



PARTICIPANT GUIDE: Malta & Sliema

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Welcome!

Dear Participants,

Malta European Mobility (MEMO) is an organisation which hosts and promotes European Mobility projects. These projects provide an annual opportunity to complete a training period through the total integration of culture, language and work systems of the countries comprising the European Union. For you, this means the improvement of your professional skills, through a professional experience in Malta, in order to increase mobility and foster innovation.

We hope that you enjoy your stay with us, the programme and your time in Malta. To facilitate you 'settling in' and enjoyment of the program in Malta, we have compiled this guide with an aim to provide the basic information you will need.

Whilst you are in Malta, the people at MEMO are available to provide you with assistance should you have any queries or problems. We hope that you will achieve your goals for the programme, and we anticipate that this will be a rewarding and enriching experience for you, that will contribute positively towards the aims of the programme.

Good luck!

MEMO – Malta European Mobility
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Important: This is a guide only, to provide information only. The information in this guide is subject to change at any time. You may need to verify information with the source.



Malta: Geography, Politics & History, In Brief

Malta, officially the Republic of Malta (Maltese: Repubblika ta' Malta), is a densely populated developed European microstate in the European Union. The island nation comprises an archipelago of seven islands situated in the Southern European areas of the Mediterranean Sea, 93 km off the coast of Sicily (Italy), 288 km east of Tunisia and 300 km north of Libya. The islands enjoy a Mediterranean climate.

Throughout its history, Malta's location in the Mediterranean Sea has given it a strategic importance. Consequently, a sequence of powers including the Phoenicians, Romans, Fatimids, Sicilians, Knights of St John and British have all conquered Malta. Malta gained independence from the United Kingdom in 1964 and became a Republic in 1974 but remains a member of the Commonwealth of Nations. It is currently a member of the European Union, which it joined in 2004, and also of the United Nations.

Malta is known for its world heritage sites, most prominently the Megalithic Temples which are the oldest free-standing structures on Earth. According to the Acts of the Apostles, St. Paul was shipwrecked on the island. Malta is also considered a potential location for the mythical lost island of Atlantis.

Malta's capital city is Valletta. The country's official languages are Maltese and English, which replaced Italian in 1934. Malta has a long legacy of Roman Catholicism, which continues to be the official and dominant religion in Malta.



Etymology

The origin of the term "Malta" is uncertain and the modern day variation derives from the Maltese language. The most common etymology is that it comes from the Greek word μέλι (meli) ('honey'). The Greeks called the island Μελίτη (Melite) meaning "honey" or "honey-sweet" possibly due to Malta's unique production of honey; an endemic species of bee lives on the island, giving it the popular nickname the "land of honey". Not only was there Greek influence on the island as early as 700 BCE, but the island was later governed by the Greek-

speaking Byzantine Empire from 395 to 870. Another etymology is the Phoenician word Maleth, the Phoenician name for the islands, meaning "a haven" in reference to Malta's many bays and coves.

Source: *Wikipedia, Malta.*

History

Although small, Malta has a long and rich history, with evidence for habitation going back to the Neolithic era (4th millennium B.C.). The country boasts some of the world's most ancient standing buildings (the Neolithic temples), and its strategic location and good harbours in the middle of the Mediterranean have attracted Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Arabs, Normans, Crusaders, the French and finally the British, with the colonial period lasting until 1964.

The Knights of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, also known as the Knights Hospitallers, took over sovereign control of Malta in 1530, and by 1533 the Order had built a hospital at Birgu (one of the Three Cities) to care for the sick. In 1565, Suleiman the Magnificent, Sultan of the Ottoman Empire, mounted a great siege of Malta with a fleet of 180 ships and a landing force of 30,000 men. In response the Order, with only 8,000 defenders, drove the Ottoman Turks away after a hard siege of several months. After this siege, the Order founded the city of Valletta on a peninsula, and fortified it with massive stone walls, which even withstood heavy bombing during the Second World War. By 1575 the Order had built a new large hospital known as the Grand Hospital or Sacred Infirmary in order to continue with its primary mission of caring for the sick.

In 1798, the French under Napoleon took the island on 12 June, without resistance, when the Grand Master of the Order capitulated after deciding that the island could not be defended against the opposing French naval force. French rule lasted a little over 2 years, until they surrendered to the British Royal Navy, under Admiral Nelson's command, in September 1800.

- Great Britain formally acquired possession of Malta in 1814. The island staunchly supported the UK through both World Wars.
- The island was awarded the George Cross for its heroic resistance during the Second World War. An image of the cross is displayed on the flag.
- Malta obtained Independence from the UK on 21 September 1964, and gained European Union membership in May 2004.

Source: <http://wikitravel.org/en/Malta>

The Maltese Language

Maltese (Maltese: Malti) is the national language of Malta, and a co-official language of the country alongside English, while also serving as an official language of the European Union, the only Semitic language so distinguished. Maltese is descended from Siculo-Arabic (the Arabic dialect that developed in Sicily, Malta and

the rest of Southern Italy). About half of the vocabulary is borrowed from Italian and Sicilian, and the English words make up to 20% of the Maltese vocabulary. It is the only Semitic language written in the Latin alphabet in its standard form.

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maltese_language

Introducing Sliema

Sliema (or Tas-Sliema) is a town located on the northeast coast of Malta. It is a centre for shopping, restaurants and café life. Sliema is also a major commercial and residential area and houses several of Malta's most modern hotels. Sliema, which means 'peace, comfort', was once a quiet fishing village on the peninsula across Marsamxett Harbour from Valletta, but now Sliema and the coastline up to neighbouring St. Julian's constitutes Malta's main coastal resort.

Source: *Wikipedia, Sliema*



Things to do in Sliema

Chill out in Sliema's Cafes

Sliema is an old colonial town by the sea across from the Capital of Valletta. Since the end of the second World War it has undergone a dramatic change and is now a chic and trendy commercial centre.

Most of the island's brand name fashion outlets and boutiques are either located here or have branches in the area. But there is more to Sliema than just shopping - namely its magnificent collection of pavement cafes.

Chilling out at those pavement cafes, where one is also served various small local dishes and wines, is a daily highlight of Sliema life. People and tourists mix happily to enjoy the views from the wide, tree-lined promenades. Sliema sea front is also a cauldron of generations, with the beautiful young strutting along towards the entertainment centre of Paceville and the not-so-young sitting on the numerous public benches, often being nannies for their children's offspring eager to try the playfields in the well-kept gardens below.

It is this lively, relaxed Sliema scene that greets you as you go into one of the pavement cafes for your espresso or a quick pre-lunch ftira, a delicious offshoot of the irresistible Maltese bread loaf. And while you do so, you inevitably watch the big tankers and the cruise liners sailing by, followed by the tourist boats on their way to Gozo and Comino and the fishing boats coming in from a night's ordeal. All you need is a Monet to capture it. Or at least a digital camera.

Malta: Sightseeing

Popular Sights & Attractions

Dingli Cliffs

You may already have done your homework, so the fact that Malta is a small, hilly island slanting south-eastwards may not come as a surprise. Thank goodness for that slant, though, as it means most of the western coast has high cliffs and the panoramic views that go with them.



