

BEING PREPARED IS HALF THE VICTORY

# TRAVEL GUIDE

**ROC**  
of the  
**MAROC**  
EXPERIENCE MAROC THROUGH CYCLING





# CONTENT

BEING PREPARED IS HALF THE VICTORY

---

## 4 - 5

HOW TO PREPARE YOURSELF

## 6 - 7

HOW TO PREPARE YOUR BIKE

## 8

TRANSPORT

## 9

PROGRAM

## 10 - 23

STAGE 0 - STAGE 6

*Here you find a description of each stage. The locations of the various checkpoints are also clearly indicated.*

## 24 - 25

SAFETY

## 26 - 27

BIVOUCAC

*In order to spend a pleasant and unforgettable week at the bivouac, it is important to respect some "camp rules".*

# PREPARE YOURSELF

- Get in shape
- Know what you're getting into!
- Get help from Energy Lab (discount) for Belgian clients
- Let your body get used to energy drinks and bars beforehand.
- Make sure you have a medical certificate.
- Get enough elevation gain



**Good preparation** is of great importance if you want to participate in an extreme mountain bike endurance (marathon) like this.

Pushing your limits is one thing, but having fun is another. If you are in good shape from the start, the experience will be more intense.

It is important that you start your training program at least 4 months in advance. With 3 to 4 workouts spread out over the week, you will already be on your way. Alternate endurance training (road cycling) with resistance and interval training (mountain biking). Road rides (3 hours minimum) and cross-country rides (1.5 hours minimum) fit perfectly into this training program. The last 5 weeks, the duration per workout should increase from 7 to 11 hours per week.

- SLEEPING BAG (max 15 degrees)
- LITTLE PILLOW (possibly inflatable)
- MATTRESS COVER (70/80 x200) - we provide the mattress
- HEADLAMP
- SHAMPOO AND SHOWER GEL ALL IN ONE
- MAX. 4 LEISURE T-SHIRTS
- MAX. 2 SHORTS
- 1 SWEATER
- If needed 1 LONG THIN PANTS
- +/- 4 CYCLING SHIRTS
- +/- 4 CYCLING PANTS
- WINDSTOPPER
- CYCLING SHOES (+ possibly additional plates)
- 2 BOTTLES + CAMELBAK
- SNEAKERS OR EASY SHOES
- SLIPPERS (for the bivouac and for the shower)
- GOOD SUNGLASSES
- COMB
- TOOTHBRUSH AND TOOTHPASTE
- 2 MICROFIBER TOWELS
- possibly EXTRA ENERGY BARS
- possibly EXTRA ENERGY GELS
- SUNSCREEN SPF50
- LIP BALM
- GPS + EXTRA BATTERIES
- EXTRA CELL PHONE FOR LOCAL SIM
- POWER SUPPLY + CHARGING CABLES
- 250€ CASH FOR DRINKS / COINS / ETC...



## STRUCTURE IS KEY

Always ask yourself if what you pack is really necessary. Invest in lightweight, compact camping gear. The more compact, the more expensive. However, it's best not to save too much money on this, as a good night's sleep is imperative when you're testing your stamina and making great physical efforts. It is important to pack correctly and logically. Know where you put everything.

Every year we see participants dragging their excessively heavy luggage for a week.

PACK YOUR PERSONAL STUFF

# PREPARE YOUR BIKE

## WHICH BIKE ?

### **MOUNTAINBIKE**

- A full suspension is not necessary.
- HT is perfect.
- No downhill or trials bikes.

