

Destination Algeria

Algeria is the most fascinating country you never thought of visiting.

Off limits for decades, Algeria is again struggling to its feet, resilient and ready to show you just why the country is becoming many travellers' favourite North African destination. Like all countries along the southern Mediterranean rim, Algeria has two primary drawcards: outstanding Roman ruins and the exceptional landscapes of the Sahara. The difference is that Algeria has them in almost embarrassing abundance.

Algeria's catalogue of ancient Roman cities is astonishingly varied. Tipaza, a favourite of Albert Camus, weaves among the palm trees and down to the shores of the Mediterranean. Djemila, nestled amid the hills, stunningly evokes northeastern Algeria's ancient past, while Hippo Regius is alive with the echoes of St Augustine. A further four Roman sites, all in the country's mountainous northeast, make Algeria a paradise for the amateur archaeologist in you.

Further from the coast, you don't have to travel too deep into the Sahara to be swept up in its magic. The oases of the west – Taghit, Beni Abbès and Timimoun – are surrounded by palm trees and the dunes of the Grand Erg Occidental (Great Western Erg) and are home to glorious mud-brick architecture. Intriguing Ghardaïa stands at the heart of the M'Zab Valley, home to one of the world's few remnant Ibadi Muslim communities. Deep in the desert's heart in Algeria's far south, Assekrem (the End of the World), Atakor and the Tassili du Hoggar, where the otherworldly rock formations are the spiritual home of the Tuareg, are the stuff of legend for even the most experienced of Saharan travellers. Away to the remote southeast is the mythical terrain of the Tassili N'Ajjer where superbly rendered, millennia-old rock art tells the Sahara's story in shades of ochre and other earth tones.

It all comes together in Algiers, a city that's as alive as any in the world. When deciding to include Algiers' Casbah on its World Heritage list, Unesco described it as 'one of the finest coastal sites on the Mediterranean' and we're inclined to agree. Also on the northern coast are Algeria's most beautiful cities. Constantine is stunning. Oran, the birthplace and home of rai, Algeria's world-famous musical export, is an intriguing marriage of France and Spain. And Tlemcen could easily be one of Andalusia's most beautiful cities were it not in Algeria.

There's something about Algeria that has always given it the quality of an epic and perhaps that's why so many great travellers of the past have sought to know it, and from St Augustine in Hippo Regius to Isabelle Eberhardt in the oases of the Sahara, from Red Beard the pirate-king to Charles de Foucauld the desert hermit somewhere close to the End of the World.

Algeria's troubled recent past may have slowed the arrival of travellers and the mere thought of Algeria can be daunting. There's no doubting that visiting here is a challenge. But Algeria has never lost its mystique and armed with this book, as well as the latest updates on the security situation in Algeria, you'll quickly discover that there are so many world-class places to visit in Algeria and that almost all of them are not only safe but crying out for the visitors they so richly deserve.

There are not many destinations left in the world that still possess an edgy cachet, that showcase landscapes of rare beauty and promise the joy of discovering ancient sites of world significance. Algeria is such a place and the time to visit is now.

Getting Started

Algeria can be a challenging destination and many of your pretrip thoughts are likely to centre around arranging a visa (see p206), checking out the security situation (see p200 and the boxed text, opposite) and deciding which is the best time to visit (below). But tracking down books and films before leaving home is a great way to whet your appetite for the journey ahead. Algeria is a fascinating country with a thriving cultural life and landscapes of unrivalled beauty that have drawn writers and travellers down through the centuries.

WHEN TO GO

The best time to visit Algeria is in October and November when the skies are clear, the temperatures are mild and, depending on end-of-summer rains, the desert may even have a greenish tinge in places. The next best alternative is from March through to early May, although there's a higher chance of sandstorms in April and, by May, temperatures are really starting to rise. December through to February is also a good time, although temperatures can be surprisingly cool and night-time temperatures in the Sahara routinely drop below zero. In summer (mid-May to September), temperatures can be unbearably hot – don't even think of a desert expedition at this time.

