

Malta

7000 years of history

For you to discover

In Malta and Gozo

The Megalithic Temples



Built between 3800 and 2000 BC, these temples are the earliest freestanding structures in the world. They are often situated in areas of special geographic interest, are gigantic in size and exhibit exceptional building techniques and stylistic details. Refer to the brochure "The Enigma of Prehistory", available from any Malta Tourist Office.

In Malta

Valletta (there's a map of Valletta in the brochure "An island at the heart of the Mediterranean")

The Upper Barrakka Gardens

The view from these gardens is magnificent – a superb panorama of Grand Harbour and the Three Cities of Vittoriosa, Cospicua and Senglea.

The National Museum of Archaeology



This museum, housed in the Auberge de Provence, contains several excellent collections of objects found at the main Neolithic and prehistoric sites on the islands (pottery, sculpture, statuettes ...).

The Fine Arts Museum

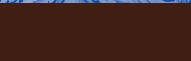
Housed in this museum are several collections, which belonged to the Knights of St. John. There is also a permanent exhibition of works by Carpaccio, Perugino, Tintoretto, Reni, Valentin, Mathias, Stomer, Preti, Ribera, Tiepolo, Favray and Vernet. One section of the museum is reserved for works by Maltese artists.

The National War Museum

This museum is inside the historic Fort St. Elmo. You can see a large selection of war relics from the plane "Faith" to the George Cross, awarded to the Maltese in recognition of their bravery in the Second World War. Weapons, uniforms and war vehicles are also exhibited.

St. John's Co-Cathedral

Formerly the Conventual Church of the Order, St. John's Co-Cathedral is, historically speaking, one of the most important buildings in Malta. It was designed by Gerolamo Cassar, the Order's chief architect-engineer and built between 1573 and 1577. Its sober façade is in stark contrast to the magnificence of its interior. The floor of the cathedral is a rich tapestry of marble tombstones, where the names of famous people from all over Europe are inscribed. The carved walls and ornate columns herald the baroque period and the floor is



echoed in the splendour of the vault paintings by Mattia Preti. On either side of the nave is a succession of chapels, each representing one of the Order's many langues. The "Beheading of St. John the Baptist" and "St. Jerome", two masterpieces by Caravaggio, hang in the Oratory.

The Palace of the Grandmasters

This palace, also designed by Gerolamo Cassar, was completed in 1574. It contains portraits of the Grandmasters and several European monarchs, several examples of period furniture and many works of art. A unique collection of Gobelin Tapestries hangs in the Tapestry Chamber. The Council Chamber is decorated with a beautiful frieze by Perez d'Aleccio, depicting episodes from the Great Siege. The ceiling of the entrance corridors was painted by Nicolo Nasoni. Many of the Staterooms are decorated with friezes depicting episodes from the history of the Order. Make sure you don't miss the works by Ribera, Van Loo and Batoni.



The Armoury

The Armoury is in two halls on the ground floor of the Palace. Weapons and armour from different periods are displayed in an impressive permanent exhibition.

The Manoel Theatre

This theatre was originally built as a court theatre under Grandmaster Manoel de Vilhena in 1731 and is one of the oldest theatres in Europe. Performances are held regularly.

The Mediterranean Conference Centre

This building was originally the hospital or "Sacra Infermeria" of the Order of St. John. It was built in 1574 under Grandmaster Jean de la Cassiere and was considered to be one of the best hospitals in Europe. Food was served on silver plates, some of which, together with some beautiful ceramic pharmacy jars, can be seen at the Fine Arts Museum. In 1976, the "Sacra Infermeria" was restored and converted into a conference centre. The Exhibition Hall, formerly the Great Ward of the hospital, is said to be one of the longest halls in Europe. It is 161 metres long. The main conference hall-cum-theatre seats 1,400 people.

The Three Cities



Across Grand Harbour, to the south of Valletta, are the three historic towns of Vittoriosa, Cospicua and Senglea, commonly referred to as Cottonera or the Three Cities.

The Maritime Museum

This museum, once a bakery belonging to the Royal Navy, highlights the most important moments of Malta's maritime history. Exhibits include two ceremonial barges (Wignacourt's and Vilhena's), several models of sailing ships and galleys of the Order, as well as a number of authentic guns and cannons.

The Folklore Museum

This museum is housed in the Inquisitor's Palace in Vittoriosa, formerly the seat of the Inquisition in Malta. A section of the building contains interesting specimens of tools and objects of devotion of a bygone age. Of special interest to visitors are the judgement hall, the private apartments and the dungeons.

Mdina

The old capital of Malta is a typical medieval town, situated in the centre of the island. The "Silent City", as it is known, commands a magnificent view of the island.

The Cathedral

The XI century Siculo-Norman cathedral was destroyed by an earthquake in 1693. The present cathedral was built by the Maltese architect Lorenzo Gafa four years later and is believed to stand on the site originally occupied by the house of Publius, the Roman governor at the time of St. Paul's shipwreck and stay on the island. The Cathedral Museum contains several art treasures, including a superb collection of woodcuts and paintings by Albrecht Durer.



The Museum of Natural History

Housed in a palace built by Grandmaster Vilhena, this museum is divided into seven sections, which contain local and foreign specimens of fish, insects, birds, shells and fossils alongside a number of geology exhibits.