### **E MOUNTAINBIKE**

- 2 extra batteries included
- Are distributed on CP2 and CP3
- Can be recharged every night

### **GRAVELBIKE**

- Preferably 29x2,25 (tires)

### **E GRAVELBIKE**

- Same as E MTB

## IMPORTANT

- **Make sure your bike is properly prepared and checked!!!**
- **Our mechanics are NOT here to service your bike at the start!**
- **Do NOT come to Morocco with a bike that has not been checked!**
- **Replace any parts that are damaged or need to be replaced!**
- **Check tires, wheelset, brake pads, chain and sprockets.**
- **Bearings (bottom bracket - head set)**

# PACK YOUR BIKE STUFF

## TAKE THESE SPARE PARTS

- DERAILLEUR
- EXTRA WHEEL SPOKES
- VALVES FOR TUBELESS WHEELS
- EXTRA INNER TUBE IF NEEDED
- AN EXTRA SET OF CLEATS
- OUTER TIRE ( Vittoria Mezcal )
- CHAIN ADAPTED TO YOUR BIKE
- CHAIN LINKS
- REAR DERAILLEUR
- CO<sup>2</sup> CARTRIDGES 25gr AND/OR CO<sup>2</sup> PUMP
- MILK FOR TUBELESS TIRES
- MULTI-TOOL AND CHAIN TOOL
- BICYCLE LOCK
- BICYCLE LAMP
- HELMET

The slopes are often rough and rocky, so it is best to use a sturdy bike that can handle the bumps.

A good front suspension is recommended, especially if you want to avoid back problems. A full suspension bike will give you the most benefit and enjoyment on this terrain.

Choose tires with a decent profile, good grip and solid sidewalls (VITTORIA MEZCAL 2.25)

There are far fewer punctures with tubeless tires. The tire is lighter, can be used at lower pressures for lower rolling resistance, and offers better grip on this terrain.

Make sure your seating position is properly adjusted so that you can cover 85 km a day without any problems.

Choose reliability over lightweight.

# TRANSPORT



## CHARTER

- Departure on 5/10 from Zaventem
- 2 charters
- departure around 2:30 pm
- Check-in 3 hours before departure
- **International passport**
- **No personal ticket is issued**
- You just have to register at check-in
- Round trip on 13/10 from Errachidia to Zaventem.
- 2 charters
- Arrival of the charter 1 around 14h30
- Arrival of charter 2 around 19h30
- **The time slot may change**

## LUGGAGE

- **Max. 20kg (one piece)**
- No loose luggage.
- Hand luggage must be placed in a duffel bag upon arrival in Morocco!
- **NO suitcases or carts**
- A flexible duffel bag is best
- You have to bring your luggage to the trucks every day (so you carry every kilo you take).
- Your luggage will be transported from bivouac to bivouac.
- **Clearly label** your luggage with your name and race number

## BICYCLE

- Loading of the bikes in Antwerp on 26/9
- Bikes can be packed on site.
- **Watch the video "how to pack"**.
- Bike box of the organization or similar
- **NO BIKE SUITCASE**
- Dimensions bike box = **146cmx21cmx83cm**
- dimensions may NOT deviate !!!!!
- Collect the bike box during the info day or at the time of loading.
- Only the bike (+ helmet, shoes, backpack, battery)
- Write your race number and name clearly on the box.
- Collection of the bikes in Antwerp about 1 week after the arrival of the charter.





# PROGRAM

- o 5 OCTOBER : ARRIVAL OUARZAZATE / HOTEL KARAM PALACE  
DINER + BRIEFING
- o 6 OCTOBER: MORNING ADMIN.AND ASSEMBLAGE BICYCLES  
WITH TIME SLOTS TO AVOID QUEING  
LUNCH  
14H PROLOGUE = STAGE 0  
DINER + BRIEFING  
HOTEL KARAM PALACE
- o 7 OCTOBER: STAGE 1 -> BIVOUAC
- o 8 OCTOBER: STAGE 2 -> BIVOUAC
- o 9 OCTOBER: STAGE 3 -> BIVOUAC
- o 10 OCTOBER: STAGE 4 -> BIVOUAC
- o 11 OCTOBER: STAGE 5 -> BIVOUAC
- o 12 OCTOBER: STAGE 6 -> FINISH bivouac with deluxe tents
- o 13 OCTOBER FLIGHT BACK HOME: ERRACHIDIA -> BXL (CHARTER)