Dingli Cliffs, the sheerest and undoubtedly the most popular, are a must for people intent on walking, jogging and abseiling. They offer other opportunities, like the less hectic pastime of discovering and cataloguing wild flowers, butterflies and even snails, at least those that have not already been plucked away for tomorrow's traditional Maltese dish of aljoli or stuffat.

The cliffs are named after the nearby village of Had Dingli where it is no cliché to say time has stubbornly stood still. A walkabout in the whole area will also be rewarding in the sense that you are just half an hour away from the town of Rabat, with its public gardens, early-Christian catacombs and Roman remains, and the old Capital, Mdina, the Silent City.

Nature-lovers may find more time for the Island's largest wooded area, between Dingli Cliffs and Rabat, known as Buskett, originally a hunting ground for the Knights who had also made it a point to let loose a number of exotic animals they could eventually hunt amongst the trees. Have no fear, the animals are long gone, but this beautiful green spot offers peace and serenity as well as some lovely surprises like natural springs, orange groves, castles - one of them with its resident ghost - and grandmasters' lodges.

Back up on the edge of Dingli Cliffs, one can watch the farmers extracting fruit from impossible earth as the lone isle of Filfa, a bird sanctuary, shows up almost clumsily across the horizon, a mere five kilometres off the coast.

You will need to do a bit of walking if you are heading to Dingli Cliffs by bus as the route stops in the town of Dingli and you will have to get to the cliffs themselves by foot. Then again, you shouldn't let that stop you taking in this magnificent sight. The bus you are looking for is the number 81.

Source: <http://www.101malta.com/index.php/Things-to-See/Dingli-Cliffs.html>

The Three Cities

“Visit Naples and die” is the famous travel dictum. One hopes not, however, as there are many other beautiful places to visit all over the world. A visit to Malta’s historic “Three Cities”, also known as The Cottonera, would easily make you think back of Naples. It is the character of the people of Bormla, Birgu and Isla that triggers this assimilation. They tend to be jovial and helpful, outgoing and proud of the historical and cultural heritage that they live with everyday of their lives.



Imagine waking up and taking your first coffee of the day opposite the views of the palaces and auberges of the Knights, with the domineering skylines of churches and robust fortifications all around you. There is history at every step you take in Birgu, Bormla and Isla, known officially and in tribute as Vittoriosa, Cospicua and Senglea.



For too many years the cities had been left to sadly rot away in their history as the early tourism drive chose to concentrate on the northern sandy beaches, the new hotels and holiday complexes and the shopping areas of Valletta, Sliema and Mdina. The Three Cities very rarely got a mention on the colourful brochures until recent years when the area finally got its chance....and grasped it.

Today, the Cottonera can be safely said to be the fastest-growing tourist area in Malta, following a major rehabilitation exercise that has seen the creation of new, specialised tours, the opening of numerous new restaurants and museums, a splendid yacht marina and a full calendar of events that vary from re-enactment shows to candlelight evenings that emphasise the beauty of those narrow, winding streets.

Waiting to be picked like the idiomatic cherry on the cake, there is the charming village of Kalkara, a suburb of the Three Cities, from where you can get breath-taking views of the bastioned cities and Valletta from across the water. Happily, you don’t have to die after.



Getting to the Three Cities is relatively easy by car but do consult a map to be sure. By bus you will need to get yourself to Valletta first and then catch the appropriate bus from there. Buses 1, 2, 4, and 6 take you to Bormla and Birgu while bus 3 takes you to Isla. For more information on these three, must-see cities visit their respective websites: www.birgu.gov.mt , www.islalocalcouncil.com and www.liquidstudios.com.mt/bormla

Source: <http://www.101malta.com/index.php/Things-to-See/The-Three-Cities.html>

Valletta

As cities go, Valletta is one of Europe's most famous. Built over 500 years ago it is often described as a city 'built by gentlemen, for gentlemen' and has recently been made a World Heritage Site signifying its cultural importance. When you walk into the city expect an explosion of activity, colour, noise and confusion.

Apart from being Malta's capital, Valletta is also the commercial and political centre and is filled with hundreds of shops as well as a vast daily market. For the more discerning visitor there is plenty of history and culture to get your teeth stuck into.

Valletta is teeming with museums, galleries, palaces and other places of extreme interest – most of which are very much worth visiting. But, more importantly than all of that, it is the people who make Valletta a truly beautiful place to visit.



Whether you are walking down the main road – Republic Street – or off down one of the many, many side streets, you will find a wide variety of people each with a story to tell. Don't limit yourself to the beaten track either. Under the fortifications and around the bastions there are plenty of interesting little places to look at, bars to sit in and while away the time and, of course, people to chat to.

Unlike some other capital cities in Europe, there are no parts of Valletta that are out of bounds - everywhere is safe. So dig a little deeper and find out what really makes this historic town tick.

Getting there? Simple. Catch a bus. 99.99 per cent of all buses in Malta go to Valletta. You would have to be very unlucky to catch one that doesn't.

Source: <http://www.101malta.com/index.php/Things-to-See/Valletta.html>

Fort Rinella

Sitting like a tired dinosaur on top of Fort Rinella, limits of Kalkara, is the world's largest cannon – a 100-ton Armstrong gun – originally built by the British in Malta to safeguard that part of the coast and to protect naval shipping in the area from the newest generation of Italian battleships of the time.



Luckily it was never fired in anger, but an amusing legend about its first test still does the rounds much to the chagrin of military experts and local conservationists who have done a wonderful job restoring and up-keeping

both the cannon and the fort.

The persistent legend says that when the gun was first fired, the 2000-pound shell fell just a few metres down into the nearby sea. If told, Queen Victoria cannot have been amused. Because a single shell cost, in those days, as much as the daily wage of 2,600 soldiers. In fact, so costly was it that the gun was only fired twice a year for practice.

The cannon and the fort that has housed it for so many decades are certainly worth a visit. When installed, the massive cannon was state-of-the-art, equipped with a steam powered hydraulic system that traversed, elevated and depressed the gun. Fort Rinella, sometimes also referred to as Rinella Battery, was built between 1878 and 1886, standing above the shore east of the mouth of Grand Harbour, between Fort Ricasoli and Fort St Rocco, in the same region of the island.

Today you can visit the museum and even attend, on the 5th of May of every year, the firing of the gun by volunteers. They use black powder only, of course, so you can't really prove or disprove the legend.

Every afternoon the same dedicated volunteers, dressed as 19th Century British soldiers, provide a tour of the fort that combines lectures, demonstrations and live re-enactments. A Victorian-era muzzle-loading fieldpiece is fired, again without shot, but sorry, there is no legend about that.....

Fort Rinella is one of the most fascinating things you will see in Malta with its authentic re-enactments and quite spectacular cannon. To get there by car you need to head in the general direction of the three cities and then follow the signs to Rinella. By bus you need to be catching the bus in the direction of Kalkara – the number 4. For more information on Fort Rinella visit the website of the organisation that looks after it www.wirtartna.org

Source: <http://www.101malta.com/index.php/Things-to-See/Fort-Rinella.html>

The Blue Lagoon

There are plenty of destinations around the world that offer miles and miles of luxurious sandy beaches with not a person in sight; just a few palms trees, the occasional piece of intriguing driftwood and a few permanently startled crabs.



