Complete Gozo



Trip style:	Destination:	Walking Grade	Carbon Footprint:
Guided Walking Holidays	Maltese Islands	4 & 6	1052kg CO2

HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Fondly known as Malta's little sister, rural and peaceful Gozo is the second-largest of the three islands that make up the Maltese archipelago. Complete with lovely beaches, pretty villages, interesting archaeological sites, and reliably good weather, life here is gloriously slow-paced. This holiday will be spent exploring the island's coastal paths leading to secluded coves and rocky headlands backed by the glittering Mediterranean Sea.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Admiring the stunning interiors at Victoria's cathedral
- Stopping for a coffee at Mgarr-ix-Xini
- Taking a boat ride through the caves to the open sea
- Sampling island-grown produce
- Enjoying a mid-walk swim at San Blas Bay
- Discovering the 17th-century Dwerjra Tower

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Return flights from London Heathrow, including baggage and transfers (flights available from other airports - price may vary)

- A choice of 2 guided walks per day with local leaders (on walking days)
- HF Holidays Tour Manager
- 7 nights' accommodation in Mgarr
- 7 breakfasts & 7 dinners
- All in-destination transport

ITINERARY - ITINERARY

Day 1 **Arrival day**

Welcome to Grand Hotel. Unpack and settle in.

Day 2 **Xlendi and the Southern Coast**

Today we explore the coastal area along the south coast of Gozo. Here you'll find precipitous cliffs and deep-cut fjords, rocky headlands and little urbanisation.

Option 1 - Along the coast to Xlendi

Distance: 5 miles (8km)

Ascent: 600 feet (180m)

Following the coast path, we take in dramatic views of the cliffs. We continue along the coastline passing Xlendi Tower, the oldest freestanding watchtower on Gozo. Beautiful fossil embedded limestone formations and Xlendi Tower perched magnificently on a cliff top.

Option 2 - The Southern Coast to Xlendi

Distance: 8 miles (13km)

Ascent: 1,000 feet (300m)

We walk from our hotel and cross scenic countryside towards the inlet of Mgarr-ix-Xini. We then walk along the coastal path through one of Gozo's most remote areas taking in spectacular clifftop views.

Day 3 **Ta Pinu and Sculpted cliffs**

The Church of Pilgrimage at Ta Pinu starts the day. From here the north coast offers some spectacular cliff scenery. Heading eastwards there are some beautiful 'wind sculptures' to admire as well as quaint fishermen's storerooms, formed in the softer rock of the higher cliffs, on our way to Marsalforn or Victoria

Option 1 - Ta Pinu, Scultped cliffs & Marsalforn

Distance: 6 miles (10km)

Ascent: 150 feet (40m)

Descent: 450 feet (140m)

Our day begins at the sanctuary church of Ta Pinu with time to explore. We'll then head to the coast via the village of Ghasri. On reaching the coast we'll see the beautiful inlet of Ghar il Qamh, fascinating saltpans and weather-sculpted cliffs. We finish at Marsalforn with refreshments.

Option 2 - Marsalforn via Hekka Point

Distance: 7½ miles (12.5km)

Ascent: 300 feet (90m)

Descent: 600 feet (190m)

We too start with a visit to Ta Pinu, but then begin walking uphill to Ta Ghammer with its stations of the cross. We then head for Hekka Point via the village of Gharb. We'll then follow the other party to Marsalforn via the saltpans and cliffs.

Day 4 North Coast Beaches and Caves

Both walks follow quiet countryside roads to Marsalforn and the scenic northern coastline taking in Ramla Beach, the longest sandy beach on Gozo and the spectacular viewpoint from Tal-Mixta Cave.

Option 1 - Ghasri to Ggantija Temples

Distance : 5.5 miles (8.5km)

Ascent: 500 feet (140m)

Our walk today starts at the impressive Corpus Christi Church in Ghasri, then we make our way towards the coast at Marsalforn, where the beautiful bay is set between hilltop towns. We continue back inland, through the countryside and ascend towards Xaghra, passing a traditional 18th century windmill, before we reach the fascinating Ggantija Temple.

Option 2 - Ghasri to San Blas

Distance: 9 miles (14.5km)

Ascent: 1,000 feet (300m)

We begin walking from Ghasri towards the coast at Marsalforn, from here we follow the rugged northern coastline past Ramla Bay and the iconic viewpoint at Tal-Mixta cave. We then continue past San Blas beach and the beautiful San Blas gardens to finish at Nadur Observatory.

Day 5 Free day

Today there are no organised walks, allowing you time to explore the local area or relax in the Hotel or at the beach.

Ta'Mena Estate

The Ta"Mena estate, which the Spiteri family owns, is situated in the picturesque Marsalforn Valley between Victoria and Marsalforn Bay. The estate includes a fruit garden, an olive grove with about 1500 olive trees, an orange grove, and over ten hectares of vineyards. It enjoys the panoramic views of the Gozo Citadel and the surrounding hills and villages. They cultivate vines, olives, lemons, oranges, various fruit trees, strawberries, tomatoes, melons, watermelons and other vegetables. They produce their own wine. There is also an opportunity to buy. HF Holidays groups have visited in previous years and thoroughly enjoyed it.

