# TUNISIA - History, Arts & Traditions

## Historical & Cultural and Journey Throughout Tunisia

### December 25, 2010- January 7, 2011

**Day 1** (**Saturday December 25th**): Arrival in **Tunis**

Personalized welcome by PromoTunisia staff in Tunis Carthage Airport. Check in Tunisia Palace 4*, a restored french colonial building at the border of the Medina in downtown Tunis. Dinner at leisure at the hotel or a suggestion is to dine at leisure in high style at a converted Ottoman palace in the medina, Dar el Jeld. Dinner will include a selection of mouthwatering delicacies, accompanied by harp player and authentic Moorish music.

**Day 2** (**Sunday December 26th**):**Bardo Museum/Utica/Bizerte (B,D)**

The day will start with a visit of the National Museum of the Bardo, one of the best archaeological museums of the Mediterranean world, especially known for its beautiful collection of mosaics, the World's largest, and located in an old palace that belonged to the Beys, the rulers of Tunisia.

Depart to Utica and Bizerte. Utica was the contender to power with the city of Carthage. Situated at the sea, along the only river that carries water in summer time, Utica collaborated with the Romans, in order to weaken its opponent.

Bizerte is at one and the same time the most French and the oldest city of Tunisia. Bizerte served as a French base for five years into the Tunisian independence. It is one rare city that meets the water, It's "defended" from the sea by a double kasbah that is in perfect shape despite the 400 years of age.

Tonight, dinner and overnight at Tunisia Palace 4*.

**Day 3** (**Monday December 27th**): **Medina of Tunis/Carthage/Sidi Bou Said (B)**

After breakfast, tour the Medina, the old city (the largest in North Africa, larger than Fez or Cairo), with its wonderful mosques, palaces and covered market places. Visit ottoman houses that illustrates the way of life and customs of the nineteenth century Tunis. After lunch at leisure, your archaeological discovery of Tunisia continues with a tour of the Carthage Museum, the Punic city and the Roman Baths of Anthonin. Visit the famous Punic Harbors, the Roman Villas and the Theater, all sites excavated in the past fifteen years thanks to an international archaeological campaign led by UNESCO. Dinner at leisure, overnight Tunisia Palace 4*.

Discover Sidi Bou Said, a village with immaculate white and blue houses, that has managed to preserve its charm and peacefulness. Stroll through Sidi Bou's narrow streets bordered by white-washed houses with blue shutters and doors. Check out the various art galleries, try a bambalouni, light and crispy Tunisian style doughnut with some mint tea in one of the cafes.

**Day 4** (**Tuesday December 28th)** : **Dougga/Kairouan (B,L,D)**

In the morning, leave for Dougga, the best-preserved roman city in Africa, listed in 1997 in the UNESCO world heritage list. on our way to Dougga, we will stop by the andalusian village of Testour.

Visit Dougga, where you will find the most extensive Roman ruins in the country, noted for a 2nd-century-B.C. Punic mausoleum, several temples, a Forum, a marketplace and the Square of the Four Winds.

Leaving Dougga, travel south to Kairouan, the holiest city in Tunisia with its impressive Islamic monuments some dating to 670AD. Check in and dinner at your hotel (La Kasbah 5* lies at the heart of the holy city of Kairouan. This hotel, with a luxurious inside and a sober outlook, merges harmoniously into the Arab-Islamic architecture of the city of Kairouan).

**Day 5** (**Wednesday December 29th**):**Kairouan/El Djem (B, L, D)**

After breakfast, visit the sacred city, home to the Great Mosque built in the 9th Century, a great fortified building where many Roman columns were reused to build the prayer hall. Next to impressive water reservoirs built in the 9th century by the Aghlabid dynasty, you will stop at a lovely mosque covered with blue and white tiles. Kairouan also has some of the most beautiful and best quality carpets in the country.

Depart to El Djem, the site of a very impressive Roman amphitheater (which once held more than 30,000 spectators).

Lunch at Le Bonheur restaurant in El Djem, a tiny family restaurant that serves fresh central Tunisian food.

