

Mystique of **MOROCCO**

April 21–May 3, 2012

Dear Travelers:

Magical moments await you on this wonderful adventure to explore the mystique of the **Kingdom of Morocco!** Morocco possesses a wealth of opportunities for the traveler, spectacular landscapes and fascinating cultural experiences!

We will start our journey in Rabat, the capital of Morocco, with a visit to the Oudais Kasbah and the elaborately decorated mausoleum of King Mohammed V. We will then discover cultural and archaeological sites from the Imperial city of Meknes to Volubilis, the best preserved Roman town in North Africa. Explore kasbahs, medinas, and souks, and learn about a 1,200-year-old university heritage important to all of Western Civilization!

We will then cross the Atlas Mountains en route to the Sahara Desert with stops for

spectacular photos. The majestic canyon of the Ziz Gorge rivals the Grand Canyon and we will also see the Todra and Dades Gorges. In the desert, we will experience the berber way of life as it has existed for centuries from making bread to preparing and drinking mint tea.

We will then follow “the route of 1,000 Kasbahs” to reach the desert city of Quarzazate, an oasis on the edge of the Sahara Desert. We will continue to the Kasbah village of Ksour of Ait Ben Haddou, a World Heritage Site, nestled within ochre-colored mud walls.

Our final destination is the fabled and exotic Marrakech. From magnetic Marrakech to the ancient Phoenician coastal city of Magador (now called Essaouira), Morocco offers rich cultural experiences and a fascinating heritage.

We hope you will be able to join us!

Sincerely,

Margaret

Margaret M. Betchart
President
Betchart Expeditions Inc.



LEADERSHIP

Leading this expedition will be **Dr. Patrick Hatcher**, Kiriyama Distinguished Scholar-in-Residence at the University of San Francisco Center for the Pacific Rim. Dr. Hatcher retired from the History and Political Science Departments at the University of California, Berkeley. He was honored with the MacArthur Award from the Institute of International Studies and was the recipient of the UC Berkeley Instructor of the Year Award in 1988. He has written four books and numerous articles on politics and history.

Patrick is a popular leader with unbridled enthusiasm, great knowledge, wonderful stories, and humorous antidotes. Patrick has led many educational expeditions for Betchart from the Ice Festival in Harbin, China, to the scenic waterway between St. Petersburg to Moscow. He co-led the *Mystique of Morocco* in 2010. Patrick looks forward to sharing his enthusiasm and experiences with you and fellow members of AAAS and Sigma Xi.

Heritage of Morocco

According to legend, it was Hercules who created Morocco when he opened the Strait of Gibraltar. Once believed to be the westernmost point in the world, Al Maghrib, the Arabic name for Morocco, means "far west" or "where the sun sets."

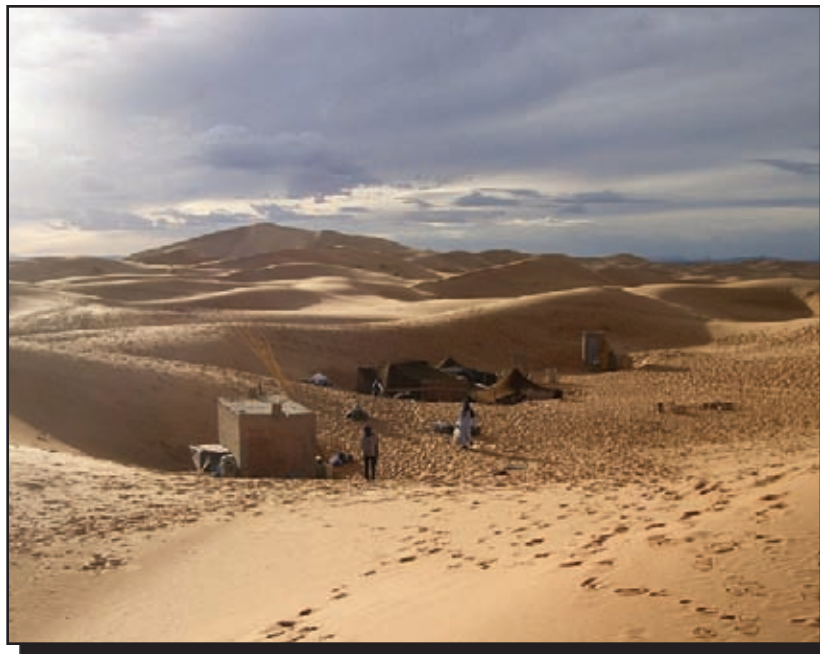
The first-known inhabitants of Morocco were the Berbers. Still present today, these nomads are thought to have been distant cousins of the ancient Egyptians. Then came the Phoenicians who were followed by the Romans, calling the area Mauretania.

