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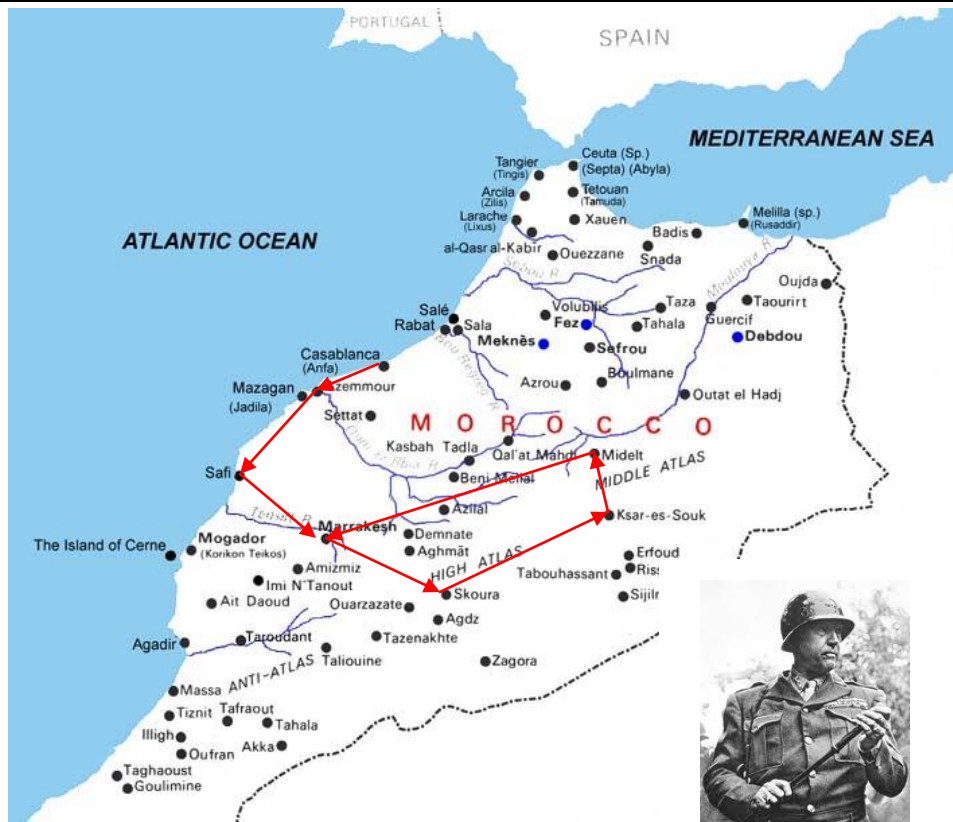
OPERATION TORCH & OPERATION DRAGOON



Escorted by Steve
Hamilton of Western
Desert Battlefield
Tours, UK

Morocco August 6 to 13
and France August 13 to 20, 2018

America's Oldest and Most Experienced Military History Tour Operator



Tour route →



This is a joint operation between Western Desert Battlefield Tours and Valor Tours. These two tours can be taken singularly or together. Operation Torch was the Allied invasion of North Africa; in response, the Axis forces invaded Vichy France. Operation Dragoon was the invasion of Southern France in August 1944 which this tour covers the US involvement of. The Allied invasion of southern France in the late summer of 1944, an operation first code-named ANVIL and later DRAGOON, marked the beginning of one of the most successful but controversial campaigns of World War II. However, because it fell both geographically and chronologically between two much larger Allied efforts in northern France and Italy, both its conduct and its contributions have been largely ignored. Planned originally as a simultaneous complement to OVERLORD, the cross-Channel attack on Normandy, DRAGOON actually took place over two months later, on 15 August 1944, making it appear almost an afterthought to the main Allied offensive in northern Europe. Yet the success of DRAGOON and the ensuing capture of the great southern French ports of Toulon and Marseille, together with the subsequent drive north up the Rhone River valley to Lyon and Dijon, were ultimately to provide critical support to the Normandy-based armies moving east toward the German border.

