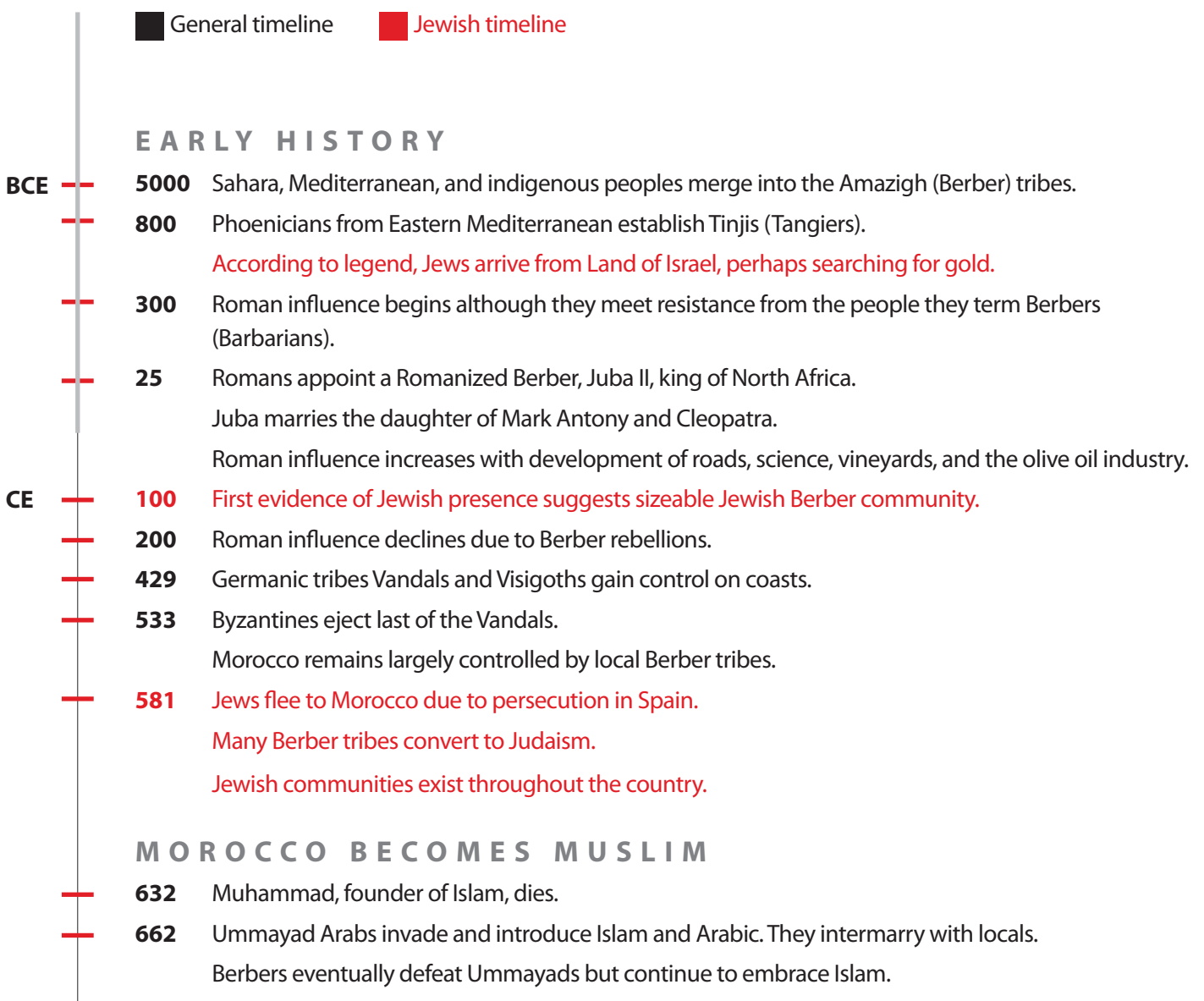




## MOROCCO THROUGH THE AGES

On your journey through Morocco, you'll experience a modern nation bursting with life and energy, but also feel the continuing power and fascination of the country's history, traditions, and beliefs. This timeline will help you keep a handle on the great events and powerful dynasties that have shaped Morocco. It also provides a glimpse into how the Jewish community was affected by and influenced what was happening in Morocco as a whole. Keep in mind that the dates, especially for the earlier events, are approximate only.



## THE IDRISID DYNASTY

**788** The Idrisids become Morocco's first great dynasty.

**792** Idriss II establishes Fes as the first imperial capital.  
Idrisid dynasty spreads into Europe, especially Spain.

*A golden age for Jewish economic, cultural, and religious achievement.*

*Idriss II invites Jews to live in Fes.*

*Strong ties with Spain. Many Moroccan Jews, including leading thinkers, leave for Cordoba in Spain.*

*Two-way traffic; Spanish Jews also move to Morocco.*

## THE ALMORAVID DYNASTY

**1062** Berber Almoravid dynasty establishes royal capital in Marrakech.

**1069** Almoravids conquer and rebuild Fes.

Almoravids also control much of North Africa and the Andalusian region of Spain.

*Jews continue to enjoy economic opportunities and connections with sultans.*

*Strong Jewish communities in Fes, Marrakech, and Meknes.*

**1121** Berber Almohad spiritual leader, Ibn Tumart, launches a rebellion and condemns Almoravids for tolerance of wine and music.

Almohad stronghold in Atlas Mountains.

## THE ALMOHAD DYNASTY

**1147** Almohads in control after defeating Almoravids.

They destroy and then re-design and rebuild Marrakech.

Rabat is made the royal capital.

Almohads build the Hassan Tower in Rabat, Koutoubia Mosque in Marrakech, and Giralda Tower in Seville (Spain).

