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(ALIF is an affiliate of the American Language Center-Fez)

**Student Orientation Manual**

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## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Fez! The staff at ALIF hopes that your stay will not only be a time of serious progress in your Arabic studies, but also an enjoyable, enriching experience. Few cities in the world have as much to offer as Fez in terms of living history, scenery, and cultural interest. At the same time, it is not a city which discloses its secrets easily. On one level or another it exacts a price for every treasure revealed. *To receive from Fez, one must be prepared to meet certain conditions and to adapt to different ways of doing things.*

Probably the most important condition is patience: Fez is not a quick, clean, amusement park ride. The city and its inhabitants take time to discover and appreciate. *Time in Morocco has a qualitative side to it that easily frustrates Westerners used to a "time-is-money" mentality.* Furthermore, you must give yourself time to come to terms with a whole new socio-cultural setting with norms and values which may startle or bewilder you. In this regard, you must be prepared for situations where you will not always be in control. Similarly, you will not always "come out on top" of every commercial transaction. Such experiences are part of cultural adaptation and needn't make you feel unduly indignant or ridiculed. Every lesson takes time to master and every lesson has its price.

Another condition is adequate background knowledge, or at least the willingness to acquire it. Prepare yourself as much as you can by doing background reading on Morocco before you arrive. Once here, take advantage of ALIF's excellent library resources (in English, for the most part) on topics related to Moroccan history and culture, Islam, and Arabic language and literature. In addition, seize opportunities to ask respectful questions of Moroccans (both your teachers and students of the American Language Center who welcome the chance to speak English).

This manual is meant to save you time and to provide you with practical background information which should enable you to explore Fez with greater confidence. Unfortunately, no such manual can be complete and we therefore appreciate any and all comments and criticisms of the pages that follow, as we would like to improve this mini-guide for future ALIF students. ***Prices and information given are meant as a guideline and are subject to change without notice.***

### ***What to Bring***

**Clothes:** For both men and women, modest and understated clothing is preferable in Fez. As is mentioned in the section on Islam on page 5, women can often avoid unwanted attention by dressing modestly; and this also holds true for men who might want to wear shorts or go out shirtless. No matter what time of year you come to Fez, it is wise to prepare for varied temperatures, as the weather in Fez is somewhat unpredictable, even in the course of one day (see "Climate," pg. 26). Long, loose clothing is often most comfortable and coolest in the summer months. The summer is usually quite hot, but a sweater is handy for the occasional chilly evening. If you're coming in mid-winter an umbrella and rain-resistant jacket may also prove useful, as well as warm sweaters and long underwear! ***Keep in mind that central heat is rare in Morocco, so it can be quite cold indoors during the winter months.*** Strong walking shoes (or sandals in the summertime) with non-slip soles are essential for walking down the slick, inclined streets of the Fez Medina.

**Household Items:** Students planning to move into long-term apartments will probably need to furnish them, as furnished apartments are less common in Fez. ALIF staff will be happy to direct students to used furniture markets. Most necessary furnishings are easily available and relatively inexpensive. However, a few things, such as sheets, good pillows and pillowcases, which can be difficult to find, are best brought with you. The Marjane hypermarche has them, but tends to be very expensive.

**Toiletries:** Most of what you will need is readily available in Fez - soap, shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste, razors and razor blades, etc. If you are particularly attached to a brand name product, though, you would be wise to bring enough to last the duration of your stay. Saline solution for contact lenses is also quite expensive in some stores, so it would be advisable to bring some with you if you wear contacts.

**Medicine:** **Please read the section "HEALTH CARE" on page 15 for information on prescription medications.** If you wear glasses, bring an extra pair or a copy of your prescription. Most common non-prescription drugs in Europe and America, such as ibuprofen and multi-symptom cold medicines, are now readily available in Morocco.

**Electronics:** *For information on bringing computers to Morocco, please see Computer Use on page 19.*

Gifts: You may want to bring some simple gifts for friends you'll make in Fez or the members of your host family if you'll be in a homestay, although gifts are by no means expected. There is no need to be extravagant. Gifts for the young children are appreciated by the whole family.

## CULTURAL NOTES

### ***General Background***

Morocco has a tremendous amount to offer the visitor. It is one of the most functionally modern and open countries of the Arab world and, at the same time, one of the most traditional. Fez, in particular, is a city where one can enjoy the best of both worlds, so to speak: here you can breakfast on superb French-style café-au-lait and croissants in an elegant café on a broad, tree-lined boulevard in the Ville Nouvelle and then descend into the narrow alley-ways of the old medina and watch craftsmen working with techniques and in a setting that have changed little in hundreds of years. City-dwelling Moroccans, led by His Majesty King Mohamed VI, move from ultra-modern to ancient modes of doing things with the same ease and dignity that they shift from French to Arabic (and often English and Spanish, too). The country's geographical location within eyesight of Europe (where hundreds of thousands of Moroccans work) and its recent history have contributed to the cosmopolitan quality of Morocco and its people. Furthermore, it is a country of pronounced tolerance where foreigners are normally held in high esteem and made to feel welcome. However, this welcome may not be as effusive as one might encounter in Syria, for example, since Moroccans (especially Fassis) have a certain natural reserve. Though rural people's hospitality is often as spontaneous as it is genuine, urbanized Moroccans typically don't open their doors readily to foreigners without some sort of preliminary introduction or after repeated contact which gives them time to size you up. Generally, doors to Moroccan contacts are not opened through casual encounters in public places. In fact, the Moroccan who approaches you in a friendly way in the street is more often than not some sort of hustler who wishes to sell something or make a commission on you from someone else who has something to sell (see "Tour Guides and Hustlers," page 16). **Generally speaking, honest Moroccans without a hidden commercial agenda are those you meet through your host family, friends of friends, in the ALIF garden, or through academic or professional association.** Remembering this rule can spare you a lot of headaches and leave you more time to cultivate truly rewarding relationships.

ALIF students would also do well to keep in mind that the welcome they do receive is not unconditional. Among the most important things to observe in this regard is a comportment which indicates that you do not take their hospitality for granted. *In other words, one's behavior should not be based on the assumption that Moroccans are merely a "third-world" people aspiring to emulate Western cultural models, and that you are the trend-setter in every domain.* The people of Morocco have a distinct and age-old cultural-religious heritage of which they are justifiably proud. They cherish deep-rooted values and norms that may not coincide with your own. It therefore behooves the ALIF student to be adequately informed about Moroccan culture and, while you are not expected to agree with all of its attitudes and conventions, you will do well to either express appreciation or to at least reserve judgment and negative comment.

It is also worth noting that Morocco, like many other countries in the region, is undergoing complex and often painful socio-cultural adjustments, the negative ramifications of which are exacerbated by economic strains, especially unemployment. Thus, many young enterprising Moroccans have turned to being, unofficial guides or hustlers in order to earn money, and they continue to do so despite the government's recent campaign against these activities. On a psychological level, numerous Moroccans, especially the younger generation, are going through a kind of identity crisis in which they may be simultaneously attracted and repelled by Western culture which translates itself into uneven attitudes and, at times, a certain moodiness. ALIF students are encouraged to show sensitivity and circumspection and to avoid articulating too many comparisons between their home countries and Morocco. They should also not be surprised if many young Moroccans seem to be pressing them for information about the possibilities of emigrating or finding work abroad.

### ***The Linguistic Situation in Morocco***

For those ALIF students who have never lived or studied in an Arab country before, and even for some of those who have, a word of explanation is in order: as our course offerings indicate, it is more appropriate to speak of "Arabics" rather than "Arabic". While both Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and Colloquial Moroccan Arabic (CMA) are largely derived from the same basic source (so-called "Classical Arabic"), they are in many ways two distinct languages. MSA is the language of the news media, written correspondence, official documents, literature and formal speeches. As strange as it might sound, MSA is not a language spoken fluently by the majority of Moroccans (or Arabs, for that matter). Though few educated Moroccans have difficulty reading Arabic and understanding Arabic news broadcasts, few of them feel truly confident in using it as a means of oral communication. To further complicate matters for ALIF students wishing to practice their MSA outside

of class, many Moroccan professionals have been educated in France or in a French mold, so that in discussing more intellectual or technical topics they may have difficulty expressing themselves without turning to French. It is not uncommon for a foreign student trying to make conversation with a Moroccan in MSA to be answered in French. Obviously, if you don't know French or (wisely) pretend not to know it, the Moroccan in question will be forced to struggle to express himself or herself in as correct a variety of MSA as he/she can muster. There are, happily, exceptions to this generalization, even some very articulate ones, especially in a city like Fez which prides itself as being Morocco's "Intellectual Capital"; however, on the whole, students of MSA should not have unrealistic expectations about chatting in literary Arabic with the corner grocer whose native language may well be Berber anyway! It bears pointing out that for most Moroccans MSA spoken in day-to-day situations has an almost comical quality about it, comparable perhaps to the effect of speaking Shakespearean English with a small-town grocer.

Concerning the local dialect, this is much easier to practice outside the classroom. However, even when initiating a conversation in CMA, a student may get a response in French from a Moroccan. This may be due to their not believing their ears and having an automatic reaction of conversing in French with foreigners, or it may be due to your own lack of mastery of the dialect. Persistence pays off in such situations and a pretended or real ignorance of French often opens the door to fruitful conversational practice. At the same time, it should be remembered that CMA has many (Arabized) French loan words and that Moroccans frequently intersperse their speech in CMA with additional vocabulary, phrases and expressions from French, even when speaking to each other. On a different plane, students should be cognizant of the limitations inherent in studying CMA, since sooner or later (usually after 3 six-week sessions) they reach a plateau in their ability to discuss more intellectual topics (economics, religion, etc.) beyond which they can only proceed by studying MSA from which vocabulary and phraseology are drawn. Without formally studying MSA they will never gain an adequate ability to comprehend news broadcasts or read newspapers. Students should also be aware of the typical Moroccan attitude towards CMA: it is not regarded as a "language" in the formal sense of the word and Moroccans may be quite bewildered by the fact that you are studying it formally. For them, only MSA is a written language with formal rules and conventions. They may express astonishment if they see you studying one of ALIF's CMA coursebooks, and even make remarks suggesting that CMA is not "real" Arabic. Finally, students of CMA should accept the fact that their hard-earned knowledge of CMA will be of very little value beyond the confines of North Africa. To illustrate this point, it should suffice to note that the common every day words for "bread", "want", "need" and "go" are totally different in CMA and the other Arabic dialects. Cairene colloquial Arabic, on the other hand, is passively understood by many Moroccans thanks to the diffusion of Egyptian-made films on Moroccan television.

