

 **Journee**

Malta

Our guide to your destination.



Dear Explorer,

Before you begin to explore your destination, we wanted to say a massive thank you.

At Journee, we believe travel is an amazing thing for humanity. Especially when done right. It broadens horizons, making the world a more understanding place. We want to make travelling to interesting destinations and exploring their cultures, as easy as possible.

So, **thank you** for trusting us with your travel plans and joining us on this mission. We're proud to call you a Journee Explorer, and it's open-minded travellers like you that make the world a better place.

Journee x



You're off to **Malta!**

We've carefully matched you with Malta, an island country consisting of an archipelago in the Mediterranean Sea. The European nation lies 80 km south of Italy, 284 km east of Tunisia, and 333 km north of Libya. Only the three largest islands, Malta, Gozo and Comino, are inhabited. The capital city is Valletta, which is the smallest national capital in the European Union (area 0.8 km). It's, quite rightly, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



A snapshot of your destination



Inhabited since: The Neolithic era (5th millennium BC).

Invasions: Over the years it's been ruled by the Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Arabs, Normans, Crusaders, French and most recently the British.

Independence: Gained its independence from the British in 1964.

Etymology: It's derived from the Greek word 'meli' which means 'honey' referring to the country's honey production.

Politics: Malta is a republic with a parliamentary system.

Population: 493,559

Religion: More than 90% of the country are Roman Catholic.

Good to know



Timezone

The whole of Malta is on Central European Standard Time (GMT+1).



Emergency

Dial 112 from your mobile and they'll direct you to the relevant service (ambulance, police, fire).



Power adapters

The power plugs and sockets are three-pin rectangular (type G).



Currency

They use the Euro (€). Most places accept card but you may need some cash for smaller businesses.



Expected prices

Three course meal, mid-range restaurant - €28

Pint of beer - €2.50

Coffee - €2



Tipping etiquette

Hotel housekeeper - €2-€3 a day

Restaurants - 5-10%

Taxi drivers - Optional



Potable water

The tap water is safe to drink.



“Travel is not really about leaving our homes, but leaving our habits.”

Pico Iyer

Getting around



Getting around

Connectivity is good and the small size of the islands makes getting around easy and hassle-free.

Public transport

By boat: A regular service links Malta to Gozo, taking about 20 minutes each way. There are also regular boat services between each island and Comino.

By bus: Services operate daily between 5:30 and 23:00. A ticket costs €1.50 in winter, €2.00 in summer and €3.00 at night all year round. You can buy the tickets from Malta Public Transport sales office/booth or directly from the driver on all buses.

Taxis

Uber is not available in Malta. The closest alternative is www.ecabs.com.mt which offers an on demand service.

Several private companies also run efficient (but not cheap) taxi services.

Driving

All the road signs are in English and driving is on the left hand side.

Renting scooters, motorbikes or bicycles is also an option, but bicycle lanes on major roads are limited.

Speaking the lingo



Speaking the lingo

The national language is Maltese, but English is also an official language.

So, ask the locals if they speak English first and if not the below phrases should help. Use the phonetic pronunciation on the right hand side to sound just like a local!

The essentials

Yes/No	Iva/Le	ee-va/lay
Please	Jekk jogħġbok	yek-yoh-jbok
Thank you (very much)	Grazzi (ġafna)	grats-ee (hawf-na)
You're welcome	Mhux problema	mush prob-lay-muh
Hello	Ħello	hello
Good morning	Bonġu	bon-ju
How are you?	Kif int?	kiff int
I'm fine, thank you (m)	Jien tajjeb grazzi	yee-in tai-yeb,grats-ee
I'm fine, thank you (f)	Jiena tajba grazzi	yee-ina tai-ba,grats-ee
What is your name?	X'jismek?	shee-yis-mek
My name is...	Jisimni...	yis-im-nee
Nice to meet you	Għandi pjaċir	aan-dee pya-cheer
I don't understand	Ma nifhimx	Maa ni-fimsh
Do you speak English?	Titkellem bl-Ingiliz	tit-kell-em blin-gleez

The essentials

Goodbye (informal)

Ĉaw

chaw

Cheers!

