

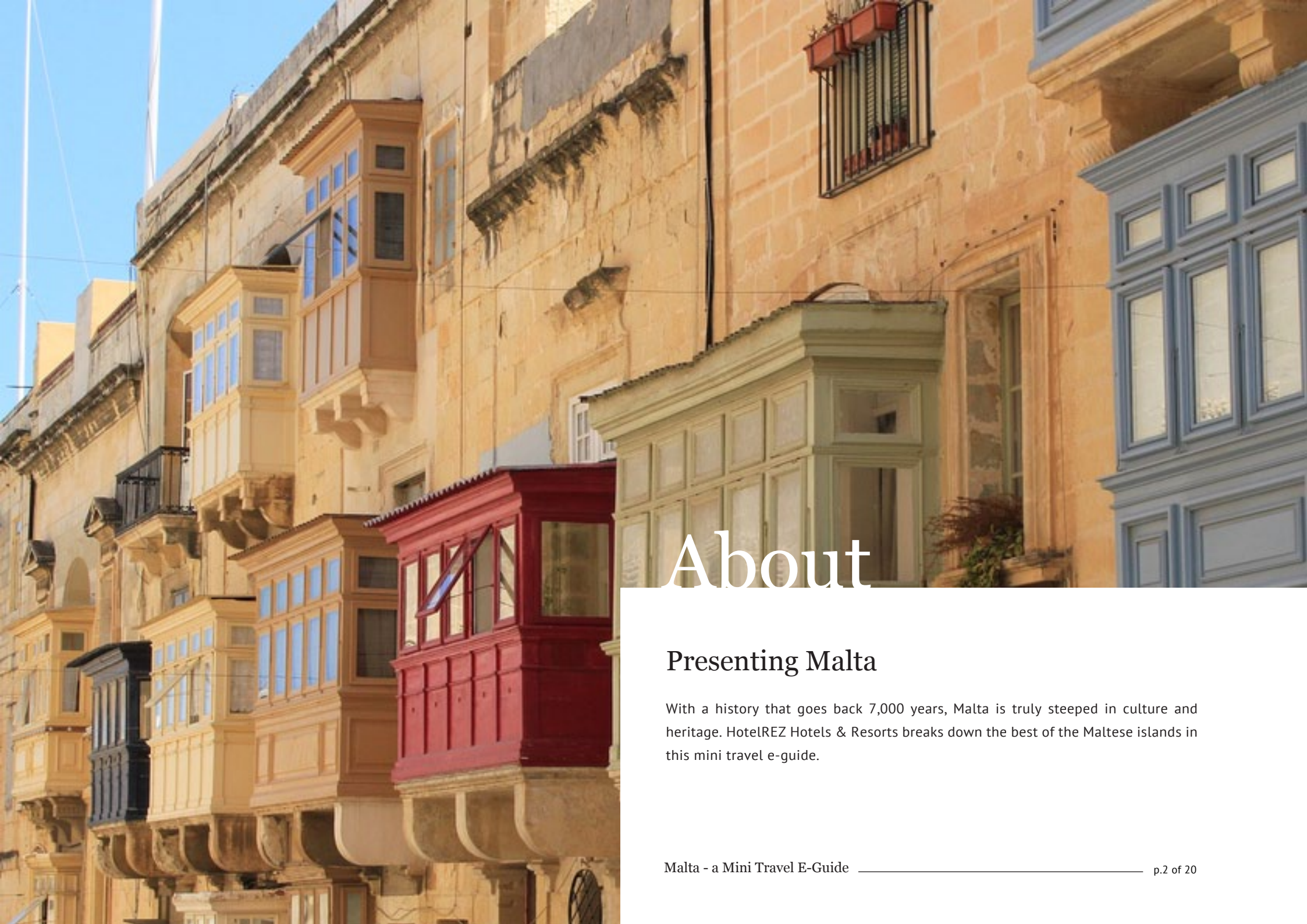


# Malta

A MINI TRAVEL E-GUIDE

**HotelREZ**  
HOTELS & RESORTS





# About

## Presenting Malta

With a history that goes back 7,000 years, Malta is truly steeped in culture and heritage. HotelREZ Hotels & Resorts breaks down the best of the Maltese islands in this mini travel e-guide.





## Malta basics

**Capital:** Valletta

**Population:** 452,515

**Area:** 316 sq. km/ 121 sq. mi

**Trademarks:** Maltese Cross, Luzzu (Maltese traditional fishing boat), Knights of St. John or Knights of Malta, smallest European Capital.

**Currency:** Euro

**Timezone:** CET (UTC+1)/CEST (UTC+2)

**Language:** Maltese (national and official)/English(official)

**Average temperature:** January Max. 15.1°C/59.18°F – Min. 9.5°C/49.1°F  
August Max. 30.6°C/87.08°F – Min. 21.8°C/71.24°F

**Visa:** Citizens from the EU, USA, Brazil, Australia, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea or Chinese national holders of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR) do NOT require a visa to enter Malta, provided their stay does not exceed 3 months. For other nationalities check the Visa requirements [here](#).

**Communications:** Malta Country Code +356. There are various Internet Cafes on the islands and most hotels have Wi-Fi available.





## Soaking Up The Culture

**Read:** The Siege of Malta, a historical novel by Walter Scott written from 1831 to 1832 and published posthumously in 2008. It tells the story of events surrounding the Great Siege of Malta by the Ottoman Turks in 1565.

**Listen:** Charles 'City' Gatt, one of the greatest Maltese musicians, veteran jazz drummer and founder of the Malta Jazz Festival; Ruben Zahra and the Nafra ensemble, the most important international exponent of Malta's folk music heritage.

**Watch:** : Malta Story, a 1953 British war film, directed by Brian Desmond Hurst, which is based on the heroic air defence of Malta during the Siege of Malta in the Second World War.

