

Sophia

Recorded at a pharmacy on Steinway Street, Astoria

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“My name is Sophia. I am Moroccan. I grew up in Astoria, New York, which is a super North African community.

The last World Cup was just a dream come true. It was amazing for Moroccans. And honestly I felt like the North African / African / Middle Eastern world, I felt like everyone was kind of rooting for Morocco. You had the Arabs rooting for Morocco, you had the Africans rooting for Morocco, it was just like a beautiful thing that kind of unexpectedly brought together so many people that I didn't realize had our back.

I actually happened to be in the UK for the first two games then I came here. So I also experienced it in London, with all sorts of people gathering in coffee shops. And specially the earlier games not even knowing what to expect, just being happy that we even made it. And obviously rooting for your team, but we were in a difficult division. I remember we played the United States, we played Croatia, we played Portugal.

Portugal was probably the most iconic game, and a difficult one too, because a lot of Moroccans grow up loving Cristiano Ronaldo. We are such huge CR7 fans. Messi or Ronaldo, but we have a deep love for him. So you know, when we played Portugal naturally we wanted to win but we were very nervous, and we didn't think we would be able to, but we did. And we were the ones that cost Cristiano Ronaldo his World Cup, like one of the main reasons. So it was kind of bitter sweet. More sweet than bitter, but still a little bitter sweet.

The vibes here were incredible. Everyone was out on the streets, when we won, it basically became a big parade of people, everyone going out on the streets with the flags and celebrating together. You felt it in real life, you felt it in your daily life. People who maybe didn't even know what Morocco was, or where Morocco was, are now like “oh my gosh you're Moroccan, you did amazing in the World Cup, we were rooting for you guys.”

Or seeing people in Palestine when everything was going on over there, celebrating. Seeing people from all corners of the World who don't have a lot of hope and rooting for us and celebrating us.. and so much support that was unexpected. Honestly that was one of the best parts. Even online, just seeing that support, all types of people rooting for Morocco.”