

**Ayelet** TOURS

THE MEMORIES LAST FOREVER!

Temple Beth Elohim  
Jewish Heritage Journey to  
**MOROCCO**



Led by Cantor Jodi Sufrin  
& Cantor Roy Einhorn  
December 3-14, 2025

Embark on a captivating journey through Morocco, where centuries-old Jewish history is interwoven with the rich cultural fabric of the country. This itinerary explores the vibrant cities, ancient medinas and sacred sites that tell the story of Morocco's once-thriving Jewish communities. From the historic Mellahs (Jewish quarters) of Fez and Marrakech to the beautifully preserved synagogues and cemeteries, you'll uncover the profound influence of Jewish culture on Morocco's heritage. Along the way, you'll experience the warmth of Moroccan hospitality, the beauty of its landscapes and the resilience of Jewish traditions that continue to thrive today. This journey offers a unique insight into the enduring legacy of Jewish life in Morocco, a country where coexistence and cultural exchange have flourished for centuries.

### Physical Activity Scale



We are delighted that we have been able to secure **Dr. David Mendelsohn** to join us on our trip to Morocco, in addition to our local guide, to bring added depth to our learning as we travel the country together.

## DAY 1

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2025  
DEPARTURE

- We depart the United States on our overnight flight to Morocco.

## DAY 2

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2025  
WELCOME TO MOROCCO!

- Welcome to Morocco! We arrive at **Marrakech Menara Airport**, where we are met by our local guide who will assist us through customs and baggage claim.
- As we begin our journey in **Marrakech**, our tour educator will discuss why so many people over the centuries have been drawn to the city. Our first stop is the **mellah of Marrakech** (Jewish quarter). Until the 20th century, most urban Moroccan Jews, including in Marrakech, lived in walled, Jewish-only areas. We'll explore whether these quarters resembled the ghettos of Europe or were something quite different, as we discuss the sometimes close, sometimes brutal relations between Jews and Muslims in Morocco. Our tour will include:
  - **Slat Al Azama Synagogue:** This "Synagogue of Exiles" was established around 1792 by Jews who were expelled or fled from Catholic persecution in Spain and Portugal. The synagogue's ornamentation, attractive blue and white decor and small but active community are all examples of how the Jewish traditions of Marrakech are being maintained.
  - **Marrakech Jewish Cemetery:** The cemetery has been recently restored after years of neglect. Here, we'll see monuments and graves commemorating children who perished during the epidemics that ravished the city's crowded Jewish quarter in the 17th century. We learn about great rabbis and Kabbalists of Marrakech and discuss why many Jews from around the world make pilgrimages to their graves.
- We check into our hotel and have a chance to freshen up.
- This evening, we enjoy a delicious **welcome dinner** at our hotel.

### Overnight in Marrakech (D)





## DAY 3

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2025  
THE OLD CITY OF MARRAKECH

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- Today, we enjoy an **introductory tour of Marrakech** and get our first glimpse into this whirlwind of a city, which combines the madcap energy of its marketplaces with the serene rhythms of its religious life.
- The **Djemaa El Fna Square** is an enormous market and a thrilling experience. According to one theory, its name means "the assembly of the dead" and refers to the public executions that used to take place here. Today, this square teems with life. Locals gather to shop, talk and eat some of the best street food in all of Morocco. There's always something going on, so get ready for a daily carnival of snake charmers, street vendors, musicians, storytellers and acrobats.
- Next, we'll tour the **Medina** (walled city) of Marrakech, one of Morocco's four imperial cities, also known as the Red City for the red walls that surround it. The Medina is a thrilling, multifaceted area, which includes:
  - **Bab Agnaou:** A huge, superbly decorated gate allowing entrance into the royal city.
  - **Bahia Palace:** Built in the late 19th century by Morocco's leading artisans, many consider this to be the finest palace built anywhere in the world during this time. Certainly its architecture, gardens and design render it a remarkable achievement of Moroccan culture. Among its features is a harem where vizier Abu Ahmed's four wives and 24 concubines lived.
  - **The Saadian Tombs:** The tombs provide lavish insight into the wealth and power structure of the Saadian dynasty that ruled Morocco from 1549 to 1659. The greatest of their kings, Ahmed al-Mansour, is buried in the magnificent Chamber of 12 Pillars in a tomb made from Italian marble and gilded with pure gold. Less exalted princes and rulers from the dynasty are buried nearby. The royal wives, chancellors and the king's Jewish advisor were "relegated" to graves in the still impressive gardens.
- **OPTIONAL:** Enjoy a **pottery class**, learning one of the most common forms of artistry in Morocco.
- As the sun sets over the city, we join together for **Kabbalat Shabbat services** at a local synagogue. A Marrakech Jewish family will be our hosts for **Shabbat dinner**. This will be a chance to share the warmth, blessings and food of a Moroccan Shabbat and to talk with local Jews about their lives. Find out why they continue to call Morocco home when so many of their relatives and friends left for other lands, hear about contemporary Moroccan Muslim attitudes toward the Jewish community and discuss whether they believe Marrakech has a Jewish future.

