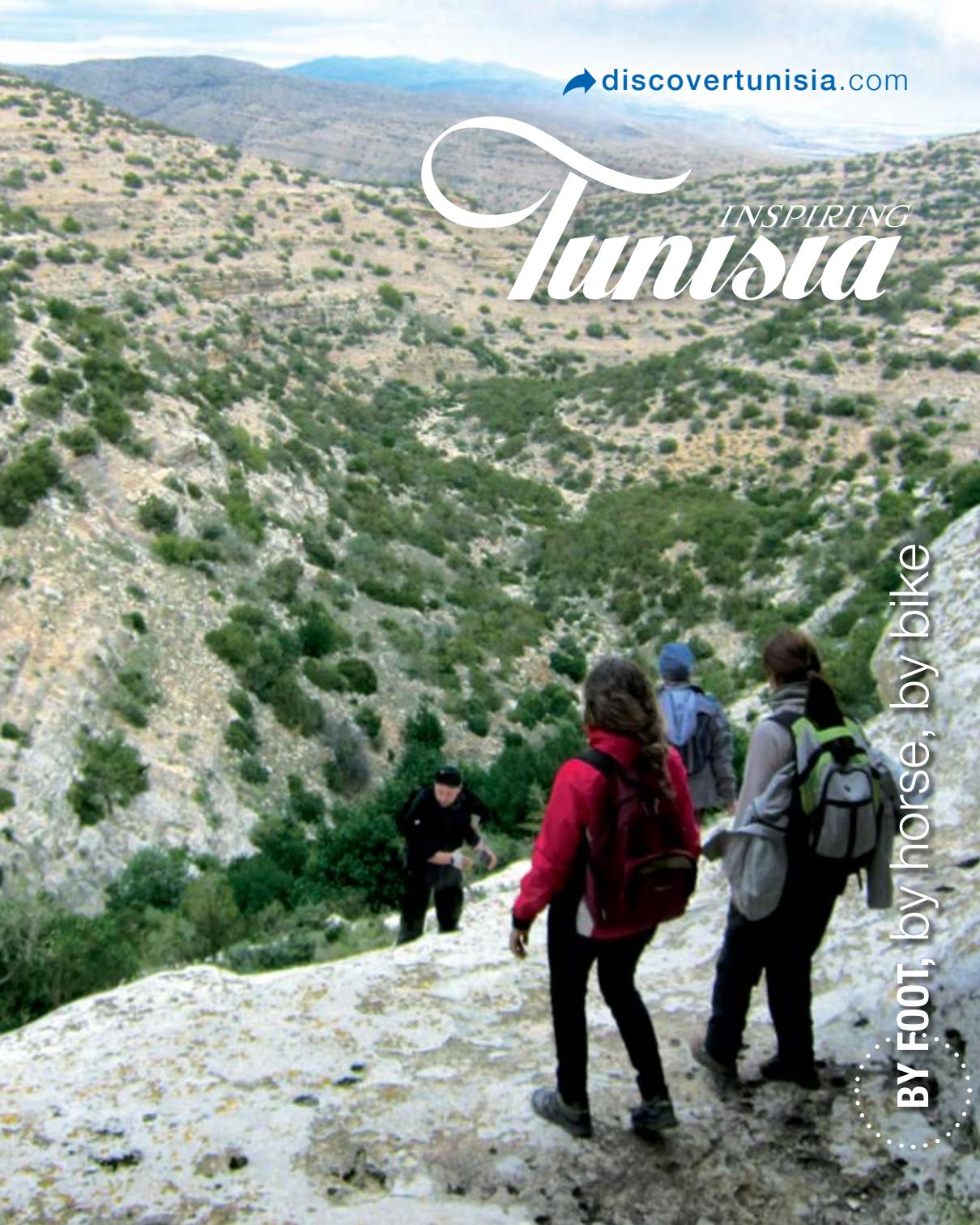


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# INSPIRING *Tunisia*

BY FOOT, by horse, by bike





# 5 reasons to go **TREKKING** in TUNISIA

p.2



# From one **REGION** to another

p. 14

Northwestern forests .....	16
Across the fields .....	18
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The islands of the South .....	24
Ksour and Berber villages .....	26
Canyons and oases .....	28
The sandy desert .....	30

Immerse yourself in the heart of the Tunisian regions practically unknown to the hurried tourists. **Live your life** to a different rhythm, whether On foot, by bicycle or upon a **Barb horse**, the small local horse, both agile and tough. Discover the beautiful Mediterranean landscapes that Tunisia conceals: pine forests and scrubland, orchards and wheat fields, **sandy coves and rocky cliffs**. Reach unforgettable summits on peaks more than one thousand metres high. **Experience the Sahara intimately**, whether through its canyons and rocky plains, or in the vastness of the sandy desert. Countless surprises await you: Roman ruins in the countryside, lakes and **migratory birds**, fossils and rare plants... and traditions to discover throughout your journey.







