



Ayelet
Tours, Ltd.

THE MEMORIES LAST FOREVER!

American Conference of Cantors Presents:
A Musical Jewish Adventure in
MOROCCO

February 14-25, 2027

Join one of our extensions:
Pre-tour to Tangier or Agadir and/or
Post-tour to Tangier/Sahara



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as of 2/19/26

Join the American Conference of Cantors on a deeply immersive journey through Morocco, where music, memory, and Jewish heritage intertwine. As we move from imperial cities to Atlantic shores and from sacred spaces to living marketplaces, we will dive into the distinctive musical traditions of each city we visit, exploring how Jewish, Muslim, and Berber sounds reflect local history, spirituality and community life. Through encounters with scholars, artists and local residents—and through shared music and ritual—this journey offers a rare opportunity to experience Morocco not only as a place of history, but as a living tapestry of coexistence, creativity and spiritual connection.

DAY 1

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2027
OUR JOURNEY BEGINS

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

DAY 2

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2027
WELCOME TO MOROCCO

- **Welcome to Morocco!** Upon landing at **Casablanca International Airport**, you will be welcomed by an Ayelet Tours representative.
- We begin our adventure as we drive toward the city of **Casablanca**, Morocco's cosmopolitan economic and business capital. Originally, a Phoenician and Roman city, Casablanca is home to the largest Jewish community in the Arab world.
- Those arriving early meet today's arrivals as we set out on an overview orientation of the city.
- The **Casablanca Mellah** is the city's historic Jewish quarter, established in the early 20th century near the Royal Palace. Unlike older mellahs in cities such as Fez or Marrakech, Casablanca's mellah reflects the city's modern development and the rapid growth of its Jewish community during the French Protectorate period. Walking through the area offers insight into Jewish life in urban Morocco, with remnants of synagogues, communal buildings and narrow streets that once bustled with Jewish commerce and daily life.
- We continue to **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 Judaism in Casablanca.
- We stop by the **Fhal Jewish bakery**, where the scent of freshly baked pastries fills the air, and we savor traditional Moroccan Jewish delights.
- Next, we visit a **local Jewish school**, where we **meet with representatives** to hear about the challenges of living Jewish life in Morocco today.
- After our introduction to the city and the Jewish community, we check into our hotel with time to refresh.



ACC MOMENT: We begin the evening with an **opening concert** led by our cantors, using melody and shared song to explore the spiritual and cultural threads of Jewish life in Morocco. This meaningful gathering sets the tone for the journey ahead, followed by a group **welcome dinner** to continue conversation and connection together.

Overnight in Casablanca (D)



- Breakfast at our hotel.
- Fast-moving Casablanca is also a city of faith, as we will experience at the **Mosque of Hassan II**. This modern mosque has room for over 100,000 worshippers. 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.
- This afternoon, we enjoy **lunch at Rick's Cafe**, created to evoke the architecture and atmosphere of the classic film.
- We continue to the **Museum of Moroccan Judaism**, which offers a meaningful introduction to the rich history and cultural life of Morocco's Jewish communities. As the only Jewish museum in the Arab world, it traces more than 2,000 years of Jewish presence through ritual objects, traditional clothing, photographs and everyday artifacts.
- Later, we hear from **Professor 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.
- We complete our day in the **Habous Quarter**, also known as the New Medina, which offers a fascinating glimpse into Morocco's blend of tradition and modern history. Built in the early 20th century, this neighborhood was designed to preserve classical Moroccan architecture while accommodating contemporary urban life. As we stroll through its wide arcades and orderly streets, we encounter artisan shops, bookstalls, spice merchants and bakeries alongside mosques and communal spaces that reflect daily Moroccan life. Dinner is on own here tonight.



Overnight in Casablanca (B, L)



DAY 4

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2027
MEKNES TO FEZ

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- We depart this morning for **Meknes**, traveling through fertile plains and historic landscapes that once formed the heart of Morocco's imperial past. Upon arrival, we explore highlights of this former capital, including its monumental gates, including **Bab Mansour**, and royal-era architecture, learning about Sultan Moulay Ismail's vision and Meknes' role as one of Morocco's great imperial cities.
- After lunch on own and time to explore, we continue the drive east toward **Fez**, Morocco's spiritual and cultural capital.
- After checking into our hotel, participants may choose to take part in an **optional pottery workshop**, offering a hands-on introduction to one of Fez's most celebrated traditional crafts and the artisans who keep these skills alive today (additional cost).
- We conclude the day with **dinner**, enjoying our first evening in Fez and preparing for deeper exploration of the city ahead.

