

Morocco

HIGH ATLAS & SAHARA

LIMOSA HOLIDAYS | TOUR INFO PACK



We've enjoyed fantastic views of roosting Egyptian Nightjars on our last nine tours to Morocco in March © Brian Small, Limosa

2019 **Wednesday 27th March - Thursday 4th April (9 days)** **Small group tour with Arnoud van den Berg**

NEW LOOK! *The best birding in North Africa on our new look tour to Morocco, with more time to explore the deserts and mountains of the south – and a bird list that reads like a 'Who's Who' of sought-after Western Palearctic specialities... Cream-coloured Courser, Crowned and Spotted Sandgrouse, Pharaoh Eagle Owl, Egyptian Nightjar, Blue-cheeked Bee-eater, Levaillant's Woodpecker, Maghreb Magpie, nine larks, Tristram's and African Desert Warblers, seven wheatears, Moussier's Redstart, African Crimson-winged Finch, Trumpeter Finch and Desert Sparrow among possible highlights!*

- The best birding in North Africa - *bar none!*
- Two days of excursions by 4WD Land Rovers into the Sahara for desert birds at Merzouga
- Egyptian Nightjar and Desert Sparrow plus a host of other Moroccan specialities
- Migration in full flow - up to a dozen raptors, 9 larks, 7 wheatears, 17 warblers possible
- Incredible and varied landscapes, from snowy Atlas peaks to towering Saharan sand dunes
- Small group tour - maximum 10 participants
- Expertly led by Limosa's Arnoud van den Berg, a foremost authority on Morocco's birds

What's Included?

- Limosa Tour Leader
- Return flights - from London Gatwick to Marrakech, nonstop with British Airways
- 8 nights accommodation in comfortable Moroccan tourist hotels
- All main meals - with drinking water provided during the day
- Transportation by minibus or small coach
- Plus 2 days of desert excursions by 4WD Land Rovers at Merzouga
- All excursions, entry fees, tour based tips and taxes

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Outline Itinerary

- Day 1:** Fly London Gatwick-Marrakech. Night Ourika
- Day 2:** High Atlas Mountains around Oukaimeden (2500-3000m/8200-9800ft). Night Ourika
- Day 3:** We cross the Tizi n'Tichka pass, east to Boumalne Dades (2 nts)
- Day 4:** Tagdilt track and Gorges du Todra
- Day 5:** We continue east for the first of a three-night stay in the Sahara desert. Night Merzouga
- Days 6-7:** Sahara desert including 4WD excursions for Egyptian Nightjar, African Desert Warbler and Desert Sparrow. Merzouga (2 nts)
- Day 8:** Heading west. Night Ouarzazate
- Day 9:** Mansour lake and up over the Atlas Mountains. Fly Marrakech-London

Tour Overview

Magnificent at any season, the Atlas Mountains and desert regions of Morocco boast the richest birdlife in North Africa. Set against an ever-changing backcloth, our new spring tour finds this beautiful and incredibly varied country at its best. The northward rush of migration through the desert oases and mountain passes is in full flow, and this is also the optimum time to seek out Morocco's long list of outstanding breeding birds: Pharaoh Eagle Owl, Egyptian Nightjar, Blue-cheeked Bee-eater, Bar-tailed, Thick-billed, Temminck's Horned and Hoopoe Larks, Red-rumped, Desert, White-crowned Black and Mourning Wheatears, Moussier's Redstart, Tristram's and African Desert Warblers, Fulvous Babbler... the list of specialities seems endless!

New for 2019, our revised itinerary not only cuts down dramatically on the amount of time spent driving but gives an extra day in the desert - always the highspot of this tour - to allow longer enjoying the unique and fascinating birdlife of this very special place.