Return to Kairouan in the afternoon, walk through the winding street of the old town of Kairouan, taste the traditional local pastry stuffed with dates called makroudh, and learn about the traditional savoir-faire of women making rugs.

**Day 6** (**Thursday December 30th**):**Sbeitla/Tozeur (B,L)**

After breakfast, our Sahara berber and nomad jounrney begins. 4X4 departure to Tozeur-, an oasis town rising from the sands of the Sahara desert.

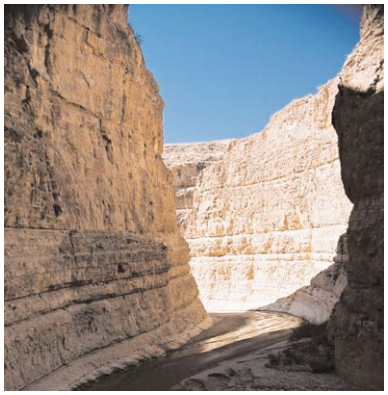
We will stop by the Roman ruins of Sufetula, containing the best preserved forum temples in Tunisia. Lunch in route near Gafsa.

Afternoon arrival in Tozeur. Check in Ras el Ain 4* (or Dar Cheraiet 4*). Visit the Belvedere of Tozeur, with its 300,000 palm trees and over 400 hot and cold springs.

After New Year eve dinner (at leisure) and celebration at the hotel, visit the Dar Cheraiet museum, an architectural jewel born of 1001 nights dreams. The museum, partially outdoor features luxurious decorations and gardens with the most representative scenes of North African life.

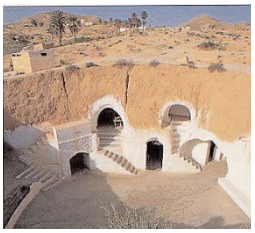
**Day 7** (**Friday December 31st**):**MountainOases/Ong Jmel (B,L,D)**

Depart to Metlaoui. Visit the golden triangle of Mountain oases, Tamerza, Mides and Chebika. Lunch near Tamerza. Explore the Mountain Oases of Mides and Chebika, which are perched in granite mountains above the Sahara and provide scenery for filmmakers in search of Biblical landscapes. On your way back to Tozeur, we will visit the set of George Lucas's Star Wars at Ong Jmel before returning to Tozeur. Dinner at the hotel.



**Day 8** (**Saturday January 1st**):**Douz/Matmata/Djerba (B)**

After breakfast, departure to Douz "gateway to the Sahara." Cross the dry salt lake of Chott el Djerid to arrive at this quiet, oasis village which is home to the Festival of the Sahara and features a daily camel market.



After lunch at Sahara Douz, continue to the Berber village of Matmata and its famous troglodytes, homes built underground to protect the Berbers from summer heat and winter cold. One of these fabulous Berber village with its pitted lunar landscapes was the set of the Spielberg's movie Raiders of the Lost Arc and Lucas “Star Wars”.

Depart ot Djerba, land of the Lotus-eaters in Homer's Odyssey. Dinner at leisure in Djerba, overnight Sofitel

**Day 9** (**Sunday January 2nd**):**Island of Djerba (B, D)**

Morning visit of the Island: areas of interest include the Ghriba synagogue, built in the 6th century BC (fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians), one of the holiest Jewish places that hosts annual pilgrimage of Jews from all over the world and holds one of the most ancient Torah's in the world. Also, Houmt Souk, the island's capital, for a chance to experience local markets, crafts and foods, the museum of arts and popular traditions in Sidi Zitouni and the village of Guellala for its potteries. Lunch at leisure, suggested restaurant is Haroun, fresh catch of the day.

For those returning to Tunis, Late afternoon flight from Djerba to Tunis. Check in Tunisia Palace, Dinner and overnight.

**for those continuing into our 14 days journey, dinner and overnight in Djerba Sofitel 5***

**Day 10** (**Monday January 3rd**):**Tunis/Europe/US (B)**

After breakfast, Depart to the airport.

