The Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut, Inc.

# The Gardens, Arts and Culture of Morocco

**March 14 — 25, 2027**

## "Blue City" & Tangier Extension

**March 25 — 28, 2027**

***Join us on an in-depth exploration of the wondrous Kingdom of Morocco, whose multi-cultural history and achievements span over two millennia, on an "insider's" program designed exclusively for FGCCT. The journey will naturally cover the Kingdom's best-known treasures, including its thousand-year-old cities surrounded by ramparts within which we find a hive of ageless activity, a myriad of scents and colors, and astounding architecture. But it will also offer insights into the fabric of life of Moroccan peoples and reach off-the-beaten-track sites of glorious history and breathtaking nature. Along the way we will discover the traditions of Berber tribesmen amid the pristine setting around North Africa's highest peak; hear from a university professor on Morocco's geopolitics; admire the world's last forest of giant cedars; enjoy private events, from a dinner reception to a wine tasting; and marvel at six exquisite gardens. Come on what should be one of the most enriching travel experiences of your life.***

**$5,824 Per Person Double Occupancy**
**(based on minimum 20 participants)**

**$7,568 Per Person Single Occupancy**
**(limited availability of single units)**

**$150 Supplement for non-Members of FGCCT**

**$150 Separate Donation to FGCCT**

**Pre-night: From $294 (depending on unit available)**

**Flights: Book to Marrakech (RAK); return from Casablanca (CMN) or Rabat (RBA)**
**(do not book flights until you have been advised our minimum has been met)**


**FGCCT**
Kathy Lindroth
Tour Coordinator
860.836.3407

Kathleen.lindroth@gmail.com

Ctgardenclubs.org


## Highlights and Inclusions

- 6 unique gardens
- 5 World Heritage Sites
- Private dinner reception at a garden home in Marrakech
- Private vineyard tour, wine tasting and lunch
- Private lunch and lecture at the Center for Cross Cultural Learning
- Mule ride and lunch in the Mt. Toubkal National Park
- Private hands-on culinary class
- Services of experienced national guide throughout
- Services of expert local site guides
- 11 nights lodging in superior, character-rich boutique hotels
- Transport throughout the program by private a/c coach
- Meals at select eateries as indicated in the itinerary (B = breakfast, L = lunch, D = dinner, R = reception)
- Mineral water with meals and on the coach
- Welcome Meet & Greet cocktail on first evening
- Wine with farewell dinner
- Transfers between airports and hotels on arrival and departure dates (grouped by arrival/departure schedules)
- Entry fees to all monuments, museums & gardens listed
- Gratuities for guides, driver, mule handlers, included meals, luggage port at hotels

# Itinerary

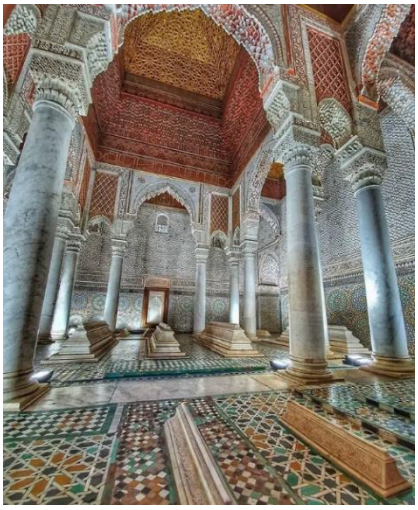
**March 14: Sunday – Arrive in Marrakech (D)**

Land in Marrakech for a transfer to the hotel. Remainder of day at leisure. Welcome cocktail followed by dinner of Marrakchi specialties at the hotel.

HOTEL: ***Riad Kniza,*** one of the highest-rated boutique hotels in the country, with excellent traditional cuisine, built in typical Moroccan style and located just inside the medina in the Doukkala residential neighborhood, a 10-min walk to the bazaars. Five nights.

