



Spring 2026
American River College

4700 College Oak Drive
Sacramento, CA 95841
(916) 484-8011

The Parrot

ISSUE # 206
Spring 2026



Your ARC newsletter by and for ESL, multicultural, international students, Californians, and, well, anybody really...

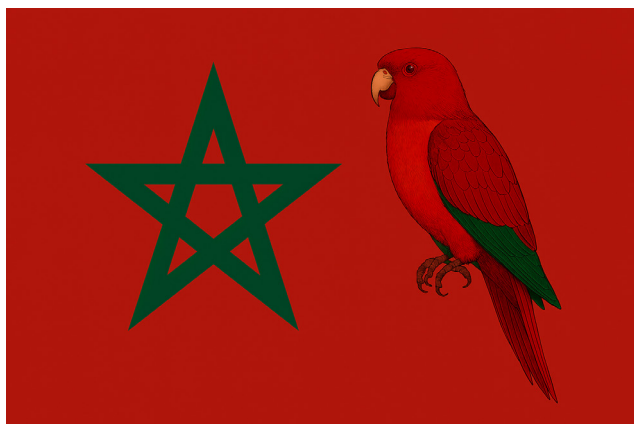
Family is the heart of Moroccan society. Growing up in Morocco taught me that family bonds are sacred and full of warmth. Every celebration, meal, and even simple moment at home carries meaning. In a Moroccan family, you never feel alone; there is always someone to talk to, someone to share food with, and someone to help when you face difficulties. The values of love, respect, and hospitality are learned at home long before school begins. These family traditions shape who we are as Moroccans and how we treat one another in daily life...

Read more on page 5



Disclaimer:

The articles in this special issue are based on a combination of Internet resources and the personal perspective of an individual originally from Morocco. It reflects one person's viewpoint and experience. Please understand that cultural interpretations may vary, and this content is not intended to offend or disturb anyone. Thank you for respecting this personal expression.



Would you like to contribute to *The Parrot*? Page 12

Inside This Issue

City Life
Page 3

Knowledge
Investment
Page 4

The Fabric of
Life
Page 6

Cloud Villages
Page 9

Snail Soup!?
Page 11

Wedding Week
Page 13

Amazigh New Year: Yennayer



Among Morocco's many beautiful traditions, Yennayer, the Amazigh New Year, holds a special place in my heart. It usually falls on January 12 or 13 and marks both the start of the agricultural year and the deep connection between people and the land. In 2026, Amazigh (who are the indigenous people across North Africa) are celebrating the year 2975, according to the Amazigh calendar, which began nearly three thousand years ago. Yennayer is not just a date; it is a symbol of identity, continuity, and gratitude for life's blessings.

My family begins preparing for Yennayer with great excitement. A few days before the celebration, my mother cleans the house carefully and decorates the living room with fresh fabrics and flowers. My father brings home vegetables, grains, and fruits from the market. On the evening of Yennayer, everyone wears clean or new clothes, and the aroma of traditional food fills the house. The most famous dish is couscous with seven vegetables, which symbolizes abundance and prosperity. Each vegetable represents good fortune, such as health, happiness, and success. Some families also prepare tagine with dried fruits, almonds, and honey to bring sweetness into the new year.

As a child, I remember sitting close to the fire while my mother told us stories about our Amazigh ancestors. ("Amazigh" means "free people"). She spoke about their bravery, their respect for nature, and how they lived in harmony with the earth. My grandmother used to take a handful of grains and throw them outside the door while saying prayers

for peace and a good harvest. That moment always felt magical, as if she was speaking directly to the spirits of our ancestors and the soul of the land itself.