Starting in Marrakech, we head directly up into the mountains for the exciting prospect of Atlas Horned Lark, Seebohm's Wheatear and African Crimson-winged Finch as we ascend to more

than 2500m (8000ft) in the snow-capped High Atlas Mountains. In forests on the approach road, we will look for Levillant's Woodpecker, plus Barbary Partridge, Moussier's Redstart and African Chaffinch amongst many specialities on this tour that are endemic to Northwest Africa.

Descending to the oasis town of Ouarzazate, we then swing east to Boumalne Dades for our first real taste of desert birding. Larks abound on the stony *hamada* at Tagdilt, where we shall be looking especially for Temminck's Horned and Thick-billed Larks, alongside sandgrouse, Cream-coloured Courser and Desert Wheatear.

Continuing east, we check out sites for Saharan Scrub Warbler, Maghreb Lark and Fulvous Babbler, before heading deeper into the desert for an extended three-night stay at an excellent hotel in Merzouga, on the fringes of the great Sahara. Over the next two days, we will make exciting excursions by Land Rover that will carry us around the flowing skirts of the huge red dunes of Erg Chebbi. Aided by our local guides we'll visit the current hotspots amidst this spectacular but shifting landscape in our quest for African Desert Warbler, Brown-necked Raven and the rare and rapidly declining Desert Sparrow. Egyptian Nightjars also breed and, although not present every year, our last nine tours have all been lucky! Nearby, we'll visit some cliffs where Pharaoh Eagle Owls nest.

Retracing our steps to Ouarzazate, we have a chance to visit El Mansour Reservoir, on the edge of town. At this time of year, the area can be alive with migrants, attracted by the water. Wetland birds might include Marbled Duck, storks and waders such as Collared Pratincole, while small flocks of Yellow Wagtails and Meadow Pipits often hold Red-throated Pipit, too. We may also find Bluethroat and Saharan Olivaceous Warbler nearby.

Guide Arnoud van den Berg has led the vast majority of Limosa's tours to Morocco over the past 30 years as well as escorting many visiting Dutch birding groups and undertaking numerous ornithological studies and research visits there. His network of local contacts and extensive knowledge of Morocco's special birds and where to find them is second to none.

Daily Itinerary

Day 1

MARRAKECH & ATLAS MOUNTAINS

Our spring birdwatching tour to Morocco begins with a British Airways flight nonstop from London Gatwick to Marrakech, where Arnoud will be waiting to welcome us. We head south and climb up into the Atlas Mountains that loom large in the distance to arrive at our first hotel near Ourika, our base for two nights. Well away from the hustle and bustle of the city, Ourika is the perfect base from which to explore North Africa's highest mountain range.

If flight times permit, we will enjoy a short walk nearby to investigate a remnant area of mature pine forest for Hawfinch and Atlas Common Crossbill, as well as our first Northwest African endemics: Moussier's Redstart and Levaillant's Woodpecker. We also have a chance to see the Moroccan form of Short-toed Treecreeper, and listen for its characteristic song. Gardens and orchards along the valley resound to the songs of Nightingales and Blackcaps in early spring, and we are also likely to encounter our first 'African' Chaffinches, of the green-backed North African race. *Night Ourika*

Day 2

THE HIGH ATLAS

Our birding reaches a literal high today as we make the 30-minute drive up to an altitude of 2500-3000m (8000-9800ft) in the High Atlas Mountains. If the visibility is clear, the views from up here can be quite stupendous!

Ringed by ragged snow-capped peaks, the ski-resort of Oukaimeden grants access to the realm of Red-billed and Alpine Choughs, Atlas Horned Lark, Rock Sparrow and Seeböhm's Wheatear, the dapper males with their distinctive black throats. The chunky Black Wheatear is also on the cards today and with luck we will come across the splendid African Crimson-winged Finch - another of the region's endemics. This altitudinal species can be relatively easy to find one year and seemingly absent the next, so can never be guaranteed - but we'll check a number of favoured haunts that we know.