**March 15: Monday – Majorelle Garden and the Imperial City (B,L,D)**

The day begins with a stroll in the exotic garden that French Orientalist *Jacques Majorelle* created in the 1920s, restored by *Yves Saint-Laurent*, who lived in *Majorelle*'s former home. There we visit the exquisite Museum of Berber Arts. Then into the area from which Marrakech ruled over a vast kingdom under four dynasties. First, the Bahia ("Resplendent") Palace of a late 19th-Century vizier, a showcase of Moorish-Andalusian art, with its astounding ceilings in salons around verdant patios. Next, the Monde des Arts de la Parure, an Ali Baba's treasure trove of over 3,000 articles of jewelry, costumes and other personal ornaments collected from dozens of indigenous cultures in nearly every corner of the world. Enjoy a Lebanese lunch there and continue to the Saadian Dynasty's mausoleum, the last window left into the lavishness of their late 17th-Century art. Wind up with a stop by the 12th-Century Koutoubia mosque, the symbol of the city and a "reference" of world Islamic architecture, built under the Amazigh Almohad Dynasty (who also built Seville's Giralda minaret as a "sister" to the Koutoubia). Dinner awaits at the fashionable *Bo&Zin* bistro, in a garden setting.



**March 16: Tuesday – Culinary Arts and Into the Souq (B,L)**

In the morning we split up to head to different chefs' homes in the medina for hands-on culinary classes of Moroccan specialties, learning how to prepare a salad, main course, dessert and mint tea. Lunch is what we have concocted and we then penetrate the vast bazaars, Morocco's largest, to see a myriad of crafts still fashioned by hand. We wind our way to Le Jardin Secret, a green space hidden amid the maze of the souqs, part of a royal residence initially established in

the 16th century, opened to the public for the first time in its history in 2016. Also a visit of the Ben Youssef Madrasa, a theological school that was the largest in Africa when initially built in the 14th Century, and the grandiose  Dar al Basha palace of a city's overlord during French days, to see the museum within of interreligious currents as expressed in crafts and beliefs. We wind up at the famed Jemaa el Fna square, the vibrant heart of the old city, where the circus-like atmosphere — acrobats, musicians, snake charmers, story tellers, et al. — is at its highest then . Dinner is on your own, to enjoy Marrakech's great variety of world-class eateries.

**March 17: Wednesday – Mt. Toubkal National Park (B,L)**

We head South, following the scenic N'Fis Valley into the magnificent High Atlas mountains, the Continent's longest range, until Imlil village at the foot of 14,000-ft Mt. Toubkal, North Africa's highest. There we mount mules (each led by its handler) for a ride through terraced fields to Armed, Africa's highest permanent hamlet, observing the traditional ways of life and work of the Amazigh (Berber) tribesmen, Morocco's indigenous settlers. After a tea stop in a local home, we wind up for lunch at the award-winning *Kasbah du Toubkal* ecolodge. Late-afternoon return to Marrakech, with dinner again on your own.

**March 18: Thursday – The Anima (B,L,R)**

A morning excursion to the Anima, on everyone's list of "must-see" world gardens. A whimsical, magical world spread on over 7 acres, the creation of Austrian artist *André Heller*, with large works of modern art by renowned artists (including *Picasso*, *Renoir* and *Calder*) nestled amid lush vegetation. We move on to  lunch at the exquisite *Oberoi* hotel, set amid a manicured garden designed by *Madison Cox*. The afternoon is open for personal pursuits in Marrakech: additional sightseeing, leisure activities, shopping, or just relaxing. A private dinner reception awaits at the garden home of an eminent architect, founder of the Marrakech Art Biennale

**March 19: Friday — A Glass of Wine en Route to Fes** **(B,L,D)**

An early departure on the limited-access autoroute North toward Casablanca, then East to the Kingdom's prime viniculture area. There we stop at one of top vineyards for a tasting of its prime crûs, followed by a private lunch and tour of the cave and vineyard. Continue East to spiritual capital Fes, whose medina is considered by scholars to be the last true example of a typical medieval Arab city. The remainder of the afternoon is at leisure, albeit those interested may proceed in the late afternoon to an atelier for ceramics and *zellige* (mosaic tile), a Fesi specialty since the 14th century. Dinner of refined Fesi cuisine at the hotel.

