



THE OTHER AFRICA: TUNISIA

OCTOBER 3-13, 2025

Day 1. Friday, October 3, 2025

Arrival to Tunis-Carthage International Airport. (Airport code: TUN). Transfer to the hotel. Check-in and rest. Welcome dinner and orientation. Overnight in the capital of Tunisia, **Tunis**.

Day 2. Saturday, October 4, 2025

The day will start with the visit to the **Bardo Museum** and **Medina of Tunis**. The national Bardo Museum is a jewel of Tunisian heritage. It is housed in an old Beylic palace dating back to the 19th Century. It is one of the most important museums in the Mediterranean region and the second museum of the African continent after the Egyptian Museum of Cairo by richness of its collections. It traces the history of Tunisia over **several millennia** and across several civilizations through a wide variety of archaeological pieces. The museum houses one of the largest collections of **Roman mosaics** in the world, thanks to excavations in various archaeological sites in the country. The museum also has a very important and large collection of **Christian artifacts** that include couple complete Baptisteries, great many funerary mosaic epitaphs and





images, clay tablets with Christian religious imageries, reliquaries and fragments of the basilicas' interior décor.

The term **medina** is applied to the old Arab or non-European quarter of a North African town. The Medina of Tunis is the largest and the most representative medina in the whole of Tunisia. The narrow alley and small squares filled with dozens of different stores, cafes, and restaurants. To a visitor it looks essentially like a big and very picturesque market. We will remain overnight in **Tunis**.

Day 3. Sunday, October 5, 2025

We will start our day with the **Divine Liturgy** at the local Orthodox Church.

Today we will explore one of the most important sites in Tunisia and, likely, in Antiquity, the **city of**

Carthage. The city quickly developed from a Phoenician colony into the capital of a Punic empire due to its convenient location along the trade routes. Carthage became one of the most important trading hubs of the Ancient Mediterranean and one of the most affluent cities of the classical world. It dominated large parts of the Southwest Mediterranean during the first millennium BC. The Romans **conquered Carthage in 146 BC** after a three-year siege. The Punic city was destroyed, but the Romans rebuilt the city in their style and it became the most important city of **Roman Africa**. Time was merciless toward



Carthage, and it is difficult to appreciate its former grandeur in full. However, we will be able to see the excavated and well-preserved parts of the harbor, Roman baths, and the eerie **Tophet of Carthage**, a large cemetery where thousands of children sacrificed to the gods were buried. We will visit the Amphitheater of Carthage, the site of the martyrdom of **Sts. Perpetua and Felicity**, two young Christian women martyred by the Romans in the third century AD. We also will visit the site of the largest Christian Basilica in North Africa, complete with a **Baptistry and the Martyrium**. We will interrupt our exploration of Carthage at midday for lunch at the **picturesque village** of **Sidi Bou Said** that is known for its beautiful

blue and white houses, cobblestone streets, and spectacular views of the Mediterranean. For an overnight we will return to our hotel in Tunis.



Day 4. Monday, October 6, 2025

Today we will explore **Bulla Regia** and **Dougga** - two very important ancient sites, located south-west of the capital. Bulla Regia was a Berber, Punic, and Roman town. The name **Bulla Regia** is Latin for "Royal Bulla". The epithet refers to its status as the Numidian capital. It was re-established at the time of its elevation to colony status and formally

named Colonia Aelia Hadriana Augusta Bulla Regia, after its imperial sponsor Hadrian. Its surviving ruins and archaeological site are noted for their Hadrianic-era **semi-subterranean housing**, protection from the fierce heat and effects of the sun. Many of the **mosaic floors** have been left in place, and more may be seen at the Bardo Museum in Tunis.

Dougga or Thugga was a Berber, Punic and Roman settlement. **UNESCO qualified Dougga** as a World Heritage Site in 1997, believing that it represents "the best-preserved Roman small town in North Africa". The site, which lies in the middle of the countryside, has been protected from the encroachment of modern urbanization.

Dougga's size, its **well-preserved monuments** and its rich combination of Numidian-Berber, Punic, ancient Roman, and Byzantine history make it an exceptional site for a visit. For a dinner and overnight we will arrive to the city of **Kairouan**.

