



MOUNT TOUBKAL TREK

6TH TO 10TH OCTOBER 2025

Detailed Guide & Itinerary

Welcome	3
Itinerary: 6 to 10 October	4
Training & Fitness Preparation	6
Fundraising for Ethar Relief	8
Packing & Kit List	10
Your Support Team	13
Environmental & Cultural Notes	14
Optional Add-Ons & Final Tips	16
Thank you	18



Mount Toubkal: The highest peak in North Africa

Welcome to the adventure of a lifetime!

This guide will provide everything you need to prepare for the challenge, from a detailed itinerary and training advice to fundraising tips and packing guidance.

Get ready to trek North Africa's highest peak (4,167 m) while forging new friendships and supporting a great cause. As you embark on this journey, you'll not only experience breathtaking scenery and local culture, but you'll also be raising vital funds to support displaced communities across the Horn of Africa.

We can't wait to take on this awesome challenge with you!

Itinerary: 6 to 10 October 2025

Our Mount Toubkal trek is a 5-day adventure packed with unforgettable experiences. Below is the day-by-day itinerary, including dates, locations, and key activities:

Day 1, Monday 6th October: Arrival in Morocco & Transfer to Imlil.

Arrive at the airport and unite with your group. After a warm welcome and initial briefing, transfer by road (~2 hours) to the High Atlas Mountains. We reach the village of Imlil, the gateway to Toubkal. Enjoy a welcome dinner with your fellow trekkers and guides, followed by a kit check to ensure any last-minute updates to the necessary gear. Today is all about acclimatising and getting to know the beautiful Imlil region. Overnight stay in Imlil – get a good rest before the trekking begins!

Day 2, Tuesday 7th October: Trek to Toubkal Base Camp.

The adventure truly begins! After an early breakfast, we leave Imlil and start trekking towards Mount Toubkal's base camp. The trail ascends through the Mizane Valley. Here we'll take a break and re-fuel before the harder climb. We then continue the ascent on a well-trodden mule path, climbing steadily into rocky terrain. By afternoon, we reach the Toubkal Refuge (Base Camp) at 3,207 m. Congratulations – you are now at base camp! Enjoy stunning mountain views as the team settles into the hostel-style lodge. Your guide will brief everyone on the summit attempt planned for tomorrow. Dinner is served early; then it's off to bed to rest.

Day 3, Wednesday 8th October: Summit Day! Summit Mount Toubkal & Return to Imlil.

We rise early, don head torches, and set off in the predawn darkness. The route starts steeply on slopes above the hostel. Breathing is harder in the thin air, so we pace ourselves, encouraging each other step by step. After a few hours of steady ascent, dawn breaks and reveals a high pass. Pressing on, we reach the summit of Jebel (Mount) Toubkal (4,167 m) by morning. Take a moment to savour the massive sense of achievement as you stand at the highest point in North Africa! On clear days, the views are spectacular – from the surrounding Atlas peaks to the Sahara Desert's hazy dunes on the horizon. You'll see the iconic iron pyramid summit marker, perfect for group photos and victory poses. After celebrating at the top, we begin our descent. We carefully retrace our steps to the hostel, then continue down to Imlil by late afternoon.

Day 4, Thursday 9th October: Rest, Recovery, and Celebration.

Those of us who are up for it make a short walk to see stunning waterfalls in the natural environment. Come along, it'll be worth it – after all, we've achieved so much together and seen so much beauty in the name of a good cause. Otherwise, tired but triumphant, we drive back to Marrakech by road. This is a free day for shopping, chilling, and recovery. In Marrakech in the evening, everyone will enjoy a celebratory dinner together to toast our accomplishment. Share stories of the trek over delicious Moroccan cuisine – you've earned it! In the evening, we have a friendly little Awards Ceremony recognising all the highs and experiences we've had together. Overnight in Marrakech.

Day 5, Friday 10th October: Departure from Morocco.

After breakfast, it's time to bid farewell. Depending on flight times, we may have a little free time in Marrakech to explore the vibrant souks (markets) or simply relax. Then, transfer to the airport for the flight home. As you depart Morocco, take pride in all you achieved, from summiting Mount Toubkal to raising funds for an amazing cause. Mabruk (congratulations)!