Apart from the weather and a sprinkling of local festivals (see the boxed text, p16), the most important consideration for when to visit is the holy month of Ramadan. Few countries take the month of fasting as seriously as Algeria does and the simple fact of closed restaurants alone – most Algerians break the daily fast in private homes and many restaurants close for the month – should make you think seriously about avoiding travelling in Algeria for the duration. Only in five-star hotels in Algiers are you likely to find a place to eat. For details on upcoming dates for Ramadan, see p202.

COSTS & MONEY

Algeria is not the region's most expensive destination and travellers on a tight budget could get by on €35 per day by staying in youth hostels,

See Climate Charts (p199) for more information.

DON'T LEAVE HOME WITHOUT...

- A visa firmly ensconced in your passport (p206)
- Travel insurance (p202) – accidents do happen
- Driving licence, car documents and appropriate car insurance (p215) if bringing your own car
- Extremely warm clothes for winter (above)
- A universal bathplug – you'll thank us when you emerge from the desert
- An MP3 player – the desert can be beautiful but there are days when epic distances and empty horizons can do your head in
- Mosquito repellent – that unmistakable high-pitched whine in the ear is death to sleep in many Saharan oases
- A small size-three football (soccer ball) – a great way to meet locals

For more advice on what to bring for travelling in the Sahara, see p68.

OFF LIMITS

As you set about planning your Algerian itinerary, remember that uncertain security in some parts of the country means some regions remain off limits to travellers.

For the foreseeable future, you should definitely avoid overland travel through the Kabylie region in Algeria's northeast. Consider flying into places such as Sétif or Annaba; many of the towns are relatively safe. The town of Bejaïa and the coastal area east to Jijel was particularly volatile and dangerous at the time of research. For more information on the security situation in this region see the boxed text, p110. In the northwest, Mascara and Chlef should also be avoided.

In southern Algeria, concerns remain about security for travellers in some desert regions, which is why independent travel is forbidden in desert regions south of Ghardaïa. In practice, this means that the spectacular Saharan landscapes around Tamanrasset (p180) and Djanet (p190) can only be visited in the company of a professional guide. For more information see the boxed text, p181.

travelling in shared taxis and eating cheap. Staying in midrange accommodation and eating in decent sit-down restaurants will blow the budget out, but only to a reasonable €60 per day. If you add in car hire, a few internal flights, the odd local tour and a bit of shopping, your daily spend is more likely to approach €100 or more. For advice on the expected cost of accommodation, see p196.

The rule when it comes to money in Algeria is simple: bring cash, preferably in euros or British pounds, as ATMs that accept foreign cards are extremely rare and credit cards and travellers cheques will rarely (if ever) have a chance to leave your wallet. For more information on money matters, see p203.

TRAVEL LITERATURE

The Sword and the Cross (Ian Fleming) This wonderfully readable account of the lives of Charles de Foucauld and Henri Laperrière is a like a journey through French historical fantasies about the Sahara and Algeria in particular.

The Conquest of the Sahara (Douglas Porch) Porch tells a rollicking, even sensationalist tale of the often ill-fated French attempt to seize control of the Sahara and their battles with the equally ill-fated Tuareg.

Sahara Unveiled (William Langeweische) One of the most carefully written narratives of modern Saharan exploration, this fine book combines sparing prose and an epic journey that begins in Algeria.

Tangier to Tunis (Alexandre Dumas) In 1846 Alexandre Dumas was asked by the Ministry of Public Instruction in France to travel and write his way around Algeria and the result is a fascinating window into 19th-century circumstances.

The Tuareg and Sahara Man (Jeremy Keenan) There is no finer academic authority on the Algerian Tuareg than Jeremy Keenan, whose anthropological work in southern Algeria began in the 1960s and is updated with an enlightening return decades later.

The Oblivion Seekers (Isabelle Eberhardt and Paul Bowles) Paul Bowles provides a biography of this most iconic of travellers as a precursor to Eberhardt's 11 enthralling stories that vividly bring to life late-19th-century Algeria.

The Star of Algiers (Aziz Chouaki) This fast-paced novel of cultural conflict in 1990s Algiers is set against the backdrop of music and civil war, two of the driving forces of recent Algerian history.

