

Water | Water Management

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Knowledge of land irrigation allowed Arab rulers to expand their jurisdiction to the Mediterranean. The upkeep of cisterns in caravanserais was essential for travellers, merchants and pilgrims, and canals were carved through the desert to irrigate the land. Mechanical constructions were built along the rivers, and wells were exploited to help distribute the water further a field.



Name:

Norias (nawa'ir) of Hama

Dynasty:

Hegira 6th–10th century / AD 12th–16th century Atabeg, Ayyubid, Mamluk, and Ottoman

Details:

Hama along the Orontes River, Syria

Justification:

In the city of Hama, norias (pl. nawa'ir) raised water from the River Orontes to supply urban institutes, such as mosques, madrasas, and public gardens.



Name:

Nilometer

Dynasty:

Hegira 247 / AD 861 Abbasid

Details:

Cairo, Egypt

Justification:

The Nilometer is a type of well. It is filled with water from the Nile by means of three tunnels; the water is then distributed through subterranean canals.



Name:

Qastal

Dynasty:

Hegira, before 126 / AD 744 Umayyad

Details:

Al-Qastal, Jordan

Justification:

Although situated in the middle of the desert south of Amman, the complex at al-Qastal owned a vast water-collection system, including a dam and aqueduct.



Name:

Menara

Dynasty:

Hegira 5th / AD 11th century (first lake); Hegira 10th / AD 16th century (first pavillion); Hegira 11th / AD 17th century (final monument) Almohad; Sa'did; Alawid

Details:

Marrakesh, Morocco

Justification:

This artificial water basin, first constructed by the Almohads (r. 524–668 / 1130–1269), was an important source of water for the citizens of Marrakesh in Morocco and it witnessed several periods of construction and maintenance.