Operation Torch & Dragoon 2018 REGISTRATION FORM

Mail to: Valor Tours, Ltd., 10 Liberty Ship Way, Sausalito, CA 94965
Questions? Call 1-800-842-4504

Please reserve ___ spaces on the following tour(s):

___ Operation Torch to Morocco, August 6 to 13 2018

___ Operation Dragoon to France, August 13 to 20, 2018

Enclosed is my/our deposit in the amount of _____ (\$600 per person, per tour) in the form of a check___, or credit card:

Exp _____ For accommodations based on a ___ twin share basis or ___ single occupancy:

___ I am traveling alone and wish to share with another tour member, or

___ I am traveling alone and do not wish to share and will pay the single supplement.

___ Smoking ___ Non smoking

Name _____ Name _____
(As it appears on your passport)

Name _____ Name _____
(As you would like it to appear on ID badge)

Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (days) _____

Veteran of WWII, family member, history buff: _____

___ I/we require assistance with air fare/arrangements from _____ to coincide with tour.

Facilities for the disabled are non-existent. Please let us know if you have any disabilities that may prevent you from climbing on and off aircraft, buses or walking. I/we have read and understand the terms and conditions as set forth in this brochure.

Signature _____ Date _____

This tour qualified for Early Booking/Payment Discount

Reservations and Final Payment

Reservations can only be held with a deposit of \$600 per person per tour, accompanied by the Application form. Valor Tours Ltd. accepts checks and all major credit cards. Once received a confirmation/invoice, reading list and travel insurance information will be sent to you. Final payment is due 90 days prior to departure unless otherwise stated on confirmation. Reservations will be accepted on a first come – first served basis. Valor Tours, Ltd. does not recommend that children under the age of 12 participate on this tour. Passport required. Visas are not required.

Cancellations and Changes

If Valor Tours, Ltd. receives cancellation more than 90 days prior to departure your deposit is fully refundable. Cancellations received between 89 to 30 days prior to commencement of tour subject to loss of deposit. Cancellation within 30 days or ‘no shows’ are non refundable. Refunds may take up to 30 days to process. Cancellation charges also apply to additional travel arrangements such as airfare. Travel medical emergency insurance is included in tour cost, but does not include cancellation or trip interruption coverage. Available upon request.

Baggage allowance

We recommend one suitcase and one carry-on bag per person, please. Porterage for one bag per person is included in the tour cost; however there may be times when you will be responsible for your baggage, so it is to the benefit of the passenger to travel light. Passengers are responsible for carry-on bags, purses, camera bags, briefcases, etc. No responsibility is accepted for loss or damage to baggage, or any of the passenger’s belongings. Limited baggage insurance is included in the tour cost.

Disabilities

Any personal disability requiring special attention should be reported to Valor Tours at the time of reservation. Valor Tours will make reasonable attempts to accommodate the special needs of disabled tour participants, but is not responsible for any denial of services by carriers, hotels, restaurants and other independent suppliers. Motor coach companies and other carrier employees may not physically lift participants or assist them on or off conveyances. A qualified companion must accompany persons requiring such assistance. Be advised that foreign countries do not have the disabled and handicapped laws that Americans enjoy here at home.

Single travelers

Single occupancy of hotel rooms is an additional cost over and above the tour cost. If you would like to avoid this expense, you may share with another single traveler. Valor Tours will make every attempt to find you a suitable roommate of the same age and gender, however Valor Tours, Ltd. cannot be held responsible for incompatibility, nor can they guarantee a roommate should one not be available. In that case, the single supplement will apply.

Not included in tour cost

Meals not indicated in itinerary, airfare from the U.S., passport fees, items of a personal nature such as laundry, telephone calls, alcoholic beverages, tipping to driver & guide, foreign airport departure taxes, cancellation/trip interruption insurance coverage.

Itinerary and cost subject to change. Revisions can be made to accommodate the needs of participating Veterans and family members. Valor Tours reserves the right to substitute any hotel with a hotel of similar or better quality. Tour costs based on minimum of 8 participants. If number of participant’s falls below 8 passengers, modifications may be made to itinerary, hotels and/or components of tour.

