



OneLife Adventure

www.onelifeadventure.co.uk

VEHICLE BASED EXPEDITION TRAVEL

GUIDANCE NOTES

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Guidance notes on expedition travel

Documentation/Passports

To join any OneLife Adventure expedition you must have a full passport (not temporary) and it must have at least 2 clear pages in it and also be valid for the duration of the entire journey, and a further 6 months after the end of the trip. If this is not the case, or else there is too much dissimilarity between your passport photo and you now, then apply for a new passport allowing plenty of time to arrange for the processing of a new passport.

Visas

British nationals currently do not need visas for Iceland, Spain, Morocco or Tunisia. Algeria and Libya do require a visa for British nationals and must be applied for in advance of your journey. We assist and oversee the application process to obtain these for Algeria and Libya. The position with visas remains fluid and we will advise on current needs and procedures when you book your expedition. We would like to add that passport, visa and immigration requirements remain the passenger's responsibility, but we are able to advise and assist.

Personal Insurance

It is essential that everyone joining a OneLife Adventure expedition takes out travel insurance to cover the cost of any medical treatment necessary as a result of accident or illness whilst on the trip. This insurance should also cover the cost of flights home in the event of anyone being too ill to continue the trip. Please note that your cancellation cover will start from when the policy is issued, i.e. when you pay for it, even though the period of time insured should start to run from the date specified i.e. the date of departure. Therefore we advise that the latest the policy is taken out is at the time of payment of the full balance of the fare so that the cancellation cover is in place. It is important to check that any policy taken out is for Africa/worldwide cover and not just Europe, unless you are participating in our Spanish or Iceland Explorers expeditions.

Vaccinations

Vaccinations for our expeditions are generally not required. Please consult your local GP or local travel clinic, they may advise that you should have Typhoid and Hepatitis-A inoculations and also boosters for Polio and Tetanus. A vaccination certificate for all your inoculations is required, signed and stamped by your doctor. You should carry this with you, as it may be required in some cases.

Malaria

Malaria does not occur in the countries we visit, but again you should seek medical opinion for the latest advice. There have been some recent cases of malaria occurring in countries or areas previously not considered at risk, probably due to climate change.

If you are travelling independently after your expedition with us then consider your exposure before, during and after the expedition. If you are planning to travel south of the Sahara you will encounter malaria and you must get professional advice from your local GP or Travel Clinic. Malaria is widespread in many parts of Africa and it is essential that you take a course of prophylactics before, during and after the expedition. Prevention is all-important in dealing with malaria.

Insect repellents

Long sleeved shirts and trousers should be worn after sunset. A good mosquito repellent containing 25% DEET is strongly recommended. Products using 100% DEET may cause a skin reaction and should be avoided, they are designed for fabric impregnation – they are also very good at melting sunglasses and any other bits of plastic they come into contact with!

Medical Kit

We carry an expedition medical kit, which includes courses of antibiotics to be used under medical supervision as necessary and a general supply of drugs and dressings. The medical kit is not intended for long courses of treatment or day-to-day medical care. If anyone has an accident or falls ill we will accompany you to a reputable hospital or doctor for professional treatment. This subsequent treatment may involve you in medical expenses, which would normally be covered under your travel health insurance policy and reclaimable on your return. You may wish to bring along your own personal medical kit. It should include such items as aspirins, throat lozenges (sore throats tend to occur in the low humidity air), antiseptic ointment, good supply of plasters, Imodium or similar anti-diarrhoeal tablets, re-hydration powders, eye drops, fungal infection powder/creams and any personal special medicines. A high protection factor sun cream will be needed (factor 20+) and moisturising lotions are also useful for desert dried skins. You should bring these with you, as they are not available locally. A chap stick for lips is also invaluable.

Clothing

You will see below the suggested clothing list, it is by no means extensive, I have been seen in a polar down jacket in Libya ! For warm and temperate countries, clothing should be light, tough and casual, loose fitting preferably. For cold weather a multi-layered system, coupled with a wind and waterproof outer shell, will keep you warmer and allow you to control your own temperature effectively.

North Africa (ITS LIKE - hot and dry, cooler evenings)

1 pair soft walking/desert boots, 1 pair sandals/thongs.

5 pairs thin socks,

2 pairs safari trousers (zip off legs), 1 pair shorts

1 warm jumper or fleece jacket, 2 or more t shirts, underwear, 2 long sleeved tops.

1 pair of good trousers and shirt.

A wide brimmed hat (for shade), waterproof anorak, long scarf for protection from blown dust and sand, towel and swimwear.