5  
reasons  
to go  
**TREKKING**  
in TUNISIA

2  
3

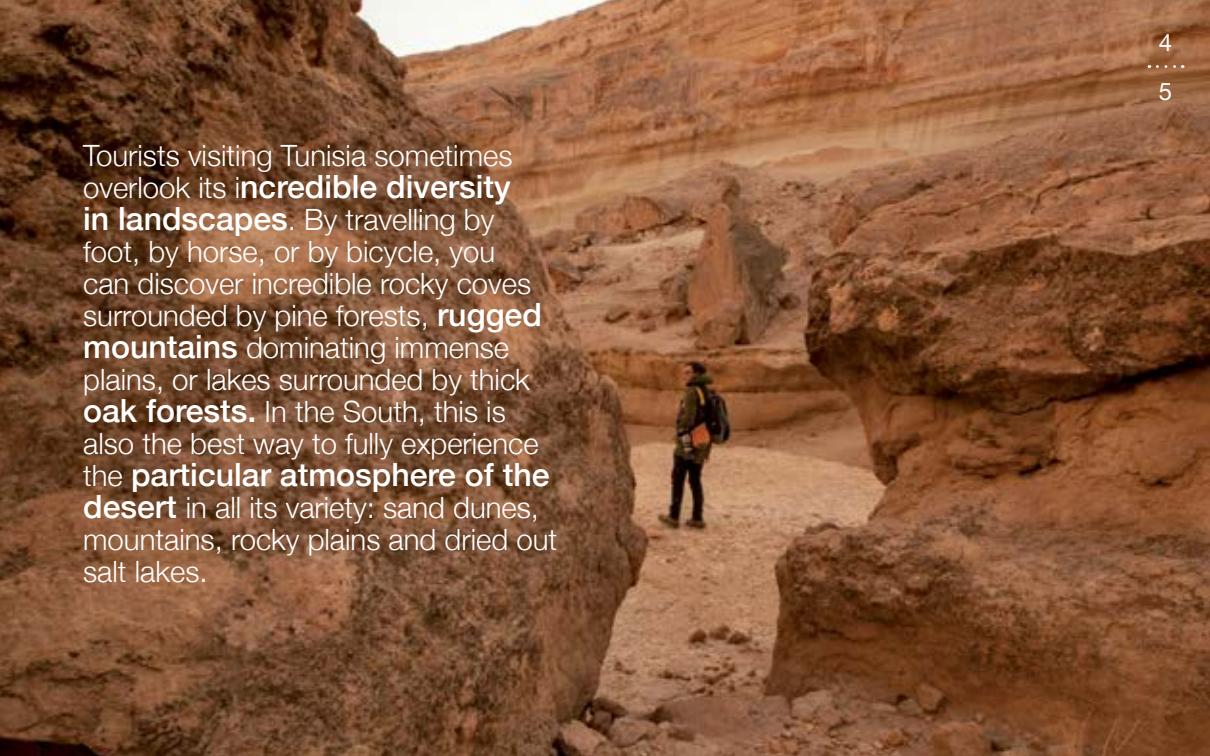
Near Tunis



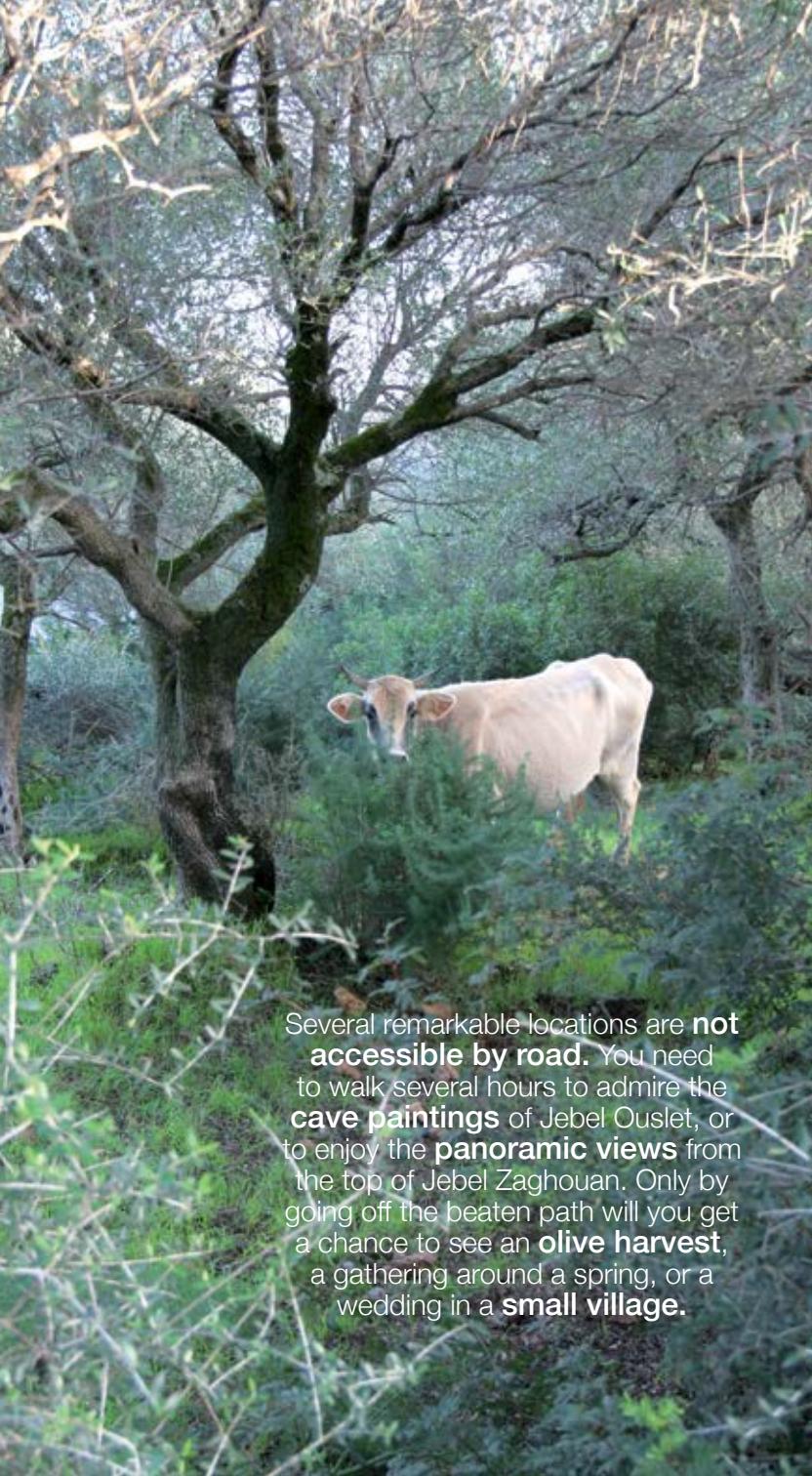


# 1

## To **DISCOVER** magnificent landscapes



Tourists visiting Tunisia sometimes overlook its **incredible diversity in landscapes**. By travelling by foot, by horse, or by bicycle, you can discover incredible rocky coves surrounded by pine forests, **rugged mountains** dominating immense plains, or lakes surrounded by thick **oak forests**. In the South, this is also the best way to fully experience the **particular atmosphere of the desert** in all its variety: sand dunes, mountains, rocky plains and dried out salt lakes.



Several remarkable locations are **not accessible by road**. You need to walk several hours to admire the **cave paintings** of Jebel Ouslet, or to enjoy the **panoramic views** from the top of Jebel Zaghouan. Only by going off the beaten path will you get a chance to see an **olive harvest**, a gathering around a spring, or a wedding in a **small village**.



