Morocco Unveiled: Hidden Treasures from the Medinas to the Sahara

With Study Leader
Prof. Susan Miller

March 12 – 24, 2016
Dear Traveler,

There is something inexplicably alluring and romantic about Morocco. Its colorful mix of Berber, Arab, African, Jewish, and European influences have created Morocco's unique pulse of life. Morocco is one of our favorite destinations. It offers it all——friendly and outgoing people, rich cultures, dramatic beauty, and ecological diversity. From its snowy Atlas peaks to the undulating dunes of the Sahara, Morocco delivers startling contrast and striking images around every turn.

Our program goes beyond the well-trodden sites, unveiling treasures ignored to mass tourism. Among them are prehistoric drawings etched into boulders in a remote corner of the Sahara; the traditional Salé medina, once a lair of corsairs, with its 14th century restored religious college; the Museum of Moroccan Judaism, unique in the lands of Islam; and Berber hamlets deep amid pristine mountain realms.

We naturally also explore the Kingdom's most famed attractions, its millennium-old Imperial Cities, with their medinas, souks, mosques and shrines, to indulge in rich architecture and deep cultural history. Throughout our journey we search for the details and textures which are Morocco's true magic—round loaves of bread stacked high on wood tables, the stirring calls to prayer echoing among alleyways, the oranges that dangle like ornaments off the trees in Gueliz, the aromas of olives and spices emanating from open-air stalls, coppersmiths toiling away in ways unchanged in ages.

Sharing her expertise on Morocco with us is Prof. Susan Gilson Miller, a historian of modern North Africa and the Mediterranean, with a special interest in urban studies, minority studies, and most recently, in humanitarian relief and human rights. Miller holds degrees in Modern European History and Near Eastern and Judaic Studies from Wellesley College and Brandeis University, respectively, and a Ph.D. in Modern Middle Eastern and North African History from the University of Michigan. She has taught at Wellesley College, Brandeis University, and Harvard University, where she headed the Program in North African Studies. At UC Davis, she lectures on contemporary North Africa, Modern Jewish history, and Jews in the Muslim World, and has taught seminars on the Algerian Revolution, space and gender, port cities of the Mediterranean, and Mediterranean historiography. Her most recent book, A History of Modern Morocco: 1830-2000 (Cambridge University Press, 2013), is a study of contemporary Moroccan history in its global context. Miller's current research project concerns the political, social and ethical dimensions of rescuing and humanitarian relief in North Africa during World War II.

Space is limited to 20 travelers, so contact us early to reserve your place on this remarkable journey. We can be reached by telephone at (617) 495-2463, by e-mail at hmsctravel@hmsc.harvard.edu, or by fax (617) 496-8782. This and other HMSC trips can be found at www.travel.hmsc.harvard.edu.

Kind Regards,

Lauren Bruck
Director of Travel Program
Harvard Museums of Science & Culture presents
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ITINERARY (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)

Saturday, March 12 – Sunday, March 13
USA / Marrakech, Morocco

Arrive this morning in Marrakech, where we are met and escorted to our hotel. In the afternoon join an introductory tour of Marrakech, beginning with the 12th-century Koutoubia Mosque, the city’s tallest and most famous landmark, its minaret towering over the medina. It is known as the “mosque of the booksellers” because stalls of book traders were once at its base. Explore the necropolis of the Saadian Dynasty, dating back to 1557, its tombs decorated with intricate mosaics and plaster work. The central mausoleum, the Hall of the Twelve Columns, is exceptionally ornate with a high vaulted ceiling, furnished with stunning carved cedar panels and columns of grey Italian marble. Conclude the day with a stroll in the exotic garden of French Orientalist Jacques Majorelle, most recently owned by fashion designer Yves Saint Laurent, and its new Museum of Berber Culture. Return to our hotel for dinner.

