

My time in Morocco was an amazing mix of linguistic and cultural immersion, made possible by Pembroke College's Alan Jones grant. I started my trip in Rabat, where I took private language lessons in Arabic, working specifically on advanced literary translation from English to Arabic. This focus helped me understand how to translate idiomatically into Arabic, as a language with such a profound and diverse literary heritage spanning thousands of years.

Throughout my stay, I lived with host families who spoke French, Moroccan Arabic, and Modern Standard Arabic, which meant I was constantly practicing both languages I study and two variations of Arabic. I grew particularly close to my host mother, who often called me *ma fille* (my daughter) and who taught me how to make a different traditional Moroccan dish each night. Having spent my year abroad in Jordan, The West Bank, Lebanon, and Egypt, it was great to be back in a country which places so much value on family interaction.

After my time in Rabat, I took the train to Marrakech, a city that lives up to its vibrant reputation (walking through the alleyways alongside donkeys and mopeds was a formative experience.) I arrived just in time for Eid al-Arash (عيد العرش), the anniversary of the King's accession to the throne, which gave me insight into Morocco's cultural and political atmosphere as a monarchy. Watching the celebrations and talking with locals helped me better understand the role of tradition and the monarchy in everyday Moroccan life.

From Marrakech, I drove out to the Agafay Desert and the Ouzoud Waterfalls. The desert and the waterfalls' natural beauty made for some of the most memorable moments of the trip—each place had its own charm and gave me a chance to see Morocco's incredibly varied scenery.

This trip was an unforgettable experience that allowed me to practice my language skills in real-life contexts, connect deeply with Moroccan culture, and make lasting memories. I'm very grateful to Pembroke College for making this possible.

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