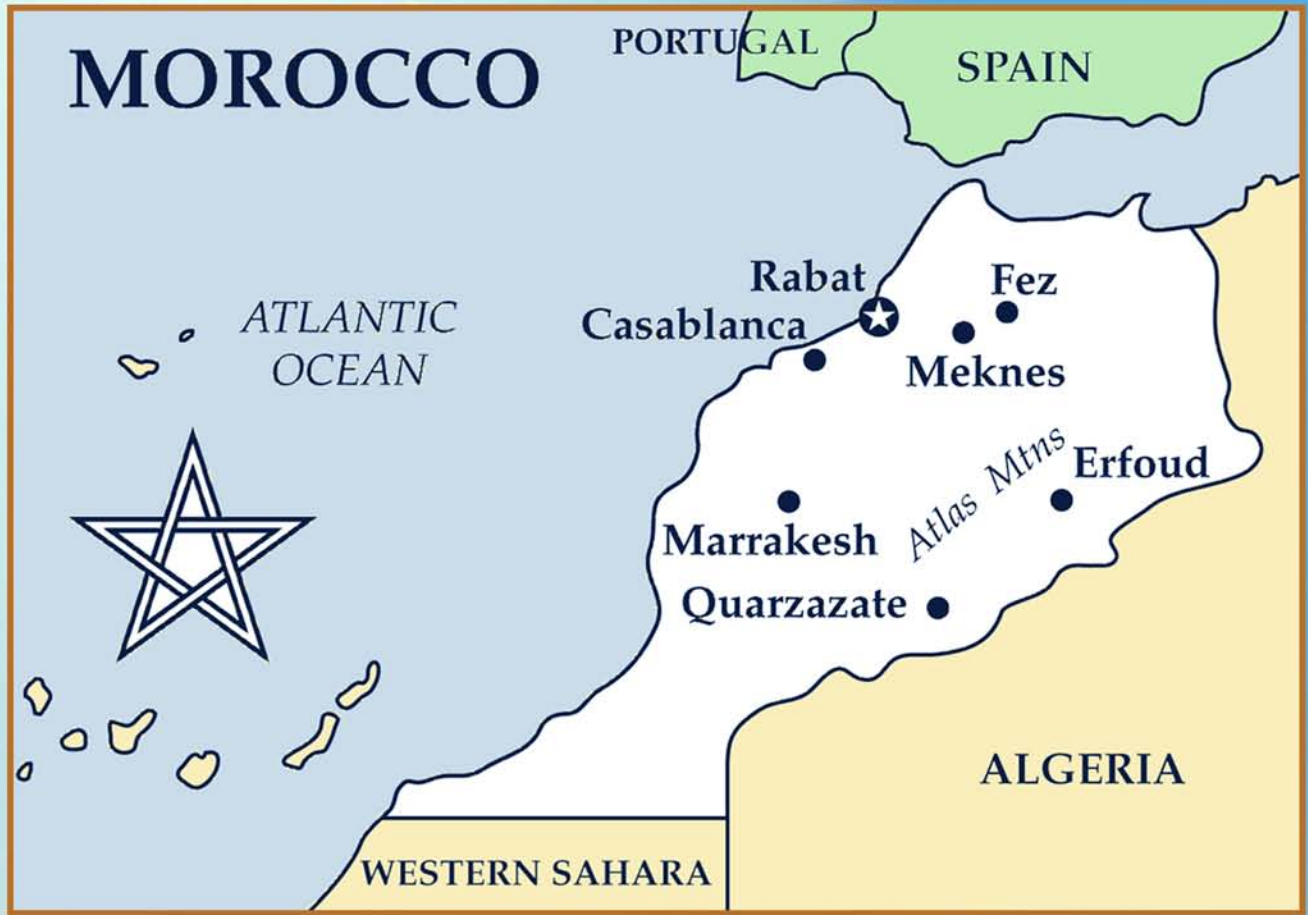


MYSTIQUE OF MOROCCO

April 24 - May 5, 2010



BETCHART EXPEDITIONS, INC.



MYSTIQUE OF MOROCCO

April 24 - May 5, 2010

OVERVIEW

Magical moments await you on this wonderful adventure to explore the Mystique of Morocco! Morocco possesses a wealth of opportunities for the traveler . . . from the capital of Rabat to the fantastic Roman site of Volubilis . . . to the Atlas Mountains & the Sahara Desert . . . From magnetic Marrakech to the ancient Phoenician coastal city of Magador (now called Essaouira). Morocco offers rich cultural experiences and spectacular scenery. Explore kasbahs, medinas, and souks, a hill town with troglodyte dwellings, and learn about a 1200-year-old university heritage important to all of Western Civilization!