As we head back down for a second night at our Ourika hotel, we will check the streambed for the local Atlas race of White-throated Dipper (*minor*), and scan the rocky slopes for secretive Barbary Partridges that (frustratingly) seem to scarper as soon as you find them! *Night Ourika*

Day 3

MARRAKECH TO BOUMALNE

Leaving Ourika, we cross the mighty High Atlas range today via the spectacular Tizi n'Tichka pass - with further opportunities to watch for Levaillant's Woodpecker along the way. In high mixed woodland, we will also look for African Blue Tit, Great Spotted Woodpecker and singing Subalpine Warblers (the race *inornata* found here being more orange below than the birds breeding in Europe). Tristram's Warblers love the low *maquis*-like scrub of the slopes as we rise higher towards the pass and we will have a good chance to see this super *Sylvia*, another tricky Northwest African endemic. Over the pass itself we should see 'North African' Raven and may encounter a migrant Black-eared Wheatear or two beside the road. Migrant raptors may be passing overhead and could well include Black Kite and Booted Eagle, harriers and kestrels.

Nearing Ouarzazate, we will make one or two stops to search for larks, including Greater Short-toed, and have our first chances of Trumpeter Finch and White-crowned Black Wheatear. With luck, we will also come across Western Mourning Wheatear, which is by far the scarcest and hardest to find of all the Moroccan wheatears.

Continuing east along the Dadès Valley, we pass a string of villages and oases where rose petals are harvested for rose water. The riverbed itself can be interesting and a brief stop might reveal migrant White and Yellow Wagtails - the latter most often of the race *iberiae* - as well as the striking 'Moroccan' White Wagtail. Waders such as Green and Common Sandpipers also occur here on passage. *Night Boumalne Dades*

Day 4

TAGDILT TRACK & GORGES DU TODRA

We will be out and about first thing this morning to explore one of Morocco's most productive areas of *hamada* or stony desert. Situated at an

elevation of 1600m (5200ft) and known to birdwatchers simply as the 'Tagdilt Track', this extensive, high arid plain is home to desert specialists such as Cream-coloured Courser and the chuckling Black-bellied Sandgrouse. Crowned and Spotted Sandgrouse are scarcer and more elusive, but we sometimes see them here, too.

We will plan to be in place to see dawn above the desert and, if it is clear, the distant Atlas Mountains may glow pink as the sun rises. As the light gradually improves we will begin to hear the songs of Tagdilt's desert birds. Most of the region's sought-after larks occur at Tagdilt, including Hoopoe Lark, the 'Viking-like' Temminck's Horned Lark and the bruising Thick-billed Desert Wheatear utter their 'sad Robin' song and we may even be treated to a Red-rumped Wheatear's rendition of a whistling kettle coming to the boil!

Later, we'll head west to the impressive Gorges du Todra - itself well worth a visit, if only to gaze in wonderment at the towering walls of sheer pink rock soaring skyward above us. Alpine Swift, Crag Martin and Rock Bunting breed in the cliffs and afternoon is a good time to look for the hawkish Bonelli's Eagle, which also nests here. Nearby, we'll make another effort to find the secretive Tristram's Warbler.
Night Boumalne Dades

Day 5

TAGDILT TRACK TO MERZOUGA

After a further early morning visit to the Tagdilt Track this morning, we travel east towards Goulmima, stopping at one or two of Limosa's 'special spots' to check for the elusive and highly localised Streaked Scrub Warbler. Perhaps a troop of chattering Fulvous Babblers will also show. Desert Wheatear and larks are common beside the road, including further chances to spot the mighty Thick-billed Lark.

After lunch, we swing south, following the Oued (river) Ziz towards Rissani, where the landscape changes to one of broad wadis and sweeping desert flats. Ancient earth-walled villages and enticing palm-fringed oases dot the route. We will be keeping a sharp lookout for the exotic Blue-cheeked Bee-eater, a migrant that should

be returning here to breed about now, and check the skies for marauding Lanner and Barbary Falcons.

