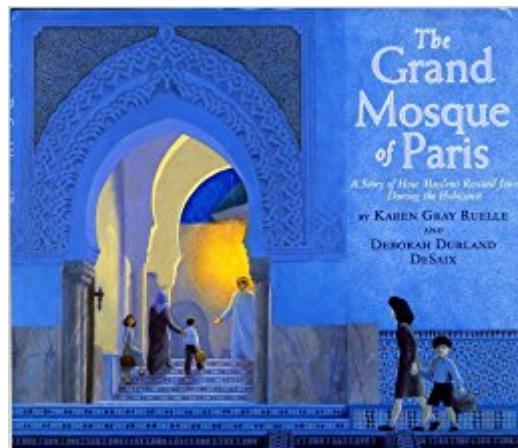




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# The Grand Mosque Of Paris: A Story Of How Muslims Rescued Jews During The Holocaust



## Synopsis

When the Nazis occupied Paris, no Jew was safe from arrest and deportation. Few Parisians were willing to risk their own lives to help. Yet during that perilous time, many Jews found refuge in an unlikely place--the sprawling complex of the Grand Mosque of Paris. Not just a place of worship but a community center, this hive of activity was an ideal temporary hiding place for escaped prisoners of war and Jews of all ages, especially children. Beautifully illustrated and thoroughly researched.~ Â

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: NC1090L (What's this?)

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Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars 19 customer reviews

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Age Range: 8 - 11 years

Grade Level: 3 - 6

## Customer Reviews

Grade 4

•The authors of *Hidden on the Mountain: Stories of Children Sheltered from the Nazis in Le Chambon* (Holiday House, 2007) return to France to uncover a little-known story. While they admit that "many of the details are destined to remain forever uncertain, with few facts proven to a historian's satisfaction," Ruelle and DeSaix feel strongly that the bits and pieces of information that they were able to unearth provide convincing evidence that the Muslims of the Grand Mosque of Paris saved Jewish lives. While the format and appearance of this title are similar to other picture books of rescue and resistance during the Holocaust, such as Carmen Agra Deedy's *The Yellow Star* (Peachtree, 2000) and Ken Mochizuki's *Passage to Freedom* (Lee & Low,

1997), the text provides more of a descriptive history of events than a retelling of a story. The oil-paint spreads are luminous and beautiful, but they belie the tone of the writing and the presentation of facts. Regardless, this well-researched book belongs on the shelves of most libraries. --Rachel Kamin, North Suburban Synagogue Beth El, Highland Park, IL END --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

The book begins with a quote found in Islamic and Jewish traditions: "Save one life, and it is as if you've saved all of humanity." Today's problems between these two Abrahamic religions are obvious, but there are moments of brotherhood. During the Nazi occupation of France, Jews were being rounded up and sent to concentration camps. One avenue of refuge was the Grand Mosque in Paris, where Jewish adults and children hid, some briefly until they could be spirited away, others for longer stays. Thanks to the mosque's rector, and particularly Berbers from Algeria, many lives were saved. This is a fascinating, little-known piece of history (the afterword explains how difficult it was to research). The authors sometimes try too hard to explain too much to a middle-grade audience, but they effectively capture the desperation felt by the victims and the enormous effort made by the resistance. The evocative paintings in somber colors heighten the tension, but some, like the one of a Jewish girl in front of an intricately designed mosque wall, capture the hope. Grades 3-6. --Ilene Cooper --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Educators are urging parents to introduce more non-fiction into their children's reading repertoire, for the simple reason that non-fiction reading is more prevalent in real life. Add to that the average parent's never ending quest to find good books, and you might have a problem on your hands. "The Grand Mosque of Paris" is a children's book dealing with a fascinating piece of forgotten history, how Muslims helped Jews survive the holocaust in Nazi occupied France. Written in clear, descriptive prose, "Grand Mosque" not only helps expose children to something other than popular fantasy literature, it also provides parents with an opportunity to respectfully discuss religious and cultural diversity and provide a nuanced view of the world. For us to be one global family, it's very important to help children to learn about cultures and religions, and how each have contributed to Mankind's journey. This is a task best not left to Hollywood. Since reading non-fiction is something of an acquired taste, you might opt to read it aloud to your child, as I decided to do. This was a story I knew nothing about, so both parent and child benefited from the read.

What a sweet story! My daughter teaches Freshman English and her students were reading a book

about the Holocaust a couple of months ago. We were talking about that book when she suddenly remembered this book and shared briefly the story with me. I knew then that I had to get the book. There is so much enmity and polarization among "religions", but this story brought tears to my eyes as the heart of humanity in selfless giving was expressed in such a caring and careful manner. This was a true case of practical spirituality manifesting itself under extremely trying and dangerous circumstances. Even though it is written primarily as a children's book, it crosses effectively into the adult book arena, due to the nature of the content and the authors' style of writing.

Beautiful Picture book about how the Iman and Rector of the Grand Mosque of Paris were able to save Jews of North African descent by having them pose as Muslims and live in the mosque during WWII. Some other Jews who did not look North African were quickly sent through the underground to safer ground. Wonderful book and very moving.

Great book. Wonderful information about the Berbers the natives of North Africa and how they helped the Jewish community in France during the WW2

I found out about this book from a film review about a French film with the same story, but this picture book that depicts the tales of how the Grand Mosque of Paris was used to house Jews during the time of the Vichy government did not disappoint one bit.

I loved this book. I have a passion for history and it was nice sharing a story that was hidden for so long with my child. Well written.

I'm always on the lookout for good quality books to buy for my children and this was definitely worth it. It's best for ages 7-14 -- my 9 year old truly enjoyed the story. Also, the illustrations are absolutely wonderful. Highly recommend!

great story

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