

## Food and Culture in Morocco

**“It seems that the more places I see and experience, the bigger I realize the world to be. The more I become aware of, the more I realize how relatively little I know of it, how many places I have still to go, how much more there is to learn.” –**

**Anthony Bourdain**

Learning Objectives: The topic of Moroccan Cuisine and Food Culture will be explored through a multimodal digital experience. Students will delve into the principles of Moroccan cuisine, the role of spices in Moroccan cooking in addition to the role of food in traditions, celebrations, and family gatherings. Furthermore, the experimental learning will include a virtual visit to the Moroccan Souk and a visit to host families.

Students will also have the opportunity to participate in a cooking workshop, prepare authentic dishes, and learn traditional techniques. Throughout the course, students will gain a deeper appreciation for the cultural significance of Moroccan food, recognizing how it reflects the country's history, traditions, and values.

Learning Outcome: At the end of this activity, students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of Moroccan cuisine including its key ingredients, cooking style, and regional variations. In addition, students will learn about Moroccan souks and understand their importance in the local culture. Students will also participate in a virtual visit to a Morocco souk, and host families. Finally, students will engage in reflective exercises to assess their own learning experience and its impact on their perspectives of Moroccan cuisine and food culture. To conclude the experimental learning, students will design and present a multimodal digital project that showcases their knowledge and understanding of Moroccan cuisine and food culture.

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### **Activity 1: Reflection (10 min) Before you begin this activity, let’s explore what you already know:**

The objective of this task is to provide students with an opportunity to reflect on their beliefs and examine any stereotypes or misconceptions they may have about food-eating habits in the Arab world. Additionally, this talk will prepare students to discuss cultural topics and express their thoughts effectively.

Students will be presented with six guided questions that encourage them to explore their perceptions of food habits in the Arabic world. Afterward, they will be asked to write a paragraph discussing how these perceptions might lead to harmful misconceptions.

This pre-task will be used as a warm-up for students to start thinking about the topic of food, but from a different perspective. Although they are required to reflect in English (Students could be Arabic students or students of other programs like service learning or travel tourism), this will help them to remove any misconceptions or stereotypes they might have about people in the Arab world. Also, since they are preparing themselves for a potential study abroad experience, this will be serving as an introduction for them to avoid any cultural shock or avoid cultural misunderstanding.

- What do you know about Arab food and culture?
- What do you know about eating habits in the Arab world?
- Do you know the difference between Middle Eastern and North African Food?
- Do you know any eating habits in the Arab world?
- In your opinion what is the relationship between food and culture?
- What do you know about Arab Markets or shopping habits in the Arab world?

### **Activity 2: Food related vocabulary**

Students will start the class by learning essential food vocabulary such as 'vegetables, fruits, and spices.' They will watch a video vlog, then work with a worksheet to familiarize themselves with these words.

Watch these videos, take notes, and prepare to answer some reflection questions.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZYe0coEsUVU&ab\\_channel=LearnArabicwithKhasu](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZYe0coEsUVU&ab_channel=LearnArabicwithKhasu)  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dA0QG0YcgEw&ab\\_channel=LearnArabicwithKhasu](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dA0QG0YcgEw&ab_channel=LearnArabicwithKhasu)

- What new vocabulary did you learn in Arabic?
- What are some expressions you can use in the souk?
- How frequently do you think people in the Arab world shop for everyday goods and necessities?
- Are there any cultural or religious considerations that might impact shopping habits in the Arab world?
- What are the payment methods used in the Arab world for shopping?
- How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted shopping habits in the Arab world?
- Compare and contrast shopping habits in your culture and the Arab world. Are there any similarities? Major differences?

### **Activity 3: Food Variations**

During this activity, students will develop the ability to distinguish between various varieties of Arab food, specifically from North African and Middle Eastern cuisines. They will delve into the composition of each cuisine, understanding its unique distinctions. The session will begin with a talk by a local guest speaker, providing insights into Arab food, followed by a

video vlog presentation showcasing the main staple dishes of the Arab world. The instructor will explain how these dishes are prepared, the spices used, and the occasions on which they are served.

Students will use Perusall collaboratively in this activity:

Direction: Watch the videos and annotate your impressions on(Perusall).

Comment on 3 of your classmate's annotations.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cPQG0R7GGUo&t=426s&ab\\_channel=LukeMartin](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cPQG0R7GGUo&t=426s&ab_channel=LukeMartin)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WaxbpNDg6Mg&ab\\_channel=tapexplore](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WaxbpNDg6Mg&ab_channel=tapexplore)

- What are the flavor or tastes that differentiates North African cuisine from Middle Eastern?
- Did you notice any significant variations in cooking styles between North African and Middle Eastern cuisines?
- How did you see the use of spices differ between the two cuisines?
- List some of the most popular traditional dishes unique to North African cuisine? Which one would you want to try? Cook? Ever had any of these foods?
- What can you say about the overall presentation of meals?
- How do the traditional drinks in North African cuisine differ from those in the Middle East?
- Are there any Middle Eastern or North African restaurants in your own city? Which one did you try? How was your experience and how did it help you appreciate cultural diversity in your own location?

