

Directory

CONTENTS

Accommodation	276
Activities	278
Business Hours	280
Children	280
Climate Charts	281
Courses	282
Customs	282
Dangers & Annoyances	282
Discount Cards	283
Embassies & Consulates	283
Festivals & Events	284
Food & Drink	285
Gay & Lesbian Travellers	285
Holidays	285
Insurance	286
Internet Access	286
Legal Matters	286
Maps	287
Men Travellers	287
Money	287
Photography	288
Post	288
Shopping	289
Solo Travellers	291
Telephone & Fax	291
Time	292
Toilets	292
Tourist Information	292
Travellers with Disabilities	293
Visas	293
Women Travellers	293

ACCOMMODATION

As a well-established tourist destination, Tunisia has accommodation ranging from rock-bottom basic to five-star glitz. Recently a number of smaller, chic boutique hotels have arrived on the scene – welcome additions to the market. Throughout this book, accommodation is divided into three price categories: budget, midrange and top end. Some hotels add an air-con supplement to their prices in summer – this is usually around TD5 to TD10. We have included this supplement in the prices listed where appropriate.

BOOK YOUR STAY ONLINE

For more accommodation reviews and recommendations by Lonely Planet authors, check out lonelyplanet.com/hotels. You'll find the true, insider low-down on the best places to stay. Reviews are thorough and independent. Best of all, you can book online.

Although it can vary from town to town, budget accommodation includes camping, hostels and cheap hotels – where a bed will usually range from TD8 per person to TD40 for a double. In the cheapest places, your few dinars won't get you much more than a dorm bed or a cell with a shared bathroom. At the upper end of the scale you'll probably get somewhere quite pleasant with a private bathroom. Lone women travellers will feel uncomfortable in the lowest-end cheapies, though exceptions are specified throughout the book; youth hostels are usually a good bet.

Midrange accommodation can start at TD50 per double, rising to TD130. In this price range, you'll usually have a private bathroom, more space and hopefully higher standards of cleanliness, and – on rare occasion – charm, views and a pool.

For top-end rates (from around TD130 for a double), you can expect luxurious, though not always stylish, rooms with satellite TV, fluffy towels, direct-dial telephone and a bathtub. Most places in this price bracket also have a pool, spas and a hammam (bath-house). 'Name' resorts and *hôtels des charme* – boutique properties – can be substantially higher and often quote in euros.

Camping

There are few camp sites in Tunisia and facilities tend to be basic and set up for campervans. Most charge between TD5 and TD8 per person. Showers are either free or cost a few dinar, while those with cars and campervans pay around TD4 for water and electricity. The best camp sites are those in Tozeur (p253), Ksar Ghilane (p247), Douz (p241) and near Kélibia (p118).

PRACTICALITIES

Newspapers & Magazines

Daily newspapers include the French-language *La Presse* (www.lapresse.tn) and *Le Temps* (www.letemps.com.tn), and Arabic-language *Assabah* (www.assabah.com.tn) and *Al-Hourriah* (www.alhourriah.org). In English, *Tunisia News* (www.tunisiaonlinenews.com) is available weekly, and the website has a weather feed, plus you can usually find (two-day-old) major European and US papers, and (week-old) *Time* and *Newsweek*. *Jeune Afrique* (www.jeuneafrique.com) is a pan-African newsmagazine, founded in Tunisia but now based in Paris; *iD déco Tunisie* is a new interiors glossy for the country's style set (both are in French).

Radio

Tune in to local French-language Radio Tunis (98FM; www.radiotunis.com), BBC World Service on short wave (15.070MHz and 12.095MHz) or Mosaïque FM (94.9FM; www.mosaïquefm.net).

TV

The French-language TV station (www.tunisiatv.com) includes 30 minutes of news at 8pm daily; satellite TV can be found in top-end hotels.

Electricity

Almost universal and reliable, electricity is 220V; wall plugs have two round pins (as in Europe).

Weights & Measures

Tunisia uses the metric system (weight in kilograms, distance in metres); conversion charts are on the inside front cover of this book.

Camp sites apart, it should be possible to camp anywhere as long as you obtain permission from the landowner. You can also ask locals where good camping spots are. Sleeping on the beach at Raf Raf and Ghar el-Melh in the north is only possible out of season, and is never an option at the resort beaches around the Cap Bon, Jerba and Sousse.

Hostels

Hostels fall into two categories: *auberges de jeunesse*, which are affiliated with Hostelling International (HI); and government-run *maisons des jeunes*.

The *auberges de jeunesse* are recommended, though vary from the impeccable to the just passable. Most have prime locations, such as a converted palace in the Tunis medina (p78), an old *funduq* (travelers' inn) in Houmt Souq on Jerba (p270) and on the beach in Nabeul (p114).

You must be a member of Hostelling International to stay at an *auberge de jeunesse* (for membership information, see p283). The hostels generally charge about TD6 to TD12 per night, with a basic breakfast (eg

coffee, bread, croissants and jam) usually only a few dinars extra. Many impose a three-night limit during high season.

Maisons des jeunes, on the other hand, often have all the charm of a barracks, though there are exceptions, such as Hammamet's central beachside option (p107). Almost every town has one, but they can be far-flung and hard to reach without private transport, and their use by large groups can mean they are noisy, and cleanliness can be an issue. They all charge around TD8 for a dorm bed or up to TD20 including all meals.

There are a few places where the *maison des jeunes* concept has evolved into a *centre des stages et vacances*, combining hostel and camp site. These are on the beach at Aghir on Jerba (p275) and in the oasis at Gabès (p221). Camping charges are usually TD7 for two people. Electricity and hot showers are available for a few dinars extra.

Hotels

Tunisian hotels fall into two main categories: classified hotels, which have been inspected and awarded between one and five