ALGÉRIE
1830|1962
avec Jacques Ferrandez

Visitor's itinerary

Algeria, WWI, WWII and Indochina (1914-1954)

From the time of the Second Empire onwards, Soldiers from Algeria participated in all of France's wars in Europe and across the globe. More than 240,000 of them fought in France and in the East during World War I. While France paid tribute to her Muslim subjects in 1926 by establishing the Paris Mosque, in Algeria the Centenary celebrations of 1930 tended to glorify the achievements of European colonists. More than 250,000 men from Algeria took part in the French campaign in 1940 and many regiments from the African Army fought valiantly. However, the French defeat in 1940 and the Anglo-American landing in 1942 undermined French prestige in North Africa and fuelled the nationalist protest. In 1943-44 a sizable part of the French expeditionary corps in Italy and of the 1st Army – which liberated France alongside the Allies – was made up of Algerian troops. Yet on 8 May 1945, the day Germany capitulated, and while the African Army was being fêted in France, riots broke out in northern Constantinois. A hundred Europeans were killed and the French Army launched a repression that cause thousands of casualties and strengthened Algerian nationalists' resolve. In 1947 the new status for Algeria did not bring electoral equality and the 1948 elections were rigged. The French defeat at the battle Dien Bien Phu (Indochina) heralded the end of the French Empire after eight years of a struggle between the Vietminh and the French Army in which many Algerian soldiers had fought.

Young visitors' itinerary

An Occidental artistic interpretation of Africa

The conquest of Algeria followed by its colonization by the French made it easy for painters, engravers, writers and photographs to spend time in Northern Africa. A great number of painters, from Eugène Delacroix to Auguste Renoir, nourished their artistic inspiration from their stay in Northern Africa. This new artistic movement known as Orientalism was to be in vogue all throughout the nineteenth century.