#### **Activity 4: Souks**

Students will participate in a virtual visit to one of the busy Moroccan markets “souks,” students will learn how Moroccan people do shopping and bargain. Students will practice their speaking and communication skills, doing essential shopping of items “vegetables, fruits, other food, spices, etc.” need from the souk to cook their own recipes or participate in a virtual cooking workshop.

Direction: The first task requires them to record their experience inside the virtual souk and talk about their experiences. Prior to that, every student should select a dish they want to make, prepare a list of shopping needs and hunt for all those items in a busy Moroccan souk in Marrakech. Once done, every student will return to their homestay family and make the dish with assistance from the host family. Eventually, they will take pictures of the cooking process and write down their first Blog entry with pictures.

Watch this video and prepare to reflect on the question below:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1e37qWLCc94&ab\\_channel=WalksandAdventures](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1e37qWLCc94&ab_channel=WalksandAdventures)

- What first impressions did you have walking into the square “[Jamma Al Fna](#)”?
- What was the overall vibe? what sounds have you heard? products displayed?
- What types of cultural performances or live entertainment have you witnessed at the Souk?
- What colors, patterns, and structures have you noticed about the Moroccan souk?
- How is the Souk organized?
- How do vendors present their goods?
- Please describe the atmosphere of the Souk and the interactions between vendors and customers?
- What types of handicrafts or artisanal products did you see?
- What are some popular spices you saw?
- Please describe any traditional clothing or textiles that are sold at the Souk?
- How do the prices at the Souk present? Is it cheap? expensive?
- Reflect on the importance of the Souk as a social gathering place for Moroccans and compare it to a shopping experience in your own culture.
- Take one screenshot from the virtual visit and share it with your classmate. Invite your classmates to discuss the picture and reflect together on it.

### **Activity 5: Visiting a Moroccan host family**

In this activity, students will pay a visit to a Moroccan host family in a village in the High Atlas of Marrakech. Please watch the video, and immerse yourself as if you are the author of the video. While watching the video, take notes of new items you have learned, reflect on what you have seen, and answer reflection questions.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oPfAyh0612E&ab\\_channel=EvazuBeck](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oPfAyh0612E&ab_channel=EvazuBeck)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=njalEx6KGU4&ab\\_channel=KOED](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=njalEx6KGU4&ab_channel=KOED)

- Describe the traditional house, its room, and the village you stayed in.
- Describe your host family and the members of the family. How is the family different from yours?
- What did you notice about the storage room?
- How do people in the village cook their food?
- How do you think the Berbers differ from the Arabs?
- Describe some items that were unfamiliar to you.
- What cultural norms and customs you took into account when visiting the family?
- How did you dress to show respect for the local culture while visiting the family?
- What are some traditional dishes or foods you tried?
- What are some activities you engaged in with the family?
- Did you notice any specific gestures while interacting with the family?
- How do people eat food in the village? Breakfast? Lunch etc.

- How did you use non-verbal language to communicate if a language barrier is experienced?

### **Activity 6: Cooking workshop**

- In this activity, you will participate in a virtual cooking workshop with a group of people in Marrakech, Morocco.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mcWMsaVH4dI&ab\\_channel=EverythingGis%C3%A8le](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mcWMsaVH4dI&ab_channel=EverythingGis%C3%A8le)

While you watch the video, please take notes of the steps required to make the dishes cooked in the workshop.

- How did the cooking workshop in Marrakech compare to your expectations before attending?
- What were the highlights of the cooking workshop, and which specific dishes did you learn to prepare?
- How did the local instructors or chefs contribute to the overall experience of the workshop was their instructions and explanation clear enough?
- What were some of the key ingredients used in the Moroccan recipes you learned, and were they different from what you're used to in your own cuisine?
- Did the workshop include any educational components, such as learning about the history or origins of certain dishes?
- Did the workshop include a visit to a local souk?

### **Activity 7: Digital story.**

Students will be able to narrate, summarize, and elaborate on their virtual tour to Morocco experience in a digital story. The goal also is to assist students in expressing themselves with different creative tools, using a combination of audiovisual tools (pictures, videos, and voice-over).

Direction: This assignment will wrap up the virtual experience of students in Morocco, the digital story that they will create will be a representation of their experience, reflections, and stories. Specifically, students will be asked to elaborate on their thoughts about how they viewed food habits in Morocco before and after the trip and what they have learned from the activities, the interactions, and the virtual experiences they have.

Steps to complete a project:

- Use visual material taken from the virtual visits (photos, videos clips, etc)

- Use your notes, annotations, or journal to recall details or insights from the experience.
- Choose a digital media creation software or app that you are familiar with.
- Divide your digital story into sections: For example The Souk, The Host Family, and Cooking Workshop.
- Write a short narrative for each section of your story to provide context.
- Record an audio narration (accompanied by Music) to give a personal touch to your digital story.