Our destination this evening is an excellent hotel in the remote desert settlement of Merzouga (south of Erfoud), where we enjoy an extended stay of three nights. Situated at the foot of the towering red sand dunes of Erg Chebbi - the largest and most spectacular dune system in all Morocco - stands of palm and feathery tamarisks around Merzouga act as a magnet to northbound passage migrants in spring. Wryneck, European Bee-eater and Melodious Warbler are among many species we could see making their way north across the Saharan sands. *Night Merzouga*

Days 6 & 7

SAHARA DESERT AT MERZOUGA

We have two full days to explore the desert around Merzouga, where our excursions by 4WD Land Rovers into the plains of the Sahara are invariably rated as the highlight of the tour.

Leaving our hotel at dawn, we will try for Egyptian Nightjar, an extremely scarce and erratic species to be found in the desert around Merzouga. Although we have been lucky in each of the past nine years, we can't promise to repeat the amazing good fortune of our last four tours, which were all treated to remarkable daylight views of birds roosting on the desert floor!

Maghreb Crested Lark, African Desert Warbler and Brown-necked Raven may all be new to us today. We shall also be hoping to find that most reclusive of desert birds, the handsome and nomadic Desert Sparrow. Sadly, this is now a species in serious decline in Morocco, having been ousted from many former haunts by the ever-spreading House Sparrow.

If the desert rains have been good this winter, we'll continue out to an ephemeral lake which (when present!) proves irresistible in spring to flocks of transient waterfowl and waders - even Greater Flamingos and Coots - as they wing their way across the Saharan sands. Set against the backdrop of towering red dunes, it makes for a truly remarkable sight! Sometimes Spotted Sandgrouse might come in to drink, while the surrounding stony desert may reveal Cream-

coloured Courser, and lanky Hoopoe Larks looping the loop in song flight display.

After a thrilling morning in the desert we return for lunch at the hotel, where those that wish will be able to take a break from birding and later enjoy watching the sun set on Erg Chebbi. If we haven't already been there, in the afternoon we may travel out to some cliffs that have rewarded our last five tours with fine views of two more Saharan specialities: Pharaoh Eagle Owl and Barbary Falcon, as well as Alpine Swift. The low bushes in this area are also a favoured haunt of Crowned and Spotted Sandgrouse.

With Land Rovers again at our disposal, our second full day at Merzouga affords the chance to catch up with anything we may have missed before - Pin-tailed Sandgrouse, perhaps - or to pay a return visit to any wetland areas or wadis in search of migrants. Blue-cheeked Bee-eater, Rufous-tailed Scrub Robin and the heavy-billed Western Olivaceous Warbler all pass this way in spring. At Rissani, amongst the pink-flowering tamarisks and palms of the oasis, we may find the smaller, tail-pumping 'Saharan' form of Eastern Olivaceous Warbler singing its cyclical song. *Two further nights Merzouga*

Day 8 MERZOUGA TO OUARZAZATE

Morocco is a big country and we have a fair bit of ground to cover today as we travel back west towards the town of Ouarzazate - famed as Morocco's answer to Hollywood. We will pass through varied habitats along the way, perhaps breaking our journey near Jorf, where Blue-cheeked Bee-eaters sometimes nest in holes in the ground, or to investigate a shallow desert wadi for migrant Spectacled and Subalpine Warblers. Raptors and White Storks are also on the move at this time and could well be seen spiralling over hilltops, seeking to gain height as they continue their northward journey to Europe. At Kelaa, we cross a river where 'Moroccan' White Wagtail and Little Ringed Plovers feed.

