

UCLA alum

Eclipse Over Antiquity: Tunisia

JULY 26–AUGUST 4, 2027

FEATURING PROFESSOR

Amy Mainzer

Department of Earth, Planetary,
and Space Sciences

A JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY.
A MOMENT IN TIME.

📍 **SFAX, TUNISIA**

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THE 2027 TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE



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Dear UCLA Alumni and Friends,

Join UCLA Alumni Travel for an unforgettable journey to Tunisia, where ancient civilizations, vibrant culture, and dramatic landscapes set the stage for one of nature's most extraordinary events - a total solar eclipse.

We begin in Tunis, exploring the remarkable Roman mosaics of the Bardo Museum and the storied ruins of Carthage, once a great Mediterranean power. Wander the UNESCO-listed Medina and take in the striking blue-and-white village of Sidi Bou Said overlooking the sea. Traveling inland, discover Tunisia's archaeological treasures, from the underground Roman villas of Bulla Regia to the breathtaking hilltop city of Dougga, among the best-preserved sites in North Africa. In Kairouan, one of Islam's holiest cities, explore grand mosques, historic homes, and a rich living tradition.

Our journey culminates in Sfax, ideally located in the path of totality for the August 2, 2027 solar eclipse. Here, for five unforgettable minutes, daylight will give way to twilight as the moon fully obscures the sun - an awe-inspiring and rare experience.

Enhancing and accompanying the program will be **Professor Amy Mainzer**, from the department of planetary science at UCLA where her research interests include the orbital and physical properties of asteroids and comets, in particular those that come close to the Earth. She will provide insight into the science and significance of solar eclipses through lectures and informal discussions.

We hope you will join us for this remarkable exploration of Tunisia - where history, culture, and a rare celestial event come together in a truly unforgettable way.



Christel Aragon, Director, Alumni Travel

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Eclipse Over Antiquity: Tunisia - 2027 Eclipse Journey

JULY 26, MONDAY

Depart the USA.

JULY 27, TUESDAY. ARRIVE TUNIS

Arrive in Tunis and transfer to our centrally located hotel located along Avenue Jean Jaurès, within walking distance of Habib Bourguiba Avenue and the edge of the Medina. Enjoy a welcome reception and dinner at the hotel.

Radisson Hotel Tunis City Center. R, D

JULY 28, WEDNESDAY. TUNIS

After breakfast, drive to the **Bardo Museum**, one of the most important museums in North Africa. Housed in a former 15th-century palace, it is best known for its extraordinary collection of Roman mosaics, considered among the richest in the world. These mosaics were discovered in villas, bathhouses, and temples across Tunisia, particularly from ancient cities like Carthage, Dougga, and El Jem. The works cover entire walls and floors, depicting mythological scenes, daily life, hunting expeditions, and marine creatures in astonishing detail.

Depart the Bardo and drive about thirty minutes to Carthage for lunch at the **Hotel Villa Didon**.

After lunch explore **Carthage**. Once a great maritime power, Carthage was founded by the Phoenicians around the 9th century BCE on the coast near present-day Tunis. It grew into the center of a vast trading empire that stretched across the western Mediterranean. The city is most famous for its rivalry with Rome, culminating in the Punic Wars and the legendary figure of Hannibal. After its destruction in 146 BCE, Carthage was rebuilt by the Romans and became one of the wealthiest cities of the empire. The site is a UNESCO World Heritage location, reflecting its enduring significance in Mediterranean history.

A short distance away is an **American Cemetery**, the final resting place for over 2,800 U.S. service members who died in North Africa during World War II. Established in 1948 and maintained by the American Battle Monuments Commission, it honors those who fell in campaigns across Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco.



Drive to **Sidi Bou Said**, a picturesque hilltop village overlooking the Mediterranean, known for its whitewashed houses accented with vivid blue doors, windows, and wrought-iron balconies. From the cliffside, enjoy sweeping views of the Bay of Tunis and the ancient ruins of Carthage.

Enjoy dinner at **Au Bon Vieux Temp**.

