

Sufi Way



ENTERING INTO SILENCE

A Sufi walking retreat in the Moroccan desert

with

Karim Noverraz and Elmer Koole

FEBRUARY 15 - 26, 2025



A Sufi Way Associated Program

retreat organised by <https://www.desert-montagne.ma> and <https://sufiway.org>

REGISTRATION AND PRACTICAL INFORMATION

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REGISTRATION AND PRACTICAL INFORMATION

CONTACTS

Karim Noverraz – Retreat Leader – Sufi Way



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speaks French, English,
German

Sufi Way

Karim is a teacher within the Sufi Way and he leads a Sufi centre in the south of France. Together with his wife, he has facilitated several pilgrimages to Turkey and led weekend retreats about music and non-duality. He is a passionate musician with a deep interest in jazz and all Sufi musical traditions.

Elmer Koole– Retreat Leader – Sufi Way



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speaks Dutch, English, German,
French

Sufi Way

Elmer is a teacher within the Sufi Way and has facilitated a variety of programmes related to Sufism. He has qualified as a Vision Quest guide and has facilitated outdoor quests. He has done a MSC in Ecology and his professional life has been dedicated to conservation issues and international cooperation.

Zineb Boutkhoul– Trek Guide – Agence Désert & Montagne



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speaks Arabic, Tamazigh,
French

Zineb is a professional desert guide and the co-director of the guest house Dar Daïf. In 2008, she and her husband, Saïd, created the *Agence Désert et Montagne* which promotes a fair and ecologically responsible tourism. They offer a variety of camel and trekking journeys in the Sahara and the Atlas mountains.

The company has had the HACCP food hygiene certification every year since it was founded. In 2014, they received the Moroccan National Award for Responsible Tourism.

For further information and enquiries about the retreat

Karim and Elmer will gladly answer your questions on: sufipilgrimage@gmail.com

REGISTRATION AND PRACTICAL INFORMATION

COST

Cost of the retreat: € 1'750.- per person.

- Student discounts for 18 to 25 years old students
- Some bursaries are available for low income

Please apply on sufipilgrimage@gmail.com

The price includes:

- Collection from (day 1) and transfer to (day 12) the Ouarzazate airport or the bus station to the guest house; transfer from the guest house to the desert and back
- 3 nights in a double room at the three star Dar Daïf guest house, 8 nights in a communal tent in the desert
- All food from the evening meal of day 1 to breakfast of day 12. Free mineral water available throughout
- Retreat facilitation, desert guide, drivers, camel drivers, cook, camels
- Equipment: communal tents, mattresses, WC tent, shower tent, cooking tent, other required equipment
- Donation to an ecological project to compensate the carbon consumed for our flights

This price does not include:

- Flights and other travel costs to and from Ouarzazate
- Mandatory travel insurance, including cancellation, rescue and repatriation
- Unforeseen expenses due to an interruption or a modification of the programme, for instance due to a prolonged sandstorm
- Any additional options – see below

Additional options

The following additional options can be ordered from the time of registering:

- Single room for the 3 nights of the retreat: € 130 per person
- Room for extra nights before or after the retreat: € 60 per person per night, single: € 100 per person per night - includes breakfast and evening meal
- Igloo tent for 1 or 2 persons for sleeping in the desert: can be booked for € 150 for the trek
- Camel for riding in the desert and the camel driver: can be booked for € 240 for the trek
- Very warm (-12 to -17°C) sleeping bag for the desert, with a pillow, a warm sleeping bag liner and a towel: € 40 for the trek. Here is the model for rent:
<http://www.snugpak.com/outdoor/sleeping-bags/sleeper-expedition>
- Walking sticks (good quality) can be booked for € 20 for the trek
- Foldable chair can be booked for € 30 for the trek

REGISTRATION AND PRACTICAL INFORMATION

REGISTRATION & PAYMENT

1. Please fill in the registration form on the next page and email it to sufipilgrimage@gmail.com .
2. As soon as it is received, we will confirm your reservation and send you the payment instructions. Payment can be made in one or several instalments. The initial instalment should amount to at least € 400
3. When your initial instalment is received, we will confirm that you are registered
4. The total fee including the options should be paid by January 6, 2025.