DAYS 1/2 USA TO RABAT. Depart New York on Air Maroc for Casablanca. Arrive on the morning of Day 2, and transfer to Rabat, the capital of the Kingdom of Morocco. This afternoon explore Rabat, including the Hassan tower, museums, and more. *Golden Tulip Farah.* D

DAY 3 MEKNES TO FES. Explore the Imperial City of Meknes (a UNESCO World Heritage Site) and the superb Roman ruins at Volubilis. *Menzeh Zalagh Hotel (3 nights).* B,D

DAY 4 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 nouvelle is a sharp contrast! B,D

DAY 5 SEFROU. Wander through the walled medina in this picturesque Berber town. Also see the Christian hill town of Bhalil, with troglodyte (cave) dwellings in the hillside. B,D

DAY 6 AZROU - MIDELT - ZIZ GORGES - ERFOUD. Explore the Berber hill town of Azrou in the Middle Atlas mountains. Then cross the High Atlas mountains at Tizi N'Talghemt pass (1907 m) and travel through the spectacular Ziz Gorges to Erfoud at the edge of the Sahara sand dunes. *Desert Camp, Merzouga.* B,D

DAY 7 ERFOUD TO OUARZAZATE. See sunrise over the Sahara, then explore along the foot of the High Atlas Mountains to the mouth of the Todra Gorge (Morocco's Grand Canyon) and Dades Gorge. *Kenzi Azgor Hotel.* B,D

DAY 8 AIT BENHADDOU - MARRAKECH. Visit several kasbahs, all nestled within high clay walls, including Ait Benhaddou (a World Heritage Site), one of the finest kasbahs in the Atlas region. Pass over the High Atlas Mountains to Marrakech. *Hotel El Andalouss (3 nights).* B

DAYS 9/10 MARRAKECH. Explore the magical city of Marrakech & Toubkal Nat'l Park. Have mint tea with a family in the High Atlas and learn ways hardly changed in centuries. B

DAYS 11/12 MARRAKECH & ESSAOUIRA. Drive to the ancient Phoenician coastal town of Mogador (Essaouira) Farewell dinner. Day 12 depart for Rabat & the USA. B,D

Trip Fee: \$2,995 per person twin share + air \$695 + tax from JFK to Morocco, RT
Single Supplement: \$595

FOR RESERVATIONS, PHONE RENEE, (800) 252-4910

or Email: renee@betchartexpeditions.com

Betchart Expeditions Inc. - 17050 Montebello Road - Cupertino, CA 95014-5435

ITINERARY

DAYS 1/2 NEW YORK TO CASABLANCA

Depart from New York's JFK International Airport on an evening flight on Royal Air Maroc for Casablanca. Arrive at 7:45 am on Day 2. Meet your guide, and transfer to Rabat, the capital of the Kingdom of Morocco. This afternoon, we will explore Rabat, including the Hassan tower and its impressive esplanade, the exquisitely decorated mausoleum of King Mohammed V. Your sightseeing will include the King's palace, the Chellah or the Roman archaeological site of Sala Colonia ruins, the Oudaïas kasbah and museum of Roman antiquities. Welcome social. *Golden Tulip Farah Hotel 4 **. D

DAY 3 RABAT - MEKNES - FES

This morning we will depart Rabat and head north to the famous museum of Belghazi, with fascinating displays on the heritage of Morocco.

Continue to the Imperial city of Meknes, a World Heritage Site, which is 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.

Continue to Volubilis 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." Continue to Fes. *Menzeh Zalagh Hotel 4* (3 nights)*. B,D

DAY 4 FES

Today we will explore the renowned city of Fes, the spiritual capital of Morocco! Visiting Fes is like stepping 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 1200 years ago. Fes has served as Morocco's political and spiritual capital several times in its history. We'll visit the Mosque of Moulay Idriss II, founder of the city, and patron saint of Morocco. We will also tour the Karaouyne University and Medersas, the famous Bou Jeloud Gate and the Nejjarine Square. Also see the Batha Museum, Merinides Tombs, and Royal Palace esplanade with the nearby Mellah or ancient Jewish quarter. B,D

DAY 5 FES - BHALIL - SEFROU - FES

Today, we will have an excursion to Sefrou. En route, is Bhalil, a small hill village which may have had a Christian population before Islam. Behind the picturesque village are several troglodyte (cave) dwellings, where people still inhabit the caves. The town of Sefrou has fascinated American academics, with anthropologists Greets, Rosen and Robinson carrying out research here. Sefrou is certainly worth visiting as it is one of the most appealing towns in Morocco, an historic walled town lying in a beautiful wooded valley. We'll enjoy wandering through the medina in this picturesque Berber town. B,D

DAY 6 FES - AZROU - ERFOUD

Early departure this morning through the Middle Atlas Mountains and charming mountain towns. See Ifrane (a typical ski resort). Next is Azrou which has a relaxed air and good hiking in the wooded vicinity. The cedar forests, with their monkeys, are a great place to wander about. We'll continue to Midlet and Knifra.

