

Haj – the fifth pillar of Islam

With its origins in the Biblical era, the annual pilgrimage to Mecca attracts over two million Muslims each year. The five-day spiritual journey follows the footsteps of Muhammad and the sacrifices made by Abraham in striving to follow God's will

Prelude

Grand Mosque in Mecca: Pilgrims perform *tawaf* – circling *Kaaba* at its centre seven times – and *saiy* – walking seven times between *Safa* and *Marwah*.

Saiy symbolizes search for water by Abraham's wife, *Hajar*, before spring welled up in desert

Mecca

Al-Masjid al-Haram Grand Mosque

Rebuilt in 1992 to hold 1.5 million pilgrims

Umrah gate

Fahd gate

Abdul Aziz gate

Fatah gate

Marwah

As-Salaam gate

Safa

Zamzam – ever-flowing well

Footprint of Abraham

Kaaba

Built by Prophets Abraham (Ibrahim) and Ishmael (Ismail)

610AD: Rebuilt by Muhammad and Quraish tribe

683AD: Reconstruction on original foundations by Caliph Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr after destruction by Syrian Army

693 AD: Rebuilt by Caliph Abdul Malik bin Marwan on Quraish plan

1659: Renovated after massive flood damage

1996: Rebuilt using original stones

NORTH

Tomb of Hajar and Ismail, wife and son of Abraham

Hateem – original boundary of Kaaba

WEST

Yemeni corner

SOUTH

Mecca remained a sacred site between eras of Abraham and Muhammad, during which time a number of idols were worshipped there

Day 1 Pilgrims walk to Mina where they spend night

Mina

Sea of tents

Slaughterhouse

Muzdalifah

8km

5 miles

2 Waqfa

Central rite of Haj: Pilgrims climb Mount Arafat, site of Muhammad's final sermon

Arafat

Mount Rahmat

Mosque

3 Eid al-Adha (Feast of Sacrifice)

Stoning of three pillars at Jamara, representing temptations of Satan. Pillars have been replaced with 26m-long walls to improve flow of crowd.

Slaughter of an animal to give away meat to the poor

4 Return to Mecca for final tawaf

Construction

Area: 11m x 9m

Height 12m

1m thick stone walls – polished exterior

Hajar-ul Aswad

Black Stone – embedded in south-eastern corner of Kaaba

Path of tawaf – seven times around Kaaba