

Women | Muslim Women's Costume and Jewellery

'Jewellery accessories were widely used to further enhance the impact of the costume.'

Garments often had to be fastened and secured. Affluent women could afford fine gold and silver hooks and buckles that were functional and decorative at the same time. Jewellery accessories were widely used to further enhance the impact of the costume, and women of all backgrounds were proud to show off their finery at public events, not only as symbols of beauty but also of their wealth. Indeed, jewellery items were accumulated as assets that could be converted into money when needed. Some jewellery designs incorporate verses from the Qur'an, prayers or protective talismans to ward off the 'evil eye'.



Name:
Pair of fibulae

Dynasty:
Hegira 13th century / AD 19th century 'Alawid

Details:
Museum of the Udayas
Rabat, Morocco

Justification:
Exquisite gold fasteners that are decorated with precious stones; they would have finished off a costume ensemble very elegantly.



Name:
Fragment of a brooch

Dynasty:
Hegira 524–668 / AD 1130–1269 or Hegira 627–982 / AD 1229–1574 Almohad or Hafsids

Details:
National Museum of Setif
Setif, Algeria

Justification:
A finely worked silver clasp that would have been used to pin items of clothing together.



Name:
Pendant

Dynasty:
Hegira 5th century / AD 11th century Fatimid

Details:
Museum of Islamic Art
Cairo, Egypt

Justification:
The text on this enamelled brooch reads 'God is the best protector', a familiar protective invocation applied to fashionable accessories.



Name:
Hand-palm amulet

Dynasty:

Hegira, late 13th century / AD late 19th century Ottoman

Details:

Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, Glasgow Museums
Glasgow, Scotland, United Kingdom

Justification:

Charms like these have always been popular in the Muslim world and were used by all levels of society.

**Name:**

Medallion (bracteate)

Dynasty:

Hegira 524–668 / AD 1130–1269 or hegira 627–982 / AD 1229–1574 Almohad or Hafsids

Details:

National Museum of Cirta
Constantine, Algeria

Justification:

This charm includes an Islamic invocation to Allah.
