

Books of the month: July

Anthony Sattin cruises in Herodotus's wake in Turkey, and hits the bar with Coward, Flynn and Fleming in Tangier

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The lunch run: Josh Shoemake gives Tangier the literary treatment (Philippe Michel)

Tangier: a Literary Guide for Travellers

By Josh Shoemake (IB Tauris £16.99/[Sunday Times Bookshop price £15.40](#), inc p&p)

Tangier has had moments as glorious and as louche as any city on earth. Many of the louche moments came between 1923 and 1956, when the city was the centre of an international zone administered by France, Spain and Britain. Josh Shoemake is an American who has lived in Morocco for much of the past two decades, and he spent three years in Tangier, hanging out with some of the finest writers resident there, including Paul Bowles.

His literary companion is a work of passion and of experience — this amount of detailed information takes time to acquire, and even more time to tie to specific locations. Take, for instance, the chapter on Dean's Bar (and which other literary guide has an entire chapter devoted to a bar?). In its high days, you might have found Francis Bacon, Noël Coward, Errol Flynn or Ian Fleming at Dean's, some of them at the same time. Shoemake concludes that the only way to recover some of Tangier's lost charm is "by communing with its ghosts, still walking through the

streets on their way to legendary cocktail parties". And the only way of doing that, short of spending a few years reading and a few more walking the streets, is by digesting this fascinating guide.