In different parts of Morocco, Yennayer is celebrated in unique ways. In the Atlas Mountains, people dance in circles, beating drums and singing Amazigh songs that echo through the valleys. In some villages, people wear traditional clothes and exchange greetings in Tamazight, (the language or at times one of the dialects used by the Amazigh people formerly referred to as "Berber") wishing each other health and prosperity for the new year. Children often receive small gifts, nuts, or sweets, while families visit one another to share laughter and warm wishes. These joyful gatherings strengthen community bonds and remind everyone that we belong to a culture rich in history and pride.

Yennayer 2975 is more than a holiday; it is a living celebration of Morocco's cultural diversity and the endurance of Amazigh traditions. It connects generations through stories, songs, and shared meals. Every year, when I celebrate Yennayer, I feel a deep sense of renewal, gratitude, and belonging. This special day reminds me that the strength of the Amazigh people lies in their harmony with nature, their love for family, and their respect for the past. As we welcome each new Amazigh year, we also renew our promise to keep these traditions alive for the generations to come.

Life in a Moroccan Medina vs. Modern City Life

Culture

Most Americans have heard of the cities of Mecca and Medina in Saudi Arabia, Mecca being the holiest place and Medina the second holiest place in Islam. Beyond that, many Americans may not realize that as an Arabic word, medina simply means city or town. In Morocco, however, “a medina” is a term that refers to the “the historic, walled old quarter of a city, characterized by a maze of narrow, winding alleyways filled with traditional houses, souks (markets), mosques, fountains, and artisan workshops, often car-free and feeling like a journey back in time” ([The Best Medinas in Morocco](#)).

Fez is one of the oldest cities in Morocco. It has a famous old Medina and a modern new city. I lived in the old Medina of Fez for many years before I moved to the new city. Because of this experience, I can clearly see the differences between life in the Medina and life in the modern city.

Life in the old Medina is very traditional and simple. The streets are narrow and small, and cars cannot enter most areas. People walk everywhere



or use donkeys to carry goods. The houses are old, but they have beautiful designs and quiet inner courtyards. Neighbors know each other very well, and people often greet one another. In the Medina, life

feels slow and calm, but sometimes it is also difficult. For example, it is hard to carry heavy items, and access to modern services like parking and hospitals is limited.

In contrast, life in the modern city is faster and more comfortable. The streets are wide, and cars, buses, and taxis are everywhere. Buildings are newer, and apartments have modern facilities. In the new city, it is easier to find supermarkets, schools, hospitals, and offices. Daily life is more convenient, especially for work and transportation. However, people are often busy, and neighbors do not communicate as much as in the Medina.

From my personal experience, both places have advantages and disadvantages. The old Medina offers a strong sense of community, tradition, and history. The modern city provides comfort, speed, and better services. After moving to the new city, my life became easier in many ways, but I sometimes miss the peaceful atmosphere and close relationships of the Medina.

In conclusion, life in the old Medina of Fez is very different from modern city life. Living in both places helped me understand the value of tradition as well as the importance of modern comfort. Each lifestyle has its own beauty, and together they show the rich diversity of life in Fez.



Moroccan School Day

Daily Life

My school days in Morocco were full of discipline, curiosity, and friendship. Although I didn't realize it at the time, those early years shaped my way of thinking, learning, and working with others. Moroccan schools are not just places to study; they are small communities where we build friendships, learn respect, and prepare for the future. Let me take you on a short journey through a typical school day in Morocco, the kind of day that taught me the importance of education and effort.

The school day usually starts early, around eight in the morning. Before entering the classrooms, students gather in the schoolyard to line up for the national anthem. Standing in rows under the morning sun, we sing with pride as the Moroccan flag waves above us. This ceremony reminds us that education is not only personal, it's also a duty to our country. After the anthem, the teachers lead us to our classrooms, where the serious part of the day begins.

Students wear clean uniforms, usually blue or white, depending on the school. Teachers are respected figures in Moroccan society, and they expect discipline, punctuality, and politeness. We raise our hands to speak, and if someone misbehaves, the teacher gives a warning or extra homework. Our subjects include Arabic, French, mathematics, Islamic studies, history, geography, and sometimes English or Amazigh (a language group formerly referred to as "Berber"). I always loved Arabic because I enjoyed writing essays and reading stories. French, however, was more challenging, but it opened the door to understanding another culture.