The United States had last sent armed forces to Morocco during the Second Barbary War of 1815. However, on 8th November 1942 US forces would again be off the coast of Morocco. The Western Task Force was landing on the coast between Port Lyautey and Fedala and Safi. This was the beginning of American involvement in North Africa, other landings would take place in Algeria and before the end of the year American and British forces would be on the outskirts of Tunis. The Panzerarmee Afrika counter-attacked delaying the end, but six months to the day of these landings the war in North Africa would finally be over. While in Morocco we will also look at the most famous desert fighters of them all – the Foreign Legion. We shall follow one of their longest marches, see their longest tunnel and examine two of their typical No Surrender battles. We shall cross the Atlas Mountains and spend one night in a 5* Bedouin encampment. Who wouldn’t want a drink in Ricks Café in Casablanca? This is a 5* exclusive and exciting tour that encompasses WW2 and the romance of the desert and the Foreign Legion.



*Casablanca Conference, 14-21
January 1943
General Henri Giraud, President
Roosevelt, General Charles de
Gaulle, and Prime Minister
Churchill.
(National Archives.)*

Operation Torch tour to Morocco - August 6 to 13, 2018

Monday 6th August (D)

Arrive Casablanca, met and transferred to our hotel; check in at hotel. Welcome Dinner & overnight

Tuesday 7th August (B, D)

Casablanca

After breakfast, we visit Ben Msik War cemetery in Casablanca, where we can find the grave of Galley Boy Raymond Steed, who at 14 years of age, was the youngest known Commonwealth casualty of the Second World War. He is buried alongside “The Auk”. We then take the opportunity to see some of the famous sites of Casablanca - Mohammed V Square, the Royal Palace, the Mehkama, the Cathedral Notre Dame de Lourdes, external visit of the famous Hassan II Mosque and the beautiful Ain Diab Corniche. Back to the hotel, freshen up. Dinner at Restaurant Rick’s Café.

Wednesday 8th August (B, D)

Operation Torch

Today we visit the landing beaches at Fedala where Patton and the 3rd Infantry Division landed. We then move onto the landing beaches at Port Lyautey where

units from the 9th Infantry Division and 66th Armoured Regiment landed, under command of General Truscott. At both sites we shall examine the landings and the bridgehead and the fight for the “Kasbah” Return to Casablanca. Dinner and overnight at hotel.

Thursday 9th August (B, D)

Landings at Safi

After breakfast at hotel, we head to Marrakech via the landing beaches at Safi, Where, under the command of General Harmon the remainder of 9th Infantry Division and the 67th Armoured Regiment landed. We will also visit the defensive position at Pointe de la Tour and La Raillouse. We then continue to Marrakech. Dinner is at a local restaurant. Back to the hotel & overnight.

Friday 10th August (B, D)

“In the footsteps of the Foreign Legion”

After an early departure, we cross the High Atlas Mountains and reach the 2260 m-high Tizi N’Tichka pass. Then we continue on until we reach the Kasbah of Ait Ben Haddou. Then continue towards Ouarzazate through the implacable Hamada. Optional lunch in Ouarzazate followed by a visit to Kasbah of Taourirt. The journey then continues along the Road of one thousand Kasbahs to the Dades Valley. Along this road we will pass through the fascinating town of Skoura as well as Kalaat Magouna, which is known for its roses. After arriving in Boumalne Dades, there will be dinner and an overnight stay.

Saturday 11th August (B, D)

“Beau Geste”

After breakfast, we go from Dades gorges to Errachidia. Berber villages are scattered along the way. Pass through Todra Gorges, Tinghir to Errachidia and the Foreign Legion fort at Ksar Amezouj. We then return to Errachidia and continue to Merzouga, an experience not to be missed is to watch the sunset from the spectacular Merzouga dunes, an energizing location in the midst of the huge ever-changing golden dunes. Traditional dinner in the evening will be prepared and served, with an accompaniment of live Saharan music and desert hospitality, for the sharing!

Sunday 12th August (B, D)

We rise early for a morning departure by camel from the camp and return for a traditional Berber breakfast. Then head to another Legion fortification, Fort Tazougert to examine the dramatic story of the “40 against 400”. Return to Marrakech via Ouarzazate. Dinner & overnight at hotel.