Cave paintings near Kairouan

2

To **EXPLORE**  
an unseen  
Tunisia



Ask directions from a **shepherd**, buy **traditional bread** or olive oil from villagers: you will be charmed by the **hospitality** and kindness in the areas far from the major tourist centres. Join a group of Tunisian hikers or **cycle tourists**, increasingly numerous to want to explore the multiple facets of their country: yet another way to make **interesting connections** with the natives.

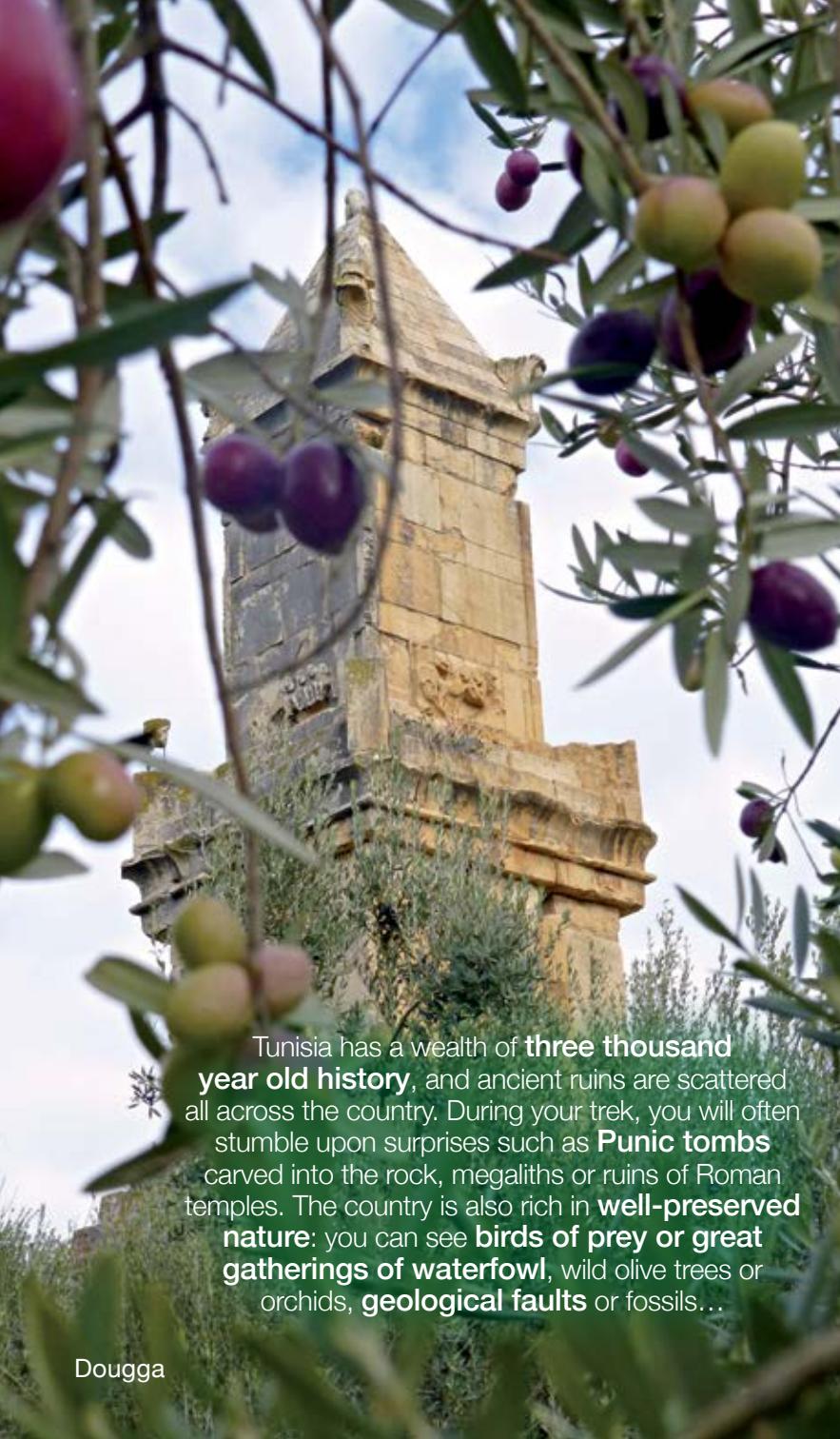
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# 3

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To make  
**AUTHENTIC**  
connections





Tunisia has a wealth of **three thousand year old history**, and ancient ruins are scattered all across the country. During your trek, you will often stumble upon surprises such as **Punic tombs** carved into the rock, megaliths or ruins of Roman temples. The country is also rich in **well-preserved nature**: you can see **birds of prey or great gatherings of waterfowl**, wild olive trees or orchids, **geological faults** or fossils...