Return to Tunis after dinner. **B, L, D**

JULY 29, THURSDAY. TUNIS

After breakfast, depart the hotel and drive a short distance to the **Medina of Tunis**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the best-preserved historic city centers in the Arab world. Founded in the 7th century, it grew into a thriving hub of commerce, learning, and craftsmanship under successive dynasties. Its narrow alleys wind through a maze of souks where traders sell textiles, spices, jewelry, and traditional crafts. The area is also home to important monuments, including the Zitouna Mosque, madrasas, palaces, and mausoleums that reflect centuries of Islamic architecture.

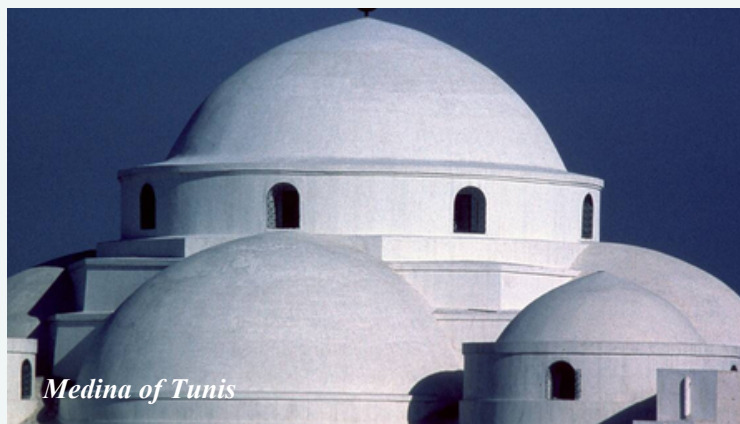
Enjoy lunch at **Fondouk El Attarine**, a historic fondouk in the Medina of Tunis, located in Souk El Attarine. Originally, under the Hafsids dynasty, it served as a storage and lodging place for perfumers, their goods, and travelers coming into the city.



This afternoon, visit the **Palais de Ksar Saïd** - a palace of the Beys, usually used for receptions. The rule of the Beys began in 1705, when **Hussein ibn Ali** established the dynasty. Officially, Tunisia belonged to the Ottoman Empire in 1705, but it was so far from the center of power that the Beys ruled almost independently while still acknowledging Ottoman suzerainty. In 1881 the French imposed the Treaty of Bardo, establishing a protectorate and effectively ending Ottoman authority in Tunisia. The French chose to keep the Beys as head of state in name, but France controlled foreign relations, defense, and finances, basically stripping them of any real power. The French system created a dual façade: Tunisia was still a “monarchy” under the Bey, but effectively a colony under French administration. When Tunisia gained independence in 1956, the last Bey, Muhammad VIII al-Amin, was briefly declared “King of Tunisia.” In 1957, Habib Bourguiba abolished the monarchy, ending the Beylical dynasty after more than 250 years.

Today the **Palais de Ksar Saïd** is a lavish 19th-century residence, blending Moorish arches, Italian marble, and gilded salons into a vision of grandeur. Its vast halls are adorned with crystal chandeliers, ornate stucco, and richly carved wood ceilings. Graceful balconies and airy courtyards open onto gardens that once hosted royal receptions.

Return to the hotel for an evening at leisure. **B, L**



JULY 30, FRIDAY. TUNIS

Depart the hotel and drive for just over an hour to visit the **Réserve Ben Ismail**, a family-run olive estate set amid Roman-era landscapes and well-known for premium, estate-bottled extra-virgin oils. The property encompasses about 50 hectares with roughly 5,000 olive trees.

Enjoy an opportunity to taste some of their oil as well as their locally produced goat cheese.

From here drive just under an hour to **Bulla Regia**, best known for its unique two-story Roman villas, with cool subterranean living floors designed for the summer heat. The site also preserves a theater, baths, streets, and temples that show the city’s evolution from Numidian town to prosperous Roman colonia.

Continue on about an hour to **Dougga**, a remarkably preserved Roman–Berber city set on a hill amid olive groves in northwestern Tunisia.

Enjoy lunch with a view at **Dar Ejoud Dougga**.