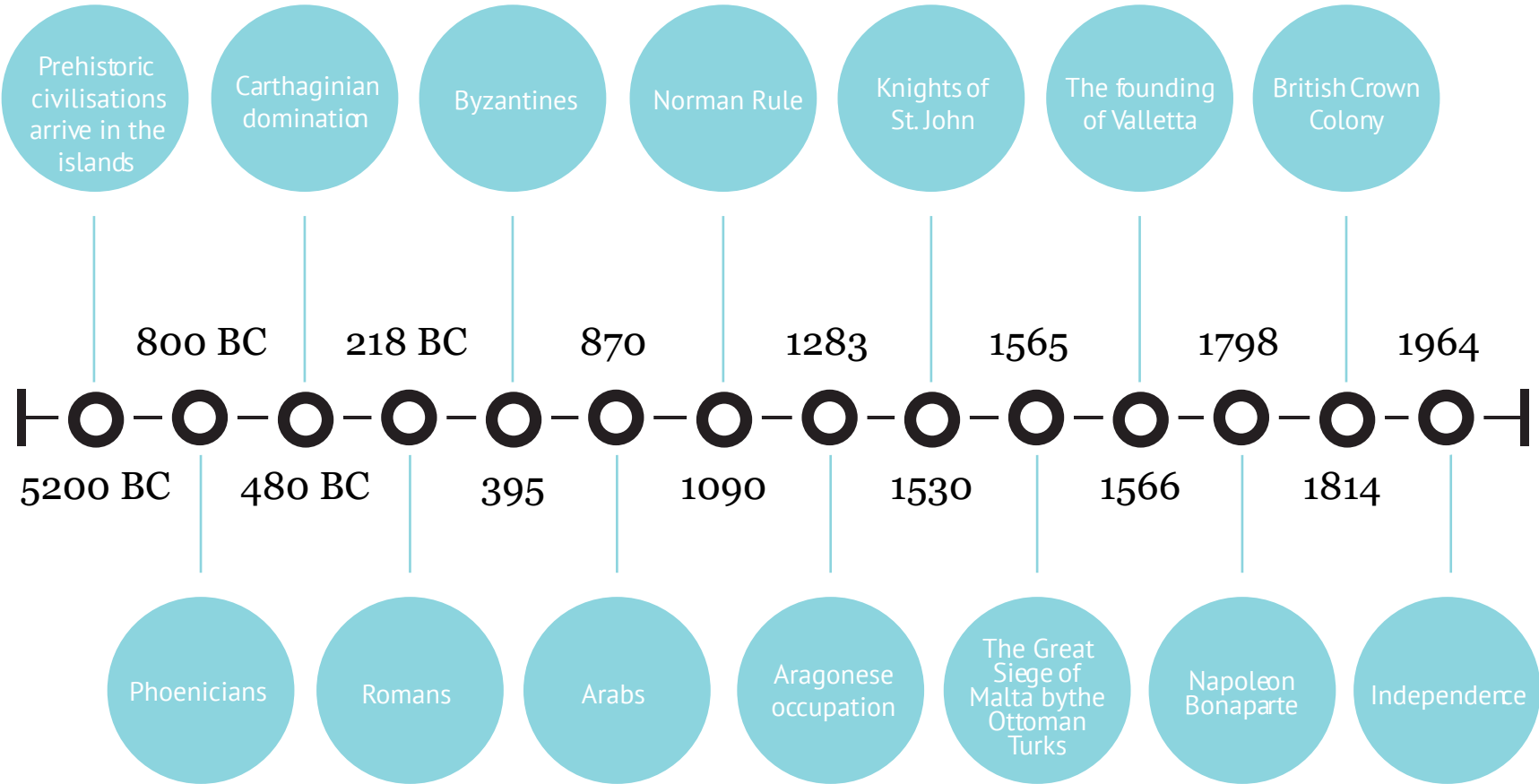
**Speak:** Learn a few basic sentences with this [Survival Guide](#) to Maltese.

**Cook:** From pastizzi to bragioli, get your head around Maltese cuisine with this [crash course](#).



# History

The history of Malta is a long and colourful one dating back to pre-historic civilization, after which a succession of conquerors and different cultures took possession of these small but strategically important territories over the centuries.







# Heritage and Culture

The Maltese Islands have three sites inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

## 1. Valletta the fortress city

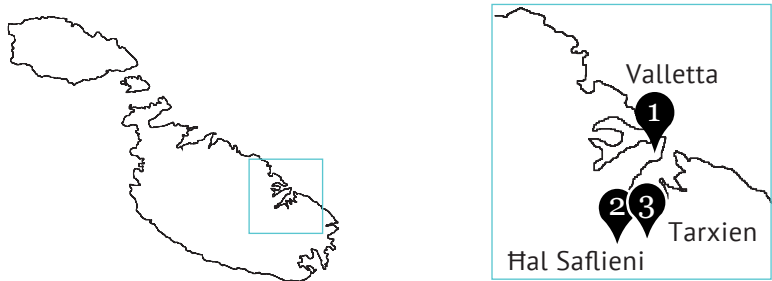
Valletta is named after its founder, the Grand Master of the Order of St. John, Jean Parisot de la Valette. The fortress city grew on the arid rock of Mount Sceberras peninsula, which rises steeply from two deep harbours, the Marsamxett and Grand Harbour. Valletta has been given many labels over the years, all recalling its rich historical past. It is the city built by the Knights of St John; a masterpiece of the Baroque; a European Art City and a World Heritage City. Today, it is one of the most concentrated historic areas in the world.

