

# CASABLANCA, MOROCCO

## CONSULATE GENERAL'S RESIDENCE, VILLA MIRADOR

Villa Mirador, built in 1935 on the outskirts of Casablanca, is a residence designed in the French North African colonial style. It was requisitioned by U.S. forces following the American invasion of North Africa in November 1942. The next month President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill exchanged secret telegrams to arrange a high-level Allied war meeting because, in Churchill's words, "we have no plan for 1943 which is on the scale of or up to the level of events." What followed was the Casablanca Meeting in January, 1943.

General Eisenhower, who was directed to plan for the meeting, reported in late 1942 that the neighborhood in which Villa Mirador was located, Anfa, had a hotel "surrounded by a group of excellent villas situated five miles south of Casablanca" which seemed ideal for the meeting. The residence which impressed all as "charming, . . . exactly suited as to what was required," complete with a "nice garden, light and airy," was Villa Mirador, which seemed "top-rate."

Churchill arrived on January 13 and immediately set up his travelling "war room" which was outfitted with updated maps of all theatres of war. That evening he and the British Chiefs of Staff laid the groundwork to pressure the U.S. for an invasion of Sicily rather than the European mainland approach that was the traditional American preference. The British, of course, were ultimately successful in this aim: the Allies invaded Sicily later that year with full American support, paving the way for the fall of Italy and ultimate American and Allied success in Western Europe.

Perhaps the most important legacy of the Casablanca Conference, however, was the bold new policy of an "unconditional Surrender." Over the course of consultations and discussions held at the Anfa Hotel and the Villa Mirador, Churchill and Roosevelt agreed that "Peace can come to the world only by a total elimination of German and Japanese war power." This would mean "the destruction of a philosophy [in these countries] which is based on the conquest and subjugation of other peoples," a policy that would result in "the reasonable assurance of world peace for generations."

On May 2, 1947, Villa Mirador was purchased by the United States from its original owner, Paul André Jules Cauvin. It has since served as the official residence of the U.S. Consul General.