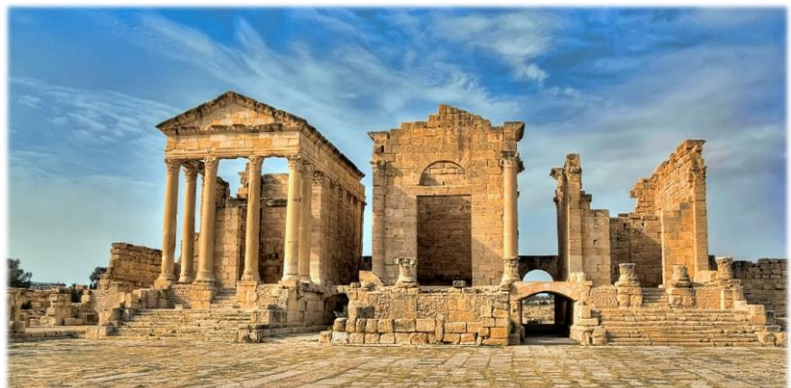


Day 5. Tuesday, October 7, 2025

The city of **Kairouan** was **founded** by the Umayyads **around 670AD**. Soon after its foundation, Kairouan becomes an important center for Sunni Islamic scholarship and Quranic learning, attracting Muslims from various parts of the world. The Great Mosque of Kairouan, also known as the **Mosque of Uqba** is the largest Islamic monument in North Africa. From the outside, **the Great Mosque of Kairouan** is a fortress-like building with the massive outer wall and the massive corner towers. Still, despite the austere façades, many buttresses, countless

columns of the yards, and cupolas give the sanctuary a sense of striking grandeur. The Uqba mosque, along with the medina of Kairouan have been added to the list of UNESCO World Heritage in 1988.

The archaeological site of **Sbeitla (Roman Sufetula)** is among the most important archeological remains in the country. The city still preserves a grid of the streets, and it contains the **best preserved Roman forum** temples in Northern Africa. Instead of constructing only one temple dedicated to the three most important Roman gods (Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva), the inhabitants of the city built separate temples for each one. The city also has a **few Christian basilicas**, some of them completed with the **fanciful Baptisteries**, found to date only in North Africa. Sufetula was the theatre of the great confrontation between Byzantines and Arabs in 647AD, setting the stage for the later Muslim conquest of the diocese of Sufetula and further conquests





in southern Europe. After the exploration of the ruins of Sufetula, we will have a lengthy transfer South to the town of **Tozeur**.

Day 6. Wednesday, October 8, 2025

Today will be dedicated to the exploration of the **natural beauty of Tunisia**. First, we will visit **Chebika**, where **refreshing water** rushes over an imposing waterfall to form a gorge surrounded by palm trees at the bottom. After just a short drive we will visit **Tamerza**, barricaded by its mountain range as if suspended on the

side of a **vast canyon** with commanding views over the vast plains. Tamerza is the largest mountain oasis

in Tunisia that was known already to Romans. It has a canyon and an abandoned old town. The town was abandoned after the river flooded in 1969. It is located north of the salt lakes and receives fresh water from nearby as there are many water cascades and springs in the area. Our last stop will be at **Mides**, the westernmost and arguably the most impressive of these oases which overlook a breathtakingly high canyon. In ancient times, Mades had a **Christian population** and its bishop Petrus participated in the synod of Carthage in 484AD. We will return to our hotel in **Tozeur** for dinner and overnight.



Day 7. Thursday, October 9, 2025

Our first visit today will be to the **village of Matmata**. It is a small Berber speaking town in southern Tunisia. Some of the local Berber residents live in traditional **underground "troglodyte" structures**. These



structures, typical for the village, are created by digging a large pit in the ground. Around the perimeter of this pit artificial caves are then dug to be used as rooms, with some homes comprising multiple pits, connected by trench-like passageways. Our next stop will be at Douz a town known as the **"gateway to the Sahara."** It has been called the "ultimate palm oasis", because it has over **500,000 palm trees** in the area, and it is a major producer of dates. In the past it was an important stop on the trans-Saharan caravan routes. Today, it is a destination for tourists who are interested

in seeing the desert, and a starting point for various desert treks. Our last stop of the day will be at **Chott el Djerid**, a large endorheic salt lake. The bottom of Chott el Djerid is located at an elevation of over 50 feet above sea level. The lake's width varies widely; at its narrowest point, it is only 12 miles across, compared to its overall length of 160 miles. At times, parts of it appear in various shades of white, green and purple. It is the **largest salt pan of the Sahara Desert**, with a surface area of over 50000 square feet. Overnight in **Djerba**.