After lunch, begin exploring this site which has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1997. It reflects the fusion of Numidian, Punic, and Roman traditions in its street plan and monuments. The well-preserved temple was built in 166–167 CE and dominates the city's forum from a raised platform. The site is crowned by a magnificent Capitol, a temple dedicated to the "Capitoline Triad": the three most important Roman deities, Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva.

Drive just over two hours to **Kairouan** and the **Hotel Kasbah**, arriving early evening. Located inside the old city of Kairouan, this traditional 3-star property with its stone arcades, carved doors, and restored historic wings blends into the Arab-Islamic architecture of this “holy city.”

Enjoy dinner at the hotel this evening. **B, L, D**



JULY 31, SATURDAY. KAIROUAN

Spend the day exploring **Kairouan**, an important religious center considered the fourth holiest site in Islam after Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem.

Arrive at the **Great Mosque** which is among the oldest and most influential Islamic monuments in North Africa. Founded in the 7th century and substantially rebuilt by the Aghlabids in the 9th century, its fortified enclosure frames a broad sunlit courtyard and a prayer hall set on hundreds of reused Roman and Byzantine columns. The powerful, square, three-tiered minaret - one of the earliest surviving - anchors the skyline and signals the mosque's civic importance.

Continue by foot, walking along tiny, twisting streets making stops as we go. Close by is **Palais Harran**, a restored, centuries-old mansion in the heart of Kairouan's medina which is now a guesthouse reflecting Kairouan's layered architectural history.

Stop at the **Mosque of the Three Doors** which is closed to visitors but has an impressive carved facade with three-pointed horseshoe arches.

Walk inside **Bir Barouta**, a small, domed chamber in the medina where a camel walks in slow circles to power a traditional water wheel (saqiya) drawing water from an old well. Steeped in local tradition, this historic well offers a fascinating insight into how water was lifted across North Africa for centuries.

After lunch at **Dar Zarrouk**, drive to the religious complex of **Zaouia Sidi Sahab**, a lavishly tiled 17th-century complex comprised of a mosque, madrassa (school for study of the Quran) and mausoleum.

Non-Muslims are permitted inside the courtyard but not permitted inside the mosque

End the day at the **Aghlabid Pools**, built to hold water carried more than 20 miles. In semi-arid Kairouan, water scarcity was solved by the Aghlabid Basins, a remarkable work of medieval engineering.

Return to the hotel for some free time.

Dinner this evening has been arranged at the **Brija Restaurant**, a local restaurant close to the hotel. **B, L, D**



AUGUST 1, SUNDAY. SFAX

This morning drive just under an hour and a half to **El Djem**, once the center of a major Roman city - ancient **Thysdrus**.

Our first stop will be at the **El Djem Archaeology Museum** which anchors the story of ancient Thysdrus beyond its famous amphitheater. A true hidden gem, the museum showcases exquisite floor mosaics, reflecting the wealth of villa culture and North Africa's unique mosaic artistry.

The museum itself is laid out like a Roman domus and sits beside the **House of Africa**, an AD 170 Roman villa from the heart of El Djem that was excavated in the 1990s and transferred here for display.

From here, drive a short distance to the amphitheater of **El Djem**, another UNESCO site. Considered the largest amphitheater in Africa, it is freestanding, much like the one in Rome. Its oval tiers once seated tens of thousands for gladiatorial shows and hunts, and it is still possible to walk through the stepped cavea, vaulted galleries, and the underground hypogeum where animals and performers waited.

After lunch at Restaurant **Afe les Mires**, walk back to the bus passing some workshops where local artists continue the mosaic traditions.

Drive about an hour to the town of **Sfax** for an orientation tour of Tunisia's second-largest city. Its 9th-century medina is among the country's most intact walled old towns.

Tonight's hotel is Radisson Sfax. B, L, D



AUGUST 2, MONDAY. SFAX

On August 2, 2027, Sfax will lie directly within the path of a total solar eclipse, offering several minutes of complete totality—among the longest durations visible on land anywhere along the eclipse track. With its flat coastal setting and typically clear summer skies, Sfax provides one of the premier locations from which to witness this rare celestial event.