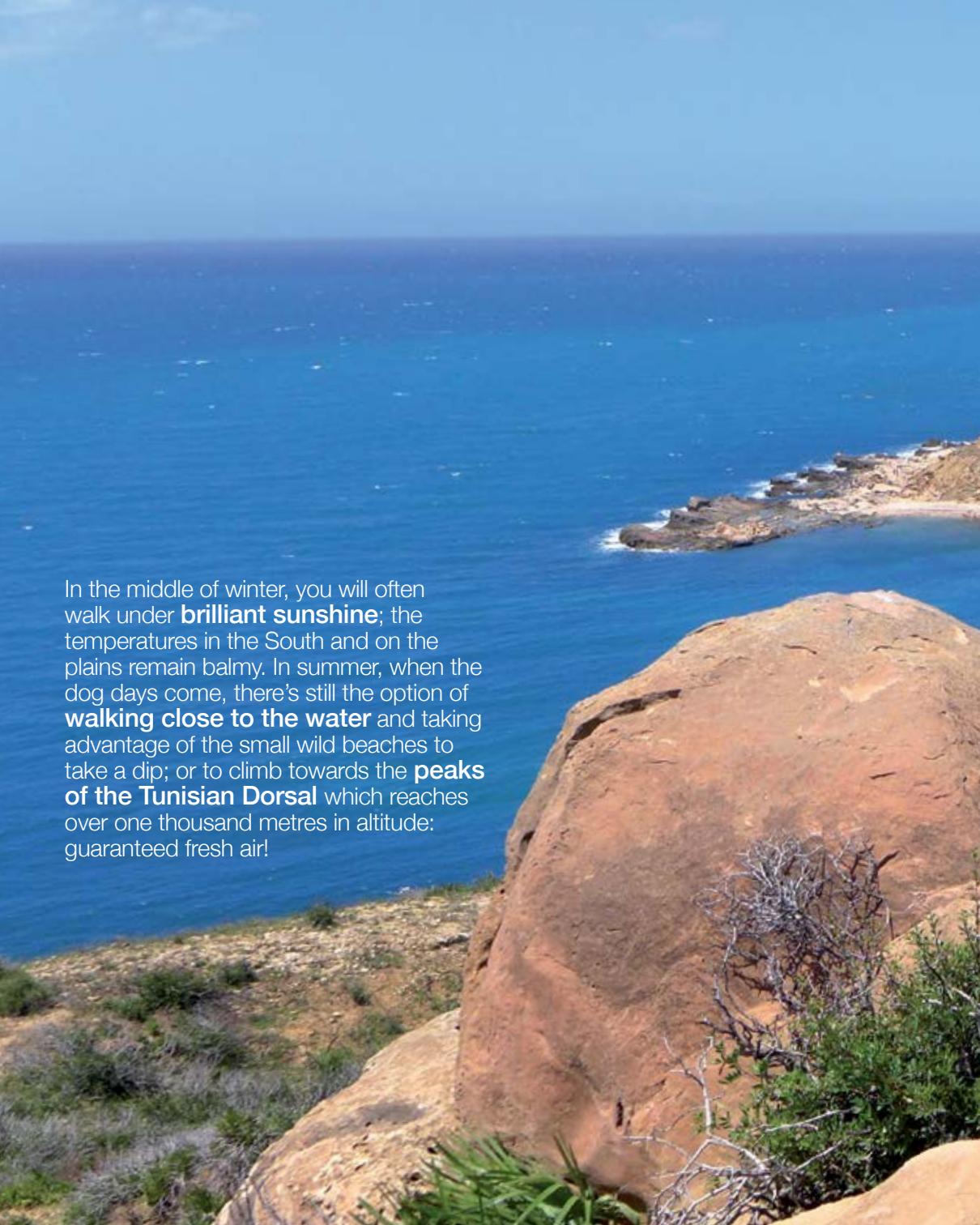
Dougga



# 4

To **LEARN**  
a lot about  
**nature**  
and **culture**



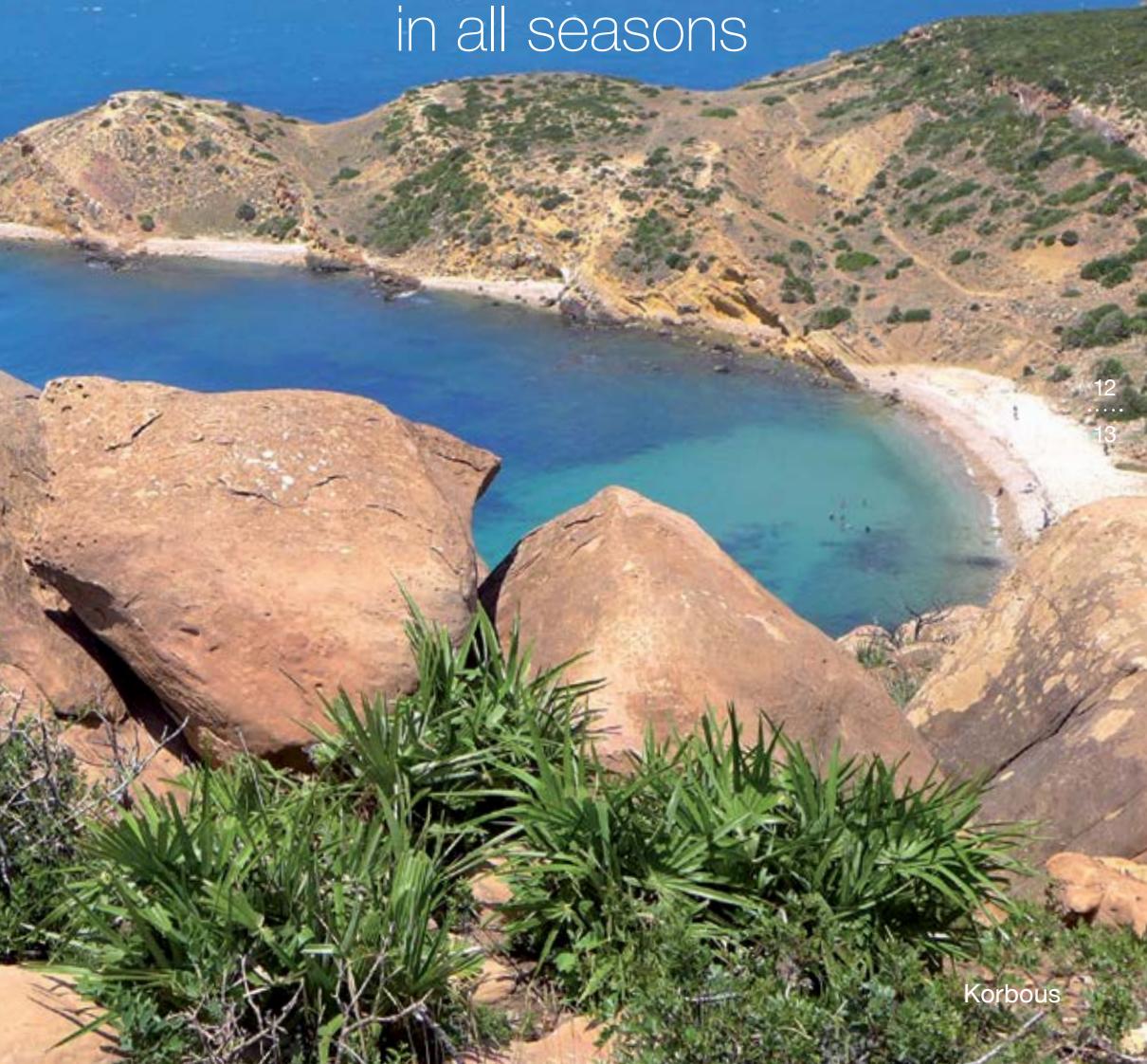
A scenic coastal view. In the foreground, a large, reddish-brown rock formation with a textured surface and some green scrub on its slopes. The middle ground shows a vast, deep blue sea. In the distance, a rocky coastline with a small beach is visible under a clear blue sky.