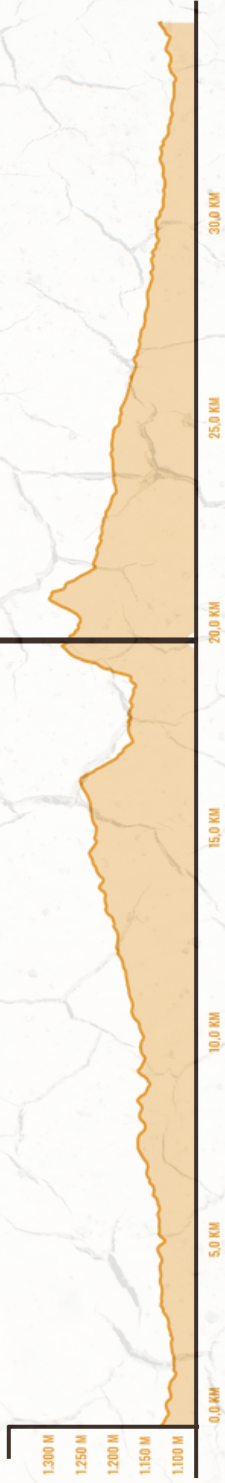
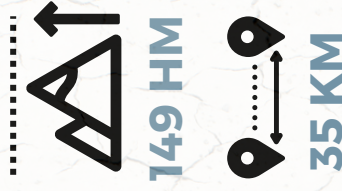


# STAGE 0

## OUARZAZATE - OUARZAZATE

After lunch, it's time for the prologue. Not to determine the starting position for the next day, as it will be a mass start. The main purpose of the prologue is to test the equipment. Both for the participants (bike, gps, tracker, chip) and the organization (measuring equipment). The results of the prologue do not count, which means that for once you can fully enjoy the beautiful landscapes of Morocco.

The prologue is a 36 km loop around Ouarzazate, culminating at the "Oasis de Fint". This place, and especially the imposing rock structures that surround it, served as the backdrop for the movie "The 10 Commandments", in which Moses descends with the 10 commandments from Mount Sinai (the steps are still there). Halfway through the stage is the steepest climb of the Roc du Maroc. Who will make it to the top without setting foot on the ground?





# STAGE 1

## OUARZAZATE - GHASSET

“Gladiators, start the battle”

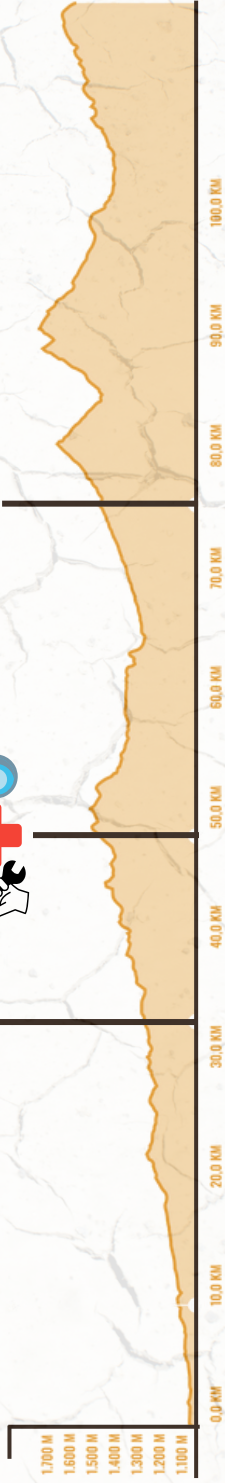
The imposing castle of the “Kingdom of Heaven” is the ultimate starting point of the Roc du Maroc. An “old fashioned” start, with everyone in a single line next to each other at the start. A real goosebump moment! Passing through Nevada-like landscapes, this stage will take you to the famous Kasbah of Aït-Ben-Hadou, the setting for film classics such as Lawrence of Arabia, Jerusalem and Gladiator. Cycling through the narrow streets of this ancient settlement guarantees an unforgettable experience. Following the motto “we don’t teach you to swim, we just throw you in the water”, participants will have to tackle the most challenging terrain Morocco has to offer in this first stage. Technical climbs and descents over rubble, sandy river beds and bumpy slopes. Many will curse it, but the breathtaking scenery, with the High Atlas Mountains constantly in the background, makes up for everything. At Ghasset, after 113 km of fun and agony, in a beautiful valley, the first bivouac awaits you.