HOTEL: ***Riad Maison Bleue***, three former mansions within the Fes medina that have been connected and converted to a character-rich boutique hotel, with numerous patios and terraces, spa and one of the city's top traditional cuisines. Three nights.

**March 20: Saturday — Fes** **(B,L)**

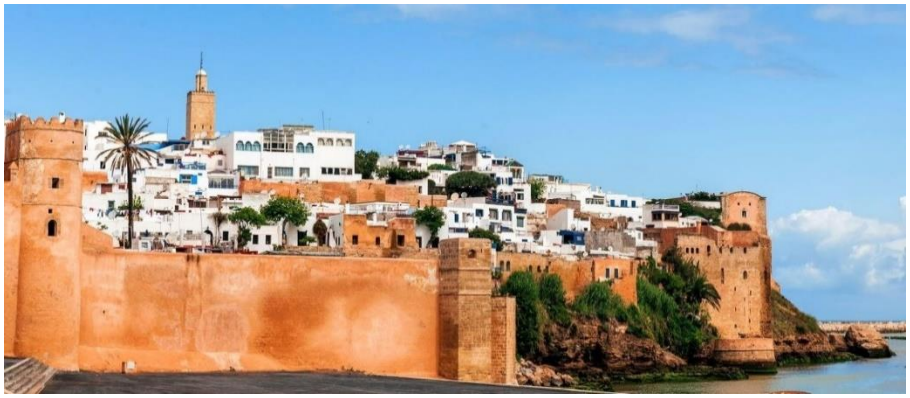
The day belongs to Fes. Founded by *Idriss II*, a direct descendant of the Prophet, and former capital of the 14th-century Amazigh Marinid Dynasty. Begin with a walking tour of 9th-century "Old" Fes, with its jewels of art spanning a millennium — pilgrimage shrines, intricately embellished theological schools, a caravansary, the world's oldest functional university, the Qarawyine — along with the famed leather tanneries and craft quarters where the arts are passed in ageless ways from master to disciple. Lunch during the walk at the *Ruined Garden*. In the afternoon we tour 8-centuries-old "New" Fes, with its Bou Inaniya theological school, to many the top masterpiece of Marinid architecture, the iconic "Blue" Gate, and the 19th-C. Jnane Sbil Royal Garden, a hidden gem of the medina.

**March 21: Sunday — The Middle Atlas - Cedars, Monkeys and Cave Homes** **(B,L,D)**

An excursion South into the Middle Atlas range. We cross mountain station Ifrane, site of the Continent's most prestigious university, the Al Akhawayne. From there reach the heart of the last forest of giant Mediterranean cedars, amid which we should spot a band of the indigenous Barbary macaques (of Gibraltar fame). Then across the Atlas to the hillside village of Bhalil, with its unique cave dwellings and painted houses. Early afternoon return to Fes, with free time.

**March 22: Monday — Volubilis, Meknes and Rabat (B,L,D)**

We head West to the ruins of Rome's regional commercial hub Volubilis, renowned for its numerous mosaics still *in situ* (World Heritage). Then South to Meknes, the 17th-Century capital of the current dynasty's founder Sultan *Moulay Ismaïl*, where we see the World Heritage immense granary he built to sustain the city's population and his thousands of horses for up to a year-long siege. Midday arrival in the stately capital of Rabat, a World Heritage city. After a seafood lunch we proceed on a leisurely walk through the picturesque Oudaya Kasbah, a former lair of Barbary Coast corsairs, with an Andalusian garden and the Oudaya Gate, another prime example of the purely Moroccan architectural style developed under the Almohad Dynasty. There we visit the National Museum of Jewelry and Adornment. A French dinner caps the day.



HOTEL: ***Villa Mandarine,*** Rabat's foremost boutique hotel, amid the diplomatic enclave, full of art and museum-quality crafts, heated pool, and one of the city's foremost cuisines. Three nights in Deluxe rooms with either a patio or balcony overlooking the hotel's exotic garden.