Each teacher had their own style. Some were very strict and serious, while others were kind and liked to joke with students. One of my favorite teachers was my math teacher in middle school. He had a calm but confident way of explaining difficult problems. Instead of making us afraid of numbers, he helped us see the logic and beauty behind them. He

My father reminded me that knowledge is the best investment.

always said, "Mathematics is like a puzzle; if you focus, you can find the missing piece." His lessons taught me patience and problem-solving, and they planted the first seeds of my love for analytical thinking.

The school break, or "recess," was everyone's favorite time. As soon as the bell rang, students rushed outside to the small shop next to the gate to buy sandwiches, chips, or sweet cakes. The air was full of laughter, conversations, and the smell of fresh bread. Some students played soccer in the yard, while others sat on benches sharing snacks and stories. These moments of friendship were as important as the lessons themselves because they built a sense of teamwork and joy.

After classes ended around 5:00 p.m., I usually walked home with friends, talking about homework

or weekend plans. At home, my parents always asked about my day. My mother helped me review lessons, while my father reminded me that knowledge is the best investment. Sometimes I attended extra evening lessons to prepare for exams, which taught me time management and responsibility.

Looking back, I am truly grateful for my Moroccan education. It gave me strong language skills, curiosity, and a deep respect for teachers and learning. My school was not luxurious, but it was full of life and motivation. Today, whenever I see children walking to school with their backpacks and uniforms, I feel both pride and nostalgia. Those mornings, filled with sunshine, discipline, and laughter, built the foundation of who I am today, a person who believes in learning as a lifelong journey.

Moroccan Family Life

Family is the heart of Moroccan society. Growing up in Morocco taught me that family bonds are sacred and full of warmth. Every celebration, meal, and even simple moment at home carries meaning. In a Moroccan family, you never feel alone; there is always someone to talk to, someone to share food with, and someone to help when you face difficulties. The values of love, respect, and hospitality are learned at home long before school begins. These family traditions shape who we are as Moroccans and how we treat one another in daily life.

In Moroccan families, people stay closely connected throughout their lives. It is very common for children to live near their parents, even after they get married, so that they can visit and support them easily. Parents play a central role in the household, and their opinions are deeply respected. The connection between generations is strong, and grandparents often live with the family, helping to raise the children and share wisdom from their own experiences. When an elder speaks, everyone listens attentively; that is part of our culture of respect.

Fridays hold a special place in Moroccan life because it is the day of communal prayer and couscous. After the Friday prayer, families gather around a large round dish filled with steaming couscous, tender vegetables, and pieces of meat or chicken. The meal is shared from one big plate, symbolizing unity and equality. Each person eats from their side of the dish using a spoon or their right hand, and

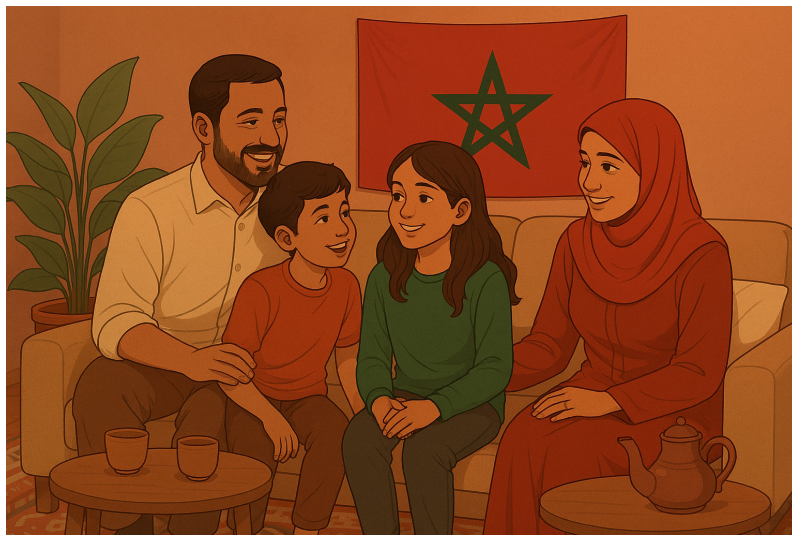
the oldest member often invites everyone to begin with a blessing. During this meal, people share stories about their week, discuss news, and laugh together. It is not only a tradition, it is a spiritual and emotional reunion that strengthens family bonds every week.