The Great War for Civilisation (Robert Fisk) This weighty tome by the doyen of Western Middle East correspondents includes one of the most searing and compelling studies of the Algerian civil war.

INTERNET RESOURCES

153 Club (www.the153club.org) One of the best sites for Saharan enthusiasts with a pleasing mix of the aspirational and the practical, and plenty of Algeria-specific information.

HOW MUCH?

Algiers–Tamanrasset air ticket DA14,000

Algiers–Ghardaïa bus ticket DA650

1 hour's internet access DA80–150

Tour from Tamanrasset DA4800–7750

Museum entry DA20

See also inside front cover.

TOP PICKS

Algerian Music

The following albums will provide a marvellous soundtrack to your Algerian visit; they're widely available throughout Europe and elsewhere.

- *Deb – Heart Broken* (Souad Massi)
- *Forever King* (Khaled)
- *Diwan* (Rachid Taha)
- *Meli Meli* (Cheb Mami)
- *Rai Roots* (Cheikha Rimitti)

Algerian Festivals

There's no boring time to visit Algeria, but organising your visit around one or more of the following festivals will add an extra dimension to your trip.

- Fête du tapis (March/April; Ghardaïa; p158)
- Le Tafsit (end April; Tamanrasset; p186)
- S'bou de Timimoun (dates vary; Timimoun; p170)
- Festival National de la Chanson du Rai d'Oran (August; Oran; p144)
- Sebiba (Djanet; p193)

Algerian Films

These films should give you a taste of one of Africa's most innovative and respected film industries (p53).

- *The Battle of Algiers* (directed by Gillo Pontecorvo; 1966)
- *Bab el-Oued* (directed by Merzak Allouache; 1994)
- *Chronicle of the Years of Embers* (directed by Mohamed Lakhdar-Hamina; 1975)
- *Barakat!* (directed by Djamilia Sahraoui; 2006)
- *Days of Glory* (directed by Rachid Bouchareb; 2006)

Algeria.com (www.algeria.com) At first glance a little light-on for information, but its range of topics (tourism, news, business and culture) is hard to beat.

Lonely Planet (www.lonelyplanet.com) Includes background information on Algeria with links to travellers' reports on visiting the country.

Sahara Overland (www.sahara-overland.com) Companion to the excellent desert guidebook of the same name with up-to-date travel reports and news.

Wanadoo – Algérie (www.wanadoo.dz in French) A multipurpose French-language portal that takes a contemporary and tech-savvy look at Algerian culture from writers and traditional costumes to the latest news.

Yakeo (www.yakeo.com/fr/algerie/) One of the most extensive listings of (mostly French-language) links to Algerian news, music and sport sites.

Itineraries

CLASSIC ROUTES

THE BEST OF THE COAST

Two Weeks/Tlemcen to Annaba

Travelling along Algeria's Mediterranean coastline is like a journey through the Algerian soul, with all the clamour, historical influences and home-grown creativity on show. There's no better place to start than **Tlemcen** (p146) with its touch of Andalusia and the Almoravid twist that is Tlemcen's trademark. On no account miss the **Grand Mosque** (p148) and the **Mosque & Tomb of Sidi Boumediene** (p149). Just up the road, **Oran** (p139) suggests a Spanish aesthetic grafted onto Algerian soil, but with a French ambience and an irresistible soundtrack of rai music that began in Oran. You could stop off in **Cherchell** (p106) and **Tipaza** (p104) as you head for Algiers, but most people visit these as a day trip from the capital. **Algiers**, (p87) the bustling white capital, can be overwhelming. Fly to evocative **Constantine** (p117) and use it as a base for visiting the Roman cities of **Timgad** (p126) and **Djemila** (p132). **Annaba** (p110) is one of Algeria's most agreeable cities, not least because it boasts **Hippo Regius** (p113).



This route covers around 820km by road, plus the flight from Algiers to Constantine – the flight avoids the roads east of Algiers where the security situation can be unpredictable.

DEEP INTO THE SAHARA Three Weeks/Algiers to Tassili N'Ajjer National Park Algiers (p87) has long been one of the most important gateways into the interior of Africa and it can turn your head for as long as you let it, but you've a long journey ahead of you. You could fly to Tamanrasset or Djanet (and you should do so for the return journey), but travelling the first leg of the Trans-Saharan Hwy is one of Africa's great road trips. By the time you reach the five oasis towns that make up **Ghardaïa** (p155), you're already deep into the northern Sahara. Take the opportunity to explore the town itself, but the real fascination here lies in the oases of the M'Zab, home to one of Islam's smallest minorities, the Mozabites (see the boxed text, p160) who are Ibadi Muslims (see the boxed text, p48). You get a real sense of this community at **Beni Isguen** (p160) which is surrounded by ramparts. **Melika** (p161) offers splendid views, while **El-Atteuf** (p162) is the oldest of the M'Zab villages. The dune-surrounded town of **In Salah** (p181) is another convenient place to break up the journey, before pushing on to **Tamanrasset** (p183). From here, the excursions into the wonderful world of the Ahaggar are endless, with **Atakor** (p188), **Assekrem** (p188) and the **Tassili du Hoggar** (p189) some of the most extraordinary vistas anywhere in the Sahara. If you time it right, catch the weekly flight to the often-sleepy, sometimes overrun oasis town of **Djanet** (p191). The **Tassili N'Ajjer National Park** (p194) – the world's most astonishing open-air gallery of millennia-old **rock art** (p80) – is close by and you should spend as much time as you have exploring it.

From Algiers to Tamanrasset is just under 2000km – ideally take a week so you can break up Algeria's longest journey. The excursions from both Tamanrasset and Djanet will require an organised tour using a mixture of 4WD and walking. Flying between Tamanrasset and Djanet is essential.



ROADS LESS TRAVELLED

THE OASES OF THE WEST

Two to Three Weeks/Oran to Ghardaïa

All great desert journeys begin beyond the Sahara's borders in your last taste of civilisation before entering the wilderness. There are no more civilised cities in Algeria than **Oran** (p139) and **Tlemcen** (p146). After crossing the High Plateaus, pause at **Ain Sefra** (p162), one of the most agreeable oasis towns of the northern Algerian Sahara. It shouldn't be too difficult to avoid the fate of Isabelle Eberhardt (see the boxed text, p163), that great 19th-century traveller who drowned here in 1904. The road winds through the western reaches of the Saharan Atlas and then down around the silent gravitas of the **Grand Erg Occidental** (p162), one of the great sand seas of the Sahara. There are few more evocative Saharan villages on the edge of a sand sea than little **Taghit** (p165) – the dune-fringed oasis town you always imagined as a child. **Beni Abbès** (p166) is equally beautiful. As magical as these places are, nothing quite prepares you for **Timimoun** (p169), which would be many travellers' favourite oasis town in all the Sahara (if they made it this far) and which combines abandoned villages, an escarpment perch and sand dunes. It's the sort of place to relax and soak up the silence for a few days. If you've an extra week up your sleeve, you could make a dash down the Route du Hoggar to **In Salah** (p181) and the rarely visited **Tassili d'Immidir** (p182). Most of you will, however, be more than satisfied to complete a partial circuit of the southern Grand Erg Occidental and on into the oasis towns of the **M'Zab** (p160) and **Ghardaïa** (p155).



You can make the entire journey (1715km if you don't visit the Tassili d'Immidir, almost 2900km if you do) by public transport (mostly bus, with an occasional shared taxi). If you stay longer in the oasis towns, you easily add a week to your journey.