Note: This itinerary is subject to slight changes depending on weather and local conditions. Our guides will keep you informed and ensure everyone's safety. Also, remember that trekking at high altitude can be unpredictable, so flexibility and a positive attitude are key.

Training & Fitness Preparation

Climbing Mount Toubkal is a challenging but achievable goal with the right training. You don't need to be an elite athlete, but a good base level of fitness is essential.

Over the course of the trek, you'll be walking for several hours a day on mountain paths, and the summit involves steep ascent at altitude.

Here's how to prepare:

- ***Build up your Hiking Stamina:*** Start training well in advance by doing regular walks and hikes. Gradually increase your distance and elevation gain. Aim for at least one longer hike (4 – 6 hours) each week, with shorter walks or cardio sessions in between. If you can, practice on hilly terrain or stairs to simulate uphill climbs. The goal is to get your legs and lungs used to sustained effort. By trek time, a 6-hour hike should feel challenging but manageable.
- ***Cardio and Leg Strength:*** Complement your walking with aerobic exercises (jogging, cycling, swimming) and leg strengthening (squats, lunges). Elevating your heart rate regularly improves endurance so try to get 30–60 minutes of moderate exercise 3–6 times a week. Strengthening your thighs, calves, and core will help on steep sections. Remember, Toubkal's summit push is tough but rewarding. Training hard will make it more enjoyable!
- ***Hike with Your Gear:*** During training, wear the boots and backpack you'll use on the trek. This helps you 'break in' your boots (preventing blisters) and get comfortable with your equipment. Top tip: if you've bought brand new boots, break them in thoroughly by walking plenty of miles in them (whether on treks or just during your regular day). Do some training walks carrying a pack with weight, building up to 6-8 kg, to simulate your daypack load.
- ***Altitude Awareness:*** The summit is over 4,000 m, where the air is thinner. Our itinerary includes a bit of acclimatisation time, but you should be prepared to go slowly but steadily and listen to your body. Stay hydrated and inform guides of any altitude sickness symptoms (headache, nausea) so they can help. Mental preparation is important too. Be ready to push yourself, but also to recognise your limits and stay positive. Our guides are trained in mental health first aid and will support you if you feel anxious or overwhelmed.

- **Who Should (or Shouldn't) Trek:** Generally, anyone in good health with appropriate training can attempt Toubkal. However, if you have any heart condition or a serious respiratory condition (e.g. uncontrolled asthma), or any other health issue that could be aggravated by strenuous exercise or high altitude, consult your doctor before committing. Unfortunately, this trek is not suitable for those with severe heart problems or poorly controlled asthma – safety comes first. If you're pregnant or have orthopaedic injuries, seek medical advice as well. We require all participants to fill a medical questionnaire; honesty is crucial to ensure your well-being on the mountain.

By following a solid training plan and taking care of your health, you'll be fit and ready to conquer North Africa's highest peak. Remember, the challenge will be tough - but that's what makes the achievement truly rewarding! As the saying goes, "If it doesn't challenge you, it doesn't change you." Keep your eyes on the goal (and that amazing summit view) to stay motivated.

Fundraising for Ethar Relief

Taking on this trek, you're not only challenging yourself - you're also raising funds for Ethar Relief's life-changing work. All of us in the Ethar Family are dedicated to easing the suffering of refugees in East Africa. Our mission is to help refugees and internally displaced people in the Horn of Africa with vital humanitarian aid, education, and hope for a better future. By participating in this sponsored climb, you become a champion for "Remembering the Forgotten" - making sure those displaced by conflict and famine are not left behind.

Your Fundraising Target: £1,499 per trekker. This might sound daunting, but don't worry, you've got plenty of support and it's more achievable than you think! Many challengers before you have even exceeded their targets. Ethar's fundraising team is here to help with ideas, materials and encouragement every step of the way. You're not alone in this; we know you can do it and we're here to help.

