

## **Conflicts Abroad Bring Greater Thirst for Knowledge of Islam through Cultural Travel**

*With worldwide tourism on the rise, countries with greater populations of Muslims are seeing an influx of western travelers interested in a cultural learning experience.*

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With all the travel warnings concerning security to citizens in the United States and elsewhere, western governments are seeing a rise in travel to far-off lands. Travelers and tourists in the United States and around the world are not searching for only adventure any longer, but are exploring the vistas to find opportunities to gain cultural enlightenment while abroad.

As the United States government works diligently to secure its own borders, many U.S. travelers are taking leaps out into frontiers they might have once overlooked. "Primarily Islamic Nations, such as Morocco in North Africa, deserve to be experienced and enjoyed. Travelers, who once looked for an experiential adventure, are now thinking about what they can learn and share back home, telling people who haven't ventured past their own borders how friendly the world can be," as explained by Thomas Hollowell who runs Morocco tours with his cultural adventure company, JourneyBeyondTravel.com

With nearly 800 million travelers donning their suitcases or backpacks worldwide, North Africa is gaining greater numbers of voyagers who want to explore the history, culture and even languages of the region. According to the World Tourism Organisation's (WTO) statistics, nearly 37 million visitors toured the African continent, leading the way worldwide with a ten percent rise in 2005 alone. "North Africa has had a lot of Western/European influence. It is an interesting mixture" continued Mr. Hollowell. "Travelers come and see that they can gain a greater understanding of the peoples here. They can formulate their own thoughts apart from what is going on in the world politically."

So, while conflicts abroad are at the top of most political agendas, the people who pack their bags and head away, even for a short time, are finding that the thirst for adventure is still alive and that Islamic countries might just offer the cultural quench that is changing adventure travel today.

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