*Many Jews are forcibly converted to Islam, flee, are expelled, or killed.*

*Almohads destroy synagogues and plunder Jewish communities.*

*Leader of Fes Jews, Rabbi Judah HaKohen ibn Shushan, is buried alive for refusing to convert to Islam.*

**1168** Maimonides, who moved to Morocco to escape persecution in Spain, flees Morocco for Holy Land and Egypt.

**1189** All Jews, including converts, are forced to wear distinctive signs.

**1199** Almohad power at peak. They control vast areas from Tripoli to Spain.

**1212** Almohads weakened after suffering major defeat by Christians in Spain.

## THE MERENID DYNASTY

**1269** Merenid (Berber) dynasty ousts Almohads.

Moroccan control over Spain is now a thing of the past.

*Jews begin to return to Morocco from Spain and elsewhere.*

Fes again is the royal capital.

Bou Inania madrasa built in Fes.

**1275** Merenid sultan intervenes to stop pogroms.

*The first Jewish quarter (mellah) is established near the royal palace in Fes.*

*Jewish community flourishes.*

*Jews are prominent in trade; Aaron Ben Matta is sultan's prime minister.*

— **1492** Christians complete reconquest of Spain and begin Inquisition.

Massive influx to Morocco of Spanish Jews and Marranos (Jews forced to convert to Christianity).  
Those expelled from Spain (known as the megorashim) gradually become dominant in Morocco's Jewish community, especially in Fes.

Moroccan-Jews speak Haketia (Judeo-Spanish), a blend of Spanish, Hebrew, and Arabic.

— **1497** Portuguese occupy Morocco's ports.

## THE SAADIAN DYNASTY

— **1525** Saadian Berbers battle Portuguese and establish a dynasty.

Marrakech becomes the royal capital.

Sugar and salt trade booms.

Saadian Berbers establish opulent tombs to bury their rulers and the El Badi palace.

Jews recognized as *dhimmi*, protected non-Muslims subject to special tax.

Jews are heavily involved in trade and are advisers to sultans.

Jewish quarter (mellah) established next to palace in Marrakech.

New mellahs formed in Rabat, Meknes, and elsewhere.

European Jews settling in Morocco.

— **1578** At the Battle of the Three Kings, Saadians defeat Portuguese and oust them from Morocco.

Moroccan Jews celebrate Saadian victory with special Purim-like festival.

## STILL RULING TODAY: THE ALAOUITE DYNASTY

— **1660** The Alaouites from the Sahara, descendants of the Prophet Muhammad, begin a dynasty that remains in power today.

— **1672** Moulay Ismail, a brutal, powerful Alaouite sultan, brings piracy under his control and builds an elaborate palace in Meknes.

Jewish economic and diplomatic influence continues.

— **1727** After Moulay Ismail's death, there is a period of anarchy and uncertainty.

— **1789** Yazid begins rebellion against his father, Sultan Mohammed Ben Abdallah.

Jews of Tetuan refuse important loan to Yazid.

— **1790** Yazid comes to power and leads murder, plunder, and rape of Jewish community, especially in Tetuan.

— **1792** New king stops violence against Jews.

— **1808** Formerly open Jewish mellahs turned into closed ghettos.

— **1840** Increasing influence of European powers in Morocco.

— **1862** Alliance Israelite Universelle introduces secular French education to Jews.

Jewish population: 200,000.

Jewish community is dominated by wealthy families and more impoverished masses.

Plagues ravish increasingly overcrowded Jewish quarters.

## UNDER THE COLONIAL POWERS

- **1912** France establishes protectorate over much of Morocco.
  - Pogrom in Fes kills over 100.
  - Spain rules north of the country; Tangiers is international zone.
  - Rabat becomes the capital of French Morocco.
  - Casablanca develops into major North African city.
  - Modernization of country sees growth of educated Jewish middle class.
- **1930s** Jewish position in Morocco vulnerable with rise of European fascism and Arab revolt in Palestine.
- **1940** French Morocco under Vichy (Nazi collaborators) rule during World War Two.
  - Anti-Semitic laws passed.
  - Foreign Jews placed in labor camps.
  - King Mohammed V credited with refusing to hand Moroccan Jews over to Nazis.
- **1942** Anglo-American invasion (Operation Torch) defeats Vichy forces.
  - Moroccans attack Jews throughout the country.
- **1943** De Gaulle and Free French take control over French Morocco.
- **1948** Jewish population: 271,000.
  - Moroccans protesting new State of Israel kill 43 Jews.
  - Mass immigration to Israel begins.
- **1950s** Moroccan nationalist unrest threatens Jews.

## INDEPENDENCE AND EMIGRATION

- **1956** Moroccan independence. Muhammad V returns as king.
  - Jews forbidden from emigrating.
- **1959** Zionist activity banned in country.
  - Nonetheless, clandestine emigration to Israel, France, and Canada increases.
- **1962** King Hassan II takes power and establishes Morocco as constitutional monarchy.
  - The Years of Lead: Hassan dissolves parliament, and squashes dissent.
- **1970** Jewish population has dropped to 42,000.
- **1975** The Green March: Morocco asserts control over Western Sahara leading to war with locals.
- **1991** Ceasefire in Western Sahara but no resolution of issue.
- **1993** Hassan II Mosque, the largest in Africa, built in Casablanca.
- **1999** Mohammad VI succeeds to throne and promises reform.
- **2011** Arab Spring leads to protests but does not shake regime.

## MOROCCO OF TODAY

Population of Morocco: 36 million.

Jewish population: 2,500.

King and government support Jewish community, rebuild synagogues, and welcome visiting Jews, including from Israel.