To kickstart your campaign, here are some proven fundraising tips:

- **A Personal Touch:** Set up an online fundraising page (we can give you tips on how to do this) and make it compelling. Explain who you are and why you're trekking up Mount Toubkal for Ethar Relief. What does this cause mean to you? A personal story will inspire others to donate.
- **Closest Ones First:** Before asking the wider world, get your close friends and family to donate on your page first. People tend to match the amounts already listed, so having a few donations (especially generous ones) early on can set a positive trend.
- **Leverage Social Media:** Share your journey on social platforms. Post updates on your training progress, trek preparations, and facts about refugees your fundraising will support (our website and annual reports can help you with those). Link your fundraising page to Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc., and don't be shy about posting regular reminders. Going live or making short videos about why you care can engage your network. Enthusiasm is contagious!

- **Tell Everyone (and then tell more people!):** Next, think beyond your immediate circle. Email colleagues, former classmates, members of any clubs or communities you're part of. You might be surprised to find who is willing to support you if you just ask. Encourage your supporters to share your mission with others, extending your reach.
- **Tap into Employers and Media:** Ask your workplace if they offer match-funding for your charity efforts. Many companies will match what you raise (doubling your money!). Also, consider reaching out to local media – a human-interest story about your upcoming trek (and why you're doing it) in the local newspaper or radio can attract donations beyond your network. It's also great publicity for Ethar's cause.

Throughout your fundraising, remember the impact: "Every act of kindness is charity" – a saying of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) often quoted to remind us why we do this work. The money you raise will directly support refugee families with essentials like food, clean water, education and healthcare. That's worth climbing a mountain for! If you need any help with fundraising ideas, we'll be happy to assist – you're part of the Ethar Family now.

Packing & Kit List

Having the right kit will make your trek safer and more comfortable, which is the difference between a happy trekker and an unhappy one! Use the checklist below to prepare your gear well in advance. Our trek involves a packing system with two bags:

Daypack (carry each day): You'll carry a rucksack (10–20 litres) containing your daily essentials (water, snacks, camera, extra layers, rain gear, sun protection, personal meds). Aim to keep it reasonably light (5–8 kg). Use a waterproof liner or rain-cover to keep contents dry. Pro tip: Pack items you'll need on the trail at the top of your daypack for easy access.

Main Duffel (carried by mule): A larger duffel bag will be carried by our trusty mules to the hostel and back. You do not hike with this bag during the day. It will contain the rest of your gear (clothes, sleeping bag, toiletries, etc.). Weight limit: Keep it under 15 kg (to avoid overloading the mules). Use a soft duffel or rucksack – no hard suitcases. The mule team will transport your duffel between Imlil and the camps/refuge, so you can trek with just your lighter daypack. You'll have access to the duffel at the hostel in the evening.

Now, here's the recommended equipment list for the Toubkal trek.

All items marked (*) are essential:

- **(*) Sturdy Hiking Boots:** Waterproof ankle-high boots with good ankle support and grippy soles. Make sure they are broken in and comfortable over long distances. Trekking shoes or trainers are not sufficient for the summit terrain – you need proper boots.
- **(*) Waterproof Jacket & Trousers:** A quality waterproof outer shell (hooded jacket and over-trousers) is crucial in case of rain or wind. Choose breathable fabrics (Gore-Tex or similar) if possible. Even if the forecast is dry, mountain weather can change quickly.
- **(*) Insulating Layers:** Layering is key to adapting to temperature changes. Bring multiple thin layers rather than one heavy coat. For your base layer, pack moisture-wicking tops (e.g. long-sleeve thermal or dri-fit shirt). For a mid-layer, bring a warm fleece or light puffy jacket. For the summit, add an extra insulated jacket (down or synthetic) or an extra fleece because it can get cold up there. You'll layer up or down as needed.