La Maison Arabe (Meals Aloft, D)

Monday, March 14
Marrakech

This morning we penetrate the vast reed-covered bazaars, the country’s largest, exploring quarters where all types of crafts are still fashioned by hand (and foot!). Visit the Ben Youssef Medersa, the largest Koranic school built by the 14th-century Merinid Dynasty. Explore the courtyard, prayer hall, and student cells, noticing that every surface is decorated with carved wood or stucco-work. Continue to the splendid Museum of Marrakech, its collection of fine crafts and contemporary art within a sumptuous former palace. After browsing among the myriad of wares and colors, proceed to the new city for a Continental lunch. This afternoon, visit the Bahia Palace; set within extensive gardens, the vast complex includes a mosque and several tiled courts surrounded by lavishly decorated reception halls. See the 16th-century El Badi Palace, in its day considered the finest palace in the world, with marble from Italy and other precious building materials from India. It now shelters a 12-foot-high early 12th-century preacher’s pulpit of inlaid wood, recently restored by the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Tonight, enjoy a Moroccan dinner in the heart of the old city. La Maison Arabe (B, L, D)

Tuesday, March 15
Marrakech / Mt. Toubkal National Park

Depart all-terrain vehicles and head to the area of Aït Ouazzik, Morocco’s largest assembly of prehistoric petroglyphs, with dozens of zoomorphic and symbolic images etched into rock faces. The petroglyphs are over formerly owned by a local chief and is furnished in Moroccan style, retaining the traditional building techniques and wood decorations of the mountains. At nearly 6,000 feet above sea level, the Kasbah unobtrusively looks out over the major valleys carved out of majestic rocky mountains. The films “Seven Years in Tibet” and “Kundun” were filmed here, an indication of how magnificent and dramatic the landscape is. Return to Marrakech where the remainder of the evening is free to explore and enjoy dinner on our own. La Maison Arabe (B, L)

Wednesday, March 16
Aït Ben Haddou / Ouarzazate

Travel across the High Atlas on the spectacular drive of the Tizi n’Tichka pass, with vistas on deep vales below snow-clad peaks. Stop along the way to visit the UNESCO World Heritage site of Kasbah of Aït Ben Haddou, one of the most memorable sites of the arid south. Aït Ben Haddou is a village made up of several small adobe fortresses, the _kour_, reaching up to five stories high, some dating back to at least the 16th century. The importance of the site was due to its position on the route for camel caravans carrying gold, ivory, and slaves from across the Sahara. Continue to Ouarzazate, a fascinating area often used as a backdrop for fashion articles and films—segments of “Jesus of Nazareth” and “Gladiator” were filmed here. Lunch by the massive Taourirt Kasbah of an early 20th-century pasha. Then depart farther South over the moonscape of the Saghro range and down to the palm-filled Draa Valley, where we turn East until the hamlet of N’Koub above a vast oasis. The remainder of day is free to enjoy the idyllic scenery. Kasbah Imdoukal (B, L, D)

Thursday, March 17
Aït Ouazzik / Tazzarine / Arfoud

Board all-terrain vehicles and head to the area of Aït Ouazzik, Morocco’s largest assembly of prehistoric petroglyphs, with dozens of zoomorphic and symbolic images etched into rock faces. The petroglyphs are over
the principal monuments in the medina—
century, Fes reached its height in the 13th and 14th centuries, when it
We spend today exploring the ancient city of Fes. Founded in the 9th
medieval cities in the world. Arrive late in the afternoon, with dinner at
more than any other city in Morocco, it seems
to the spiritual capital of Fes, with a typical local shish kebob lunch
Africa's largest (with room for 25,000 worshippers!), before heading

**Tafilalt Oasis / Sijilmasa / Erg Chebbhi**

Depart for the Tafilalt Oasis, Morocco's largest, and the 17th-century
cradle of the Kingdom's current ruling Alawite Dynasty. Explore their
old crumbling Oulad abd el-Halim fortress and observe the local people
working the fields and date palmeries much the same as they have for
hundreds of years. See the remains of the former important trade center of
Sijilmasa, one of the largest settlements in Western Africa until the
14th century, along with a small museum of artifacts found there. In the
early afternoon we drive by 4x4 vehicles to the Erg Chebbhi sand dunes, the
northernmost edge of the Sahara's vast expanse which continues far to
the south all the way to Timbuktu. Here we can walk or take a camel ride up the dunes to watch sunset over the desert. Return to our hotel
dinner. Kasbah Xaluca (B, L, D)