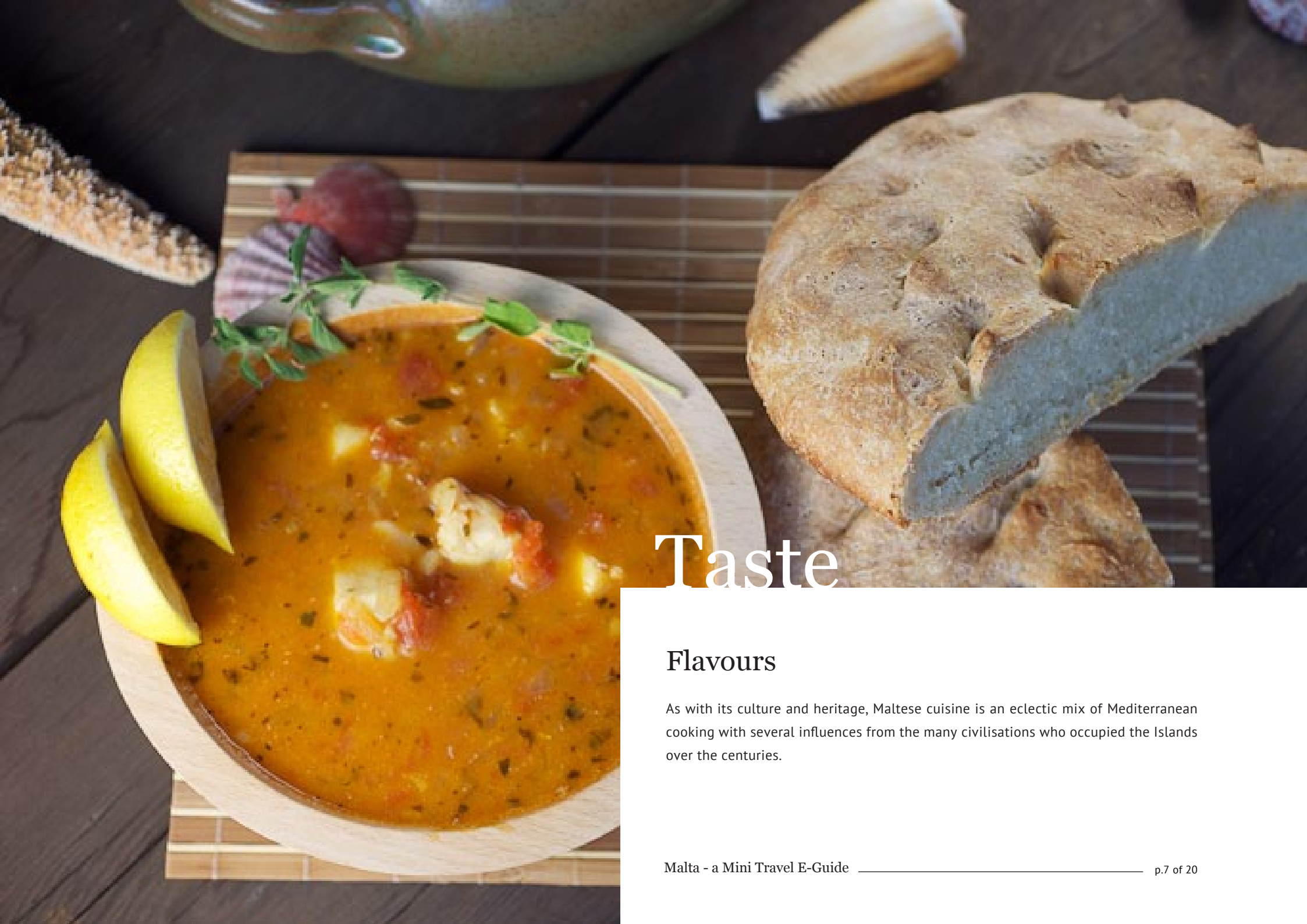
## 2. Hal Saflieni Hypogeum

The Hypogeum, a labyrinth of underground chambers probably used as both a burial site and a temple, is one of Malta's highlights. Excavation has yielded a wealth of archaeological findings including pottery, human bones, personal ornaments such as beads and amulets, little carved animals and larger figurines.

## 3. Tarxien Temples

An archaeological complex dating from approximately 3150 BC, the Tarxien consist of three separate, but attached, temple structures. Excavation of the site revealed that it was used extensively for rituals, which probably involved animal sacrifice. Many of the decorated slabs discovered on site were relocated indoors for protection, and can be visited at the Museum of Archaeology in Valletta.





# Taste

## Flavours

As with its culture and heritage, Maltese cuisine is an eclectic mix of Mediterranean cooking with several influences from the many civilisations who occupied the Islands over the centuries.



# Maltese cuisine



## Bigilla

A glass of local wine with friends is always best enjoyed with a dish of sun riped olives, some ġbejniet (local sheep's cheeses), and some bigilla (thick pate of broad bean and garlic) served with galletti (Maltese crackers).

Other snacks not to miss, are fobs biż-żejt, made from a thick slice of crusty Maltese bread soaked in olive oil and rubbed with juicy red tomatoes and topped with mint, a little onion, garlic, tuna or anchovies and capers.



## Bragioli

Bragioli is a rich beef dish and a Maltese specialty. The traditional version of the recipe involves a stuffing made with bread - ideally the typical Maltese bread Hobz Malti - as well as bacon, garlic, parsley, and wedges of hardboiled egg - all stuffed inside beefsteaks.

The bragioli is then garnished with sautéed onions, carrot and bay leaves, and slowly braised in a robust local red wine.



## Pastizzi

Pastizz (plural pastizzi) is a savoury pastry from Malta. Pastizzi usually have a filling either of ricotta or of mushy peas, and are called pastizzi tal-irkotta, "cheesecakes", or pastizzi tal-piżelli, "peacakes".

On a cold winter's day try the hot ricotta pastizzi which are perfect with a glass of wine or cup of coffee.



## Lampuki

Lampuki, in Maltese, or common dolphin fish in English, is a surface-dwelling ray-finned fish found in off-shore temperate, tropical and subtropical waters worldwide and very common to Malta.

A trip to the Marsaxlokk fish market on Sunday morning will show you just how varied the fish catch is in Maltese waters. Look out for Lampuki Pie (fish pie) and Aljotta (fish soup).