Monday 13th August (B)

Breakfast at hotel, departure to Marrakech Airport for your flight home, or join Steve Hamilton on our flight to Marseille to begin the Operation Dragoon tour.



Sample Air Fares

As of August 2017 – subject to change

From New York to Marseille, returning from Strasbourg: \$851.00 per person, round trip including taxes via Air France.

From New York to Casablanca round trip: \$913.00 per person, round trip including taxes via Air Maroc, non stop.

From New York to Casablanca and Strasbourg to New York (both tours back to back) via Air Maroc, approx. \$836.00 per person, incl. taxes.

Extension at the Best Western Monopole Hotel in Strasbourg possible for about \$169 per night.

This tour qualifies for the Early Booking/Payment Policy (Book with deposit six months or more prior to date tour starts and receive a 5% discount. Book with full payment six months or more prior to date tour starts and receive a 10% discount. Take both tours back to back and air fare from Morocco to Marseille is free.



AIRFRANCE



Marseille



Hotel Saint Aygulf, St. Raphael

Sunday 19th August (B, D)

A German bridgehead on the west bank of the Rhine 40 miles long and 30 miles deep was formed in Nov. 1944 when the German defences in the Vosges Mountains collapsed under the pressure of an offensive by the U.S. 6th Army. The French First Army would force the Belfort Gap and destroyed the German IV Luftwaffe Korps near the town of Burnhaupt in the southern Vosges Mountains. Soon after, French forces reached the Rhine in the region north of Swiss border between Mulhouse and Basel. Likewise, in the northern Vosges Mountains, the French 2nd Armoured Division spearheaded a US Seventh Army advance, forced the Saverne Gap, and drove to the Rhine, liberating Strasbourg on 23 November 1944. The effect of these two advances was to collapse the German presence in southern Alsace west of the Rhine to a semi-circular shaped Bridgehead centered on the town of Colmar that came to be known as the Colmar Pocket. Visit various sites within the Colmar Pocket including Audie Murphy's MOH site, Colmar Pocket Memorial, examine important tank Battlefield of Hatten, as well as WWI trenches and a Lancaster bomber crash site. Dinner in the famous Kammerzell House restaurant. Overnight in Strasbourg.

Monday 20th August (B)

Transfer to airport and fly home from Strasbourg, or train to Paris.

\$3700 per person, twin share – Includes A/C bus for all transfers and battlefield tours per itinerary, water on coach, 4* hotels, meals indicated in itinerary B-Breakfast and D-Dinner daily, entrance fees, arrival and departure transfers, services of Steve Hamilton as tour leader, Battlefield Guide Book, local taxes. Emergency travel insurance coverage. Single supplement \$800.00.

SOUTHERN FRANCE 1944



\$3700.00 per person, twin share. Included are - A/C bus for all transfers and battlefield tours per itinerary, 4WD from day 5 to day 7, 1 bottle of mineral water per day per person while touring, 5* Hotels, breakfast and dinner daily, entrance fees, arrival & departure transfers, Battlefield Guide book, services of Steve Hamilton as tour leader, local taxes; Emergency travel insurance coverage. Single supplement \$800.00.



"I found the entire trip (with Steve Hamilton) exciting, challenging, and adventurous, eye opening and educational..." Don Waterbury May 2011

"We enjoyed our trip to Tunisia. Everything went like clockwork and the content of the trip was fascinating. Steve Hamilton was an excellent guide...very knowledgeable, personable and accommodating. We couldn't have asked for more."
Bob and Nan Rudd, 2014 (The Rudd's also participated on the 2016 Dragoon tour)



Steve Hamilton, far right, with our 2016 Operation Dragoon group at Audie Murphy's MOH site.

Steve Hamilton is far better known for his exploits in the deserts of North Africa; however he is just as enthusiastic about the other Mediterranean campaigns and battlefields. Consequently he has led groups of battlefield enthusiasts all around the Med. From southern France to Sicily, Greece, Crete, Malta and Morocco. He has also led groups to southern Germany and the Alsace. Steve comes from a real military family – his Great Grand-Father had been at the Relief of Mafeking during the Boer War and during WWI he was one of just seven men from his Battalion to come through the first day of

the Battle of Somme. His Grandfather was KIA in Tunisia, while his died as a POW in Changi Gaol. His father and uncles were to serve post war in armoured regiments. Not surprisingly Steve grew up with a military interest, which he passes onto his group.