After an early breakfast, head to our viewing spot in Sfax, where the eclipse begins around 8:56am as the Moon slowly covers the Sun. Totality, the rare moment when the Sun is fully obscured, occurs at approximately 10:11am and lasts an extraordinary 5 minutes and 40 seconds, as daylight softens and the Sun's luminous corona appears. The spectacle gradually fades as the Sun re-emerges, with the final partial phase ending around 11:31am.

Enjoy a local lunch at our viewing spot.

This afternoon enjoy a walking tour of the **Medina of Sfax**. Entering through the stone gates, the route follows narrow, functional streets laid out during the Aghlabid period, where workshops, mosques, and homes were designed for daily life rather than display. The souks are still working spaces operating much as they have for generations. We will stop to admire the exterior of the Great Mosque and stretches of the intact city walls, which give a sense of Sfax's role as a fortified commercial center.

Dinner is at a local restaurant this evening. **B, L, D**



Sfax Skyline



Mahdia

AUGUST 3, TUESDAY. TUNIS

Return to Tunis today stopping at **Mahdia**, a graceful seaside town on Tunisia's eastern coast. Set on a narrow peninsula reaching into the Mediterranean, the town is known for its whitewashed medina, old fishing harbor, and relaxed maritime character.

Enjoy lunch with a chance to stroll through the compact historic center or explore the old ramparts and the impressive Skifa el Kahla gate.

Continue on to Tunis and the **Residence Hotel at Gammarth**.

Farewell dinner this evening. **B, L, D**

AUGUST 4, WEDNESDAY. RETURN HOME

Return flights home. **B**

TOUR LECTURER

Professor Amy Mainzer

Department of Earth, Planetary, and Space Sciences

Amy Mainzer is a professor of planetary science at UCLA where her research interests include the orbital and physical properties of asteroids and comets, in particular those that come close to the Earth. She builds and uses space telescopes to detect and discover near-Earth objects. Prior to coming to UCLA, she was a professor at the University of Arizona and a scientist at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory. Mainzer was the host and science advisor for the PBS Kids TV series "Ready Jet Go!", which taught space and Earth science to children ages 3-8, and has served as science advisor for the Netflix film "Don't Look Up", History Channel's "The Universe" series, among others. Asteroid 234750 Amymainzer is named after her.



Accommodations for the Eclipse Journey



Tunis - Radisson Hotel Tunis City Center



Sfax- Radisson Hotel Sfax



Kairouan - Hotel Kasbah



Tunis - Residence Hotel at Gammarth

Pricing:

Tour Price: \$8,295 per person, double occupancy

Single Supplement: \$1,760 (Limited availability)

Terms, Conditions, and Inclusions:

Reservations and Payments:

Reservations for this tour require a deposit of \$750 per person and an application form signed by the participant. The deposit can be put on a credit card. Final payment is due January 23, 2027, and must be paid by check or wire transfer.

Tour Price Includes:

Hotel Accommodations: Accommodations in hotels as outlined in the itinerary based on double occupancy. There are a very limited number of single rooms.

Meals: American breakfast (B), lunches (L) and dinners (D) are included as specified in the itinerary.

All Land Travel Listed: Including transportation in air-conditioned motor coaches, the services of Distant Horizons tour managers, special activities, an educational program of lectures as quoted in the itinerary, all entrance fees and basic gratuities to all local guides, tour managers, and drivers. Arrival and departure transfers.

Tour cost is based on rates of currency exchange at time of printing (June 2026) and is subject to change with or without previous notice.

Tour Price Does Not Include:

International air to/from Tunisia, any meals not listed in the program, trip insurance - which we recommend you seriously consider purchasing to protect your trip investment and any item not listed.

Please note that viewing the Eclipse is weather dependent and not guaranteed.