### ***Living Legally in Morocco***

While ALIF students may find life in Morocco laid-back and easy in many respects, they are encouraged to keep in mind that **this life is not without its rules**. Although you may encounter kif and hashish being smoked openly, it is illegal; and some police take great pleasure in applying this law to foreigners. The penalty can vary, but may involve an extended stay in a Moroccan prison - an experience most visitors to the country would prefer to avoid. ***ALIF does not take responsibility for students who have broken the law and possession of illegal substances on ALIF premises (including the ALIF Residence) is grounds for eviction from the Residence and expulsion from classes.***

Other Moroccan laws for ALIF students to keep in mind are interdictions on proselytizing, which is grounds for repatriation; public criticism of the royal family; and participating in certain political activities.

### ***Islam***

Though Morocco is legally-speaking a secular state, Islam remains the official state religion and 98% of Moroccans are at least nominally Muslim of the prevalent Sunni school (rather than the Shi'a as in Iran). It is indicative that among the titles of His Majesty King Mohamed VI of Morocco is "Prince of Believers" (Amir al-Mu'minîn), an ancient title used by the early Caliphs of Islam. Fortunately, so-called "Islamic fundamentalist" political movements have not gained any real foothold in Morocco (they are, in fact, illegal) and violence perpetrated in the name of Islam is virtually unknown. At the same time, there has been a subtle but perceptible resurgence of Islam as a guiding force in the lives of many Moroccans. This can be measured by increasing mosque attendance, greater proliferation of head covering and full-length clothing by young women, and growing membership in certain Sufi orders. However, as opposed to Egypt and Algeria, this tendency is far more centered on reforming the individual than on reforming society or establishing a state based on Islamic legal codes. It is also, on the whole, not as zealously exclusive as evinced by the ubiquitous scene of veiled Moroccan female students walking arm-in-arm with unveiled girlfriends.

*What does all this mean for non-Muslim ALIF students? They should be aware of the following:*

Visiting Muslim Places of Worship: In Morocco, non-Muslims are not allowed to enter mosques, mausoleums or other religious shrines. This interdiction does not include the theological colleges (medersas), which are among Morocco's most splendid historic monuments (see section on leisure activities, pg. 17). However, Moroccans are fairly tolerant of non-Muslims peering (respectfully) into mosques from the doorway.

Ramadan: During the month of Ramadan the vast majority of Moroccans fast (from early dawn to sunset) and those that don't are very circumspect about eating, drinking or smoking. Cafés remain closed all day and open about an hour and a half after sunset. As for restaurants, most close down for the month with the exception of a few located in hotels. *During the 2011 academic year, Ramadan should begin at the start of August*, starting about ten days earlier the following year, and so on. It is not possible to be more precise than that, since the Islamic calendar is lunar-based and the start of any month depends upon the physical sighting of the crescent moon. Students residing with Moroccan host families are not expected to fast and some provision will be made for their breakfasts and lunches; however, the main meal(s) will be in the evening.

Proselytizing: While Moroccans are usually delighted if a Westerner embraces Islam, missionary work on the part of non-Muslims is forbidden by law in Morocco. All students are asked therefore to refrain from any activity which might be construed as proselytizing.

Dress: The strictest Islamic prescriptions require that a Muslim woman be completely covered except for her hands and face and that a Muslim man be covered from his navel to his knees. However, there are many pious women throughout the Muslim world who adopt this form of dress for prayer but wear western style clothing for work or leisure. There are many variations in the personal interpretation of what is "proper" clothing for a woman. Here, too, most city-dwelling Moroccans are fairly tolerant in their attitudes and do not expect foreigners to adhere to local dress codes which often vary dramatically from person to person anyway. However, this does not mean that anything goes. Few Moroccan men wear shorts apart from sporting activities which require them, nor do they go bare-chested except at the beach. Foreigners who do this are usually tolerated but stick out like sore thumbs. On the other hand, while there are Moroccan women who wear skin-tight jeans and low cut tops, this is not necessarily the model for female students. Moroccan women who dress in a "risqué" fashion are aware of what kind of response their attire will attract, and presumably know how to react, or not react, to provocation and cat calls from Moroccan men. Foreign women usually do not have this knowledge, nor would they necessarily want to be put into the same category (i.e., "immoral women") that their daring Moroccan counterparts may be put in. Female students are encouraged to dress in a way which balances their need for comfort with a basic minimum of modesty to avoid attracting attention to themselves as objects of sexual desire. This does not mean they are expected to wear headscarves or long dresses, but they should avoid mini-skirts, tight pants, shorts, and low-cut tops.

Alcohol: Drinking alcohol is expressly forbidden in Islam and its negative social connotations derive largely from this interdiction. While Fez does have several bars, hotels and restaurants that serve liquor, most Moroccans do not drink. Those that do are often not the best elements of Moroccan society. Therefore, students - especially women - are cautioned about social drinking with Moroccans, as this can sometimes lead to unpleasant and, occasionally, even dangerous situations. If you must drink, it is recommended that you do so in hotel lounges or restaurants rather than in bars which tend to be quite seedy in Morocco. Alcohol is also sold in certain shops, especially around the Marché Central. However, to avoid scandal, **ALIF students staying with Moroccan families should under no circumstances drink in their homes.**

*Note: While the streets of Fez are comparatively safe (all firearms, with the exception of licensed hunting weapons, are strictly prohibited), it is not famed for its lively night-life. Outside of Ramadan, streets become fairly deserted by 9:30 - 10:00 p.m. and purse-snatching and hold ups with knives are not unheard of. If you are drunk, or smell of alcohol, and are out on the streets after this hour, this makes you just that much more of an attractive target. Women especially should under no circumstances be alone on the street after about 9 p.m. (outside of Ramadan).*

## **Women in Morocco**

The place women are accorded in Moroccan society has seen significant transformation in recent years. By way of example, two women were recently elected to the Moroccan Parliament (one of whom is from Fez) and classes at Morocco's universities are attended by men and women in nearly equal numbers. More and more women are joining the work force in professions that were once the exclusive domain of men. Nevertheless, traditional attitudes among both men and women concerning the role of the latter are still much in force and differ considerably from those in other societies and, viewed from a Western perspective, the constraints placed upon women often seem extreme. For example, certain public places, such as bars and most

cafés, are considered inappropriate for women, and unmarried women (even if they are over 21!) may have strict parental restrictions on when they can leave the house.

The greatest problems most female ALIF students will encounter are cat calls from men on the streets, generally consisting of little more than "bonjour" or "hello." This treatment is not reserved for foreigners. Moroccan women receive similar advances, and are generally aware that, while extremely annoying, such advances are seldom physically threatening. A response is not expected. Don't worry about being "rude" as it is not impolite to ignore a stranger's greetings or questions in the street; to respond - even in a negative way - is to offer them reason to continue bothering you. **It goes without saying that invitations from unknown men to "meet their families" should be flatly refused.** If anyone becomes particularly persistent, rude, or difficult to avoid, call him to someone else's attention. Other Moroccans - both men and women - are often more than willing to intervene when they see someone in need of help and won't hesitate to chastise someone whom they see behaving shamefully. If you are ever followed more than once by the same man, contact the ALIF administration rather than trying to deal with him on your own.

By far the best way to ensure one's safety in Morocco is by avoiding deserted places and sticking to areas where there are plenty of people around to help should you have any difficulties. Women in Morocco, more often than not, go out of the house in pairs or groups, and you will rarely find a woman on the streets by herself after dark. While this is by no means necessary for foreign students, having a Moroccan companion to show you around the city, at least initially, will go a long way toward making your stay in Fez an enjoyable experience.

As mentioned earlier in the section on Islam (page 5), dressing modestly is one of the most important factors for avoiding unpleasant situations. Avoiding deserted places, walking purposefully, and realizing that it is entirely inappropriate to talk to unknown men in the street - no matter how persistent they may be - will spare you a lot of headaches.

Except in nice hotels, women should never attempt to go to bars unaccompanied. This is partially true for cafes, too, which tend to be male-only gathering places. However, the more elegant pastry-shop or juice-shop cafes are usually acceptable places for women, especially sitting inside or upstairs with a companion. Naturally, foreign women have a certain leeway that "respectable" Moroccan women do not share. However, even this cultural license has its limitations and its price. Smoking in public by women is still considered somewhat risqué.

### ***Male-Female Relationships***

Relations between men and women in Morocco differ considerably from those in Europe. ALIF students should try to be sensitive to these differences, as misunderstandings can lead to hurt feelings, resentment, and, occasionally, physically threatening situations. Strong, non-romantic friendships between members of the opposite sex are far less common in Morocco than in Europe, and these are generally formed and maintained within the structure of family gatherings, work, or school. The occasional couples you will see walking together or in cafes are most often married or dating - a practice which is still not as common or open in Fez as in other major Moroccan cities. This is not to say that male-female friendships do not exist, however, as many ALIF students have developed many lifelong friendships in the ALIF garden and through their families.

Should you be interested in something more intimate than a platonic friendship, whether you're male or female, make sure you know what you're getting into! Outside of schoolyard flirtations, much of the dating that does go on in Fez occurs with marriage as the eventual aim. Some couples, in fact, are not allowed to date until after their engagement. If you have no intention of getting married, it's wise to make sure that the other interested party (and his or her family!) shares your feelings.

### ***Photography***

Although most Moroccans are familiar with cameras and are not overly sensitive to having their picture taken, indiscriminate photographing of people is not advisable: ask first! (How would you feel if a group of Moroccan tourists came to your place of work or supermarket and started taking snap shots of you as if you were a curious animal in a circus tent?) There are still instances when one may encounter a vehemently hostile attitude by certain Moroccans at having a camera pointed in their direction. In some cases, this attitude may derive from traditional beliefs related to the evil eye; in other cases it may simply be viewed as an intrusion into the privacy of the intended subjects (especially if they are women). If you do encounter this hostile attitude, it is better to put your camera away and avoid confrontation over the issue. It is worth remembering that the medina is not a Disney theme park. On the other hand, Morocco is a photographer's paradise where superlative shots can be taken with discretion (and maybe a zoom lens).

