

Tour to Morocco - Spring 2009

Inshallah!! An intrepid band of GSGB members boarded the “Air Maroc Time Machine” at Heathrow airport in freezing cold weather and were transported to Marrakech back into the 12th century. It was lovely and warm, far removed from the temperatures back home. Our senses were assailed with the noise of local merchants, squatting by their stalls, jabbering away in strange tongues, that hadn't changed for hundreds of years. Heavily laden camels and donkeys with loads that appeared too much for them to even move mixed with the scent of spices drifting in the air made it even more exotic.

The coach took us to this wonderful oasis of calm at the Palmeira Palace Hotel where we were greeted with hot sweet tea and quartered in sumptuous rooms for our seven day stay

A welcome dinner preceded by a relaxing round of golf on the resort course was the introduction to our first day. We also played at The Royal Golf Course and the Amelkis Golf Course. The facilities were ideal and the swimming pools were a welcome relief after hacking round the golf courses.

A guided tour of Marrakech was on the menu, beautiful gardens, palaces rich in history and then the Medina. Words can't describe the scene, it was a heaving mass of humanity, snake charmers, acrobats, food stalls, markets which sold every-thing under the sun, the people milling about in their thousands, it was not for the faint hearted. We were later entertained to a Moroccan Dinner, consisting of numerous dishes, if you like sheep's brains this is the place to go. The entertainment was provided by some male dancers playing weird instruments which produced even weirder noises, followed by, yes you've guessed it, a pretty little belly dancer, the men's eyes all lit up as she cavorted amongst us twitching her tassles in an unbelievable manner.

After 7 days we travelled by coach to Agadir, the journey initially was through a rather boring flat plain, but then a breathtaking route through the Atlas Mountains, it was dramatic descending to the coast to our next port of call. The Royal Atlas Hotel was located on the beach, so it was handy for both the golf and the town.

In all 10 games of golf were played by the majority of the party, all in good spirit, except for the final game “Men v Ladies”, which due to the extraordinary advantage of the Ladies tees, the men succumbed to a humiliating defeat. Trish Wymer, captain of the Ladies Team, could hardly contain herself whilst Rob Downes the Men's captain was restrained from falling on his sword, by offering him a consolation second pint of beer to drown his sorrows.

The main aggregate competition was a walk away victory for Linda Hill who played superbly all week, but the man who surprised the whole party was Alan Burnay. He calmly plotted his way round the courses, his repertoire of shots was very impressive and he won by a considerable margin. The Ladies were quite taken with some of the caddies, who were very attentive, given another couple of day's we might well have returned with a few less ladies. It was a very happy trip, we all bonded very well, Dorothy sorted out any problems with her usual charm and good humour, she can't speak Arabic but by golly they very soon understood her, she was indispensable.

Peter Batty