Spain (ITS LIKE – hot, humid with some rain in mountains)

1 pair good fabric walking boots, 1 pair sandals/thongs/trainers.

5 pairs thin socks,

2 pairs safari trousers (zip off legs).

1 pair of warmer trousers.

1 warm jumper or fleece jacket, 2 or more t shirts, underwear, 2 long sleeved tops/shirts.

1 pair of good trousers and shirt.

A wide brimmed hat (for shade), a warm fleece type cap, waterproof anorak and leggings, a towel and swimwear.

Iceland (IT'S LIKE – cool day in spring)

1 pair good waterproof walking boots, 1 pair trainers or light boots for camp wear, Wellington boots can be useful for river crossings.

Water and windproof anorak/shell jacket and leggings

3 pairs thick socks, 2 pairs thin socks,

1 pair safari trousers (zip off legs).

2 pairs of warm trousers.

1 warm jumper, windproof fleece jacket, 2 or more t shirts, underwear (thermal), 2 long sleeved tops/shirts.

1 pair of good trousers and shirt.

A wide brimmed hat (for shade), a warm fleece type cap, gloves, a towel and swimwear.

Avoid bringing military style clothing or government surplus items as these are illegal in some countries and may be confiscated. Generally, try to avoid white, as you will never get it clean and dark colours, especially blue, seem to attract insect's more than lighter colours. Hand

washing can be undertaken while on the expedition but machine washes will be limited to some campsites.

Miscellaneous

Wash bag with toilet articles, good quality sunglasses, binoculars, camera plus spare battery, camera films, Swiss army knife or similar, 1 head torch and spare batteries, 1 water bottle (1 litre) and a money belt.

While loo paper is universally available, female sanitary items are sometimes unavailable so a full supply of these is recommended. If you wear contact lenses we recommend that you use spectacles during the trip, although by all means take your lenses for use in the towns. If you have a spare pair of spectacles, take them as well.

Strong smelling perfumes, cosmetics and deodorants seems to attract insects so should be used with caution.

Photography

You will encounter some of the most spectacular photographic opportunities in the world, to capture these scenes you may wish to invest in a camera with a good zoom lens (28mm to 300mm). You will need more film or data cards than you imagine, quality film may not be available locally. Film speeds of 100 ASA are generally sufficient. Fill in flash is useful, especially when photographing people or other dark objects in high incident light situations. Heat and dust will be the biggest hazards - safe guard your camera against dust at all times. For digital cameras much of the above also applies, dust is a big problem particularly for cameras with interchangeable lenses where dust may settle on the CCD unit. Bring enough storage media for the expedition. We carry a laptop and a DVD writer and can make backups for you during the expedition.

Although standard batteries are very easy to come by they don't seem to have the longevity you expect so bring a few spare Duracell's, especially those for cameras and penlights.

Personal Spending

In North Africa the Euro is sometimes accepted in shops and is easy to change at banks, along with UK Pounds. ATM machines are becoming widespread, at least in the major cities, and it is worth bringing your card with you BUT DO NOT RELY ON THIS as your means of money while on the expedition.

Barclaycard, Visa and American Express credit cards can sometimes be used, however this should not be relied upon as a source of cash unless you are in Europe. Remember to notify your credit card company that you will be using it abroad. A money belt or similar is essential for carrying your passport and monies. We use an underarm holster type, which is more comfortable when driving compared to a belt type. Don't rely on trouser pockets, even when zipped, as they can easily be slashed.

Pace and service

North Africa does not run like clock work, things do not always run to plan: there may be times when you will need to be patient and philosophical. OneLife Adventure makes a strong point of visiting indigenous populations of each country you visit, in order to give a true reflection of the country and its culture: therefore please treat the local population and their customs with respect, they are sometimes not used to the standards of service that we are accustomed to in our busy developed worlds.

Roads and driving

A days travel on the expedition varies, generally we leave our camp at 9am, on some days this may vary if we have a longer distance to cover, however we do not drive all day - comfort stops, roadside shopping, lunchtime and obviously sightseeing and photo stops break the day. Ultimately you will set your own pace. However it may be necessary to increase the pace at times to ensure return travel arrangements are met. In general, our routes are designed to include a combination of shorter and longer drives. Road condition also varies widely and will have an impact on pace.

