

JAZZ IN CARTHAGE

~~CARTE~~ MUSICAL HISTORY

A crescendo of captivating culture in Tunisia; from northern high notes to the southern low down

Famed for its diverse and turbulent history, the ancient city of Carthage is set to be invaded by an international force of jazz musicians and fans.

The jazz festival, 'Jazz in Carthage by Tunisiana' held 9 - 19 April 2009 will celebrate its fifth anniversary this year. Held again at Barcelo Carthage Thalassa, this year's festival will host rising stars such as Australian songstress Gabriella Climi.

Highlights of 'Jazz in Carthage 2009' include performances from British singer saxophonist Ray Gelato, Charles Lloyd and Tunisian born Dhafer Youssef, as well as jazz master-classes and after-hours jam sessions.

The ancient ruins of Carthage are a legendary Phoenician stronghold and were home to the epic battle between Hannibal and the Romans in 146 BC, before being ruled by the Vandals and the Byzantine Empire. Modern day Carthage remains a popular attraction for historians and culture-vultures alike.

For visitors spending time in the vibrant city of Tunis the Bardo Museum is a cultural must-see. Located inside a former royal palace, it is a magnificent example of Tunisian 13th century architecture. Renowned for housing the finest collection of mosaics in the world, the Bardo Museum is also home to striking sculptures recovered from sites including Carthage, Bulla Reggia and Dougga.

Stories from the South

Home to a multitude of fascinating historical sites and traditional Berber villages, Southern Tunisia is a cultural hotbed amid rolling dunes.

Only a few miles south of the modern city of Gafsa, lies the tranquil oasis of El Guettar close to which lies the world famous "Hermaion of El Guettar". Discovered alongside countless primeval artefacts and dating back to around 1,000BC, this cairn of silex and stone is thought to be humanity's first true expression of religious belief.

El Guettar is also of significant historical value in the 20th century, providing the battleground on which the US army, lead by General Patton, gained a crucial victory during World War Two. Following the defeat of the German's desert tank units the allies managed to gain a foothold within the region, a fact famously portrayed in the Oscar winning epic "Patton".

Further South lies the ancient town of Tozeur; gateway to the Sahara. Tozeur provides travellers with the chance to explore the medina, visit its vast oasis and stay among the Berber people.

A must for visitors to the south is a trip aboard the famous Red Lizard train which travels through the commanding landscape of the Atlas Mountains, and Berber mountain villages.

In recent times southern Tunisia has become a Mecca for film fanatics travelling to Tatooine (aka Tataouine), which was made famous by George Lucas' "Star Wars". The wonderfully preserved film set remains in almost pristine condition, featuring the original props and backdrops from the first film.

Only a two-and-a-half hour flight from the UK Tunisia is so close yet remains a cultural world away.

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