



Welcome to Rott's Manor

Pete & Mary Clukey

Tunisia 2010 Trip Report

Tunisia: From the Mediterranean to the Sahara

Day 1: Friday, Dec 17 - Depart from the U.S.

Flight 1

Departure: **09:55 AM** Atlanta, USA - Hartsfield Jackson, terminal S
Arrival: 12:38 PM Boston, USA - Logan International, terminal A
Airline: **Delta Air Lines DL1200** Duration: 2:43
Change of plane required. Time between flights = 4:52.

Flight 2

Departure: **05:30 PM** Boston, USA - Logan International, terminal E
Arrival: 07:35 AM +1 day(s) Rome, Italy - Fiumicino, terminal 3
Airline: **Alitalia AZ615** Duration: 8:05
Change of plane required. Time between flights = 2:45.

Day 2: Saturday, Dec 18 - Arrive in Tunis/Welcome Drink and Dinner

Flight 3

Departure: **10:20 AM** Rome, Italy - Fiumicino, terminal 3
Arrival: 11:40 AM Tunis, Tunisia - Carthage, terminal M
Airline: **Alitalia AZ864** Duration: 1:20



After arriving at the Tunis airport, we'll be met outside of Customs and transferred to our hotel.

We have the afternoon free; the Trip Leader will have suggestions to fill our time.

This evening, we meet our trip leader and fellow travelers over a welcome drink and enjoy the included welcome dinner.

Meals Included: Dinner (**Not Lunch**)
Lodging: Tunisia Palace <http://www.goldenyasmin.com/tunisia-palace/en/index.htm>
13 Avenue De France
1000 Tunis Cedex
Tunisia
Tel: 0011 216 71242 700

Day 3: Sunday, Dec 19 - City tour and Bardo Museum/Explore ancient Carthage/Visit North Africa American Cemetery

Today we'll explore Tunisia's bustling capital and its surroundings on a full day tour. Tunis was one of the greatest cities in the world during the reign of the Almohad and Hafsid dynasties from the 12th to the 16th centuries. We'll witness the legacy of that era in the hundreds of stunning palaces, mosques, and fountains in the city's medina, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. We also visit the Bardo Museum, Tunisia's national museum of archaeology. Located in an 18th-century royal palace, it

displays a spectacular collection of ancient Roman mosaics along with sarcophagi and statues from the Roman and Carthaginian periods.

Then we explore the site of ancient Carthage, which evokes the romance and tragedy of the legendary era of Queen Dido and Aeneas chronicled in Virgil's Aeneid. Scattered ruins help us envision where the mighty city of antiquity once stood, sending its fleets for trade and warfare across the Mediterranean, including Hannibal's famous but doomed campaign against Rome in the Second Punic War. After Carthage was conquered, the Romans destroyed the old city but established a new one of their own on its site, which lasted for almost another 500 years.



Following an included lunch at a local restaurant, we'll pay our respects to the American soldiers who liberated Tunisia during World War II with a visit to the North Africa American Cemetery and Memorial. This 27-acre memorial is the final resting place of 2,841 American military dead and also honors 3,700 soldiers whose remains were never found. In December 1942, American forces landed in Tunisia for their first transatlantic deployment of World War II. Things started off badly, with German General Rommel deriding the U.S. strategy as inept. Yet the hard lessons learned helped the Allies

eventually turn things around, defeating the Germans in North Africa and thus preventing them from establishing another front in the war.

We'll also have a discussion about the status and history of Tunisia's Jewish population. This evening, dinner is on our own in Tunis.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch **(Not Dinner)**

Lodging: Tunisia Palace <http://www.goldenyasmin.com/tunisia-palace/en/index.htm>

Day 4: Monday, Dec 20 - Tour of ancient Roman Dougga



Today we'll embark on a full-day tour of ancient Dougga, the best-preserved ancient Roman city in North Africa and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Here stand the remains of a complete town that once had 5,000 residents, including villas, temples, baths, a paved street, and a forum, making it easy to imagine life in this place in the second century AD. The temple known as "the Capitol" and the Caracalla Baths are particularly well preserved. We'll enjoy an included lunch at a local restaurant as a break from our discoveries, and return to Tunis this evening for dinner on our own.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch **(Not Dinner)**

Lodging: Tunisia Palace <http://www.goldenyasmin.com/tunisia-palace/en/index.htm>

Day 5: Tuesday, Dec 21 - Cross Cap Bon/Explore Kerkouan/Travel to Hammamet



After breakfast today, we make a scenic drive along the Cap Bon Peninsula, stopping en route at Kerkouan. At this notable archeological site, the ruins date to the 3rd and 4th centuries BC, when this was a Punic city in the time of ancient Carthage. Yet while Carthage was destroyed by the Romans at the end of the Punic Wars and subsequently rebuilt in Roman fashion, Kerkouan escaped this ill fate. Therefore, the ruins that we'll find here represent an accurate depiction of an ancient Punic city and also shed light on what the famed city of Dido originally looked like.