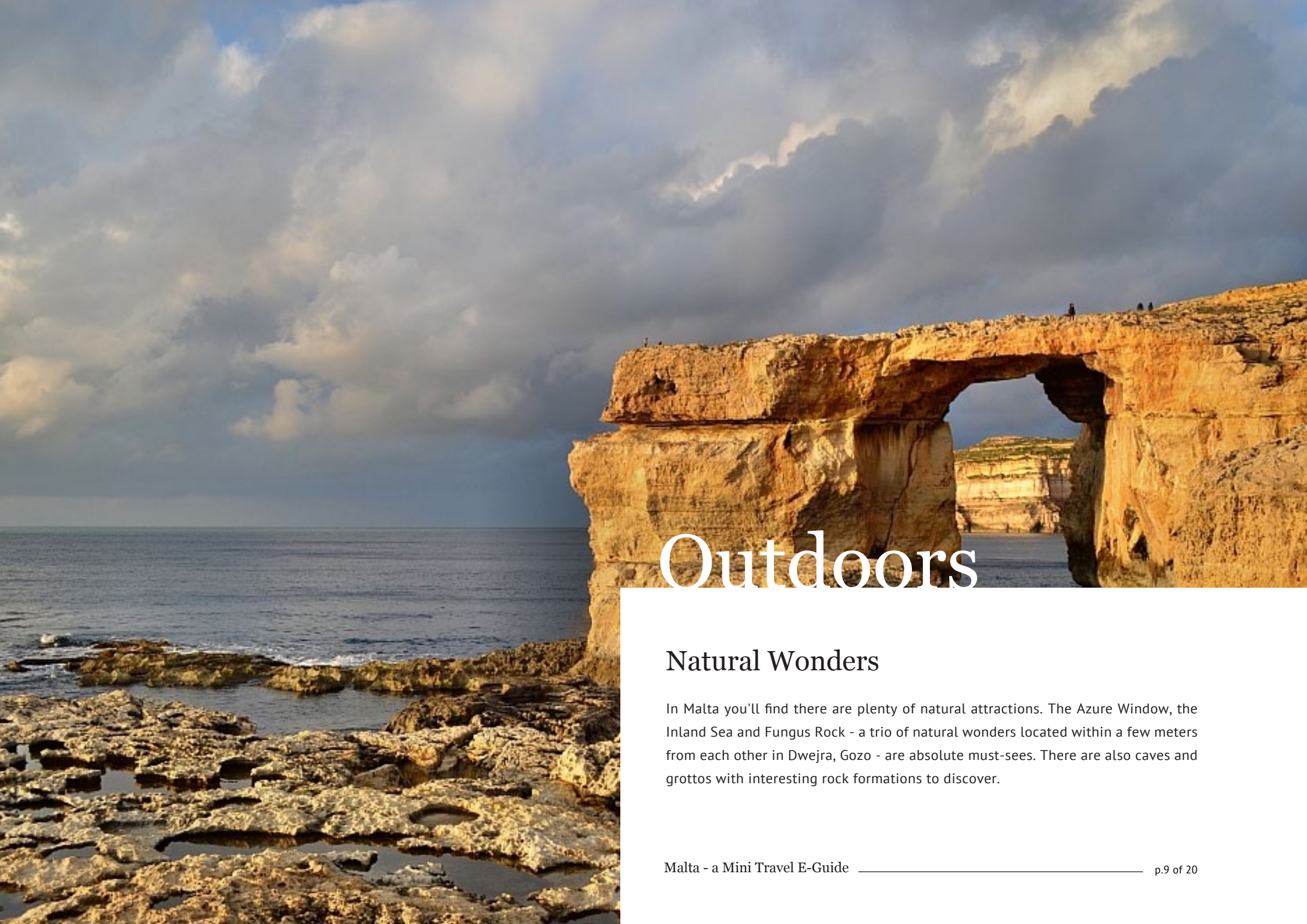


## Imqaret

Imqaret is a traditional Maltese sweet made with pastry and a filling of dates. The word found in off-shore temperate, tropical and subtropical waters worldwide and very common to Malta. Imqaret in Maltese, is the plural of maqrut (diamond shaped) and it signifies the diamond shape of the sweets.

It is very popular in Malta and it is sold in street markets, particularly around religious holidays and village festivals. On hot summer days try it served with ice-cream.





# Outdoors

## Natural Wonders

In Malta you'll find there are plenty of natural attractions. The Azure Window, the Inland Sea and Fungus Rock - a trio of natural wonders located within a few meters from each other in Dwejra, Gozo - are absolute must-sees. There are also caves and grottos with interesting rock formations to discover.





### 1. Blue Grotto - Outskirts of Qrendi, Malta

A number of caves, including the Blue Grotto, which is the biggest one, can be reached by boat from Wied iz-Zurrieq, on the outskirts of the town of Qrendi.



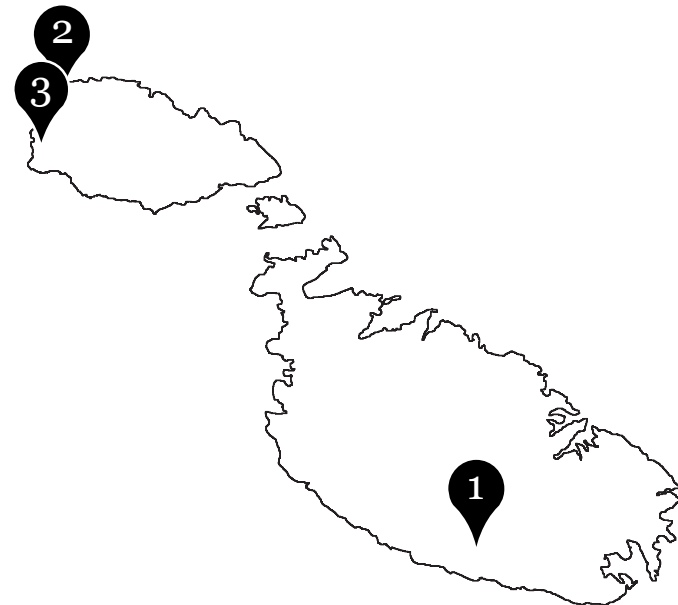
### 2. Azure Window - Dwerja, outskirts of San Lawrenz, Gozo

One of the most photographed vistas of the Islands, particularly spectacular during winter when waves crash high inside the arch.



### 3. Fungus Rock - Dwerja, Gozo

A small islet in the form of a 60 metres high massive lump of limestone in Dwejra, on the coast of Gozo. It is called Fungus rock due to the discovery of the common Malta fungus growing on the rock's flat top by the Knights of St. John. Thought to have medicinal properties the Knights used it for dressing wounds and cure dysentery.







## Adventure & Outdoors

### Best for:

### 1. Diving

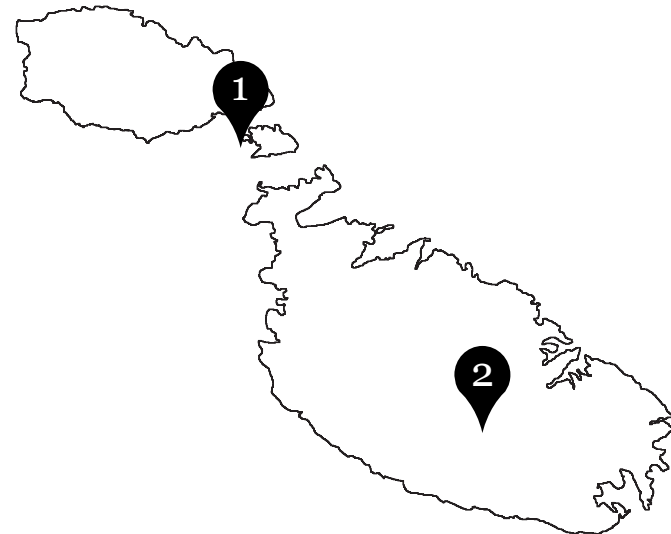
One of the top spots for diving in Malta is The Inland Sea. A lagoon of shallow seawater on the island of Gozo, linked to the Mediterranean Sea through an opening formed by a narrow natural arch, the Inland Sea was elected by ocean explorer Jaques Costeau as one of his top ten dives!