Road conditions will be very variable – from good sealed tar to dust and sand tracks. Driving on loose surfaces in a laden vehicle will be very different to what you are typically used to, braking distances will be increased, whilst traction and “feel” of the vehicle will be reduced. Local traffic will not follow the conventions we are used to in the UK, lanes do not exist and vehicle size determines how much space the driver will demand. Take time to become accustomed the local conditions. If in doubt then stop or pull off the road. We will be on hand to advise and provide further training or tips when you are on your expedition, generally avoid heavy braking and harsh steering movements on loose surfaces. If no other traffic is present then adopt a central position on the road, branches or rocks placed in the road usually indicate a broken down vehicle or an area of subsidence ahead. Only drive to what you can see and be prepared to stop quickly.

Climate

On arrival there will be a marked difference in the weather from that of England. In North Africa the daytime temperatures will be approximately 25-35 degrees centigrade and at night it may drop as low as 10 degrees centigrade. It will be necessary to drink plenty of water, keep in the shade, wear a hat to keep your head cool until you become acclimatised. At nights the sun sets approximately between 6.00pm and 7.00pm, the night air suddenly becomes cool and the diurnal change in temperature can be as much as 20 degrees centigrade. So it is a good idea in the evenings to put on long sleeved top and long trousers to both keep you warm and protect you from insects. Insects will not be too much of a problem, save the river insects close to the shores of rivers and lakes in certain places. It does rain in Africa, sometimes a light shower for 10 minutes only, sometimes torrential, but these are isolated and hot sunshine is never far away. In the High Atlas it can be cool and misty but this mist soon burns off during the day. In Iceland it will be milder than you think but very unpredictable, inland near the main ice masses night temperatures can be several degrees lower than those in Reykjavik. In the summer, day time temperatures can reach 17 ° C but days can be interspersed with rain and misty spells when the temperature may fall to 10 ° C. Days are long and in the north during July the sun never really sets. In the Pyrenees rain is infrequent during the summer, but the peaks can be cold, as they may be still snow capped and exposed.

Water

Your vehicle should have the capacity to carry 40 litres of water. This is normally enough to last 5 days. We recommend you carry a 1 litre water container for your personal use, bottled water is available in larger towns. Further guidance will be given regarding the use of water but generally speaking water should be used sparingly, especially in North Africa. Purification tablets are required in some areas and its worth carrying a packet of these for emergencies.

Security

You need to be aware of what's happening around you at all times, we advise that vehicle doors are locked when you are in the vehicle, especially in towns. Opportunist thefts can occur when vehicles are stationary in traffic. When parking in towns, solo exploring, it is worth using a car guard or to park, with permission, in police compounds or other secure areas. Personal possessions are much safer stored in the vehicle than carried on your person. Do not take unnecessary valuables with you. A money belt worn close to your body is the best way to carry passports and money. Baggage and valuables should never be left in your tent even when

sleeping in it. We do employ camp guards when needed, but also will only camp on approved sites with their own basic security, unless we are in very remote areas wild camping.

Borders

Never get cameras out at frontiers or indeed when passing military personnel, installations or government buildings. Care must be taken with clothing especially at borders but also throughout our time in the country when in populated areas.

When completing forms for immigration observe the following:

- a. Write legibly using capital letters and in blue or black biro.
- b. Carry photocopies of all your important documents with you.
- c. Always treat officials with respect.
- d. Never volunteer additional information to an official.

In North Africa there are occasional road checkpoints, and you may be asked for the vehicle documents, passports and driving licenses at some of them. It's worth keeping them to hand. Do not give them to officials, if the official requests them then accompany him. Sadly corruption does exist and some officials may try to solicit a "gift". In these cases a polite refusal, a request to see the documentation/law quoted as the reason for an additional payment or a simple "I'm sorry I don't understand, is there someone else in authority I can talk to" may work, we will be on hand at all times. NEVER lose your temper, shout or undermine an official – they are the power on their patch of turf! We will advise on the best way to deal with checkpoints dependant on the country, and will be on hand to personally oversee the entry and exit procedures for countries.

Cultural/environmental impact

The government laws and local customs of the countries and areas we travel through should be respected and we always treat the local people, their cultures and religions with respect i.e. cover up in mosques, we will advise on any local situations. English will be the second language in most of the African countries we visit, however a few words of French or Arabic will be useful. Religions are usually Christian or Islam.

Bargaining is normal in North Africa, and while initially intimidating, is fun. Generally expect to pay in the region of one third to half the initial asking price. Humour lubricates the deal and ensures it is a fun experience. Remember that you are very wealthy compared to them so pay what you feel is a fair price for the item rather than bargain them into the ground. Avoid buying items made from rare materials or animal parts, apart from further endangering them you will have problems upon exit from the country or upon entry to the UK.