As the name implies, this is a location where you will find some of the bluest waters around the islands. Located along the coast of Comino, the small island which lies between Malta and Gozo, this lagoon enjoys crisp, clear, turquoise waters that are absolutely perfect for taking a dip.

At both sides of the lagoon are small sandy beaches and a variety of interesting rocky beaches to explore. But it is the water itself which makes this place truly beautiful. In fact, it is so popular with swimmers than boats are no longer allowed to enter the lagoon making it 100 per cent safe as well as beautiful.

Boat trips to the lagoon leave regularly from a variety of places around the island and are reasonably priced making this one place definitely not to miss out on for the seasoned swimmer and occasional dipper alike.

Unfortunately, this is not the sort of place you can get to by yourself, unless you are coming to Malta by boat. For the rest of us, there are numerous local companies offering tours and cruises to this special place -either ask at your hotel or just pop into any of the many shops selling tourism products in prime locations around the island. Alternatively you can drive all the way up to Cirkewwa and catch a boat from there if you prefer.

Source: <http://www.101malta.com/index.php/Things-to-See/The-Blue-Lagoon.html>

Ride a Maltese Dhajsa

When visiting another country it is always nice to touch base with some of its living history. And in Malta you will find that sort of thing everywhere you go.

But one of the most fun and fascinating ways of doing so has to be by taking a tour of the magnificent Grand Harbour in a traditional Maltese dhajsa - a water taxi.



These boats leave from the Valletta Waterfront complex which is where cruise-liners which visit Malta berth during their visit.

On board the tiny vessels you will be taken on a tour of the harbour and shown its stunning points of interest ranging from old fortifications to a sea view of the capital city Valletta.

You will also be shown sites like the inner creeks of the harbour which are still heavily used as commercial centres, the imposing three cities which were built by the knights as well as things like the bombed out breakwater, the Seige Bell memorial and the set of Hollywood blockbuster Gladiator.

And, the old really does meet the new on the water taxis as each passenger is provided with a multilingual audio guide which talks you through the entire trip.

These simple-to-use audio guides are available in English, Maltese, Italian, French, Spanish and German and

each passenger is given a map to help them navigate their way around the harbour. Helped, of course, by the friendly dhajsa boatsman.

Very reasonably priced, tours by dhajsa leave at all times of day, provided there are cruise liners in port.

Source: <http://www.101malta.com/index.php/Things-to-Do/Ride-a-Maltese-Dhajsa.html>

Historic & Heritage Sites

Ggantija Temples

If you think Hagar Qim and Mnajdra in Malta were the ultimate, wait until you cross over to Gozo where the oldest standing structure in the world – the Ggantija temples – awaits you. You are bound to wonder how busy and enterprising these Neolithics must have been.



Were they giants? The very Maltese name for the temples, Ggantija (derived from the word Ggant, meaning giant), says it all. Huge rocks cut and hewn into elaborate stone make up the temples, a feat difficult to do even with today's technology.

How did they do it? What means did they use to carry those gigantic stones from the nearby quarries of the village of Xaghra? You will probably have more questions than answers, but it is this enormous gap in knowledge of that early period in human life and civilisation that fascinates both the visitor and the researcher.

Obviously for this one you will need to be in Gozo first of all so a quick ferry trip will be in order if you are not going to be based on Malta's sister island. Once there, you can either follow the signs to Xaghra, if you are in a car, or catch a bus to Victoria and then another – the number 64 or 65 – to Xaghra. Well worth the effort.

Source: <http://www.101malta.com/index.php/Things-to-See/Ggantija-Temples.html>

Hagar Qim Temples

If you are into the mystery of ancient civilisations and the mystique of their arts and crafts, then the Neolithic temples of Malta and Gozo will fascinate you, a kind of ancient "magical mystery tour". They did the same thing to Eric Von Danekan, famous author of "Chariots of the Gods" and whose research and analyses all over the world popularised the study of archaeology and Indiana Jones type of discovery.



Perhaps the most famous is Hagar Qim temple which was excavated for the first time in 1839 and dates from what is known as the Ggantija phase (c. 3600 - 3200 BC). It stands on a hilltop on the southern edge of the island overlooking the sea and the islet of Filfla and lies some two kilometres south-west of the village of

Qrendi.

It is within the geometric passageways and other eerie spaces marked by the massive stones of these temples that you can really feel the vibes of the civilisation that built them. The fact that these and other temples on Malta and Gozo actually pre-date both the Pyramids of Egypt and Stonehenge is a source of much wonder and speculation amongst students and researchers alike.

Adjacent to Hagar Qim, further towards the cliff face, lies another remarkable temple site, Mnajdra. The whole surrounding area, which is typical of Mediterranean garrigue and spectacular in its starkness and isolation, is a Heritage Park. The temples are soon to be given a bubble-like cover to finally protect them from the elements.

By car you will need a good map to get there but by bus is quite easy – from Valletta and catch bus 138 or 38.

Source: <http://www.101malta.com/index.php/Things-to-See/Hagar-Qim-Temples.html>

Museums & Galleries

In an island so rich with history and culture, no holiday is complete without a visit to one or more of its many museums. It is where a wealth of artefacts and architecture from the greater part of Malta's history is displayed. Malta's national collections are in fact a voyage of discovery of man and his environment from his earliest settlement here in caves some 7,400 years ago to his present-day cultural ideas articulated in modern art.



Many of the collections are housed in magnificent, baroque palaces built by the Knights of Malta. The National Museum of Archaeology is in the Auberge de Provence, an inn of residence of one of the eight 'langues' of the Knights. Its richly-painted, upper salon is an architectural gem.

The National Museum of Fine Arts is housed in an exuberant Rococo building dating from the 1570s but which later served the British Mediterranean fleet. But there are museums also in domestic dwellings where Malta's national museums offer an insight into the life and times of the islanders, from the ruled to the rulers.

The Foklore Museum in Gozo not only documents the rural trades but is also among the best-preserved medieval, domestic dwellings on the islands.

Ta' Kola Windmill, still in working condition, is a step back in time to the work of the miller and bears witness to a thriving rural economy.

As one would expect of a maritime nation, Malta has plenty of memorabilia charting her seafaring past. The Malta Maritime Museum in Birgu and the War Museum in Valletta relate the stories and document the facts.

From man to fauna and flora, these collections chart the Islands. A visit to the natural history museum will help you discover a diversity of plants, insects and small mammals that are still found on the Islands, as well as strange remains of species long extinct. And you thought a week's holiday would be enough?

For more information on Malta's national museums visit www.heritagemalta.com

Source: <http://www.101malta.com/index.php/Things-to-See/The-Museums.html>

Religious Sites

St John's Co-Cathedral

St John's Co-Cathedral is one of Malta's 'must-see' attractions, once the conventual (of, relating to, or befitting a convent or monastic life www.merriam-webster.com) church of the Knights of Malta. Its Oratory houses Caravaggio's famous painting "The Beheading of St John the Baptist" (1608), the only one signed by the reckless artist.