1863 HM



115 KM





# STAGE 2

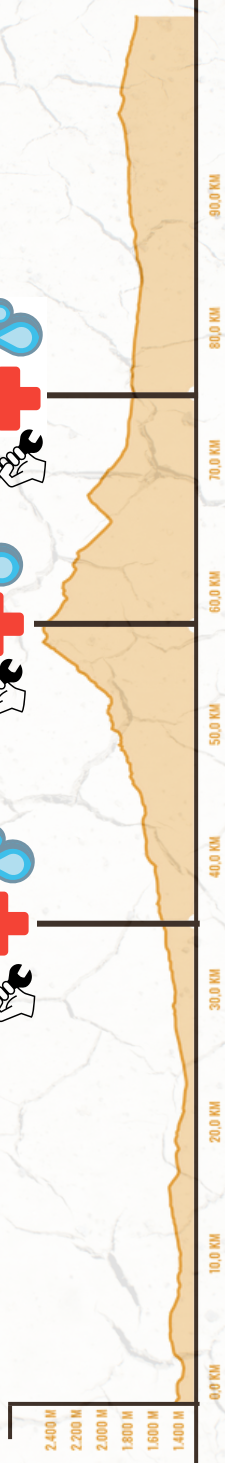
## GHASSET - AIT TOUMERT

“Mountain goats of all nations, unite!

With 103 km and 2064 elevation gain, stage 2 can easily be called one of the two queen stages. The first 30 kilometers pass through a beautiful lunar landscape with a boulder strewn river (3 km); the ideal warm up for what is to come: the biggest climb of the Roc du Maroc. Between CP1 and 2, there are only 25 km but 1150 EG. "Spicy" is therefore an understatement. The old villages and kasbahs, the almond orchards and the friendly mountain people bring the necessary variation. But "what goes up, must come down". The descent of CP2 is a real pleasure: once again beautiful landscapes, but this time also long curves and a good surface. During 25 km, you have the possibility to recover. The last 30 km are in a long valley: typical Moroccan gravel slopes with many cracks due to the heavy rains that sometimes occur in the region. Be careful, is the advice. A refreshing beer at bivouac 2 will do you good. Whoever gets here has earned it!

.....  
  
2064 HM

  
.....  
103 KM







# STAGE 3

## AIT TOUMERT - EL KELAA M'GOUNA

Breathtaking canyons & RDM goes to TJC.

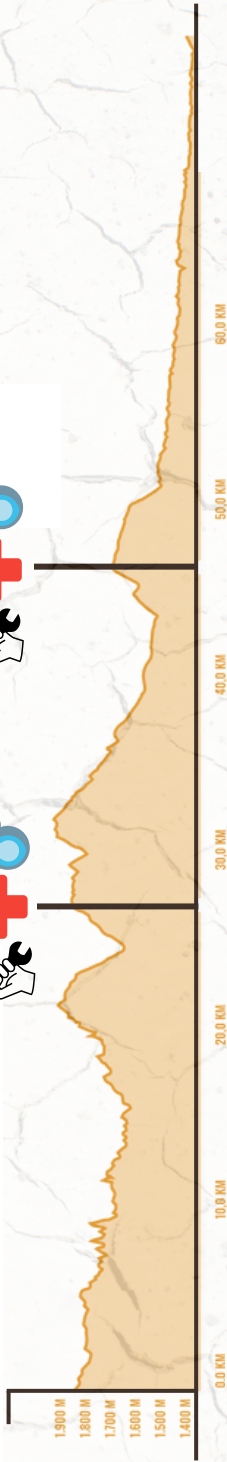
The two-mile-long canyon, with sheer cliffs on both sides, could have come straight out of an Indiana Jones movie. The ground may be strewn with rocks, but you don't want to miss this spectacle, nor the route along the river that follows it, a succession of ancient villages and a trip back in time. The second part of the stage is again a real climb, with river crossings at the bottom and a pass offering priceless views at the top. At Boumaine Dades, we say goodbye to the Atlas Mountains. The contrast with the previous days and the last 25 kilometers of the third stage could not be greater: here the Roc du Maroc meets the Togo Jungle Challenge: winding single tracks through a sea of green. We pass by small dykes, bridges and irrigation canals, between fields and fig trees, through the "valley of roses". So different, yet so beautiful!



