

# EASTER PILGRIMAGE TO MALTA & GOZO

*The sacred islands in the heart of the Mediterranean*

8 Days • Wednesday 1 April 2015



Malta's religious roots were sown when St Paul was shipwrecked in 60AD and since then the nation have retained their Catholic faith. The Knights of Malta introduced the first Good Friday processions in the 1530's and the traditional re-enactments are testimony to how fervent the Maltese cherish their Christianity.

Whether you're looking to get in touch with your spiritual side, Malta provides the ideal destination for all kinds of pilgrimages. There are more than 360 churches across the islands, the huge majority of which are in daily use. This pilgrimage will give you a unique opportunity to celebrate Easter weekend in a very traditional and spiritual way with the deeply religious Maltese people.

The Islands boast of 7,000 years of history. Each era left monuments more spectacular and more sacred than the last, creating on Malta and Gozo a unique religious identity that has endured to this day. This is a country that has not only been founded and shaped by a succession of deeply spiritual orders, but in which religious devotion remains profoundly interwoven into everyday life. The commitment to family ideals and the strength of the community is so pronounced in Malta where the whole village pours onto the streets to offer thanks to its patron saint. It has also made Malta and Gozo one of the most significant pilgrimage destinations in the world, where a visitor can marvel at the prehistoric ingenuity, walk in the footsteps of St Paul, or admire the treasures commissioned by the Knights, all in celebration of their faith. The islands are much treasured and greatly revered, they are tranquil but vividly alive.

Appointed agents for





*This pilgrimage will give you a unique opportunity to celebrate Easter weekend in a very traditional and spiritual way. Immerse yourself in ancient history and rich culture, or just escape, relax and reflect.*



Towns	Highlights
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mdina</li> <li>• St Pauls Bay</li> <li>• Siggiewi</li> <li>• Vittoriosa</li> <li>• Marsaxlokk</li> <li>• Valletta</li> <li>• Gozo</li> <li>• Valletta</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• St Paul's Grotto</li> <li>• Laferla Cross</li> <li>• The visits of the seven Holy Sepulchres</li> <li>• Traditional Easter procession</li> <li>• Village of Marsaxlokk</li> <li>• Megalithic temples of Ggantija</li> <li>• Ta' Pinu Sanctuary</li> </ul>

**£799 pp**

Based on 2 people sharing

(£150 pp deposit required to secure your booking)  
Non-refundable if booking cancelled

01 Apr 15 KM 117 Lgw - Mla 11:55 15:55  
08 Apr 15 KM 116 Mla - Lgw 08:45 10:55

Appointed agents for



## Dolmen Resort Hotel & SPA \* \* \* \*



The Dolmen Hotel is a unique fusion of ancient and modern - the state-of-the-art interior with its modern facilities contrasts with one of the garden's most eye-catching features - the remains of a Neolithic temple. Set on the seafront at St. Paul's Bay, the Dolmen Resort offers panoramic sea views, a free private beach and 4 swimming pools. Its spa includes a hot tub, sauna and fitness centre. The location, the facilities, the view and the ambience make the Dolmen Hotel a wonderful setting for your Pilgrimage Tour in Malta

### Hotel Services

Free WiFi in all areas. Room service, Vending machine (drinks), Vending machine (snacks) Currency exchange, Tour desk, Luggage storage, ATM/cash machine on site, Laundry, Dry cleaning, Ironing service, Shoeshine, Trouser press, Daily maid service, Meeting/banquet facilities, Fax/photocopying, Wake-up service

### Room facilities

Safety Deposit Box, Air Conditioning, Desk, Heating, Tile/Marble floor, Wardrobe/Closet, Bath, Hairdryer, Free toiletries, Toilet, Bathroom, Telephone, Radio, Satellite Channels, Cable Channels, Flat-screen TV, Minibar, Wake-up service. Free WiFi in all rooms.

### Tour Package Includes

- Flights and Taxes with Air Malta
- Meet and greet
- Inbound and outbound transfers from/to the airports
- Transportation in a fully air-conditioned, non-smoking coach
- Tour Manager for the duration of the tour
- Excursions as per Itinerary above
- Entrance fees to various sites

- 7 breakfasts
- 7 dinners (including unlimited local house wine, soft drinks, local beer & water)
- 1 snack lunch
- 7 nights 4\* hotel accommodation

### Tour Package Excludes

- Meals unless otherwise stated
- Personal expenses

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## Itinerary

### Day 1 • Wednesday 1 April

We leave Gatwick airport late morning on your Air Malta flight to Malta. On arrival you will be transferred to your hotel. The rest of the day you may relax at the hotel before your evening meal. *(Dinner)*

### Day 2 • Thursday 2 April Mdina, St Pauls Bay, Siggiewi

After breakfast we then begin a tour of the old capital city of Mdina – often called “the silent city” – welcomes us in our first tour. Walking along the narrow, winding streets, dating back to medieval times, we come to the city’s imposing bastions, which command a magnificent landscape of the island. Leaving Medina through Greek’s Gate, we walk to the



Mdina streets

suburb of Rabat, to view the historical “St Paul’s Grotto” where, according to tradition, St Paul is said to have lived during his 3-month stay in Malta. Two important visitors of the Grotto were Pope St John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI.