Then we'll travel to Hammamet, either after lunch at a local restaurant or *perhaps (2011 itinerary) stopping along the way at a winery and olive farm to learn about local agriculture and to enjoy lunch at the farmhouse*. We'll check into our hotel in Hammamet, a Mediterranean town of whitewashed houses and an old medina and Kasbah near some of Tunisia's finest beaches.

After checking in at our hotel, we'll go for a short walk through the old medina of this seaside village. Later in the afternoon, we may visit a Tunisian citrus farm. Dinner tonight is on our own.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch **(Not Dinner)**
Lodging: Mehari Hotel <http://www.goldenyasmin.com/mehari-hammamet/en/index.htm>
BP 119
8050 Yasmin
Hammamet
Tel: 011 216 72 241 900

Day 6: Wednesday, Dec 22 - Travel to Kairouan/Introduction to Islam discussion and mosque visit/Visit carpet factory

Today we leave Tunisia's seacoast and journey inland to Kairouan, a city with a spiritual feel whose domed mosques and minarets we may glimpse from afar as we approach. This holiest of Tunisian cities was founded in AD 670 by Oqba ibn Nafi who, according to legend, slipped on a golden cup that came from Mecca and was hidden in the sand at the spot where Kairouan is now located. When he picked up the cup, water burst forth from the ground. The ornate Great Mosque here dates from early in the Islamic period and is the fourth-holiest site in Islam after Mecca, Medina, and the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem. We'll enjoy an exclusive discussion giving us an introduction to Islam with an Imam at this mosque.



In the 14th century, Kairouan was home to Ibn Khaldun, whose masterwork the *Muqaddimah* has been described by noted British historian Arnold Toynbee as "a philosophy of history which is undoubtedly the greatest work of its kind." Ibn Khaldun's work reflects the level of achievement Islamic scholars attained in medieval times—and this same cultural richness shines from the historic architecture that we'll see inside Kairouan's walled medina during our two-night stay.

We enjoy a special glimpse of everyday Tunisian culture during a home-hosted lunch with a local family. After lunch, Kairouan is known as Tunisia's leading center of carpet-making and this afternoon's discoveries include a visit to a carpet factory with a demonstration of this craft.

Tonight we'll have free time for dinner on our own; perhaps somewhere in the town's medina.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch **(Not Dinner)**
Lodging: La Kasbah Golden Yasmin Hotel <http://www.goldenyasmin.com/la-kasbah/en/index.htm>
Avenue Ibn Jazzar
Citte La Mosque
Kairouan, Tunisie
Tel: 0011 216 77 237301

***** Sahara Douz Festival in Douz Dec 23 - 26 *****

***** International Festival of the Oases in Tozeur Dec 26 - 31 *****

Day 7: Thursday, Dec 23 - At leisure in Kairouan/Optional tour to El Djem

OPTIONAL TOUR / \$90 per person

Today on our optional excursion we uncover Tunisian antiquity with a visit to El-Djem, home to the third-largest ancient Roman amphitheater in the world, which soars impressively above the low-rise

buildings of the town's medina. This is the best-preserved Roman structure in Africa and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Built in the third century AD, this still-impressive stadium could seat 30,000 spectators. After an included lunch, we'll continue to the seaside city of Monastir, to explore its well-preserved ribat (fortress); which was used as a location for Monty Python's satirical film, *The Life of Brian*. Afterwards we will visit the ornate mausoleum of Habib Bourguiba, Tunisia's first president; considered to be the founder of modern Tunisia.

Dinner tonight is at our hotel.

Meals Included: Breakfast, *Lunch*, Dinner

Lodging: La Kasbah Golden Yasmin Hotel <http://www.goldenyasmin.com/la-kasbah/en/region.htm>

Day 8: Friday, Dec 24 - Travel to Tozeur/Visit Sbeitla



After breakfast today we depart Kairouan and make a dramatic transition from green landscapes alive with olive groves to great arid expanses of desert dotted with scattered oases. During our full day transfer we'll make our first stop at Sbeitla, where we visit the impressive ruins of the southernmost Roman town in Tunisia.

Afterwards, we have an included lunch at a local restaurant and travel by the oasis town of Gafsa on the way to our destination for tonight, Tozeur. This ancient city occupies a four-square-mile oasis of 250,000

date palms whose green lushness stands in stark contrast to the surrounding Sahara.