St John's was built between 1573 and 1578 on a design by Maltese architect Girolamo Cassar who was responsible for many other fine buildings in the new Capital of the Knights. Valletta was built soon after the Great Siege of 1565, at a time when the threat from the Ottoman Empire, still smarting from its failure to capture the Island, was an on-going reality.

It is why the inside of St John's Co-Cathedral is in sharp contrast to the bare and rather dull façade, created to maintain the image of a continuing line of fortifications within the city itself. The richness inside, however, makes up for all that. It was largely decorated by another Italian artist and a knight himself, Mattia Preti, who designed the intricate carved stone walls, all done in-situ, and painted the vaulted ceiling and side altars with scenes from the life of St John.

The Co-Cathedral is never fully discovered. Archaeologists and historians continue to find new leads, particularly in the subterranean world that supports this majestic building, with its catacombs and graves underneath the formidable collection of marble tombstones.

The name, Co-Cathedral, refers to its later, dual role. In the 1820s, the Bishop of Malta, whose seat was at Mdina, was allowed to use St John's as an alternative See... All in all, well worth a visit, even by those for whom the idea of walking round a holy place is not top of their holiday agenda.

For more information visit www.stjohnscathedral.com

Source: <http://www.101malta.com/index.php/Things-to-See/St-John-s-Co-Cathedral.html>

Malta Maps

- <http://www.101malta.com/index.php/Maps-of-Malta/malta.html>
- <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/maps/europe/malta/>
- <http://www.maltavista.net/>

Sliema Maps

- <http://www.maltavista.net/en/list/topic/31.html>
- Sliema Local Council - <http://www.sliema-malta.com/map.htm>

Tours

Malta offers a myriad of things to see and do. Various tours showcase Malta's heritage allowing one to experience the island's beauty and these can either be conducted by coach, boat, car, jeep or on foot. These tours start from different locations ending at a multitude of destinations. Each site is unique - from a trip down to the quaint fishing village of Marsaxlokk to a walk around Malta's older capital city, the captivating Mdina, Malta's historical wonders - the temples of Malta and Gozo or perhaps a wander around Birgu's narrow streets and 16th century Auberges ending up at a relaxing wine bar.

If you want to break away from the bustle of everyday activity as well as exhaust-emitting vehicles and seek tranquil, peaceful locations, boat trips are plentiful and provide a different aspect to Malta than on land. Boat rides around the islands are organized on a daily basis. One can even charter a boat for a day or simply make a weekend out of it. Or you can simply escape to the other adjacent islands - picturesque Gozo or snorkelling in the clear blue sea around Comino for a spot of relaxation.

Source: <http://www.101malta.com/index.php/Things-to-Do/Take-a-Tour.html>

Catch the Sightseeing Bus

The buses run on two distinct routes - one covering the south of the island and one covering the north. Each tour takes approximately three hours if you stay on board the bus. However, as they run on a circular route you can hop off one bus and then get on another one later.

The South tour visits Valletta, The Three cities, the picturesque fishing village of Marsaxlokk, the Blue Grotto and the Megalithic Temples of Hagar Qim as well as many, many other fascinating sites.

The North tour takes you through the yacht marinas of Ta' Xbiex, San Anton Palace gardens, Ta Qali Craft centre, the Aviation Museum, Mosta Dome all the way up to the Silent City of Mdina. The return journey takes you past some of Malta's most magnificent beaches as well as the hugely popular tourist centres of Bugibba and St Julians.

Each bus has built in audio guides who offer commentary about all the places visited in eight languages -

English, French, German, Italian, Maltese, Danish, Spanish and Japanese.

Source: <http://www.101malta.com/index.php/Things-to-Do/Catch-the-Sightseeing-Bus.html>

Malta: Arts & Culture

The Crafts Village

From prehistoric times, the Mediterranean was the major source of arts and crafts that were to later flourish all over the old Continent of Europe and beyond. Today every country in the region has its own unique items to present to the visitor as precious souvenirs.

In Malta, modern-day artisans are to be found working in unison at the Crafts Village in Ta' Qali, a former RAF wartime air-field, where these local experts create all kinds of beautiful artefacts, from blown glass to the famous Maltese lace, and from pottery to intricate filigree jewellery.

Whether you're looking for a special souvenir to take home, or just feel like spending an interesting day out watching these skilled craftspeople at work, the Crafts Village at Ta' Qali is the perfect destination. The list to choose from is endless: art and sculpture, ceramics and stone, food and drink, furniture and wood, gifts, glass, jewellery, lace, fabrics and metalwork.

A visit to Gozo will also give you the opportunity to take back home some quality souvenirs. Gozitan crafts have undergone a revival in recent years, not solely because they make interesting souvenirs but also because of their cultural significance.

Some crafts, such as knitwear, basket-making and lace, have a long history. In Gozo, there are two main centres where you can browse and buy crafts: the Crafts Centre in the Citadel of Rabat (Victoria) and the Ta' Dbiegi Crafts Village, at San Lawrenz.

To get to the Crafts Village by car, just follow signs to Ta Qali - the village is well signposted from there. For bus users there is a direct route from Valletta to the village - the number 65 - which also passes through Sliema on the way. For more information on the crafts village itself, check out their website www.taqali.com.

Source: <http://www.101malta.com/index.php/Things-to-See/The-Crafts-Village.html>



Go to a Village Festa

The Maltese festa is one week of non-stop celebrations marked by the most beautiful fire-works when it's dark and some of the most tedious aerial bombardments during daylight. But the daytime noise is made up for with the band music, the street decorations and the different colours and traditions that distinguish one village festa from another.

Confounding? Most towns and villages in Malta and Gozo have two, some even more, parishes, each with its own patron saint, band club and festa. The rivalry is strong. Way back, it used to be more of a hostile nature, but today it is happily restricted to competition for the better decorations, the better fireworks and the better attendances.

There are special stalls selling the traditional festa nougat, peanuts and candy floss, in more recent years joined by the hot-dog and hamburger outlets. The happy atmosphere is augmented by the young men and women singing and dancing together, while inside the magnificently decorated church the religious aspect of the festa is manifested by very well-rehearsed, well-attended functions.

If you wish to play a more active part in the festa proceedings, there is always the temptation to have a go at carrying the statue, often so heavy that it needs six to eight men to take it through the village streets, or you may be invited into a villager's home from which you can see the procession and the celebrations going on.

A fading tradition that survives in only one village (Kalkara) is the crowning of the statue with an assortment of paper flowers, usually the colour of the local patron.

There are organised coach tours to the many festa celebrations that are held in Malta and Gozo during summer. That makes it easier. But if you'd rather drive there, make it early to find a good parking place. There's no need to tell you to make it late going back. You will probably be still celebrating with the local lads in the wee hours of the next day.

Every town and village on Malta has its own festa and some of the bigger localities have more than one. You will only struggle to find a festa to see in the winter months. To see which ones are coming up soon visit www.whatson.com.mt.