**Overnight in Marrakech (B, D)**



## DAY 4

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2025  
A MOROCCAN SHABBAT

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- Today, we depart for the **Ourika Valley** in the High Atlas Mountains, where we see the special relationship the Moroccan Jewish community has with the area. Here, we visit the grave of the tzaddik, **Rabbi Shlomo ben Hensh**, where the first Berber and Moroccan Jews have visited for generations of prayer and special requests. We hear the **story of Hananiyah Elfassie**, one of the last Berber Jews, who devoted his life to protecting the grave and preserving Rabbi Hensh's memory.
- We take part in a **Moroccan home cooking workshop** and enjoy **lunch** of your own making.
- After lunch, we return to Marrakech.
- Named after the traditional Jewish Moroccan celebrations held at the end of Passover, **Association Mimouna** is an organization of Muslim students who honor the country's Jewish traditions and promote Jewish-Muslim friendship. We'll meet some of the students and hear of their activities, which range from kosher cooking workshops to organizing one of the Islamic world's first conferences commemorating victims of the Holocaust.
- After time to refresh, we set out to enjoy an **evening tour by horse-drawn carriage**.
- This evening, we enjoy dinner on our own.

Overnight in Marrakech (B, L)



## DAY 5

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2025  
ON THE ROAD TO FEZ

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- Morocco is a melting pot of identities and influences ranging from its indigenous Berber tribes to more recent visitors including the French, who ruled over much of the country from 1912 to 1955. We will spend time in the **French Quarter**, visiting **Majorelle Garden** designed by the French painter and botanist, Jacques Majorelle. The garden and buildings took 40 years to create, but you will see that it was time well spent as we wander along the paths by sparkling pools shaded by gorgeous trees and plants from around the world.
- This afternoon, we board our bus and drive to **Fez**, one of the great medieval cities of the world. It gained its nicknames due to its Muslim and Jewish scholars, spirituality, trade and culture. In the 12th and 13th centuries, Fez was among the world's most populated cities and the home of the Marinid kingdom. We will learn about the kings, communities and creativity that drove Fez as we experience the beauty and liveliness of the city today.
- Upon arrival, we check into our hotel and freshen up before **dinner** together this evening.

Overnight in Fez (B, D)



## DAY 6

MONDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2025  
THE MYSTERIES OF FEZ