### 2. Climbing

The rocky terrain and sheer cliffs that characterise much of the Maltese archipelago make it ideal for practicing rock climbing. There are over 1300 climbing routes to choose from, and of course, with good weather throughout most of the year, the Maltese Islands are renowned as a climber's paradise.

Find out more  
about Scuba  
Diving in Malta  
[here](#)

Find out more  
on the  
[Malta Rock  
Climbing Club  
website](#)







# Events

## Festivals & Events

Malta has plenty of festivals and special events taking place all year round. Here is a selection of some of the islands' main events.



## Festivals & Events



### Malta International Fireworks Festival

An annual event taking place at the end of April around the Grand Harbour in Valletta.

The festival includes several fireworks displays designed by international companies, as well as some of the best of local fireworks factories.

More information [here](#)



### Ghanafest

A three-day manifestation of Maltese folk singing, known as Ghana in Maltese, which takes place every year in Floriana.

This is a family event, complemented by traditional Maltese food and the marvellous surroundings of the Argotti Botanical Gardens in Floriana.

Information on the festival website [here](#)



### Malta International Jazz Festival

Annual festival taking place in July in Valletta's Grand Harbour. A line-up of top international and Maltese artists present an eclectic mix of jazz styles from the current musical scene.

Previous editions counted with international jazz superstars such as Chick Corea, Al di Meola or John Scofield.

Information on the festival website [here](#)



### The Malta Arts Festival

The Malta Arts Festival is an annual festival comprising of a wide variety of art forms, such as theatre, dance, music and art. Usually taking place in mid July in Valletta.

Information on the festival website [here](#)



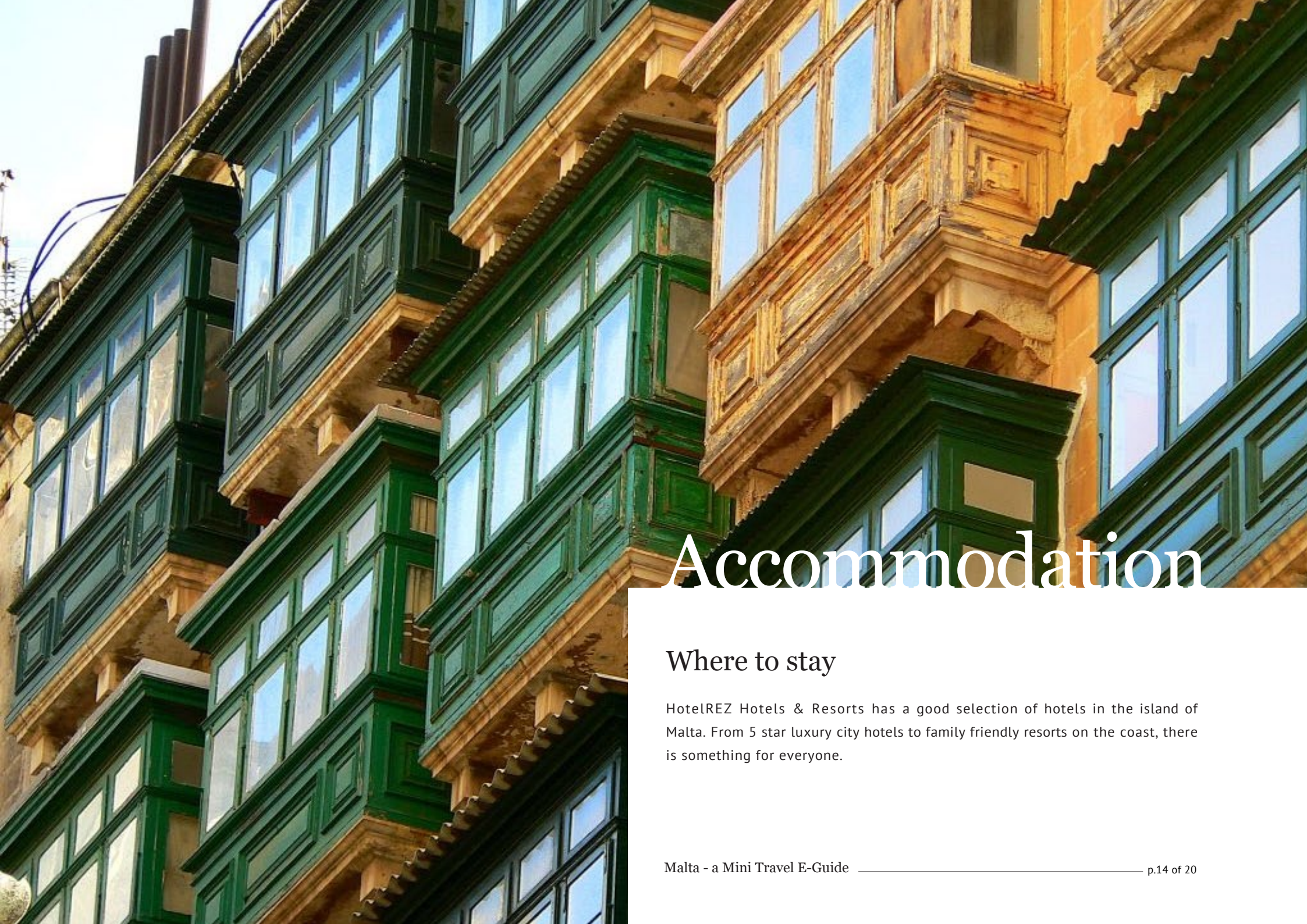
### Religious festivities and Village Festas

The festa season in Malta is made up of a series of extended weekends, starting from the end of May well into September.

During this period, there is hardly any weekend when a town or a village is not celebrating the feast of its patron saint.

For more information on what's on, check [Visit Malta website](#)





# Accommodation

## Where to stay

HotelREZ Hotels & Resorts has a good selection of hotels in the island of Malta. From 5 star luxury city hotels to family friendly resorts on the coast, there is something for everyone.





★★★★

### The Saint John Hotel

A charming, boutique-style hotel on the narrow streets of Valletta, offering comfortable, modern and stylish accommodation and a relaxing environment.

Highlight

Sophisticated designer-style bedrooms with 24/7 app to manage room amenities. In-house gastropub and creperie.