Birding stops permitting, we'll aim to arrive at Ouarzazate in time to visit El Mansour Reservoir for the last hour or so of the day. With the light behind us, we will check the lake for wildfowl that might include Marbled Duck, while the

shore also attracts waders such as Avocet, Redshank and Collared Pratincole. Migrant Black and White Storks often put down here to rest and refuel, as various races of Yellow Wagtail creep about the vegetation and pipits to watch out for include Red-throated Pipit with its fine brick-red throat. *Night Ouarzazate*

Day 9 EL MANSOUR RESERVOIR TO MARRAKECH, FLY LONDON

A pre-breakfast gathering in the grounds of our hotel might reward us with groups of Night Herons returning to roost, or screaming Pallid Swifts over the town. After breakfast, we will take a look at El Mansour Reservoir in the hope of finding new species: Spoonbill, Little Stint, Wood and Common Sandpipers, Black-winged Stilt and Gull-billed and Whiskered Terns are all regular here in spring and our recent visits have also produced Western Osprey and Collared Pratincole. Little Owls frequent the castellated roof of a nearby ruin and Squacco Herons might be seen along the waters' edge, where we will look for migrants such as Quail and Bluethroat.

Leaving Ouarzazate, we head back north over the Tizi 'n' Tichka Pass through the Atlas Mountains. We'll pause for lunch along the way and as we descend the northern slope of the mountains back towards Marrakech have a last chance to look for the attractive Maghreb Magpie. Check-in for our British Airways early evening flight from Marrakech to London Gatwick, where our spring birdwatching tour to Morocco concludes.

Please note that airline schedules can vary year on year, which may necessitate an adjustment to the timing and itinerary on Days 1 and Day 9 as outlined above. We have no control over this of course, but such changes should not affect the range of birds seen nor the places visited on our tour.

Trip Information

Group Size Max 10 participants & leader

What to Expect Morocco is a big country and we cover a fair amount of mileage on this tour. The longer drives are punctuated with stops for birding, but even when we are travelling you will find the Moroccan scenery is fascinating and constantly changing.

We usually drive to each birding site and take short, gentle walks from the vehicle. There are one or two longer walks, always at an easy pace.

Birds 140-180 species

Accommodation Hotels range from a new (and very well reviewed) 'kasbah' in the foothills at Ourika to an excellent, contemporary four-star hotel in the desert at Merzouga. Standards vary widely across Morocco, but overall the accommodation is surprisingly good and improving year on year. All rooms have private facilities.

Meals All main meals are included in the tour price, commencing with dinner at the hotel on Day 1 and concluding with lunch on Day 9. Our evening meals and most breakfasts will be taken at the hotels. Most lunches (and the occasional breakfast) will be picnics, but some lunches will be taken at local restaurants, where the food is good.

Walking Easy walking at a gentle pace, but you should be prepared for early starts on this tour to see the best birds and to beat the desert heat. Mostly short walks (typically ca. 1-3km) over mainly easy terrain. It can be stony and uneven underfoot in places so we recommend good walking shoes or lightweight 'desert' boots with sturdy, corrugated soles for this tour.

Maximum elevation: we drive to 2600-3000m (8000- 9800ft) at Oukaimeden, where we spend a few hours birding.

Weather In March/early April, the climate in southern Morocco is typically warm to hot (10-30C/50-86F) and sunny. However, it can sometimes feel surprisingly cool - even cold at

night and chilly first thing in the morning on both the high plains (Tagdilt) and in the desert. Rainfall is generally unusual at this season but not impossible, especially at higher altitudes in the Atlas Mountains, where it can also be cold. In some years, snow may still be lying - or even falling! Be sure to pack warm clothing to layer up if necessary.

Flights Return flights from London Gatwick to Marrakech. British Airways usually offer the best service (nonstop) and timings on this route, so we generally use them for our tour. (Easyjet and Royal Air Maroc also fly to Morocco, but their timings are usually less appealing and/or involve a change of planes en route)

Ground Transport By coach or minibus, switching to 4WD Land Rovers for our two days in the Sahara Desert at Merzouga.

Photos A good tour for opportunistic bird photography, plus many great landscapes.

