

News from Nan

TRAVEL

MOROCCO 2012

SEPTEMBER 30, 2012 | DICK



Madrasa teacher

In September 2012 we took a Road Scholar trip to Spain and Morocco. This post covers Morocco; another post covers Spain.

We left Spain at Tarifa and crossed the Strait of Gibraltar on a ferry, which landed in Tangier, Morocco. Since the time of the Moorish invasion of Spain in 711, the two countries have been linked with common history, but Morocco is a very different place than Spain. Morocco is ruled by a king, Mohammed VI (who is very popular), and it is a Muslim country. The Muslim religion, Sunni Islam, has a huge influence over life and we saw it everywhere. We also heard it quite a bit, since there is a call to prayer broadcast over loudspeakers five times each day, starting at 5:30 am.

The people of Morocco are roughly half Arab and half Amazighi (aka Berber). Most people speak both French and Arabic. We learned a few Arabic words, but it is not an easy language to learn!

In Morocco the main meal is usually served at mid-day. Meals we ate usually consisted of a salad first course, a *Tangine* second course (like a stew) and then a dessert and a glass of mint tea. No alcohol is served at meals, although for our group, wine was sometimes available.



Tangine



Tea with mint



Chefchaouen: City view



Chefchaouen: Hotel Parador



Cat with kitten



Door



Slippers



Hadra band



Fes: Medina



Fes: Fruit



Fes: Donkey



Fes: Satellite dishes



Fes: Tile wall



Fes: Tannery



Fes: Blue pigment



Casablanca: Hassan III Mosque



Casablanca



Casablanca: Anna at mosque



Casablanca: Stained window in Catholic church



Casablanca: Dick at mosque

We stopped in four cities:

- **Chefchaouen** in the Rif mountains. It is a very pretty spot. Most of the houses are painted blue.
- **Fes**, an old imperial city famous for its Medina, where you can easily get lost. Here we also visited the leather tanneries.
- **Rabat**, the capital of Morocco and home of one of the royal palaces. Near it we visited **Chellah**, the ruins of a Roman city.
- **Casablanca** (no, there really was no Rick's Cafe here in World War II). This city has the worst traffic we have ever seen. It is the business capital of Morocco and is the most cosmopolitan place we saw.

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