

USER GUIDE



IDEAS

This deluxe CD set is designed to be shared with others, and we invite you to be creative and define 'sharing' in whichever way best suits you. All of the items create a starting point for a listening party—whether private and intimate, or large and communal.

A listening party is a gathering or party where people come together to listen to a new album of an artist. They are an effective means to introduce people to music they've never heard before; guests come for the food and good company, but leave having been exposed to music they might not have listened to otherwise.

You might take your listening party on the road for a spontaneous road trip. Or you may keep it small and simple at someone's home or apartment. Or you may decide to relive the desert experience and set up a tent outside. The options are limitless. The music is the central focus, but the other items included in the set can be adaptable to suit whatever environment you choose.

For more ideas, we recommend looking up [#WelcomeToTheDesert](#) on social media to get inspiration from other Tinariwen fans on how they've planned their parties. Don't forget to use the hashtag when sharing your own experience so that we can follow along!

Password entry code for a private
Q&A session with Tinariwen

Poetry book

Tifinagh alphabet magnets

Indigo-dyed fabric

Sandalwood incense sticks

Tea glasses

Gunpowder green tea with recipe

MP3 music download code

Tinariwen CD / LP

BOX CONTENTS

WELCOME

The "Welcome to the Desert" deluxe CD set is intended to offer a multi-sensory listening experience while also providing an introduction to the rich and unique Touareg culture. We invite you to share the music and the experience with family and friends by hosting a listening party (more details in the following section). This brief guide book will explain some of the cultural artifacts included in the set and also offer some suggestions and ideas for how to create an enriching experience.

This is an introduction to what is a very rich and ancient culture. If you're curious to learn more, there's a wealth of information on our website.

"A brief but important note on cultural appropriation: Though this box is meant to provide exposure to a culture that is remote and relatively unknown, we also caution against cultural appropriation, which is "the adoption or use of the elements of one culture by members of another culture"; especially in such a way that misinterprets or misuses the cultural elements. Many of the artifacts, symbols, and traditions we've introduced in this box have deep cultural significance and meaning, and we must respect and honor the sacredness of those customs. We especially caution against getting any Tifinagh tattoos unless you consult with a Touareg first!



¹ "Cultural appropriation." Wikipedia. May 08, 2017. Accessed May 09, 2017. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_appropriation.

ELEMENTS

MUSIC (SOUND)

Music is, obviously, the central focus of a listening party. You may have received a CD or an LP of a Tinariwen album, depending on your preference, in addition to a code to download the MP3s online. Do with these options what you will! You might prefer a small, intimate gathering around a record player, or a large-scale party with music blasting from a surround-sound speaker system. Or you might take your party on the road with friends for a spontaneous road trip. Tinariwen's music has a universally meditative and calming effect, so you may just have a relaxing party of one at home with incense and candles. Be creative; we invite you to experience Tinariwen's music on your own terms, in your own way. Use [#WelcomeToTheDesert](#) to let us know how you've chosen to use this set.

WAYS TO SHARE

- We feel music is best as a shared experience, and hospitality is a central tenet of Touareg cultural values, so we suggest inviting guests over for a listening party. It can be as formal or informal, structured or spontaneous as you like.
- If the MP3s are all you need, pass the CD or LP on as a gift for a friend. The liner notes provide a wealth of information and rich photography that are the perfect introduction to this unique music and culture.
- All of Tinariwen's songs are uploaded to YouTube and Spotify. If there's a particular song you love, share a link on social media for others to listen. Your friends will thank you for it. Contribute to a collection by using [#WelcomeToTheDesert](#).

TEA (TASTE)

Tea is an important part of the Touareg culture. It is served in small glasses (provided), and is usually drunk strong and sweet. It is served as a gesture of hospitality to guests, so ideal for a listening party. The aroma of the tea is enticing and further adds to the experience.

We've included a recipe with a step-by-step method for making traditional Touareg tea. If the Touareg technique feels too complex for you, just brew a strong and sweet cup of the tea provided in the box by adding one teaspoon of tea per 8oz. cup of boiling water.

Touareg tea is made slowly, over conversations with friends. We offer you this small introduction to the tradition of tea and with it, we invite you to slow down, take in the aroma of sugary tea brewing, and become present with your guests, the music, the atmosphere, and feel yourself transported to the desert.

WAYS TO SHARE

- Make tea for friends!
- The tea box and glasses make an excellent gift for tea aficionados.
- The complete interaction is meant to be shared, so if possible, make the tea in the presence of your guests as you listen to the music. Watching the tea being aerated and poured from glass to glass can be a meditative experience in and of itself.