1173 HM



77 KM





# STAGE 4

## EL KELAA M'GOUNA - ALNIF

Crossing the Sahro Mountains

Crossing an entire mountain range in one day. That's today's challenge. The Sahro is an older mountain range and looks a bit like the Pyrenees in its rocky structure. Until CP1, around km40 the terrain is seemingly flat. But after that, you enter the real mountains and there are climbs and descents all day. From CP3, at about km90, everyone is guaranteed to be dizzy. The views are so beautiful that it will be hard for the competition riders not to stop and take a picture. From CP3, the descent begins. We leave the high altitudes behind and what follows are miles of downhill on gravel trails. 200% fun for a trained biker with guts. The bivouac, about 20 km north of Alnif, is located on a beautiful plain with a view of the Sahro.



1671 HM



124 KM



2200 M  
2000 M  
1800 M  
1600 M  
1400 M  
1200 M  
1000 M

0.0 KM 10.0 KM 20.0 KM 30.0 KM 40.0 KM 50.0 KM 60.0 KM 70.0 KM 80.0 KM 90.0 KM 100.0 KM



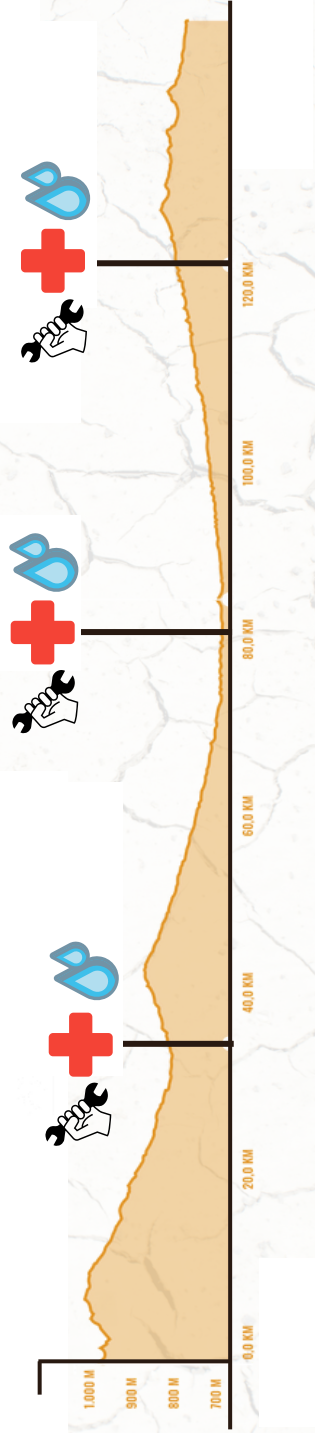
# STAGE 5 ALNF - THE MUMMY

.....  
  