[more ▶](#)

## Valletta

### Why Visit

- The heritage of the Knights of Malta, including the ornate St. John's Co-Cathedral, the Palace of the Grand Masters and the Knights' armouries
- Walk around the beautiful natural harbour, admiring the vista of forts and marinas
- Malta's capital is home to the best places on the islands for shopping, souvenirs and eating and drinking







★★★★★

### The Palace

Comprised of an exquisite collection of spacious designer rooms and suites, the Palace creates extraordinary and relaxing atmospheres for its guests.

A 3 floor spa and fitness centre as well as a rooftop infinity pool overlooking the coastline. Free wi-fi available throughout the hotel.

Highlight

more ►

## Sliema

### Why Visit

- The Beach Lidos, such as MedAsia Playa a beach club including a restaurant, lounge and relaxation areas and a pool lido
- The excellent restaurants in and around Howard Street
- The Point Malta, a recent shopping complex in Sliema and one of the largest shopping centres in all of Malta



★★★★★

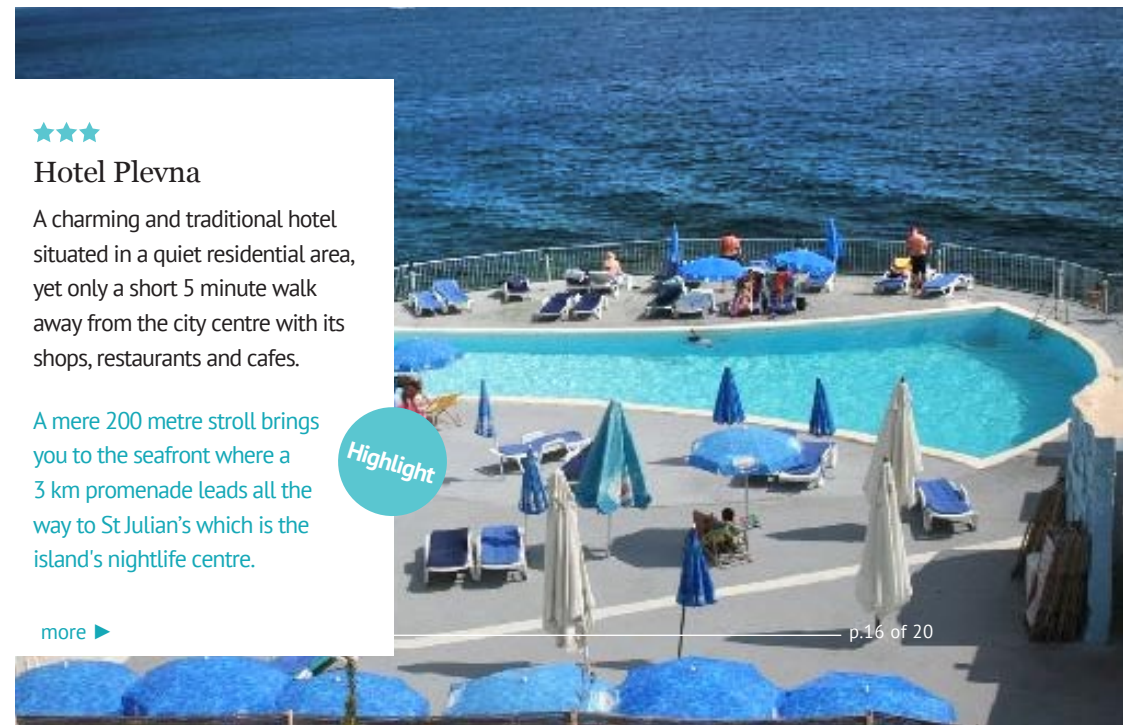
### The Victoria Hotel

Pledging a 5\* service at 4\* prices, The Victoria boasts excellent rooms, luxury Spa facilities and multi-purpose conference halls.

Complementing the property is the 200 year old Palazzo Capua, a prestigious Palace restored to its formal glory and transformed into an exclusive conference and reception venue.

Highlight

more ►



★★★★

### Hotel Plevna

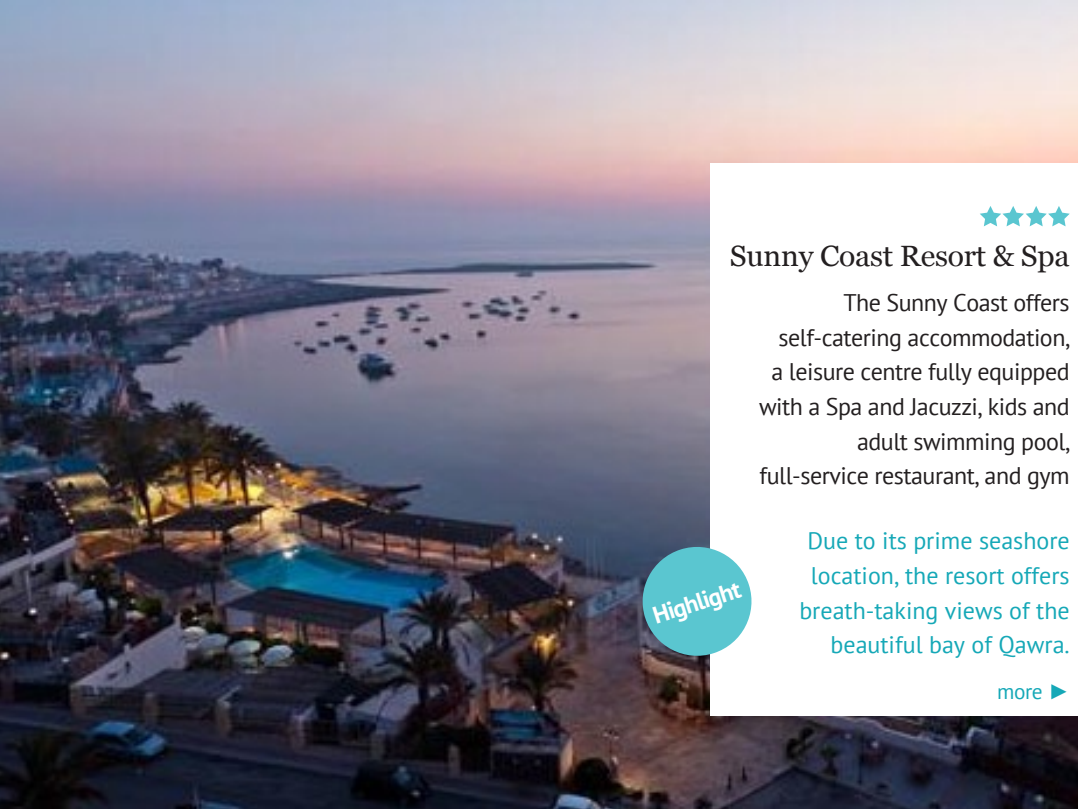
A charming and traditional hotel situated in a quiet residential area, yet only a short 5 minute walk away from the city centre with its shops, restaurants and cafes.

