

# Abu Ishaq Al-Sahili Encyclopedia Article

## Abu Ishaq Al-Sahili

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# Abu Ishaq Al-Sahili

fl. c. 1325

Spanish Arab architect who was one of the most highly acclaimed builders of the medieval Islamic world. A native of Granada, Abu Ishaq was brought to West Africa by the Malian emperor Mansa Musa. The emperor apparently contracted Abu Ishaq's services during his celebrated *hajj* or pilgrimage to the Muslim holy city of Mecca, during which time Musa spent prodigious amounts of gold and established himself as the first sub-Saharan African ruler widely known throughout the Western world. Abu Ishaq returned with Musa to Mali in around 1325, and there was ordered to build the largest mosque in the region. Five centuries later, British traveler Henry Barth wrote of the mosque, "its stately appearance made a deep impression on my mind."