404 HM

.....  
151 KM

Crossing "infinity" & welcome to the desert

Stage 5 is a "love it or hate it" stage. On the menu: 151 long kilometers through endless desert plains. The last long test. Whoever finishes this one will probably finish the Roc du Maroc!  
The start is relatively varied: 25 km of winding tracks in a slightly hilly landscape, interspersed with some oases and stony wadis. But as soon as the riders cross the asphalt, the landscape changes radically and monotonously in. After CPI, the desert still looks like an African savannah, with many acacias and typical Moroccan slopes with many gorges. It goes on like that for 35 km, in a straight line. And then suddenly, all vegetation disappears and there is only the great plain, 360° of emptiness. After an hour of pedalling, the mountain, where the next checkpoint is located, seems to be barely approaching. It is a very special experience to do such a test. The struggle: you and your bike... against yourself! But that night, no matter what time you arrive, before or after sunset, a warm welcome awaits you at the bivouac "the Mummy" (yes, from the movie with the same name). We traditionally camp and celebrate this exceptional achievement in the heart of a crater. This is the evening when you can finally let go of everything! The release will be great!





# STAGE 6

## THE MUMMY - MERZOUGA



146 HM



72 KM

It ain't over till the fat lady sings!

Only 72 km separate you from eternal glory and the RDM trophy. But the sting, as often, is in the tail. We approach the dunes, the temperature rises and the landscape becomes more sandy than the last days. The race takes us through a date palm farm and a white hot plain. And then, 20 km before the finish, they appear from nowhere: the red dunes. The last 3 km to the finish line are a bit of a death trap for those who haven't completely deflated their tires at the foot of the sea of sand. But then, behind these last dunes, there it is: the arch of the finish line.

We are curious to see how many cyclists will reach this ultimate goal of mountain biking!  
Congratulations to those who succeed: you are men and women of steel! Respect!



# SAFETY

## **Morocco is still part of Africa.**

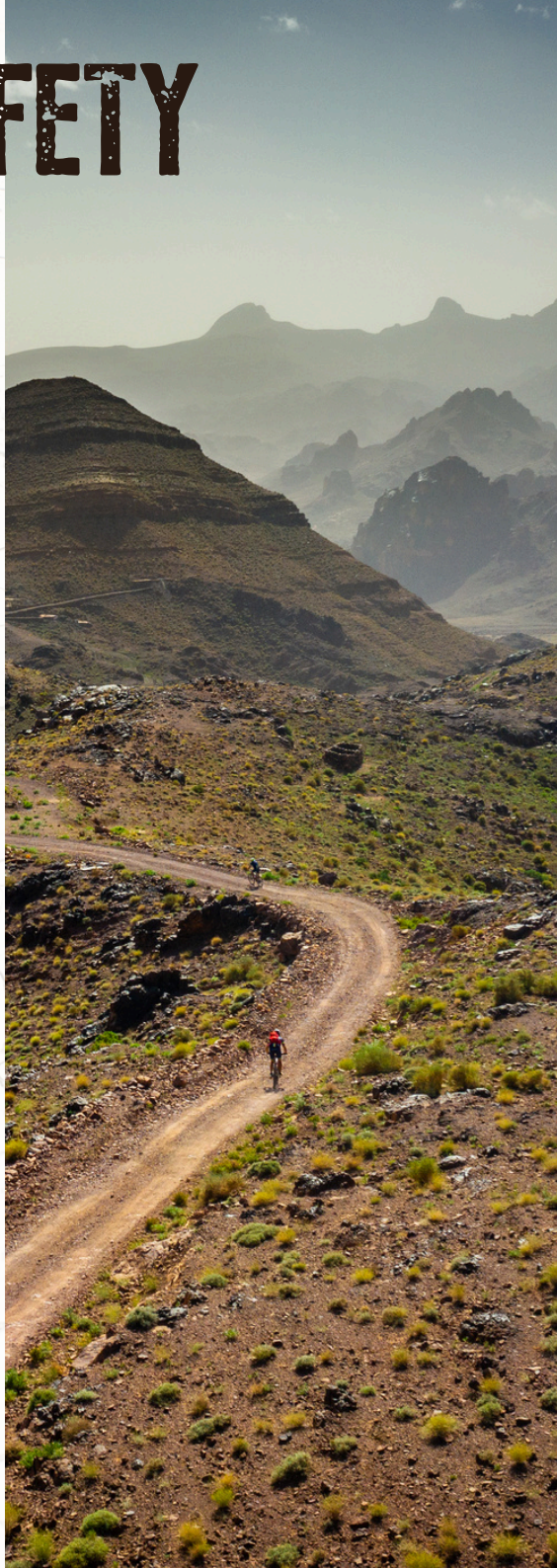
On the few paved roads we encounter, reckless speed devils can sometimes pass by while on the phone and zigzagging across the road. Here, survival of the fittest still applies. The car outperforms the bicycle. The concept of the weak road user is unknown in these desolate areas.