Tour Cost

2019 (9 days): £1895 (inc flights from London)
Land only cost: £1725
Deposit: £300
Single Supp: £185

Cost includes

- Services of Limosa guide
- Return flights London Gatwick-Marrakech
- 8 nights accommodation in Morocco
- All main meals (with drinking water provided)
- Local travel by coach or minibus
- 4WD Land Rovers at Merzouga
- All excursions, entry fees, local guides, tour based tips and taxes
- Map & Limosa checklist of birds

Cost excludes

Insurance, drinks, airport meals/snacks, in-flight meals (except where included within the airline ticket cost) & other items of a personal nature.

About Your Guide

Arnoud van den Berg Arnoud is a principal *Limosa* guide living in the Netherlands, where he is chief editor and founder of *Dutch Birding* magazine, and one of the three core members of the ground-breaking *Sound Approach* team. Well known for his top notch bird photography, Arnoud has been recording bird sounds since the days when this involved lugging a bulky tape recorder around the world with him! An integral part of the *Limosa* team since 1991 - when he masterminded our first Dutch *Wild Goose Chase* - Arnoud's relaxed and cheery disposition fit perfectly the *Limosa* style. His many tours for *Limosa* over the past 28 years have taken him across Europe, Africa, Asia and the Americas, including 30 or so trips to both the Netherlands and Morocco. Indeed, Arnoud has led the vast majority of *Limosa's* tours to Morocco over the past 30 years. His network of local contacts and extensive knowledge of Morocco, its special birds and where to find them is second to none.

Financial Security

Limosa Holidays is a fully bonded Tour Operator and a member of the Association of Independent Tour Operators (AITO). We hold an ATOL (Air Tour Operators Licence) granted by the CAA, providing for your protection in the event of *Limosa Holidays'* insolvency. Our ATOL licence number is ATOL 2950.

For tours not including the cost of a flight from the UK or for holidays booked by you as 'Land Only', all payments made to us are fully bonded through the Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited (ABTOT). Our ABTOT membership number is 5230. For details please see our brochure or website: <http://www.limosaholidays.co.uk/financial-protection>

Limosa Loyalty Discount

We are proud of the number of loyal customers who travel regularly with us. As our way of saying 'thank you', we offer a **Frequent Travel Discount**. Under the scheme, everyone who

takes four trips with us is entitled to claim a 5% discount on their 5th trip. ^{*1}

^{*1} **Please note:** *This offer applies to the basic tour cost only and excludes certain commission-based trips, extras such as additional flights or accommodation, private extensions and cancellations.* • Discounts cannot be given in lieu of tour deposits or off the cost of single room supplements. • Discount **must** be requested at time of booking!

How To Book

Check availability on our website or with our office. We are happy to hold Provisional Reservations for up to 7 days. After this, we do require a Booking Form and deposit to confirm your place on tour. Any unconfirmed space will be released.

Book Online, by Phone or by Post

You can book and pay the deposit simply and securely **Online** via our website, using the '**Book This Tour**' button on the relevant tour page or the **Booking** tab at the top of the page.

Telephone bookings must be confirmed in writing by completion of a Booking Form (there's one tucked inside every brochure or as a PDF download from our website), which can be mailed to us in the time honoured way.

Be sure to read our **Booking Conditions** and **General Information** (found at the back of our brochure, on our website or available from our office on request) prior to booking.

When to Book

Early booking is advised since flights and accommodation are much more easily secured well in advance. To encourage early booking, we are pleased to offer an **Early Bird Discount** - see our current brochure or website for details.

All our tours are limited to small group sizes. So they can fill up quickly - sometimes even before our new brochure comes out! Single rooms in particular can often be in short supply and among the first to go, so do try to plan well ahead if you definitely require one of these.

Last-minute Bookings: We inevitably receive a few unexpected cancellations over the course of a season so it is always worth enquiring about vacancies on any tour - even for those departing in just a few weeks!

Payments

Deposit: The amount of **booking deposit** per person is shown alongside every tour. We accept deposit payments by **electronic bank transfer** (please ask for our bank details), **UK debit card** and **cheque** (made payable to *Limosa Holidays* and drawn on a UK bank in GB Pounds Sterling).