Saĥĥa!

sah-ha

Journee *Bingo*

Don't just visit places. Experience them.
So see how many of these fun challenges you can get done.

Travel authentic. No regrets. Tag @journeetrips for bonus points.

Watched the sunset over the horizon	Got lost in The Cittadella, Gozo	Snapped a pic of the Salt Pans 🧴
Ate a pastizz every day 😊	Malta Edition	Sampled something made from prickly pear
Dipped in The Mediterranean	Visited a prehistoric temple 🏛️	Hopped between all three islands

The cuisine



“Do we really want to travel through the rural provinces of France, Mexico and the Far East, eating only in Hard Rock Cafes and McDonald’s? Or do we want to eat without fear, tearing into the local stew, the humble taqueria’s mystery meat, the sincerely offered gift of a lightly grilled fish head?”

Anthony Bourdain

Our guide to the local cuisine

Maltese food is best described as fresh and flavourful. Its dishes have been influenced by African and European cuisine alike. They make use of the most readily available local ingredients, some of which have a distinctive flavour. Get ready to tuck in!

The national dish

Stuffat tal-fenek: A traditional rabbit stew, stuffat tal-fenek is considered the national dish of Malta. This lovingly prepared dish is slow cooked to ensure the meat falls off the bone. Maltese families love to use the rich tomato sauce with pasta as a first course and serve the rabbit with vegetables as a main.



Breakfast & Snacks

Hobz biz-zejt: Crusty sourdough bread rubbed with tomato, drizzled with olive oil and filled with tuna, capers, onions, olives, garlic, sea salt and pepper.

Pastizzi: Warm, savoury pastries filled with either warm ricotta cheese or mushy peas (V).

Gbejniet: Local cheese made from goat's milk, with the texture and milky flavour of mozzarella (V).

Qassatat: Savoury pie filled with ricotta cheese and beaten egg (V).

Ftira: Bread with a thin and crispy crust, baked in a wooden oven and often shaped like a donut (in Malta) or a pizza (in Gozo) (V).

Bigilla: Mashed beans seasoned with olive oil, garlic and parsley. Often eaten as a dip with flour based crackers called chanterelles (V).



V = Veggie

Lunch & Dinner

Torta tal-lampuki: Pie made of ‘mahi-mahi’ fish, or the common dolphinfish, freshly caught and cooked with tomatoes, onions, olives, capers and spinach and baked in a puff-pastry.

Timpana: Baked macaroni dish cooked in layers, separated by pastry covered in minced meat, tomatoes, onion, garlic and cheese.

Zalzett: Salty, garlicky pork sausages with a distinctive coriander flavour. Eaten fried or steamed.

Kapunata: Summer dish made from fresh tomatoes, capers, aubergines and green peppers (V).

Minestra: Thick, vegetable soup traditionally eaten with Maltese bread and oil (V).

Lampuki: Fish seasoned with spicy tomato sauce, olives, capers, mint and garlic, and then baked in the oven.

Ravjul: Fresh ravioli stuffed with eggs, ricotta and parsley and served with tomato sauce (V).

Aljotta: Soup made of mixed fish and lots of garlic.

V = Veggie



Desserts

Imqaret: Pancakes flavoured with orange flower water and dates, and stuffed with a paste of orange zest, cloves and anise.

Nelwa tat-tork: Traditional sweet made of sugar, tahini and almonds.

Gaghaq tal-ghasel: Also called honey ring, it's a ring pastry filled with a mixture of marmalade, sugar, lemon, oranges, mixed spices, cinnamon, vanilla and syrup.

Pudina tal-hobz: Bread pudding made with stale bread soaked in sultanas, candied peel and chocolate.