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- Despite suffering from periodic persecutions, Fez's **fe (Jewish Quarter)** was home to brilliant scholars, poets and innovators. We will travel back in time to the Golden Age for Jews in Fez from the 8th to 12th centuries, when the community included some key figures in the Jewish world, including Rabbi Moses Maimonides (the Rambam), the great philosopher and religious thinker. We will also find out why the name of the Jewish Quarter comes from the Arab word for salt. Our tour will include:
  - **Ibn Danan Synagogue:** Although recently restored, this is one of the oldest and most important synagogues in North Africa.
  - **Slat El Fassiyine Synagogue:** This once-vital synagogue fell into disrepair after the migration of most of the city's Jews in the 1950s and 1960s. It was used as a boxing ring and carpet factory until it was recently restored with support from overseas funders and the Moroccan government.
  - **Fez Jewish Cemetery:** We will hear stories of some of the city's legendary rabbis and leaders who are buried here and learn about the influence of the tzaddikim, Jewish holy men who were admired by both Jews and Muslims for their scholarliness and reputation as miracle-workers. We will also stop at a **plaque commemorating Sol Hachuel**, a young Jewish woman famed for her beauty who was decapitated in 1834 for refusing to convert to Islam.
- The **Fez Medina** is a dense maze of alleyways and streets and the largest car-free pedestrian zone in the world. Don't worry, our tour educator knows the way through this UNESCO World Heritage site that includes many buildings, mosques and gates from the 12th century.
  - **Local craftsmen:** Catch a glimpse of the craftsmen at work in their shops as they weave, embroider, carve and chisel using ancient techniques.
  - **Madrasa Bou Inania:** Fez contains some of the finest Islamic architecture in the world. This Madrasa (Islamic religious college) was established in 1351 and is famed for its minaret and geometric decorations. It is one of the few Islamic sites in Morocco that is accessible to non-Muslim visitors.
  - A stop for **lunch** at a local restaurant.
  - **Nejjarine Museum of Wooden Arts and Crafts:** Time permitting, we tour this renovated caravanserai that preserves the tools and lifestyles of the traveling merchants who would lodge and sell their goods here.
- The **University of Al-Karaouine** is believed to be the oldest continuously operating university in the world. Today, non-Muslims can view it only from the outside, but in the 12th century, the Rambam (Moses Ben Maimonides) studied medicine and philosophy here.
- Fez is known for its leather goods and its great stretch of tanneries that give the city its distinctive smell. We will visit **Chouara Tannery**, where traditional ways of making leather are still practiced.
- We return to our hotel for a chance to freshen up, then set out for an evening at leisure and dinner on own.

**Overnight in Fez (B, L)**



## DAY 7

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2025  
LEISURE IN FEZ

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- **OPTION 1:** Enjoy the day at leisure exploring Fez on own. Optional on-own activities include:
  - Return to the medina and get lost in the maze of alleyways and stalls; enter from **Bab Boujeloud (blue gate)**, stated to be the most beautiful of the 13 gates
  - View the outside of the **Mausoleum of Moulay Idriss**, part of the Karaouine complex and Fez's most important pilgrimage site, which is not open to non-Muslims
  - Take in nature at the **Jnan Sbil Garden** filled with colorful flowers, shady trees and a peaceful fountain
- **OPTION 2 (separate cost):** After breakfast, we depart for **Ifrane**, the magical city located in the middle Atlas mountains. Known as Morocco's Little Switzerland, this is one of the most beautiful, well-kept cities in Morocco. Our drive will take in views around the city from skiing slopes to green hills and charming mountains covered with inviting white snow, in addition to flowing rivers and shining lakes. We see the famed **stone lion** that sits on the patch of grass in the garden of Mohammed V.
- After time for lunch on own in Ifrane, we continue our day trip through the stunning Atlas mountains in **Azrou**, an old Berber town with the largest cedar forest in Africa, a place where we will encounter **local Barbary Apes**.
- **ALL:** Dinner on own tonight.

Overnight in Fez (B)

## DAY 8

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2025  
MEKNES TO RABAT

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- Today, we depart Fez and travel to **Meknes**, located on a fertile plain north of the Middle Atlas and the former residence of the Sultan. We will examine the **superb architecture** created during the long reign of Moulay Ismail, with its skillful blend of Islamic and European influences. At this finely decorated mausoleum, we will also consider the less attractive characteristics of "Moulay the Bloodthirsty" who is said to have ordered the city walls to be decorated with the heads of 10,000 of his enemies.