- **(*) Trekking Trousers:** Comfortable, quick-drying trousers for hiking. Avoid jeans or cotton which become heavy when wet. Many trekkers like zip-off pants or leggings. Bring thermal leggings or long johns as a base layer for the cold summit.
- **(*) Hats & Gloves:** Sun hat or cap for strong sun at lower elevations, and a warm beanie or wool hat for cold nights and the summit. Gloves are a must – waterproof gloves for warmth (you can layer a thin glove liner under a thicker pair). Your hands will be cold at over 4,000m.
- **(*) Sunglasses & Sunscreen:** UV intensity is high in the mountains. Sunglasses (category 3 or 4) will protect your eyes from glare off rocks or any snow. Sunscreen (SPF 30+), lip balm with SPF, and even a neck gaiter or buff to shield your face/neck from sun and wind.
- **(*) Head Torch + Batteries:** A good headlamp is essential for the early summit climb in darkness. Bring spare batteries. We start early on summit day, and you'll need your headtorch again at night in the hostel (limited lighting there).
- **(*) Water Storage:** Hydration is vital. Carry capacity for at least 1.5–2 litres of water – whether two 1L bottles or a 2L hydration bladder. (Insulated bottles or a thermal cover can prevent water from freezing on cold mornings). Our guides will advise where to refill – bring water purification tablets or filters if you prefer to treat water from local sources.
- **(*) Snacks & Energy Food:** Although meals are provided, it's wise to have your own high-energy snacks for the trail. Pack things you enjoy: chocolate bars, dried fruit, nuts, energy gels, protein bars, etc... These will keep you fuelled between meal stops and give a boost on summit day.
- **(*) Personal Medication & First Aid:** If you have prescribed medications (inhalers, etc.), pack more than enough for the trip and keep them in your daypack. Also bring a small personal first aid kit: plasters (band-aids), blister pads (like Compeed), ibuprofen or paracetamol, antiseptic wipes, and any other routine meds you might need. The guides will have a group first aid kit, but it's good to have your own basics.
- **Clothing Extras:** Pack several pairs of trekking socks (wool or synthetic, not cotton) to switch out as needed. Bring spare underwear and t-shirts – you can re-wear outer layers, but fresh socks/underwear feel great on multi-day treks. Also pack a set of casual clothes for travel or post-trek, including something modest for the city (remember you'll likely have a celebratory dinner in Marrakech).

- **Footwear for Camp:** After a long day in boots, you'll want to relax your feet. Pack a lightweight pair of sandals, flip-flops, or camp shoes for evenings at the hostel or guesthouse. This also gives your boots a chance to dry/air out.
- **Trekking Poles (Optional but Recommended):** Many trekkers use walking poles to take pressure off the knees during long descents and to aid balance on uneven terrain. If you have a history of knee issues or are used to hiking with poles, definitely bring them. (Make sure they are collapsible for travel).
- **Backpack Rain Cover / Liners:** The weather can be unpredictable. Pack waterproof covers for both your daypack and duffel, or use heavy-duty plastic bags to line the inside of packs. Keeping your gear dry is crucial for comfort and safety.
- **Miscellaneous Items:** Travel-size toiletries (keep it minimal: toothbrush, toothpaste, biodegradable soap, wipes, toilet paper, etc.), a small quick-dry towel, hand sanitiser, headscarf or buff, earplugs (rooms can be noisy with snorers!), power bank and charging cables (there are limited power outlets at the hostel), travel adapter for Morocco (same as European plug). A small notepad and pen or a book can be nice for downtime. And of course, your passport and travel documents (keep these safe and dry – ziplock bags are handy).

Best Practices: Pack your own gear well before the trip and test it out. Do a practice hike wearing your full kit. Ensure your rucksack fits comfortably and you know how to adjust it. Label your bags with your name. And remember, “the right kit makes the difference between a happy, comfortable trek and an uncomfortable, unhappy experience” – invest in good gear within your budget. Outdoor retailers like Decathlon and Go Outdoors offer quality items at reasonable prices. If you're unsure about any equipment, ask us for advice.

Your Support Team

Rest assured, you'll be in expert hands throughout the trek. Summit Special Adventures, our expedition partner, will be guiding and supporting the group from start to finish. The Summit Special team is comprised of experienced mountain professionals, qualified Mountain Leaders trained in wilderness first aid and mountain rescue, as well as being certified in mental health first aid. They have led treks around the world and are very familiar with Mount Toubkal.