There may be occasions when trading in kind is of more use than money, or you may just want to be able to make a gift in recognition of a service. Particularly popular are t-shirts, odd bits of inexpensive jewellery, hair slides, mirrors, pen knives and torches. Don't hand them out freely.

Taking a glossy tourist guide to the UK may open up conversation with local people who are interested in where you are from – remember that you will be as interesting to them as they are to you.

When taking an individuals picture always ask permission first, don't be surprised if you are asked for money or are refused. Imagine your reaction if a tourist walked up to you in London and stuck a camera in your face!

If you are using a digital camera offer to show them the picture, children are usually fascinated and often this simple ploy can lead to wonderful experiences with local communities. I once offered to take the pictures of an entire Hama family in Ethiopia, they insisted on dressing up in their best ceremonial wear and then invited me to stay for a few days – fantastic pictures and a unique experience. If you do promise to send them a copy then remember to do so when you get back.

If you wish to make donation to a community then we will be able to advise you a suitable way to ensure the community as whole benefits. Distribution of gifts from the vehicle must not be done at any time – it encourages people on to the road and they do not have the experience to judge traffic speeds, their desire for the gift may well over come their caution. If you are giving anything to local people, do so discreetly. You will be asked for things – this direct approach is acceptable in Africa and a polite but good natured refusal also accepted. You may wish to make a small gift or tip in exchange for a gift or in recognition of service, this is fine but avoid simply handing items out as it can cause problems. Don't bring sweets and pencils/pens to hand out, often these things are taken and then sold on local markets, having encouraged children to beg from tourists. This is degrading and has caused some real long term problems in countries like Morocco.

Always slow down when approaching villages, do so well in advance to allow your dust to settle, be very aware of animals and children near the road. You may encounter stone throwing aimed at vehicles; children are the usual culprits and can usually be discouraged by a friendly wave, followed by a hard pointing finger if required. Stones are then usually dropped with an embarrassed look! If you, or your vehicle, are hit by a stone then do not attempt to chase the culprit. In some cases it may be worth stopping and explaining what has happened to the village elders, especially if an injury has occurred. Please call us on the radio if an incident occurs and we will stop and return to discuss this with the elders or officials.

Services provided by local people e.g. clothes washing, shoe repairing and guiding, helps bring money to local communities and are usually effective and reliable, we do use them when required.

Natural resources should not be misused or abused. Please do not squander firewood or water, it is precious in many areas. We collect firewood where it is in abundance and away from habitation, other times we'll buy it from the local villages. Please ensure that rubbish from your vehicle is disposed of with respect to the environment. In general paper and plastics should be burned, biodegradable should be buried and metals crushed and taken with you, we will give you more advice during the trip. When going to the toilet in the bush make sure your waste is properly buried and any paper used is burnt. Respect property and surroundings and leave places as you found them, if not better.

Tipping

Tipping of local guides is usually expected when services are rendered, however tip an appropriate amount for the service provided. We'll give guidance on local expectations.

Communications

You will need to have a CB radio fitted into your vehicle before you leave so we can communicate while driving, these can be acquired cheaply in the UK. Ariel's should be demountable and, if possible, the base unit should be discreetly located in the vehicle or be demountable. Some countries are sensitive to foreigners bringing 2 way radio communications into countries (memories of mercenaries and coup d'etat!). By removing these items from view, along with GPS units and satellite/cell phones we will ease our entry into countries.

Emails can be received and sent throughout the expedition at various internet centres. However please remember that connections are not always reliable and often slow. Your mobile phone will work in many areas, providing international call barring is removed before you leave. Roaming charges are high, but it is possible to buy a local SIM card on a pay-as-you-go scheme to keep costs down. Vodaphone seems to have wider coverage and more extensive roaming agreements than most other UK service providers.

We carry a satellite phone and you are welcome to use this at cost (approx £3/min).

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Vehicle and Preparation

Q How much preparation will my vehicle need ?

