Tunisia--throughout Centuries & Geographies

October 13 to October 26, 2006

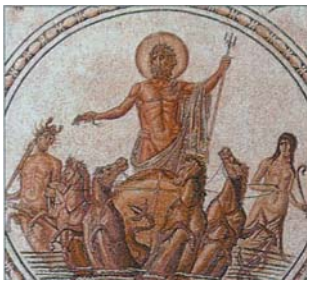
Friday October 13, 2006: Arrival to Tunis

Arrival from the US. Personalized welcome by PromoTunisia staff at Tunis Carthage airport . Transfer at the small boutique hotel (24 rooms only) Dar Said 4* (http://www.darsaid.com.tn) in the hills of Sidi Bou Said, a village with immaculate white and blue houses, that has managed to preserve its charm and peacefulness.
Dinner at leisure, overnight Sidi Bou Said.

Saturday October 14, 2006: Medina of Tunis

In the morning, visit the Medina of Tunis, the largest in North Africa (larger than Fez, Algiers or Cairo). Visit popular districts of Tunis, the area of the Ottoman Palaces, the Zitouna mosque and the Dar Ben Abdallah, house of arts and traditions which illustrate the way of life and customs of the nineteenth century Tunis.
Lunch at leisure (we recommend restaurant Escheick serving authentic Tunisian--very typical, and visited by Tunisians only). After lunch, 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 bookstores.

Dinner at leisure in Sidi Bou Said Dinner at leisure (we can make a reservation at nearby restaurant Dar Zarrouk (3 fourchettes), Tunisian and Mediterranean specialties .



Sunday October 15, 2006: Bardo Museum/Carthage/Sidi Bou Said

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. Lunch at leisure.

Afternoon visit to the UNESCO World Heritage Site City of Carthage, the oldest phoenician settlement on the coast of North Africa, and its glorious monuments: the Anthonin thermes, the Tophet at Salambo, the Amphiteatre, the Punic ports, the Acropolium and the archaeological museum of Carthage. Continue to the WWII North Africa US military (battles of North Africa, Kasserine Pass battle...).

Finish the day at Sidi Bou Said, stroll through Sidi Bou's narrow streets bordered by whitewashed 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 of Sidi Bou Said and enjoy the superb view of the gulf of Tunis from one of Sidi Bou's traditional café.

Dinner and overnight at leisure. We recommend “Au Bon Vieux Temps” (2 fourchettes), seafood and fish specialties, 5mn walking from your hotel.

Monday October 16, 2006: Dougga/Kairouan

Today, we will visit the archaeological site of Dougga, one of the best-preserved roman cities in Africa. Built on an elevated site overlooking a fertile plain, Dougga was the capital of Punic and Roman states.

Listed in 1997 in the UNESCO World Heritage List, Dougga was originally a Punic town, which allied with Rome against Carthage and as a result of that was granted some degree of independence. Romanization started in 150 AD. Dougga became an influential agricultural centre, controlling important trade routes to the coast (Carthage). Dougga also has important marble quarries and fresh water supplies, which made it prosperous.

Lunch at nearby Thugga.

Continue to the holy city of Tunisia, Kairouan. 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).

Tuesday October 17, 2006: Kairouan/El Djem

Visit the ninth century great mosque of Oqba ibn Nafi, an important reference point in Islam and Islamic architecture. Kairouan is the fourth holiest site in the Muslim religion (after Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem). It is said that 7 pilgrimages to Kairouan equates one pilgrimage to Mecca. Departure to el Djem's spectacular amphitheatre that dates from 238 A.D, and is the second largest in the World only to Rome's. Visit the newly opened small museum and the excavations extending behind the museum where beautiful mosaics have been found. Lunch le Bonheur el Djem.

Return to Kairouan in the afternoon, walk at your leisure in the souks, taste the traditional local pastry stuffed with dates called makroudh, and learn about the traditional savoir-faire of women making rugs. Dinner and overnight La Kasbah.