**Saturday, March 19**

**Todgha Gorge / Dades Vale / Valley of Roses**

By late morning, we reach a lush valley thick with date palm gardens and Berber villages until the narrow Todgha River Gorge, flanked by
rock escarpments over 1,000 feet high. After lunch overlooking the valley in market center Tinghir, continue our drive to the Valley of the
Dades, the South's most picturesque, with its varied orchards guarded by
architecturally unique fortifications, the *ksour*, used both as granaries and housing. Built out of mud with high walls to keep out marauders from the desert, they blend beautifully with the reddish earth from which they were constructed, in contrast to the bright green vegetation around them. Descend to El Kelaâ M’Gouna, in the Valley of the
Roses, and continue past numerous other *ksour* on the so-called "Route of 1,000 Castles" until we return to Ouarzazate for the overnight. *Le Berbere Palace* (B, L, D)

**Sunday, March 20**

**Casablanca / Fes**

Drive this morning to Ouarzazate airport to board our flight to Casablanca. Head into the city to see the Museum of Moroccan Judaism, the sole institution of its kind in the Arab world, where we learn from the curator about the coexistence of Judaism and Islam in Morocco over the centuries. Next, stop to see the Hassan II Mosque, Africa's largest (with room for 25,000 worshippers!), before heading to the spiritual capital of Fes, with a typical local shish kebob lunch en route. Fes has long been recognized as Morocco's intellectual and spiritual nerve center. More than any other city in Morocco, it seems to exist suspended in time somewhere between the Middle Ages and modern times. In fact, it is renowned as one of the best-preserved medieval cities in the world. Arrive late in the afternoon, with dinner at the hotel. *Riad Maison Bleue* (B, L, D)

**Monday, March 21**

**Fes**

We spend today exploring the ancient city of Fes. Founded in the 9th century, Fes reached its height in the 13th and 14th centuries, when it replaced Marrakech as the capital of the kingdom. The urban fabric and the principal monuments in the medina—*mederias, fondouks, palaces, residences, mosques, and fountains—date from this period. Visit the Attarine Medersa, an Islamic teaching establishment and a prime example of the intricacy of 14th-century Merinid architecture. View the city's most revered sanctuary, the Mausoleum of Moulay Idriss II, the founder of Fes. Tour the 17th-century Nejjarine caravansary, now an exquisite museum of wood arts, and the area of the world's oldest functioning university, the Qarawine, surrounded by specialty bazaars, craft workshops, and the famed, colorful leather tanneries. Enjoy a typical Fesi lunch during a visit at a converted home in the midst of the medina before a driving tour of the ramparts and a visit of 14th-century “New” Fes, its 700-year-old Bou Inania Koranic school, and the famed “Blue Gate.” Visit the pottery production area to see how the local vessels and Morocco's original zellij tile mosaics are made. The evening is free for exploring and dinner on our own. *Riad Maison Bleue* (B, L)

**Tuesday, March 22**

**Volubilis / Meknes / Rabat**

Depart Fes and drive to the ancient Roman city of Volubilis. The lonely remains of the remote Roman outpost dating back to the 2nd and 3rd century are dwarfed by the vast surrounding plains and the backdrop of the Zerhoun mountain. It is one of the finest archeological sites in Morocco and equal to any other great Roman city in North Africa. Continue to Meknes to see Bab el Mansour, the largest city gate in Morocco, perfectly proportioned and decorated with thousands of green and white glazed tiles. Visit the late-16th-century granaries, built as giant vaulted halls meant to hold a year's supply of grain for the city's population and the Sultan's thousands of horses. Still standing today, the thick mud and pebble walls maintained a constant temperature of 55°F even in the heat of summer. After a lunch in a former palace, drive to Rabat, the administrative and political capital of the Kingdom. The city was recently added to the World Heritage List for its successful symbiosis of 20th-century city planning in concord with grandiose historical monuments dating as far back as the 12th century. The oldest part of the city, the Kasbah of Oudaïas, occupies a hill above the Atlantic, surrounded by massive ramparts. Pass through the Oudaïa gate and follow narrow alleyways painted blue and white until a broad terrace with sweeping views over the bay and estuary. *Villa Mandarine* (B, L, D)

**Wednesday, March 23**

**Salé / Rabat**

Depart on a walking tour of Salé, once a haven for the Salée Rovers Barbary pirates, now a Moroccan residential town. Visit the restored 14th-century *medersa* (religious college), a gem ignored by mass tourism, decorated by intricately carved stucco and woodwork. Back in Rabat, explore the country's sole archaeological museum, renowned for its Roman and prehistoric collections. For lunch we head to the Center for Cross Cultural Learning within Rabat's medina, where we enjoy a lecture on US-Moroccan relations from the 18th century to the present. This afternoon, visit the new Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, the Kingdom's sole museum built to world standards, in a magnificent structure of neo-Moorish architecture. The day ends with a stop at the mausoleum to modern Morocco's “father,” Mohamed V, built in traditional Moroccan style on the grounds of a vast 12th-century mosque. This evening, gather for a farewell dinner tonight at our hotel. *Villa Mandarine* (B, L, D)