Film is widely available, especially color print and slide film of various brands and speeds. However, prices seem to vary from shop to shop and one is usually better off buying it from shops and photo developers in the Ville Nouvelle (such as Photo Magic which is across the street from the main post office). One should avoid buying film from people in the street as it may

be of questionable quality. As for black and white film, it is available in some shops, but there is no reliable place to have it developed in Fez.

### **Background Reading**

It is highly recommended that you do some select background reading before coming to Morocco. The titles listed below should also be available in the ALIF library. (Library privileges require a resource center fee of 300 Dh which is usually paid with your initial registration, and book borrowing privileges require a refundable 200 Dh deposit.) The following recommended books are grouped according to subject area/discipline:

#### **General History:**

- A History of the Maghrib in the Islamic Period, Jamil M. Abu-Nasr (1987: Cambridge U.P.).
- A History of the Arab Peoples, Albert Hourani (1991: Faber & Faber).
- The History of the Maghrib: An Interpretive Essay, Abdallah Laroui (1977: Princeton U.P.).

#### **Politics:**

- The Commander of the Faithful: The Moroccan Political Elite, John Waterbury (1970: Columbia U.P.).
- The Political Economy of Morocco, William Zartman (Ed.) (1987: Praeger).

#### **Islam:**

- Ideals and Realities of Islam, Seyyed Hussein Nasr (1985: Unwin Hyman).
- Muhammed: His Life Based on the Earliest Sources, Martin Lings (1983: Unwin).
- Moroccan Islam: Tradition and Society in a Pilgrimage Center, Dale Eickelman (1976: University of Texas Press).

#### **Sociology/Anthropology:**

- Meaning and Order in Moroccan Society, C. Geertz, H. Geertz, & L. Rosen (Eds.) (1979: Cambridge U.P.).
- The House of Si Abd Allah: The Oral History of a Moroccan Family, Henry Munson, Jr. (1984: Yale U. Press).
- Beyond the Veil: Male-Female Dynamics in Muslim Society, Fatima Mernissi (1987: Indiana U.P.).
- Sacred Performances: Islam, Sexuality, and Sacrifice, M. E. Combs-Schilling (1989: Columbia U.P.).

#### **Fez:**

- Fez: City of Islam, Titus Burkhardt (1992: Islamic Texts Society, Cambridge, U.K.).
- Fez in the Age of the Marinids, Roger Le Tourneau (1961: Norman, Oklahoma).
- A Practical Guide to Islamic Monuments in Morocco, Richard Parker (1981: Baraka Press, Charlottesville, USA).
- The Spider's House, (fiction set in Fez) Paul Bowles (1955: Random House).

#### **Travelogues:**

- Their Heads are Green and Their Hands are Blue, Paul Bowles.
- The Land of the Moors, Budgett Meakin (1901: Macmillan; recently republished by State Mutual Bank).

#### **Travel Guides:**

- The Rough Guide to Morocco, Marc Ellingham & Shaun McVeigh.
- Cadogan Guide to Morocco, Barnaby Rogerson.
- The Lonely Planet Guide to Morocco, Frances Gordon, Dorinda Talbot, & Damien Simonis.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

### **City Buses**

Despite the appearance of some of its buses, Fez maintains a quite reliable and thorough local bus service. The buses can be absolutely packed on some of the principle routes during peak hours, but this often

presents a perfect opportunity to meet and befriend Moroccans, thereby redeeming what otherwise could have been an unpleasant ride. One should, however, guard against pickpockets. Men should keep their wallets in an inside jacket pocket and women should have handbags that zip or snap shut and should hold them close under the arm.

Buses run from 6:00 am until between 8:30 and 9:00 pm. Fares for routes within the city are 2,10 - 2,90 Dh, (subject to change) while the fare for those running outside city limits - Ain Chkeff and Sidi Harazem - is higher: 2,50 - 3,50 Dh. The following is a complete list of public buses operating in and around Fez:

<b><u>Bus</u></b>	<b><u>Route</u></b>
1	Ben Zakour - Sidi Boujida
2	Lirak/Hay Hassani - Bab Semarin via Tariq Sefrou
3	Place de la Resistance - Bab Ftouh
4	Dixieloun - Doukkarat
5	Bab Semarin - Dixieloun
6	Place de la Resistance - Cité Universitaire via Dhar Mehrez
7	Train Station - Agadir
8	Bou Jeloud - Ben Souda
9	Tariq Sefrou & Mohammed V Square - Batha via Florence Square & Place de la Resistance
10	Alaouite Square - Train Station - Batha - Bab Guissa (Palais Jamais)
11	Train Station - Sidi Boujida
12	Bou Jeloud - Bab Ftouh
13	Train Station - Tariq Imouzzar
14	Zouagha (Champ de Course) - Baladia (City Hall)
15	Florence Square - Adarissa via Hay Sa'ada
16	Train Station - Saiss Airport
17	Florence Square - Ain Shkeff
18	Place de la Resistance - Bab Ftouh via R'cif
19	Train Station - R'cif
20	Florence Square - Ben Debab via Ain Kadous
21	Train Station - Baladia - Ben Slimane via Ben Debab
22	Bou Jeloud - Hay Tghat
23	Baladia - Tariq Sefrou
24	Train Station - Hay Hassani
25	Train Station - Ben Souda
26	Tariq Sefrou - Bhalil
27	Batha - R'cif
28	Place de la Resistance - Sidi Harazem
29	Tariq Sefrou - R'cif
30	Florence Square - Hay Tghat
31	University - Faculty of Islamic Studies
32	Train Station - Ain Smen
33	Bou Jeloud - Dwiyat
34	Hay Ben Skar - Quartier Industriel
35	Route Ben Souda - Zliligue
36	Sefrou - Azzeba
37	Bou Jeloud - Belkhyat
38	Atlas - Ain Beda
39	Bou Jeloud - Souk Jemla
40	Bab Semarin - Hay Tarik
41	University and Dhar Mehraz - Route d'Immouzzar

***Cross-Country Buses(very subject to change, so check beforehand)***

The national bus company, Compagnie de Transports au Maroc (CTM), and a number of private companies operate a network of lines running throughout the country that provide an excellent means of seeing Morocco. The coaches are generally quite fast, but you can expect most buses to stop at a number of towns and cafes for 10 to 30 minutes between destinations. In more rural areas the arrival of a coach can be the cause of great excitement for local residents.

Fez recently amalgamated its various privately-run, cross-country bus stations into a newly built terminal north of Bab Mahrouk (to the northwest of the Medina). While most CTM buses depart from here or at least stop here on their way out of the city, there is also a brand new CTM-only bus station (tel: 732984) just next to Atlas Square. Tickets, especially for CTM routes, can be purchased up to five days in advance; and purchasing tickets early for some of the more popular routes - i.e. Fez-Marrakech, Fez-Tangier - is not a bad idea, as demand can often be quite high. Expect to have to pay an additional 5 to 15 Dh for luggage; it will be weighed just before boarding, so be sure to arrive at the bus station 15-20 minutes before scheduled departure. The baggage handler will invariably expect a tip of one to two Dirhams.

### **CROSS-COUNTRY BUS SCHEDULE (private lines)**

(Number of daily trips and duration of trip in hours calculated from Fez)

To:	Trips/Day	Hrs	To	Trips/Day	Hrs.	To	Trips/Day	Hrs
<b>Azrou</b>	6	3.5	<b>Meknes</b>	8	1	<b>Beni Mellal</b>	2	8.5
<b>Midelt</b>	3	5.5	<b>Casablanca</b>	hourly	7	<b>Oujda</b>	13	6
<b>Chefchaouen</b>	2	7	<b>Rabat</b>	14	5.5	<b>Er-Rachidia</b>	4	8.5
<b>Sefrou</b>	17	1.5	<b>Ifrane</b>	11	1	<b>Tangier</b>	6	8
<b>Imouzzer</b>	5	1	<b>Taza</b>	7	2.5	<b>Marrakech</b>	4	11
<b>Tetouan</b>	5	7						

### **CTM BUS SCHEDULE-(website inoperative, check onsite)**

<b>Casablanca:</b>	0100, 0130, 0700, 0830, 0930, 1030, 1200, 1330, 1530, 1700, 1900
<b>Oujda:</b>	0130, 0730, 1200
<b>Rabat:</b>	0100, 0130, 0830, 0930, 1030, 1200, 1500, 1700, 1900
<b>Taza:</b>	0730, 1230, 1900
<b>Beni Mellal:</b>	0630, 2200
<b>Marrakesh:</b>	0600, 2000
<b>Meknes:</b>	0700, 0830, 1030, 1200, 1330, 1530, 1700, 1800, 1900
<b>Tetouan:</b>	0800, 1100
<b>Tangier:</b>	0100, 1030, 1730

## **Trains**

A rail network of about 2,500 km links all the major towns of Morocco, and the Moroccan government has put a good deal into up-grading and maintaining lines over the past years. The national railway office, ONCF, recently inaugurated an efficient line between Casablanca's international airport and Casablanca's two main train stations with regular 20 - 30 minute trips in either direction every hour or so. On the whole, trains are modern, comfortable, and reliable. Most trains have first and second classes. It's certainly worth the small extra charge for first-class, which is always air-conditioned during the hotter months and provides more personal space on peak routes. Second class consists of individual compartments having eight seats each and are air-conditioned on certain routes only. The "direct" trains have buffet cars and/or trolley snack service (sandwiches, hot & cold drinks). On certain routes at certain times, "couchettes" (night sleepers) are available. One word of caution: thieves and pickpockets are not uncommon on trains in Morocco, particularly on overnight trips where passengers are tired and not attentive of their belongings. Be particularly vigilant in the corridors between compartments and cars, especially when people are getting on and off at different stations - never put your wallet, passport, or other valuables in pants pockets and have locks on all luggage zippers. Also, take special care with luggage or other belongings nearest open windows.

The train station in Fez is located in the Ville Nouvelle about 10 minutes from the center of town at the end of Boulevard Chenguit (tel: 625001/625132). All east-bound trains travel to Oujda, via Taza. This line then continues across Algeria to Tunisia as part of the Trans-Maghrebian Railway. Taza is about 2.5 hours from Fez by train while the trip to Oujda takes about 6. Heading in the opposite direction, there are several daily trains to Meknes (about 45 minutes), which continue on to Sidi Kacem (2.5 hours), Kenitra (3.5 hours), Salé (4 hours), Rabat (4.5 hours), and Casablanca (5.5 - 6 hours). Train trips to Tangier typically take 6 hours, with a change of trains often necessary at Sidi Kacem. The line to Marrakesh via Casablanca takes anywhere from 8 to 11 hours depending on the type of train. Fast trains are preferable to direct as they bypass small,

rural stations, thus reducing time spent en route. Train schedules are posted at ALIF and on the ONCF website: [www.oncf.ma](http://www.oncf.ma)  
Check schedules during holidays for changes!