- We stop to enjoy **lunch** together at the **Bistro Hotel Transatlantique** overlooking the city walls.
- While the Torah warns that a king should not acquire extra horses, a multitude of wives or excessive amounts of silver and gold, Moulay Ismail took a different approach. He is believed to have had 2,000 wives and concubines who bore him 867 children, although he seems to have been fondest of his 12,000 horses. The **Royal Stables** here are under renovation and cannot be visited at this time, but we will see the opulent **Bab Mansour gate**.
- We **meet with the caretaker of a now-empty synagogue** and discuss the transformation of Jewish life in Morocco. The mass migration of the country's Jews began after the establishment of the State of Israel and accelerated when Morocco gained independence in 1956 from its French rulers. Today, only a few thousand Jews remain. We will talk about Jewish life in Morocco in the past and today and find out why people, often Jews but sometimes Muslims, are determined to maintain these once-crowded places of worship.
- Later this afternoon, we continue to Morocco's royal capital city of **Rabat**.
- Our tour of Rabat will allow us to experience the huge role, historically and currently, that the king plays in Moroccan life. We will walk around the walls of Rabat's **Royal Palace**, the primary (although certainly not the only) residence of the current king, Mohammed VI, and ask whether modern Morocco is an autocracy, a democracy or something in between.
- We check into our hotel before heading out for dinner on own.

Overnight in Rabat (B, L)



## DAY 9

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2025  
ROYAL RABAT

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- Today, we visit the magnificent **mausoleum of Mohammed V**, Morocco's king during WWII, and hear why Moroccan Jews today believe that he should be recognized as one of the Righteous Among the Nations for helping to stop Nazis from deporting Morocco's Jews to the death camps of Europe. His burial building is considered an architectural masterpiece. Also buried here is his son, **Hassan II**, who ruled over Morocco during the so-called "Years of Lead" (1961-1999). We will visit his tomb and hear about this period of conflict, human rights abuses and assassination attempts on the king's life. It was during Hassan's reign that most of the country's Jews migrated to Israel, Canada and France.
- We make our way up to the **Kasbah des Udayas**. This citadel is the oldest part of Rabat, dating back to the 12th century. Sitting high above the river and the Atlantic Ocean, it features gorgeously decorated gates, blue and whitewashed homes and French-influenced gardens.
- We enjoy **lunch** in a local restaurant and a **presentation by Dr. Mohamed Chtatou**, Professor of Education Science at the university in Rabat. He is currently a political analyst with Moroccan, Gulf, French, Italian and British media on politics and culture in the Middle East, Islam and Islamism as well as terrorism. He is also a specialist on political Islam in the MENA region with interest in the roots of terrorism and religious extremism.
- This afternoon, enjoy time at leisure to explore or relax and enjoy our hotel amenities.
- Dinner is on own this evening.

**Overnight in Rabat (B, L)**



## DAY 10

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2025  
CHARMING CASABLANCA

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- We depart Rabat and travel to **Casablanca**. Get your first glimpse of Casablanca on a tour of Morocco's economic hub and largest city. We'll experience its energy and discuss whether the modern and modernizing Casablanca you'll explore has anything in common with the version seen in the classic Hollywood film starring Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman.
- Next, we meet **Rabbi Jacky Sebbag, Director of Ozar HaTorah Neve Shalom Jewish School**. Rabbi Sebbag is a key figure in the Moroccan Jewish community and he'll help us foster a better understanding of Jewish life past and present in Morocco.
- Fast-moving Casablanca is a city of faith, as we'll experience at the **Mosque of Hassan II**. This modern mosque has room for over 100,000 worshipers. It is perched dramatically over the ocean to reflect a verse in the Koran that "God's throne was built upon the water." Over 6,000 master craftspeople created its hand-carved marble walls, retractable roof, and the tallest minaret in the world at almost 700 feet. See if you agree with the builder's patron, King Hassan II, that this is a monument that Casablanca will be proud of "until the end of time."
- We walk through Morocco's rich Jewish heritage at the **Jewish Museum of Morocco**, the Arab world's first museum of its kind. According to legend, Jews arrived in Morocco as early as 800 BCE. By 1948, the Jewish population had grown to an estimated 250,000 - 350,000 and was the largest, and arguably most integrated Jewish community in any Muslim country. The museum includes displays of traditional Jewish-Berber clothing and a feature on goldsmiths, a common Jewish occupation in Morocco.
- We stop by the **Fhal Jewish bakery** to sample the delicious treats, followed by **lunch at Rick's Café**, created to evoke the architecture and atmosphere of the classic Humphrey Bogart film.
- In the 1930s and 1940s, the Jewish community in Casablanca was growing fast as both wealthy merchants and poorer families from villages and towns rushed to the rapidly expanding city. We'll visit **Bet El Synagogue**, where we view the beautiful stained-glass windows and architecture and learn about the rich history of this synagogue that many consider the center of Jewish life in Casablanca. We remain for **Kabbalat Shabbat**, followed by **Shabbat dinner** together.