**Thursday, March 24**

**Rabat / Home**

Transfer to the Casablanca airport for your homeward journey. (B)
**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Price:** $4,990 per person, double occupancy

**Single supplement:** $1,550*

*Should you request to share a twin room, we will attempt to find a roommate for you; however, if at the time of final payment no roommate is available, the single supplement fee will be charged.

**Airfare:** International airfare is not included. As of May 2015, estimated international roundtrip airfare from Boston to Marrakech and return from Casablanca, including taxes: $1,231 for economy and $4,567 for business class. As a general rule, it is wise to refrain from purchasing nonrefundable airfare until the minimum number of participants has been met.

**Tour Includes:** All land transfers upon arrival in Morocco; internal one-way flight Ouarzazate to Casablanca; all activities as stated in itinerary; excursions; entrance fees; all accommodation; nonalcoholic beverages with meals; all meals except one dinner in Fes and one dinner in Marrakech; specialists as per the itinerary; bottled water throughout; coffee/tea with included meals; porterage; all gratuities; $75,000 of emergency medical and evacuation insurance.

**Tour Excludes:** U.S. domestic and international airfare; medical immunizations; passport and visa fees if applicable; airport departure taxes; accident/baggage/cancellation insurance; optional excursions or deviation from the scheduled tour; excess baggage charges; one dinner in Fes and one dinner in Marrakech; laundry; medical expenses; meals not specified in the program itinerary or special meals not on the menu; dishes and beverages not part of included meals; alcoholic beverages; telephone or fax charges; room service; and other items of a purely personal nature.

If you are arriving independently from the group, please note that you are responsible for your own transfer to the hotel. If you would like the HMSC to arrange a private transfer for you at your own cost, please contact our office.

**Reservations, Deposits, and Final Payment:** To reserve a space on this tour, please mail a nonrefundable deposit of $300 per person payable to “Cross Cultural Adventures”, along with the completed reservation form to: Travel Program, Harvard Museums of Science & Culture (HMSC), 26 Oxford Street, Cambridge, MA 02138. Reservations are acknowledged in order of receipt until the maximum enrollment of 20 persons has been reached. Final payment is due by check or wire transfer only no later than January 12, 2016, 60 days prior to departure.

**Cancellations and Refunds:** Cancellations must be made in writing to the Harvard Museums of Science & Culture. The following per person fees apply: Up to 61 days prior to departure: $300 deposit; 60-31 days prior to departure, 25% of land tour cost; 30-15 days prior to departure, 50% of land tour cost. Fewer than 15 days prior to departure, no refund. These cancellation fees are in addition to any imposed by airlines. Leaving an expedition in progress, for any reason whatsoever, will not result in a refund, and no refunds will be made for any unused portions of an expedition.

**Tour Size:** This tour, exclusively designed for the Harvard Museums of Science & Culture, is limited to 20 participants on a first-come, first-served basis. The minimum group size is 10. Should the minimum not be met, we reserve the right to cancel the program, levy a small group surcharge, and/or send the program without a HMSC representative.

**What To Expect:** This exclusive expedition is designed for HMSC members and friends who are interested in learning about the history, culture, and natural history of Morocco. This is a moderately active program. Some walks in the High Atlas Mountains are potentially long and at high altitudes. There will be a lot of walking in old cities and natural areas. Typically, the weather is warm in Morocco, with cool nights, particularly in the mountains. Since some of the travel will be in remote areas, everyone must be flexible concerning time schedules, food, insects, weather, and dust. In order to enjoy this trip, a spirit of adventure and anticipation, and the desire to explore spectacular natural areas are musts. There are a couple of relatively long drives. Travel is by regular scheduled jet aircraft and private motor coach.

**Insurance:** We highly recommend the purchase of trip cancellation insurance. An application for insurance will be sent upon confirmation. The pre-existing medical conditions exclusion is waived if the insurance is purchased within 15 days of initial deposit. Neither the HMSC nor the tour operator accept liability for any airline cancellation penalty incurred by the purchase of a nonrefundable airline ticket or other expenses incurred by tour participants in preparing for the tour. As a service to our travelers, we automatically provide emergency medical evacuation insurance. You will receive detailed coverage approximately 30 days prior to your departure.