The Roman presence can be seen in sites, such as the impressive ruins of Volubilis, a city once occupied by more than 20,000 people. The emperor Caligula tried to declare the end of Berber autonomy, but the Roman army was ultimately driven out by a campaign of constant harassment from the Berbers in the Rif and the Atlas.

By the end of the 7th century, the soldiers of the Prophet Mohammed had brought Islam to nearly all the Berber tribes. Idriss I, contesting the power of Baghdad, founded the Idrisid kingdom in Volubilis. There followed the Almoravid dynasties, the Berber conquerors of the south, then the Almohads whose power extended into Muslim Spain, and finally the Merinids, Berbers from the high plateaus. During the rising and falling of Islamic dynasties, exquisite mosques and madrasas were built in Fes and Marrakech, the capitals of the time.

Today, Morocco is ruled by His Majesty King Mohammed VI, the 23rd king in the Alaouite dynasty. You will witness how religious tolerance, Andalusian heritage, and the prosperity of these dynasties created treasures which now constitute the cultural, artistic and architectural richness of Morocco.





ITINERARY

Days 1/2 USA to Casablanca

Depart from New York's JFK International Airport on an evening flight on Royal Air Maroc for Casablanca. Arrive on the morning of Day 2. Meet your guide and transfer to your hotel. Our adventure begins in Casablanca this afternoon. We will visit the Hassan II Mosque, the city center with its impressive French-built Mauresque-style administrative buildings, and the Habous or "new medina." Enjoy a welcome dinner this evening. *Hotel Les Saisons*. (D)

Day 3 Casablanca to Rabat

Depart this morning for Rabat, the capital of the Kingdom of Morocco. This afternoon explore Rabat, including the Hassan tower and its impressive esplanade, the exquisitely decorated mausoleum of Mohammed V. Your sightseeing will include the King's palace, Oudaias Kasbah, the Chellah, a 13th century necropolis, and the small medina. *Hotel Majliss*. (B,D)

Day 4 Rabat, Meknes & Fes

This morning we will depart Rabat and drive to the superb Roman ruins of Volubilis (a UNESCO World Heritage Site) which ranks among the best preserved Roman towns in North Africa. It was once the home of Cleopatra's daughter who eventually married the

berber King Juba II. Most recently, Volubilis served as a backdrop for the movie "Patton". Next we will visit the nearby holy town of Moulay Idriss, then continue to the Imperial city of Meknes, often used as a movie backdrop by film producers from all over the world. The city's most glorious days were under Sultan Moulay Ismail (1672-1727), a contemporary of Louis XIV of France. See the monumental gateway of Bab Mansour and walls which stretch for over 20 miles, stables built to accommodate the sultan's 12,000 horses, and the huge water cisterns used for irrigation. *Hotel Fes Inn*. (2 nights). (B,D)

Day 5 Fes

Explore this renowned city, the spiritual heart of Morocco! Visiting Fes is like stepping back into Jerusalem a thousand years ago. The medina (Old Fes) is one of the biggest medieval cities in the world, a cultural extravaganza. Twisting alleys snake through the city, lined by covered bazaars, workshops, mosques, and more! Fes is famous throughout Islam as the seat of the internationally-known Karaouyne University, founded 1,200 years ago. Fes has served as Morocco's political and spiritual capital several times in its history. We will visit the Palace gates, the Mellah (Jewish quarter), pottery quarter, ancient medina with the souks, tanneries, and artisans, and the panoramic view points from the old forts on the hills around the town. (B,D)

Day 6 Fes & Erfoud

Early departure this morning through the Middle Atlas Mountains and charming mountain towns. See the ski resort town of Ifrane. Next is the Berber town of Azrou which has a relaxed air and wooded vicinity. We will continue to Midlet and the spectacular Ziz Gorges and Valley with a green oasis and palm groves. Pass through Errachidia (former Sejilmasa) which was a flourishing town during the 8th century as the capital of a kingdom on the caravan route. Arrive in Erfoud in the late afternoon, an excellent base for exploring the Sahara sand dunes. *Hotel Kasbah Chergui*. (B,D)

