

Al-Franj: the Crusaders in the Levant | Pilgrimage to the Holy Land

‘Travel and pilgrimage to and through the Holy Land was hazardous even in times of peace.’

During the Crusader period the Levant was divided up into a number of rival city states. Some of these were Crusader principalities, while local rulers governed others. This meant that travel and pilgrimage to and through the Holy Land was hazardous even in times of peace and particularly dangerous during the Crusader period. Despite these difficulties there were plenty of resolute travellers determined to reach the Holy Land.



Name:
Pilgrim bottle

Dynasty:
Hegira 7th century / AD 13th century Ayyubid / early Mamluk

Details:
Museum of Mediterranean and Near Eastern Antiquities (Medelhavsmuseet)
Stockholm, Sweden

Justification:
An unglazed earthenware pilgrim's flask typically carried by travellers and pilgrims.



Name:
Pilgrim's Flask

Dynasty:
Hegira 742–6 / AD 1341–5 Mamluk

Details:
National Museum of Damascus
Damascus, Syria

Justification:
An unglazed earthenware pilgrim's flask typically carried by travellers and pilgrims.



Name:
Pilgrimage proxy scroll

Dynasty:
Hegira 602 / AD 1206 Ayyubid

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

Justification:
A Muslim is obliged by his or her faith to make the trip to Mecca at least once in a lifetime; if he (and it was particularly difficult for women) was not able to fulfil the duty of pilgrimage it was possible to send a proxy who would bring back a certificate to show they had visited all the Holy sites.