We'll enjoy dinner at our hotel tonight.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Lodging: Ras El Ain Hotel <http://www.goldenyasmin.com/ras-el-ain/en/index.htm>
P.P. 141
Tozeur, Tunisia
Tel: 0011 216 76 452698

Day 9: Saturday, Dec 25 - Visit the Eden Palm Museum/Ride in horse-drawn carriages through Tozeur Oasis/Optional Arabian Soiree excursion

Today we head to a small private oasis to tour the Eden Palm Museum, which focuses on the role of the date palm in Tunisian society. Here we discover the many uses of this remarkable plant, one of the few that grows in the Sahara. As we learn about the irrigation and pollination techniques necessary to sustain an oasis, keep in mind that many of these techniques date back thousands of years and yet are still in use today.

After lunch at a local restaurant we explore the oasis by horse-drawn carriage. For two thousand years, this city has thrived in a lush oasis on the edge of the largest salt flat in Northern Africa, and was a remote and fiercely independent enclave for much of that time. In its old section, elaborate designs in yellow brickwork decorate the walls lining narrow alleys and passageways with the same traditional patterns that are found in the local Berber handicrafts. We'll feel the true oasis atmosphere here as we explore byways where spring-fed canals water date palms, flowers, and crops of plums, grapes, pomegranates, and bananas.

OPTIONAL TOUR / \$65 per person

This evening we will join an optional excursion for an Arabian Soiree in a private home. Traveling to a peaceful farmhouse situated on a plantation of date palms for an evening of authentic Tunisian

entertainment. We'll dine on home-cooked local specialties while enjoying a sensual Arabian dance performance accompanied by live musicians.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, *Dinner*
Lodging: Ras El Ain Hotel <http://www.goldenyasmin.com/ras-el-ain/en/index.htm>

Day 10: Sunday, Dec 26 - At leisure in Tozeur/*Mountain Oases optional tour*
OPTIONAL TOUR / \$110 per person



Today we join a full-day Mountain Oases optional tour to the oasis towns of Chébika, Tameghza, and Midès—set in stunning mountain gorges and boasting histories going back to ancient Roman times.

We board four-wheel-drive vehicles and head first for Chébika, a village of stone and clay houses set on a terrace overlooking an oasis, a river gorge, and a deep ravine. Then discover the Roman and Byzantine history of Tameghza, strikingly situated on the walls of a huge canyon, where we'll have our included lunch. We also see Midès, a village

perched above a beautiful palm grove at the site of a gushing spring, and visit the Nefta Oasis.

Dinner is on our own tonight.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch (*Not Dinner*)
Lodging: Ras El Ain Hotel <http://www.goldenyasmin.com/ras-el-ain/en/index.htm>

Day 11: Monday, Dec 27 - Discover Bedouin Wedding Traditions/Travel to Desert Camp



We depart Tozeur this morning, making our first stop at Douz, a town at the edge of the Great Eastern Erg. Beyond Douz, this immense expanse of the Sahara extends hundreds of miles to the south. In Douz, we'll discover the traditions of a Tunisian wedding, from the drinking of tea to henna painting and more. We'll join a Bedouin family in their home for a fascinating demonstration and talk. Volunteers from our group may even get to model their ceremonial attire.

After lunch in Douz, we board four-wheel-drive vehicles for our journey into the Sahara. Our destination is our Desert Tented Camp, set amidst gently rolling golden sand dunes. Just before sunset, we'll take advantage of the rich evening light on an exploration of the Great Eastern Erg. We'll pause to admire the dramatic desert sunset before returning to camp by the light of oil lamps beneath the starry sky.

We'll have dinner in camp and then gather for an informative Bedouin Life discussion with a lifelong resident of the Sahara's sands.

About 40% of Tunisia is in the Sahara Desert, with the oases of Tozeur, Douz, and Ghilane lining its boundary in the southwestern part of the country. Living up to the classic image of an endless expanse of dunes, the Great Eastern Erg (or Grand Erg Oriental) extends southward from Douz and covers about 46,000 square miles.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Lodging: Ghilane OAT Sahara Tented Camp
Sahara Desert, Tunisia

Day 12: Tuesday, Dec 28 - Visit Ksar Ghilhane/View Sunset at Chenini



This morning, we head back into the Saharan dunes, traveling until we reach the ancient Roman Fort Ghilhane, where we leave our four-wheel-drive vehicles behind in favor of the traditional all-terrain desert transportation – camels. In this timeless Bedouin tradition, we continue our desert trek to the nearby oasis of Ksar Ghilane. We enjoy lunch at a tented camp in the Ghilane oasis before departing for Tataouine. We'll arrive there in the early evening, and have dinner at our Tataouine hotel.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Lodging: Sango Privilege Tataouine Hotel
Route De Chenini
3200 Tataouine, Tunisia
Tel: 0011 216 75860102

