The Umayyads | Official Patronage

‘Architectural patronage was a demonstration of the power of the new faith.’

For the Umayyads architectural patronage was a demonstration of the power of the new faith in general and their own dynasty in particular. Umayyad patronage included major religious buildings such as the Dome of the Rock and the Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem, and the Great Mosque of Damascus. The mosque as an architectural type unique to Islam was created during the pre-Umayyad period on the basis of the House of the Prophet in Medina. The Umayyads contributed new features that in time became characteristic components of every mosque: the minaret (symbolic of the presence of Islam and from which the call to prayer is made); the mihrab (to symbolise the presence of the Prophet) and the maqsura (an enclosed space reserved for the imam, the leader of prayers, or caliph) next to the mihrab.



Name:
Dome of the Rock

Dynasty:
Hegira 72 / AD 691 Umayyad

Details:
Jerusalem

Justification:
Built under the auspices of 'Abd al-Malik bin Marwan on the Haram al-Sharif in Jerusalem, the Dome of the Rock was completed in 72 / 692; it is one of the earliest and most important Islamic monuments. It was subject to a number of renovations instigated at different periods by several different caliphs and sultans.



Name:
Aqsa Mosque

Dynasty:
Hegira 65–96 / AD 685–715 Built in the Umayyad period; renovated in the Abbasid, Fatimid, Ayyubid, Mamluk and Ottoman periods

Details:
Jerusalem

Justification:
The mosque was constructed by order of al-Walid I on the Haram al-Sharif in Jerusalem. It was rebuilt several times due to repeated earthquakes.



Name:
Umayyad Mosque

Dynasty:
Hegira 87–96 / AD 706–715 Umayyad

Details:
Damascus, Syria

Justification:
A Congregational Mosque, it was built under the auspices of the caliph al-Walid I and was completed in 96 / 715.



Name:
Al-Qastal Minaret

Dynasty:
Hegira 101–5 / AD 720–4 Umayyad

Details:
Qastal, Jordan

Justification:
The palace complex of al-Qastal owns the only extant minaret from the Umayyad period; the minaret has a spiral staircase.



Name:
Two carved limestone blocks

Dynasty:
Hegira first quarter of the 2nd century / AD first half of the 8th century Umayyad

Details:
Museum of Jordanian Heritage, Yarmouk University
Irbid, Jordan

Justification:
The palace complex of al-Qastal aptly demonstrates the evolution of a typical Umayyad decorative repertoire of profuse stone-cut geometric and vegetal motifs.