## Grand Taxis

While grand taxis (shared taxis) cost about 20% - 50% more than a bus on the same route, they are worth considering on more scenic routes. If there are enough in your party to fill one taxi (6 passengers or the equivalent in fares) you can ask the driver to make frequent stops to take photographs. This, of course, will cost more, and it's best to settle on a price before you go. If you're sharing with strangers, however, it's unlikely the driver will agree to stop. Note that sharing a car with 5 other passengers can be very cramped. Some people like to pay for two seats to assure a comfortable ride. Make sure you know what locals are paying for a particular trip as grand taxi drivers are notorious for jacking up the fare for unsuspecting foreigners. In general, you can count on paying between 25-30 Dh for every 100 km. One word of caution, especially to those foreigners not yet accustomed to Moroccan driving: not only are most highway deaths attributed to grand taxis, but their fearless driving methods alone - passing cars and trucks on blind, winding mountain roads - are enough to make anyone sick with fright. In such cases, it's best just to look at the landscape and let the other passengers do the worrying.

Stations for grand taxis are scattered throughout Fez. Trips to Meknes (typically 15 Dh) leave by grand taxi from Place des Alouites at the northern end of Boulevard Moulay Youssef in Fez El-Jdid, from the streets around the CTM Station near Atlas Square, and from the lot next to the train station. Taza and other eastern destinations leave from Bab Ftouh, and taxis to Sefrou run from Atlas Square in the Ville Nouvelle. Other grand taxi stations can be found near Bab Bou Jeloud, Zouagha, Ben Souda, and Bab Khoukha.

## Petit Taxis

Petit taxis (bright red city taxis with yellow roof racks) are very useful around Fez and can save you a lot of time. They are inexpensive (10 Dh for an average trip) and plentiful in the Ville Nouvelle. There is rarely any difficulty flagging down a taxi, and they can be found at all hours at different taxi stands throughout the Ville Nouvelle (Atlas Square, Jardins Lalla Amina) except during peak hours when everyone seems to be trying to get somewhere (12:00-12:30, 2:30-3:00, 6:00-6:30). Note that the presence of a passenger in a taxi does not necessarily mean that the taxi is "taken"; one taxi may take up to three separate passengers, picking them up along the way if their destinations aren't too out of the way. If you get into an already-occupied taxi, note the amount on the meter as you get in. Your fare should be the amount elapsed from getting into the taxi plus the initial charge of 1.4 Dh. Drivers in Fez usually use their meters without any hassle so you aren't expected to bargain about the price. Also, they don't expect a tip between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. You can expect a 50% increase in the fare at night. Unfortunately, there is no way of telephoning for a taxi in Fez.

## Rental Cars and Driving in Morocco

Although renting a car can be very expensive, it is by far the most convenient means of getting to more remote parts of Morocco. The major international car rental agencies are represented throughout Morocco, and Fez is no exception. Charges among the international companies vary only slightly so it is worthwhile to check with a number of locally-run agencies where rates are often significantly lower. Rental agencies around Fez include (but may change at any time):

**Tourvilles**, 15, Bd. Mohamed V (near the Marché Central, negotiable prices, tel: 626635)

**Avis**, 52 Blvd. Chefchaouen (tel: 626746)

**Hertz**, Hotel de Fez (tel: 622812)

**Budget**, Place de la Resistance

**Tourist Cars**, Grand Hotel (tel: 622958)

Most agencies will ask for a credit card or refundable deposit of 3,000 DH in addition to a government tax of 20% which must be paid on all rentals. Almost all cars take premium super *gasoline* which is very expensive. For computing mileage charges, the following distance chart should be useful for those wishing to take trips in Morocco via rental car.

From Fez to: (all distances in km)

Agadir	756	Essourira	640	Khemisset	117	Nador	339	Settat	361
Azilal	375	Figuig	719	Khenifra	160	Ouarzazate	687	Tangier	303
Beni Mellal	289	El Hoceima	275	Khouribga	333	Oujda	343	Tan Tan	1,067
Boulmane	101	El Jadida	388	Laayoun	1,396	Rabat	198	Taza	120
Casablanca	289	Kelaa	399	Marrakesh	483	Er-Rachidia	364	Tetouan	281

Chaouen    225    Kenitra    166    Meknes    60    Safi    545    Tiznit    849

(For information on drivers licenses, please see “Visas & Other Documentation” on page 21.)

***Air Travel***

The Fez Saiss Airport (tel: 035-624712) is about 12 km south of the city. There are 7 weekly flights to Casablanca, 3 to Marrakesh, 3 to Tangier, 9 to Agadir, and 1 to Er-Rachidia. The airport also has several weekly flights to Paris and 1 or more to Marseilles, Lyon, Toulouse, etc. Bus 16 makes one round trip an hour between the train station and the airport between 7:00 am and 7:00 pm. Since flights from Casablanca usually arrive after 10:00 pm, the bus is often not an option for getting to Fez. If you plan to fly into Fez in the evening, you are urged to notify the ALIF administration of your name and arrival date & time at least 7 days in advance so that arrangements can be made for someone to pick you up (the pickup fee, 120 Dh for a single passenger, 100 Dh per person for two or more. The RAM office in Fez is at 54 Ave. Hassan II (tel: 625516/620456). If you fly into the Casablanca airport, there is an excellent train service directly from the airport into Casablanca and from there to Fez. It is considerably more comfortable to get first class train seats. Note: for most return flights, passengers are requested to reconfirm 2 or 3 days in advance

***Overland to and from Europe***

Morocco can be reached overland by several means. CTM (the Moroccan cross-country bus company noted above) offers service between Fez and Brussels (twice weekly), Paris (5 times weekly), and Toulouse, Marseilles, and Lyons (all once weekly). Eurolines, another bus company, makes two trips weekly from London's Victoria Station via Paris to Tangier, Rabat, Casablanca, Marrakech, Agadir, and Tiznit. The trip averages about 3.5 days depending on the final destination. Much more comfortable for this somewhat long trip is the train which has sleeping accommodations in both first and second classes. There is a train leaving Paris' Gare D'Austerlitz every day at 10:15. It travels south via Irun, Madrid, and Cordoba, arriving in Algeciras about 36 hours later.

In addition to a couple of passenger boat lines running between the French ports of Sète and Marseille, there are a number of ferries running between different points in Spain and the north coast of Morocco:

***FERRY SCHEDULE SPAIN-MOROCCO (SUBJECT TO CHANGE, PRICE NOT GUARANTEED)***

<u>Departure</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Duration</u>	<u>Price</u>
Algeciras-Tangier	8/day both dir. (12/day in Summer)	2.5 hrs.	230 Dh
Algeciras-Ceuta	6/day both dir. (4 on Sundays)	1.5 hrs.	100 Dh
Almeria-Melilla	T-SAT 1300, SUN 1130	6-8 hrs.	220-630 Dh
Mellila-Almeria	M-SAT 1130		
Malaga-Mellila	M-SAT 1300 (1 on Sunday in Summer)	7-10 hrs.	220-630 Dh
Mellila-Malaga	M-SAT 2300 (1 on Sunday in Summer)		
Tarifa-Tangier	Daily	1 hr.	230 Dh
Tangier-Tarifa	Daily		196 Dh
Gibraltar-Tangier	M, W at 0815 and F at 1830	1 hr.	£ 18
Tangier-Gibraltar	T, TH, SAT		

Note: ALIF students are warned that all of the above links from Europe to Morocco are very heavily used in summer when Moroccans working in Europe return home for their annual holiday. Also Easter week and during Ramadan. This often translates into longer waits at customs and passport control as well as very crowded trains. One should be very vigilant with his or her belongings and valuables under such circumstances. Also remember that ALL schedules and fares are subject to change, so check before you travel.

## HEALTH CARE

### General Notes

Standards of health care in Morocco are generally quite good, though government clinics and hospitals often leave much to be desired. French-trained doctors, who often have experience dealing with a wider variety of ailments than their Western counterparts, are plentiful in hospitals, clinics, and private practice offices. Pharmacies abound in and around Fez; there are more than 100. Their staffs are consistently well-informed and have a wide variety of drugs for over-the-counter sale, many of which (such as antibiotics) would only be available by prescription in Europe or North America.

The ailment you're most likely to encounter in Morocco is traveler's diarrhea, which is a natural consequence of any change in diet and water flora. The best remedy for this is simply to let it run its course while avoiding fresh fruit & raw vegetables. In more severe cases, the best remedy is either Ercefuryl or Intetrix which are available in pharmacies in both 100 and 200 mg. capsules. Such cases generally can be avoided by staying away from charcoal-grilled meats and fish at market stalls, salads in inexpensive restaurants, ice cream from street vendors, and any fruits which have no peel. If preparing fruits and vegetables (particularly lettuce) at home, especially in the summer months, it is advisable to soak them in a solution of permanganate (available in small bottles in pharmacies) or "javel" (chlorox bleach). Be sure to rinse well! Don't become unnecessarily paranoid, however, as tasting the local cuisine is one of the highlights of the Moroccan experience.

***Tap water in Morocco is safe in the modern sections of larger towns, although water in the medinas may contain a wide variety of intestinal flora. Drinking from freshly washed glasses should also be avoided if possible. If you find the water giving your stomach a run for its money, you should probably stick with bottled mineral water. Brands widely available in Morocco include Sidi Ali, Sidi Harazem, and Oulmes (naturally carbonated).***

Heat exhaustion can be a problem in the summer months, particularly since it's often difficult in dry climates to notice how quickly the body loses moisture. Indications that you may have been exposed to the heat too long include nausea, dizziness, headaches, and sometimes profuse sweating. Avoiding this discomfort is easy if you put a little extra salt in your food, drink plenty of fluids (both of these to avoid dehydration), and wear a hat. If, despite precautions, you find yourself suffering from the symptoms of heat exhaustion, the remedy is not to try to "cool down" with vast quantities of cold liquids: this is in fact quite dangerous. Rest in a moderately warm (not cold) place, and put on a sweater if you feel a chill. Eat a lot of salted snack food, or in small increments, take a couple teaspoons of salt. This will help you retain water, which is exactly what you need to do to avoid further dehydration. When you've had your fill of salted food, slowly and over a period of time, drink as much warm (not cold) liquid as your system can stand.