In the middle of winter, you will often walk under **brilliant sunshine**; the temperatures in the South and on the plains remain balmy. In summer, when the dog days come, there's still the option of **walking close to the water** and taking advantage of the small wild beaches to take a dip; or to climb towards the **peaks of the Tunisian Dorsal** which reaches over one thousand metres in altitude: guaranteed fresh air!

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# 5

To **ENJOY**  
pleasant  
weather  
in all seasons



**NORTHWESTERN**  
forests  
p.16

**ACROSS**  
the fields  
p.18

**COASTS**  
of the  
Northeast  
p.20

**CANYONS**  
and oases  
p.28

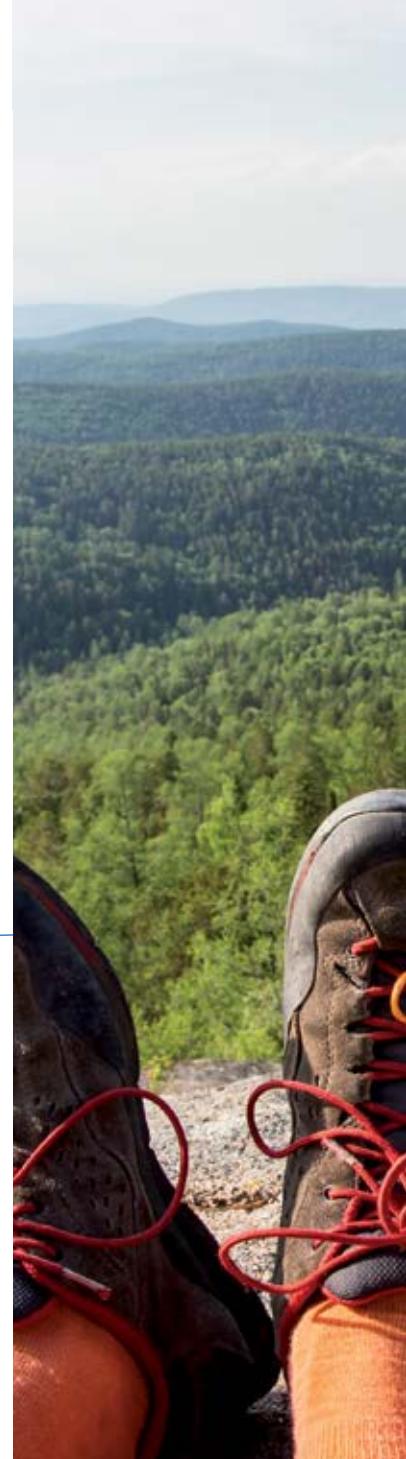
**MOUNTAINS**  
of the  
Dorsal  
p.22

**THE ISLANDS**  
of the  
South  
p.24

**THE SANDY**  
desert  
p.30

**KSOUR**  
and Berber  
villages  
p.26

- MOTORWAY
- - - RAILWAY
- ★ ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE
- ✈ INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
- 🌴 OASIS





# From one **REGION** to another

All of Tunisia's regions hold attractions for hikers.

The North is best for its **thick forests**, its picturesque coastline and its lush countryside. In the centre, the **mountains** of the Dorsal offer fabulous views and true challenges for the more athletic. The **Saharan South**, with its variety of unusual landscapes, provides a unique trekking experience among the sand dunes. Finally, the **great islands** of the South, Djerba and Kerkennah, are worth a special mention for their end-of-the-world atmosphere and their enchanting **setting**.





# NORTHWESTERN forests



Hiking at  
Mount  
Ichkeul

Tunisia has one of the most beautiful **FORESTS OF CORK OAKS** and Mirbeck's oaks in North Africa: the forest of Khroumirie which stretches over the **mountain range** in the Northwest of the country.

A setting completely unique in Tunisia where you can, on foot or on horseback, discover a **dense and humid undergrowth**, where it sometimes snows in winter. Close to the city of Kef, the superb **PINE FOREST** of Nebeur frames a **reservoir** lake offering magnificent scenery. Another beautiful forest of cork oak can be found next to Sejnane, the small village famous for its **potters** who still continue their ancestral art. Further east, isolated in the plains and overlooking a natural lake, **MOUNT ICHEUL** – designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site – is covered with **mastic trees** and wild olive trees.

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1 Pottery from Sejnane.