Day 8. Friday, October 10, 2025



Today we will explore the **island of Djerba**. First, we will visit the **village of Erriadh**, renowned for the **Djerbahood** - a street art event in which artists from all over the world gathered to create 250 mural paintings. (Part of the name comes due to the giant letters THE HOOD installed at the entrance of the village). The organizers chose Erriadh for its traditional architecture, and thanks to Djerbahood, the village became an attractive destination for tourists. In fact, the whole island, which had suffered from mismanaged garbage collection after the 2011 revolution, benefited because of this project. Our next visit will

be to the **pottery village of Guellala**. This village is one of the few where the Berber dialect is still used. The name of the village, Guellala, comes from Goulla (jar) or Gallal (the person who makes jars). This profession dates back to the time of the Greeks and Phoenicians and continues today as it is inherited from father to son and represents the way of life, the history and the specialty of the region. Our last stop today will be at **Houmt Souk** that literally means: "**The Market neighbourhood**". It is a commune and the main town of the island of Djerba. It is also a popular tourist destination that is best known for its traditional souk and the **Aghlabid fortress**.





Day 9. Saturday, October 11, 2025

This morning we will depart from the island of Djerba and will head North.

The road will take a fair amount of time, but what we will see today will be certainly worth it.

Our first stop will be at **El Jem**, famous for its enormous amphitheater that is counted among the largest in all of Roman Empire. The Roman city of

Thysdrus (modern El Jem) was built, like almost all Roman settlements in ancient Tunisia - on former Punic settlements. In a less arid climate than today's, Thysdrus prospered as an important center of olive oil production and export. By the early 3rd century, when the amphitheater was built, Thysdrus was likely the **second largest city of Roman North Africa** after Carthage. However, following the revolt that began there in AD 238 and after the rebels' leader committed suicide, the troops loyal to the Roman emperor sacked the city. The mighty construction never saw any games. The destruction led to the rapid decline of the city. Drifting sand preserved the ruins the market city of Thysdrus and saved many of its ruined structures from later reuse and vandalism. Not too far from the amphitheater is an **extremely fascinating museum** with a **grandiose collection** of artistically refined mosaics, a reconstructed Roman villa and a large area of excavated **villas of local nobility**.



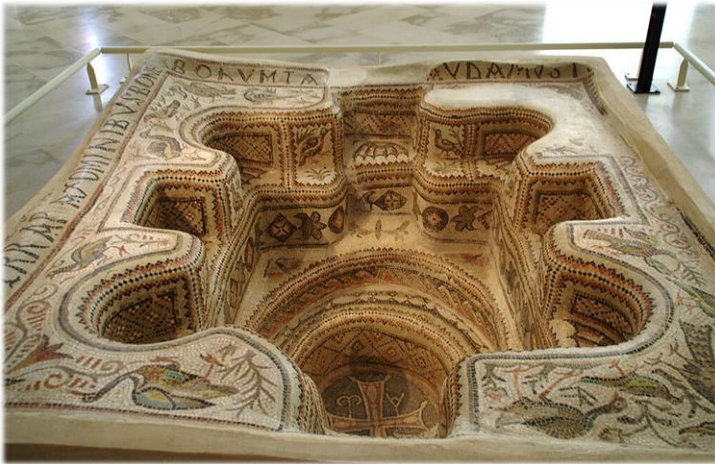
Before heading to the hotel we will explore the **Ribat of Manastir**. The word ribat comes from the Arabic word ribāṭ, which means "station", "inn", or "religious house".

We can say that a ribat was a fortified Islamic "monastery" that was built on the outskirts of conquered Muslim territories to protect against attacks.



Founded in 796 by the Abbasid leader, the complex went through a series of changes over the centuries. Many watchtowers were added between 11th and 13th, 17th and 19th centuries in order to accommodate the artillery. The towers are also climbable, allowing visitors to enjoy a view of the city and the beach. In addition to the small rooms dedicated to worship, the ribat has two mosques, the largest of which hosts a **unique collection of medieval articles**.

Day 10. Sunday, October 12, 2025



In the morning we will explore second largest museum of Tunisia. The antiquities on display at the **Sousse Archaeological Museum** date as far back as the 7th century BC. Artefacts from the Tophet of Sousse and the Sanctuary of Baal Hammon invoke **Biblical parallels**. After all, what was once considered to be Roman propaganda that accused the Carthaginians of sacrificing their own children, archeologically proved to be true. But the museum is **particularly famed** not for these terrible mementos of the past, but for its

remarkable collection of Roman mosaics. Of great interest to Christians is a stunning **baptismal font from Bqalta**, lavishly decorated with mosaics. It is certainly one of a kind not only in the region, but in the whole World. Decorative **terracotta tablets** engraved with Christian motifs complement the display.

