

St. Olaf Study Travel
Go behind the seen

**Morocco: African Explorations from
Imperial Cities to the Sahara Desert**

June 1–14, 2010

Program leaders: Richard Allen, professor of Computer Science, and Wendy Allen, professor of French

Since gaining its independence in 1956, Morocco has struggled to preserve its traditions while adapting to the 21st century. We will study Moroccan culture and society, paying particular attention to its multicultural heritage and resulting questions of identity. Our itinerary is designed to explore Morocco's history, beliefs, traditions and practices, as well as its art and literature.

We will also examine the stunning mosaic designs which appear throughout Morocco, most especially in Fes, where geometric motifs are still being created on a large scale. In order to understand the origins and significance of Islamic geometric art, we will explore the tenets, history and cultural development of Islam. Finally, we will look at the everyday life of contemporary practicing Muslims.

Along the way, we will not ignore Morocco's many treasures, its Kasbahs, souks, landscapes, Berber tent villages and tantalizing cuisine, to name just a few tempting attractions.

Discover Some of Morocco's Distinctive Features

- **Fes** — the most ancient and perhaps the greatest of Morocco's imperial cities, it has also been called the spiritual heart of Morocco. Within the walls of its medina, Fes el Bali (Old Fes) lies the world's largest intact medieval city. Prepare for a glorious assault on your senses!
- **Sahara Desert** — camp in the dunes overnight and witness the beginning of a new Moroccan day from the edge of the Sahara. Experiencing the desert's utter tranquility while feeling the cold, soft grains of sand between your toes can be one of the most serene, invigorating and spiritual moments you'll ever have.
- **Marrakech** — with a boisterous history, this former imperial capital is a vibrant crossroad of cultures. Experience daily life in the medina in a city surrounded by both palm trees and arid pockets of desert.
- **Hassan II Mosque** — a stunning piece of architecture, it is the world's second largest and most high-tech mosque, with heated flooring and a retractable roof.

(Descriptions from frommers.com)

Program Leaders

Professor of French Wendy Allen and Professor of Computer Science Richard Allen custom designed this program with our long-time land provider, Menara Tours. Since 2001, Rich and Wendy have led students on Term in the Middle East once and Global Semester twice.

At St. Olaf since 1977, Wendy has taught courses in French language, culture and literature, and has led numerous January Interim courses for students in France. Her particular areas of research include 17th-century French literature, contemporary France, second language acquisition and

pedagogy. She has also been deeply involved with St. Olaf's Foreign Languages Across the Curriculum program.

Richard came to St. Olaf in 1975 to establish the computer science program and has been involved ever since. For the past 20 years, Rich has conducted research on French artificial intelligence teams in Rennes and Grenoble. He has spent three successive sabbatical leaves in France working on these teams. A result of his Middle East work is a course on Islamic geometric patterns that he teaches at St. Olaf.

Richard and Wendy plan to lead January Interim courses in Morocco in 2010. The topic of Richard's course is Islamic decorative art and its cultural and religious significance in Islam. The theme of Wendy's course is French language and Moroccan culture.

What to Expect

Most of our movement will be by air conditioned private coach. Movement within each city will be on foot. You should be capable of walking up to five miles per day over possibly uneven terrain (e.g. cobblestones or sidewalks in disrepair) in crowded souks and medinas, climbing stairs that may not have handrails, keeping pace with an active group of travelers on long days of traveling, dealing with the emotional highs and lows that can occur when experiencing a different culture, and being a considerate member of a group (prompt, courteous and flexible).

Hotels will be tourist class (three- or four-star) with private baths, air conditioning and English-speaking staff. We will spend one night in nomad tents in the Sahara Desert. The tents, made from dark wool material, accommodate four to six people and are large enough to stand up in and move around easily. Bedding is low to the floor. A central building contains toilets and showers.

Temperatures in early June will be warm, averaging highs in the mid-to-upper 80s Fahrenheit and lows in the mid-60s. Rainfall is negligible.

Plan to see your family physician or a travel doctor at least four to six weeks prior to departure, preferably earlier, to talk about routine vaccinations. For more information on travel health, visit cdc.gov or who.it.

Program Fee

The program fee is \$4,600 per person through Feb. 1, 2010. Based on double occupancy, it includes seminars by Richard and Wendy Allen, assistance by a national guide, roundtrip airfare from Minneapolis/St. Paul, accommodations, breakfast daily and several other group meals, group tours, admissions for group activities, ground transportation and gratuities.

For single occupancy, add \$600. To travel "land only" (making your own arrangements to and from Casablanca), subtract \$1,400.

After Feb. 1, 2010, the program fee is \$4,750 per person and could be subject to additional airfare.

Continuing Education Units

Approximately 40 hours of continuing education are available.

Register Today

Go "behind the seen" with St. Olaf Study Travel. Register online at stolaf.edu/studytravel, call toll-free 866-255-6523 or fax a completed form to 507-646-8232. A deposit of \$500 per person guarantees your space.