



# Tangier: A Literary Guide for Travellers (The I.B.Tauris Literary Guides for Travellers)

*Josh Shoemake*

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"You can be anyone in Tangier," writes author Josh Shoemake in this entertaining and comprehensive Literary Guide for Travellers, for it is an "edge city," where one can "remake yourself, rewrite your backstory, reform or deform, indulge your subconscious, cultivate nemeses or simply start anew." Multilingual and positioned at a crossroads of cultures, Tangier's "edge" mystique is the result of its place between Africa and Europe, overlooking both the Atlantic and the Mediterranean, between what the ancients called the known and unknown world. For writers, this meant Tangier was more than a destination, but an escape, an "Interzone," as William Burroughs called it, a place that has attracted spies, outlaws, outcasts, and literati working at the edge of literary forms, and breaking through artistic borders for hundreds of years.

As a guide, this book is a work of literature itself. Organizing his Tangier tour by the many maze-like neighborhoods, famous buildings, and sections of the city, Shoemake reveals how Tangier's outlaw originality is what most astonishes readers when encountering the literary history of the city for the first time. Particularly in the past century, writers working in Tangier have produced some of the most incendiary and influential books of our time, the most prominent being Burroughs' *Naked Lunch* and Bowles' *The Sheltering Sky*. The list of writers who were drawn to Tangier's "edge" is long, including many giants of world literature: Ibn Battuta, Samuel Pepys, Hans Christian Andersen, Alexandre Dumas, Mark Twain, Edith Wharton, Walter Harris, Jean Genet, Paul and Jane Bowles, Tennessee Williams, William Burroughs, Brion Gysin, Patricia Highsmith, Jack Kerouac, Truman Capote, Gore Vidal, Allen Ginsberg and other Beat poets, Alfred Chester, Joe Orton, and Mohamed Choukri, among others. Throughout each chapter, the author includes excerpts of journal entries, books, poems, plays, and more that help bring the city's artistic heritage to life through the words of the geniuses who lived and worked there, and as he details the city's corresponding history and geography at the time.

Extensive text features include several photographs and illustrations of writers and sites in the city, a map with key sites highlighted (with a URL address for an online version), an Author Profiles section with short bios of the writers and their works, a Chronology of Tangier's cultural and political history, a bibliography for further reading, and an index for handy reference. **Tangier: A Literary Guide for Travellers** is a must-have for Moroccan tourists, armchair adventurers, and literature buffs who will love the unconventional and the originals who made the city on the edge their home.

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