**Day 10** (**Monday January 3rd**):**Tatouine/Ksours (B,D)**

This morning drive south through the Dahar Mountains to the Berber village of Tataouine. Here we visit the Ksours, fortified stone castles or homes carved in the steep sides of the surrounding mountains. We will also explore the Ghorfas, buildings in the Ksours originally used by the Berbers as warehouses, then as lodgings.

Departure for Ksar Ghilane, an exotic oasis famous for its dunes and hot water spring. Check in 4* tents Pansea developed in harmony with the surrounding environment and local traditions. Silence and vastness around the camp makes for a magical and unforgettable night. Dinner and overnight in Ksar Ghilane.

**Day 11** (**Tuesday January 4th**):**Ksar Ghilane/Djerba B)**

Enjoy the immensity of the Sahara desert at Ksar Ghilane. The Grand Erg Oriental near Ksar Ghilane truly offers vast spaces for exploring and the emotion of tasting the nomad life. Enjoy amazing camel rides to the deserted fort of Ksar Ghilane and into the Sahara desert.

Drive to the Island of Djerba. Fly to Tunis in the early evening. check in Dar el Medina 4*, restored boutique hotel. Dine (at leisure) in high style at a converted Ottoman palace in the medina, Dar el Jeld. Dinner would include a selection of mouthwatering delicacies, accompanied by harp player and authentic Moorish music.

**Day 12** (**Wednesday January 5th**):**Hammamet/Kerkouane/Haouaria (B,L)**

Departure to the coastal city of Hammamet noted for its orange and lemon groves as well as its historic landmarks. Here you will find the walled town, a 13th-century fortress, a 15th-century Casbah and Dar Sebastian, a beautiful home with luscious gardens.

Continue to Kerkouane, a UNESCO world heritage site, has the best punic ruins after the ancient Carthagian country, as they were only partly destroyed in the mid of the 2nd centuryAround the site where the layout is clearly visible, many houses still show their walls, and the coloured clay on the facades is often still visible.

Continue to Haouaria, best known for the Roman quarries. Haouaria is the closest point, in Tunisia, to Sicily. Lunch in El Harouaria at “le Pecheur” featuring fresh seafood and fish. Go back to Tunis.

Dinner at leisure, overnight Dar Fatma, boutique hotel in Sidi Bou Said.

**Day 13 (Thursday January 6th): Sousse/Medina (B)**

Today is dedicated to the coastal city of Sousse, third largest city of Tunisia. Sousse has a majestic Medina with high crenellated ramparts dating from the 9th century that recalls its Medieval past as a center for dissiminating Islam and a stronghold for protecting the coast against Christian Invasion. Sousse is classified in the UNESCO World Heritage Site,and its historical museum is one of the best in North Africa.

**R**eturn to Tunis area in the afternoon.

Spend some time in the Medina and its Souks, colorful local markets to discover the exquisite craftsmanship of Tunisia's artisans and discover the traditions and cultural heritage of Tunisia in the various libraries and bookstoresshop at leisure in the afternoon.

Dinner at leisure. Overnight Dar Fatma, boutique hotel in Sidi Bou Said.

**Day 14** (**Friday January 7th**):**Tunis (B)**

After breakfast, Depart to Tunis Carthage airport.

## Price Proposal and Inclusions

- Minivan/SUV Comfort AC/Heat with experienced driver in Northern and Central Tunisia
- Transfers from and to Airports
- English-speaking Tunisian Tour Director
- Baggage handling/service fees, Parking fees/Highway fees, tips (but tips to main guide and driver)
- Hotels stays (includes Breakfast)
  Tunisia Palace boutique hotel 4* -- 3 nights, Kasbah 5*--2 nights, Ras el Ain 4*--2 nights, Pansea 4*- 1 night, Sofitel 5* or Ulysse Palace 5*--2 nights, Dar el Medina 4*- 3 nights
- Breakfasts throughout, Lunches & Dinners as specified
- All Entrance fees in sites and monuments
- one way flight Djerba-Tunis

**Total Cost Per Person Superior Package (14 Days with a private Tour Director and a private Chauffeur--small group of max 5 participants)**

**= $3,980**

**Single Supplement=$960**