Overnight in Casablanca (B, L, D)

## DAY 11

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2025  
SHABBAT IN CASALBANCA

- Breakfast and a leisurely morning at our hotel.
- On our final day in Morocco, we relax and enjoy the slower pace of life. Those who wish may choose to head out to explore on own. Some suggested places to visit are as follows:
  - **Parc de la Ligue Arabe**: A peaceful escape from the bustling city and Casablanca's largest green space
  - **Villa des Arts**: This charming gallery showcases Moroccan and international modern art. Located in a beautifully preserved Art Deco building, it offers a quiet retreat into Casablanca's vibrant art scene.
  - **Quartier Habous (New Medina)**: Known for its fusion of French and Moroccan architecture, you can find charming bookshops, artisan bakeries and traditional handicrafts.
- Tonight, we savor, one more time, Morocco's terrific food at our festive **farewell dinner**. There will also be an opportunity to share the experiences and discoveries that have inspired you during our Moroccan adventure as we get ready to say wadaeean (goodbye) and see you soon to Morocco.

Overnight in Casablanca (B, D)

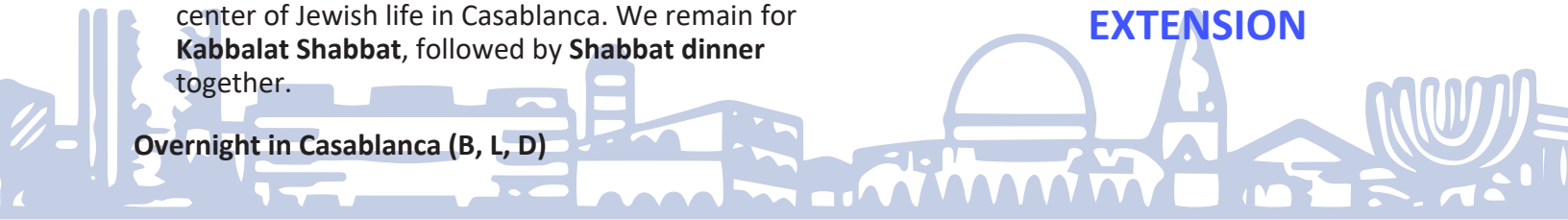
## DAY 12

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2025  
FAREWELL

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- We transfer to the Casablanca Airport for our flights home, landing later today.

(B)