Wednesday October 18, 2006: Sousse/Monastir

Morning departure to the coastal city of Sousse, third largest in Tunisia.

Sousse is one of seven UNESCO World Heritage Sites of Tunisia. Visit the ramparts, the Ribat dating from the 13th century. Continue to the archaeological museum of Sousse where beautiful mosaics from ancient Hasdrumete were found. Lunch la marmite Sousse.

Continue to the city of Monastir to visit the Bourguiba mausoleum, a comtemporary piece of great arabo-ottoman architecture. Return to Kairouan, dinner and overnight.

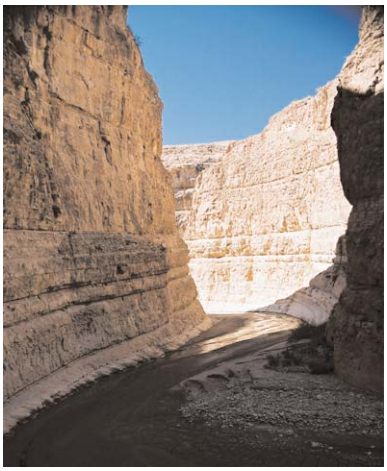
Thursday October 19, 2006: Sbeitla/Tozeur

Today our archeaological discovery of Tunisia ends in style with the Roman site of Sbeitla, one of the most important sites in Tunisia. Lunch Gafsa.
Our Sahara adventure starts with an arrival to the oasis of Tozeur, launching point to Caravans heading deep down in the Sahara. Check in at hotel "Dar Cheraiet"5*, (http://www.darcherait.com.tn) an architectural jewel born of 1001 nights dreams. The beautifully-tiled Moorish bath will take you back a few centuries. Dinner at hotel.

Friday October 20, 2006: Tozeur/Nefta

Today is dedicated to the visit of the oases of Tozeur and Nefta with their natural hot and cold springs and their hundreds of thousands of palmier trees. Lunch at Nefta.
Evening visit of the Dar museum, partially outdoor, and laid out like an amusement park. It features luxurious decorations and gardens with representative scenes of North African life. Dinner and overnight Dar Cheraiet.

Saturday October 21, 2006: Mountain Oases- Mides, Chebika, Tamerza (set of “The English Patient” and “Star Wars”)



Depart to Metlaoui. Visit the Selja gorges with the Red Lizard Train--depending on availability of the train that day (schedule unpublished yet): the Red Lizard, the train belonging to the Bey of Tunisia (ottoman royalty of Tunisia in the 19th century) is part of the colonial spirit. With six wagons, including one used by the Bey, the train takes you to discover the famous and otherwise inaccessible Selja gorges. Continue by Toyota 4x4 to Tamerza, a verdant mountain oasis overlooking a drop of hundreds of meters to the Oued El Khanga ravine and a superb waterfall.

Lunch in the Tamerza Palace. Afternoon visit to the Mountain Oases of Mides and Chebika, which are perched in granite mountains above the Sahara and provided scenery for filmmakers in search of Biblical landscapes (Indiana Jone: raiders of the lost ark). On your way back to Tozeur, enjoy the ride on the sand dunes of the Sahara desert along the settings of George Lucas's Star Wars at Ong Jmel. Dinner at Dar Cheraiet.

Sunday October 22, 2006: Douz/Ksar Ghilane

After breakfast, departure to Douz "gateway to the Sahara." This quiet, oasis village is home to the Festival of the Sahara and features a daily camel market.
Cross the dry salt lake of Chott el Djerid, arrive at Douz where we will ride camels in the area of the golden triangle made up of three small oases. Lunch Sahara Douz. 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. Silence and vastness around the camp makes for a magical and unforgettable night. Dinner and overnight Ksar Ghilane.