Cancellation Policy

In case regulations relating to pandemics don't allow us to carry out the event, all payments will be fully refunded.

In case of a disease or an accident, your travel insurance will cover the related costs. The retreat fee will not be refunded.

For all other cases, the cancellation policy of "Agence Désert & Montagne" applies:

- 20 to 15 days before the event: 10% of the total fee, or voucher for a later trek
- 13 to 14 days before the event: 15% of the total fee, or voucher for a later trek
- 12 to 1 days before the event: 20% of the total fee, or voucher for a later trek



REGISTRATION AND PRACTICAL INFORMATION

REGISTRATION FORM

Please provide the information required in the fields below per email:

- either copy the fields and fill them in
- or print this page, fill in the following fields and scan it

<i>Name :</i>	
<i>First name :</i>	
<i>Birth date :</i>	
<i>Email :</i>	
<i>Telephone number :</i>	
<i>Address :</i> <i>Street, street nb.</i> <i>Postal code</i> <i>City</i> <i>Country</i>	
<i>How is your health?</i> <i>Are you fit enough for walking</i> <i>3 to 5 hours daily?</i>	
<i>Do you have any question?</i>	

In addition, the following valid documents are required by the Agence Désert et Montagne :

- A copy of your passport
- A copy of your travel insurance

The form and the documents can be sent to: sufipilgrimage@gmail.com

Thank you!

REGISTRATION AND PRACTICAL INFORMATION

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

- **Valid passport** required. In addition, please keep a photocopy of the main pages with you at all times
- **Travel insurance** including cancellation, repatriation all the way home is required. Please keep one photocopy with you during the retreat
- **Pandemic** : test and vaccines documents depending on the current regulation
- **Other vaccination: none required.** However, tetanus and polio vaccinations are recommended
- **Waterproof pouch** for your travel and personal documents

HEALTH

We will walk from 2 to 6 hours a day in the sands. The temperatures may go from 30° degrees Celsius in daytime down to 0° at night. You must be in reasonably good health and fit. You may want to discuss your health condition with your general practitioner. It is recommended that you train walking in the months preceding the trek.

PANDEMIC

We comply with applicable sanitary and any health protection measures. The requirements of the Moroccan authorities are available at:

<https://www.visitmorocco.com/en/useful-information?id=modalcœur482>

If needed, please make sure to have enough masks and hand gel for the journey.

SAFETY

Desert walking and camping has some inherent dangers. The trek guide and her team are very well trained and have professional expertise to avoid and respond to dangers. Participants are asked not to take risks and to always listen to and comply with the instructions given by the trek guide and her team. Risk-taking can be a distraction from the deeper purpose of this retreat. We trust you are willing to help make this trip as safe as possible for yourself and the group.

REGISTRATION AND PRACTICAL INFORMATION



YOUR TRAVEL

International travel connections to and from Ouarzazate:

There aren't many flights to and from Ouarzazate and they are not conveniently scheduled for the retreat. Most participants will prefer to fly to Marrakech and then catch a bus to Ouarzazate. In addition, the flights to Ouarzazate are relatively expensive while those to Marrakech are cheaper.

CTM, the national bus company, have several bus stations in Marrakech – see <http://www.ctm.ma/en>

Pick-up and drop-off points in Ouarzazate:

The personnel of the Dar Daïf guest house will pick you up and drop you off at the CTM bus station or at the Ouarzazate airport. Please communicate your arrival and departure dates and times to the guest house at desertmontagne@gmail.com or by telephone on +212 661 576405

REGISTRATION AND PRACTICAL INFORMATION

DAR DAÏF - GUEST HOUSE IN OUARZAZATE



<https://www.dardaif.ma/>

<https://www.facebook.com/dardaif/>

You will be accommodated in a double room unless you have booked a private single room as an option – see section *Additional Options*. The accommodation is included in the total price of the retreat.

WEATHER CONDITIONS IN THE DESERT

The south of Morocco has a Sahara climate, characterized by large temperature variations between day and night. In February, it will be cold at night with temperatures around 0° Celsius. During the day, it will usually be sunny with temperatures between 16° and 32° Celsius. Check the weather forecast on:

<https://www.accuweather.com/en/ma/ouarzazate/245772/weather-forecast/245772>

Sandstorms are a potential hazard – it is therefore necessary to bring glasses to protect your eyes – for instance ski goggles.