**March 23: Tuesday — Bouknadel and Rabat (B,L)**

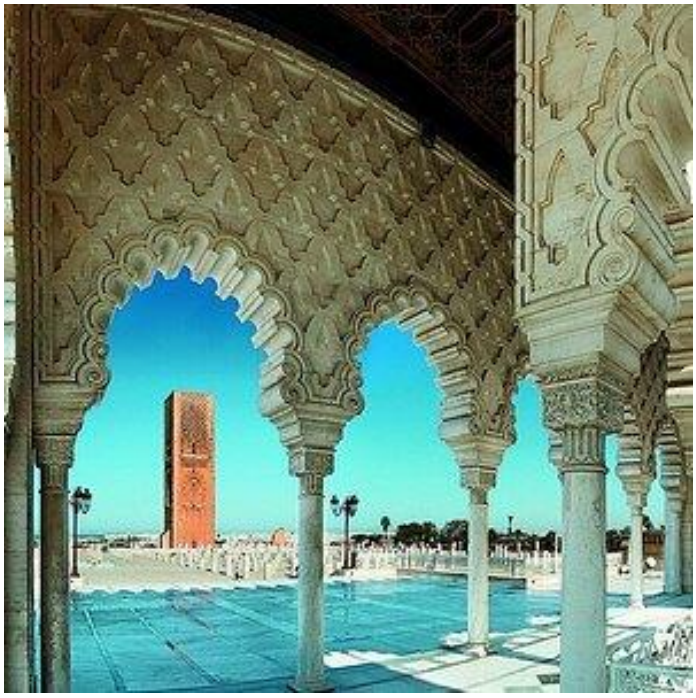
In the morning we undertake an excursion a half-hour North of the city to the Jardins Exotiques of Bouknadel. These vast gardens, with 7 world themes (Andalusia, Peru, Congo, etc.), were created in the 1950s by a French resident and have been recently restored to their original beauty and as an educational center under the guidance of the King's youngest sister. After a lunch break at the hotel we explore the city's Botanical Gardens, established in 1917 and set on 42 acres, with over 600 hundred plant varieties.

**March 24: Wednesday — Rabat** **(B,L,D)**

The city tour continues with a walk through the Chellah fortress, its remains of the Roman colony of Sala and the stork-guarded necropolis of the 14th-century Marinid Dynasty amid lush vegetation. Next, the kingdom's prime archaeological museum and the Museum of Contemporary Moroccan Art, in a magnificent structure of neo-Moorish architecture. Lunch awaits at the Center for Cross Cultural Learning in the Rabat medina, with a presentation on Morocco as a crucial player in international affairs. A stop to see the ornate mausoleum of modern Morocco's "father" King Mohamed V, set on the grounds of what had been meant to be the world's largest mosque with the tallest minaret in the Almohad Dynasty period. The remainder of the day is free to relax, while a farewell dinner of Moroccan delights awaits at the *Dinarjat* in the Rabat medina.

**March 25: Thursday — Outbound** **(B)**

Transfers to Rabat or Casablanca airports in conjunction with outbound flights.



# "Blue City" & Tangier Gardens Extension

***You may wish to consider a 3-night post-program extension, first to Chefchaouen, considered Morocco' most picturesque town, with its cobblestone alleyways amid blue-washed buildings, set on a hillside of the Rif Mountains. Then on to famed Tangier, the former lair of spies and intrigue on the Strait of Gibraltar.***

**March 25: Thursday — To Chefchaouen** **(B,L)**

An early morning departure on the 4½-hr transfer to Chefchaouen. Lunch upon arrival, followed by a guided tour of the old town's highlights, with the remainder of the day free for strolling around and photography. Enjoy dinner on your own at any of the numerous eateries within a 10-min walk from the hotel, or at the hotel.
HOTEL: ***Lina Ryad & Spa***, the town's top, all-suite boutique hotel, located in the heart of the old city. 1 night.