From the moment you meet them, our guides will look after you every step of the way. They'll conduct safety briefings, set the pace, and keep everyone motivated and safe on the trail. The guide-to-trekker ratio will ensure no one is left behind; you can trek at a pace comfortable for you. The team includes English-speaking local guides and porters (mule handlers) who are native to the Atlas Mountains. Together, they bring a wealth of knowledge about the route, geology, and culture of the region.

Our guides carry group first aid kits, navigation tools, radios/phones, and have an emergency action plan for any scenario. In the unlikely event of someone needing to turn back or get medical attention, they are prepared to handle it with professionalism and care. Your safety is the top priority. Listen to your guides' instructions, and never hesitate to communicate any concerns or issues to them. They are there for you.

Trekking is also a fun and enriching experience. Our guides foster a supportive, team atmosphere. Whether it's leading a little song or chant on the trail, sharing stories about local folklore around the dinner table, or helping you take the perfect summit photo, they'll help make the journey memorable. By trek's end, you'll likely consider them friends.

As mentioned, at least one guide is trained in Mental Health First Aid, meaning they are equipped to support participants who might feel anxious, homesick, or mentally overwhelmed. Trekking can be as much a mental challenge as a physical one. Be assured that our team understands this and will provide a listening ear and encouragement if you hit a mental wall. We want everyone to not only reach the summit, but to enjoy the experience along the way.

Environmental & Cultural Notes

As responsible adventurers, it's important that we respect both the environment and the local culture during our trek. Here are some guidelines and tips to keep in mind.

Environmental Responsibility: Mount Toubkal lies within Toubkal National Park, a protected area. We must do our part to Leave No Trace. This means:

- Carry out all your rubbish. Whatever you carry in, carry it back out to Imlil for proper disposal. This includes food wrappers, plastic bottles, and tissues. Littering on the mountain is strictly unacceptable. We want to leave the trails pristine and also show that we are kind and caring humanitarians.
- Use refillable water bottles to minimise waste. The local team will boil or provide treated water at the hostel – refill your bottles instead of bringing disposable plastic bottles.
- Stay on marked trails to avoid damaging fragile vegetation. The rocky terrain has some defined paths; follow the guide's lead to minimise our impact.
- Toilet etiquette: At the hostel, use the provided toilets (be prepared: they may be quite basic). On the trail, if caught in a "call of nature," go at least 50 m off-trail and away from water sources. Bury any waste and pack out toilet paper in a ziplock (or use natural alternatives).
- No trace camping: We won't be camping (sleeping in refuge), but during rest stops, be mindful not to disturb wildlife or pick plants. The motto is "Take nothing but photos, leave nothing but footprints."

Cultural Respect: We are guests in Morocco, and a little cultural awareness goes a long way in fostering goodwill.

- Greetings and Language: Morocco's official languages are Arabic and Berber. In the Imlil region, many locals speak Berber as their mother tongue, as well as Arabic. French and English are also understood by those in tourism. Learning a few phrases will delight your hosts. Don't worry, your guides will teach you some basics, and smiles go a long way in any language!

- **Dress Modestly:** While on the mountain trek technical clothing is expected, when in villages or towns it's respectful to dress modestly. In Marrakech and Imlil, locals are used to tourists, but erring on the side of modesty shows respect for local norms.
- **Photography:** The landscapes are stunning and you'll want to take lots of photos. However, be considerate with photographing people. Always ask permission before taking a close-up photo of a local person, especially women. Many will be okay with it, some may decline, and we should respect their wishes. Your guide can help translate a request to take a photo if needed.
- **Religious Sites:** If we visit or pass any mosques or shrines (such as passing Sidi Chamharouch), remember these are holy places to local people. Always ask if unsure about etiquette, as local customs must be respected for cultural and religious reasons.
- **Local Customs:** Moroccans are famously hospitable. You may be offered tea (mint tea, a staple of Berber hospitality) and if time allows, it's polite to sit and enjoy it. When interacting with locals, a right-handed handshake is the norm (or place your hand over your heart as a warm gesture if someone of the opposite gender doesn't offer a hand). Tipping is part of the culture in tourist services; our guide will advise on tipping the muleteers and any other staff at the end of the trek (we usually do a group tip).
- **Supporting the Local Economy:** Feel free to buy handicrafts or snacks in Imlil or Marrakech as it's a great way to contribute. Haggling in markets is expected but always be polite. And remember, an Ethar trek's purpose is charitable, so be an ambassador of kindness!