Day 7 Erfoud to Merzouga

Drive via the town of Rissani, to the dunes of Merzouga. Morocco's erg is a magical landscape of





huge drifting expanses of sand dunes that change color from pink to gold to red at different times of the day. The movie "The Mummy" was filmed here. This is the best area in Morocco for spotting many desert bird species including desert sparrows, Egyptian night jays, desert warblers and more. Explore this region, visiting local villages where you may have the chance to meet a family of musicians. In the late afternoon ride camels into the dunes to camp overnight in Berber-style tents. *Kasbah Mohayut (Desert Camp)*. (B,D)

Day 8 Todra Gorge

See sunrise over the Sahara, before exploring along the foot of the High Atlas Mountains to the mouth of the Todra Gorge. Tinerhir will be our base for exploring the gorge and the interesting kasbahs that were home to warrior tribes for centuries. See the spectacular mountain formations of the Todra Gorge, which have been compared to the Grand Canyon. Take a walk through the lush palm valley to discover the way the local people cultivate their crops. *Kasbah Lamrani*. (B,D)

Day 9 Todra Gorge, Ouarzazate, Ait Benhaddou

Today you follow the "route of 1000 kasbahs". We pass through Boumalne du Dades at the head of the Dades Gorge, Kelaa M'Gouna (famous for rose water) and Skoura to reach the desert city of Ouarzazate, an oasis on the edge of the great Sahara desert. Indeed, the



exotic landscape, dry desert climate and crystalline skies have made this former French Foreign Legion outpost a favorite with movie directors and producers from all over the world. The recently renovated kasbah of Taourirt served as a set for Bernardo Bertolucci's film, "The Sheltering Sky." Continue to the kasbah village of Ait Ben Haddou, a UNESCO Heritage site all nestled within crenellated walls of ochre-colored mud. Explore one of the finest kasbahs in the Atlas region, which still has a few families living in it. *Hotel La Kasbah*. (B,D)

Day 10 Tizi 'n Tichka Pass to Marrakech

Today cross the High Atlas Mountains via the Tizi 'n Tichka Pass (2,300 meters) through spectacular scenery on the highest paved road in Morocco, to reach the exotic city of Marrakech. In the afternoon visit the medina. Discover Djemaa el Fna, the great square at the heart of the medina where every night you can experience the local food markets. Explore the small alleys with colorful souks, discover beautiful palaces, and Koranic schools. *Golden Tulip Farah*. (3 nights). (B)

Day 11 Marrakech

Today you have a full day to explore the magical city of Marrakech. Called the Pearl of the South or the "Pink City" for the ochre color of its walls. Marrakech is full of wonders which delight travelers. This morning make a visit to the Menara Gardens, a great olive grove with a water reservoir that was once the main water source for the city. Also see the Majorelle Gardens, a calm garden full of cacti, water ponds and blue-painted buildings, and Gueliz, the modern town of Marrakech. Afternoon free to explore further. (B)

Day 12 Marrakech & Essaouira

Today can be at leisure for personal interests in Marrakech, or enjoy a full day excursion to the ancient Phoenician coastal town of Essaouira. In Essaouira, explore the small alleys of the medina to discover the local artisans, visit the fishing port, or wander along the beach. Essaouira is one of Morocco's most enjoyable and attractive towns on the coast. Its charm is undeniable with white washed and blue shuttered houses, art galleries, wood workshops, fishermen and



colorful boats—all enclosed by ancient red walls. The town faces a group of rocky islands and is surrounded by an expanse of empty sandy beaches and dunes. Farewell dinner. (B,D)

Day 13 Marrakech to USA

Early transfer to Marrakech airport for your flight to Casablanca, connecting with your Royal Air Maroc flight to JFK. Arrive late afternoon and take connecting flights home.