A Don't worry if your vehicle is not fully equipped - the **UK Explorer weekends** are designed to help you determine what enhancements are actually needed. Standard vehicles will be able to undertake all of our UK expeditions, however it is advisable that your vehicle is fitted with basic underbody protection as a minimum (steering and differential guards for Land Rovers)

For the **Foreign Explorers** then a slightly higher level of preparation will be needed. As a minimum your vehicle will need underbody protection, proper recovery points front and rear, a CB radio for communication within the group, have been recently serviced and in good mechanical condition. Other items you may consider fitting are -

- Snorkel - advisable for engine protection against dust and water
- Recovery equipment – either strops and recovery points to a winch for self recovery
- Fridge - well, no one said travelling should be hard!
- Storage system - a boxed system is normally adequate.
- GPS - always useful for logging your track
- Dual battery and a split charge system

A good packing system will make or break a holiday. Think about how you will use the car beforehand and come up with an organised system that suits you. It may be based around a few big boxes with some smaller storage boxes so that anything you need is accessible, especially your brew kit and stove! There are loads of ideas and options available on the web to get you thinking about what might work for you. A quick flick through a 4x4 magazine or a wander around a Land Rover show will reveal a vast array of modifications you can make to your vehicle, 80% of which are not really necessary but fall into the luxury or “make it easier” bracket – but before either buying the whole shop or dismissing it stop and consider “would it work for me or does it make it easier”. For more information and options available then the companies listed on our **LINKS** section will help you get started in the right direction

Useful books are Sahara Overland and Morocco Overland by Chris Scott, whilst biased towards desert travel, they extensively cover all aspects of vehicle choice and preparation for any destination. Another extremely comprehensive book is the **Vehicle Dependant Expedition Guide** by Tom Sheppard ISBN 0-9532324-0-9

Q We have a CB radio for communication. Do we need a licence or similar for it ?

A No licence is required for CB radio, provided the unit has not been modified to transmit more than 4 watts power. For some countries some import restrictions apply. We don't use VHF or UHF radios, except in exceptional cases when we will advise you and provide information on these sets.

Q What tools, spares or specialist equipment do I need ?

A The type and quantity of spares and tools will vary between expeditions - you will need less on the shorter trips than on the longer and the further from main dealers we go, the more you'll need to carry. A basic spares kit would be spare tyre, a set of hoses, belts, wheel

bearings and UJ's, a basic tool kit along with spanner and socket set, i.e. enough to undertake daily basic maintenance. On the support vehicle we carry a comprehensive tool kit and a full puncture repair kit for tubed and tubeless tyres. It is worth approaching your local parts shop and ask if you can get your spares on a sale or return basis - provided you don't open the packets and keep everything in mint condition some parts suppliers will do this. We carry all specialist equipment such as compressors, sand trays or ladders, PMR radio's, satellite communications and vehicle recovery equipment. Although optional, you are recommended to carry your own basic recovery kit (tow rope, shackles and strop) and a compressor for re-inflating your tyres after sand driving.

Q What tyres are best, do I need 2 spares ?

A Good quality AT or AT/MT tyres are essential, we use both BF Goodrich AT and Cooper ST's and had no problems with either make. Aggressive mud tyres (dig too much) and remoulds (weakened carcasses) are not suitable. You generally don't need a second spare tyre as punctures are fixed easily, ripped side walls are sometimes unavoidable and do happen but we can usually find a local solution.

Q How much fuel range is needed ?

A For most of the expeditions, all you will need is an emergency 20L jerry can. For expeditions into Algeria and Libya you will have to extend your range for a minimum of 1000km of off road driving, either by jerry cans or additional tanks. A 300tdi Defender will typically do 7km/l average on an expedition, a Toyota Land Cruiser 5 km/l. More information is on each trip itinerary, but please call us if you have a petrol engine or LPG.

SAFETY

Q Is it safe ?

A Generally the chance of getting caught up in any violent attack is extremely unlikely. Travel in the Sahara is reasonably safe from wars and terrorism, - the threat of al-Qaeda action in the Sahara as a whole is real but certainly no worse than else where in the world including the UK mainland. Local political problems are generally fairly minor and don't tend to include anyone apart from the locals. We do however make use of the UK Foreign Office Travel Advisory Service and have contacts elsewhere within the security sector as well as "on the ground" information from local sources. If the security situation should deteriorate to a level that would stop us travelling in safety there or the FCO advise against travel to a particular region or country we would either cancel the expedition or offer different itinerary.

Apart from a few lawless areas of the desert in Northern Mali, Niger and Chad, there is much less threat of robbery and violence than in Britain. It is sensible to keep your vehicle locked at all times and anything attached to it secured against theft but muggings and street crime are virtually unheard of.

Q Medical kits / First aid – what do you carry, what should we bring ?

A All our staff are trained expedition medics, having attended both standard and specialist expedition first aid and trauma courses. We carry an extremely comprehensive medical kit which we will use to treat any serious conditions or injuries. For minor cuts and scrapes we advise all expedition members to provide their own basic supply of plasters, aspirin and the like, along with a European Health Insurance Card - available from UK Post Offices. We also insist that all our expedition members provide their own comprehensive medical insurance,

which covers repatriation in case of an emergency.