<http://catalogue.sangho.fr/Default.html> (page 22 - 24)
<http://www.sangho.fr/index.html> (parle' vous Frances)

Day 13: Wednesday, Dec 29 - Discover the Ksar Route/Sunset at Chenini/Farewell dinner

After breakfast, we head out to discover the Ksar Route, along which lie more of the castle-like fortified villages known as ksars, centuries-old redoubts whose exotic architecture was featured in the Star Wars movies. We visit the villages of Chenini and Tataouine, and enjoy lunch at a local restaurant before heading on to Ksar Hadada--a maze of courtyards, stairways, and doorways built atop a small hill. We visit Ksar Hedada; an especially fine example of the ksars in this area. Particularly striking are the beehive-like ghorfas, vaulted granaries once used by Berber tribes for storing their grain and protecting it from their enemies. Located on easily defended hilltops or hidden away in palm-dotted oases, some ksars blend in with their surroundings to be virtually invisible to any enemy.

Tonight we'll enjoy a farewell dinner in Ksar Ouled Dabbeb before returning to our hotel.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Lodging: Sango Privilege Tataouine Hotel

<http://catalogue.sangho.fr/Default.html> (page 22 - 24)

Day 14: Thursday, Dec 30 - Overland to Djerba/Fly to Tunis/Farewell Dinner in Tunis

We return to Tunisia's seacoast today to explore the island of Djerba, which can be reached from the mainland by a causeway or via ferry. Djerba is a historic city of whitewashed mosques, traditional menzels (small fortified land holdings), and groves of olive and citrus trees located on an island on Tunisia's Mediterranean coast. Upon arrival here, we'll visit a souk (market) and have lunch at a local restaurant.

Later in the afternoon, we fly to the seaside town of Garmmarth, where we'll have a final overnight stay before returning to the U.S. We'll enjoy a final dinner in Tunisia this evening with our trip leader and traveling companions in the city of Tunis where this adventure began 13 days ago.

Meals Included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Lodging: Karthago Le Palace
Complexe Cap
Gammarth BP 68
2078 Tunisi
Tel: 0011 216 71 205500

<http://www.karthagolepalace.com/index.php>

Day 15: Friday, Dec 31 - Return to U.S.

After breakfast this morning, we transfer to the Tunis airport to board our flight home to the U.S.

Flight 1

Departure: **06:25 AM** Tunis, Tunisia - Carthage, terminal M
 Arrival: 07:50 AM Rome, Italy - Fiumicino, terminal 3
 Airline: **Alitalia AZ867** Duration: 1:25
 Change of plane required. Time between flights = 2:35.

Flight 2

Departure: **10:25 AM** Rome, Italy - Fiumicino terminal 3
 Arrival: 02:10 PM New York, USA - John F Kennedy, terminal 1
 Airline: **Alitalia AZ608** Duration: 9:45
 Change of plane required. Time between flights = 2:35.

Flight 3

Departure: **04:45 PM** New York, USA - John F Kennedy, terminal 3
 Arrival: 07:35 PM Atlanta, USA - Hartsfield Jackson, terminal S
 Airline: **Delta Air Lines DL061** Duration: 2:50

Meals not included:

Day 1 – Boston, Lunch	\$25	Day 2 – Tunis, Lunch	\$25 **
Day 3 – Tunis, Dinner	\$40 **	Day 4 – Tunis, Dinner	\$40 **
Day 5 – Hammemt, Dinner	\$40 **	Day 6 – Kairouan, Dinner	\$40 **
Day 10 - Tozeur, Dinner	\$40 **	Day 15 – New York, Brunch	\$40
		Total Meals:	\$290

Tips (per person, per day):

OAT trip leader: \$7 - \$10	15 x \$20 = \$300
Local guide: \$3 - \$4	15 x \$8 = \$120 **
Driver ½ day or full day tours: \$3 - \$4	15 x \$8 = \$120 **
Sahara camp staff: \$10 - \$15	\$30 **
Housekeeping: \$1 per night	15 x \$1 = \$15 **
Public restroom attendants: \$0.30 - \$0.50	15 x \$2 = \$30 **
	Total Tips: \$615

TND/USD  OANDA

Interbank Rate +/- 0%

Dec 2, 2010

TND	USD	TND	USD	TND	USD
1	0.68	15	10.20	45	30.59
2	1.36	20	13.60	50	33.99
3	2.04	25	17.00	100	67.98
4	2.72	30	20.39	250	169.95
5	3.40	35	23.79	500	339.91
10	6.80	40	27.19	1,000	679.81