Pilgrimage | Pilgrimage Routes and Holy Sites along the Way

'Every year Muslim pilgrims converge on Mecca from all corners of the Muslim world.'

The Qur'an says: 'And proclaim to mankind al-Hajj. They will come to you on foot and on every lean mount; they will come from every deep and distant mountain highway. (XXII: 27–8)' Every year Muslim pilgrims converge on Mecca from all corners of the Muslim world. The upkeep of the pilgrimage routes, the rest stations, reservoirs and watchtowers, were the responsibility of the local Muslim governors or rulers.



Name:
Astrolabe

Dynasty:
Hegira 417 / AD 1026–7 Umayyads of al-Andalus

Details:
National Museums of Scotland
Edinburgh, Scotland, United Kingdom

Justification:
For pilgrims astrolabes were indispensable tools for orientation and navigation.



Name:
Astrolabe

Dynasty:
Hegira 459 / AD 1067 Taifa kingdom of Banu Dhi'l-Nun (Dhu'l-Nunids)

Details:
National Archaeological Museum
Madrid, Spain

Justification:
Al-Andalus was an important centre for the production of astrolabes which were indispensable to travellers on pilgrimage. This example was made in Toledo and is in the collection at Madrid Museum.



Name:
Planispheric astrolabe

Dynasty:
Hegira 614 / AD 1217–18 Almohad

Details:
Batha Museum
Fez, Morocco

Justification:
Astrolabes were also used for determining the time of prayers.



Name:
Prayer rug

Dynasty:
Hegira 13th century / AD 19th century Ottoman

Details:
St. Mungo Museum for Religious Life and Art, Glasgow Museums
Glasgow, Scotland, United Kingdom

Justification:
Pilgrims traded prayer rugs while travelling, or offered them as votive gifts to mosques.



Name:
Distance marker (milestone)

Dynasty:
Hegira 66–86 / AD 685–705 Umayyad

Details:
Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts
Sultanahmet, Istanbul, Turkey

Justification:
Milestones marked the distance from one post to the next on the pilgrimage routes. Part of the text reads: 'From here to Damascus is 109 miles'.



Name:
A pilgrim's flask

Dynasty:
Hegira 8th century / AD 14th century Mamluk

Details:
Jordan Archaeological Museum
Amman, Jordan

Justification:
A flask was the one essential item carried by most pilgrims to hold drinking-water on the long journey.