After the visit to the Museum, we will explore the Medina of Sousse, filled with the multitude of different shops and cafes. Then, after a lunch brake we will stop to see the part of the **Zaghouan Aqueduct**. The **Zaghouan Aqueduct** or **Aqueduct of Carthage** is an ancient Roman Aqueduct, which supplied the city of Carthage with water. From its source in Zaghouan it flows a total of 132 km, making it among the longest aqueducts in the Roman Empire. The aqueduct draws on several sources which ran dry at different times. The first and most important source is located near the town of Zaghouan in the



Mount Zaghouan, a mountain range about 60 km south of Carthage. In Roman times a sacred fountain structure (nicknamed "Water Temple") was built over the spring, which became one of the most important in ancient North Africa. It's not a typical temple as such, but still a religious monument dedicated to the mountain-spring source that kept Carthage watered. The ancient fountain is surrounded by arched niches that once held 12 statues depicting the months of the year.

Time permitting, we will explore the site of **Thuburbo Majus**. Thuburbo Majus or Colonia Julia Aurelia



Commoda, its Roman name, was originally a Punic town, later founded as a Roman veteran colony by Augustus in 27 BC. Military veterans were settled here by Augustus to allow them to start their post-army lives with land of their own. Its strategic location and access to trade routes made it an important establishment. This location has a number of interesting, excavated sites, such as the remains of a forum, the amphitheater, temples, baths, houses, and **Christian Basilica**. The Bishopric was founded here very early, as the name of the local bishop Sedatus have attended council of Carthage

in the mid third century. The Bishopric have survived through the Arian Vandal and Orthodox Byzantine empires, only ceasing to function after the Muslim conquest of North. Thuburbo Majus is important to Christians as the **birthplace of Perpetua**, a young Christian martyr of Carthage in Africa. For an overnight we will arrive to our hotel in **Tunis**.



Day 11. Monday, October 13, 2025

Breakfast at the hotel and departure from the Tunis-Carthage International Airport. (Airport code: TUN).

Day 11 - OPTIONAL DAY

Monday, October 13, 2025 AS AN OPTIONAL ADD ON DAY

If you'd like, you'll be able to participate in an exciting optional add-on day:

Kerkouane is the site of **an ancient Punic city** in north-eastern Tunisia, near Cape Bon. Arguably, it was one of the most important Punic cities. The city of Kerkouane was likely abandoned during the First Punic War (c. 250 BC) and was not rebuilt by the Romans. As it remains the only example of a Phoenicio-Punic city to have survived until the present day, **UNESCO declared the Punic town of Kerkouane** and its necropolis a **World Heritage Site** in 1985. The name Kerkouane was given to the town by archaeologists. Its name in antiquity has not been preserved in any known historical document.

In the afternoon we will visit the **Ribat and Medina of Hammamet**. The **medina of Hammamet** is much smaller than that of Tunis, but just as picturesque. It is very interesting to get "lost" in the maze of the narrow alleys, finding a new angle for yet another artistic "Kodak" moment. We recommend you climb the walls of ribat of Hammamet for splendid views of the medina and the Mediterranean. For an overnight we will return to our hotel in **Tunis**.



PRICING AND INCLUSIONS:

Price includes:

- Accommodations in five star hotels along the way
- All breakfasts, lunches and dinners
- Private bus transportation along the way
- Group transfers from the airport and from the hotel to the hotel in Tunis, Tunisia
- All admissions, according to the schedule
- Hotel/city taxes
- Professional English-speaking [local] tour guides
- English speaking guide/escort during the entire tour
- No hidden fees, taxes or surcharges

Price does not include:

- Personal health/accident insurance
- International air tickets
- Transportation to and from the airport if traveling separately from the group
- Private activities: transfers, optional tours, tickets to shows or additional museums.
- Some newly introduced fees that may occur in certain places
- Drinks with meals (soft or alcohol drinks)
- Tips to bus drivers and tour guides: \$10 days per day/per traveler total (Your generosity will be always greatly appreciated)
- Anything that is not specifically mentioned in "Price includes"

Financial arrangements:

\$ 3025 per person, in double occupancy in a group of 25 participants; Single supplement: \$550 extra and subject to availability. Please consider that the final price may fluctuate due to the actual number of participants or due to nearly unprecedented spikes in fuel prices that negatively impacted on the economies of the most countries in the region. In case of need for financial adjustment you'll be informed right away. We do apologize for any inconvenience in that regard and appreciate your understanding of the difficult circumstances of the current challenging environment.