REGISTRATION AND PRACTICAL INFORMATION

INDIVIDUAL EQUIPMENT

To prepare for your journey, here is the list of the personal equipment you need.

Please note: You will be requested to leave your cameras and phones in Dar Daif. However, you will be reachable at any time for emergency purposes through the mobile phone of our trek guide, Zineb. Pictures will be taken for the group.

Travel bags

You need to take the 2 following bags to the desert:

- 1 large, flexible and robust travel bag that can be loaded on the roof of vehicles and on camels backs. The full bag must not exceed 12 kilo.
- 1 day backpack: for clothes and small equipment (windproof jacket, water bottle, sun cream, sunglasses, snacks, binoculars). It is better to have a day backpack that is not too small and with straps and a comfortable waist belt, even if you don't want to overload it. Carrying several kilo all day long is a significant effort. However, it is possible to let the "assistance" camel carry it if you are very tired.

During the trek you leave at the guest house the suitcase for your flight with all the gears you don't need in the desert.

Clothing

- Fleece jacket – or a pullover
- Waterproof and windproof light jacket for use during the day. Rain cape or poncho, if you do not have a waterproof and windproof jacket
- Warm anorak or down jacket for evening and early morning wear
- 2 pairs of light and loose cotton trousers. You are kindly requested not to wear shorts or dresses as they do not comply with local customs
- Warm tracksuit
- 2 or 3 cotton shirts with long sleeves to prevent sunburn
- Comfortable underwear and T-shirts
- 4 or 5 pairs of good quality socks – trekking socks. Poor quality socks can be the cause of sore feet, even for those who are used to walking. Avoid ribbed material
- Sun hat, cap or a turban and a woolen cap for the cool evenings
- Large cotton scarf
- Swimsuit for the hammam (Turkish bath) in the guest house

REGISTRATION AND PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Shoes

- VERY IMPORTANT: **Desert** shoes - Lightweight walking shoes, preferably ankle height. These must have been used several times before your departure so that they are well broken in:
- You may enjoy light slippers for the campsite
- Comfortable walking sandals. If you are going to buy them, look for a thick sole and select one or two sizes larger than usual to prevent your toes from hitting a stone or a branch. Wear them with thick socks the first few days to protect the feet from irritation caused by dust and sand
- Light sport shoes as a backup to your other shoes or sandals, in case your feet are painful. Avoid sport shoes with synthetic mesh fabric because sand penetrates them.



Miscellaneous

- Good quality sunglasses with a rigid case – preferably a wrap-around model
- Ski goggles or equivalent for protection against the sand during sandstorms
- Led headlamp with spare batteries. This is an essential item
- Water bottle of up to 2 litres. Screw caps are preferable. Please be informed that plastic water bottles will be distributed to everyone every morning
- Plastic bags such as garbage bags, including 1 or 2 large ones in case of rain
- Transparent zipped plastic bags to store small items
- Optional pillow cases for your clothes
- Notebook and pencil
- Optional pocket knife – not to keep as hand luggage in the airplane!
- A good whistle – in case you are lost behind dunes!

Personal toilet kit

- Sunscreen for skin and lips.
- Absorbent microfibre towel
- Sanitary wipes
- Toilet paper (that you must dispose of through burning, so bring matches)

Whenever possible in the desert, you will get a small bucket of warm water in the evening and in the morning to wash yourself.

Personal medical supplies and first aid kit

Bring along your personal medicines and a first aid kit with you . The trek guide will carry an extensive first aid kit.

REGISTRATION AND PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Seats

Those who want to be seated more comfortably at the camp site can bring a light folding seat with them. These seats will be carried by a camel.

Mobile telephones and cameras

As mentioned, you will be requested to leave your mobile telephones and your camera with your luggage at the guest house during the trek. This is to enable you to connect on a more profound level with yourself and the environment without being distracted by these items.

Our trek guide will carry a mobile telephone for important communications. Photographs will be made by one of us which will be shared with everyone later on.

SLEEPING IN THE DESERT

We will sleep 8 nights in the desert.

Bring a very warm sleeping bag, suitable for the desert nights with temperatures around 0° Celsius or rent one from Agence Désert et Montagne – see *Additional Options*. Please bear in mind that temperature indications on sleeping bags are often over-estimated. We recommend therefore that you bring a sleeping bag with an indication of -40°. See model in section *Additional Options*.

Bring a fleece sleeping bag liner to provide extra warmth if you have a medium-warmth sleeping bag or if you easily get cold.

EQUIPMENT PROVIDED BY THE TREK AGENCY

- 1 very large dormitory tent for men
- 1 very large dormitory tent for women
- 1 mattress per person (8-10 cm thick)
- 1 shower tent
- 1 WC tent
- 1 kitchen tent with all the kitchen equipment
- Cups, plates, bowls and cutlery
- An extensive first aid kit

EQUIPMENT AVAILABLE FOR RENT

Please refer to section *Additional Options* on page 4

REGISTRATION AND PRACTICAL INFORMATION

CAMEL HIRE

We will be walking 3 to 5 hours a day, except on day 5 when we stay in the campsite. If you feel uncertain about walking that much, you can consider hiring a private camel with its driver – see *Additional Options*. You can then ride that camel whenever you feel tired.

FOOD & DRINKS

All meals are prepared by a cook in the kitchen tent. Great care is taken in their preparation and you will be offered varied, delicious and balanced menus.

Participants with special dietary requirements should communicate these at the time of registration. The required ingredients will be purchased and the cook will take these requirements into consideration.

Breakfast: black or green tea, instant coffee, hot chocolate, cereals, butter, jams, biscuits, bread, cheese.

Snack for walking and breaks: tea and herb tea, fruits, jam, bread or biscuits.

Lunch: mixed salads: tomatoes, rice, potatoes and vegetables, tuna, sardines, cheeses, dried and fresh fruits, tea.

Evening meals: various soups, hot vegetable dishes, tagines with or without meat, rice, pasta, bread baked in the embers of the fire, cheeses, desserts, teas, herb teas.

ECOLOGY

Everyone must take responsibility for not leaving our footprint on the environment. We will travel in a clean and often fragile environment and we must not leave anything behind. At the campsites, we will have large garbage bags for paper, plastic, metal waste and batteries. These bags will be brought back with us at the end of the trip.

Keep any waste in your pockets until the evening when they can be thrown in the garbage bag. Do not dispose of them in the camp fire.

REGISTRATION AND PRACTICAL INFORMATION

GIFTS AND TIPS

It is customary to express our appreciation and gratitude to our fellow travellers, the camel drivers and guides, for their considerable efforts which often exceed what is required of them. At the end of the trip, you may offer them a tip and/or clothes and objects that you do not wish to take back home that would be of use to them. All these items will be put in a big bag and equally divided amongst them.

For your information:

Agence Désert et Montagne complies with Moroccan law about employment and provides regular work contracts to their employees, which is not the case of many other organizations in this sector.

HOW TO BE CONTACTED IN THE DESERT

Participants will not make use of their mobile phones in the desert. Only the trek guide will carry her mobile phone for important communications. The telephone network can sometimes work in the desert.

If family or friends need to urgently contact a participant, they can do so via *Agence Désert et Montagne* who will inform our trek guide:

telephone number 00 212 524 85 49 49, email desertmontagne@gmail.com



REGISTRATION AND PRACTICAL INFORMATION

CHECKLIST

- Plane ticket, insurance, passport
- case of pandemic: test – if required
- Waterproof pouch
- Travel bag for the desert
- Suitcase or bag to be left at Dar Daif
- Day backpack
- Sleeping bag, sleeping bag liner
- Water bottle
- Fleece jacket
- Waterproof and windproof jacket or rain poncho
- Warm jacket or anorak
- 2 pairs of trousers
- Warm clothing
- 2 or 3 shirts with long sleeves
- Underwear and T-shirts
- 4 or 5 pairs of socks
- Sun hat, cap or turban
- Walking shoes, walking sandals, light shoes
- Notebook and pen
- A bit of cash for a tip to the camel drivers
- Sunglasses, special sandstorm glasses or ski goggles
- Headlamp
- Small and large garbage bags
- Plastic zipped bags
- Towel
- Swim suit
- Toilet wipes and toilet paper
- matches
- Sun cream
- Personal first aid kit
- Whistle