Holidays are another time when Moroccan families truly shine. During Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha, families visit one another, exchange gifts, and share special dishes. In Eid al-Adha, for example, the men sacrifice a sheep as part of the religious celebration, while women

prepare delicious meals using the meat. Neighbors exchange portions of meat and sweets, and children run happily from house to house wearing new clothes. It's a time of forgiveness, generosity, and togetherness. Weddings and births also bring families and neighbors together, filling homes with music, dancing,

and joy that often lasts late into the night.

My childhood memories are full of these family moments. I still remember evenings when everyone sat together drinking mint tea and watching TV or soccer games. The smell of fresh bread baking in the oven and the sound of my mother preparing tea with her silver teapot made the house feel alive. My father would tell stories or give advice, and my siblings and I would listen while eating homemade cookies. Even simple actions, like helping my mother wash dishes or my father fix something in the yard, taught me the value of cooperation and care. In Moroccan culture, children learn early that family is not just the people who live with you but



also your cousins, uncles, aunts, and even your close neighbors, who often feel like extended family.

In modern Morocco, family life is slowly changing, especially in big cities where people move for work or study. However, the core values remain the same. Even when young people live far from their hometowns, they call their parents every day or visit them during holidays. Technology like WhatsApp and video calls helps families stay connected despite distance. For Moroccans living abroad, family gatherings during vacations are moments of deep emotion because they bring back childhood memories and strengthen their cultural identity.

Family time in Morocco is not only about tradition, it is about love, unity, and gratitude. It teaches us to share, to forgive, and to stay humble no matter where life takes us. Wherever I live, I carry that sense of belonging with me. When I sit with my own family or prepare tea for guests, I feel the spirit of Moroccan hospitality and affection. Family gives me strength and reminds me of who I am, a person shaped by warmth, respect, and the beautiful values of Moroccan life.

Traditional Clothes

The Fabric of Life

Traditional Moroccan Clothing: Djellaba, Kaftan, and Amazigh Outfits

When I think about traditional Moroccan clothing, I don't just think about fabric, colors, or designs. I think about moments, family celebrations, old memories, and the feeling of pride that comes from wearing something connected to our history. Three outfits that always stand out to me are the djellaba, the kaftan, and Amazigh traditional clothing. Each one carries a special meaning for Moroccan people, and each one is worn at different times in life.

Djellaba: Everyday Comfort with Cultural Pride

The djellaba is probably the most familiar traditional outfit in Morocco. When I see someone wearing a djellaba, I immediately think of comfort, modesty, and everyday life. Men and women both wear djellabas, but the styles are different. Men's djellabas are usually simple, often in neutral colors like brown, gray, or white. Women's djellabas come in brighter colors with beautiful embroidery.

For me, the djellaba represents daily culture.

People wear it when they go to the market, visit family, or walk to the mosque. In winter, the djellaba feels warm and protective with its hood. In summer, lighter fabrics make it cool and easy to move in. Whenever I see a djellaba, I feel a sense of home; it is the clothing of ordinary days, simple moments, and quiet traditions.