By being environmentally conscious and culturally respectful, we ensure that our trek benefits everyone: you as travelers, the local community, and the beautiful mountain environment. Ethar is committed to ethical, eco-friendly travel, and we know our trekkers are too.

Optional Add-Ons & Final Tips

Lastly, here are a few optional extras you might consider bringing or doing to enhance your Toubkal experience. These aren't required, but some past trekkers have found them useful or fun.

- **Action Camera or GoPro:** If you're into capturing your adventure on video, bring it along (and spare batteries). Mount Toubkal's summit is a moment you might want to relive later! Just ensure you secure your camera with a strap or mount – the trail can be rugged.
- **Energy/Caffeine Gels:** A few lightweight energy gels or caffeinated sports gummies can be a lifesaver during that final push to the summit, especially in the early morning. They deliver quick calories and alertness. Pack your preferred electrolyte tablets or rehydration salts as well, they help on hot days or if you feel dehydrated.
- **Favourite Snacks:** While we'll provide meals and basic snacks, bringing a small stash of your absolute favourite treat can be a great morale booster. Whether it's a particular protein bar, gummy sweet, or even sachets of instant coffee for the hostel, a little comfort from home can lift your spirits on tiring days.
- **Personal Comforts:** Some ideas: earplugs and an eye-mask (for better sleep in shared rooms), a lightweight travel pillow, a pair of compression socks (good for the flight and recovery after long hikes), and a journal or sketchbook to record your thoughts as you trek. Don't forget extra batteries or a power bank to keep your devices charged for photos.
- **Flag or Ethar T-Shirt:** Many charity trekkers like to unfurl a flag (country flag or charity flag) or wear an Ethar Relief t-shirt for a summit photo. If you have one and have space, bring it along as it makes that summit shot even more special. You'll be literally raising the flag for refugees at 4,167 m!

Finally, a few important closing tips as you prepare for October 2025:

- **Plan your travel documents.** Ensure your passport is valid (Morocco requires at least 6 months validity on arrival) and you have any needed visas. Sort travel insurance that covers trekking up to 4167m. Make copies of important documents.
- **Health precautions.** There are no mandatory vaccinations for Morocco, but check NHS travel advice. Pack a small bottle of hand sanitiser to use before eating on the trail. If you have a sensitive stomach, Imodium (loperamide) and rehydration salts are good to carry just in case.

- **Money.** Moroccan Dirham is the currency. You can exchange some cash or use an ATM in Marrakech. In Imlil, having some small notes is useful to buy drinks or snacks. Tipping kitty: we might collect ~£10-£15 worth of dirhams from each person for group tips (guide will organise this).
- **Stay flexible and positive.** Travel in Morocco (and mountain weather) can occasionally throw curveballs. A travel delay, an unseasonal storm... we'll handle it as a team. Come with an open mind and an adventurous spirit, and you'll embrace whatever comes your way.

Thank you

On behalf of Ethar Relief, thank you for joining this challenge. Your dedication means the world to us and to the refugees we serve. "Your support is often the gift of life itself," as one charity guide put it, and we have truly seen lives transformed by what you give. By climbing Mount Toubkal and raising necessary funds, you're offering hope and help to those who need it most.

Now, all that's left is to enjoy the journey. Look forward to stunning vistas, the camaraderie of new friends, and the satisfaction of achieving something incredible. We're excited to greet you in Marrakech and start our trek to the top of North Africa! Until then, happy training and fundraising.

See you on the mountain. Let's make this an adventure to remember!



**MOUNT
TOUBKAL
TREK**

**467 Coventry Road
Birmingham
B10 0TJ**

**events@etharrelief.org
Call: 0121 309 0230**

UK Charity Registration : 1169308