



DRIVE IT ALGERIA

With magnificent scenery and a full-range of terrain, Algeria is an excellent 4x4 destination, though the country's authorities can often prove just as challenging as the driving

Go there...

OneLife Adventure runs regular expeditions to Algeria and the Sahara, among many other exciting destinations. For more details, check out its website at onelifeadventure.co.uk.

Algeria – Hogar and Tissilli Explorer

22 Nov to 17 December 2007
3-25 November 2008

Libya – Fezzan Explorer

20 December 2007 to
10 January 2008

The Sahara desert covers more than 80% of Algeria. But while sand dunes dominate the landscape, elsewhere in the country a full range of scenery and terrain can also be found, including rocky hammadass, remote sand plateaux and scenic mountainous tracks, particularly in the areas of Hoggar and Tassili.

For 4x4 explorers the country can represent a tough challenge, both in terms of traversing its remote regions and dealing with the authorities, but those who persist will be rewarded by the best the Sahara can offer. After several visits, OneLife Adventure is returning to Algeria in 2007; we asked them their advice on travelling there.

Getting There

It's not advisable to enter Algeria directly from France, so the best route is to

cross the Mediterranean from Marseille to Tunisia and then drive south to enter at Tabel Larbi. Although SNCM Ferries offer crossings all year round, the best time to visit is from October to February

Getting In

You'll need a 'Letter of Invitation' to obtain a visa from the Algerian Embassy in London, which you must have before entering the country. Otherwise entry requirements are a passport, visa and V5 document for your 4x4.

At the border you will complete police and customs declaration forms for both yourself and your vehicle, before exchanging money (keep all the forms) and purchasing insurance.

Occasionally you'll meet police officers within a few miles of the border who will require you to register with them. Nearly all officials here speak French.

Getting Around

With diesel at around 12 pence a litre, driving in Algeria is very cheap. But as fuel stations are sometimes as far as 250 miles apart, careful planning is required. The relatively good tarmac roads from the border to Tamanrasset allow you to reach the heart of the desert very quickly, and once here you'll be spoilt for choice – dunes, sandy pistes, rock art, hermitages and mountains will all tempt you.

Avoid the border track from Illizi to Hassi Messaoud via DebDeb, as there are many time consuming checkpoints along the way. You'll need a good quality air compressor, as you'll be varying tyre pressures several times a day as you pass from rock to sand. A GPS system and a set of waypoints are also useful but not essential as your desert guides will help you explore this fantastic country.