



MOROCCO

ITINERARY (subject to change)

WITH DR. MARC SHAPIRO
JANUARY 6-15, 2025

MONDAY: ARRIVAL IN CASABLANCA

Dinner and overnight

ACCOMMODATIONS: Le Casablanca hotel

TUESDAY: CASABLANCA, RABAT, FEZ

Tour begins in Casablanca at 9:00 am. Visit the Jewish Museum, following which we will travel to Rabat, the modern capital of Morocco. While there we will visit the mausoleum of King Muhammed V, who was very good to the Jewish community. We will see the Palace, the Kasbah of the Udayas, and the mellah with its synagogue. We then travel to Fez, the most extensive medieval city in the Arab world. At one time Fez was the center of Jewish life in Morocco and it remained the capital city of Morocco until 1925. A Jewish community still remains here and we will visit one of its synagogues and do a panoramic tour of the city before dinner.

ACCOMMODATIONS: Sahrai Hotel, Fez

WEDNESDAY: FEZ

We will visit all the important sites of Fez, including the Medina, where we will see craftsmen working as they have done for centuries, the Mellah, Jewish quarter, and the Jewish cemetery which to this day is a pilgrimage site, especially the grave of a particular Jewish woman, for reasons we will learn. We will also see Maimonides' house, where he is said to have lived when he came to Fez to escape the Almohad persecution in Spain, the King's Palace, Museum of Wood Arts and Crafts, and the Madrasa Bou Inania.

ACCOMMODATIONS: Sahrai Hotel, Fez

THURSDAY: FEZ, MEKNES, MARRAKECH

We journey to Meknes, known as the Moroccan Versailles. Among the sites we will see are the olive market, the Jewish market, the royal stables, and the famous Gate, Bab El Mansour, the building of which began in the reign of the ruler Moulay Ismail. Although this formerly great Jewish city is only a shadow of itself, the Jewish community continues to function and we will visit the synagogue currently in use. Our tour continues on to Marrakech where we will visit the Jewish quarter, El Azamah Synagogue and the famous square Jmaa el Fna.

ACCOMMODATIONS: Le Naoura Barriere, Marrakech

FRIDAY: MARRAKECH

The tour begins with travel to the High Atlas Mountains where we will visit a wonderful Berber village. On the way there we will visit the grave of R. Shlomo ben Hensh (Lhans; “son of the snake”), one of the most revered tombs in Morocco. In the afternoon we return to Marrakech, which for many years was the most important city in Morocco and which had a very large Jewish population, we will visit and explore the Medina, the Jewish Quarter followed by preparation for shabbat.

ACCOMMODATIONS: Le Naoura Barriere, Marrakech

SATURDAY: MARRAKECH

Tefillah on Shabbat morning will be at the local shul. Later in the day Dr. Shapiro will lead a class focusing on a Moroccan Torah sage. After Shabbat we will go to the famous square of Marrakech. It has to be seen to be believed.

ACCOMMODATIONS: Le Naoura Barriere, Marrakech

SUNDAY: MARRAKECH, ESSOUIRA

In the morning we will tour Marrakech, we will visit the Majorelle Gardens and Yves Saint Laurent Museum and then head to Essouira, the beautiful port town on the Atlantic coast we will see the local fishing port and locally produced handicrafts.

ACCOMMODATIONS: The luxury Heure Bleue Palais Hotel, Essouira

MONDAY: ESSOUIRA, EL JADIDA, AZEMOUR, CASABLANCA

The day begins in Essouira where we visit the Jewish quarter and the cemetery. Then we travel to El Jadida, on the coast of Morocco, where we will visit the Portuguese Fortified City, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and the Jewish quarter. Next, we will drive to the city of Azemour. While there are no longer any Jews in Azemour, it remains a place of pilgrimage to the grave of Rabbi Abraham Moul Nis. We will end the day back in Casablanca.

ACCOMMODATIONS: Le Casablanca, Casablanca

TUESDAY: CASABLANCA

Casablanca is the largest city in Morocco and the center of the country’s Jewish life, with around 2000 Jews and twenty-six functioning synagogues. We will tour the Hassan II Mosque, the largest mosque in Africa. We will visit the Beth El synagogue, the Jewish quarter of the city, the street of seven synagogues, and a kosher bakery before we enjoy our closing dinner.

ACCOMMODATIONS: Le Casablanca, Casablanca

WEDNESDAY: CASABLANCA

Breakfast and transfer to the airport for return to home.