



Rotary Heritage Tour to Malta

Thursday 22nd to Sunday 25th April 2010

Rotary Club Malta invites Rotarians, their family and friends for a 3 day tour exploring Malta's rich heritage. This inclusive guided tour will visit certain of Malta's World Heritage sites classified as being the heritage of mankind by UNESCO.



The objective of the tour is to raise money for Rotary District 2110's End Polio Now campaign while also acting as an excellent Rotary inter-club activity fostering Rotarian friendship.

What will we visit?

With over 7,000 years of history at the centre of the Mediterranean and with probably the greatest density of sites of historic interest in the world after Roma within its 120 Sq miles, Malta boasts 3 sites among UNESCO's World Heritage Sites list: the megalithic temples, the hypogeum of Hal-Saflieni and the city of Valletta, build by the Knights of St John.

In these 3 days you will be taken to Malta's most important sites with a professional guide and be given the opportunity to visit sites not usually open to the public. The main sites visited will be as follows:

- The city of Valletta and the magnificent cathedral of St John where you will be able to visit 2 of Caravaggio's works, including his masterpiece The Beheading of St John.
- The Grand Master's Palace, currently the President's Palace, including the state rooms and the armoury of the Order of St John.
- A spectacular multi-visual show at the Malta Experience which will take you through Malta's 7,000 years of history
- The megalithic temple of Mnajdra
- The ancient capital of Mdina
- The city of Birgu, first home of the Knights of St John in the Maltese Islands in 1530.
- The Hypogeum at Hal Saflieni (involves extra cost due to limited availability).



When?

The tour will take place between Thursday evening 22nd April and Sunday 25th April.

Tour Details

The tour will include the following:

- Accommodation at the 5-star Grand Hotel Excelsior just outside Valletta's walls
- The services of guides for the duration of the tour
- Transport to and from sites included in the tour (airport transfers are extra)
- Entrance tickets for all sites on the tour
- All meals including wine for lunch and dinner
- The Gala Dinner at the Embassy of the Order of Malta in Valletta



Entrance tickets for the Hypogeum are extra as only a limited number of people would be able to attend. Transport to and from Malta needs to be arranged by the participants and is not included. Airport transfers are extra and require booking.

For Booking: www.rotary.org.mt/heritage Fax: +356 2131 9528

Places We Visit

The City of Valletta

Built after the Great Siege of 1565 by the Knights of St John, Valletta is a jewel of Baroque architecture. The capital of the Islands is designed in a grid-iron pattern of streets decked with palaces and grand buildings including the *Auberges* built to house the knights of each of the eight *langues* that the Knights were organised in.

St John's Co-Cathedral

Rarely, if ever, will you enter a church as splendid as this. St Johns Co-Cathedral was built as the conventual church of the Knights of St John between 1573 and 1578 and sports a very severe exterior in an almost military style which contrasts with the ornate internal redecoration undertaken during the height of the Baroque period.



The Grand Masters and several knights donated gifts of high artistic value and made enormous contributions to enrich it with only the best works of art not least of which are the two paintings by Caravaggio, the Beheading of St John the Baptist, his largest and only signed painting considered to be his masterpiece, and the St Jerome. The splendid marble tombstones of the knights make up the entire floor of the Cathedral and a magnificent collection of Flemish Tapestries made to the cartoons of Reubens adorn the museum.

The Grandmaster's Palace

The Grandmaster's palace, built in the 16th Century to house the Grandmaster, today is the House of Parliament and the offices of the President of the Republic. Of particular interest are the Armoury and the stunning Gobelin tapestries, featuring tropical scenes set in South America, the Caribbean, India and Africa. The tapestries were given to the Order by Grand Master Ramon Perellos in 1710.



The Armoury, housing one of the finest collections of weapons of the period of the Knights of Malta in all of Europe, runs the width of the back of the palace. Spears, swords, shields, heavy armour and other weapons, including Dragut's sword are on display.