Source: <http://www.101malta.com/index.php/Things-to-Do/Go-to-a-Village-Festa.html>

The Nadur Carnival

The village of Nadur still holds the most traditional carnival of all. It is where hundreds of Maltese and Gozitan couples, tourists and possibly a large secret army of closet drag queens come together to roam the streets,

dance to the band music, make merry, eat, drink and generate enough laughter to last for the rest of the year.

The maxim is: go out and be happy. No one will know it's you, just as much as you don't know the lovely blonde with horrendously big chest next to you is actually the lad from Chatham you met on the plane from Luton. The surreal takes over for a few hours.

Source: <http://www.101malta.com/index.php/Things-to-See/The-Nadur-Carnival.html>

Leisure and entertainment

Cinemas

Malta is among the first countries in Europe to have the latest releases, ranging from blockbusters to art house films. The Islands are well served with several multiplex cinemas.

There is also a cinema at the Centre for Creativity, St James' Cavalier, Valletta. Here, the programme is geared more towards art is also a winter season of art house movies, re-releases and foreign language films.

Cinema-going is a popular leisure activity. Not surprising given the Islands' own interest in the film industry. With its backdrop of historic buildings and stunning land- and seascapes, the Maltese archipelago has long been used as a location for some major films: Midnight Express and Oscar-winners Gladiator and U-571 are among the most memorable. Malta has recently also hosted Hollywood blockbusters such as The Count of Monte Cristo and the epic Troy, The Da Vinci code and Munich, as well as prestigious period dramas, including the BBC's Byron and Daniel Deronda. For more information, see the source: <http://visitmalta.com/cinemas>.

Sport

Watch a Football Match

Maltese Football is amongst the oldest outside the United Kingdom, no doubt introduced by the thousands of British sailors and soldiers who used to be stationed on the island during the late 19th Century and early 20th Century.

The British connection can still be seen in the name of some of the oldest Maltese clubs - St George's, St Patrick's, Hibernians and Sliema Wanderers - just as much as the general jargon on the terraces during matches - corner, foul, off-side, come on Blues and play-the-whistle - testifies to this historical attachment. Some top Italian - mostly Sicilian - and Tunisian clubs, likewise started by British servicemen, and initially recruited the best Maltese footballers for their earliest squads until they started to produce their own talents.

Football life has of course turned full circle since and most of these clubs are today considered top European contenders, while Maltese football, minuscule as it has always remained, is concentrated on local competitions that from time to time produce their own solitary idol for the bigger clubs of Europe. Michael Mifsud who currently plays with Coventry is the latest Maltese football export for example. National league and cup competitions take place at the National Stadium in Ta' Qali, a former RAF airfield.

Derby matches and clashes between title contenders attract fairly big crowds. They also offer ample entertainment to the visitor intrigued as he or she must be with the unique support that often includes two rival bands playing team anthems amid a sea of contrasting colours. Getting there is easy from Valletta. The stadium has all the modern amenities, including an Olympic-size indoor pool, state-of-the-art gymnasium and the administrative offices of the Malta Football Association, again one of the oldest in the world.

Attending football in Malta is absolutely safe. No violence is tolerated and security measures are taken before and after every game.

Football matches in Malta are held at several venues although most clubs don't have their own grounds. Premier League matches, for example, are all played at the national stadium in Ta' Qali which is also where international games are held. For fixtures and more information visit the Malta Football Association website www.mfa.com.mt.

Source: <http://www.101malta.com/index.php/Things-to-Do/Watch-a-Football-Match.html>

Events in Malta

There is a multitude of annual and other events in Malta; see www.whatson.com.mt for details.

Night life

Although Sliema is Malta's trendiest city, there is not much night life here. The liveliest place is TGI's which is located in a converted old Fort. In this area, there are a couple of bars too. Tex Mex, Ta Bajri Wine Bar & Time Square bar. Do not expect any wild nights though, just start off the night here and then you can move up to Paceville (St Julian's) at a later time. Casual or casual smart (dress) should be okay.

Source: <http://www.virtualtourist.com/travel/Europe/Malta/Sliema-453848/Nightlife-Sliema-BR-1.html>

The main Maltese night life district is Paceville (pronounced "pach-a-vil"), just north of St. Julian's. Young Maltese (as young as high school-age) come from all over the island to let their hair down, hence it gets very busy here, especially on weekends (also somewhat on Wednesdays, for midweek drinking sessions). Almost all the bars and clubs have free entry so you can wander from venue to venue until you find something that suits you. The bustling atmosphere, cheap drinks and lack of cover charges makes Paceville well worth a visit. The

nightlife crowd becomes slightly older after about midnight, when most of the youngsters catch buses back to their towns to meet curfew. Paceville is still going strong until the early hours of the morning, especially on the weekends.

Source: <http://wikitravel.org/en/Malta>

Out late? [Transport] It is always a good idea to think about how you are going to get home, before you head out, and figure out what your options are in case you miss the last train/bus/tram.

Mdina by Night

Mdina during the day is a beautiful, beautiful place, and a visit to this stunning fortified city after dark is very much worth the effort.

To make it a truly memorable occasion, why not pack a few goodies in a bag – a bottle of wine, some cheese, maybe some crackers – and head towards the far end of the city. There you will find the bastions which overlook large parts of Malta.

The best time to visit Mdina at night is when there is a full moon, as this helps bring the entire city to life.

This is rumoured to be haunted by the ghost of a knight who killed himself after the woman that lived there rejected him. It is said you can sometimes see his shadow on the balcony from where he plunged to his death...

Getting to this must-see location is easy with buses leaving regularly throughout the day from Sliema. You need to look for the number 65. Just be careful you don't miss the last bus back.

Source: <http://www.101malta.com/index.php/Things-to-See/Mdina-by-Night.html>

Food & Drink

Distinctly Maltese cuisine is hard to find but does exist. The food eaten draws its influences from Italian cuisine. Most restaurants in resort areas like Sliema cater largely to British tourists, offering pub grub like meat and three veg or bangers and mash, and you have to go a little out of the way to find 'real' Maltese food. One of the island's specialities is rabbit (fenek), and small savoury pastries known as pastizzi are also ubiquitous.

The Maltese celebratory meal is fenkata, a feast of rabbit, marinated overnight in wine and bay leaves. The first course is usually spaghetti in rabbit sauce, followed by the rabbit meat stewed or fried (with or without gravy). Look out for specialist fenkata restaurants, such as Ta L'Ingliz in Mgarr.