The Allied invasion of southern France on 15 August 1944. Often overshadowed by the more famous Operation Overlord (D Day) which took place two months earlier. Op Dragoon is the forgotten Allied invasion of Europe. An amphibious assault by the United States Seventh Army and the French First Army forced the German Army Group G to abandon southern France and retreat towards the Vosges Mountains. We shall visit all the landing beaches from St Raphael to St Tropez and head north towards Germany, learn of the “Lost Battalion” and see where Audie Murphy won his Medal of Honor and hear the heroic story of the native North African troops.



Operation Dragoon Tour to France – August 13 to 20, 2018

Monday 13th August (D)

Fly to Marseille. Escorted to our hotel in the city.

Tuesday 14th August (B,D)

While in Marseille we will visit the Commonwealth war cemetery, the world famous Foreign Legion Museum at Aubagne, German U Boat bunker “Martha” and the tank

Memorial at Notre-Dame De La Garde. Overnight BW Marseille.

Wednesday 15th August (B,D)

Today we visit the landing beaches and Memorials at St Tropez where the 45th Inf Division landed with overwhelming success. German resistance was low. The Allied Units in this sector were able to link up with paratroopers very quickly and succeeded in capturing the nearby town. Only on Carmel Beach did the Germans put up some serious resistance. This beach was secured by several well emplaced coastal guns as well as several flak batteries. German artillery formed the main opposition and some bunkers provided heavy resistance. The most serious fighting was on Carmel Red beach at the town of St. Raphael. A bombing run of 90 Allied B-24 bombers were used against a German strongpoint here. But even with their assistance of naval fire, the Allies were not able to bring the landing ships close to the beach. They decided to avoid Carmel Red and land only at Carmel Blue and Carmel Green, which was successful. Today, the anniversary of the landings, visit the landing beaches and memorials at Cavalaire sur Mer and St Tropez where the 3rd Inf. Div. Landed, Ste Maxime where the 45th Infantry Division landed and St. Raphael where the 36th Infantry Division landed. Meet up with the 36th Texas Division re-enactment Society and the opportunity to go shopping around a military market. While passing Toulon, visit the two forts where Napoleon first made a name for himself. Overnight in St Raphaël.

Thursday 16th August (B,D)

Visit Le Muy crossroads and 4th Para Road Bridge and the Airborne Memorial; Le Muy a vital inland crossroads captured by paratroopers who paved the way the advance inland. Watch re-enactors as they drive through Le Muy for the Liberation Parade and visit the Le Muy War Museum. Le Motte, the first town in southern France to be liberated, and the American War cemetery at Draguignan. Overnight Aix-en-Provence.

Friday 17th August (B,D)

The battle around Montelimar saw the heaviest fighting of the northerly advance. On the night of Aug 17, the German High Command ordered General Blaskowitz’s Army Group G to evacuate southern France. German forces then began to move to the north East. To cut off the Germans and capture as many as possible, VI Corps commander Major Gen. Truscott organized a mobile task force under his chief of staff, Brig. Gen. Butler, on Aug 17th. Its job was to drive north, link up with the French Resistance and try to cut off Gen. Friedrich Paul Wiese’s retreating German Nineteenth Army. Today make our way north along the road used by the retreating Army Group G. Visits to the important Hill 300 and Condullac Pass where Task Force Butler took up its positions. Overngiht Lyon.

Saturday 18th August (B,D)

Visit the Vosges Mountains battlefields. Here we learn of the dramatic story of the 1st Battalion of the 141st “Alamo” Regiment, better known as the “Lost Battalion” and the Nisei warriors of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team as we visit Bruyeres and Biffontaine, as well as Epinal War Cemetery where 4 Medal of Honor recipients, 14 sets of Brothers and 2 Tuskegee airmen are buried. Overnight Colmar.