Of all the rooms the most magnificent is the Hall of St Michael and St George, also known as the Throne Room, decorated with a cycle of 12 frescos, vividly portraying the 1565 Siege of Malta. The artist was Matteo Perez d'Aleccio, an engraver and painter who once helped Michelangelo with the Sistine Chapel.

The Hall of the Ambassadors was originally the Grand Master's audience chamber. Known also as the Red Room, this is decorated in crimson with Louis XV furniture and a high frieze recalling episodes from the early history of the Order when it still had bases in Jerusalem, Cyprus and Rhodes.

Mdina

Mdina is a medieval walled town situated on a hill in the centre of the island of Malta and was the capital until the arrival of the Knights of St John in 1530. Mdina was inhabited and possibly first fortified by the Phoenicians around 700 BC. Tradition holds that the Apostle St. Paul resided in the city after his historical shipwreck on the islands. The Normans surrounded the city with thick defensive fortifications and widened the moat.



The strong earthquake of 1693 which effected many parts of Sicily and Malta led to the introduction of Baroque design within the cityscape. The Knights of Malta rebuilt the cathedral, to the designs of Maltese architect Lorenzo Gafà. Palazzo Falson, the Magisterial Palace and major restoration works are other projects undertaken by the Knights. Known as the Silent City, the atmosphere of the city is magical.

Mnajdra Temples

Mnajdra Temples is a complex of three Neolithic temples surrounding an oval courtyard, the oldest having been built during the Ġgantija phase (3600-3200 BC), while the other two date from the early and mid Tarxien phase (3150-2500 BC). It has been stated by numerous historians that part of the Mnejdra Temples are the oldest free standing buildings in the world, much older than Stonehenge.



Birgu

Birgu, one of the Three Cities to the south east of the Grand Harbour, has provided a secure anchorage for thousands of years and has been inhabited since prehistoric times. The city occupies a promontory with Fort St Angelo at its end. On their arrival in Malta in 1530, the Knights of St John occupied Birgu and commenced its fortification to provide protection to their fleet and against the predicted attacks of the Ottoman Turks. First they built the Auberges and fine buildings and then, over the course of the years, palaces.



Birgu was the seat of power of the Order and the focus of attacks during the Great Siege of Malta by the Turks in 1565 during which was exposed the weakness of the Three Cities, exposed from the higher ground. On the lifting of the siege for winter, the order went out for the building of a city on the higher ground across the water, later to be called Valletta in honour of Grand Master Jean de La Valette.

Today you can walk the streets of Birgu, more of a lived in historic city than a museum, immersing yourself in its historic atmosphere, visit the Maritime Museum or relax in the cafes and restaurants with a view of the Super Yacht marina on the waterfront.

The Malta Experience

The 7000 year history of Malta is beautifully captured in the Malta Experience audio-visual show which allows you to understand the links between each phase of the islands' development.

Accommodation

Accommodation for the Rotary Heritage Tour will be at the **5-star Grand Hotel Excelsior**, just outside the walls of Valletta.

The Grand Hotel Excelsior has been recently reconstructed into a Deluxe 5 star resort forming a part of the massive 15th & 16th century bastions around Valletta and Floriana.

The hotel is of a high quality and style and commands stunning views across Marsamxett Harbour and the fortifications of Manoel Island from its location by the edge of the sea. Its central position allows for easy travel to all parts of the islands.

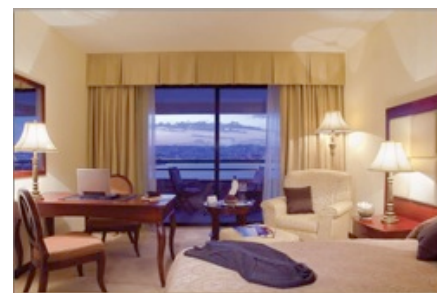


As a member of the Preferred Hotels & Resorts, the hotel offers excellence through its 5 star service. Many famous visitors have been guests at the hotel, most recently H.M. The King of Spain on his state visit to Malta.