INCENSE (SMELL)

Incense plays an important role in Touareg culture and is used to ward off bad spirits. Though the brewing green tea has its own beautiful aroma, we included incense as an additional element in this multi-sensory experience. The scent is sandalwood, which is commonly used across the world, but also in Touareg societies.

If you don't enjoy incense, use your favorite candle to represent the wood fire lit during cold desert nights.

WAYS TO SHARE

- Start burning the incense in advance of your listening party, so your guests know they've entered a special space and are about to experience something new, different, sacred even.
- Pass one of the incense sticks along to a friend.

Right: Members of Tinariwen robed in indigo.

Photo credit: http://historie.rachot.cz/2004/_tisk/tinariwen100x67.jpg

- Incense can be used as fumigation or to scent one's clothes. If you like the sandalwood scent and want to carry it with you, burn some incense near your closet or wardrobe; the scent will permeate your clothes.

FABRIC (TOUCH)

The Touareg wear a distinct and recognizable fabric that is dyed with indigo. Because of the lack of water, the dye is pounded into the fabric itself. The dye then rubs off and stains the skin, lending the Touareg their nickname of "the blue men." The dyed skin is also considered a protection from the sun and a symbol of status.

The "taghelmust" or "shesh" is the name of the face veil traditionally worn by Touareg men. The Touareg are a unique Muslim culture in that the men veil their faces but the women have greater liberty in their manner of dress. The shesh is long—ten meters or more—and serves the purpose of protection from the sun and sand. It also has cultural significance, as it is considered shameful for men to reveal their emotions to elders or strangers.

The fabric piece provided is not long enough for a shesh, and is offered more as a cultural artifact than for practical use.

WAYS TO SHARE

- The indigo fabric is worn as garments by Touareg men and women, and does not have any other use. This fabric piece is offered as a unique cultural element made in Mali that can be kept as a conversation piece, just as a souvenir might be.

TIFINAGH ALPHABET

Tinariwen speak a Berber dialect called Tamasheq, and the written form is an ancient form of writing called Tifinagh. It is one of the oldest scripts still in use today, but is losing popularity as more Touareg move to the cities and communicate in French, Arabic, or even English. There are efforts to revive the language and the script; this is our small attempt to raise awareness of this ancient tradition and help keep it alive.

There are several sounds and letters in the Tamasheq alphabet that are not used in English, so those letters were excluded from this set. Conversely, some English letters and sounds don't have an exact equivalent in Tamasheq or Tifinagh. Thus, you may not find all the letters you need to spell out an English name or word, but try thinking of alternatives ('j' in place of 'ch,' for example). Also, focus more on the phonetics than the spelling. For the name Mike, try spelling out the sound M-Y-K rather than using letters that correspond to letters M-I-K-E.

WAYS TO SHARE

- Reminiscent of the magnetic poetry trend in the past, these alphabets can be put up your refrigerator to encourage friends, family, roommates, and visitors to interact with the symbols and spell out their own words or names.
- There are four sets of alphabets included in the box, so pass one along to a friend to help spread knowledge about this ancient script.

- Remember, tattoos are permanent, so we do not recommend getting any Tifinagh tattoos unless you are certain it is written correctly and you have confirmed the meaning with a Touareg person!

POETRY (MEANING)

The book of poetry is an English translation of lyrics from Tinariwen's albums, songs which speak of universal themes such as freedom, loss, love, home, and nostalgia. They also offer insight into the difficulties of desert life, their adoration of the desert landscape, and their calls for unifying in the struggle for peace and independence.

WAYS TO SHARE

- Do one of these poems speak to you? Take a photo of the page or copy the poem and share on social media. Remember to include the [#WelcomeToTheDesert](#) so we can see what has inspired you.
- Marginalia caravan: Marginalia is the practice of underlining, highlighting, commenting, or writing notes in the margins of a page. We've left ample space for such practice, and encourage you to pass your marginalia-filled copy to a friend, who can then reflect on your notes and also add their own. Let the caravan go as long as people are willing and actively engaging. Remember to share the progress and the final version with the hashtag [#WelcomeToTheDesert!](#)

Q&A SESSION

You've also received a password code for a private UStream Q&A session with Tinariwen during their American tour. Guard this password! Details about the Q&A session will be emailed to you closer to the date.

WAYS TO SHARE

- As Tinariwen do not speak English, questions to the band will be submitted in writing to allow for translation via a chat platform. This Q&A session is a special gift and invitation to you for buying the deluxe CD set, but if you'd like to invite friends to attend the Q&A session, feel free!