**March 26: Friday — Chefchaouen & to Tangier** **(B,D)**

The morning is open for personal exploration and photography in the town. Lunch is again on your own to try the restaurants around the town's main square. Then a 2½-hr transfer West to Tangier. In the early evening we proceed to tour the garden of the Riad Mabrouka, the former home of *Yves Sait-Laurent*, now converted to a boutique hotel, where we stay for dinner.
HOTEL: ***El Minzah***, the city's flagship hotel with a rich history, fashioned in the style of a parador. 2 nights in Deluxe rooms with view.

**March 27: Saturday — Gardens** **(B,L,D)**

A morning excursion an hour South of Tangier to *Umberto Pasti*'s hilltop Rohuna Garden, which he built with the primary goal of preserving native flora, including rare narcissi that were at risk of extinction. After a lunch there, with produce from the garden, we turn back North to the Spartel Cape, below which the Mediterranean clashes with the Atlantic, to visit its public botanical garden and enjoy the splendid vistas on the Strait. An optional late-afternoon stroll through the markets of the Tangier kasbah, followed by a farewell dinner there.

**March 28: Sunday — Outbound** **(B)**

A morning transfer to Tangier airport (TNG), for connecting homebound flights via European hubs, or to Tangier port for the 45-min hydrofoil ferry ride to Tarifa in Spain.

**$1,360 Per Person Double Occupancy**
**(based on minimum 10 participants)**

**$1,918 Per Person Single Occupancy**

# Terms and Conditions

## FGCCT Terms & Protocols

**FGCCT Release of Liability and Indemnification**

By signing this Agreement and accepting the Travel Services as set forth, the Guest hereby releases, waives, and discharges Federated Garden Clubs of CT., Inc. from all liability, claims, demands, actions, or rights of action arising out of related to the travel services provided, including but not limited to any bodily injury, damage to **property, or other loss. FGCCT acts only as an agent for the various independent suppliers that provide hotel** accommodation, transportation, sightseeing, activities or other services connected with this tour. Such services are subject to the terms and conditions of those suppliers. FGCCT and the respective Directors accept no liability whatsoever for any injury, damage, loss, accident, delay or any other incident which may be caused by negligence, defect, default of any company or person in performing these services. This release and waiver of liability shall explicitly include any liability, claims, demands, actions, and/or rights of action resulting from the negligence of FGCCT or its agents. The Guest further agrees to defend, indemnify and hold harmless FGCCT from any loss, liability, damage, or cost, including attorney fees, arising out of or related to the Guest's participation in this Trip.

**Assumption of Risk**

The Guest acknowledges and understands that travel inherently involves certain risks, including but not limited to transportation accidents, illness or injury, property loss or damage, and/or natural disasters or emergencies. The Guest further acknowledges that international travel specifically carries certain risks including but not limited to limited cellular service, sub-par medical care, gaps in health insurance coverage, and potential crime. The Guest agrees that he/she/they explicitly assume and voluntarily accepts these risks.

**Travel Insurance**

FGCCT strongly recommends that each participant purchase trip insurance. For international trips, medical and evacuation insurance is required. Please check *Insuremytrip.com* or *Squaremouth.com* for competing policies. Travel Insurance Center *(travelinsurancecenter.com*) can be reached at 866-979-6753 to speak with their knowledgeable agents. The industry has seen an increase in supplier financial default and we want you to be aware of the protection that comprehensive travel insurance can provide in these situations. Using a credit card can afford you protection depending on the credit card. It is up to you to protect yourself depending on your individual needs.

**FGCCT Travel Health Recommendations & Protocol**

The FGCCT is making the following recommendations and protocols to our members and their guests who embark on a FGCCT sponsored tour. These recommendations and protocols are subject to change based on governmental regulations, the unique tour destination, rates of infection for viral respiratory disease (including Covid) and other factors. Our goal is to do our utmost to protect our members and to work toward the expected experience for everyone on tour.