All 439 deluxe rooms and suites offer a pleasant mix of classical and contemporary design and offer excellent facilities including free Wi-Fi, multi-channel international television service on a flat screen.

Built on 10 levels, 3 of which are reserved as executive floors, the majority of rooms and suites are provided with a beautiful view of the leisure harbour and yacht marinas. The hotel includes a large outdoor and an indoor pool as well as 4 restaurants and bars. The hotel is well equipped with all facilities befitting its 5-star standard including well appointed rooms, various restaurants and an excellent [Spa](#).

Click here for [more details about the Grand Hotel Excelsior](#).



Travelling to Malta

Travelling to and from Malta is easy with the island being served by flights from a wide range of different airports and airlines. Check [Malta International Airport's web site](#) for connection information.



Rotary Heritage Tour to Malta

Thursday 22nd to Sunday 25th April 2010

Programme

Thursday 22nd April

- Arrival Malta via your own transport arrangements
- Transfers from airport/seaport to the hotel (optional and requires pre-booking)
- Welcome Buffet in the hotel (Grand Hotel Excelsior)



Friday 23rd April

- Transport from hotel to Valletta
- Tour of Valletta accompanied by a professional guide, including visits to St John's co-Cathedral, the Grandmaster's Palace (now the Presidential Palace) including the armoury, as well as the multi-visual history show at the *Malta Experience*.
- Lunch at Café Premier in Queen's Square, right at the heart of the city
- Free time to wonder through the streets of Valletta
- Maltese Night dinner at Ta' Maria Restaurant in Mosta.

Saturday 24th April

- Guided tour of the Mnajdra Megalithic
- Tour of the ancient capital of Mdina, known as the silent city
- Light lunch at Bacchus Restaurant on the bastions of Mdina
- Guided tour of Birgu
- Gala dinner at the 16th century cavalier housing the Embassy of the Order of Malta in Valletta



Sunday 25th April

Departure Day

- Farewell breakfast in the hotel
- Free time
- Transfers from hotel to airport/seaport (optional and requires pre-booking)



All transport between the hotel and the sites visited as well as restaurants are included. All meals are also included. Transfers to and from the airport are charged as an extra and require pre-booking.

Rotary Heritage Tour to Malta – Application Form



Details of the Group Head				
Surname		Name		Title (Mr/Ms)
Telephone Number		e-mail		
Name of Rotary Club				

Dettagli della camera			
	Surname	Name	Title
1 st Person in room			
2 nd Person in room			
3 rd Person in room			
Remarks			

	Dates	Details of Flights/Catamaran etc	Transfers from/to airport/port
Arrival			None / Coach / Taxi
Departure			None / Coach / Taxi

Description	No of People	Price per Person €	Total €
Tour package – accommodation, tours, transport as described		495.00	
Additional days of accommodation (pre or post standard tour dates)		165.00	
Transfers airport/port to hotel – coach / taxi		6.00/ 12.00	
Transfers hotel to airport/port– coach / taxi		6.00/ 12.00	
Tour to Hypogeum – transport included		50.00	
Additional donation to district 2110 Polio Plus fund			
Total €			€

Method of Payment	Credit card / bank transfer	
Credit Card	Bank Transfer	
Type of card	Visa / Mastercard	Payment can be effected by bank transfer to the account as defined below: Bank: HSBC Bank (Malta) plc - High Street, Sliema, Malta A/c name: Rotary Club Malta IBAN: MT05 MMEB 4406 0000 0000 0605 1262 002 Payment must be effected by the 31 March 2010. Please provide your name as the reference on the bank transfer.
Card Number		
Expiry Date		
CVC Code (back of card)		
Name of card holder		
Address of credit card holder as listed on card		

I confirm that I have read and accept the [terms and conditions](#) governing this tour which are on the Club's web site

Signature _____

Name _____

Date _____

Book on-line at: www.rotary.org.mt/heritage Fax: +356 2131 9528