True Maltese food is quite humble in nature, and rather fish and vegetable based -- the kind of food that would have been available to a poor farmer, fisherman or mason. Thus one would find staples like soppa ta' l-armla (widow's soup) which is basically a coarse mash of whatever vegetables are in season, cooked in a thick tomato stock. Then there's arjoli which is a julienne of vegetables, spiced up and oiled, and to which are added butter beans, a puree made from broad beans and herbs called bigilla, and whatever other delicacies are available, like Maltese sausage (a confection of spicy minced pork, coriander seeds and parsley, wrapped in stomach lining) or ġbejniet (simple baby cheeses made from goats' or sheep milk and rennet, served either fresh, dried or peppered). Maltese sausage is incredibly versatile and delicious. It can be eaten raw (the pork is salted despite appearances), dried or roasted. A good plan is to try it as part of a Maltese platter, increasingly available in tourist restaurants. Sun dried tomatoes and bigilla with water biscuits are also excellent. Towards the end of summer one can have one's fill of fried lampuki (dolphin fish) in tomato and caper sauce (see here for the peculiar method of catching this fish. One must also try to have a bite of ħobż biż-żejt, which is leavened Maltese bread, cut into thick chunks, or else baked unleavened ftira, and served drenched in oil. The bread is then spread with a thick layer of strong tomato paste, and topped (or filled) with olives tuna, sun-dried tomatoes, capers, and the optional arjoli (which in its simpler form is called ġardiniera).

Source: <http://wikitravel.org/en/Malta>

Drink

A typical soft drink that originated in Malta is Kinnie, a non-alcoholic fizzy drink made from bitter oranges and slightly reminiscent of Martini.

The local beer is called Cisk (pronounced "Chisk") and, for a premium lager (4.2% by volume), it is very reasonably priced by UK standards. It has a uniquely sweeter taste than most European lagers and is well worth trying. Other local beers, produced by the same company which brews Cisk, are Blue Label Ale, Hopleaf, 1565, Lacto ("milk stout") and Shandy (a typical British mixture pre-mixture of equal measures of lager and 7-UP). Other beers have been produced in Malta in direct competition with Cisk such as '1565' brewed and bottled in the Lowenbrau brewery in Malta. Since late 2006 another beer produced by a different company was released in the market called "Caqnu". A lot of beers are also imported from other countries or brewed under license in Malta, such as Carlsberg, Lowenbrau, SKOL, Bavaria, Guinness, Murphy's stout and ale, Kilkenny, John Smith's, Budweiser, Becks, Heineken, Lowenbrau, Efes, and many more.

Malta has two indigenous grape varieties, Girgentina and Gellewza, although most Maltese wine is made from various imported vines. Maltese wines directly derived from grapes are generally of a good quality, Marsovin and Delicata being prominent examples, and inexpensive, as little as 60-95ct per bottle. There are also many amateurs who make wine in their free time and sometimes this can be found in local shops and restaurants, especially in the Mgarr and Siggiewi area. Premium wines such as Meridiana are an excellent example of the dedication that can be found with local vineyards.

Interestingly it does not rain much on Malta and almost all of the drinking water is obtained from the sea via large desalination plants on the west of the island or from the underground aquifer.

Source: <http://wikitravel.org/en/Malta>

Shopping & Groceries

Clothes Shopping

Many people visiting Malta for the first time are complementary about the way most women, young and not-so-young, dress. It is instantly obvious that they are flagrantly fashion-conscious, but to be so they have to go on regular shopping sprees.

Sometimes it is just a question of keeping up with the Joneses, but more often than not it is also a matter of finding the latest designs and the latest fads. New, modern shopping complexes have been opening all over Malta and Gozo, which of course makes things a lot easier.

Prices range from the incredible bargain at one of the familiar international department-store chains to the ultra-expensive Dolce & Gabbana gowns that you might need for that special occasion. Going clothes shopping in Malta requires no special effort and the trendiest shopping areas are either within walking distance or a mere 30-minute drive away, and that's allowing for the occasional traffic jams. Sliema and the Capital, Valletta, lead the way with their numerous complexes and shop-lined streets, but one is also able to do some very good shopping in the more central places like Hamrun, Fgura, Paola, Zurrieq, Birkirkara, Mosta and, in Gozo, Victoria.

Salespersons are nice and welcoming, often able to speak more than just Maltese and English. And now that Malta has joined the eurozone, even the old problem of a stunning rate of exchange has become a thing of the past. Of course, it is not just the women who are catered for. Men too are spoilt for choice. It just might take them less time to decide...

Source: <http://www.101malta.com/index.php/Things-to-Do/Go-Clothes-Shopping.html>

Maltese Glass

Amongst other souvenirs, Malta has several glass producers. Most well known are Mdina Glass and Imtarfa Glass. Both can be found at the craft village of Ta Qali. All the workshops are housed in disused aircraft hangars and former military premises. Craftsmen and women can be seen busy at work throughout the many 'huts'. The glassblowers are always fascinating to watch, and the air-conditioned factories are now much cooler than I recall them being years ago!

As well as a huge range of traditional and contemporary glassware, many types of craft ware can be seen being made and sold here, including lace, pottery, silver filligree jewellery, ironwork, woodwork and leatherwork. Well worth a visit!

All at reasonable prices, but look out for bargain 'seconds' in the glassware - some products are greatly reduced in price for very minor blemishes.

Source: <http://www.virtualtourist.com/travel/Europe/Malta/Shopping-Malta-BR-1.html>

Commercial Centres

- Bay Street - A medium sized shopping area set on 3 floors of a purpose built block - there is a hotel within the complex too, all under 2 years old.

There are several designer shops, an amusement hall, a few restaurants and bars, and the inevitable...McDonalds! Some more shops are located outside the building, very close by.

- Plaza Shopping Centre - this is the largest shopping centre in Malta, you can find many different shops all under one roof, besides restrooms, a Mc Donalds, a hairdresser and a Chinese Restaurant and a Coffee Shop as well. There is also an ATM at the entrance of Bizazza Street. Most shops in Sliema open at 9.30am - 1.00pm and re-open at 4.00pm, closing at 7.00pm.

Source: <http://www.virtualtourist.com/travel/Europe/Malta/Shopping-Malta-BR-1.html>

Traditional Maltese Easter Sweets – Figolli

It is customary for Maltese women (and some men :-) to make Figolli for Easter. If you visit Malta around this time of the year you will see them in colourful displays in shop windows. Figolli are almond pastries cut out to represent symbolic figures. The traditional shapes are men, women, fish and baskets. They are decorated with glaze and royal icing and an Easter egg wrapped in colourful foil to finish off the decoration.

Recommendation: Don't be tempted to buy them from the first place you come across because you will be greatly disappointed, try: Cafe Cordina (244 Republic Street, Valletta), Santa Lucia Confectionery (Old Railway Track, Attard) and Tivoli Confectionery (Manwel Magri Street, Hamrun).

Source: <http://www.virtualtourist.com/travel/Europe/Malta/Shopping-Malta-BR-1.html>

Qaghaq tal ghasel (Honey Ring)

This is a traditional Christmas cake, but it is sold even in the summer. Its filling is made with honey, semolina and other things. A recommended nice confectionery shop located in Merchants Street is "Camilleri and Sons".

Source: <http://www.virtualtourist.com/travel/Europe/Malta/Shopping-Malta-BR-1.html>

Open-Air Markets

Open-air markets are held in the morning, usually, until 12.00am and you will find one in Merchants Street

Valletta every day. Other markets however are held in other towns in Malta, but perhaps the largest is the one in Birgu, which is held every Tuesday. There is another good one in Mosta, on Mondays and then on Sundays, one in Valletta, in Rabat and there is also one in Marsaxlokk. You will find lots of bargains, clothes, shoes, food, books, antiques, souvenirs and lots of other items. Be careful of the fakes....