OR JOIN OUR  
TANGIER & CHEFCHAOUEN  
EXTENSION





# TANGIER & CHEFCHAOUEN EXTENSION

## DAY 12

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2025  
TO TANGIER

- We transfer to the train station for our **high speed train to Tangier**, a roughly 2 -hour ride.
- The first Jews migrated to **Tangier** (once known as Tanja or Tingus) after the destruction of the First Temple in Jerusalem and settled among the Berbers. A second wave of migration from the Jews living in the Iberian Peninsula began with the 1492 Alhambra Decree and expulsion. This second wave of immigration changed Moroccan Jewry, as they largely embraced the Andalusia Sephardic liturgy, creating a population of Moroccan Jews that gained a primarily Sephardic identity. The Moors and the Jews intermixed in Tangier, living peacefully side by side. In 1856, Tangier had become the largest port in Morocco. During this time, the Jewish community of Tangier flourished and established schools, hospitals, charitable works and businesses. By 1925 Jews were assigned three out of the twenty-six seats on the Legislative Assembly offering them significant political power. After World War II, the Jews of Tangier enjoyed prosperous and cosmopolitan lives as they were minimally impacted by the war and offered protection by Mohammed V who referred to them as “Moroccans and not only Jews.” At its peak in the 1940s, there were 22,000 Jews in Tangier and Morocco’s Jewish population exceeded 350,000. Immigration after the foundation of the state of Israel has diminished the numbers, but today there remains a small but vibrant community in Morocco which counts approximately 2,000 –2,500 Jews.
- On our Tangier **Jewish heritage tour**, we start seeing the highlights of **Old Tangier**. The synagogues, cemeteries, monuments and communal institutions of Tangier show how important the city has been to the Jewish community over the centuries.
- Behind a non-descript door, located on Rue Synagogue in Tangier is the **Moshe Nahon Synagogue**. This last remaining operating synagogue in Tangier is monumental and lavish, ranking among one of the most beautiful synagogues in Morocco. Built in the 1870’s, the Nahon Synagogue remained as a working place for Jewish prayer until it fell into despair in the late 20th century. Then in 1994, it was renovated revealing intricately covered carvings that are illuminated by stunning hanging synagogue lamps and Jewish artifacts. At one time, there were over 20 synagogues in Tangier. On **Rue des Synagogues**, there are many former synagogues. One of them, **Temple Benatar**, has been restored and is superbly decorated.
- We continue to **Chaar Rafael**, one of the last surviving synagogues and remnants of Jewish heritage in Tangier. This Jewish owned villa was built in 1919 and it was converted to a synagogue in 1954 when the owner, Raphaël Bendriaahm died. Located in the center of the European city, Chaar Rafael is nearby the ocean cliffs where we can see the stone outlines of the tombs of the Phoenicians who came to Tangier almost three thousand years ago.
- Historically unlike Morocco’s other Imperial cities, Tangier did not have a formal Jewish mellah. Instead, it had an **unprotected Jewish quarter** that we will stop by for a short visit.
- We proceed to the **Jewish cemetery** (“the old cemetery”), featuring more than one thousand graves, some of which date back to the 16th century. There are many important individuals buried here. Owned by the Tangier municipality, the Jewish cemetery is open to the public and has caretakers who oversee it.
- Later, we check into our hotel and have a chance to relax and refresh before **dinner** together tonight.

### Overnight in Tangier (B, D)



## DAY 13

MONDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2025  
THE BLUE CITY

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- This morning, we drive to **Chefchaouen** to experience the old town's famous Jewish-inspired blue-washed buildings. Originally built as a fortress in the 15th century, the town is picturesquely nestled in the Rif Mountains, We see the **octagonal mosque** and **Spanish ruins**, then explore the **medina** and the winding alleys of this charming village, reminiscent of an Andalusian village in Spain.
- Next, we visit the **Plaza Uta El Hammam**, the **Ras el Maa** and the **wash houses**, where locals hand wash their laundry.
- We return to Tangier and our hotel for a chance to freshen up before setting out for dinner on own.

Overnight in Tangier (B)

## DAY 14

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2025  
TOURING TANGIER

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- This morning, we stop at **Le Fils du Detroit** to see the local musicians plus some hot tea and cookies.
- Next, we enjoy the vantage point of the **Colline de Bella-Vista** then drive to see the **Grand Socco**, a popular nighttime square close to the Mosque of Sidi Bou Abib and the link between Ville Nouvelle and the medina.
- **Optional:** Visit the **American Legation Museum** located in the oldest American consulate in continuous use. Since 1829/1923 when Tangier was established as an international city, there were many Moroccan Jews that served as American proteges, placing them beyond the law of the Sultan.

- Next, we enter the **old medina** at Rue Es-Siaghinie, the busiest part of this Roman medina, lined with cafes and bazaars, a Spanish church, jeweler's shops and an arts center displaying works depicting Tangier's social history. We walk **Petit Socco**, which was once the heart of the medina where businessmen and bankers frequented.
- We move on to visit the **Grand Mosque**, built on the site of a Portuguese cathedral, then stop to enjoy **lunch** in the Jewish cercle **Chez Rica**.
- Walking north, we visit the **Kasbah**, decorated with mosaics, ornamental stucco and woodcarvings.
- We continue to the **Cave of Hercules**, the point of intersection of the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, and enjoy the 4km of sandy beaches bordering Tangier. To enjoy the tranquility of the coastline, we suggest the East side of the bay.
- The evening is at leisure with dinner on own.

Overnight in Tangier (B, L)

## DAY 15

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2025  
FAREWELL

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- We transfer to the Tangier Airport for our flights home, landing later today.

(B)



**THE MEMORIES LAST FOREVER!!**

*\*itinerary subject to change*