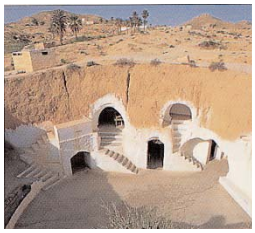
Monday October 23, 2006: Ksar Ghilane

The Grand Erg Oriental near Ksar Ghilane truly offers vast spaces for exploring and the emotion of tasting the nomad life. Enjoy the immensity of the Sahara desert at Ksar Ghilane on an amazing camel ride (horse ride available too) to the deserted Roman fort of Ksar Ghilane. Lunch Pansea.

Dinner and overnight in Ksar Ghilane.

Tuesday October 24, 2006: Berber Ksours(Tataouine/Chenini) Matmata/Djerba

Depart to Tataouine (where the name Tatooine in Star Wars came from) driving amid the Dahar Mountains. Visit the Ksours at the Berber village around Tataouine, with their unique houses carved in the steep sides of the surrounding mountains. Visit the Ghorfas buildings in the Ksours originally used by the Berbers as warehouses, then as lodgings. Lunch in route. Return to Djerba towards the end of the day.



After lunch in Tataouine, continue to Matmata and its famous troglodytes, houses built underground to protect the Berbers from intense heat in the summer. Berber villages are among the most exciting places to explore in Tunisia. 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”.

Continue to the Island of Djerba, land of the Lotus-eaters in Homer's Odyssey. Check in and dinner at Sofitel Palm Beach 5*.

Wednesday October 25, 2006: Island of Djerba

Visit 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.

Continue to 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 Haroun Djerba.

Short late afternoon flight from Djerba to Tunis (45mn flight). Check in at hotel Dar El Medina 4* , boutique hotel (http://www.darlemedina.com) inside the Medina of Tunis, a recently opened 4* boutique hotel, restored ottoman palace. Dinner at leisure-recommended nearby Dar el Jeld, the best restaurant in Tunis http://www.dareljeld.tourism.tn/site2.htm

Thursday October 26, 2006: Tunis

Morning transfer to Tunis Carthage airport. Departure to the US.

Price Proposal and Inclusions

TUNISIA

- Hotels stays in Double Room
  Dar Said Sidi Bou Said 4* boutique hotel---3 nights, Kasbah Kairouan 5*--3 nights, Dar Cheraiet Ottoman Palace 5*--3 nights, Pansea Camp Tents Ksar Ghilane 4*--2 nights, Sofitel 5* Djerba--1 night, Dar el Medina Tunis 4*---1 night

- All Breakfasts, Lunches and Dinners wherever there are no alternatives (i.e. outside the Tunis greater area)

- All Entrance fees in sites and monuments
  Sidi Bou Said sites, All Carthage & Dougga monuments & sites
  All Medina monuments in Tunis & the Bardo Museum
  All monuments in Kairouan (great mosque, Sidi Sahbi, Aghlabites Bassin…)
  All monuments in Sousse & El Djem & Monastir
  Roman sites of Bulla Regia, Dougga, Mactaris
  Roman site of Sbeitla
  Red Lizard Train 19th century through the Selja Gorges
  Tozeur Dar Cheraiet Museum
  Douz/Matmata sites/Berber Ksours
  Ghriba Synagogue/Djerba museums

- Tunisian English-speaking Guide
- Mercedes Comfort AC/Heat with experienced driver for 8 days in Northern and Central Tunisia
- Toyota 4X4 in the Southern part of Tunisia for 5 days with experienced driver
- Transfers from and to Airport (including Djerba)
- Baggage handling/service fees, Parking fees/Highway fees, All Tips but to PromoTunisia Trip Director and Main Driver.

TOTAL LAND TUNISIA/person in DOUBLE

For 7 to 10 participants= $3,180

For 5 to 6 participants= $3,640

For 2 to 4 participants= $3,950

Single Supp= $530

* **No visa required for US Citizens to Tunisia.**

Additional fees apply for the services of an English-Speaking Tour Director/Historian