning sunset over the Atlantic, the evening is free for your own adventures.

Inclusions: Tour of Essaouira's walled medina, UNESCO World Heritage site; ATV ride on the beach

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 8 ESSAOUIRA – CASABLANCA

Our journey continues along the coast to Casablanca. Although it is not Morocco's capital city, it is the country's largest city with a thriving economy and an array of cultural venues. Hassan II Mosque is Casablanca's landmark building. Having employed over 10,000 of the Kingdom's artists and craftsmen to build, today it is the largest mosque in Morocco with the tallest minaret in the world and a stunning display of Moroccan-Andalusian architecture. A local guide will share stories and history of this grand work of architecture on our guided tour today. Enjoy free time to further explore the city or for some last minute shopping before our farewell dinner at Rick's Café. It was designed to recreate the bar made famous by Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman in the movie classic, Casablanca. Share stories of your Arabian adventure, post last minute images on the BAND App and start following your travel companions on Instagram to ensure everyone is on board for a reunion trip to yet another spectacular country.

Inclusions: Guided visit of Hassan II Mosque and Plaza; Farewell dinner at Rick's Cafe

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 9 CASABLANCA – TRAVEL HOME

Today we transfer to the Casablanca International Airport for our return flight home. We board our flight home with memories of one of the world's most intriguing destinations and plans for our next young alumni journey!

Inclusions: Transfer from hotel to airport included with purchased AESU group airfare

Meals: Breakfast, In-flight

Your trip includes the services of a private tour director for the duration of the land tour.

All services charges and local taxes are included. Thank your tour director and driver with a gratuity at the end of the tour (suggested amount \$5 per day for your tour director and \$2-3 per day for your driver.) They will do their very best to make this trip the most memorable and best time of your life.



PROGRAM ACCOMMODATIONS

HOTELS

Our hotels are 4-star hotels or better, with private bathrooms. They are centrally located or have easy access to public transportation. Many have great extra amenities such as pools, gyms or roof-top bars. All land package rates are based on two people sharing a room. If traveling solo and not wanting to pay the single supplement, AESU will attempt to arrange a share with a same-gender traveler. If a share cannot be arranged a single supplement of \$825 will apply.



ACTIVITY LEVEL 2: MODERATE

Standing and walking for extended periods of time during city tours, museum visits, and/or outdoor activities. Walking over sometimes difficult terrain (e.g. cobblestones, city hills, stairs without handrails, absence of elevators, climbing aboard buses or trains with high steps.) Appropriate for travelers who are physically fit, lead active lives and are comfortable participating in moderate activities.

Please Note: Travel to and from the tour is not factored into our activity level ratings. You should take into account your stamina when traveling long distances and/or with multiple flight changes. Also, you must be able to handle your luggage independently throughout the itinerary.

TOUR DIRECTORS

We are very proud of our tour directors. They are young professionals; multi-lingual and carefully selected graduates from major European universities. They are eager to show the world through the eyes of an adventurer. Our tour directors know this is a trip of a lifetime and will share their knowledge as well as interesting little-known facts. Our qualified tour directors and staff of local experts mean a trouble-free journey with the added security of group travel.



**“IT WAS MY DREAM
COME TRUE AND
I COULDN'T HAVE
ASKED FOR A
BETTER TRIP.”**

- past traveler

BOOKING TERMS & CONDITIONS

EXCLUSIONS: These prices do not include passport and, if applicable, visa fees (Depending on your nationality, you may require visas in addition to a passport to enter certain countries. You must contact appropriate consulates for details on how to obtain on your own.); airport and government taxes; tipping of tour guide and driver (suggested \$5 per day for tour director, \$2-3 per day for driver); beverages with meals unless indicated otherwise; laundry; personal insurance; room service; telephone charges; all items of a personal nature; airport transfers when a participant deviates from scheduled flights or travel dates; private transportation; and all items not specifically stated in the itinerary.

CANCELLATION POLICY: All cancellations must be received by AESU in writing. All cancellations for any reason whatsoever will be subject to a \$300 per person cancellation fee. Date of receipt will determine penalties assessed. In addition to \$300, cancellation between 60-31 days of departure will result in forfeiture of 35% of tour cost; between 30-16 days 50%. Cancellation within 15 days of departure or a “no-show” at the time of departure will result in forfeiture of the entire cost of the trip.