A mere 200 metre stroll brings you to the seafront where a 3 km promenade leads all the way to St Julian's which is the island's nightlife centre.

Highlight

more ►





★★★★★

### Sunny Coast Resort & Spa

The Sunny Coast offers self-catering accommodation, a leisure centre fully equipped with a Spa and Jacuzzi, kids and adult swimming pool, full-service restaurant, and gym

Highlight

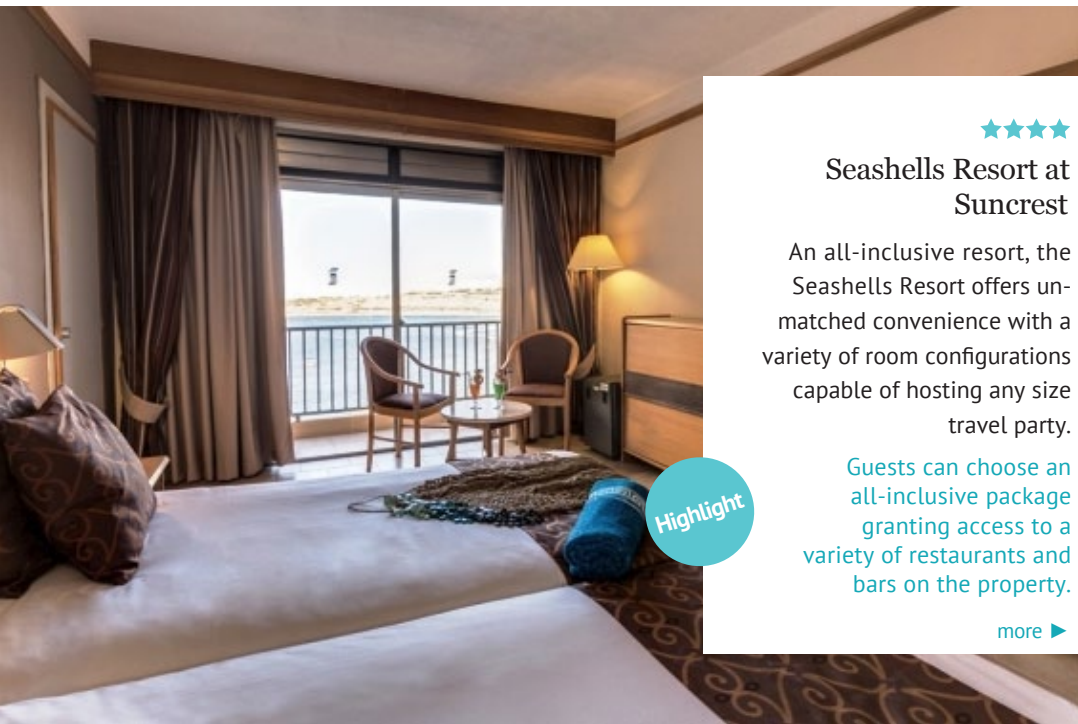
Due to its prime seashore location, the resort offers breath-taking views of the beautiful bay of Qawra.

[more ▶](#)

## Qawra

### Why Visit

- The Qawra Tower, built by the Knights in 1659 and now a restaurant and swimming pool offers views of both St Paul's and Salinas Bays
- The nightlife in the Promenade, with its many bars and restaurants
- The rocky beaches in Qawra offering clear, warm waters, ideal for snorkelling and swimming



★★★★★

### Seashells Resort at Suncrest

An all-inclusive resort, the Seashells Resort offers unmatched convenience with a variety of room configurations capable of hosting any size travel party.

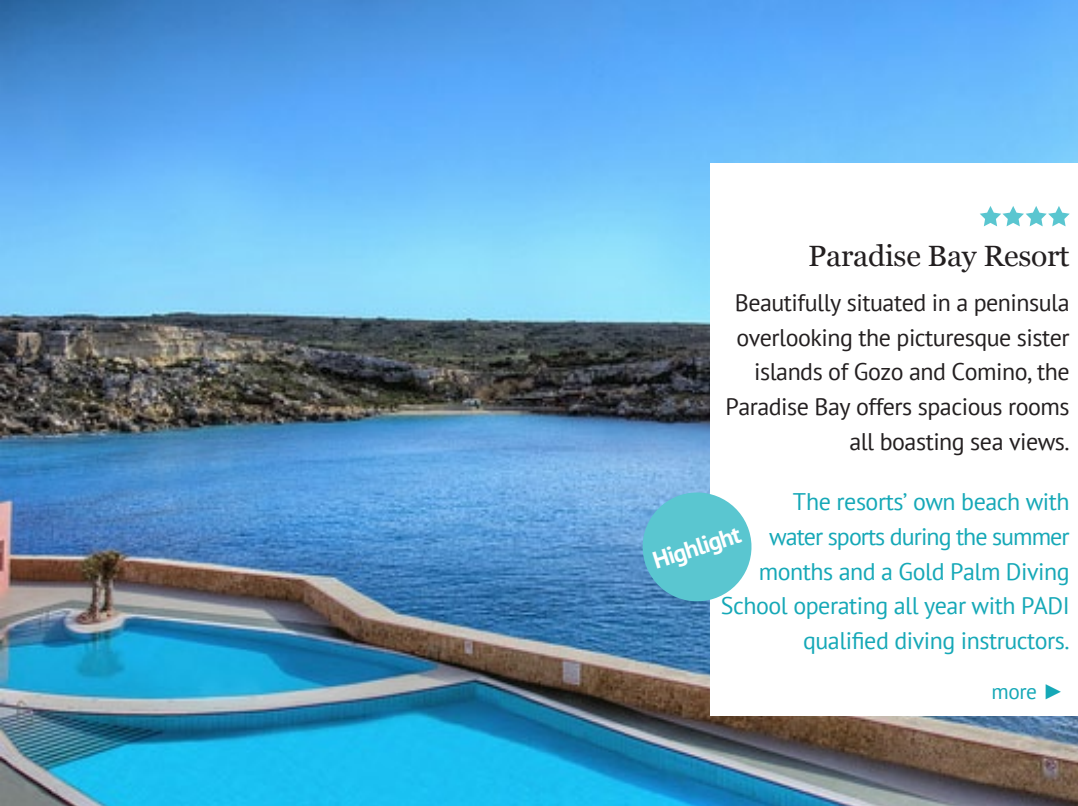
Highlight

Guests can choose an all-inclusive package granting access to a variety of restaurants and bars on the property.