Bilharzia is thought to be present in pools and streams in the south, so avoid contact with any standing water in this region, no matter how clear it may look, particularly in oases. Mosquitoes thrive in Morocco, notably in the south, but in most cases are not malarial.

Although not mandatory, it is probably a good idea to have typhoid, hepatitis A&B, tetanus, and polio immunizations brought up to date before traveling to Morocco. There are cases of meningitis occasionally reported in areas with poor water supplies in the summer, so a vaccine for this may be advisable if you plan to live in the medina.

**SPECIAL NOTE: Anti-depressant medications/anti-psychotic medications CANNOT be purchased over the counter OR with a foreign prescription. You must have a prescription from a Moroccan doctor so please bring any necessary medications of this sort with you.**

### Pharmacies

Should you feel you're coming down with something, please feel free to contact the ALIF administration. In general, however, you can stop at a pharmacy which, in addition to prescribing medication on the spot, can also recommend doctors. Business hours for pharmacies are typically from 8:30 to 12:30 in the mornings and 3:00 to 7:30 in the evenings. The following is a list of pharmacies around town:

**Ville Nouvelle**

*Pharmacie de l'Hopital:* 1 block south of ALIF on corner of Rue Mohammed Diouri and Bd. Mohammed Slaoui

*Pharmacie de la Liberté:* Place de la Resistance

*Pharmacie Centrale:* 70 Avenue Mohammed V

*Pharmacie de la Croix Verte:* 109 Avenue Mohammed V

*Pharmacie la Garde:* 30 Avenue Chefchaouen (2 blocks W. of ALIF)

*Pharmacie Saada:* Hay Saada

**Medina**

*Pharmacie Maroc:* Batha

*Pharmacie R'cif*

*Pharmacie Ras Cherratine*

*Pharmacie Bab Ftouh*

**Fez Jdid**

*Pharmacie Naima:* Fez El-Jdid

The all-night pharmacy which opens at 8:00 pm in each neighborhood is indicated by a sign in front:

*Pharmacie de Garde*

***Clinics and Private Hospitals***

There are also a number of modern, privately-run clinics and hospitals in Fez. It is better to avoid government-run hospitals which treat the general, non-paying public and are frequently understaffed and poorly equipped.

*Clinique Kawtar :* Rte d'Immouzer,, Ville Nouvelle (tel: 0535- 61 19 00)

*Clinique Tazi:* Avenue Mohamed El Kouri, near Florence Square (tel: 622137)

*Clinique Qarawin* Rue Imam Ali, near the French Consulate (tel: 623065)

*Clinique Benmoussa:* 2 blocks Northwest of ALIF next to Café Tour d'Or (tel: 626464)

***Doctors***

The following doctors are recommended in cases of more serious ailment. If you need assistance, (all doctors speak good English), contact the ALIF administration.

- **Leila Tazi, General Practitioner, English-speaking, Clinique Tazi (GSM: 0661-76 47 12)**
- **Robert Villard, Ophthalmologist, English-speaking, Bd. Chefchaouni (tel:624350)**
- **Dr Filali, Chakib Clinique Kawtar, GSM: 0661- 13 47 03**
- **Clinic Kawtar, Rte Immouzer, Fez V.N 0535 – 61 19 00**

**\*\* Dial 15 for an ambulance in the event of a serious medical injury \*\***

***Dentists***

Having a dental check-up is advisable before coming to Morocco. On the other hand, should dental problems arise while you are in Fez, there are plenty of competent dentists in town:

- Dr.Said Amour, English-speaking, Immeuble Hazaz, Rue El Khisali, south of post office (tel:62.18.35)
- Nouzha Laraqui, English-speaking, 36 Blvd Med V (93.24.93)

- *Medical Insurance*

**Students are not required to have health insurance before coming to Morocco. All medical and pharmaceutical bills must be paid up front. If you have medical insurance, you should check with the insurance company before leaving for Morocco to ensure that they will accept your receipts and to see if they have any specific requirements for documentation.**

## MONEY

### General Notes

Morocco's official currency is the Dirham, which is broken down into 100 Centimes. Most Moroccans, however, tend to use a system of "francs" (Centimes) and "riyals" (5 Centimes) among themselves, and prices more often than not will be given in one of these denominations. To compute Dirham values: from Centimes/francs, drop two zeros; from riyals, drop a zero and divide by two. The following chart may help you make sense of the sometimes baffling prices your grocer will quote you. Caution: in the area of Tangier, a Riyal is worth 20 Centimes.

5 CT =	1 Riyal =	5 Francs	5 Dh =	100 Riyals =	500 Francs
10 CT =	2 Riyals =	10 Francs	10 Dh =	200 Riyals =	1,000 Francs
20 CT =	4 Riyals =	20 Francs	50 Dh =	1,000 Riyals =	5,000 Francs
50 CT =	10 Riyals =	50 Francs	100 Dh =	2,000 Riyals =	10,000 Francs
1 Dh =	20 Riyals =	100 Francs	1,000 Dh =	20,000 Riyals =	100,000 Francs
1.5 Dh =	30 Riyals =	150 Francs	10,000 Dh =	200,000 Riyals =	1,000,000 Francs

### Exchange Rates

While **exchange rates vary from day to day**, the following rates give you an idea of what to expect. Note: There is only one official bank rate throughout Morocco. **THIS RATE IS NOT GUARANTEED FOR ANY PAYMENTS OR EXCHANGES.**

**US \$1 = 8.0 Dh**      **UK £1 = 11.5 Dh**      **Euro = 10.9 Dh**

### Banking

Banks in Morocco have regular business hours Monday through Friday which are roughly from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Summer hours are now the same. Hours during Ramadan, likewise, are continuous from 9:30 to 2:30. Most banks in Fez are located on or near Bd. Mohammed V. If you're willing to put up with the wait, most of these will cash your traveler's checks for you. Eurocheques are accepted by all banks and major hotels, as well as some stores. ALIF students who plan to reside in Fez for six months or more should consider opening a "convertible Dirham account" into which they can have money wired and from which they can withdraw both Dirhams and foreign currency. The minimum opening deposit for such an account is about \$2,000 and must be in foreign currency or traveler's checks. (Students under twenty years of age may have to produce an official statement from their embassy, stating that they have reached the age of majority in their country in order to open an account.)

Foreign currency and traveler's checks are most efficiently changed at the banks listed below (bring along your passport). Many larger hotels also have facilities for exchanging money. If, prior to your departure from Morocco, you need to convert leftover dirhams back into a foreign currency, this can usually be done at bank stalls at the port of exit provided you have clear receipts in your name showing you have officially exchanged the money in Morocco. Note: There is no black market for foreign currency to speak of in Morocco.

The following are the major banks located in the Ville Nouvelle:

Banque du Maroc - Av. De France	B.C.M.E. - Florence Square
B.M.C.E. - Mohammed V Square	B.M.C.I. - Florence Square
Banque Populaire- Rue de Liberté	Credit du Maroc - Bd. Mohammed V
S.G.M.B. - Bd. Mohammed V	Attijariwafa bank - Bd. Hassan II

### Automatic Teller Machines/Cash Advances

There are several automatic teller machines in Fez. Accepted cards include Mastercard, Visa, Eurocard, and Plus & Cirrus Network cards. If you use a different card, contact the issuing bank to see if they have machines in Fez. Keep in mind that most banks charge a hefty sum for cash advances. Some ATM machines in Fez:

Visa and Mastercard advances can be arranged at many banks in Fez, including the Bank Populaire, Attijariwafa bank, and BMCE. **ALIF students should note that their daily or weekly credit limits in Morocco may be substantially lower than expected.** If you plan to use a credit card, be sure to contact the issuing agency and check your credit line as applicable in Morocco

Having money wired to Morocco can be a surprisingly long and frustrating process if you need money in a hurry, often taking two weeks or more. You must have your passport to conduct business or collect transfers at banks or Western Unions.

## LEISURE-TIME ACTIVITIES

### **General Notes**

Some hotels may allow you to use their pools, generally for a nominal fee (100 Dh). Another place to go is the "Diamant Vert," 3 km south of Fez at Ain Chkeff (reachable by bus 17 from Place Florence). The pool is enormous and there are water-slides, vast lawns, cafes, and snack bars. A similar option is "Les Trois Sources" on Route d'Imouzzer (bus 13 from the train station) which is not far from a stable (Ain Aymer) where you can go horseback riding. Other possibilities for one-day excursions include trips to Sidi Harazem (a mineral springs spa east of Fez) and Moulay Yaqoub (another hot sulfur spa northwest of Fez).

The French Cultural Center runs an interesting program of films and musical performances (from October to mid-June only). There are also sports centers (aerobics, etc.) with alternate times/days for men and women (ask the ALIF secretary for specifics).

Fez also has two outstanding museums: the Batha museum, which is in an interesting Alaouite palace (with a splendid garden), and houses a fine collection of Moroccan artifacts from various periods; and the arms museum in the Borj Al-Shimâl ("the northern fort") which, besides its fascinating collection of weapons from over the ages, offers a breathtaking view of the old city. Both museums charge an entrance fee of 10 Dh. The museums are normally open from 9:00 am - 12:00 pm and from 3:00 - 5:00 pm including weekends, but are closed on Tuesdays. Additionally, ALIF offers regular video showings of films in Arabic throughout the year, and keeps students updated on upcoming films, plays, and concerts in Fez. One of the most interesting of these events is Fez's annual World Sacred Music Festival which runs for approximately one week in early June and includes spiritual music from around the world. A Sufi Festival was recently started and takes place in April and there is a Jazz festival in late November.

### **Tour Guides and Hustlers**

Fez, unfortunately, is not the best venue for those who enjoy visiting sites on their own. While the government has been trying to control the "faux-guide" phenomenon recently, you will more than likely encounter them and their official (with government i.d. to prove it) counterparts in the medina. **A word to the wise: the effusive, "friendly" approach of unofficial guides should not be mistaken for sincere friendliness or local hospitality. It is not acceptable behavior according to Moroccan norms to address a stranger in the street, except to ask for information.** Therefore, people who do so should normally be ignored. If one encounters a particularly persistent hustler, you might look for a policeman (or threaten to) - pestering foreigners is against the law. Keep in mind that anything you buy when accompanied by a guide will be more expensive, since he'll get a percentage from the shop owner. The best way to avoid the hassle is simply to arrange for an official tour guide. Another option is to go to the Syndicat D'Initiative (the Moroccan equivalent of the Chamber of Commerce) on Place Mohammed V and arrange for a guide there. A half day tour with an official guide will cost about 250 Dh and spare you from a day of periodic hassle. The ALIF staff can also arrange for guided excursions on a regular basis to assist you in exploring the marvels of the medina.