Rabat

The Museum of Roman Antiquities – The Roman Villa



Evidence of Malta's wealth and magnificence during the Roman rule (218 BC – 870 AD) may be seen here. Look out for the very fine mosaics.

St. Agatha's and St. Paul's Catacombs

These catacombs in Rabat are typical of the underground Christian cemeteries, which were common in the 4th century AD. Of special interest are the round tables, hewn out of the rock and known as "agape tables", where parents and friends reclined to partake of a farewell meal in honour of their loved one.

In Gozo

(Consult the brochure "Gozo, the island of love and honey")

Traditionally known as Calypso's Island, Gozo is separated from Malta by a narrow but very deep channel. The capital Victoria, also known as Rabat, is 6 km away from Mgarr, Gozo's main harbour.

The Citadel and its Museums



The Citadel or "Gran Castello" has an imposing cathedral, impressive ruins and a number of old houses surrounded by historic fortifications. One of these old houses, known as "Norman House", has been restored and transformed into a Folklore Museum. The other two museums are the Museum of Archaeology and the Cathedral Museum.

Ggantija Prehistoric Temples

The complex is made up of two very well preserved temples built side by side on the Xaghra plateau.

Calypso's Cave

This cave, overlooking the red sands of Ramla Bay, has a legendary connotation with Calypso and dominates one of the most breathtaking views in Malta and Gozo.

The Ta' Pinu Basilica

It stands in open country close to the village of Gharb and the hamlet of Ghammar. In its simplicity, it is one of the most beautiful churches of the Maltese Islands.

MUSEUMS & HISTORICAL MONUMENTS

In Malta

National Museum of Archaeology - Valletta

Fine Arts Museum - Valletta

War Museum - Valletta

Palace Armoury - Valletta

Ghar Dalam Cave and Museum - Birzebbuga

Tarxien Temples - Tarxien

Hagar Qim and Mnajdra Temples - near Qrendi

Maritime Museum - Vittoriosa

Inquisitor's Palace - Vittoriosa

Natural History Museum - Mdina

Museum of Roman Antiquities - Rabat

St. Paul's Catacombs - Rabat

Opening Hours

All these museums and monuments are open every day (except Public Holidays):

Monday to Saturday: 8.15 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.

Sundays: 8.15 a.m. to 4.15 p.m.

Summer Opening Hours (16/06 to 30/09):

Monday to Sunday: 7.45 a.m. to 2.00 p.m.

Grandmasters' Palace, Valletta

Tel: (356) 21 221221

Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday: 8.30 a.m. to 3.45 p.m.

Thursday and Friday: 8.30 a.m. to 4.00 p.m.

Saturday and Sunday: by appointment

Summer Opening Hours (16/06 to 30/09):

Monday to Friday: 8.00 a.m. to 12.45 p.m.

(Closed occasionally during Parliamentary sessions)



St. John's Co-Cathedral, Museum and Oratory, Valletta

Tel: (356) 21 220536

Open every day (except Sundays and Public Holidays)

Monday to Friday: 9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. and 1.30 p.m. to 4.30 p.m.

Saturday: 9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.

Cathedral Museum, Mdina

Tel: (356) 21 454697

Open every day (except Sundays and Public Holidays)

Monday to Saturday: 9.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. and 1.30 p.m. to 4.30 p.m.

Fort St. Angelo, Vittoriosa

Open on Saturday: 9.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m.

Every first Sunday of the month: 10.00 a.m. to 12.00 (noon)

Guided tours between 9.15 a.m. and 12.15 p.m.

Manoel Theatre, Valletta

Tel: (356) 21 222618

Monday to Friday: 10.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. and 5.00 p.m. to 7.00 p.m.

Saturday: 10.00 a.m. to 12.00 (noon)

Guided tours from Monday to Friday at 10.30 a.m. and 11.30 a.m.

Hal Safieni Hypogeous, Paola

Tel: (356) 21 825579

Open from 9.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m.

Reservation absolutely necessary

Visits in groups of 10 on the hour, every hour

In Gozo

Museum of Archaeology, Citadel, Victoria

Folklore Museum, Citadel, Victoria

Natural History Museum, Citadel, Victoria

Ggantija Megalithic Temples, Xaghra

Ta' Kola Museum (Windmill), Xaghra

Opening hours:

Monday to Saturday: Opening at 8.30 a.m.

Closing at 4.30 p.m. (from 01/10 to 31/03)

at 6.30 p.m. (from 01/04 to 15/06 and 16/09 to 30/09)

at 7.00 p.m. (from 16/06 to 15/09)

Sundays: 8.30 a.m. to 3.00 p.m.

Cathedral Museum, Citadel, Victoria

Tel: (356) 21 556087

Monday to Saturday: 1.30 p.m. to 4.30 p.m.

(Closed on Sundays and Public Holidays)

Toy Museum, Xaghra

Tel: (356) 21 562489

Monday to Saturday: 10.00 a.m. to 12.00 (noon) and 3.00 p.m.

to 6.00 p.m.

(Closed on Sundays and Public Holidays)

Ninu's Grotto, Xaghra

Tel: (356) 21 556863

Monday to Saturday: 8.30 a.m. to 6.00 p.m.

Sunday: by appointment

Xerri's Grotto, Xaghra

Tel: (356) 21 560572

Every day: 9.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m.

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