

The Fatimids | Pleasures and Celebrations at Court

'The Fatimids enjoyed the outdoor life, keeping well-maintained gardens and orchards.'

The Fatimids enjoyed the outdoor life, keeping well-maintained gardens and orchards. Visitors were invited to walk in the grounds to enjoy the decorative fountains and sounds of running water. Some royal residences had menageries that accommodated a variety of exotic animals and birds. Beyond the palace gates, royal and upper-class society pursued a variety of sports including hunting and horsemanship. Birds, hares and gazelles were pursued for sport using birds of prey, dogs and horses. Polo, mace-striking and spear-throwing were other favourite sports.



Name:
Ivory casket

Dynasty:
Hegira 5th–6th centuries / AD 11th–12th centuries Fatimid

Details:
Museum of Islamic Art at the Pergamon Museum
Berlin, Germany

Justification:
Both utilitarian and expensive objects were decorated with motifs relating to the natural world: gardens, orchards and the wilderness.



Name:
Jar

Dynasty:
Hegira late 4th–early 5th century / AD late 10th–early 11th century Fatimid

Details:
Burrell Collection, Glasgow Museums
Glasgow, Scotland, United Kingdom

Justification:
Both utilitarian and expensive objects were decorated with motifs relating to the natural world: gardens, orchards and the wilderness.



Name:
Oliphant

Dynasty:
Hegira 5th–6th centuries / AD 11th–12th centuries Fatimid

Details:
Museum of National Antiquities (Historika Museet)
Stockholm, Sweden

Justification:
A Fatimid ivory horn decorated with deer, rabbits and other animals. Both its function and decoration relate closely to hunting.