2 Forest of Khroumirie.





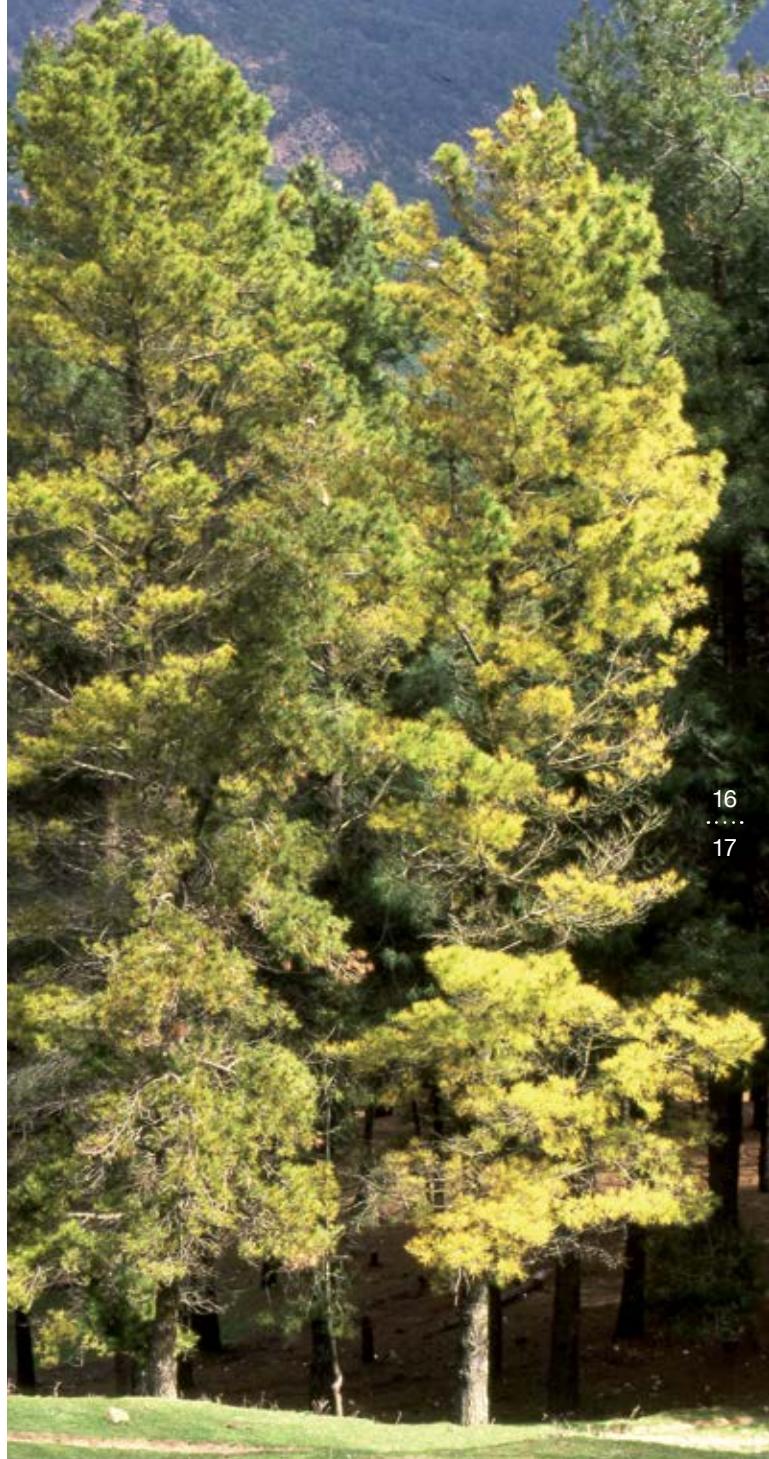
## WHAT to see?

In Khroumirie, trek through Feija National Park: there you can see Barbary deer, a rare species endemic to the Maghreb. Take an excursion as far as Beni M'tir lake, the oldest reservoir lake in Tunisia. Close to Sejnane, search for haouanet, curious ancient tombs carved into the rock. Make open air archaeological sites part of your tour: Chemtou, Thuburnica...



## CRAFTS and traditions

Far from the major urban centres, the Northwest has stayed anchored to the Bedouin culture. You will meet the inhabitants of the *douars* (hamlets) and small-scale farmers. In Sejnane, the potters make magnificent objects decorated with Berber patterns in brown and red from rudimentary tools without a potter's wheel.





# ACROSS the fields



Fields in the  
Kef region

Hills and valleys, mountains and plateaus... Northern Tunisia offers **LUSH LANDSCAPES** where wheat fields lie alongside **vineyards** and **olive groves**, broken up with small forests offering soothing shade. You will meet on your journey **villagers** heading out to the fields on donkey back, shepherds watching their sheep, **VILLAGES** and monuments on the crest of hills; maybe you will even spot the **nomads' tents**. You will see cliffs and mountain ridges, **rivers** and reservoir lakes, centuries old olive trees, migratory birds, Roman ruins rising up from the springtime poppies. A whole **RURAL WORLD** to discover with scenery both attractive and **ever-changing**.

---

1 The  
archaeological  
site of Dougga.  
2 Kef.





## WHAT to see?

Visit Kef's medina and the nearby villages. Discover the magnificent scenery of Djebba, a village clinging to the hillside, its ancient lead mine, its caves and its dolmens. Pass through archaeological sites both famous (Dougga, Thuburbo Majus, Oudhna) or overlooked (Mustis, Aïn Tounga...). Visit Testour, a town with Andalusian origins. On the plain of Enfidha, vast farms border the lagoons where the migratory birds gather.



## CRAFTS and traditions

Admire the weaving of blankets and Berber carpets. Visit the famous agricultural regions, such as the fruit orchards of Djebba and the vineyards of Thibar. Discover traditions anchored in ancient history: in Djebba, they will tell you the legend of the Seven Sleepers, an old Mediterranean myth. In Kef, take a detour via the Hammam Mellegue, a Roman bath fed by a thermal spring and still used by the public; or attend the folk festivals of Mayyou, with ancient origins, corresponding to the first of May in the Julian calendar.



# COASTS of the Northeast



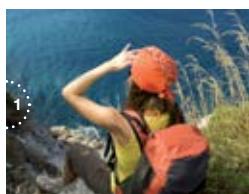
Coast of  
Cap Bon

A beautiful coastline stretches either side of the city of **Bizerte**. Vast **beaches of fine sand**, rocky spurs, boulders and cliffs... and **CRYSTAL CLEAR WATERS** to finish your hike with a delicious swim! These shores rival those of **Cap Bon** in attractiveness, a peninsula with contrasting terrain, famous for the beauty of its beaches and the purity of its waters. Following the **PATHS** far above these shores, you will enjoy breathtaking views across small deserted coves; look out over cliffs, cross scrublands, follow river banks and **pine forest**, run down hills to picnic on a **DESERTED BEACH**. You might spot falcons or boars, and, if you dive, set out to discover the magnificent **marine depths**.

---

1 Path above  
the sea.

2 Raf-Raf.





## The coast near Bizerte



### WHAT to see?

Around cape Zebib, close to Bizerte, admire the pine forest and olive grove planted by the Andalusian refugees in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. At Ghar el Melh, the ancient arsenal and three fortresses date from the Ottoman era. At the point of Cap Bon, enter the underground Roman quarries, explore the caves full of bats and the cliffs where falcons nest. From afar, you will see the Tunisian island of Zembra and the Italian island of Pantelleria. On the east coast, the Punic site of Kerkouane, by the water's edge, is bordered by a beautiful Mediterranean forest.