Overnight in Fez (B, D)



DAY 5

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2027
JEWISH LIFE IN FEZZ

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- **ACC MOMENT:** Despite suffering from periodic persecutions, Fez's **Jewish Quarter** was home to brilliant scholars, poets and innovators. We'll 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. Our tour will include a visit to the recently restored **Ibn Danan Synagogue**, one of the oldest and most important synagogues in North Africa, where here we will hear a local **Peitan**, a traditional method of Jews praying in Morocco. Afterward, we pay a visit to the **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'll 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.
- Entering the **Fez medina**, a UNESCO World Heritage site, we navigate its labyrinthine streets to encounter traditional crafts and daily life. Our tour will pass by and discuss the stories of the **University of Al-Karaouine**, **Madrasa Bou Inania** as well as the **Nejjarine fountain**.
- We break for **lunch** together at a local restaurant nearby.
- We continue to the "**Arabian house**," a gathering place for craftsmen still working in the old oriental tradition.
- Fez is known for its leather goods and its great stretch of tanneries that give the city its distinctive smell. We'll complete our day with a visit to **Chouara Tannery**, where traditional ways of making leather are still practiced.
- Enjoy a leisure evening to continue exploring and dining on own.

Overnight in Fez (B, L)



- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
 - We begin the day with a **pottery experience**, offering a hands-on introduction to one of Morocco's most enduring artisanal traditions.
 - We transfer to the airport and **fly via private Chartered aircraft booked exclusively for our group to Essaouira**, the historic Atlantic port city known for its blend of Jewish, Muslim and Berber influence.
 - Upon arrival, we visit **Beit Chaim**, the Jewish cemetery overlooking the sea. The seaport city of Essaouira is still synonymous with famed **Rabbi Chaim Pinto** and remained his home all his life. Every year on the anniversary of Rabbi Pinto's death, Jews from around the world pilgrimage in the week preceding Rosh Hashanah and pray at the rabbi's grave in the old Jewish cemetery adjacent to the Atlantic Ocean. Essaouira is also home to the **Chaim Pinto Synagogue**, the building which was once the rabbi's residence and is now a historic site.
 - 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.
 - We continue to our hotel to check in and rest.
-  **ACC MOMENT:** As the sun begins to set, we gather for **Kabbalat Shabbat**, welcoming the day of rest in a setting shaped by centuries of shared spiritual life.
- We conclude the evening with a **Shabbat dinner**, enjoying warm hospitality, Moroccan flavors and the peaceful rhythm of Shabbat in Essaouira.



Overnight in Essaouira (B, D)



DAY 7

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2027
SHABBAT IN ESSAOUIRA

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- **ACC MOMENT:** Shabbat morning begins with optional **Shacharit morning services** led in different manners (more information to come closer to departure), followed by time to rest and absorb the calm of the day.
- Later, we visit **Bayt Dakira (House of Memory)**, a powerful cultural center dedicated to preserving the shared Jewish-Muslim history of Essaouira. Through texts, artifacts and stories, we explore how memory, faith and education serve as bridges between communities.

ACC MOMENT OPTIONS:

- This afternoon we are welcomed into a historic **Sufi Zawiya** in the medina of Essaouira for an intimate **musical workshop** that opens a window onto Morocco's spiritual soundscape in an interfaith manner. Under the guidance of the Munshid, we are introduced to the rhythms, instruments and melodic structures of Sufi devotional music.
- Participants experience the hypnotic rhythms and spiritual traditions of **North African Gnawa music** in an **interactive workshop** led by master musicians. Through percussion, call-and-response chanting, and storytelling, the session explores the music's West African roots and its journey across Morocco and the Mediterranean. The workshop offers both a cultural and historical lens into a living tradition shaped by migration, mysticism, and resilience.
- In an **Amazigh Artwork & Language Lesson**, **Dr. Mendelsohn** introduces the rich artistic symbols and visual language of the Amazigh (Berber) people, decoding motifs found in textiles, jewelry, and architecture. Participants learn foundational elements of the Tamazight language, including the ancient Tifinagh script, while connecting linguistic identity to artistic expression. The program weaves history, anthropology, and hands-on learning into a meaningful exploration of North Africa's indigenous heritage.
- We continue with a leisurely walk along the **Essaouira promenade**, where ocean views and gentle breezes invite reflection and conversation.



ACC MOMENT: The day concludes with a **coexistence Iftar Ceremony**, bringing together traditions of fasting, feasting and community, highlighting Morocco's enduring culture of interwoven religious life. During the gathering, the **cantors join together in song**, offering a brief shared musical moment that honors the power of music to bridge faiths and foster connection. We end our Havdallah Iftar with a light **dinner reception**.