[more ▶](#)







### Paradise Bay Resort

Beautifully situated in a peninsula overlooking the picturesque sister islands of Gozo and Comino, the Paradise Bay offers spacious rooms all boasting sea views.

Highlight

The resorts' own beach with water sports during the summer months and a Gold Palm Diving School operating all year with PADI qualified diving instructors.

[more ▶](#)

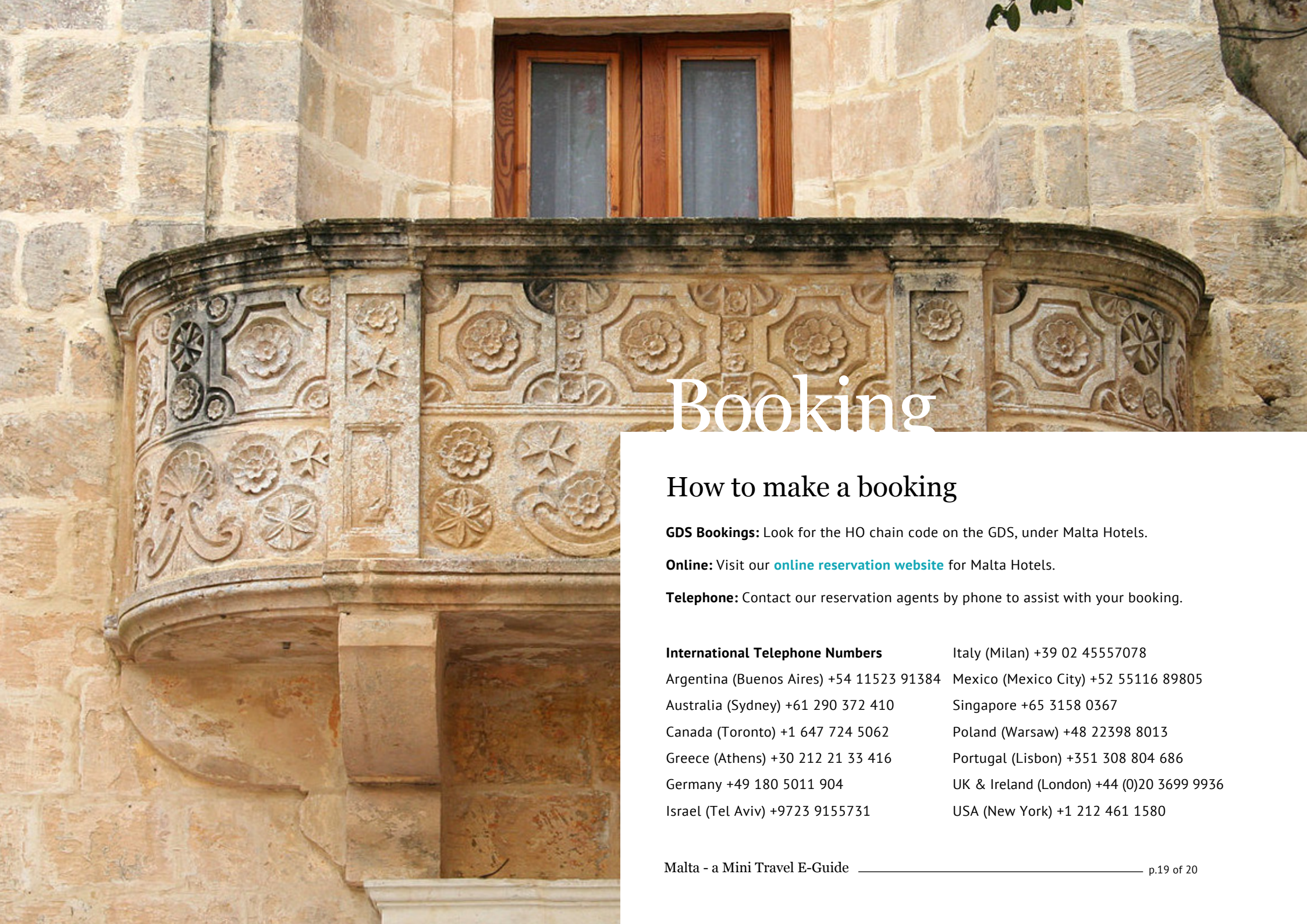
## Cirkewwa

### Why Visit

- The island of Gozo, easily reached by a short ferry ride from Cirkewwa
- Diving highlights including underwater cliffs, caves, tunnels or the wreck of the MV Rozi, an old tugboat sunk intentionally as an attraction for tourists







# Booking

## How to make a booking

**GDS Bookings:** Look for the HO chain code on the GDS, under Malta Hotels.

**Online:** Visit our [online reservation website](#) for Malta Hotels.

**Telephone:** Contact our reservation agents by phone to assist with your booking.

<b>International Telephone Numbers</b>	
Italy (Milan) +39 02 45557078	
Argentina (Buenos Aires) +54 11523 91384	Mexico (Mexico City) +52 55116 89805
Australia (Sydney) +61 290 372 410	Singapore +65 3158 0367
Canada (Toronto) +1 647 724 5062	Poland (Warsaw) +48 22398 8013
Greece (Athens) +30 212 21 33 416	Portugal (Lisbon) +351 308 804 686
Germany +49 180 5011 904	UK & Ireland (London) +44 (0)20 3699 9936
Israel (Tel Aviv) +9723 9155731	USA (New York) +1 212 461 1580



# Sources

Visit Malta – <http://www.visitmalta.org>

A Maltese Gastronomic Portal – <http://Ilovefood.com.mt>

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Climbing via <http://www.climbmalta.com/>

Malta International Fireworks Festival via <http://www.maltafireworksfestival.com/>

Ghanafest via <http://www.maltafolkmusicfestival.org/>

The Malta International Jazz Festival via <http://www.maltajazzfestival.org/>

The Malta Arts Festival via <http://www.maltaartsfestival.org/>

Religious festivities and Village Festas via [www.visitmalta.com/](http://www.visitmalta.com/)

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