All payments should be made by check to: "Palomnik, LLC", and mailed Palomnik, LLC, P.O.Box 1618, Cranberry Township, PA 16066. Any returned checks are subject to a \$25 fee. If you'd like to register and to pay via credit card, please contact follow this link: <https://tri.ps/ZfNVI> . Please beware of the extra credit card fees that are charged by the banking institutions. If you'd like to pay by Zelle, please use ortours@gmail.com e-mail address. If you'd like to make a bank deposit or need info for a banking wire, please contact us directly. A deposit of \$850 is required when you sign up for the trip. The deposit is non-refundable,

unless pilgrimage is cancelled by the organizers due to lack of participation or for some other valid or unforeseen circumstance. To avoid any money loss, emergency/travel cancellation insurance is strongly recommended.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: The deadline for signing up for the trip is July 3, 2025. The entire amount is due by July 3, 2025. Failure to pay in full by July 3, 2025, without written notice of explanation may lead to the cancellation of your participation, with no refund of any previously committed funds.

CANCELLATION POLICY: If you need to cancel after you signed up, penalty is:

- 25% of the tour cost, March 1 to 61 days prior to the departure
- 50% of the tour cost, 61 to 31 days prior to the departure
- 100% of the tour cost 31 or fewer days prior to the departure

All cancellations must be done in writing as well and sent directly to agent/coordinator - Fr. Ilya Gotlinsky and must be received for reimbursement by the dates shown in the cancellation schedule. We also have to add that should cancellation or alteration of the program occur due to any emergencies, civil disturbances, acts of terrorism, war, natural disaster, and other events of force majeure or acts of God (including threat or fear of same), refunds will be made only to the extent that they are recoverable, and that such cancellation or alteration may result in the total loss of funds paid by participants. It is assumed each participant has reviewed the same with respect to their own comfort level of risk and personal safety. A decision to withdraw from the trip for these reasons or any others will be bound by the same terms of cancellation.

ALTERATIONS TO ITINERARY:

Fr. Ilya Gotlinsky reserves the right to alter, modify or withdraw the itinerary if air schedules and/or events beyond his control deem it necessary. In the event it becomes necessary for the comfort or well-being of the travelers to alter or modify the itinerary or arrangements, such alterations may be made without penalty to the tour operator and are not grounds for cancellation with refund. Fr. Ilya Gotlinsky assumes no responsibility for any consequences because of any participant deviating from the group tour. Because of the difference in

language and customs, it is expected that the traveler will always follow the directions of the Tour Director. The Tour Director reserves the right to restrict a person's participation in the group's activities, including exclusion from the group, when, in the opinion of the Director, such action is necessary.

REQUIRED TRAVEL DOCUMENTS:

A passport with validity for at least six months beyond end of stay
The US and the EU citizens do not need visa to enter Tunisia

IT IS STRONGLY SUGGESTED THAT YOU:

- Obtain insurance covering medical needs and coverage of personal property. One of the major travel insurance aggregators is:
www.insuremytrip.com
 - Be aware that financial coverage for all emergency medical and other emergency needs will be your sole responsibility. We will provide all possible logistical and personal assistance, but the financial aspect is your responsibility.
 - Act in a manner consistent with the surrounding environment
 - Make arrangements to have access to sufficient funds to cover personal needs and unexpected events
 - Be aware that the places that we will be visiting may not have the same amenities that you are accustomed to. Medical facilities in some areas may be limited. The financial coverage for all emergency medical and other emergency needs (including those related to hospitalization, treatment, or quarantine) will be your sole responsibility. We will provide all possible logistical and personal assistance, but the financial aspect is your responsibility
- This agreement becomes effective upon acceptance into the tour by Fr. Ilya Gotlinsky

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**REGISTRATION FORM:
THE OTHER AFRICA: TUNISIA
October 3-13, 2025**

*To register: please complete this registration form and return it along with
your deposit check (\$850.00) made to PALOMNIK, LLC to the following address:
Palomnik, LLC, P.O.Box 1618, Cranberry Township, PA 16066
Please write "TUNISIA 2025" on the memo line.*

Full Name (exactly as in your passport):

Date of Birth (day/month/year):

Nationality, Passport # :

Passport expiration date (day/month/year):

Address:

City, State, Zip/Postal Code

Home phone:

Alt. phone and Email:

Emergency Contact Information (Name, Phone, Relation):

Medical restrictions:

Dietary restrictions:

Would you prefer single accommodation at additional costs specified in the itinerary?

Please let us know if there is anything else that we should know in order to make your travel experience more comfortable and pleasant:

*Your signature below confirms that you have read the itinerary and agree to abide by Terms and
Conditions that accompany the itinerary.*

NAME/SIGNATURE:

DATE: