

MANCA 2015

LAND CRUISE TO ASSILAH AN ANCIENT CITY BESIDE THE ATLANTIC OCEAN

We decided to take a break from the sailing coaching I was providing for Captain Kim to make the short land cruise from Marina Smir to Assilah. This ancient city with a beautiful location on the sandy beaches of the Atlantic Coast of west Africa is much less than two hours from Marina Smir. The town is relaxed, easy to enjoy and carries a great history from early Phoenicians, Romans , Portuguese and including the 19th Century story of a rascal called Raissouli.

Apparently Raissouli ... “a pretender to power...a brigand... extortioner and kidnapper made Assilah his base”.* Around 1906 he took over built a palace facing the sea. All good until the Spanish kicked him out in 1926.

After a great breakfast of omelets and fresh orange juice we were fortified to attack the town with our Nikons and Canons. What a delightful “raid” it was.



The town sports funky cafes with great food just outside the city walls.

Most of the gates and city walls are still standing adding to the charm.



A well preserved Andalucía style stone home inside the walls.

Many doorways are too attractive to pass up a shot.





The blues and green are traditional colours

I am told this door and steps are part of the ancient Roman city.





Family fumbles for the keys to No.5

Berber woman cools down the entrance to her doorway.





Watchtower and prayer tent below.

Colourful and casual. No hustlers made strolling around easy peasy.





Rounded watch tower still proudly stands to face the sea.

Guns still in place along the sea wall.



TIME TO PLAY ON THE BEACH

By noon it was starting to get very hot so a play on the beach and a dip in the Atlantic was the best bet. We were not the only ones wanting to cool off.



Kind owner takes his horse for a bath in the Atlantic.

Camel driver has same idea. I would love to see one of these camels on a surf board!



All those knees means the camel can get right down to cool off with a bit of encouragement from the driver.

Camel and bathers share the surf!



Baby Camel looking for lunch!

These two fellows were off along the beach to build a shack to sell drinks after Ramadan. On return they offer us a ride back along the beach!





Beach view with sea grass.

The wild Atlantic Ocean was quiet today.



The Moroccan fellows return to give us a cart ride back along the beach. The light horse is about the same size as our dear "Nelie" on the farm at Bruny Island. About as slow as well!

Inside the wide harbor is a well protected and very clean place to swim. There is a small fishing fleet but I saw no cruising yachts. *Maybe* you are allowed to anchor inside the harbor.



Plan of the ancient medina.

We thought we spotted some flamingoes along the way. I stopped the taxi and a long way off I could see they were black ibis instead. However a pair of crested larks landed almost at my feet beside the road.

A crested female lark beside the road to Marina Smir.



Crested lark: male I think!

Terry,

s/y Manca

Gibraltar,

August 9, 2015

*Notes from *DK Eyewitness Travel Morocco 2012* page 99.