



CASABLANCA

Though Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall were not waiting on the pier, and Rick's American Cafe went unlocated, Casablanca, Morocco provided the backdrop for another memorable port visit. The Wadi, the King's regional representative, extended a warm and sincere welcome to USCGC Dallas by opening a newly constructed mosque for visitation. This is the third largest mosque in the world. The two larger mosques are located in Egypt. The flight deck became an outdoor setting for a reception hosted by the U.S. Embassy for senior Moroccan military and civilian officials. The green laser lights burning heavenward from the mosque toward Mecca added to the festive atmosphere. During the three day port call, the crew was busy hosting tours and demonstrations for Moroccan Navy groups; Dallas had guests there from senior commanders to two recruit training companies. Dallas provided an Honor and Color Guard for a commemoration of the Allied soldiers lost in a ceremony at the American Cemetery. Dallas even had volunteers participating in community service projects at a handicapped children's center and at an all girls orphanage. The crewmembers that were not busy with the duty section or involved with volunteer work, explored the open air bazaars and haggled prices with vendors in a setting that was straight out of Aladdin. Dallas ballcaps and T-shirts were the hot ticket items with which to barter with and several crew members took advantage of their entrepreneurial skills, sporting new leather jackets upon their return from the marketplace. All hands enjoyed the nightlife in western world discos and clubs. As we sailed out of the harbor, it was readily apparent as to why Casablanca is regarded as the "Arabian Playground".