Source: <http://www.virtualtourist.com/travel/Europe/Malta/Shopping-Malta-BR-1.html>

Health & Safety

Stay safe

Malta is generally safe, in fact it's considered as one of the safest in the world with little in the way of violent crime or political disturbances.

Malta is generally safe compared to its European counterparts. However, with growing illegal immigration in detention camps located in the south of the Island, locals are beginning to feel a sense of uncertainty in regards to their safety in these areas.

In regards to nightlife, the Island is very safe as long as you do not walk alone. Due to Malta being a major Mediterranean port, sailors with shore leave tend to become quite rowdy after long voyages, as well as with the advent of low cost air travel coming to Malta have brought an influx of teens from across Europe enjoying short cheap weekend breaks in the sun.

Source: <http://wikitravel.org/en/Malta>

Stay healthy

The main health risk in Malta is the fierce sun in the summer, which can scorch unsuspecting tourists. Apply sun block liberally and regularly.

Source: <http://wikitravel.org/en/Malta>

Transport to Malta - Getting there & away:

By plane

Malta possesses its own national carrier, Air Malta, with regular connections to many European, North African and Middle Eastern centres.

Ryanair flies to/from London Luton, Dublin, Bremen, Pisa, Stockholm (Skavsta), Valencia, Girona and Bari. Easyjet flies to/from Manchester and London Gatwick.

The island's international Airport is located at Luqa.

Source: <http://wikitravel.org/en/Malta>

By boat

There are frequent fast ferries to the Sicilian port of Catania, Italy. The trip takes around 3 hours, and can be turbulent with a heavy swell, if it's windy. There is also a high-speed catamaran between Pozzallo and Valletta that takes approximately 90 minutes, as well as weekly trips from Palermo, Genoa and Tunis.

Source: <http://wikitravel.org/en/Malta>

Airport Transfers

For airport transfers and local taxis try using one of the local "Black cab" taxi firms such as Swansea Chauffeur Drive <http://www.active-car-hire.com> or Wembleys <http://www.malta-airport-taxis.co.uk> for airport transfers. Their rates are normally lower than white taxis and their drivers are smarter and more educated. Their services must be pre-booked however (at least fifteen minutes notice) since SwanSea and Wembley cabs cannot be picked up from the street and have to be pre-booked or called (356) 20107444 or (356) 21313261. Wembley is the largest taxi firm but Swansea offers a more reliable, personalised and professional service at roughly the same rates.

A new shared transport service maltatransfer.com started operating from the Malta International airport to all hotels in Malta & Gozo. Prices for the transfers are very cheap and you can pre-book on line from <http://www.maltatransfer.com> or you can purchase your ticket from the desk which is situated in the arrivals luggage reclaim section while waiting for your luggage. They have special offers for group bookings as well.

Source: <http://wikitravel.org/en/Malta>

Always make sure to agree on a price with the driver before setting off on your journey.

Transport Around Malta

Buses

One of Malta's joys (at least in small doses) is the wonderfully antiquated public bus system, consisting of 1950s-era exports from Britain usually kitted up with more chintz than a Christmas tree plus icons of every saint in the Bible and then some (as well as new Chinese buses -king long-). Fares are very cheap and even the longest ride across the island costs less than €1.30; the only catch is that almost all buses radiate out from Valletta, so you may have to detour back to the capital to reach your next destination. Just say - "To Valletta?" - to the driver when you get on the bus, as this will help you confirm your ending destination.

The only problem there might be is the smouldering heat during the summer but a typical bus ride is only around 20 minutes so it should be fine. A typical bus fare is €0.47 so do not expect to give €20 to change as you will probably be denied a bus fare (with good reason), so be ready with reasonable change when getting on a bus.

Source: <http://wikitravel.org/en/Malta>

Taxis

Malta's white taxis are a ravenous lot and fares are quite expensive. These are the ones you can pick you up off the street. They have meters that are uniformly ignored, figure on €12 for short hops and not much more than €30 for a trip across the island.

Source: <http://wikitravel.org/en/Malta>

Driving

Renting a car in Malta is a fine way to see the country, since it's cheap and driving conditions have improved greatly in the last ten years. Having your own car allows you to make a lot more of your trip and discover the many hidden charms these small islands have to offer.

It is always best to pre-book your car rental online as this works out cheaper than booking when you arrive. According to the Mediterranean markets, Malta has very low rates for car rental. Any driver and additional drivers must take with them their driving licenses in order to be covered for by the insurances provided by the local car rental supplier.

There is GPS coverage of the Island by popular brands such as Garmin, however, do check with your rental company as to whether they make this available to you or not. Popular opinion states that the GPS mapping of Malta isn't altogether that accurate, where certain routes planned on the GPS, will send you up 1 way streets without warning, best to use common sense in conjunction with this technology. Also the Maltese can be a very friendly bunch of people when giving directions are concerned.

Source: <http://wikitravel.org/en/Malta>

Ferry

There is the regular ferry service between Ċirkewwa on Malta and Mġarr on Gozo, it goes every 45 minutes in the summer and almost as often in the winter. You buy a return ticket at the Malta end for about €4.70. There are also irregular services to Comino.

For more information and maps go to <http://www.101malta.com/index.php/Things-to-Do/Catch-the-Sliema-Ferry.html>.

Seaplane

Regular flights between Valletta Grand Harbour and Mġarr by Harbourair started recently. There is also a planned service to Sicily. The company also offers scenic flights for around 90EUR that take 30mins and provide beautiful views of the Maltese islands. Flights start in Valletta's grand harbor. Check-in and ticket office

is at the sea passenger terminal, on the very end of the "Valletta waterfront", behind the cruise ship terminals.

Transport to Sliema

Buses 62, 64 and 67 run regularly between Valletta and Sliema, St Julian's and Paceville (Lm0.20). There's also a ferry service between Sliema and Valletta.

Source: <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/malta/sliema-st-julians-and-paceville/transport/getting-there-away>

Television & Radio

Television

Malta's television stations are listed as:

- Television Malta (TVM) - public
- Super One TV- owned by the Malta Labour Party
- Net TV - owned by the Nationalist Party

Source: <http://www.legal-malta.com/about-malta/media.htm>

Television Malta (TVM) is the national television station of Malta. TVM is operated by Public Broadcasting Services Ltd (PBS). PBS Ltd is state owned.

TVM broadcasts a mix of news, sport, entertainment, magazine programming and children's programmes. It is funded through a government grant and commercial advertising. The majority of programmes broadcast on TVM are produced externally of PBS. PBS publishes details of the types of programmes it wishes to broadcast on TVM and production companies provide PBS with a detailed report of their proposal for the programme.

Most programmes are broadcast in Maltese; however the Maltese speak both Maltese and English so English also features, mainly in BBC and ITV titles.

The English language feed of EuroNews is also broadcast daily.

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/TVM_\(Malta\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/TVM_(Malta))

The [Malta Online website](#) provides a [TV schedule](#) for most stations.