St Pauls Bay

Later proceed to St Paul’s Bay, the town where St Paul was shipwrecked in AD 60. On the way back, we will be treated to a snack lunch consisting of various Maltese savouries at an olive cultivation centre.

During the evening we attend the Traditional Maltese Maundy Thursday ceremony the Holy Sacrament is transported from the Main Altar to the Altar of Repose decorated with flowers and sweet smelling incense. We return back to the hotel to freshen up and relax before we have our dinner. After dinner you will be treated to an excited night tour one of to the



Laferla Cross

town of Siggiewi boasts of a unique landmark in its outskirts: the 52 feet high Laferla Cross, which was erected by Rev: Paul Laferla in 1900 to commemorate the Holy Year. The hill, on which the Cross stands, provides a vantage point from where spectacular views of the surrounding countryside can be enjoyed due to the very well cultivated view to the very hard work of the local growers.

On Maundy Thursday evening, the steep path that leads uphill is illuminated with traditional “fiaccoli” and a Via Crucis is organized, which is attended by many Maltese persons and in which we can participate. This Via Crucis procession is a unique experience of lights and prayers on this particular evening. We return back to the hotel for a good nights sleep. *(Breakfast, Snack lunch, Dinner)*

### Day 3 • Friday 3 April Valetta, Zebbug

After breakfast on Good Friday morning we follow the Maltese custom of “The visits of the seven Holy Sepulchres” in seven of these churches for the adoration of the Holy Sacrament, during which we can also experience the artistic decorations of these Holy Sepulchre altars, famous amongst which those of the Dominican, Franciscan and Augustinian Churches and of the Chapels of the St Ursula and St Catherine’s nunneries.



Zebbug coastline

In the afternoon we attend Good Friday Services (traditional Malta service) has three priests taking roles of narrator, Jesus, and other characters reciting the gospel. The M.U.S.E.U.M. society, re-enact the biblical scene of Jesus’s entry into Jerusalem on a donkey, with crowds singing to joyous salutations and waving olive and palm branches.

Towards evening discover Zebbug – one of the towns which organize the Good Friday procession. This procession is a real spectacle at which about 500 persons take part representing various personalities and scenes from the Old and the New Testament. Outstanding in this procession are the ten statues showing the various phases of the Passion of Our Lord, and the funereal marches played by the participating band. *(Breakfast, Dinner)*

### Day 4 • Saturday 4 April Rest Day

After breakfast you can relax at the hotel taking advantage of the facilities available maybe a swim before your evening meal. *(Breakfast, Dinner)*

### Day 5 • Sunday 5 April Vittoriosa, Marsaxlokk

After breakfast on on Easter Sunday relive history visiting the town of Vittoriosa, where the Knights of the Order of St John first





Marsaxlokk

settled in 1530. Walking through the narrow streets in the shade of historic buildings we experience the medieval atmosphere of this town. Today we will also enjoy watching the traditional Easter procession with the statue of the Risen Christ, especially how in certain streets the persons carrying the statue run with it in a festive Easter Sunday mood.

Later we drive to the idyllic fishing village of Marsaxlokk where we can admire the colourful fishing boats and the fishermen at their work. One also has time to stroll through the local market set out on its waterfront, or for a glass of refreshing beer or wine at one of the many bars. *(Breakfast, Dinner)*

### Day 6 • Monday 6 April Gozo

We start the day after breakfast with a twenty-five minute crossing, from the northernmost harbour of Cirkewwa we arrive



Gozo coastline



Ta' Pinu

at Malta's sister island of Gozo. In Gozo one cannot fail to be impressed by the island's lush countryside and its serene atmosphere. Here the guide will first lead you around the megalithic temples of Ggantija, the oldest free-standing monuments in the world. This will be followed by the visit of the medieval citadel in Victoria where we will later have lunch at a typical Gozitan tavern, hidden away in one of its narrow streets.

Later we visit the fjord-like bay of Xlendi and the marvel of nature called the Azure Window at Dwejra. Included in today's programme is the visit of the neo-Romanesque Ta' Pinu Sanctuary, a famous centre of religiosity, which was also visited by St John Paul II in 1990. This was originally a small chapel where a Gozitan farmer woman once heard the voice of Our Lady inviting her to pray at the chapel, which she actually did. A great devotion to this chapel later followed and the sanctuary was built. We return back to your hotel for your evening meal. *(Breakfast, Dinner)*

### Day 7 • Tuesday 7 April Valletta

In Valletta today let the breath-taking panorama of the Grand Harbour astound you when we visit the Upper Barracca Gardens. Afterwards we visit the topmost treasure of



Valetta



St John's Co-Cathedral

Malta: St John's Co-Cathedral, originally the conventual church of the Knights. Besides the baroque beauty of the church interior one can admire the world famous Caravaggio paintings, the Flemish tapestries and the marvellous marble inlaid floor.

Lastly allow a way of life to come to life viewing Casa Rocca Piccola, a privately owned

and still much loved noble home. Some free time will be given for that last minute gift to take back home! You will return back to the hotel to relax and have your dinner *(Breakfast, Dinner)*

### Day 8 • Wednesday 8 April

After breakfast our Easter Pilgrimage tour concludes and we say goodbye to our new friends and you will be transferred to the airport for our flight back to London Gatwick.