For such a tiny country—the smallest in North Africa—Tunisia packs a lot in. It is a nation with scenery ranging from Mediterranean beaches to the Sahara Desert, from ancient souks to Star Wars film sets. The capital, Tunis, reflects the country’s diversity. Its French colonial past has a far-reaching influence, most apparent in its cuisine, which blends sophisticated French styles with Arabic spices. Its older history is evident in the remains of what was Roman Carthage, while the Roman ruins at Dougga and El Jem are some of the finest in Africa.

Note: this itinerary is preliminary and subject to change in order to facilitate insider’s meetings in Tunis with local journalists, officials, and academics coordinated by faculty leader, Ross Brann.

Monday, May 25: Tunis, Tunisia
Arrive at Tunis International Airport. Your local English-speaking guide will meet you and you’ll be transferred to your hotel.
HOTEL in Tunis (D)

Tuesday, May 26: Tunis - Medina - Carthage - Sidi Bou Said
After breakfast, we’ll enjoy a walking tour of the city revealing the contrast between the medieval Arab medina, or old town, and the French-built modern city. Then we will head to the Bardo museum, a repository of the finest collection of Roman mosaics in the world. Together as a group we’ll have lunch in a restaurant in the heart of the old medina. In the afternoon, we will be driven by private motor coach to Carthage and Sidi Bou Said. Ancient Carthage founded by the Phoenicians in 814 B.C. was once an affluent center of Mediterranean trade before its destruction by the Romans in 146 B.C. Sidi Bou Said is a delightful seaside village of whitewashed cottages that tumble-down cobbled streets to the sea.
HOTEL in Tunis (B, L)

Wednesday, May 27: Tunis - Dougga - Kairouan
This morning we’ll depart to Dougga, considered the best-preserved Roman city in Tunisia and on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Built on an elevated site overlooking a fertile plain, Dougga was the capital of Punic and Roman states. We’ll enjoy lunch in local restaurant at Dougga. We’ll continue on to Kairouan, an isolated town founded by Arab invaders in the 7th century and considered the fourth holiest Islamic site after Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem. It is a walled city completely dominated by its mosque, built in the 7th century by the founder of the city, Okba Ibn Nafi.
HOTEL in Kairouan (B, L)
Thursday, May 28: Kairouan - Tozeur
Today we'll visit Kairouan's Islamic monuments including the ninth century great mosque of Oqba Ibn Nafi of Kairouan, an important reference point in Islam & Islamic architecture. Our tour will also include a visit to the Aghlabid basins, the mausoleum of Sidi Sahab and the medina. We'll transfer by private motor coach to Tozeur, an African oasis with an abundance of tall palms. We'll walk in the maze of alleyways of the old city built in the 14th century by the Ouled al-Hadaf tribe, and then continue to the palmeraie with its 200,000 palms.
HOTEL in Tozeur (B, D)

Friday, May 29: Tozeur - Shabika - Tamerza - Chott El Jerid - Douz
As a group, we'll explore in 4WD vehicles some of the country's most spectacular mountain scenery with visits to the mountain oasis of Tamerza and Shabika on the Algerian border. Via Chott El Jerid, we'll then transfer to Douz, the gateway to the Sahara Desert.
HOTEL in Douz (B, D)

Saturday, May 30: Douz – Matmata - El Jem –Sousse
After breakfast, we will depart for Matmata, center of the most traditional troglodyte pit homes in the region. The Berber people built these simple underground dwellings in the barren landscape to escape the extremes of weather and any unwelcome invaders. Together we will have lunch at a troglodyte style restaurant in Matmata. We'll then continue to El Jem, the site of a massive Roman Coliseum, the third largest in the Roman world. We will stay the night at Sousse.
HOTEL in Sousse (B, L)

Sunday, May 31: Sousse - Tunis – Departure
In the morning, we'll depart Sousse for Tunis airport to catch our departing flights.

TOUR LEADER ROSS BRANN
Ross Brann is the Milton R. Konvitz Professor of Judeo-Islamic Studies and Stephen H. Weiss Presidential Fellow in the Department of Near-Eastern Studies at Cornell. He has taught at Cornell University since 1986. Brann is the author of Power in the Portrayal: Representations of Muslims and Jews in Eleventh- and Twelfth-Century Islamic Spain (Princeton University Press, 2002), The Compunctious Poet: Cultural Ambiguity and Hebrew Poetry in Muslim Spain (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), and Andalusi Moorings (forthcoming 2020 University of Pennsylvania Press). He has received fellowships from the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Center for Advanced Judaic Studies of the University of Pennsylvania, and the Frankel Center for Advanced Judaic Studies at the University of Michigan. He is also the editor of four volumes and author of essays on the intersection of medieval Jewish and Islamic cultures.