Depart for Errachidia (former Sejilmassa) which was a flourishing town during the 8th century as the capital of a kingdom on the caravan route. Cross over the Tizi N'Talghemt pass at 1907 meters. Then travel through the spectacular Ziz Gorges and Valley with green oasis and palm groves. Arrive in Erfoud in the late afternoon, an excellent base for exploring the Sahara sand dunes. Transfer to 4 wheel drive vehicles to get to Merzouga. *Tent Camp in Merzouga.* B,D

DAY 7 ERFOUD - QUARZAZATE

See sunrise over the Sahara then explore along the foot of the High Atlas Mountains. Leave Erfoud for Tinerhir which is a good base for exploring the gorges 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. Also the **Dades Gorge** has magnificent landscapes that are fabulous for walks and excellent for bird watching, with plenty of eagles, bulbuls and crag martins. Continue to Ouarzazate. *Kenzi Azghor Hotel 4** B,D

DAY 8 QUARZAZATE - AIT BENHADDOU - MARRAKECH

Quarzazate is an oasis on the edge of the great Sahara plains. 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*. Visit kasbahs of Taourirt, Ait Ben Haddou (a World Heritage Site) and Tifoultout, all nestled within crenellated walls of ochre-colored mud. In the afternoon depart for Marrakech through spectacular scenery in the High Atlas Mountains and the Tizin Ntichka Pass (2,300 meters). Arrive in Marrakech in the late afternoon. *Hotel El Andalouss 4* (4 nights).* B

DAY 9 MARRAKECH

Explore the magical city of Marrakech today. 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. Enjoy a full day to explore the city, including the Medina and Djema el Fna Square, the Koranic school Medresa Ben Youssef, and Bahia Palace. We will also visit Dar Si Said museum, the Majorelle garden, and Menara reservoir, as well as the Agdal olive groves and Koutoubia minaret. B

DAY 10 TOUBKAL NATIONAL PARK

Today you will take a closer look at one of the most spectacular places in Morocco, the Toubkal National Park. The starting point will be the village of Imlil where you will meet your licensed mountain guide. The entire area is blanketed with all types of trees: from Juniper, Atlas Cedar, Holm-oak, and Barbary thuya to Aleppo pine, Carob, Argan and Kermes Oak. We'll also see how the berber population is keeping the same way of life for centuries now. Visit a local house and have mint tea with a family, and have a taste of their daily activities (making meals, preparing bread in a way that has hardly changed over the centuries). Return to Marrakech at the end of the day. B

DAY 11 MARRAKECH - ESSAOUIRA - MARRAKECH

Today can be at leisure for personal interests in Marrakech, or enjoy a full day excursion to the ancient Phoenician coastal town of Essaouira (about a three hour drive). 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 12 MARRAKECH - USA

Early transfer to the airport for your flight to Casablanca, connecting with your Royal Air Moroc flight to JFK. Arrive at 2:45 pm and take connecting flights home. B

COSTS & CONDITIONS

Expedition Fee: \$2,995 per person twin share + air \$695 + tax JFK to Morocco, RT.
Single Supplement: \$595.

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

Expedition Fee Does Not Include: Air fare (quoted separately); independent transfers; some meals; tips to guides and drivers; 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 natural 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 6 hours by bus or van many days. Enjoy an optional camel ride in the desert (at a small additional cost). It will be spring with midday temperatures in the 70s - 90s with 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.)

(See Next page)

RESERVATIONS

#1120

YES! I/We want to join the **Morocco Expedition, April 24 - May 5, 2010**, offered by Betchart Expeditions Inc. Please reserve _____ space(s). As a deposit, I/we have enclosed a check for \$ _____ (\$500 per person), payable to Betchart Expeditions Inc. Trust Account.

Name(s) _____ Age _____ Sex _____

_____ Age _____ Sex _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone: Home (____) _____ Work or Cell (____) _____

Email #1: _____ #2: _____

Membership (please circle): AAAS Sigma Xi ACS Planetary Society

Accommodations Preference: _____ Twin _____ Twin share _____ Single
_____ Nonsmoker _____ Smoker

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please mail to:

**Morocco Expedition
Betchart Expeditions Inc.
17050 Montebello Road
Cupertino, CA 95014-5435**

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

Accommodations: Are in a comfortable 4* 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: To reserve a place on this expedition, please mail a deposit of \$500 per person with the completed reservation form to: **Morocco Expedition, Betchart Expeditions Inc., 17050 Montebello Road, Cupertino, CA 95014-5435.** 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.

Questions: Please call **Renee Apostolou, Betchart Expeditions Inc., (800) 252-4910 or (408) 252-4910.**

Responsibility: *Betchart Expeditions Inc. acts only as agent for the passenger with respect to transportation and hotels and exercises every care possible. Betchart 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, terrorism, quarantine, 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 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.*

c 2009 Betchart Expeditions Inc. All rights reserved. CST#2036304-40