

ProjectsAbroad

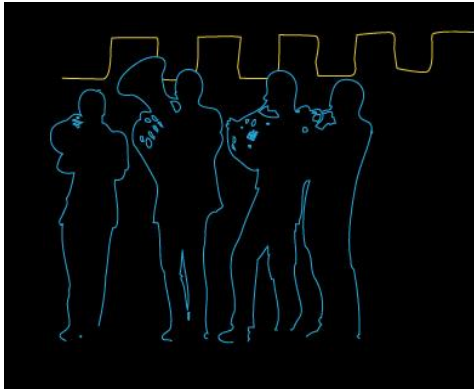
أهلا وسهلا بكم في المغرب

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Get together meeting – Chellah Jazz Festival



The volunteers and members of staff of Projects Abroad Morocco had the chance to attend the opening of the festival organized inside the old fortress of Chellah in Rabat, giving the event a very authentic aspect.

We saw two great performances from Swedish band Naoko Sakata Trio, and French band Papanosh Quintet who were joined later by Moroccan singer Oum. The latter fusion was expected to be good but turned out to be amazing!

Here are some pictures from the event





Volunteer story: Nicola Masnadi : Italy



Il mese è quasi finito. E con esso il mio periodo in Marocco.

Fra pochi giorni avrò rimesso tutte le mie cose in valigia, salutato tutti e sarò nuovamente su un aereo verso casa.

Non è stata la mia prima volta in un paese Arabo o Islamico e per cui non ho dovuto preoccuparmi troppo del cosiddetto "shock culturale"; mangiare con le mani o con il pane, dallo stesso piatto non è stata per me una novità così come non sono stato particolarmente disturbato dal richiamo alla preghiera del muezzin nel bel mezzo della notte. Oltretutto il mio stomaco ha resistito eroicamente anche all'acqua del rubinetto.

Anzi mi chiedo come farò, tornato a casa, a riprendere a mangiare con coltello e forchetta!

La città di Rabat ha un fascino particolare: non essendo una città molto turistica ha mantenuto un'aria di autenticità maggiore di altre località. Si può passeggiare tranquillamente per i Suq (mercati) della Medina senza essere "importunati" (sempre che uno lo consideri essere importunati e non un'occasione per fare conversazione) dai negozianti e dalle guide improvvisate. Poi tornando a casa lungo il mercato alimentare tra le urla dei venditori e degli acquirenti e il profumo delle merci ti ritrovi veramente immerso nella vita quotidiana marocchina.

Vivere in famiglia è sicuramente il modo migliore per entrare in una nuova cultura e comprenderla: le usanze, la religione la lingua e soprattutto il cibo!

Non avevo mai mangiato tanto come in questo mese, e così bene.

Tajine, Harsha, Pastilla, il tutto inaffiato con litri di the alla menta, o whisky marocchino, come lo chiamano qui. La famiglia presso la quale ho abitato è il tipico esempio dell'ospitalità marocchina, gentili simpatici e disponibili.

Durante la cena, insieme a loro e agli altri ragazzi europei con cui dividevo l'alloggio, si parlava (nel nostro arabo incerto) si scherzava, si mettevano a confronto le diverse usanze dei nostri paesi. E il fascino di abitare in una antica casa marocchina nel mezzo della Medina è almeno da provare.

Dato che lo scopo principale della mia esperienza in Marocco era studiare e praticare l'arabo, le lezioni hanno preso una parte importante del mio tempo: tre ore al giorno tutti i giorni più lo studio a casa.

Poi viaggiando o gironzolando per la città ho avuto occasione di praticare la lingua e acquisire sicurezza.

Essendo molto appassionato di viaggi, sono rimasto un po' deluso scoprendo quanto fosse grande il paese e capendo che non sarei riuscito ad andare in tutti i posti che volevo: il Sahara, le Kasbah berbere, l'Atlante e mille altri luoghi. Comunque nei week end ho visitato Fes e Marrakesh, bellissime città imperiali con i loro chilometri di Suq, tintorie, moschee e mederse (scuole coraniche) incantatori di serpenti e altre meraviglie.