***This is a no-smoking tour.***

Before traveling, we strongly recommend that you:

- Check your travel insurance policy for illness and accident protection. To minimize any costs involved with becoming ill, we highly recommend a comprehensive medical and evacuation insurance policy. Such a policy is mandatory for FGCCT international tours. If you need more information on suggested coverage, be sure to contact the FGCCT Tour Coordinator. Please bring your travel insurance documents with you on the tour.
- Mask with a KN95 mask in airports and during air, bus, and train travel enroute to your tour to avoid exposure to respiratory viruses, including but not limited to Covid 19.
- Familiarize yourself with the updated CDC recommendations for respiratory viruses.
- All guests traveling with FGCCT will be required to sign the registration form which will indicate your acceptance of the FGCCT Travel Protocols.

***Vaccinations***

It is up to each traveler to secure any needed vaccinations. You should obtain all CDC recommended vaccinations and boosters for FGCCT group travel. For general international travel, the following vaccinations are suggested.

- Hepatitis A & B, Typhoid and the routine flu, pneumonia, tetanus and other routine vaccinations. An up to date Covid 19 vaccination is recommended but not required.

***FGCCT health and wellness protocols***

Please be aware of the following protocols for everyone's health and well-being. By signing the registration form for this tour, all guests understand and agree to the following:

- Any guest who displays symptoms of *any* upper respiratory illness such as persistent cough, sneezing, sore throat, will be asked to wear an N95 mask, from the supply that **you bring.** Any passenger showing the above symptoms will be placed in the rear of the coach and separated from other guests both indoors and outside. You will be asked to socially distance whenever possible, such as during meals, to minimize the risk to others.
- Any guest who is running a fever will be asked to take a rest day at our hotel (if we are returning to the same hotel that evening) to allow for isolation. Should the fever last more than 24 hours or should we be in transit that day, the guest will be asked to remain at that hotel until they have recovered from their fever and then make their way, at their own expense, to rejoin the group. We will assist as much as possible in making necessary arrangements. As mentioned above, medical and evacuation insurance is mandatory for overseas tours. By following the suggested recommendations and protocols, we are far more likely to remain healthy.
- Sharing a room? Discuss in advance how expenses will be covered if one person gets sick and necessitates the healthy guest needing to book another room.

## FGCCT Travel Tips for a Successful Tour

While it is exciting to consider the adventure upon which you are embarking, please take the time to read and follow these tips for a more rewarding tour with FGCCT.

- Enjoy the opportunity to tour new places, visit with new friends, and experience the food, culture and customs of our destination,
- When guides are speaking, please listen attentively.
- Ask in advance if photos are allowed.
- Always wear your name tag!
- Being late is a big no-no!
- Meet your travel companions by sitting with new people every day.
- Rotate positions on the tour bus.
- Loud phone conversations on the bus and on the tour will not work. Please take your phone conversation private.
- Let trip leaders know of any special requests right away. Concerned about anything? Let us know!

# Program Booking Conditions

### Reservations & Payments

**To reserve your tour, a deposit of $600 per person to "Cross Cultural Adventures" and a separate $150 per person made out to "FGCCT Inc." are payable at the time of registration. Payment of the deposit may be made by credit card via a link provided upon registration.**

**Final payment of tour costs and any other requested services will be due no later than January 8, 2027.**

Please note that the tour cost is based on a **minimum of 20 participants** (10 participants on the extension). A lower number of participants may result in cost adjustment.

### Cancellation Policy

Your deposit is **non-refundable**, unless your space can be filled by a new participant up to January 14, 2027, in which case the deposit is refunded **minus a $200 service fee. The $150 donation to FGCCT is non-refundable.**

Should you need to cancel your tour **after January 14, 2027**, your entire payment is **non-refundable.**

We regret that as a small business, we are rarely able to make exceptions to our cancellation policy.

### Documentation

International tours require a passport with at least 6 months' validity. Some destinations require a separate visa. It is up to each traveler to be aware of requirements and to secure your own visas. Morocco does not require visas from U.S. Citizens.