**Physical Health:** Participation on an HMSC program requires that passengers be in generally good health. If you have any questions about your ability to participate, we suggest that you visit your personal physician with this brochure in hand to discuss whether or not this program is appropriate for you. It is essential that persons with any medical problems and related dietary restrictions make them known to us well before departure.

**Questions:** Please call the HMSC Travel Program at (617) 495-2463.

**Responsibility:** The tour operator, its owners and employees act only as agents for the various independent suppliers and contractors providing transportation, hotel accommodations, restaurant and other services connected with this tour. Such travel and services are subject to the terms and conditions under which such accommodations, services and transportation are offered or provided, and Harvard University, the Harvard Museums of Science & Culture, and the tour operator and their respective employees, agents, representatives, and assigns, accept no liability therefore. Harvard University, the Harvard Museums of Science & Culture and the tour operator, assume no liability for any injury, damage, loss, accident, delay or other irregularity which may be caused by the defect of any aircraft or vehicle or the negligence or default of any company or person engaged in carrying out or performing any of the services involved. Additionally, responsibility is not accepted for losses, injury, damages or expenses of any kind due to sickness, weather, strikes, local laws, hostilities, wars, terrorist acts, acts of nature or other such causes. All services and accommodations are subject to the laws of the country in which they are provided. Harvard University; and Harvard Museums of Science & Culture and the tour operator reserve the right to make changes in the published itinerary whenever, in their sole judgment, conditions warrant, or if they deem it necessary for the comfort, convenience or safety of the tour participants. They reserve the right to withdraw this tour without penalty. The right is also reserved to decline to accept or retain any person as a member of the tour, or to substitute another qualified leader or special guest. Baggage and personal effects are the sole responsibility of the owners at all times. The price of the program is given in good faith based on current tariffs and rates, and is subject to change. Any tariff, exchange rate, or fuel increases will be passed on to participants. Neither Harvard University, Harvard Museums of Science & Culture nor the tour operator accepts the liability for any airline cancellation penalty incurred by the purchase of a nonrefundable ticket. The air ticket, when issued, shall constitute the sole contract between the passenger and the airline concerned. As a part of the consideration and right to participate in this tour, each participant will be asked to sign a liability release. As a part of the consideration and right to participate in this tour, each participant may be asked to sign a liability release.
Morocco: In Scented Gardens & Behind the Sultan’s Palace Walls
RESERVATION FORM

Name
Date of Birth

Name
Date of Birth

Address

City
State
Zip

Phone: Home
Office
Fax

E-mail

☐ If possible, please assign a roommate. ☐ Smoker ☐ Non-smoker
I understand if a roommate is not secured for me by final payment date, I will be charged the single supplement amount.

☐ I wish to pay the additional $1,650 for a single supplement.

☐ Enclosed is a check for ______ ($300 nonrefundable deposit per person) payable to “Cross Cultural Adventures” to hold ____ place(s) on the Morocco program.

OR
☐ Please charge my deposit of $______________ to ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ American Express

Account #  Expiration Date  Name as it appears on card  CVV

We confirm that I/we have carefully read the information on refunds, general conditions and the responsibility clause specified in the tour conditions.

Signature ____________________________  Date __________________

Signature ____________________________  Date __________________

Please return this form with deposit to: Travel Program, Harvard Museums of Science & Culture, 26 Oxford Street, Cambridge, MA 02138 or fax it to (617) 496-8782. QUESTIONS? Please call us at (617) 495-2463 or e-mail hmsctravel@hmsc.harvard.edu

HMSC Membership

The museums’ exhibitions draw on Harvard’s historic collections, and its educational programs for children and adults provide public access to the expertise of the university’s research scholars. A forum for thoughtful and informed exchange of ideas, the museum depends on membership to support its activities and its outreach to communities in Cambridge and beyond.

☐ I would like to become a member at the following level:

☐ $35 Senior/Student ☐ $50 Individual ☐ $85 Family ☐ $125 Supporting ☐ $250 Sustaining ☐ $500 Patron

Please enclose a separate check made out to the Harvard University / HMSC for membership. Thank you.