Kannoli: Deep-fried pastry tubes filled with sweetened ricotta, sometimes candied peel, and icing on top.

Cassata: Colourful cake made from marzipan, almond paste and sweet ricotta.



Drinks

Kinnie: Malta's own sparkling soft drink made with orange juice and with a bittersweet taste.

Cisk beer: A Maltese lager that the locals love.

Lumincetta ta' mari: Melange of fine alcohol and lemon peel, ideal as an after-dinner liqueur.

Bajtra: Liqueur made from extracts of the local prickly pear.

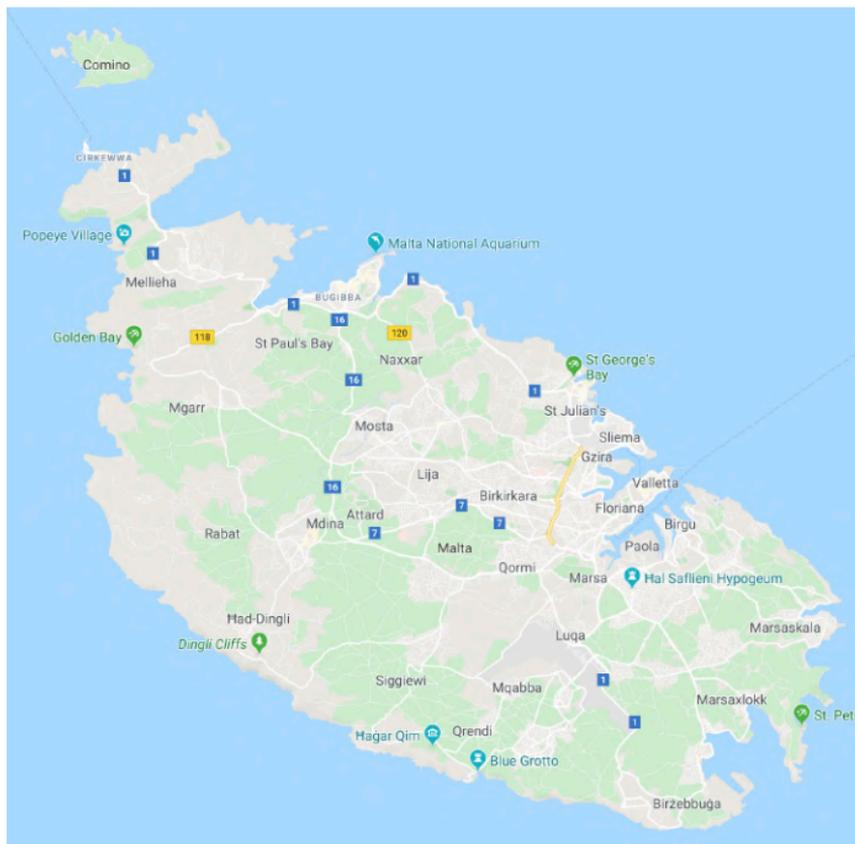


The sights



The Island of Malta

The island of Malta packs a lot in considering how small it is. The landscape is timeless and peppered with prehistoric ruins dating back thousands of years. It has everything from medieval cities, to hidden coves, limestone cliffs, crystal clear water and golden beaches. To top it all off, it offers year-round sunshine, friendly locals and great vibes all around.



St John's Co-Cathedral, Valletta



Built between 1573 and 1578 by the Knights of Malta who used to gather for communal worship here.

Richly ornamented in Baroque architecture, the church has carved stone wall designs, painted vaulted ceilings and Caravaggio's painting depicting the beheading of St. John the Baptist.