Cancellations:

Distant Horizons and the UCLA Alumni Association reserve the right to cancel the tour prior to departure for any reason. If a participant cancels, the following refunds will be available upon written notice of cancellation to Distant Horizons:

Cancellations received from June 1, 2026 to Jan. 22, 2027 will incur a \$500 cancellation fee. There will be no refunds for cancellations received on or after January 23, 2027.

Responsibility:

The liability of the UCLA Alumni Association as sponsor, and Distant Horizons as tour operator, is strictly limited. Distant Horizons and the UCLA Alumni Association act only in the capacity of agents for the hotels, airlines, bus companies, railroads, ship lines or owners or contractors providing accommodations, transportation or other services. As a result, all coupons, receipts or tickets are issued subject to the terms and conditions specified by the supplier. By acceptance of tour membership, the participant agrees that neither Distant Horizons nor UCLA Alumni Association nor any of their subsidiaries shall become liable or responsible for personal injury, damage to persons or property, loss, delay or irregularity caused by persons not controlled by it, such as (without limitation) airlines, bus and shipping companies, suppliers of accommodations or other services, or resulting from any acts of God, defects in vehicles, strikes, wars, whether declared or otherwise, civil disturbances, medical or customs regulations, acts of terrorism, epidemics or government restrictions. Distant Horizons and UCLA Alumni Association cannot be held responsible for unfavorable weather or closure of access routes due to bad weather conditions. Distant Horizons and UCLA Alumni Association cannot be held responsible if the tour lecturer or leader cancels, and passengers will be advised of a comparable replacement should time permit. Distant Horizons and UCLA Alumni Association are not responsible for any additional expenses or liability sustained or incurred by the participant as a result of the above-mentioned causes.

Assumption of Risk:

Participation in this elective trip carries with it certain inherent risks that cannot be eliminated regardless of the care taken to avoid injury.

Indemnification and Hold Harmless:

Travelers also agree to indemnify and hold the UCLA Alumni Association and Distant Horizons harmless from any and all claims, actions, suits, procedures, costs, expenses, damages and liabilities, including attorney's fees, arising out of his/her involvement in this activity, and to reimburse it for any such expenses incurred.

Tour participant acknowledges receipt of a copy of these terms and conditions and signifies acceptance of, and consents to, all of the terms and conditions set forth herein, on behalf of any participants they may act for and for themselves when registering for, or making payments on, this tour.

Distant Horizons is a California Seller of Travel (CST #2046776-40) and a participant in the California Travel Restitution Fund. Information regarding the rights of California residents to make a claim may be found at tccinfo.org. California law requires certain sellers of travel to have a trust account or bond. This business has a trust account.

Please complete this reservation form and submit it to our office.

Fax: 310-209-4271 | Email: travel@alumni.ucla.edu

Once this request has been received in our office, a Distant Horizons Sales Manager will be in touch to finalize your reservation and deposit. Your reservation is not confirmed until your \$750 per person deposit is paid and processed.

Name (exactly as it appears on passport)

1) _____
Title First Middle Last

Date of birth Email Name you would like on your name badge

2) _____
Title First Middle Last

Date of birth Email Name you would like on your name badge

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Home Phone (_____) _____ Cell Phone (_____) _____

Sharing with _____ Name (Reservation request sent separately) _____

Room Arrangements

☐ I would like to share a room with _____

☐ I would like to request a single room at an additional \$1,760 (pending availability)

UCLA Alumni Travel is an advantage reserved for UCLA Alumni Association sustaining donors. Sustaining donors include Gold and Life members as well as anyone who has made a qualifying donation of \$100 or more to the UCLA Alumni Association Support Fund in the past year.

Reservation Deposit: a credit card or check deposit of **\$750** is required for each participant.

Please note that all credit card information will be taken over the phone and all checks must be payable to **Distant Horizons Inc.** and mailed to **350 Elm Avenue, Long Beach, CA 90802.**

**Reservations are subject to availability and processed on a first come, first served basis.*

Reservations to be paid in full by January 23, 2027. **Final payments must be made by check only.*

I/We have read the tour conditions and responsibility clause and agree to all therein (all participants must sign).

Name _____ Signature _____ Date: _____

Name _____ Signature _____ Date: _____