AIRFARES are highly restrictive, NON-REFUNDABLE, NON-ENDORSABLE and NON-TRANSFERABLE once ticketed. Once reservation is booked and paid for AESU reserves the right to issue tickets. Once ticketed, airfare portion is non-refundable. Cancellation of airfare reservations is subject to restrictions, regulations and additional penalties of the airlines used. Reservation changes are also subject to penalties. Medical health and accident insurance is compulsory. PLEASE SEE WEBSITE FOR POSSIBLE ADDITIONS TO CANCELLATION POLICIES LISTED ABOVE DEPENDING ON TRIP DESTINATION.

AIRPORT TRANSFERS & BAGGAGE: All participants using AESU flights on regular group departure days and flights receive airport transfers (between airport & tour hotel) overseas. Land-Only participants (providing own flight overseas) do NOT receive airport transfers and must meet group at the first hotel after 3:00 p.m. on program start date. FLIGHT DELAYS - ALL AIRPORTS: In the event that airline schedule changes or delays force you to miss your airport transfer, just make your way to the first hotel listed on your hotel list. Many shuttle services are available as well as taxi or train options. As airline delays are beyond the control of AESU, additional expenses, if incurred, will be borne by the tour participant. (Save receipts for possible reimbursement by airline.) AESU is not responsible if an airline cancels, reschedules, or delays a flight for any reason. If you miss your departure flight, it is your responsibility to work with the airline on which you are ticketed to reach your destination. AESU is not responsible for any additional expenses you may incur prior to joining your trip. AESU is not responsible for and will not provide any refund for portions of trips missed due to canceled, rescheduled, or delayed flights. If you purchase your own airfare, book your overnight flight from the USA one day earlier than the tour start date listed on our website. Participants should limit themselves to one checked bag per person and one carry-on per person. Check your airline’s website for any additional luggage restrictions. Liability is clearly stated on the passenger contract.

RESPONSIBILITY: The responsibility of AESU as a tour operator, their agents, and any sponsoring association is limited. They act only in the capacity of agents for the passenger in all matters pertaining to accommodations, sightseeing and transportation whether by railroad, motorboat, motorcar, steamship or plane, and as such they shall not be liable for any personal injury, death, damage, loss, accident, delay or irregularity which may be occasioned, whether by reason of any defect in any vehicle, or through the acts or default of any company or person engaged in conveying the passenger, or in carrying out the arrangement of the tour. They can accept no responsibility for strike, war, quarantine, epidemic health risk, any force majeure event, weather and any other natural or unnatural causes. Additional expenses, if incurred under any of these circumstances, will be borne by the tour participant. By forwarding the deposit, the passenger certifies that he/she has no physical, mental or other condition or disability that would create a hazard for himself/ herself or other passengers & accepts the terms of this contract. The right is reserved to decline, accept or retain any person as a member of the tour or to cancel or alter the tour as required. If improvements in the itinerary can be made, or unforeseen conditions beyond AESU’s control make changes necessary, they reserve the right to alter itineraries without penalty. Trip cancellation insurance should be purchased by the individual traveler in the event cancellation of the tour is compelled by circumstances beyond our control. In the event of cancellation due to insufficient number of participants, the Operator’s liability shall be limited to a refund of land payments received from applicants, except non-refundable airfare and insurance. If the change or cancellation is due to force majeure or other similar events beyond Operator’s control, a refund of land payments received from applicants will be made less reasonable expenses incurred by Operator in respect to applicant’s land booking. Baggage and personal injury are at owner’s risk entirely. The issuance or acceptance of vouchers or tickets shall be considered consent of the above conditions. AESU reserves the right to increase the program price in the event of cost increases due to changes in airfares, currency fluctuations or fuel surcharges. The airlines concerned and their affiliates and agents are not to be held responsible for any act, omission or event during the time passengers are not on board the aircrafts. The passenger ticket in use by said airlines, when issued, shall constitute the sole contract between the airlines and the purchaser of these tickets and/ or the passenger. All services are subject to the laws of the country in which these services are rendered. No refund or allowance will be made for absence during the tour, or for activities missed, even if for causes beyond the control of the participant. For complete terms & conditions, please refer to our web site at www.aesu.com.