RocDuMaroc is everything its name promises. Along the way, the slopes are often littered with rocks. **Be careful on the descents.** A crash can occur out of nowhere.

The dryness and heat have surprised more than a few bikers in the past on the last two stages. **Hydration is the key to success!**

It's less common than it was a few years ago, but there are still areas with **no or very limited mobile coverage.** A local SIM card, along with a tracking system, will ensure sufficient coverage throughout the route. This way, you can reach us at any time after an accident or when you need technical assistance. People at home can also track you online.

Everyone is required to **take out travel and repatriation insurance.** In case of prolonged illness or after a serious fall resulting in complex fractures or internal bleeding, small local hospitals cannot always provide appropriate care. They do not have the same medical equipment that we Europeans are used to. A transfer to Casablanca, Marrakech, Belgium or the Netherlands is therefore not excluded. Without insurance, it costs a lot of money and precious time.







## TRAVEL PHARMACY

- On the bike: Mini-disinfectant + compressor and bandage
- Broad spectrum antibiotics
- Imodium or rather Norit in case of diarrhoea
- Personal medication
- Paracetamol 1mg or Ibuprofen
- ORS sachets
- Buttock cream: apply, apply, apply!
- Bandana (to wet)
- Nail clippers
- Tweezers

## GENERAL HYGIENE

- Wash your hands as often as possible. Use alcolgel with every CP. Avoid fruits and sugars (too much of them).
- Drink plenty of water (up to 8 liters per day) alternating with ORS/sports drinks + extra salt.
- Continue to urinate, preferably one time too many than not at all during the day.
- Recognize fatigue and rest in time.

## MEDICAL AID STATION

- Available 24/7
- Treatments are performed 15 to 30 minutes before breakfast or in the evening before dinner.
- In case of emergency, there is always someone ready to intervene



**I'M OK  
IF YOU NO LONGER NEED  
HELP, PRESS THIS BUTTON**



**I NEED TECH. ASS.  
STAY WHERE YOU ARE!**



**I NEED MEDICAL ASS.  
PLEASE CONFIRM BY CALLING  
THE CRISIS NUMBER.  
STAY WHERE YOU ARE!**



**SAFETY FIRST**



**LIVE GEO LOC.**



**100 % SATELLITE**

## BEFORE YOU START

- Make sure your SPOT Tracker is turned up (FACE UP).
- Attach it to your camelbak at the shoulder
- Make sure the light is on at the top and middle. **1 2**
- Share the link with people back home so they can follow your adventure live



# BIVOUAC



# BIVOUAC RULES



**TENT AREA = QUIET AREA**



**HYGIENE ALWAYS AND EVERYWHERE**



**CARRY YOUR OWN LUGGAGE TO THE TRUCK**



**FOLD YOUR OWN TENT**



**DON'T LEAVE GARBAGE LYING AROUND**



**PLACE YOUR BIKE IN THE CLOSED PARK**



**PARTY ONLY AT THE BAR**



**BE COURTEOUS**



**RESPECT EACHOTHER AND OUR VOLUNTEERS**

~~SHOULD~~

~~WOULD~~

~~COULD~~

**DID**