Q What injections do I need ? What about malaria ?

A For injections generally none but we do suggest Hepatitis A, Tetanus, Polio, Typhoid vaccinations for North Africa but confirm your needs with your doctor. Malaria is also not considered a risk in the countries we normally visit, however this situation does change and it's worth confirming this with a Travel Clinic. Further information is given on the trip itineraries and please don't hesitate to contact us for more information.

MY EXPEDITION

Q What's the maximum group size ?

A All non UK OneLife Adventure expeditions are limited to 12 adult guests or 6 vehicles and the support vehicle. We carry any additional local guides in our vehicle. Part of your expedition is opportunity to meet new friends, spend time in conversation and also enjoy the solitude and silence of the desert. If you're at the back of a 15 or 20 vehicle convoy sitting in a dust cloud all day it's not going to be much fun and there will be little opportunity to see or learn anything new. By having small group sizes, our expeditions offer more variety and can be altered to take into account group interests, run at a generally slower pace giving you more time to appreciate the environment that you're exploring.

Q Do you repeat the same routes all the time ?

A No, we alter the routes and overall program we offer every year, for example we offer Iceland on even years and Romania on odd years. We also vary the route we use for an expedition each year – about 20% of each expedition will be reconnaissance, either by exploring pistes or areas we noted on previous trips or from satellite maps or information found during our annual trip research. By varying our routes every year, we don't become jaded with the same old places and it makes it more interesting for us – and if we aren't excited why should you be! It also fits with the OneLife ethos of going that bit further off the beaten track, to find the inside line on a country and its people and to look over the next hill and round the next bend and see what's there. This is what makes OneLife different, why so many guest travel with us again and again.

Q Do I need to be an expert navigator ?

A No, you can get as involved as you want! If you simply want to follow, that's fine but we'd suggest you bring a basic map of the country with you, we're happy to mark the route on this so you can impress everyone back home! A emergency compass is useful (remember to get out of the vehicle if you need to use it). To get the most out of your expedition though, we recommend bringing a GPS that is suitable for waypoint navigation as we can give you waypoint files and tracks, allowing you to explore a little away from the support vehicle.

Q I don't want to camp all the time !

A That's OK. Whilst we spend as much time as possible out in the wild, if possible we try and spend every 3rd or 4th night in a commercial campsite, provided its clean, so you can get a hot shower and a meal out! One of the advantages of using a campsite is they are often close to civilisation so it's possible to upgrade to a hotel and spend the night in a proper bed if you want. Most campsites have basic rooms whilst local hotels can range from budget to

luxury. Some of our expeditions use local hotels as part of the included accommodation; please discuss this with us at time of booking. The Pyrenees campsites are of a high standard, usually with a pool, restaurant and bar.

Q Cash - how much will I need ?

A While cards can be relied upon in Europe (at least with a spare one in your pocket as well) cash is still king away from Europe. The Euro is the most accepted, easiest to change and generally attracts the best rates, although in most places it is possible to change Sterling and Dollars. In Morocco and Tunisia it is possible to use ATMs with a VISA or MasterCard but be aware of problems with the card issuers blocking the card due to “abnormal usage”, a call in advance of departure may prevent them from doing this. Travellers cheques are not recommended as it can take half a day to cash them. In Libya and Algeria, cards are useless and ATM's are not available. All the trip itineraries have details of fuel costs which will be your major expenditure on the trip (apart from Algeria and Libya where fuel is still sensibly priced at €0.12 and €0.08 per litre!) Daily costs vary, but in North Africa it's very cheap compared to Europe and you could get by comfortably on €10/15 per person per day for food.

Q What camping equipment do I need ?

A A basic set would consist of a roof or ground tent, 3 season sleeping bags and mats or camp beds, chairs, table, cooker, cutlery and utensils. Each trip itinerary will list clothing and any other specialist requirements. To minimise our impact on the often unique and fragile environment we travel through, all waste and refuse needs to be disposed of appropriately - so please bring bin bags, toilet roll, a lighter and a trowel - further instructions will be given in country!

Q Is the expedition suitable for a family ?

A Why not take the kids on an overland expedition? We do! Traveling in North Africa with children is a unique and extremely rewarding experience. If your children are used to traveling and camping, there's no reason why they can't come into the Sahara. Our Pyrenean, Portugal and Greece Explorers are designed for families, which means although the conditions are similar to our other expeditions, driving days are shorter and there are more opportunities to explore on foot, relax in campsites, etc. Generally if an expedition coincides with the school holidays then it will be suitable for kids of all ages. If you're unsure about how you will cope with your kids in a new environment (the kids will be fine, it's the parents that get stressed!) please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Q Weather - just how hot is it ?