Grandmaster's Palace, Valletta

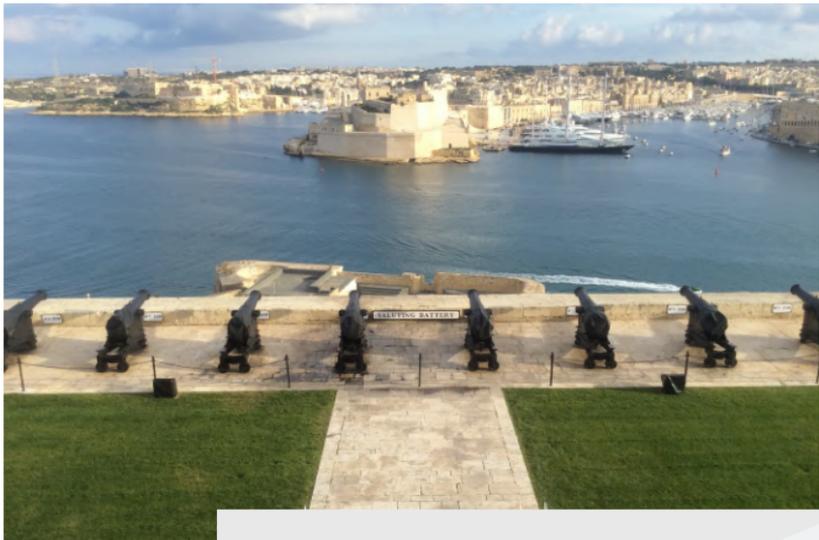


This 16th-century palace was the residence of the Grand Masters of the Knights of St John.

It served as the seat of the parliament after Malta's independence up until 2015 and continues to be the President's office as well as the House of Representatives.

It houses a collection of more than 5,000 suits of 16th-to 18th-century armour.

Barrakka Gardens, Valletta



Perched atop the Grand Harbour, the Upper Barrakka Gardens were created in 1661 for Italian knights. They offer panoramic views of the Grand Harbour with a backdrop of the Three Cities.

Directly below is the Saluting Battery, from where a cannon used to be fired to welcome visiting naval vessels. The restored battery now fire a cannon everyday at 12pm & 4pm.

Lower Barrakka Gardens closeby offer a different view of the mouth of the harbour.

National Museum of Archaeology, Valletta



Exhibits delicate stone tools dating from 5200 BC, Phoenician amulets and prehistoric figurines found locally (like the Sleeping Lady pictured here).

Lascaris War Rooms, Valletta



Go here if you are into World War history.



Underground complex of tunnels and chambers that housed the headquarters for defending the island during WW2.

Later, they became the headquarters for the Royal Navy's Mediterranean Fleet and played a crucial role during the Suez Crisis of 1956 and the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962 (a Soviet missile against Malta was expected!).

Two war time tanks are on display from the small tank force of five that the British had during WW2.

Fort St. Angelo, Three Cities



The Three Cities; Birgu, Senglea and Cospicua, all offer great views over Valletta. This medieval fort is the highlight of all three.

The fort was strengthened by the Knights who took it over in 1530 and it served as the residence of the Grand Master of the Order until 1571.

To get there, take the lift down from Upper Barrakka Garden, cross the street and continue left to the boat departure point.

Village Market, Marsaxlokk



Small picturesque fishing village known for its Sunday fish market and a fleet of coloured fishing boats called luzzu.

St Peter's Pool, Marsaxlokk



Natural lido in the rocks with large areas of flat slab for sunbathing.

Casa Bernard, Rabat



Privately owned 16th-century palace.

The lovely owner personally guides you through his impressive collection of art, furniture, silver and china.

Buskett Gardens, Rabat



Malta's only extensive woodland area with groves of pine, oak, olive and orange trees.

The gardens were planted by the Knights as a hunting ground.

City of Mdina



 **Go here if** you like places with a medieval feel.

Fortified city and the capital of Malta during the Middle-Ages. It's also called "Citta Notabile" (the noble city) as well as "the Silent City".

Mdina has quiet and charming streets with historical monuments like St. Paul's Cathedral, which is the oldest in Malta.

Tarxien Temples, Tarxien



Megalithic structures discovered in 1913 by local farmers and believed to date from around 3600 to 2500 BC.