NET Television is the television station owned by the Nationalist Party in Malta.

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NET_Television_\(Malta\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NET_Television_(Malta))

Radio

Malta's radio stations include:

- Radio Malta - public
- SuperOne Radio - owned by the Malta Labour Party

- Radio 101 - owned by the Nationalist Party
- BayRadio - privately owned FM music station
- RTK - Catholic Church Station

Source: <http://www.legal-malta.com/about-malta/media.htm>

Also, Wikipedia provides an exhaustive [list of radio stations in Malta](#).

Telephone & Internet

Mobile phones

The country has three mobile phone networks available: Vodafone, Go Mobile, and Melita Mobile; as well as with other countries, you can find white labelled cell plans such as the Bay Mobiles plan that can offer alternative rates. Due to international agreements with providers across the globe, Vodafone, GO and Melita are sure to be apart of your carriers roaming plan.

Source: <http://wikitravel.org/en/Malta>

Internet

Internet cafés and wi-fi zones are quite abundant with connection rates peaking at 30mbps.

Source: <http://wikitravel.org/en/Malta>

Emergencies

Who to contact in an emergency

For ambulance, fire or police dial 112. The main hospitals are Mater Dei Telephone: (+356) 2545 0000 and Gozo General Hospital in Gozo, tel. 2156 1600. For a complete list of government hospital services visit [The Ministry of Health, the Elderly and Community Care \(Malta\)](#).

Medical Services

Health Service

Internet resources all report favourably on Malta's medical and health service "In case one needs to see a doctor, the standard of health care in Malta is very high, both in the public and private sector." (http://www.holidays-malta.com/malta_pages/malta_tourist_information.htm). Remember to present your EHIC (European Healthcare Insurance Card - see the **Health** section under *Programme Provisions* at the beginning of this document) when being treated.

Public Hospitals

Malta

St. Luke's Hospital, St Luke's Road,

G'Mangia.

Tel: 21241251

Fax: 21240176

Gozo

Craig Hospital, Victoria.

Tel: 21561600

Fax: 21560881

Pharmacies

One can find chemists throughout the islands and these are open during normal shopping hours.

On Sundays, chemists open on a roster from 09.00 until 12.30 in Malta and from 07.30 until 11.00 in Gozo.

Check the local Sunday newspapers for details of the roster.

Source: <http://www.heartofmalta.com/en/malta/guide/tourist-information.aspx>

Post & Financial Services

Sending & receiving mail

Malta has an efficient postal service [Malta Post](#). The main post office (for parcel collection too) is at 305, Qormi Road, Qormi and is open from 07:45 to 18:30 Monday to Saturday in winter (1 October to 15 June); and from 07:30 to 18:00 in summer (16 June to 30 September).

In Gozo, the main post office is at 129 Republic Street, Victoria. Most towns and villages have post or sub-post offices. Stamps are frequently available from hotels and souvenir shops as well.

Banks & Money

- All major credit cards are widely accepted.
- The euro replaced the lira as the new national currency on 1 January 2008.

It's a good idea to round up a taxi fare or restaurant bill to leave a small tip. Shops have fixed prices; hotels and car-hire agencies offer reduced rates in the low and shoulder seasons (October to May). There's an 18% value-added tax on most consumer items.

Source: <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/malta/practical-information/money-costs>

Community

Business Hours

- Banks 8.30am-12.30pm Mon-Fri and 8.30am-11.30am Sat.
- Government museums 9am-5pm daily; closed major public holidays
- Eating Noon-3pm and 7pm-11pm.
- Shopping 9am-1pm and 4pm-7pm Mon-Sat; closed Sun and public holidays. Some shops stay open all day in summer, especially in tourist areas

Source: <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/malta/work-study-volunteering/work>

Libraries

National Library of Malta - <http://www.libraries-archives.gov.mt/>

The University of Malta Library - <http://www.um.edu.mt/library>

Public National Holidays

- January 1 – ph – New Year’s Day
- February 10 – ph - Feast of St.Paul's Shipwreck
- March 19 – ph - Feast of St.Joseph
- March 31 – nh - Freedom Day
- April 9 – ph -
- May 1 – ph – workers’ day
- June 7 – nh - Sette Giugno
- June 29 – ph -Feast of St.Peter & St.Paul
- August 15 – ph -Feast of the Assumption
- September 8 – nh -Victory Day
- September 21 – nh - Independence Day
- December 8 – ph - Feast of the Immaculate Conception
- December 13 – nh - Republic Day
- December 25 – ph – Christmas Day

Source: <http://www.heartofmalta.com/en/malta/guide/tourist-information.aspx>

Weather

The Maltese Islands are blessed with one of the most agreeable climates in the Mediterranean. The climate is a typically Mediterranean one with hot, dry summers, warm autumns and short, cool winters with adequate rainfall.

The weather is warm even in winter and there is no fog, frost or snow. The hottest period is mid-July to the end of September, but the nights are tempered by cool breezes from the surrounding sea.

Source: <http://www.heartofmalta.com/en/malta/guide/tourist-information.aspx>

Newspapers, magazines & publications

Newspapers in English

- Malta Today - weekly
- The Malta Business Weekly - weekly
- The Times of Malta - daily - www.timesofmalta.com
- The Sunday Times of Malta - weekly

Newspapers in Maltese

- Lehen is-Sewwa
- In-Nazzjon - daily, owned by Nationalist Party
- Il-Mument - weekly, owned by Nationalist Party (est. 1972)
- Il-Kulhadd
- L-Orizzont - daily, owned by General Workers' Union
- It-Torca - weekly, owned by General Workers' Union
- L-Antenna

Legal & Financial

- Malta Government Gazette
- Malta Tax News
- Malta Legal & Financial News

Magazines

- Living2000 Magazine
- Maltamag
- MaltaZoom
- Personal Computing & Technology Magazine
- Vision Technology Magazine
- The Reporter (Student Magazine)
- Sunday Circle (Magazine)

Source: <http://www.legal-malta.com/about-malta/media.htm>

Language Exchange

As part of your placement you will be provided with language classes to study and improve your Maltese. Additional ways to help you practise your Maltese can include participating in some type of language exchange.

Meet ups

www.meetup.com – is one website for people wishing to join groups of people to talk about or take part in certain activities. On the home page is a facility to find the meet-up group you are looking for, search for “Maltese” in Malta. Once you have joined you will receive emails informing you of the dates, times and venues for upcoming meet-ups.

Community / Announcement websites

www.mylanguageexchange.com – is a community website for finding a Language Exchange partner, a login is required to make contact or post your own announcement.

Useful Resources

- Malta tourist website - <http://www.discover-malta.info/>
- Malta Tourist information - http://www.holidays-malta.com/malta_pages/malta_tourist_information.htm - general information on Malta.
- Malta Online - <http://www.mol.net.mt/> - an information directory for property, travel, tourism and business
- 101 Things to do in Malta - <http://www.101malta.com> – all classified in things to DO, TRY, SEE, EAT...
- Sliema Local Council - <http://www.sliema-malta.com>.
- What’s on in Malta - www.whatson.com.mt