For payment of **booking deposits** only we also accept Visa and MasterCard credit cards.

Balance: Full payment of the **tour balance** is due not later than 12 weeks prior to departure (20 weeks in the case of certain tours such as cruises or those involving rail travel). We will send you an invoice before the balance is due.

We accept balance payments and any additional payments (e.g. interim flight deposits, flight upgrades, extra hotels etc) by **electronic bank transfer (BACS), UK debit card** or **cheque**.

Payment by overseas customers must be in GB Pounds Sterling and may be made by electronic transfer direct to our bank (*please ask for our bank details*).

We do **not** accept cheques on US Banks in US Dollars, or cheques in Euros or Eurocheques.

Credit cards - please note:

(i) We do **NOT accept** credit cards or overseas debit cards for balance payments (including any additional or interim payments) from customers living within the UK or European Economic Area (the EEA is the EU countries plus Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway).

(ii) For customers living in North America, Australia and all other areas outside of the UK and the European Economic Area we are able to accept payment by Visa and MasterCard credit cards or overseas debit card but with a charge of 2.5% of the transaction amount to help offset card company charges.

Late Booking Payments: In order for us to guarantee your airline seats, hotels etc., full payment is required at time of booking for all late bookings (*i.e. bookings made within 12 weeks of departure*).

Other Things You Need To Know

Passports & Visas

All participants must be in possession of a valid **passport**. Your passport should be valid for the proposed duration of your stay in Morocco.

No additional period of validity beyond this is required, but when travelling anywhere overseas we **always recommend** your passport has a minimum of 6 months left to run after your intended date of return home, in case of unforeseen delay.

Before travelling, make sure your passport isn't damaged. Some travellers have been refused entry when travelling on damaged passports.

- When entering Morocco, check to see that your passport is stamped by immigration. Tourists can experience difficulties leaving the country as their passport has no entry stamp.

- **VISA NOT REQUIRED** by UK passport holders for this tour.

Holders of non-UK passports should contact the nearest Moroccan embassy or consulate to check whether or not they require a visa/s. If a visa/s is required, you will need to apply locally. If the embassy or consulate requires you to provide a letter confirming that you are booked on an all-inclusive tour, please contact our office and we will be happy to provide one.

Health & Vaccinations

Visit your health professional at least 4 to 6 weeks before your trip to check whether you need any vaccinations or other preventive measures. Country specific information and advice is published by the **National Travel Health Network and Centre (NaTHNaC)**, visit: travelhealthpro.org.uk/country-

[information/](#) and by NHS (Scotland), visit:
<http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/destinations.aspx>

Useful information and advice about healthcare abroad is also available at NHS Choices website:
<http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/Healthcareabroad/Pages/Healthcareabroad.aspx>

Compulsory vaccinations: None.

Recommended vaccinations: For travel everywhere (even within the UK) however, we recommend you check you are up-to-date with protection against tetanus, polio and hepatitis A. For travel to Morocco, check with your doctor for current advice regarding the possible need for precautions against diphtheria, hepatitis B and TB. There is no malaria risk on this tour.

The above information, together with that contained within our Travel Information sheets (sent to everyone who books), outlines health requirements for this tour. **Please note that these details are given for guidance only - and are only for certain diseases - and you must consult your doctor in good time prior to travel as to what immunisations (if any) are needed for your chosen holiday.**

For full and latest health information **we urge everyone to consult The National Travel Health Network and Centre (NaTHNaC) website www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk prior to booking any overseas holiday.** NaTHNaC is funded by the UK Government's Health Protection Agency and provides health information for both health professionals and travellers, with information compiled by its own clinical and scientific team. You can search for individual country requirements.

Your Safety & Travel Advice

An unavoidable aspect of travelling abroad nowadays is the threat it may pose to your safety and security. The UK's Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) encourages British nationals to be better prepared for their overseas trips with a view to avoiding common travelling traumas, risks and dangers.

