

Mauritania

EXPERIENCE THE RAW BEAUTY OF THE SAHARA
DESERT AND IMMERSE ONESELF IN THE RICH
NOMADIC CULTURE OF MAURITANIA

11-DAY TRIP

BY WEST AFRICA TRACKS



Including:

All overnight accommodations as described, breakfast, dinners at the tented camps, all transportation and fuel, visits mentioned in the programme, tourist taxes and fees & an English speaking guide.

More information: www.westafricatracks.com

Contact us: info@westafricatracks.com



DAY 1: ARRIVAL IN NOUAKCHOTT

Today you arrive in Nouakchott, where the guide will welcome you at the airport. Your guide will bring you to Hotel de la Bienvenue. You will have some time to refresh and depending on your arrival time, you will meet your travel group and guide for dinner to get to know each other some more. Then it is time to rest before the journey through Mauritania starts tomorrow.

Overnight: Hotel de la Bienvenue (or similar)



DAY 2: NOUAKCHOTT TO IWIK

After breakfast we depart by 4x4 to Banc d'Arguin National Park. The park is host to one of the world's most diversified communities of nesting birds in the world, such as flamingos, pelicans and terns. The entire park has over 200 km of coastline and includes many islands. The extensive intertidal flats of Banc d'Arguin shelters on the most pristine seagrass beds on earth. Human impact is still at its very minimum compared to the other intertidal systems as only the few local communities are allowed to fish. We are going to visit the fishing villages of Nouamghar and Iwik. We will spend the night in Iwik.

Overnight: local camp tent

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**DAY 3:
TIDRA ISLAND**

After enjoying our breakfast in the tent camp, we will take a local boat visit to Tidra Island. Tidra is an island of 29 kilometers long and 8 kilometers wide, it's the largest island in the Banc d'Arguin Park. We will meet the members of the Imraguen fishing tribe doing their daily activities. This ethnic group has mysterious origins and is said to be descendants of the Moors who escaped the Spanish conquest in the 15th century. In the later afternoon. We will return to our camp for dinner and another night under the Mauritanian stars.

Overnight: local camp tent



**DAY 4:
IWIK TO
NOUATHIBOU**

We pack up our bags and after breakfast we continue our trip by 4x4 to Nouadhibou. Nouadhibou is the second city of Mauritania and an important fishing and mining port. It was established by the Portuguese, Dutch and later the French and serves now as a popular departure point for immigrants trying to cross over to the Canary Islands, Europe. First we will visit the bay of Nouadhibou, which is, with over 300 ships, the world's largest ship graveyard. Another interesting visit is Cape Blanc, an extension of the Parque del Arguin NP where a community of rare monk seals survives.

Overnight: hotel



**DAY 5:
NOUADHIBOU TO
TMEIMICHAT**

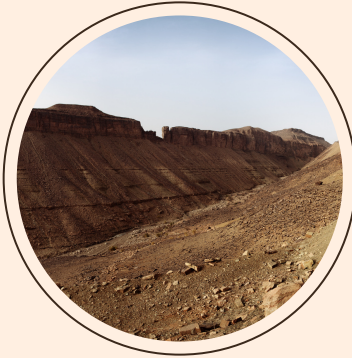
We start our day with a very early breakfast as we have a long day on the road ahead. Today contains a lot of driving, but you will not be bored. First we drive eastwards to Bou Lanouâr. We will follow the train track, where we might see trains transporting minerals, people, animals, cars, and so on. These huge cargo trains can reach up to a length of three kilometers. We will drive through endless plains and lots of sand will take us to the vicinity of Tmeimichat. A true Sahara experience.

Overnight: desert tentcamp

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**DAY 6:
TMEICHAT TO
ATAR**

After a delicious breakfast at the campsite, we continue our route to the cultural center of the country. We will make several stops along the route as it increasingly becomes more and more deserted and desolate. It might look like the end of the world, but we will still view towns and some nomadic camps. In the afternoon we will arrive in Atar, which is the capital of the Adrar region. This area of Mauritania is full of oasis, caravan cities and is the most scenic area in the country. But not only the views are mind blowing, so is the cultural richness very surprising.

Overnight: tentcamp



**DAY 7:
ATAR - OUADANE**

Shortly after breakfast we continue our desert expedition towards the historic city of Ouadane. Our first stop along the route will be at rock carvings discovered in the area that indicate that this desert was once an orchard full of fauna and vegetation. Ouadane was founded in 1147 by a Berber tribe and quickly became an important meeting and transit point for caravans. The Portuguese established a commercial center in 1487, but the city began its decline in the 16th century. The old city is declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. Although in ruins, it is basically intact, while the new city grows outside the walls. We will walk through both the old and new city. The date palm groves survive around the city and are, along with camel farming and incipient tourism, the only source of income for this decadent city that simply refuses to disappear.

Overnight: tentcamp



**DAY 8:
OUADANE TO
CHINGURRTI**

After breakfast we will enjoy a drive through the Adrar desert: a continuous changing landscape of dunes, bushes, stone plains. We will come across some nomads who survive in the desert with their dromedaries and herds of goats. We will find our way to another caravan trade center, Chinguetti. This city used to be a metropolis with the greatest cultural apogee in the region at the beginning of the 17th century. It is no wonder that Chinguetti has been UNESCO World Heritage since 1996, Cultural City of Mauritania and known as Gate to the Desert. It's hard to imagine that this city has survived for 7 centuries. The current population of the municipality is around 15,000 inhabitants, of which only 5,000 live settled in the city and the remaining 10,000 are nomads who move through the desert around the city looking for water and pasture for the camels and cattle.

Overnight: hotel

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**DAY 9:
CHINGETTI TO
HAIMAS**

With empty stomachs, we will continue to the Terjit Oasis, a magical place located in a canyon of reddish rocks. The contrast between the green of the palm trees and the red of the rocks is extremely beautiful. We will enjoy our breakfast in the oasis. Walk through this natural area, domesticated by the Mauritanian nomads who have turned it into a transit point for their camel caravans since time. We will continue the road to Haimas.

Overnight: desert tentcamp



**DAY 10:
EIMAS TO
NOUAKCHOTT**

After breakfast we say goodbye to our hosts, and we head back to where our journey started: Nouakchott. It is going to be a long travel day with several stops along the route. Depending on arrival time, we will do a night tour through some neighborhoods of Nouakchott. Nouakchott is the capital and largest city of Mauritania, it was established as the capital in 1960 after the country gained independence. The city is known for its modern architecture, vibrant markets, and serves as a hub for cultural and economic activities in Mauritania.

Overnight: hotel



**DAY 11:
NOUAKCHOTT**

Our last day in Mauritania, we will visit downtown Nouakchott and visit the local craft center. You can immerse yourself in the local culture by exploring bustling markets like Marché Capitale, where vibrant colors and lively atmospheres characterize the city's trading scene. The city also offers an opportunity to appreciate Mauritania's rich history through visits to the National Museum, which showcases artifacts from the country's past. As most flights leave in the evening, we will have dinner together and after that a transfer back to the airport. There we will have to say goodbye leaving with lots of unforgettable memories.