### **"Moorish" Bath Houses**

As not all of our homestay families (and cheaper hotels) have hot running water or bathing facilities (especially in the old medina), ALIF students might want to know something about hammâms (bath houses). Most Moroccans prefer to bathe seriously at least once a week at neighborhood bath-houses which are plentiful in both the old and new towns. These have either separate facilities for men and women or staggered times. Bathing here is a social rite which can take up to three or four hours and reminds one of the ancient Romans who similarly enjoyed prolonged visits to bath houses where they conversed with friends, enjoyed massages, and thoroughly cleansed themselves in rooms of varied temperatures. In Islam, bathing is in fact an obligatory part of ritual purity entailed in the "greater ablution."

ALIF students who visit bath houses naturally draw attention to themselves not only because their skin is usually fairer than that of most Moroccans, but also because they typically have little idea of what to do or how to do it. The following guidelines are meant to give you an advance idea of some of the intricacies of the art of public bathing. It is recommended you go with a Moroccan friend or host family member for your first few visits.

- (1) Bring your own soap, shampoo, towel, plastic rinsing cup or bowl, and an extra pair of underwear (the pair you wear into the bathing area - and which you should not remove! - will get wet).
- (2) It is advisable not to bring along more than 50-100 Dh (the bath house fee can be up to 50 Dh depending on the class of hammâm) or other valuables (you might even consider leaving your watch at home) as your clothes and other belongings are left in a common changing room which may or may not be adequately guarded.
- (3) It's a good idea to go with a friend who can help fetch buckets of fresh water.
- (4) As you go into the bathing area (in your underwear) take care to collect several rubber buckets at the door as you will need them to get water for bathing. Leave your towel outside with your clothes. Once you enter the bathing chambers it is a good idea to "reserve" a spot for yourself by lining up your buckets around a small area and placing your soap, etc. in the middle. Generally there are three chambers of differing heat with the innermost, hottest one containing the source for (nearly boiling) hot water. The middle chamber is usually a good place to reserve your spot if you can bear the heat.
- (5) When fetching your water, use a specially provided bucket (often metallic) to dip hot water out of the cauldrons into your own buckets, the bottoms of which are likely to be less than sanitary. The vat of cooler water is usually in the first chamber and can be used in the same way.
- (6) Generally, practiced hammam goes sit and sweat a bit after they've set up their filled water buckets around them and then begin scrubbing themselves with a rough cloth (without soap) until the old skin begins to come off. Friends or family members often scrub each other. Then they rinse off with clear water. Eventually, they soap themselves down, rinse again, and finally shampoo their hair.
- (7) There are often professional scrubbers and masseurs/masseuses in the hammâms (called kiyyâs for men and tiyyâbah for women). Men can expect to pay 15-30 Dh for a complete massage; for women the price is higher (30-50 Dh on top of the entrance fee) since it includes reserving you a place, fetching water, and a massage.

## HOUSING OPTIONS 2011/12

\*pricing subject to changes dictated by the local marketplace – these are **GUIDELINES ONLY**.

### ***The ALIF Residence (prices valid through Dec 31, 2011)***

Students residing in the ALIF Residence Villa have either private or shared rooms and share a fully-equipped kitchen and Western-style bath facilities. All student rooms are furnished, bed linens included, have high ceilings, and most open out onto private balconies. Please bring your own towels. **Due to the limited number of rooms in the Residence ALIF does not accept reservations for this housing option.** Students are given rooms on a first-come first-served basis. Below are specific costs and policies for the Residence. **In the summer, the double capacity rooms will be double or the single student pays the higher rate regardless.** No discounts are given for longer stays.

#### Nightly Rental Rates at the ALIF Residence\*

Room	1 Dbl		2	3	4	5		6 Dbl		7	8 Dbl		9 Dbl		10 Dbl		11 Dbl		Apt
Sept.- May	S	D	80	85	80	S	D	S	D	85	S	D	S	D	S	D	S	D	160
	90	140				90	140	90	140		100	150	90	140	90	140	90	140	
June- Aug.	140		100	105	100	160		160		105	160		140		140		140		180

\*Rental costs at the ALIF Residence include room furnished with bed, sheets and pillows, desk, chair, and lamp; all utilities (gas, water, and electricity); use of the washing machine, dishes and cooking facilities; regular cleaning of all public areas; and sheet-washing service. The garden, lounge, and common room with the television are open to all residents.

**Please note: ALIF assumes your final night paid to be your final night of residency if not otherwise notified. If you plan to extend your stay, you should notify the ALIF office or the Housing Coordinator Tariq Oulidi one week in**

**advance. If you do not do this, you may be asked to vacate your room for another student, so plan ahead! Students already residing in the ALIF Residence who wish to extend their stay should also note that the rates and the requirement to pay before the additional nights also apply to them. Check-out time is 12:30pm.**

All residents will be provided with room keys. Please keep your rooms locked whenever you are not there. Residents will not have keys to the front gate, which is locked after 11:00pm. If you plan to arrive after 11:00pm, please notify the night watchman beforehand. No visitors are allowed onto the premises of the ALIF Residence without permission of the administration, and having overnight visitors is not allowed under any circumstances and is grounds for eviction from the Villa. Alcohol is allowed as long as residents are discreet and clean up after themselves. Inappropriate behavior or harassment of other residents will be grounds for eviction.

## **Hotels**

Some popular recommended hotels are:

Hotel Mounia, 60 Blvd Zerktoni, Fes Ville Nouvelle, 351 dh per night single, 462 dh double

Hotel Olympic, Med V Blvd, Ville Nouvelle – 250 dh per night single;300 dh double (breakfast included)

Pension Dar Bouanania, Derb Bensalem, Old Medina – 300-400 per night singles/doubles

Hotel Menzeh Zalagh, Med Diouri, Ville Nouvelle – 600 dh per night single.

Note: These prices may change and do not include meals (see optional plan outlined below). Only 3 star hotels (or higher) are air-conditioned. Please check your tourist guide for more options or ask the ALIF secretary. We also maintain a list of popular maison d'hotes in Fez Medina which you can request from [info@alif-fes.com](mailto:info@alif-fes.com).

## **Apartments**

Unfurnished or lightly furnished apartments can usually be arranged through local real estate agents (who usually expect one month's rent as remuneration); although one should be aware that it may take a few weeks to find an appropriate apartment. Monthly rent on unfurnished apartments ranges between 2,500 and 3,500 Dh. Normally the landlord expects the first and last month's rent up front with an additional negotiated sum to cover utilities (since it takes about two months for electricity and water bills to be processed). Furnished apartments (except for luxury flats that rent for 5,000 - 8,000 Dh per month) are very rare in Fez, but the costs of acquiring basic furnishings for a shared apartment may be worthwhile for longer stays .

## **Home Stay**

A unique feature of ALIF's programs is our Moroccan home stay service. Homestays with Moroccan families offer room and board for a fixed fee and provide the student with a window into family life in Morocco.

**Costs: 110 dh per day standard homestay; less than one week 150 dh per day.**

Payment Procedure: The initial ALIF Homestay service fee of 350 Dh and at least three weeks of homestay payment must be paid upon arrival in Fez. The service fee and the first night of homestay are **NOT** refundable. The participant is required to pay the charges on a regular basis or else advance the total amount for the entire period to the ALIF administration. If the participant wishes to cancel the homestay, any part of the weekly payment already made to the host family will **not** be refunded; however, any homestay payment advanced to ALIF beyond the week in question will be refunded. It may be possible in such an event to arrange an alternative homestay with a different family. Note: The ALIF administration handles the payments to the families because experience has shown that the issues of payment and reimbursement can be a tricky one for students to negotiate with their host families. **ALIF does not withhold any percentage of the homestay fees beyond the initial one time registration fee.**

Days Absent from Family: As long as students keep their belongings in their room with their homestay family, they are expected to pay for that room (just like in a hotel). **Requests for reimbursements for after-the-fact absences cannot be accepted. There is no compensation for occasional meals missed,** though it is usually possible to ask for a sandwich if you expect to be gone over lunch time. Please discuss long term absences with the program coordinator on a case by case basis.

Conditions of Homestay: Due to the nature of the homestay program, it is not possible to completely "standardize" the conditions in the homes of our host families. While meals are part of the arrangement, families are not expected to depart from their standard diet and homestay participants are not entitled to "order" particular foods unless this is necessitated for reasons of medical or religious/ethical restrictions. Similarly, we do not ask families to be responsible for the washing of participants

clothes although this service might be offered. ***Homestay participants are advised not to leave cash in unlocked bags to avoid offering temptation to servants or children.*** Either keep your money on your person, in traveler's checks, or ask the ALIF administration about keeping a specially marked envelope in the ALIF safe.

Host families generally insist that the ALIF student not bring other Moroccan friends to their homes as they feel, often correctly, that a foreigner may not have the necessary discrimination to differentiate between trustworthy and untrustworthy Moroccans. If you want to meet with other Moroccans, the ALIF garden is an excellent place to socialize. In addition, many Moroccan families may not be very flexible about allowing their guests to return late at night without prior warning. Moroccan host families will typically be more protective of female students, treating them almost as their own daughters.

**Other Concerns:** Participants who feel they may have difficulty adapting to life with a Moroccan family should consider other housing options. Among the difficulties experienced by past participants: 1.) Lack of privacy 2.) Noise from television and radio 3.) Unfamiliar meal times and dietary habits 4.) Unavailability of study space 5.) Unfamiliar sanitary fixtures (in some cases squat toilets or no hot running water) 6.) Location of host family (sometimes involving a commute to ALIF). For the overwhelming number of past participants such inconveniences were far outweighed by the positive experience of living in the heart of a Moroccan family, whose hospitality is legendary for good reason.