EASTERN TRAILS Two to Three Weeks/Ghardaïa to Tassili N'Ajjer National Park Ghardaïa (p155) and the oasis towns of the M'Zab (p160) are fascinating in their own right and are the starting point of many Saharan expeditions, but a less-frequented and very intriguing road to take from there is the one that heads east. Ouargla (p176) is a moderately interesting town and Touggourt (p175) won't win any beauty contests, but the latter is central to the spirit of modern Saharan exploration – it was here that the first motorised crossing of the Sahara to Timbuktu began in 1922. Touggourt also makes a good base for visiting the ruined mud villages of **Temacine** (p176), which has a *ksar* (castle; fortified stronghold), and **Tamelhat** (p176). The road east passes amid the dunes of the **Grand Erg Oriental** (p172) to **El-Oued** (p172), the 'Town of a Thousand Domes' and one that sees far fewer travellers than it deserves. Returning the way you came, leave the main road south of Touggourt and pass through the oil-service town of **Hassi Messaoud** (p178), whereafter a long, lonely road with almost no public transport bisects the Grand Erg Oriental and finally leaves you in **Illizi** (p191). Deliciously remote, Illizi is for those who love the desert but without the crowds and who love the possibilities inherent in surveying the empty horizons. Short excursions are possible to the impressive rock-art site of **Tamdjert** (p191), but true desert aficionados will want to set out to cross the northern Tassili N'Ajjer en route to **Djanet** (p191). Here you'll rejoin the tourist trail, but after so long off the beaten track you may welcome the company. The extraordinary rock art and twisted rock formations of the **Tassili N'Ajjer National Park** (p194) are your reward for one of the most challenging but worthwhile Algerian journeys.

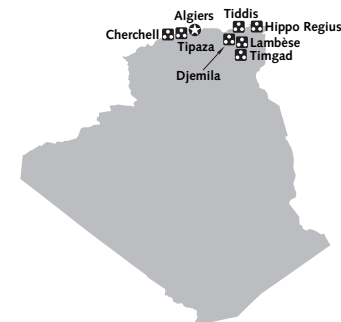
You'll need your own vehicle to travel south of Hassi Messaoud and you must travel with a guide and an organised expedition from Illizi to Djanet and into the Tassili N'Ajjer National Park. This route covers around 2000km.



TAILORED TRIPS

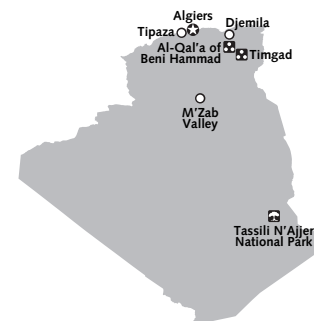
ROMAN ALGERIA

There's nothing Roman about modern **Algiers** (p87), apart from the **National Museum of Antiquities** (p96) and the fact that Romans took the town in AD 146 and held it for almost four centuries. However, it provides the ideal base for visiting the charming last vestiges of Roman **Tipaza** (p104), which was a favourite of that great Franco-Algerian writer Albert Camus and which meanders amid the pine trees down to the beach. **Cherchell** (p106) doesn't quite have Tipaza's enchanted air, but even Tipaza plays second fiddle to **Djemila** (p132), one of Algeria's most appealing drawcards and one of the most beautiful extant Roman cities in Africa. The setting among the Petit Kabylie hills and the well preserved state of the ruins make this the premier Roman site in Algeria. **Timgad** (p126) also makes it easy to imagine a lively and prosperous Roman city, while the ruins of **Lambèse** (p125) scattered around the village of Tazoult require a lot more imagination. **Tiddis** (p122) is similarly modest but not-to-be-missed if Roman ruins are your thing, while **Hippo Regius** (p113) is Djemila's rival for the title of Algeria's most spectacular Roman site, not to mention a place forever associated with the spirit of St Augustine (see the boxed text, p113).



UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES

The gritty, labyrinthine and quintessentially Algerian Casbah in **Algiers** (p93) is the most recent addition to Unesco's list of World Heritage sites in Algeria; it's a worthy member of what is an exceptional group of signature Algerian attractions. **Tipaza** (p104) has also charmed its way onto the list and there was no way that the doyens of the world's most important cultural sites could resist **Timgad** (p126) and **Djemila** (p132) – Roman Algeria clearly caught the eye when Unesco sat down to revise its catalogue in 1982. In the same year, the incomparable rock-art sites and extraordinary natural beauty of the **Tassili N'Ajjer National Park** (p194) were inscribed on the list. Few places in the Sahara can quite match the Tassili N'Ajjer for its exquisite rock art that tells the strangely compelling story of the Sahara's journey from green and pleasant land to the world's largest desert. The **M'Zab Valley** (p155) similarly tells a strange story of survival and isolation, home as it is to one of the last remaining communities of Ibadi Muslims (see the boxed text, p48) anywhere in the world. **Al-Qal'a of Beni Hammad**, the ruined 11th-century seat of the Hammamid emirs, rounds out the list, although the security situation meant that we were unable to visit this time around.