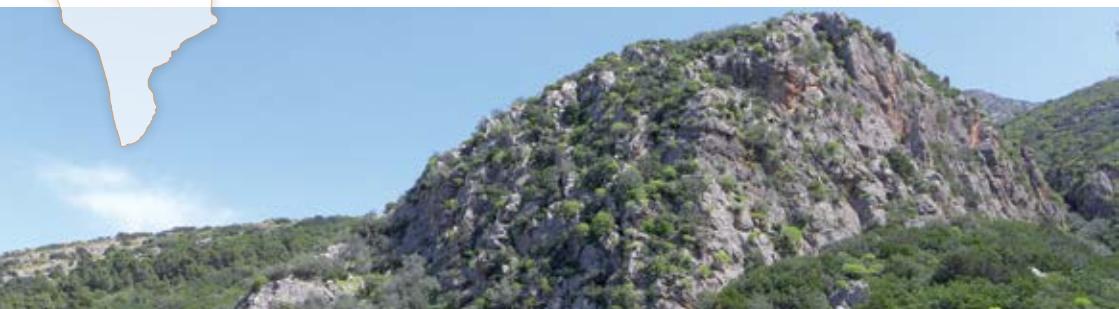


### CRAFTS and traditions

In Ghar el Melh, the ancient military port, covered in sand, is today a lagoon where fishing boats operate. In El Haouaria, in Cap Bon, the inhabitants begin falcon hunting at the beginning of each summer, taking advantage of the crossing of numerous migratory birds. In Korbous, swim with Tunisians in the hot springs that flows directly into the sea; the waters of Korbous are famous and used by thermal spas.



# MOUNTAINS of the Dorsal



Mount  
Zaghouan

Lovers of **TREKKING**, the Tunisian Dorsal is made for you! This **mountain chain** crosses the country diagonally, an extension of the great Atlas range. Close to Hammamet, **Mount Zaghouan** is a true challenge for seasoned walkers: rugged paths, rocky summits, **ELEVATION CHANGES** of close to one thousand metres. Classed as a National Park, it also offers well **trodden paths** that are more accessible, frequented by local hiking and cycle tourist groups. There are many more summits in the Dorsal to discover, offering **VIEWS TO TAKE YOUR BREATH AWAY** over the surrounding plains. In the Northeast, the mountain chain stretches as far as **Cap Bon** with Mount Abderrahmane. In the Southwest lies **Mount Chaâmbi**, the highest point in Tunisia (1544 m).

---

1 Mountain  
trekking.

2 Jugurtha's  
Table.

3 Near  
Kairouan.





## Hiking in the Dorsal



### WHAT to see?

The Dorsal conceals numerous caves and chasms; visitors can see cave paintings on Mount Oueslet. Observe the numerous raptors that nest on the cliffs of Mount Zaghouan and Ressas. Admire the small medina of Zaghouan, of Andalusian origin, the old Berber village of Mount Zriba, the abandoned hilltop village of Mount Bargou, tombs and ancient ruins. Visit the archaeological site of Makthar and the sixty one pre-Roman dolmens of the site of Elles. Make the climb to Jugurtha's Table, a table mountain only accessible via a stair carved into the rock.



### CRAFTS and traditions

In Zaghouan, they harvest wild rose flowers to distill them into perfume and pastries. During your hike, you will most probably cross cattle raised in complete freedom in the scrubland. Stop in the village to buy the traditional *tabouna* bread, baked in a vertical clay oven. At Mount Bargou, two rocky peaks receive the prayers of the nearby inhabitants who come and light candles there. In the numerous villages, the women weave carpets and blankets from wool; in Berrama, close to Siliana, they make superb Berber pottery.



# THE ISLANDS of the South



Kerkennah

Trekking by foot, **by horse** or by bike is without a doubt the best way to immerse yourself into the particular **ATMOSPHERE** of the islands of the Tunisian South. **Djerba**, famous for its beaches and beautiful hotels, offers immense and open natural areas. The gentleness of its **flat and sandy landscapes**, dotted with **PALM TREES**, is shared with the archipelago of **Kerkennah**, located a little further north. Stroll along the rural paths, follow the shallow beaches where the **fishing boats** glide silently, discover on a short cut the immaculate **DOME** of a mausoleum. Here and there, you will spot the silhouette of an **old fortress**, reminding you that these lands were frequently coveted throughout their history. And finally, climb aboard a loude, the typical boat of Kerkennah, or contemplate an **exuberant sunset** over the sea.

1 Djerba  
countryside.

2 Islet near  
Djerba.





On Djerba island



## WHAT to see?

In Djerba, search for the old wells and the *menzels*, the rural properties typical of the island. Make a circuit across the small countryside mosques, often abandoned: their rounded forms, their small pointed minarets or their staircases worn by the years are full of charm. Stroll along the beaches and lagoons where in the winter great crowds of waterbirds gather. Pass through the ruined palace of Ksar Ben Ayed, decorated with frescoes by Belgian graffiti artist Roa. In Kerkennah, stroll among the tombs of saints scattered among the palm trees, visit the archaeological site of Borj Hassar.



## CRAFTS and traditions

In Djerba, admire the draped clothing of the farmers and their large hats of braided palm. Visit a traditional dwelling: its architecture is designed to conserve coolness in summer. In Kerkennah, try the *legmi*, fermented palm sap, and watch the *loudes* go past, flat bottomed boats with Latin sails. On both islands, observe the fixed fisheries, walls of palm trees planted in a zigzag in shallow waters, placed to guide fish into fish traps.



# KSOUR and Berber villages



Village near Gabès

In a **majestic setting** of bare mountains and rugged **ROCKY PEAKS**

as far as the eye can see, the old Berber villages melt into the surrounding landscape, visible from afar by their immaculate white mosques. In the pre-Saharan regions of the Tunisian Southeast, the **pure air of the desert** and brilliant light will accompany your

hike. Here, a marabout monument stands proudly on a rocky spur; there, bunches of palm trees burst from the banks of a river. Around **Tataouine** emerge the stunning architecture of the **KSOUR**,

the fortified collective granaries of the Saharan nomads. Climb the peaks of **Chenini and Douiret**: in these **TROGLODYTE** villages, rooms dug into the rock have been refurbished into lodging. You will experience the difficulty of the lifestyle in these arid regions but also taste an incredible **sense of freedom**.