Kaftan: The Royal Beauty of Celebrations

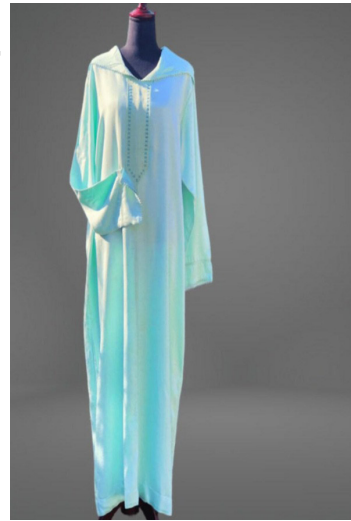
The kaftan is completely different. When I think of a kaftan, I think of beauty, celebration, and elegance. The kaftan is mainly worn by women, especially during weddings, engagement parties, religious holidays, and big family events. It usually comes with rich fabrics like silk or velvet and is decorated with embroidery, beads, or shiny stones. Sometimes the kaftan feels like art more than clothing.

When a woman wears a kaftan, she looks proud and confident. The style shows the beauty of Moroccan craftsmanship, especially the hand-made embroidery known as "tarz." The kaftan represents more than fashion; it represents honor, joy, and

Djellaba for men



Djellaba for women



Kaftan



Amazigh Outfits



special moments. I always feel that the kaftan carries the message: "This is a big day. Celebrate it with your heart."

Amazigh Outfits: Identity, Strength, and Heritage

Amazigh (Berber) traditional clothing has its own powerful meaning. When I see an Amazigh outfit, I immediately think of identity, resistance, and ancient history. These clothes usually include bright colors, bold patterns, and sometimes silver jewelry with symbolic shapes. The designs are not random; they carry Amazigh symbols that speak about protection, nature, and community.

Amazigh outfits are often worn during cultural festivals, weddings, and Amazigh New Year (Yennayer). They remind me of mountains, villages,

and strong traditions passed from generation to generation. For me, Amazigh clothing feels like the voice of our ancestors. It says: "Don't forget where you come from."

When I look at the djellaba, kaftan, and Amazigh outfits, I realize that Moroccan clothing is not only about style. It is about storytelling. Each piece carries memories, meanings, and emotions.

Together, they show the diversity of Moroccan culture. When I see people wearing these outfits, whether on a normal day or a big celebration, I feel proud. I feel connected to my roots. And I understand once again that clothing can be more than fabric: it can be a piece of who we are.

The Art of Moroccan Pottery and Ceramics: Fez vs. Safi

Traditional Arts

Morocco is famous for its beautiful pottery and ceramics. In many Moroccan homes, you can find colorful plates, bowls, tagines, and tiles decorated with flowers, stars, and geometric shapes. Two of the most important cities for pottery are Fez and Safi. Both cities have long traditions, but their styles, colors, and techniques are different. In this essay, we will compare pottery from Fez and Safi and see how each city expresses Moroccan culture in its own way.

Every time I see Moroccan pottery, I feel a deep connection to my culture and childhood. The colors, the designs, the shapes, they are more than just art. They are memories. When I recently compared pottery from Fez and Safi, I felt two very different emotions, and both surprised me in their own ways.

Fez Pottery

The pottery from Fez always catches my attention first. When I see a piece from Fez, the blue and white colors immediately calm me. The designs are so delicate and detailed that I find myself staring at them for a long time. I usually turn the plate slowly in my hands, trying to follow every line, every geometric shape. Sometimes I wonder how many hours the artisan spent painting those tiny patterns.

There is something almost spiritual about Fez pottery. The style feels clean, traditional, and connected to old Moroccan history. It reminds me of mosques, old houses, fountains, and the quiet streets



of the medina. When I look at Fez ceramics, I feel respect. It is like the art is telling me: "Slow down and look closely."