Recognised by UNESCO, the temple has four linked structures built with massive stone blocks up to 3m x 1m x 1m in size.

Hagar Qim & Mnajdra, Qrendi



These megalithic temples sitting atop sea cliffs, are Malta's best preserved prehistoric sites.

The megalith weighs more than 20 tonnes and has a series of connected oval chambers.

The 'Fat Lady' statue and the 'Venus de Malta' figurine were found here (and are now in Valletta's National Archaeology Museum).

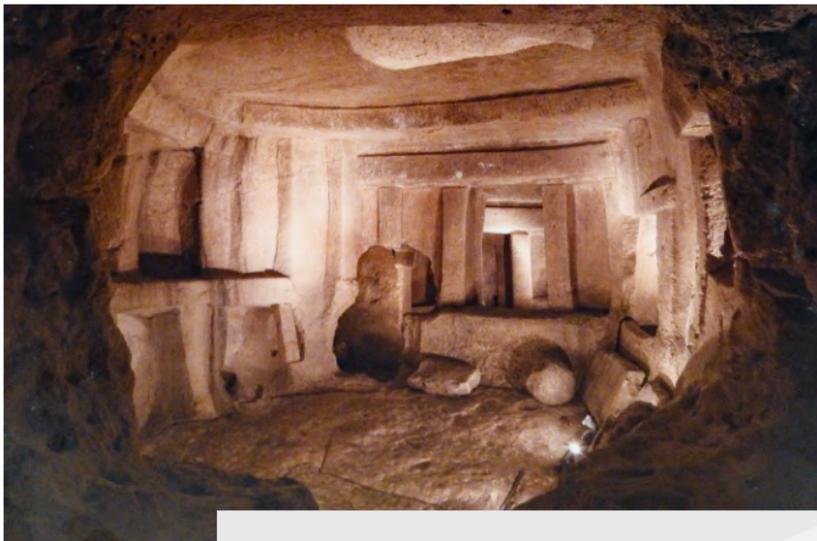
Ghar Dalam Cave & Museum, Birzebbuga



The oldest of all the prehistoric sites in Malta, the cave is made up of a huge underground tunnel which contains the fossils of extinct animals like dwarf elephants and hippopotamuses.

The lowermost layers of this 145m long cave are more than 500,000 years old!

Hal Saflieni Hypogeum, Paola



Go here if ancient history is your thing



Greek for ‘underground’, this subterranean necropolis was discovered during building work in 1902.

It’s believed to date from around 3600 to 3000 BC.

Its halls, chambers and passages, hewn out of the rock, cover a total of 500 sq metres.

Popeye Village, Mellieha



Go here to spark some childhood memories!



A colourful village next to Anchor Bay (named after the Roman anchors found on the seabed by divers).

The area was transformed into the fishing village of Sweethaven for the 1980 musical film, Popeye.

The vintage set now operates as an old-fashioned theme park.

Mosta Church, Mosta



Church with one of the biggest domes in all of Europe.

In 1942, a German bomb was dropped on it. It pierced the dome and fell into the church during mass, but didn't detonate.

