



“The Tooth and Nothing but The Tooth”

by
Chris ‘Dr. Smile Maker’
Branfield

Life Changing Dentistry Abroad - Dr. Smile Maker On Tour

Hello there. It’s dark early now as we get into November and Halloween has been and gone. Did you go to Hull fair this year? I hope that you avoided any teeth breakages on toffee, there have been many a dental casualty at Hull fair and on bonfire night. Hull City’s season still hasn’t got started. I wouldn’t say that time is running out but I must admit that my optimism is starting to waiver a tad. Come on lads.

Still Here To Tell The Tale

Well, I’m still here and back in one piece from my dental charity adventure from Morocco. I don’t know where to start as it was a trip that has really affected me. I didn’t know what to expect really but came back a better person for it I think. It is a bit of a cliché but I learned things about myself. It culminated in treating some Berber children in a school in El Jabah, a fishing village on the North East Mediterranean coast.

The Blue City In The Hills

After flying over to southern Spain to meet up with the team of three other

dentists, three ‘normal’ people and our Belgian guide, Domien we took the ferry to Tangier, Morocco. Domien is a great guy, full of life and conscientious almost to a fault. You have to work very hard to make things happen and go to plan in Morocco, a promise to ‘be there’ does not count for much with some. He was constantly on the phone talking in different languages, French, Spanish, Flemish and bits of Arabic. Our first night in Morocco was in the Chechaouen, pronounced Chef Chowan, the ‘Blue City’ in the Hills. Here we had a guided tour of the Medina by a chap called Mohamed. It was surprising in this place with hotels and restaurants to see woman washing clothes at two washing stations on the river channelled through the town. The buildings are painted blue so not to attract bugs, ingenious.

The washing stations in Chechaouen

The next day we set off on the first leg of the trek over the Rif Mountains.



We began in the Land Rover on the narrow track due to the bad weather. I was so glad to get out and walk as the rocking and rolling on the uneven ground was horrendous. The weather was bleak as we headed up to the clouds. Don’t get me wrong this was not a Chris Bonnington type expedition by any way but it was a good trek.

Our destination for the night was a hotel/hostel in Albergue De Azilane. It said hotel but that was pushing it a bit. This was the home of Abdul Karim. He was 52 but looked a lot more weathered than that. He was a great character and very hospitable. He had a small holding in the middle of a hash field. The mountains were covered in hash fields even some of the really steep bits close to the edges of shear drops, amazing. They had harvested the month before This hostel had a main room with a long table and cushioned benches around it. There were four other bedrooms.

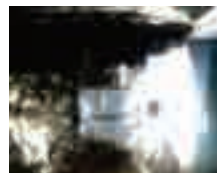
Above: Over Mountains And Through Hash Fields To Treat The Kids



Head in the Clouds



Abdul and Domien



Abdul’s kitchen

How we slept depended on how many people turned up. Nobody was turned away so if loads turned up we were sleeping on top of each other. As it turned out I had a mattress to myself in a room with three other blokes, phew, it could have been worse. This was my best sleep of the trip although I was woken early to the sound of chickens and donkeys/mules. Here we ate home-made breads honeycomb and olives for breakfast.

We had an evening meal of a tagine prepared. It was mainly vegetables but had some bits of ‘meat’ in it. Now I have not seen little ribs like this before in my food and there was little to no grisly meat on them. I don’t know what it was and that might be best, mmm. I keep thinking rat but I might just be winding myself up. Abdul’s kitchen had goats and chickens in it! A cold shower in torch light before breakfast and of we went again. Round 2 in the mountains.

A Big Thank You

I hope that I haven’t bored you so far but all this carrying on I have run out of space so will finish it next time with the proper nitty gritty and important bit of getting kids out of pain. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the very generous people that have donated money to this charitable cause. You know who you are and I am very grateful. We do hope to continue our work on a bigger scale now that we have established relationships here. I must stress that we were all self-funded and not on a mid-life crisis freebee.

What A Difference A season Makes

I must mention my daughter’s football team. You may remember that they got absolutely hammered most weeks last season. However, this year something seems to have clicked and as I write they are top of the league, hoorah! They even managed to win one game 13-0. They know what it is like to lose like that so I hope that the other team are not too downhearted. Well done girls, keep up the effort.

Take care and be good.

Chris

Chris Branfield is Principal Dentist at Castle Park Dental Care, 8-9 Castle Green, Cottingham, telephone 01482 848428. He has been in dental practice for 17years and has a special interest in life changing dentistry with dental implants and cosmetic dentistry. www.castleparkdental.co.uk

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