## **ALIF Facilities**

### ***The ALIF Library***

ALIF maintains a library for the exclusive use of its students. The catalogued collection includes works on the Arabic language, linguistics, North African and Arab studies, Arabic literature, and Islamic studies. Books are listed in the card catalogue and cassette listings are posted. All students wishing to check books out of the library are required to pay a refundable 200 Dh book-borrowing deposit. Books are to be checked out from the librarian, who can also provide you with headphones and cassettes for use in the library. The library is open during regular school hours; closed noon to 3 p.m. and Saturday afternoons. No evening hours.

### ***Computer Use***

If you intend to bring a laptop computer with you to Fez, be sure you have an appropriate transformer – most modern computers have them now. Electricity in Fez varies between 220v and 110v, even within the same room. Transformers for many laptop computers automatically convert from 110v to 220v, but check yours before you get here. Almost all computers (and printers) require that you use the manufacturer's transformer, which will be much easier (and cheaper!) to get before coming to Morocco.

If customs officials see that you are carrying a computer into Morocco, you may be asked to pay a customs duty or have your computer recorded in your passport as you arrive in the country. The customs duty may be exorbitantly high. Rather than paying customs, it is generally preferable to have the machine recorded in your passport. This ensures that you will not sell it in Morocco, and you will be required to show the machine and have it marked again in your passport as you leave the country.

***ALIF does have several PC computers available for student use, which are located in the computer lab. We now have wireless internet and ADSL.*** Please provide your own 3.5" disk for your personal documents. There is a 2 Dh/page charge for printing documents. The computer lab is open during normal school hours; closed from noon to 3 p.m. and evenings after 6.

### ***Meal Options at ALIF***

Lunch is available six days a week (excluding Sunday) at the ALIF concession stand. Lunch generally consists of a salad, tajine or couscous, fruit and bread for 40 Dirhams. **Lunch must be ordered by 10:00 am.** Coffee, tea, soft drinks, and snacks are also available at the concession stand.

There are several nearby restaurants and cafes serving lunch and dinner. The Staff will be happy to direct you.

### ***Recent Additions***

ALIF has recently acquired several items of interest to its students. First, ALIF now has a small film-viewing area for students who wish to take advantage of ALIF's DVD collection. Second, the ALIF Residence is equipped with a satellite television that receives over 16 Arabic stations and wireless internet. Non-Resident students have access to the satellite TV and study

space in the house daily from 2:00-6:00 PM, Mon.-Fri There is a cultural/study center in a beautiful Riad in Batha, Fes medina equipped with WiFi.

**Washing, cooking, showers and internet are for VILLA RESIDENT use only please!**

## COSTS

### ALIF Tuition and Payment Procedures

ALIF course tuition and other fees are to be paid on the first day of classes or when you receive your schedule. Students may pay in Moroccan dirhams, credit card, common foreign currencies or traveler's checks. Personal checks drawn on a foreign account are also accepted but are subject to a collection fee of 150 Dh which will be added to the student's invoice. **ALIF students are reminded that tuition refunds are not given for intensive course absences or cancellations after the session has begun. Any missed classes are the student's responsibility and no monetary or other compensation, such as make-up hours, can be offered.** In certain cases, private hours missed can be rescheduled. However, it is the student's responsibility to alert the ALIF administration to any absences at least three days in advance for compensation to be considered.

### Instructional Materials\* -prices subject to change due to availability in Morocco, please ask

- CMA 100 & 200 regular course books (required) . . . . . 150 Dh
- CMA Latin transcript/tape or cd . . . . . 150 Dh
- CMA 100 "accelerated" course book (required) . . . . . 120 Dh
- Labas textbook/tape . . . . . 180 Dh
- MSA 100 & 200 course book "al-Kitâb fii Ta'allum al-'Arabiyya, vol. 1" (req'd.) . . 490 Dh
- MSA 100 Alif Baa course book.....380 Dh
- MSA 300 & 400 course book "al-Kitâb fii Ta'allum al-'Arabiyya, vol. 2" (req'd.) . . 490 Dh
- MSA 500 assorted **texts** from "al-Kitâb al-Asâsî, vol. 3" and  
     "al-Kitâb fii Ta'allum al-'Arabiyya, vol. 3" (required) . . . . . 380 Dh  
     (please note al-Kitab vol. 3 is 450 Dh)
- Harrell's Moroccan Arabic/English Dictionary (optional) . . . . . 410 Dh
- Hans Wehr's MSA/English Dictionary (optional) . . . . . 180 Dh
- Moroccan Phrasebook .....70 Dh

*\*Due to the high cost of "al-Kitâb fii Ta'allum al-'Arabiyya," in Morocco, students may wish to purchase their own copies at home and bring them along.*

### • Other ALIF Fees

Optional fees. In an attempt to keep ALIF tuition to a minimum, some services are not included in the overall tuition, but require an additional fee for those students who wish to take advantage of them.

- Library Book-Borrowing Privileges . . . . . 300 Dh
- Check collection fee (payment by personal checks) . . . . . 150 Dh
- Credit card fee .....3% per transaction
- Photocopying . . . . . 1 Dh/page
- Telephone/Fax use (see "Telephone Use at ALIF" page 25)
- Airport Pick-up . . . . . 120 Dh

### Approximate weekly living expenses

In addition to the housing expenses as outlined above, individual student living expenses will depend on several factors, not the least of which is the student's individual lifestyle. The following estimates are based on experience, but they should be taken only as guidelines.

- Miscellaneous expenses for all ALIF students: 300 Dh/week, including reading material, stationery, postage stamps, minimal local transportation, snacks, etc.
- Transportation expenses for homestay participants and apartment dwellers not within walking distance from ALIF: Moroccan homestay includes all meals but if the home is not within walking distance of ALIF the expense of bus fares (normally 2.50 -3 Dh per ride) and/or taxi fares (the average fare is 10 Dh) must be kept in mind. **Some days students may have split schedules and will need to make the commute twice a day.**
- Meals for students residing in apartments or hotels: Food/meals will average 40 - 120 Dh/day depending on how often one eats out. Breakfast in a cafe averages 10-15 Dh/day. Lunches and dinners eaten in modest restaurants average 40 - 90 Dh/meal.
- Food bought for meals prepared in apartments: Produce and foodstuffs in general are inexpensive in Morocco, especially if you shop around a bit. The weekly average for ingredients bought for all meals is about 300 - 600 Dh depending on how often one buys meat. Fish is also excellent and usually slightly cheaper than meat.
- Laundry: Some families will volunteer to do a student's clothes washing, but this is not expected of host families. **STUDENT SHOULD SUPPLY THEIR OWN LAUNDRY DETERGENT.**
- There are numerous laundry/dry cleaners in Fez, but self-service laundromats do not (yet) exist. Prices are only slightly cheaper than U.S. or European rates for laundry service.
- Students residing in the ALIF Residence have access to a washing machine. **RESIDENTS ONLY!**

## MISCELLANY

### **Visas & Other Documentation**

Identification: Moroccans must keep their identity cards with them at all times. Likewise, foreigners are expected to have their passports (or residency cards if they're residents) with them. If you are uncomfortable carrying your passport with you, you should at the very least carry a photocopy. You may be asked to show your passport or residency card by police performing routine security checks throughout Morocco. ALIF also provides its students with student identity cards. These cards are not official documents that can be carried in place of a passport or residency card, but they may prove useful should you need to explain to officials what you are doing in Morocco, as well as giving proof of student status for discount airfares.

Visas: Most students automatically obtain a three-month tourist visa upon entering Morocco. Students planning to stay in Morocco longer than three months may apply for a residency visa, provided that they are full-time students. ALIF can help with this process but is in no way responsible for reminding students to do it or for completing documents other than those specifically required from ALIF.

**Residency applicants: must provide the following: 1.) nine smaller-than-passport-sized photos 2.) a 100 dirham stamp - available at most newsstands and tabacs 3.) proof of full-time enrollment at ALIF 4.) a rental contract, or a statement of residency to be obtained from landlord/host 5.) proof of financial support - usually a bank attestation showing that you have the equivalent of approximately \$2,000 in a Moroccan bank 6.) several forms provided by the police 7.) photocopies of your passport, legalized by the city clerk's office. All of these items should be submitted to the Prefecture Police on Hassan II. In one to two days, residents are provided with an official receipt, but may not get the card itself for several months.**

Depending on one's nationality, a Moroccan resident may need a re-entry visa in order to leave and return to the country without nullifying his or her status as a resident. Many Europeans do not need re-entry visas. Americans may obtain an unlimited re-entry visa valid for one year, but some nationals may need to apply for a new re-entry visa each time they plan to leave the country. As this visa may take up to two months to process, it's wise to plan ahead for a trip out of the country.

Drivers Licenses: While the police will generally recognize drivers licenses from other countries, it is advisable to obtain an international drivers license if you're planning to drive while in Morocco. International licenses can easily be obtained from AAA in the United States, AA in the U.K. and similar automobile associations in other countries.

### **Postal Services**

Post Offices: The central post office in Fez is located on Florence Square where Hassan II and Mohammed V converge. To buy stamps or to mail something enter the main door on the corner. To collect packages you should enter under the Amana sign posted on the Hassan II side of the post office near the main Maroc Telecom office. Telephone calls can also be made from the post office, although you should be prepared to wait. There are also a number of branch offices around Fez on Atlas Square, Batha Square, and Alaouite Square in Fez El-Jdid.

Regular Hours: 8:30- 2:30

Postage stamps: If you already know the weight of your letters or how many stamps you need (postal rates are posted in ALIF), it is much easier to buy them at a kiosk or newsstand around town. Bright yellow mail boxes are attached to the sides of buildings (they are not free standing); for instance, next to the entrance of the Marché Central on Mohammed V. There is normally only one box for local, domestic, and air-mail.

ALIF students are welcome to use our P.O. Box (B.P. 2136) for their personal mail which will be dropped in the student mailbox in front of the ALIF Bulletin Board. (Note: expect mail from Europe to take 1 to 2 weeks) You can also leave your stamped letters at ALIF for twice-daily mailings. With regard to receiving packages, ALIF students should avoid having family or friends send electronic goods, cameras, or audio cassettes since the customs duty charged on such items is usually exorbitant. Also, never have cash sent to you by mail.