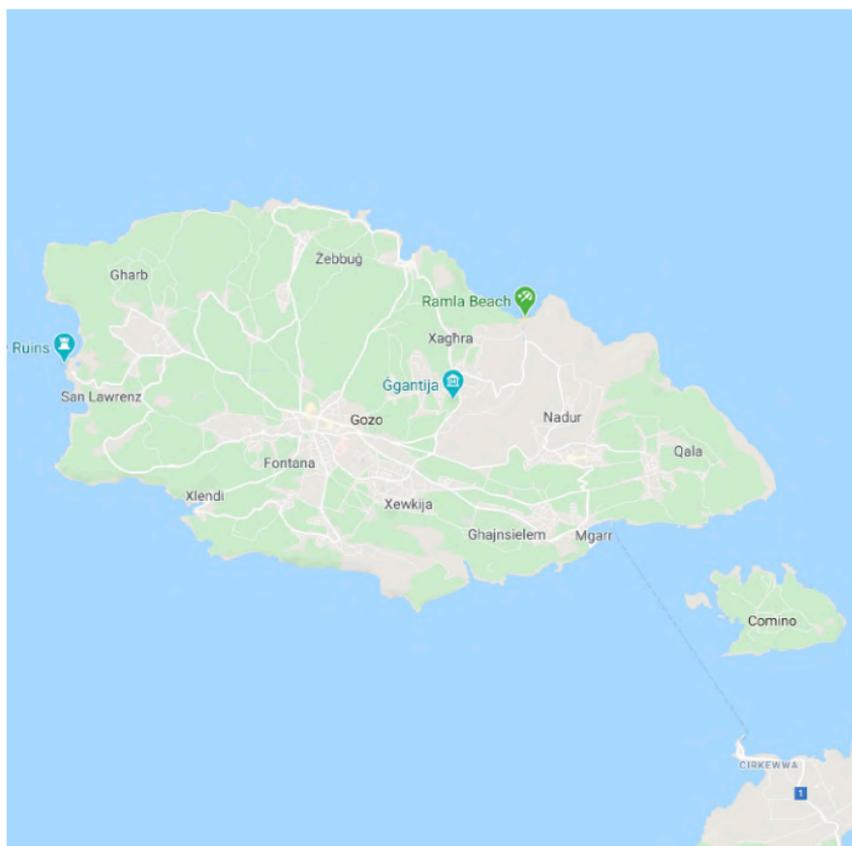
Dingli Cliffs, Dingli



The highest point in Malta, these cliffs are nice to walk around and enjoy the stunning sunsets from.

The Islands of Gozo & Comino

Gozo offers breathtaking natural beauty and picture perfect views away from the hustle and bustle of the cities. Described in Homer's *Odyssey*, the idyllic Mediterranean island has quaint fishing villages and peaceful bays. The landscape is dotted with rolling hills, sandy beaches and small coves. Comino, sat between Malta and Gozo, offers spectacular views and bays.



Citadella, Victoria (1)



Go here because this is a must visit
Journey travel gem!



Visible from almost everywhere on the island, the Citadella is an ancient fortified city that rises steeply above the surrounding countryside.

Occupied since prehistoric times, the Citadella is rich in buildings of architectural, military and historical value.

The 500 year old prison inside the fort has graffiti from prisoners that were kept there hundreds of years ago.

Citadella, Victoria (2)



The walls you see today, date from the 15th-century but there have been fortifications atop this flat-topped hill since the Bronze Age.

Walk around the city walls for astounding views over Gozo and towards the sea.

Salt Pans, Zebbug (1)



Go here if you're into photography
#snapped



A chequerboard of rock-cut salt pans protruding into the sea for 3 km on the north coastline of Gozo.

To reach this extraordinary wild landscape, continue past Xwieni Bay until you reach a rocky shore.

Salt Pans, Zebbug (2)



The 350 year old salt pans are a symbol of the centuries-old Gozitan tradition of sea salt production that the locals still follow.

During the summer months, locals can be seen scraping up crystals of salt, which are then stored and processed in caves carved into the coastal rock.

Tas-Salvatur (The Redeemer), Zebbug



A statue of Christ erected on a hill in the 1970s.

It replaced earlier statues and a wooden cross from the 1900s.

Mgarr Viewpoint, Mgarr



Viewpoint that's 1.8km uphill from the harbour, offering panoramic views over Gozo.

Egg Church, Mgarr



Built in the 1930s with money raised by local parishioners, largely from the sale of eggs. Estimates put the number sold at more than 300,000!

Ggantija Temples, Xaghra (1)



Awe-inspiring, giant megalithic temple complex from the Neolithic period. Recognised by UNESCO for their heritage.