Lo staff di Project Abroad è stato molto disponibile e attento alle mie richieste, e inoltre è composto da ragazzi giovani e simpatici, con cui si passa volentieri una serata fuori.

Quindi arrivederci Marocco e, ins'allah, ci vediamo presto!

English translation:



The month is almost over and also my time in Morocco.

In a few days I will start packing, greet everyone and head back home.

This was not my first time in an Arab or Islamic country therefore I didn't have to worry too much about the so-called "culture shock" and deal with things like: eating with your hands or with bread from the same plate. All this was not new to me. I didn't feel disturbed by the call to prayer of the muezzin in the middle of the night. Besides, my stomach has heroically resisted even tap water.

In fact, I wonder how will I start using knife and fork when go back home!

The city of Rabat has a special charm: it is not a very touristy town which has maintained an air of authenticity better than other locations. You can easily walk to the souk (market) in the Medina without being "bothered" by shopkeepers and tour guides; then return home walking through the food market, where you can hear the cries of vendors and purchasers, and can't avoid the odours of the goods very particular to Morocco.

Staying with a Moroccan host family is definitely the best way to get immersed in a new culture and understand the customs, religion, language and especially the food!

I had never eaten so much as this month, and as well.

Tajine, Harsha, Pastilla, all washed down with gallons of mint tea, Moroccan whiskey or, as they call it here. The family with whom I lived is a typical example of Moroccan hospitality; they are kind, funny and helpful.

During dinners with them and other young Europeans with whom I shared housing, we usually speak (in our shaky Arabic) and laugh; we began to compare the different customs of our countries with the charm of living in an old house in the middle of the Moroccan Medina which is at least worth trying.

Given that the main purpose of my experience in Morocco was to study and practice Arabic, the lessons have taken an important part of my time: three hours a day every day, and more studying at home.

When at home, travelling or wandering around the city, I had the opportunity to practice my language skills and gained confidence speaking Arabic.

Being very fond of travelling, I was a little 'disappointed' when I found out how big the country is, and realized that I would not be able to go to all the places I wanted to see: the Sahara, the Berber Kasbah, Atlas mountains, and a thousand other places. Even though, at the weekends, I visited Fez and Marrakesh, beautiful imperial cities with their miles long souks, dry cleaners, mosques and Medersas (Koranic schools) snake charmers and other wonders.

The members of staff of Projects Abroad were very helpful and attentive to my requests. They're a team of very nice young men.

So, goodbye Morocco. Insh'allah I'll see you soon!

Upcoming events : October - Eid al Adha



At the end of the annual pilgrimage to Mecca or "Hajj," Muslims all over the world celebrate the holiday of Eid al-Adha or sacrifice feast. This year's feast will occur around the 16th of October.

Sacrifice feast, because sheep are sacrificed as an act of obedience to God.

Why Muslims celebrate it? To commemorate Abraham's trial who was ordered by Allah to kill his only son as an act of obedience to Allah. Upon hearing this command, he prepared to submit to Allah's will. When he was all prepared to do it, Allah revealed to him that his "sacrifice" had already been fulfilled. He had shown that his love for his Lord superseded all others that he would lay down his own life or the lives of those dear to him in order to submit to God.

During the celebration of Eid al-Adha, Muslims commemorate and remember Abraham's trial, by themselves slaughtering an animal such as a sheep, camel, or goat.

On the first morning of Eid al-Adha, Muslims around the world attend morning prayers at their local mosques. Prayers are followed by visits with family and friends, and the exchange of greetings and gifts. Special cookies are made for the occasion. At some point, members of the family will make arrangements for the slaughter of the animal. The meat is distributed during the days of the holiday or shortly thereafter.

For those who will attend the feast, I hope you'll enjoy it!