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Intermediate Student’s Book

Life

Making a deal

**00.17–00.28** The souk in the city of Fez is Morocco’s oldest market. In one of its small stalls, a craftsman is making patterns on a metal tabletop. But all around him, people are making deals.

**00.32–00.34** This is business, Moroccan-style.

**00.38–01.05** Sales in the souk happen face-to-face – it’s very personal and very busy! The vendors have everything a shopper could want. Sandals are next to fish bowls, and nearby, birds in cages watch the scene. One vendor sells kaftans, others sell slippers or jewellery. Across the alley, a man sells dates and apricots to hungry shoppers. In the souk, there really is something for everyone.

**01.06–01.14** And in the city of Fez, a certain kind of small red hat is very easy to find. The fez was created here and named after the city bargaining culture. For visitors, the question is not ‘What should I buy?’ but ‘How should I buy it?’. That’s where they get a real education in making a deal.

**01.28–01.47 Vincent** You have to start yourself at one third or something and then you bargain up to 50 per cent, and that’s your maximum.

**Consuela** And they go down twice as hard as we go up with the price. So, then you get at half the price they say at first.

**Vincent** But it’s really a game. The Moroccans are very good at bargaining and they say they are the best in the world.

**01.48–01.53 Ahmed** You know, here in Moroccan culture, for everything you should bargain. We don’t have really a fixed price.

**01.54–02.08** In the souk, shopping is an exercise in bargaining. Here, it’s the natural thing to do, and just about everyone does it. However, visitors who want to practise making a deal here had better be careful! They ought to know a few things first.

**02.10–02.12** Beginners at bargaining pay more. How much more?

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**02.13–02.25 Ahmed** Sometimes 20 to 30 per cent more ... over than the price what the Moroccan people pay. So you should always for example, if he charges you 1,000 dirham, you give him 600 dirham, then you go up, he goes down, and then you can arrange between you.

**02.26–02.31** Vendors aren’t trying to cheat customers. It’s like a test to find out who’s the best bargainer.

**02.32–02.41 Mohcine** Some customers pay more than another one … we find customers more easy … they don’t bargain too much.

**02.42–02.49** The real test for any bargainer is the carpet shop. This is where the sellers really pressure customers to buy something.

**02.51–03.08 carpet seller** Excuse me, you want to buy a camel for the price of a donkey? Impossible. No, that’s too low, believe me, that’s too low.

**Chris** Once you end up in a shop, you sit there drinking tea, and you say ‘I don’t want to buy anything.’ But then it’s like, ‘Well, just offer a price, offer a price.’ You know, ‘500? What’s your best price?’ And you’re like, ‘We don’t want to buy it.’ And they’re like, ‘Oh, OK, 300.’

**03.09–03.10** But it’s all part of the game.

**03.11–03.24 Chakib** Well, we ask a little bit high price because everyone comes with an intention to bargain. They know that in Morocco they bargain a lot, so of course we leave a step to make discounts and haggling the price.

**03.25–03.27** Some shoppers enjoy the challenge too.

**03.28–03.39 Gonnie** The secret is looking very careful at how they do it. And watch them, how they move. And then go step by step, and see where you end.

**03.40–03.44** There is one thing that all tourists should watch out for: they shouldn’t buy too much!

**03.45–03.55 Bo** The thing is, they make it so cheap for you. While they start up so high, and at the end it sounds so cheap, you know, it’s only one sixth of the price or one eighth of the price, but, for this money, I can’t leave it!

**03.56–04.06** For some visitors to Fez, it may be difficult to leave without buying more than they planned. One thing here is certain – at the souk, everyone can make a deal!

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