### Program Cost Exclusions

Please note the tour cost does NOT include:

- Airfares.
- Any other travel arrangements prior to landing in Marrakech on March 14, 2027, nor after March 25, 2027.
- Any meals, beverages, activities or services outside of those listed in the program.
- Any insurance nor medical expenses.
- Other purely personal expenses (room service, laundry, telephone, etc.).

### Operator's Responsibility Statement

**Cross Cultural Adventures LLC** and not the Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut (FGCCT) is the tour operator and is responsible for the services provided. By the forwarding of a deposit and by completing and signing the reservation form for the "Morocco" tour, March 14 – 25, 2027, the depositor thereby agrees and assigns to release and hold harmless FGCCT and Cross Cultural Adventures LLC and any of their officers, agents or representatives from any and all liability which might be incurred during any portion of or in relation to this tour, and further agrees to be bound by the following limitations and conditions of operator's responsibility:

Cross Cultural Adventures LLC, operator of the tour herein outlined, its subsidiaries and/or its associated agents act as agents only for all services and disclaim any and all liability for property loss or damage, and/or any and all damages resulting from death or personal injuries, including loss of services which may be sustained on account of, or rising out of, by reason of, or while engaged on any aspect of this tour, whether due to the ownership, maintenance, use, operation, or control of any vehicle, common carrier, hotel, restaurant or other, or whether caused by failure or delay or by any transportation company due to any cause whatsoever occurring during this tour under its management, sponsorship, procurement or otherwise. All services are furnished subject in all respects to these terms and conditions and to any and all terms and conditions under which the means of transportation or any other services provided thereby are offered or supplied by owners for whom Cross Cultural Adventures LLC acts solely as agents.

Due to the unpredictable nature of travel in developing countries and/or in rare cases of safety concern, Cross Cultural Adventures LLC reserves the right in its discretion to alter any part of the itinerary or change any feature without allowance or refund.

***By signing the registration form, you agree that you have read and accept the above Terms, Protocols, Travel Tips, and Conditions in full.***

Federated Garden Clubs of Ct. Presents

# The Gardens, Arts and Culture of Morocco

March 14 – 25, 2027

Please legibly complete one form for each person traveling

Full Name _____

Cell Phone_____ Email_____

First name for nametag_____Your Garden Club_____

Address_____

City_____State & Zip_____

Emergency Contact Name and Cell Phone Number_____

Food Allergies / Dietary Restrictions (must be in writing at time of registration) _____

_____

Physical Requirements: This is an active tour requiring walking for up to 2 miles, some on uneven terrain or steep alleyways, occasionally in crowded spaces. **Steps without handrails may also be involved. All passengers must be physically and mentally sound. All physical conditions that affect mobility, as well as conditions such as motion sickness or inability to climb multiple flights of stairs, must be declared on this form.** If you have mobility issues, this might not be the trip for you. _____

_____

Do you require pre-program accommodations: ☐ 03/13/2027 ☐ 03/12&13/2027

☐ Do you intend to participate in the Tangier post-tour program, 03/25-28/2027

Are you celebrating a special occasion while on the trip _____ Date _____

| | |
|---|---|
| Per Person in Shared Room | $5,824 |
| My Roommate's Name_____ | |
| Per Person in Single Room | $7,568 |
| Supplement for non-Members of FGCCT | $150 |
| Deposit Required per Person upon Registration | $600 |
| Contribution Required to the FGCCT per Person upon Registration | $150 |

By signing this registration form and submitting my deposit with this form, I confirm I have read and accept the Terms and Conditions, Health Protocols, Physical Requirements, and Tips for this tour.

Signature_____

Registration on a first come basis. Please send this completed form (one per traveler, signed) and your payments — one for $600 per person made out to Cross Cultural Adventures and one for $150 per person made out to FGCCT Inc. — to the address below.

- Should you prefer to pay your $600/person deposit with a credit card please check here ☐
  A payment link shall be sent to your email address.

Kathy Lindroth
4 Chelsea Place
Farmington, CT 06032

Any Questions: Please contact Kathy Lindroth at Kathleen.Lindroth@gmail.com