Chefchaouen Travel Guide

The Blue Pearl & Rif Mountains Sanctuary · 2-Day Circuit

OFFICIAL MOROCCO FIELD EMERGENCY CONTACTS

- **Royal Gendarmerie (Mountain Roads): 177**
- **Urban Police: 190**
- **Protection Civile (Ambulance): 150**
- **International SOS: 112**

Field Intelligence: Mountain Realities

Cash, Cards & ATMs: The medina has limited ATM access. Keep a modest amount of dirhams in small notes for incidental purchases, shared taxis, and local cafés.

Rif Mountain Passes & Solicitations: Driving the winding N2 and N13 highways requires heightened concentration. Touts occasionally signal motorists to sell local cannabis products. Keep doors locked and politely wave them off.

Rif Mountains Cost & Logistics Matrix

TRAVEL STYLE	BOUTIQUE LODGING / STAY	AKCHOUR DAY TRIP	MEALS & DINING
Eco / Backpacker	140 – 260 MAD Hostel dorms & budget dars	60 – 110 MAD Shared grand taxi collective	80 – 150 MAD Bissara & street sandwiches
Mid-Range Explorer	650 – 1,300 MAD Private en-suite room	280 – 450 MAD Rental car or private taxi	220 – 420 MAD Rooftop dining, lamb tagines
Luxury / Heritage	2,200 – 4,800+ MAD Premium wellness retreats	700 – 1,400 MAD Private chauffeured van	600 – 1,100 MAD Multi-course dinners

The 2-Day Blueprint: Day-by-Day Field Log

Day 1: Cobalt Alleys, Kasbah Tower & Spanish Mosque Sunset

Arrive at the bus station or by road, then take a petit taxi to the nearest accessible medina gate (e.g., Bab el Ain). Much of the old town is pedestrian-only with steep lanes and stairs.

Spend your morning tracing the blue-painted labyrinth from Place Outa el Hammam into the quiet residential alleys of Bab Souk and Onsar. Tour the 15th-century Kasbah fortress. In the late afternoon, follow the gentle sound of rushing water east toward Ras el Maa spring. Cross the stone footbridge and join the dirt trail winding uphill toward the Spanish Mosque (Bouzafar) for golden hour panoramas.

Day 2: Akchour Cascades & God's Bridge

Set out early to the Akchour Dam (30 km northeast of Chefchaouen). Reach Akchour by shared grand taxi from the local taxi rank or by rental car (allow about 45 minutes).

At the trail junction, choose one route. The path to God's Bridge follows the river gorge; budget roughly 2–3 hours return, expect rocky footing. The Grand Waterfall route is longer: plan about 4–6 hours return. Bring water, sun protection, and grippy shoes. Do not attempt slippery crossings during high water.

Rif Mountains Essential Must-Packs

- **Medina Footwear:** Grippy rubber-soled sneakers are essential. Polished limestone cobblestones on steep medina stairs become remarkably slippery when wet.
- **Trail Protection:** Quick-drying water shoes are critical for wading across river shallows at Akchour.
- **Alpine Layers:** Compact windbreaker & fleece. Mountain temperatures drop sharply once the sun sets behind the Rif peaks.
- **Nomad Electronics:** 20,000mAh rugged power bank and a waterproof dry bag to protect gear from waterfall spray.

Logistical FAQ

How many days do you really need? Plan one full day for the medina, Kasbah and Spanish Mosque; allow a second day for Akchour.

Are the blue doorway photo spots free? Most streets are free. However, several heavily photographed doorways are maintained by residents who charge a small fee of 5 to 10 MAD.