Snapshot

Peace and prosperity, that's all Algerians ask for. Having not had a lot of either for the last 60 years, it's scarcely surprising that these are the two topics that dominate most conversations in Algeria.

For a start, one generation of Algerians is still waiting to hear an apology from France for the estimated one million Algerians who died during the 1954–62 Algerian War of Independence. They've been waiting a long time and aren't exactly holding their breath, but many still live in hope. As bitter as the memories are, looking longingly out across the water towards France is something of a national pastime. So many Algerian immigrants have made their homes in France (and so many more would like to) that the old enemy still holds their attention, with every Algerian desperate for France to take notice in return.

Meanwhile, the next generation of Algerians with its own recent memories of war is hoping against hope that the relative peace of recent years will hold. Scarred by the terror that rained down upon them from all sides during the 1990s, most Algerians you meet will express misgivings about the 2005 amnesty law, even as they proudly tell you that they were among the 97% of Algerians who voted in favour. Yes, criminals have walked free, but for most Algerians that's a necessary evil to help the war recede further into history with every passing day. A resumption of isolated attacks in 2006 and the perennially simmering conflict with the Berber (Amazigh) people of the Kabylie, and the April 2007 Al-Qaeda attacks nonetheless ensure that Algerians can't imagine relaxing for some time yet.

As the thriving Algerian music, film and literature scenes attest, Algerians are some of North Africa's most imaginative and creative people if given the chance and that chance is all that most Algerians ask for. What's the point in having an education or staying in Algeria if there aren't nearly enough jobs to go around, most Algerians ask. What's the point of democracy if the best option is President Bouteflika, they wonder. And just what is the government so afraid of that they have to crack down on media freedom, causing Algerians to tune in to satellite channels beamed in from elsewhere, they question. What is the good of oil wealth if life never gets any better, they plead.

For the most part, however, they've become tired of asking the same questions over and over again. The cynicism, despair and social dislocation sweeping the country's young do not bode well for Algeria's immediate future.

Algerians are desperate for good news, but it's hard to see from where such good tidings could come. From the banal (Algeria's much-loved and once-successful national football team seems to have lost the art of winning) to the bleak (the Salafist Group for Call and Combat, the GSPC, changed its name to Al-Qaeda in January 2007), Algerians just can't take a trick.

The only consolation is that if the travails of Algeria's recent history have taught Algerians one thing, it is the art of survival.

FAST FACTS

GDP per capita: US\$6603

Unemployment: 25%

Inflation: 3%

Life expectancy at birth:
73.26 years (men 71.68;
women 74.92)

Oil production: 1.373
million barrels per day

Adult/youth literacy rate:
69.9/90.1%

Population: 33 million

Population under 15/over
65: 30.4/4.5%

Doctors per 100,000
people: 113 (UK: 164)

Under-five mortality rate
per 1000 live births: 40
(1970: 220)

The Authors



ANTHONY HAM

Coordinating Author

Anthony's first encounter with Algeria was as a refugee lawyer in Australia in the 1990s when he worked on behalf of Algerian and other asylum seekers. While working as a lawyer he obtained a Masters degree in Middle Eastern politics. His second encounter came in 2001 when he (illegally) walked across the Algerian border from an isolated corner of the Libyan Sahara and back again. He has since returned, both legally and illegally. Now a full-time writer and photographer based in Madrid, Anthony has written Lonely Planet's *Libya* and the Mauritania, Mali and Niger chapters of *West Africa*, as well as contributing to *Morocco* and *Tunisia*. Whenever he can, he heads for the Sahara.