In order for you to assess and protect against any risks in your chosen destination it is **strongly recommended** that you refer to the relevant FCO Travel Advice - www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice - both prior to booking and regularly before you travel.

It is standard Limosa policy for our office to send a copy of the relevant FCO Travel Advice about the tour to all participants along with their Final Letter (ca. 2-3 weeks prior to the trip).

'**Travel Aware**' - staying safe and healthy abroad - is a travel safety campaign run by the FCO, and another useful resource. Go to: <https://www.gov.uk/travelaware>

Travel Insurance

Good travel insurance is **essential** before setting off on any overseas trip. In common with all responsible tour operators, **it is a condition of booking** that all clients are fully and adequately insured before travelling overseas with us.

Be aware that some destinations may require you to produce proof of comprehensive travel insurance (*e.g.* valid insurance certificate) at immigration on arrival in the country, so you should carry your documentation with you.

Your travel insurance should cover against cancellation, curtailment, missed departure, delay, personal accident, death, loss of baggage and valuables (see note below), personal liability and legal expenses. Most importantly, your insurance must cover you fully in respect of medical care and repatriation should you become too ill to continue with the tour, including the cost of emergency evacuation by helicopter or air ambulance should this be necessary. Note that passenger liability insurance covering the transportation that we hire, particularly in Third World countries, may be inadequate; it is therefore important that your insurance cover includes sufficient provision for your dependents in the event of an accident.

We recommend that you obtain travel insurance as soon as possible after booking your holiday to ensure you are protected right

from the word go in the event of unexpected cancellation prior to departure due to accident or illness. You must inform your insurers of any pre-existing medical conditions (including those of persons not necessarily travelling but upon whom your holiday may depend) that may require treatment during a period of overseas travel or might cause you to cancel the trip.

Once you have arranged your insurance, please be sure to send us the following essential details: name and contact details of your insurance provider, your policy number, expiry date and your insurers 24hr Emergency Assistance number.

Important Things to Note about Insurance

- Travel Insurance does **not** normally provide sufficient cover for valuable optical equipment, which is often best protected under your own household insurance policy. If in doubt ask your insurers for advice prior to travel.
- Most travel insurance policies limit the amount of cover, typically up to a maximum tour cost of £5000 per person. If the tour you are booking exceeds this amount, additional cover can usually be provided upon payment of additional premium. **We recommend all travellers** check their individual policy limit to ensure the full cost of their holiday is covered.

Arranging Your Insurance: due to UK Government legislation, under Financial Services Authority (FSA) regulations, we are not allowed to offer or recommend travel related insurance to customers. Premiums can vary widely according to your age, needs, health, choice of destination and other factors, while many people nowadays have Annual Travel Insurance cover. For these reasons, we leave you free to shop around and pick your own policy, one best suited to your own individual needs.

General Information

www.limosaholidays.co.uk

Our website gives easy access to detailed tour itineraries (Tour Info Packs), trip reports, trip photos and the latest Limosa News.

Special Diets & Other Requests

We pass on all such requests to the airlines, hotels and other suppliers, and do our best to ensure (but of course cannot guarantee) that your needs will be met. Please be sure to tell us about these (in as much detail as possible) at the time of booking, to allow good time to make the necessary arrangements.

Smoking

Almost all of our clients prefer a smoke-free environment. For the enjoyment and comfort of all, we ask that smokers refrain from smoking in proximity to the group and respect our NO SMOKING policy in the vehicle, at meal times and when watching wildlife.

Any Questions?

If you have any questions at any time, you'll find our office staff friendly, efficient, approachable - and just a phone call away, eager to assist you in every way.

Our office is open 09.00-17.00 hrs Mon-Fri, and can also be reached by email. In the event we are unable to take your call, please leave a message on our answerphone (24 hrs) and our office will contact you as soon as we can.

***Thank you for your interest in our tours.
We do hope that you will be able to join us
- and we look forward to hearing from you
again!***

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