Safi Pottery

But my reaction to Safi pottery is completely different. When I see a piece from Safi, I don't feel calm; I feel happy, almost excited. Safi pottery is full of bright colors: yellow, green, red, turquoise, and orange. It feels warm, like sunlight. When I pick up a Safi bowl or tagine, I imagine my family cooking, laughing, and gathering around the table.



Safi pottery feels more alive to me. The designs are often less strict and more natural: flowers, leaves, waves, birds. The colors make me think of the Atlantic coast, the smell of clay, and the busy workshops where artisans work with fire and glaze. When I see Safi ceramics, I feel energy and movement.

Sometimes I prefer the peaceful beauty of Fez, especially when I want something artistic and classic. Other times, I prefer the bright colors of Safi because they remind me of home, family, and daily Moroccan life.

In the end, both types of pottery make me proud. They show the creativity of Moroccan people and the strong traditions that still survive today. When I see pottery from Fez and Safi together, I feel like I am looking at two sides of Moroccan identity: the side that honors tradition and the side that celebrates life and color.

For me, this art is not just something to look at. It is something to feel, something that tells stories, keeps memories alive, and reminds me where I come from.

The Atlas Mountains: Villages in the Clouds



When I was a child growing up in Morocco, I used to hear stories about the Atlas Mountains, high, quiet places where people live close to the sky. Later, when I visited, I understood why people call them “villages in the clouds.” Sometimes you look down and see clouds moving below your feet! It feels like walking inside a dream.

The people who live there are mostly Amazigh, also known as Berbers. They are strong, kind, and independent people who have lived in the mountains for thousands of years. Their villages look like part of the earth itself, houses made of clay, stone, and straw, built right into the hills. From far away, you can't tell where the mountain ends and the house begins! I once joked to a friend, “If I lose my house key here, I'll never find it again, everything looks the same color!”

Life in the Atlas Mountains is not easy, but it's full of meaning. The people wake up early, work in their small farms and terraces, and live by the rhythm of nature. They grow barley, wheat, and vegetables, and they keep goats and sheep. The fields are green in spring and golden in summer, like nature changing its outfit. There are no big machines, just strong arms, patience, and teamwork.

I still remember sitting with a family in a small Amazigh village, drinking mint tea while watching the sunset behind the mountains. The



grandmother said, “We live close to the sky, but our hearts are closer to the earth.” I'll never forget that sentence. It explained everything about their way of life, simple, honest, and full of respect for nature.

The architecture of the villages is also amazing. The homes are built with thick walls that keep cool in the summer and warm in the winter. On the roofs, people dry fruits, herbs, and corn. Some houses even have small windows shaped like eyes, as if they're quietly watching over the valley. When you walk through those villages, you can hear the wind, the goats, and the laughter of children, no traffic, no noise, just peace.

Now that I live in the United States, I sometimes miss that silence. Here, everything moves fast: cars, lights, people. But in the Atlas Mountains, time moves slowly. You feel connected to the earth, the sky, and the people around you. When I think about it, I realize those mountain villages teach an important lesson: you don't need much to be rich, just nature, family, and a strong cup of tea.

The Amazigh people of the Atlas Mountains may live far from the big cities, but their hearts are full of culture and pride. They remind us that real strength doesn't come from muscles or money, it comes from living simply and staying close to your roots.

Street Food Adventures in Morocco

Snail Soup?!

If you ever visit Morocco, don't waste time looking for a fancy restaurant, just follow your nose! The real taste of Morocco is found in the streets, where food is sizzling, steaming, and shouting, "Come eat me!"

When I was living in Morocco, street food was a part of daily life. You could walk anywhere, in Fez, Casablanca, or Marrakech, and find delicious smells around every corner. My favorite "food adventure" always began with one strange but famous dish: snail soup.



Yes, you heard that right, snails! In Morocco, people call it *babbouche*. You can find it bubbling in big metal pots on every busy street. The smell is strong, the steam is hot, and the taste? Spicy, peppery, and surprisingly good! The first time I tried it, I hesitated. I thought, "Hmm, should I really eat something that used to crawl on my wall?" But once I tasted it, I couldn't stop. I even started fighting for the biggest snail in the bowl!