**Telecommunications**

Telephoning: There are several places from which you can make phone calls in Fez: from the post office, from a phone booth, from a privately-owned “teleboutique,” or from a private phone line. At the post office, request a domestic or international booth from the front counter. Payment is made following the call. Public phone booths require either coins or telephone cards. Moroccan telephone cards, called TELECARTE, are ideal for calling long distance from specially-equipped public phones, can be purchased along with stamps at the kiosk across from the post office/police station on Mohammed V and from many other tabacs. Teleboutiques, small shops with pay phones and sometimes photocopy machines and fax services, do not accept telephone cards. They can, however, make change for you. Relatively few Moroccans have fixed-line telephones in their homes, and few of those that do have international lines. If you are living with a family and they do have a phone, it is generally best not to ask to make international calls, even if you will be reversing the charges or using a calling card. Since phone bills are not itemized and there is a charge for even local calls, Moroccans are often very hesitant to allow others to use their phone. For international calls, dial "00" and then dial the appropriate country code and number (Country codes: England = 44, USA = 001, France = 33, Germany = 49, Holland = 31).

Collect Calls: Collect calls can be placed through the post office or a private phone line by dialing 12 for the operator and requesting "PCV." You give the operator the number and city you're calling and he or she then calls you back once the connection has been made. Charges are often still made on the calling side as well as the receiving side.

**Telephone Use at ALIF**

Students are not allowed to make international calls from ALIF unless absolutely necessary. Students may receive **EMERGENCY** calls only at ALIF at times when the administration is open (Mon.-Fri.: 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m./3:30 p.m.-6:00 p.m.; Sat: 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.). Such calls, however, should be limited to five minutes to keep the line free. Students are allowed to use the ALIF Residence phone free of charge for calls in the Fez region that do not require the dialing of an area code. Students staying at the ALIF Residence may receive calls there at (212/35) 94 05 66.

Please note the following information on long distance ALIF telephone/fax use charges:

<i>Long distance calls within Morocco:</i>			
Minimum fee:	20 Dh	For each minute over 3 minutes:	10 Dh
<i>To Europe &amp; the Middle East</i>			
Minimum fee:	60 Dh	For each minute over 3 minutes:	20 Dh
<i>To North American &amp; all other locations:</i>			
Minimum fee:	100 Dh	For each minute over 3 minutes:	40 Dh
<i>Collect Calls (PCV) to anywhere:</i>	10 Dh		
<i>International Credit Card Calls:</i>	10 Dh		

Sending Faxes: Faxes can be transmitted from ALIF as well, at the following rates. (Please read the note above concerning rates.)

*Long distance within Morocco:*

First page: 15 Dh                      Each additional page: 10 Dh

*To Europe*

First page: 40 Dh                      Each additional page: 20 Dh

*To North America:*

First page: 80 Dh                      Each additional page: 60 Dh

Receiving Faxes: Faxes received are billed as follows:

First page: 10 Dh                      Each additional page: 5 Dh

**Electronic Mail**

- E-Mail and the Internet are easily accessible in Morocco. *There are student computers in the ALIF computer lab, wireless access on campus and at the student residence, as well as free access at several cafes around the area.*
- Please note that any E-Mail for students sent to ALIF's accounts will not be read or distributed, as these accounts are intended only for the Institute's use.

**Climate**

The climate variations in a country like Morocco are endless. In general, though, Fez is quite hot and dry in the summer and cold and damp in the winter. This cold has a particularly chilling bite indoors because most buildings are made of concrete, tile, and marble, and lack any insulation or heating to speak of. Knowing how to dress in the winter can be really tricky because of the intense midday sun which creates extreme changes in temperatures from day to evening. The following chart gives an idea of average high temperatures (Fahrenheit/Celsius) throughout the year:

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
61/16	63/17	66/19	72/22	79/26	88/31	97/36	97/36	90/32	81/27	66/18	61/16

**Eating Out**

You can eat out quite well for reasonable prices around Fez. In some restaurants a service charge of 10 - 15% is listed as a separate item on the bill (not to be confused with the T.V.A., a 19% government tax which may also be added in some cases). If this service is not included in the bill it is normal to leave a 10 - 15% tip for the waiter provided the service was up to par. Some restaurants offer only Moroccan fare while others are more international in variety (salads, steaks, brochettes, omelets, as well as the ubiquitous cr me caramel). There are dozens of cafes and restaurants scattered throughout the Ville Nouvelle and the medina where a decent meal can be had cheaply. It might be best to avoid salads in the least expensive places. Traditional Moroccan restaurants are often housed in hotels or splendid villas that look more like palaces. For 200-450 Dh per person you can have a sumptuous feast frequently accompanied by Berber or Andalusian rhythms and dancing. For these restaurants, it is usually better to book in advance. Traditional Fassi Restaurants in the Medina:

Palais de Fez, Bab R'cif, carpet shop and superb restaurant, great view of the Medina (tel: 634707)

Dar Saada, 21 Rue Attarine (tel: 633343)

Dar Tagine, 15 Rossrhi Ras Jnana (tel: 634167)

Firdaous, Bab Guissa (tel: 634343)

Palais Mnebhi, 15, Soukit Ben Safi, (tel: 633893)

Palais des Merenides, 99 Zkak Er Rouah (tel: 634028)

Cheaper restaurants in Fez El-Bali are located around Bab Boujloud. Quality of food and service in restaurants around this area vary widely. Some of the better places to eat include Restaurant Bouayade (Next to Hotel Cascades), Restaurant des Jeunes, Kasbah, and Restaurant Typiquement, just inside the gate at Bab Boujloud.

Small restaurants are also a dime a dozen in the Ville Nouvelle. Among those to be recommended:

CasaNostra, 20 rue Arabia Saoudia (near the Hotel Sofia) - full pizza and pasta meals

Sandwich Florence, 39 Hassan II - nice outdoor seating, cheap.

Midway Pizza, 9 Ibn Jarah - best pizza in Fez. An okay Vietnamese place right next door.

Sandwich Stop, Atlas Square - average fare, but extremely friendly staff.

Restaurant Marrakesh, Bd. Mohammed V, Rue Omar Mokhtar - the best mid-priced food in town.

Mamia, Place Florence - reasonably-priced fast food, pizza, good salads, and a nice view of park from upper floor.

Chicken Mac, near Place Florence, good roast chicken with saffron rice and fries, take out available; cheap

Zagora, Bd. Mohammed V, turn left immediately at the shoe store "Derby", locate behind - excellent Moroccan and European food, but expensive.

Chez Vittorio, off Moh. V - excellent Italian food, great pizza, steaks and salad, liquor served, moderately expensive.

Vesuvio, on the side street across the avenue from Hotel Tghat on Ave des FAR, go past the CHM gas station and you will see the pink neon sign – excellent Italian fare and pizzas- a bit expensive.

Isla Blanca, Hassan II, French-International cuisine, very good but expensive.

CocoRico, corner of rue Abdelkrim Benjelloun near Midway Pizza – best chwarma and sandwiches; cheap.

Majestic, near Marjane and Henri LeConte Tennis Academy, good French and international gourmet cuisine, very expensive, liquor served

Maison Blanche, 12 rue Ahmed Chaouki, Fes Ville Nouvelle, 535 -62 27 27, French and international cuisine, very expensive, liquor served

Kai Tai, Thai and oriental cuisine, Rue Ahmed Chaouki near Maison Blanche, moderate to expensive

*For those who want to eat at home Fez now has three major supermarket/hypermarche stores:*

*METRO, Marjane, and Acima. You can hop into any petit taxi and ask to be taken to one of the three. METRO and Marjane also sell household goods, linens and some sporting goods/clothing.*

## **Bookstores/Newspaper Stands**

There's a good selection of bookstores and newsstands in the Ville Nouvelle; most are located on Blvd. Mohammed V. The International Herald Tribune is usually available (normally one or two days late) at major newsstands (try the one on the far side of the parking lot behind the Marché Central and the one on Mohammed V Avenue adjacent to the pedestrian mall). There are several La Presse kiosks around the city now with good selections of newspapers and periodicals, too.

An alternative source of news in English is the Saudi Gazette (published in Jeddah and priced at only 3 Dh) which has excellent international coverage, especially news of the Arab world. Newsweek and Time magazines (38 Dh) are sold regularly but not at every small newsstand

### **Bookstores**

ALC Bookshop, onsite with ALC/ALIF in Fez

Librarie du Centre - 130 Mohammed V; Nice selection of literature and history in Arabic and French.

Librarie Populaire - 55 Mohammed V; Good selection of religious texts, literature, political science and history. Most titles are in Arabic, but they do have some French titles in the back. The store also carries facsimile editions of medieval Arabic texts treating different aspects of Moroccan history.

Librarie Bachir Iraqi - 73 Mohammed V; Average selection of somewhat worn French standards. Also some Arabic dictionaries and grammar texts.

Papeterie Nouvelle - 40 Hassan II; Mostly stationery, but some nice books on traditional Moroccan arts, cooking, etc.

There are also a number of bookstores in the medina on the Talaa Sghira just inside Bab Bou jloud.

Both Maktabat Al-Fikr Al-Mu'asir (18 Bis, Rue 16 Nov.) and the newsstand at 107 Mohammed V carry a wide selection of foreign periodicals including Time, Newsweek, USA Today, and the Herald Tribune, as well as other European standards (Le Point, L'Express, El Pais, Der Spiegel, etc).

## **Electricity**

Electric current in Fez is 220v. Wall-plugs are the two-prong, rounded European type. Small, travel transformers for appliances can be found

## **Useful Phone Numbers**

Note: The country code for Morocco is 212, while there are several main area codes (Fez =5 35, Rabat =537, Casablanca = 522, Tangier =509). To dial long distance within Morocco, dial "0", then the area code, and finally the number. All numbers contain 10 digits now.

UK Embassy, Rabat (537) 720905

UK Consulate, Casablanca (522) 203316

US Embassy, Rabat (537)762265, Fax: 765661

US Consulate, Casablanca (522) 264550

American Citizens Services - [http://travel.state.gov/law/citizenship/citizenship\\_775.html](http://travel.state.gov/law/citizenship/citizenship_775.html)

Fulbright Commission, Rabat (537)764109

AMIDEAST, Rabat (537)726230

American Chamber of Commerce, Casablanca (522)311448

King Fahd School of Translation, Tangier 5(09)942813

Operator Assistance, 12

Hotel Zalagh, Fez (535)625531

Qarawiyyin Library, Fez 5(35)633939

French Cultural Center, Fez (535)623921

Fez airport, (535)624800

ONCF: Fez train station, [www.oncf.ma](http://www.oncf.ma)

Royal Air Maroc, Fez (535)625516

Emergencies/police, 19 Ambulance 15