1 The Ksour.



2 Southern handicrafts.



3 Southeastern landscape.





26  
.....  
27

Chenini



## WHAT to see?

Make a circuit of the Berber villages around Toujane or Tamezret. Take the Ksour route on foot, all different and spectacular: Ksar Haddada, Ksar Ouled Soltane, Ksar Ouled Debbab... The largest have several hundred *ghorfas* (chambers to stock the harvests). Go in search of fossilised dinosaur footprints in Chenini, cave paintings in Ghomrassen, the Permian geological outcrop close to Medenine (250 million years old) or the meteor crater of Remada. In Tataouine, a museum brings together fossils and meteorite fragments found in the region.



## CRAFTS and traditions

The Southeast of Tunisia has preserved an impressive body of weaving expertise; in particular, the *bakhnous*, shawls decorated with delicate patterns woven in white (triangles, diamonds, chevrons) typical of Berber heritage. Close to the villages of the ridge, watch how the *jessours* work, terrace cultivations irrigated by dikes which retain runoff water. In the hilltop village of Douiret, visit the ancient underground mosque, made to pray out of the heat of the sun; in Chenini, the cemetery where the giant tombs recall the legend of the Seven Sleepers. Taste the pastries and doughnuts of Ghomrassen.



# CANYONS and oases



In the palm grove

A unique combination: oases in a **MOUNTAINOUS** landscape, or the fragile exuberance of the palm trees against the craggy geometry of the **sand coloured rocks**. This improbable encounter makes the oases of **Chebika**, **Tamerza** and **Mides** some of the most moving sites in the Tunisian South. In this landscape of dazzling beauty, each oasis is different: rivers, **WATERFALLS**, abandoned villages or dizzying canyons, each offers a **striking prospect**. Further east, discover other landscapes sculpted by erosion: the gigantic canyons of Dghoumes. To the south extend giant **PALM GROVES** where a delicious undergrowth atmosphere reigns: the oases of **Tozeur** and **Nefta**, old medinas surrounded by desert plateaus and **chotts** (depressions covered in salt deposits). Meanwhile in the north, the mountains surrounding Gafsa and Redayef offer **spectacular views**.

---

1 Waterfall.

2 Tamerza oasis.

3 Canyon of Dghoumes.





28

29



## WHAT to see?

Follow the river of Chebika to the tune of the frogs, reach the great waterfall of Tamerza on foot, search for fossils. Descend into the canyon of Mides; there you can see clearly visible geological phenomena: faults, layers and folds. Make a circuit on foot or by bike through the palm groves, observe the birds and the cultivation on three levels (vegetable crops, fruit trees, palm trees). In El Guettar, close to Gafsa, a small museum exhibits an important prehistoric collection.



## CRAFTS and traditions

In Tozeur or Nefta, visit a factory making artisanal bricks from clay mixed with sand, and discover the traditional architecture in brick and palm wood. In Nefta, a focal location for mysticism, the mausoleums of the Sufi saints are highly frequented. Gafsa's woolen weavings are famous for their geometrical decorations enhanced with small stylised figures. In El Guettar, they make traditional weavings and grain mills using a specific type of stone extracted nearby.



# THE SANDY desert



Encampment in  
Tembaine

The desert like you always dreamed about it, experience immensity and vastness, silence and stillness... Tunisia has **40 000 kilometres of sandy desert**, a major part of the **GREAT EASTERN SAND SEA** which offers the most splendid views of **dunes sculpted by the winds**. Whether gently rolling, or standing proud in impetuous waves, they are tinted in yellow and pink at dawn – a rare sight which rewards a night spent in a **BIVOUAC**. The ever-changing landscape sometimes reveals surprises: **sandy wells**, mountains overlooking the dunes, basins sheltering a few bushes and trees, or even a lake where ducks and egrets frolic. Guides and **CAMEL RAISERS** of the region put all their passion and experience at the service of those who wish to discover **the emotion of a Saharan journey**.

---

1 Bivouac.

2 Nomads' weaving.

3 In the sand dunes.





30

.....

31



## WHAT to see?

Head out as far as the fort of Ksar Ghilane, the ruins of the Roman castellum of Tisavar founded in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD. Discover spectacular locations in the heart of the desert: Lake Erreched, a lake of warm water surrounded by high dunes, surrounded by a small oasis and covered with birds, or Tembaïne, a circle dug into the middle of a sea of sand, dominated by the silhouette of a high table mountain. Maybe you will be lucky enough to find a field of sand roses, or observe herds gathered around a water source.



## CRAFTS and traditions

While nomadism is not as practiced as it once was, the inhabitants of the Douz region still leave their fixed homes periodically to rejoin their tent-dwelling lifestyle. The nomads raise sheep, goats and camels, indispensable as a beast of burden, but which also provides meat, milk and fibre for mats and tent coverings. The fastest and lightest camels, the meharis, were once war mounts. Life in the desert requires a wealth of knowledge maintained from generation to generation.



# USEFUL Information



**AREA**  
163,155 km<sup>2</sup>

**COAST LINE**  
1,298 km

**CLIMATE**  
Mediterranean (semi-arid in the interior, arid in the South). Average temperatures: December 11.4°C, July 29.3°C.

**POPULATION**  
10.9 Million inh.

**OFFICIAL LANGUAGE**  
Arabic

**TIME ZONE**  
GMT + 1

**CAPITAL**  
Tunis

**MAIN CITIES**  
Sfax, Sousse, Béja, Bizerte, Jendouba, Gabès, El Kef, Nabeul, Médenine, Kairouan...

**RELIGION**  
Moslems (98% of pop.), Jews, Christians

**LANGUAGE**  
The Tunisian people converse in the Arabic language yet many speak French fluently. English, German and Italian are often spoken.

**NATIONAL HOLIDAY**  
March 20 (Independence, 1956)

**EXCHANGE**  
Tunisian Dinar (TND)  
The Tunisian Dinar is divided into 1,000 millimes. It may neither be imported nor exported. Traveller's and EuroCheques are accepted. Euro 1 = TND 2.4 approx.

**CREDIT CARDS ACCEPTED**  
Visa, MasterCard, Eurocard, Amex, Diner's Club

**TELEPHONE**  
Country code 216 + number (8 digits)

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**BY FOOT**, by horse, by bike

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