After warming up with snail soup, I always stopped by the man selling grilled corn. You can smell it before you see it, sweet, smoky, and perfectly simple. The vendor usually smiles and says, "You want salt?" and before you answer, he's already rubbing a



handful on it. I remember eating that hot corn while walking home, trying not to burn my fingers.

And of course, no Moroccan street food trip is complete without a sardine sandwich. Morocco has long coasts, and sardines are everywhere, cheap, fresh, and full of flavor. The seller fries them with a secret mix of spices (I'm sure it includes paprika, cumin, and a little magic). Then he puts them in bread with tomatoes, onions, and [harissa sauce](#), a spicy paste that can make your eyes water and your heart happy.

Every bite of Moroccan street food tells a story, a story of the sea, the mountains, and the people. It's not just about eating; it's about connection. You talk to the vendor, you laugh with strangers, you share a napkin with a new friend. That's the Moroccan way.

Now, I miss the smoke, the shouting, and that one snail that almost escaped from my spoon! Whenever I smell grilled food here, I close my eyes and imagine I'm back in Morocco, standing by the street, holding a piece of bread in one hand and a paper cup of snail soup in the other, smiling at life's simplest joys. Because in Morocco, food is not just food, it's an adventure full of flavor, laughter, and stories you can taste.

The Magic Hands of Morocco

Stories Behind the Crafts

I was born in Fez, one of Morocco's oldest and most artistic cities. Some people say Fez is like a living museum, but for me, it was just home! Everywhere I turned, I saw people working with their hands: weaving carpets, shaping clay, cutting leather, or hammering metal. It was noisy, colorful, and full of life, the best kind of art school for a curious child.

Moroccan handicrafts are famous around the world because they carry the heart of our history. The carpet weaving, for example, comes from Amazigh (Berber) villages in the Atlas Mountains. Women there spend weeks tying small knots to make bright, warm carpets that tell silent stories about love, nature, and family. When I was young, I thought they were just rugs. Later, I learned they were really *books made of wool*.

Then there's pottery, one of Morocco's oldest arts. In Fez, people use red clay from the nearby hills. They shape it, paint it by hand with blue and white designs, and then bake it in hot ovens. The result? Beautiful bowls, plates, and fountains that look like sunshine captured in stone. When I touched a pot fresh from the kiln, it almost felt alive, still breathing the heat of the earth.

Another special craft in Fez is metalwork. You can walk through the old medina and hear *ding-ding!* everywhere. The metalworkers create lamps, trays, and teapots from brass and copper. Each one shines differently because each is made by hand. No two

And of course, leather, the smell of the tanneries in Fez is something you never forget (and maybe never forgive!). But it's also where the most beautiful leather in the world is made. The craftsmen use natural colors from plants: yellow from saffron, red from poppy flowers, and brown from henna. My friends and I used to joke that you could smell the tanneries from space, but we also knew that smell meant *tradition was alive*.

Now I live in the United States, far from the sound of hammers and the smell of dye. Here, everything is fast and shiny, but sometimes, it feels too perfect. I miss those little imperfections that made Moroccan handicrafts special. A small scratch on a teapot, a crooked line on a bowl, those "mistakes" are what make it human.

When I show my American friends photos of Moroccan crafts, they always say, "Wow, that looks like art!" And I smile, because in Morocco, *art* isn't just something you hang on a wall, it's something you make with love, patience, and the wisdom of generations.

So yes, I was born in Fez, but I like to say I was raised by the hands of Morocco, the hands that weave, paint, hammer, and shape stories out of simple materials. Those hands taught me something important: that beauty isn't in machines or perfection, it's in the human touch.





