

the whole mass was burnt. The residual material was broken up and sifted. It was then ready for use in mortar, particularly for external rendering, as it has good weather resistance. Gypsum plaster, **juss**, was also used for internal finishes on important buildings.

The roof of a mud brick building was built up in layers supported on substantial rafters cut from palm wood. On top of this da'an mats and then palm leaf matting were laid. This was topped by a thick layer of mud mortar, carefully sloped to take the relatively rare rain water to a spout. This was usually made from a hollowed out half section of palm trunk that discharged the water away from the wall to prevent erosion damage. The span of a palm log rafter was a maximum of 3 to 4 metres and this controlled the width of rooms.



Interior of the restored mosque at a fort in Qattara oasis