

Roman Amphoras at Split

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In the summer of 1988, a study was made of Roman amphora fragments that have been found in the joint Minnesota/Dalmatia excavations (partially funded by the Smithsonian Institution) in the Palace of Diocletian at Split. While a small group of fragments dates from at least as early as the Augustan age, most of the pieces are late Roman. About half of those belong to the African categories now frequently called "cylindrical" and "spatheia." Datable for the most part to the fourth and fifth centuries A.C., these two types are difficult to distinguish, but study of the collection at Split has helped to clarify their differences and similarities. The large proportion of African fragments at Split also adds to the growing body of evidence pointing to a continuation of the exportation from North Africa of olive products into the fifth century. In addition, the amphoras add to our knowledge about the history of the palace at Split after the death of Diocletian and point to activity at the site before the building of the palace.

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