**Would you like to
contribute to *The Parrot*?**

If you want to share your work, art, opinion, or
anything else with

The Parrot, please email us at:

TheParrot@arc.losrios.edu

We would be happy to hear from you and will try to
respond ASAP.

The Parrot welcomes all ESL student matters!

Weddings in Morocco: A Week of Celebration



If you ever get invited to a Moroccan wedding, my first advice is simple: bring your energy, your best clothes, and maybe a week off work, because in Morocco, weddings are not just one night; they are a full marathon of celebration!

I still remember my cousin's wedding back home. It started on a Saturday... and by Thursday, we were still dancing! My American friends here in the U.S. couldn't believe it. They asked, "A whole week? What do you even do for that long?" I said, "Eat, dance, dress up, and repeat!"

Before the wedding, there is a very special event called the henna night. This is the bride's night, full of music, laughter, and perfume. The women gather together, sing traditional songs, and paint the bride's hands and feet with beautiful brown henna designs. The patterns look like flowers and stars, and



each one has meaning, love, luck, or protection. I remember once, a little cousin wanted henna too, and she ended up with a big brown circle that looked more like a pizza! Everyone laughed for an hour.

The next days are filled with preparations and celebrations. People bring gifts, decorate the house,



and cook for what feels like the whole city. The smell of Moroccan food fills the air, tagine, couscous, pastries, mint tea, everything delicious and endless. In Moroccan weddings, food is a love language. If you try to say, "No, thank you, I'm full," someone will still hand you another plate and say, "Just a little more!"

And then comes the big night, the wedding party. It usually starts late, around 9 p.m., and goes until... well, who knows? There's music, drumming, singing, and traditional dances. The bride wears many dresses, called takchita, changing colors and styles throughout the night, green, gold, red, and white, each one more beautiful than the last. The groom usually looks nervous but proud, especially when the bride arrives in a special chair called amariya, carried by strong men while everyone cheers.

The atmosphere is like a fairytale, full of sparkle, smiles, and rhythm. Even the oldest aunt, who said her back hurts, suddenly stands up to dance when the gnawa drums start! Children run around, old friends meet again, and everyone takes pictures that they'll be talking about for years.

By the end of the week, everyone is tired but happy. The family has shared food, music, laughter, and love. The wedding is not just about two people; it's about the community coming together to celebrate life.

So yes, our weddings may last a week, but the happiness lasts a lifetime.



Mohammed El Mrani – Chief Author of the Morocco Issue

My name is Mohammed El Mrani, and I am honored to be the chief author of the Morocco issue in The Parrot Newspaper at American River College. This special issue is very important to me because it allows me to share the beauty, culture, and daily life of Morocco with a wider audience.

I have a strong interest in languages, especially English and Arabic. I enjoy learning new expressions, improving my vocabulary, and helping others understand different cultures through writing. I also like reading stories, listening to educational podcasts, and exploring topics related to communication and society.

In terms of my educational background, I studied Cybersecurity and Information Assurance at American River College. This field helped me develop strong analytical thinking and problem-solving skills. At the same time, I have always been passionate about writing and cultural topics, which led me to contribute to The Parrot Newspaper.

My work experience includes being part of The Parrot team, where I wrote and edited articles about Moroccan culture, such as traditional food, daily life, and social customs. This experience improved my writing skills and taught me how to communicate clearly with an international audience.

As the chief author of the Morocco issue, my goal is to create engaging and meaningful content that connects readers with Moroccan culture. I hope this issue will be both informative and enjoyable for everyone.



Special Issue Staff Writer: **Mohammed El Mrani**

Staff Producer: **Tuyet Le**

Faculty Advisors: **Patrick Hoggan and David Evans**

Please let us know what we can do to improve *The Parrot*. We appreciate any and all feedback you are willing to give us. Contact us at TheParrot@arc.losrios.edu. To see previous issues of *The Parrot*, go to <https://arc.losrios.edu/academics/the-parrot-newsletter>