A In the desert during the winter months (Nov to March) expect warm days (30/35 deg C) and chilly nights but it can get below freezing just before dawn in the mountains so a warm jumper/fleece and a good 3 – 4 season sleeping bag keeps it comfortable. We carry down jackets and have been known to wear them in the middle of the Sahara! The summer months are hot, with day time temperatures often in the high 40's / low 50's and night time temps in the 30's. However, the almost total lack of humidity makes these extreme temperatures much bearable than a summers day on a Spanish beach. It's hot but not unbearable. Each trip itinerary has specific guidance on weather.

Q How long are the driving days ?

A In general we try and keep the driving days to less than 4 or 5 hours with a 9.00 start, an hour for lunch and camp about 17.00, although much depends on the route. We stop frequently during the day to explore, take photographs or simply admire the view. On Pyrenees expeditions we only drive for 4 hours so you can relax with the family and enjoy the quality campsites we use for this family orientated expedition. We occasionally may have a longer day on the tarmac at the beginning and end of a trip. Daily distances vary but typically it would be around 180 km on a North African expedition but on previous occasions in deep sand it could be just 20 km!

Q **Water - How much ?**

A For most of our expeditions we recommend 20 liters of drinking water and 20 liters spare (2 jerry cans) but for extended desert expeditions the water load can be significantly more due to the infrequency of wells in the area. Water can be carried in jerry cans or in an on-board tank, it is best either filtered or chemically disinfected/purified. Full details of how much you will be expected to carry will be available in the detailed expedition itinerary.

Q **How hard is the driving ?**

A At times the driving will be easy, at times it will probably be challenging but it will never be boring! All our expeditions are proper off road adventures and we only use tarmac when we have to. Conditions will range from steep mountain tracks, dune crossings, sandy pistes, flat gravel plains to rock crawling. All our European, Moroccan and Tunisian expeditions are suitable for novice off road drivers (don't worry, we'll be on hand to give you advice and help) whilst other expeditions deeper into the Sahara, such as Libya and Algeria are more suited to those with previous desert experience (or novice drivers who want a real challenge!) If you have never driven off road before and you're unsure of how you will cope, we would recommend doing one of our 1 day off road training courses and undertaking one of our UK Explorers, preferably with your vehicle laden and in expedition trim. We also offer 1:1 expedition driver training at advanced and intermediate levels.

Q **What will there be in the way of laundry facilities if any? Will there be washing machines anywhere or will it just be handwashing ?**

A Some campsites offer limited washing facilities but generally we do not stay long enough to use them. We tend to handwash and leave to dry in the vehicle during the day.

INSURANCE

Q **Car Insurance - Is it just a case of speaking to our insurer to check whether we are covered to drive in our destination ?**

A Yes, your own vehicle insurer will be able to advise on extensions of cover and green card arrangements. If they do not offer Green Cards for the destination then you will be able to purchase basic 3 party insurance for that country when crossing the border. We use the NFU and as far as we are aware, NFU are the only UK insurer who offer a Green card that covers Morocco and Tunisia free of charge.

Q **Travel Insurance - I haven't bothered with travel insurance for ages but I'm conscious that we need to make sure we are covered for the expedition, what medical cover you suggest ?**

A Travel insurance is very important due to the remote places we travel in and the increased risk compared to a normal holiday. We use WorldWide Travel Insurance (contact them from our LINKS). Medical cover and repatriation is key and we suggest you have sufficient medical cover including provision for emergence medical repatriation if needed, of at least

2.5 million pounds. In addition, personal accident, loss, third party liability and legal costs are also desirable. The policy needs to cover you while driving a vehicle abroad and for any adventure activities you intend to undertake. **Please note that this is not normally covered by your motor vehicle insurance.**

Q Are there any travel insurance companies that you can recommend that give the right sort of cover for the driving and type of expedition we are doing ?

A Take a look at WorldWide Travel Insurance in our LINKS page, they offer cover for holidays involving driving off road, but always get written confirmation that they understand the nature of your holiday and that it meets your specific needs and attitude to risk. Generally travel policies do cover driving or carriage in off road vehicles. However we suggest you always state in writing to the insurer the nature of the expedition when you take the policy out. Remember its cover for you, not for the car.