Overnight in Essaouira (B, D)

DAY 8

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2027
FROM COAST TO CITY

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- We depart Essaouira and drive inland, stopping along the way at a **women's cooperative of Argan oil**. Here, we learn about local economic empowerment, traditional crafts and the role of women in sustaining cultural heritage as well as the wide-ranging applications of the oil from cosmetics to medicines.
- **ACC MOMENT:** Our visit includes a **shared song or musical moment**, emphasizing voice, expression and connection.
- Upon arrival in **Marrakech**, we check into our hotel and have time to settle in.
- This evening, we gather for **dinner**, followed by an orientation to Marrakech, its history, rhythms and the days ahead.



Overnight in Marrakech (B, D)





• Breakfast at our hotel.

ACC MOMENT: Today we explore Marrakech's **mellah**, the historic Jewish quarter, learning about Jewish life under Moroccan rule and the city's role as a center of scholarship and commerce. Until the 20th century, most urban Moroccan Jews, including in Marrakech, lived in walled, Jewish-only areas such as this. While here, we visit **Slat Al-Azama Synagogue**, one of the most important synagogues in Morocco, where we explore Jewish ritual life and community continuity. During this visit, we meet with **Hazzan Ohayon**, and the group comes together for a shared moment of song and learning, using music as a bridge across traditions and a reflection of shared spiritual values.

ACC MOMENT: Our visit includes a short **intimate concert accompanied by local musicians**.

- We continue to the **Jewish cemetery**, recently restored after years of neglect. Here, we will see monuments and graves commemorating children who perished during the epidemics that ravaged the city's crowded Jewish quarter in the 17th century. We learn about the great rabbis and kabbalists of Marrakech and discuss why many Jews from around the world make pilgrimage to their graves.
- Our day also includes a visit to a **Bahai site**, offering insight into another layer of Morocco's religious landscape and its emphasis on unity and peace.
- Later, we pass through **Bab Agnaou**, one of Marrakech's most iconic gates, before arriving at **Djemaa el-Fna Square**, where storytellers, musicians, food stalls and performers create a living tapestry of sound, movement and tradition that has defined Marrakech's public life for centuries.
- The evening is at leisure with dinner on your own, allowing participants to explore Marrakech's culinary scene independently.



Overnight in Marrakech (B)



DAY 10

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2027
GARDENS & HERITAGE

- Breakfast at our hotel.
- We begin our day at the tranquil **Majorelle Gardens**, strolling through lush pathways, vibrant plantings and iconic cobalt-blue architecture. This peaceful oasis offers a moment of reflection while introducing the artistic vision that helped shape one of Marrakech's most beloved cultural landmarks.
- We continue to the **Berber Museum**, where we explore the rich heritage of Berber culture through traditional jewelry, textiles, tools and symbolic motifs. The visit highlights the artistry, identity and resilience of Morocco's indigenous communities and their enduring influence on the country's cultural landscape.
- The afternoon offers **optional experiences** allowing participants to tailor their day (additional cost):
 - Hands-on **Moroccan cooking class**
 - Guided excursion to the **Ourika Valley**, exploring areas connected to Berber Jewish life
 - A **shopping and artisan tour** through Marrakech's markets, meeting craftspeople and learning traditional techniques
 - A visit to the beautifully restored **Madrasa Ben Youssef**, one of Morocco's most important historic centers of learning, admired for its intricate tilework, carved cedar and role in Islamic scholarship
- This evening is at leisure with dinner on own.

Overnight in Marrakech (B)

DAY 11

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2027
RHYTHM & MOVEMENT

- Breakfast at our hotel.
 - This morning is devoted to embodied cultural expression. We begin with a **belly dancing class**, exploring rhythm, movement and storytelling through dance.
 - We continue with a **music workshop** focusing on Andalusian and Berber musical traditions, **led by local performers** who explore how Jewish, Muslim and Berber influences shaped Morocco's soundscape.
-  **ACC MOMENT:** In the late afternoon, we travel to the **Agafay Desert** for a powerful closing experience. Against the dramatic desert backdrop, we enjoy a **closing musical event**, bringing together music, reflection and celebration.
- We conclude the journey with a **farewell dinner**, marking the culmination of shared learning, creativity and connection.

Overnight in Marrakech (B, D)

DAY 12

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2027
FAREWELL

- Breakfast and check out of our hotel.
- We transfer to the airport for our flights back to the United States, landing later today.

(B)



The
Memories
Last Forever