The name Ggantija derives from the word 'ggant' (Maltese for giant), as the temples were believed to be built by a race of giants.

Perched on a hill and offering great views over southern Gozo, the temples have walls that stand over 6m high.

Ggantija Temples, Xaghra (2)



They were built between 3600 and 3200 BC, which makes them older than Stonehenge, the Egyptian pyramids and even the wheel!

They fell into disuse around 2500 BC and were not fully revealed until the 19th century.

Ramla Bay, Xaghra



One of the prettiest sandy beaches on Gozo.

The minimal remains of a Roman villa are hidden amid the bamboo behind the beach.

Calypso's Cave is closeby and offers great views.

Dreams of Horses Farm, Xaghra



A family run, not for profit organisation, that offers unique and fun experiences through hands-on interactive programs with horses and other farm animals.

Many of the animals here have been rescued and required rehabilitation as they were mentally or physically mistreated.

Azure Window, Dwejra



A collapsed arch in the sea with a 'Fungus Rock' jutting out (small islet in the form of a 60m high lump of limestone).

Before it sadly collapsed in 2017, the natural arch featured in Game of Thrones.

A path below the Dwejra Tower leads to a flight of stairs that takes you to a place to swim.

Blue Hole, Dwejra



The Blue Hole is a vertical chimney running down into limestone. It's about 10m in diameter and 25m deep, and connects with the open sea through an underwater arch.

It's a very popular dive and snorkelling site.

Basilica of Ta'Pinu, Gharb

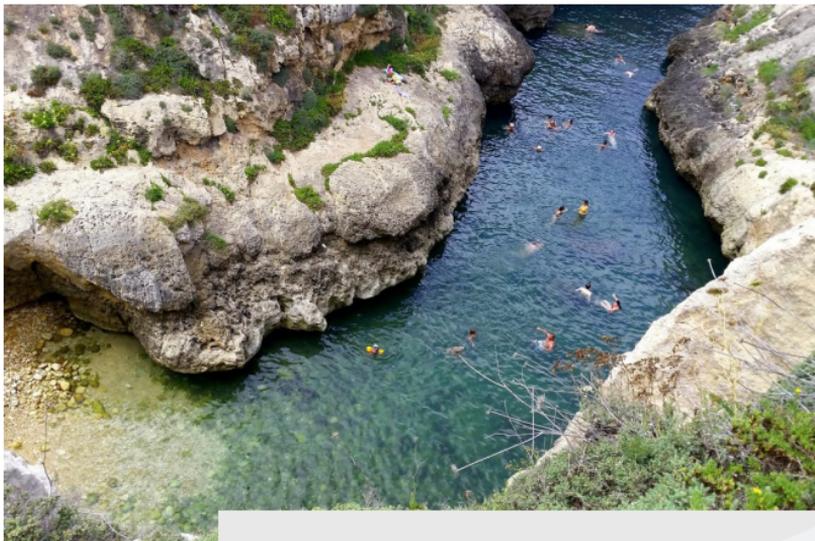


A huge lone church on a hillock, it's Malta's national shrine to Virgin Mary. Built on the site of a chapel where a local woman claimed to have heard the Virgin Mary speak to her in 1883.

The architectural masterpiece is home to superb sculptures made inside.

A series of 14 marble statues representing the Way of the Cross run up Ghammar Hill opposite the church.

Wied il-Ghasri, Ghasri



A narrow, cliff-bound inlet where a rock hewn staircase leads down to a tiny secluded beach.

Tal Mixta Cave, Nadur



Go here for a truly breathtaking view.

A beautiful cave rock shelter reached with a easy hike and offers spectacular views.

Blue Lagoon, Comino



Go here for some of the bluest waters you will ever see (promise!).



A picturesque, sheltered cove with a white-sand seabed and clear waters that are overly blue.

It's a great swimming and snorkelling spot.

“Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry,
and narrow-mindedness.”

Mark Twain