The Coordinating Author's Favourite Trip

I love the uproar and the unspoken secrets of the Algiers Casbah (p93) and rai rhythms of Oran (p139). But all the while I'm dreaming of the Sahara and as the bus rambles out across the High Plateaus, I can feel my spirits lift. From Taghit (p165) I can look out across the sands of the Grand Erg Occidental (p162). Beni Abbès (p166) could keep me detained for days, as could Timimoun (p169). Any place with a name like Assekrem ('the End of the World'; p188) is my sort of place and I'd spend as much time as I had in the Tassili du Hoggar (p189). I couldn't leave Algeria without visiting Djanet (p191) and the utterly compelling rock art of the Tassili N'Ajjer National Park (p194).



NANA LUCKHAM

Ghardaïa, Tamanrasset, Directory & Transport

Nana was born in Tanzania to a Ghanaian mother and English father. Childhood in England followed, punctuated with periods in Ghana, Zimbabwe, Australia and France. After a degree in French and history and a Masters in international relations, Nana headed off solo to see the world, also working as a press officer for the United Nations. She has spent the past couple of years as a freelance writer based in London, travelling in and writing about Africa. She has contributed to numerous publications including guides to Kenya and West Africa and Lonely Planet's *Africa* and *Southern Africa* books. She jumped at the chance to explore southern Algeria, where she began a love affair with the Sahara.

LONELY PLANET AUTHORS

Why is our travel information the best in the world? It's simple: our authors are independent, dedicated travellers. They don't research using just the internet or phone, and they don't take freebies in exchange for positive coverage. They travel widely, to all the popular spots and off the beaten track. They personally visit thousands of hotels, restaurants, cafés, bars, galleries, palaces, museums and more – and they take pride in getting all the details right, and telling it how it is. Think you can do it? Find out how at lonelyplanet.com.



ANTHONY SATTIN

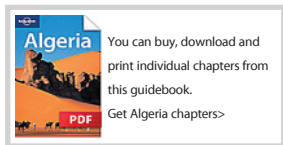
Algiers, Northeast & Northwest Algeria

Since his first visit as a teenager, Anthony has spent much of his adult life travelling around and writing about North Africa and the Middle East. He is the author of several highly acclaimed books about Africa, including *The Pharaoh's Shadow*, in which he searched for Egypt's surviving ancient culture, and he edited Lonely Planet's *A House Somewhere: Tales of Life Abroad*. His most recent book, *The Gates of Africa*, tells the history of early exploration in Africa and the search for Timbuktu. Now based in London, he is a regular contributor to the *Sunday Times* and *Conde Nast Traveller*.

CONTRIBUTING AUTHORS

Jane Cornwell wrote the rai music boxed text in the Culture chapter. Australian-born, UK-based Jane writes on world music and arts for a variety of publications including the *Telegraph*, the *Evening Standard* and the *Australian*. Her fascination with the rai music of Algeria began when she attended the 1997 Khaled concert at London's Astoria and witnessed a spectacle involving flashing lights, loud music, and bare-chested men holding the Algerian flag aloft and/or storming the stage to try to touch the hem of their hero's trousers. Jane frequently travels to and writes about North Africa.

Zahia Hafs wrote the *hittistes* boxed text in the Culture chapter, the Shanghai Blue boxed text in the Algiers chapter and the *taxieurs* boxed text in the Transport chapter. Of Kabyle descent, Zahia was born and raised in Paris. After few years at the UN in New York, she joined a press agency in Paris before setting up the French office of Lonely Planet. A decade later, she created her own little publishing company, Jalan Publications. Zahia discovered Algiers in 2004. Together with artist Elsie Herberstein, she published, in 2005, a book about the white city, *Alger: Simples Confidences*.



© Lonely Planet Publications. To make it easier for you to use, access to this chapter is not digitally restricted. In return, we think it's fair to ask you to use it for personal, non-commercial purposes only. In other words, please don't upload this chapter to a peer-to-peer site, mass email it to everyone you know, or resell it. See the terms and conditions on our site for a longer way of saying the above - 'Do the right thing with our content.'