RESPONSIBILITY

Betchart Expeditions Inc., the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), Sigma Xi, The Scientific Research Society, and the American Chemical Society (ACS) act only as agents for the passenger with respect to transportation and hotels, and exercise every care possible. However, we can assume no liability for injury, damage, delay, loss, accident or irregularity in connection with the services of any airplane, ship, motorcoach, or any other conveyance used in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. We cannot accept any responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, terrorism, acts of God, or other causes beyond our control. All such losses or expenses will have to be borne by the passenger, as tour rates provide for arrangements only for the time stated. We reserve the right to substitute another leader of similar expertise or reserve the right to cancel any tour prior to departure, in which case the entire payment will be refunded with no further obligation on our part. The right is also reserved to decline to accept or retain any person as a member of the tour. No refund will be made for the unused portion of any tour unless arrangements are made in sufficient time to avoid penalties. The price of the program is based on current tariffs and rates, and is subject to change. Any tariff, exchange rate, or fuel increases will be passed on to participants. Baggage is carried at the owner's risk entirely. It is understood that the air ticket when issued shall constitute the sole contract between the passenger and the airline concerned. The airlines concerned are not to be held responsible for any act, omission, or event during the time passengers are not on board their plane or conveyance.

RESERVATIONS #1227

Yes! I/we want to join the Morocco Expedition, April 21–May 3, 2012, offered by AAAS Travels, Sigma Xi & ACS Expeditions. Please reserve _____ space(s). As a deposit, I/we enclose a check for \$_____ (\$500 per person) payable to Betchart Expeditions Inc. Trust Account.

Name(s) _____ Age _____
 _____ Age _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone: Home (_____) _____
 Work (_____) _____

Email Address _____

Membership: AAAS Sigma Xi ACS Planetary Society

Accommodations Preference:
 Twin Single Twin Share: with a friend or
 Nonsmoker Smoker assign a roommate

Signature _____ Date _____

Signature _____ Date _____

**Please Mail To: Morocco 2012
 Betchart Expeditions Inc.
 17050 Montebello Road
 Cupertino, CA 95014-5345**



AAAS Travels ACS & Sigma Xi Expeditions

BETCHART EXPEDITIONS Inc.

17050 Montebello Road, Cupertino, CA 95014-5435



FIRST CLASS

*Discover the Mystique
of MOROCCO!*
April 21-May 3, 2012

COSTS & CONDITIONS

Expedition Fee: \$3,695 per person twin share + air \$995 + tax/fuel JFK to Morocco, RT. Single Supplement is \$595.

Questions: Please call **Taunya DeYoung,**
Betchart Expeditions Inc.

Telephone: **(800) 252 4910**

or **(408) 252 4910**

Fax: (408) 252 1444

Email: Taunya@betchartexpeditions.com

Expedition Fee Includes: Land transport; group airport transfers; accommodations twin share; meals as indicated; tips to guides and drivers; entrance fees; baggage handling; leadership, administration.

Expedition Fee Does Not Include: Air fare (quoted separately); independent transfers; some meals; gratuity to expedition leaders; personal items such as laundry, phone calls, alcoholic beverages, snacks; personal insurance, or foreign airport departure taxes.



What to Expect: This expedition is for travelers who would like to explore the spectacular cultural heritage and scenic wonders of Morocco. This is a rich cultural experience spanning Morocco's history from the Phoenicians to Romans and Berbers to the present day. It is a fascinating scenic experience from intriguing souks, medinas, and kasbahs in the cities to the Middle and High Atlas Mountains, and sand dunes of the Sahara Desert, including several World Heritage Sites. The group will travel from 2 to 8 hours by bus or van travel days. Enjoy a camel ride in the desert. It will be spring with midday temperatures in the 70s - 90s with possibly some rain. The expedition will be a tremendous experience for travelers with an appetite for adventure and discovery. (No smoking in vehicles, during lectures, or meals please.)

Air Fare & Airline Ticketing: Please phone Taunya at Betchart Expeditions, (800) 252- 4910 for information about group flights. AIR FARES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

Accommodations: Are in comfortable 4 star hotels in the cities, twin share. There will be one night in a comfortable tent camp at the edge of the Sahara Desert. Limited single accommodations are available for a supplement of \$595.

Reservations, Deposits, & Payments: Please mail a deposit of \$500 per person with the completed reservation form to:

Morocco 2012, Betchart Expeditions Inc.

17050 Montebello Road, Cupertino, CA 95014-5435

The balance of land fee is due 60 days before departure.

Cancellations & Refunds: The initial deposit is refundable up to 60 days before departure less a handling fee of \$100 per person. There is no refund after the 60-day period unless your place is resold, then only the \$100 per person handling fee is withheld. There are no refunds for unused meals or other expedition features.