NOTES

USEFUL NUMBERS

<p>Abbey (and Cahoot) Lost and stolen cards (24 hour) UK: 08459 724 724 option 3 Overseas: +44 (0) 161 951 6500</p> <p>Allied Irish Bank Lost or stolen ATM/credit cards Ireland: 01668 5500 Overseas: +353 (0) 1 668 5500</p> <p>Alliance & Leicester Lost and stolen credit cards UK: 0800 0688 638 Overseas: +44 (0) 1244 673 700</p> <p>Current accounts - lost or stolen cards or cheque books UK: 0500 31 32 33 Overseas: +44 (0) 151 928 4033</p> <p>American Express Lost and stolen cards UK: 01273 696 933 Overseas: +44 (0)1273 696 933</p> <p>Lost and stolen travellers cheques UK: 0800 521 313 Overseas: +44 (0)1273 571 600</p> <p>Bank of Ireland Lost and stolen cards (24 hour) Ireland: 1890 706 706 Overseas: +353 (0) 56 775 7007</p> <p>Customer Service (24hour) Ireland: 1890 251 251</p> <p>Bank of Scotland Lost or stolen cards: UK: 08457 20 30 99</p>	<p>Barclaycard Lost and stolen credit cards UK: 01604 230 230</p> <p>Barclays Bank Lost and stolen cards UK: 0808 100 6667 Overseas: +44 (0)1904 544 666</p> <p>Capital One Lost and stolen cards UK: 0800 952 5267 Overseas: +44 (0)115 993 8002</p> <p>Citibank Customer services UK: 0800 00 55 00 Overseas: +44 (0) 207 500 5500</p> <p>Clydesdale Bank Lost and stolen cards UK: 0845 606 0622</p> <p>The Co-operative Bank Lost and stolen cards UK: 0845 600 6000 Overseas: +44 (0) 1695 53760</p> <p>Diners Club Customer service UK: 0870 1900 011 Ireland: 0818 300 026</p> <p>Egg Lost or stolen cards UK: 08451 233 233 Overseas: +44 (0)1332 395 919</p> <p>First Direct Customer service UK: 08456 100 100 Overseas: +44 (0) 113 234 5678</p> <p>GE Capital Consumer finance UK: 0870 125 2515</p>	<p>Goldfish Lost or stolen cards UK: 0800 281 881 Overseas: +44 (0) 126 856 7402</p> <p>Halifax Lost or stolen cards UK: 08457 20 30 99</p> <p>HSBC Lost and stolen cards UK: 08456 007 010 Overseas: +44 (0) 1442 422 929</p> <p>Lloyds TSB Bank Card queries (24 hour) UK: 0800 096 9779 Overseas: +44 (0) 1702 278 270</p> <p>Marks & Spencer Money &More credit card and chargecard UK: 0845 900 0900 Overseas: +44 (0)1244 879 080</p> <p>MBNA Europe Lost/stolen card UK: 0800 062 062 Ireland: 1800 409 511 Overseas: +44 (0) 1244 672 111</p> <p>Morgan Stanley Lost or stolen UK: 0800 02 88 990 Overseas: +44 (0)123 672 5678</p> <p>National Irish Bank Ireland: 1850 700221 Overseas: +00 353 1638 5000</p> <p>Yorkshire Bank UK: 08456 060 622 Overseas: +44 (0) 113 2881403</p> <p>Thomas Cook Travellers cheques UK: 0800 622 101 Overseas: +44 (0) 1733 318 950</p>	<p>Nationwide Lost/stolen credit cards (24 hours) UK: 08457 99 22 22 Overseas: +44 (0) 1268 567 213</p> <p>Lost/Stolen cards (all cards except credit cards) UK: 08457 30 20 10 Overseas: +44 (0) 1793 456 789</p> <p>NatWest Bank Card Loss Centre UK: 0870 600 0459 Overseas: +44 (0) 142 370 0545</p> <p>Northern Bank UK: 08705 168654 Overseas: +44 (0) 113 288 1403</p> <p>Royal Bank of Scotland Lost/stolen credit cards UK: 0126 829 8929</p> <p>Lost/stolen bank cards UK: 0870 513 3550 Overseas: +44 (0) 131 317 8899</p> <p>Smile Lost and stolen UK: 0845 600 6000 Overseas: +44 (0)161 477 1927</p> <p>Woolwich Open plan gold charge card UK: 01604 230 230</p> <p>Other open plan cards UK: 0845 0700 360</p> <p>Other Woolwich cards UK: 0845 677 0009 Overseas: +44 (0) 1255 225 335</p>
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