Malta Trip

There is an excellent scheduled ferry service between Gozo and Malta and the crossing takes approximately 25 minutes. The ferry leaves Gozo from Mgarr and arrives on Malta at Cirkewwa. The ferry timetable is available from www.gozochannel.com

Trip to Valleta

There is a high speed catamaran service operating from Gozo to Valletta, if you would like to explore this historic city in your free time.

Day 6 Xlendi Bay and Fungus Rock

A combination of man's burrowing and gigantic sea erosion has shaped the landscape of today's walks. On the Harder Walk, we'll descend by cliff paths to Xlendi before a spectacular ascent of the cliffs to the west leads to Dwerja Point. Both walks visit Dwerja Point where once stood the dramatic sea-arch known as the Azure Window. Sadly, due to a combination of sea erosion and high winds, the Azure Window collapsed in March 2017. If time and weather permit, a boat trip can be taken from the Inland Sea through a tunnel in the rock out to view the nearby cliffs and Fungus Rock. Both walks continue on into Victoria, the island's capital, for well-earned refreshments

Option 1 - Fungus Rock & the Inland Sea

Distance: 6 miles (9½km)

Ascent: 550 feet (180m)

The day starts with a gradual descent to see Fungus Rock - prominently guarding the entrance to Dwerjra Bay and onto Dwerjra Point where we can see the site of the collapsed Azure Window sea arch. We then circle the Inland Sea before heading for some sightseeing in Victoria. There's opportunity to take a boat ride through the caves into the open sea.

Option 2 - Xlendi Cliffs & Dwejra Bay

Distance: 9 miles (14½km)

Ascent: 1,200 feet (380m)

Our walk starts at the village of Munxar and follows a dramatic coast path to the resort of Xlendi. After a spectacular ascent to the cliff tops we'll walk on to Wardija Point and then follow the route of the other party all the way to Victoria. Take a look inside the 17th Century Dwerjra Tower - one of only four surviving coastal watchtowers on Gozo.

Day 7 Rocky strand to secluded coves

Today's walks offer extensive views over the straits to Comino and Malta. Our groups traverse a delightful flat rock shore and then enjoy charming coves, verdant gardens and wonderful wild flowers. Both walks visit the beautiful Dahlet Qorrot beach with the opportunity for a dip. Continuing, both groups make their way through the outskirts of Nadur, arriving at one of the most stunning viewpoints on Gozo.

Option 1 - Qala, Dahlet Qorrot and Nadur

Distance: 7 miles (11km)

Total ascent: 800 feet (240m)

We start our day at Qala for great views of the strait to Comino and Malta. We then walk through open countryside to the small harbour of Dahlet Qorrot, before taking lunch at the lovely San Blas Gardens. We finish by walking through a fertile valley to Nadur, and back to our hotel.

Option 2 - Strait, Strands and Coves

Distance: 9 miles (16km)

Ascent: 1,000 feet (420m)

We walk in the remote north-east corner of the island, walking the coastline for fantastic views of Comino and Malta. We'll visit St Anthony's gun battery, then the beautiful secluded bay of Dahlet Qorrot, before picking up the route back to the hotel via Nadur.

Day 8 **Departure day**

We hope to see you again soon.

DAILY WALK OPTIONS



Gentle walking grade 4

The most active Gentle grade, with longer walks, some ascent, and possible steps, stiles, or off-path uneven ground. Typically, 6-7 miles (10-12km) with around 1,000ft (300m) of ascent.



Moderate walking grade 6

Longer full day walks with more ascent and varied terrain. Good fitness and agility are needed. Typically, 9-10 miles (15-16km) with around 1,500ft (460m) of ascent.

ACCOMMODATION

Grand Hotel - Gozo

The charming 4-star Grand Hotel with its comfortable accommodation, and friendly efficient service, occupies a commanding location overlooking Mgarr harbour and has views across the straits to Comino and Malta. Winner of three HF Hotel Awards in 2018 based on outstanding guest feedback. The hotel features indoor and outdoor swimming pools, a well equipped bar and two restaurants.

Your evenings

The friendly atmosphere of our holidays continues into the evening.

Enjoy a glass of wine or local beer before hearing about the next day's walks.

On most evenings there will be some kind of entertainment: watch a film in the hotel's own cinema: relax in the hotel with a drink and chat with your fellow guests.

Your leader will inform you of what options are available.

FOOD & DRINK

Dining at the Grand Hotel

Our holidays at the Grand Hotel are on a half-board basis and include breakfast and evening meal.

Breakfast

There is an extensive selection of hot and cold options for breakfast from a self-select buffet.

Lunch (payable locally)

You can buy picnic lunches from the hotel (order the evening before). Alternatively you can buy ingredients from the supermarket in the village or eat in a café during the walks; your leaders will advise you of all the options.

Evening meal

The Grand Hotel has a buffet dinner, comprising a choice of soup, antipasti/salad dishes, plus hot pasta. Main courses always include a choice of meat or fish, plus hot vegetables. The sweet course is usually fresh fruit/fruit salad or gateau. There will be a vegetarian option if requested; we recommend that you discuss any special dietary requirements with the restaurant manager or chef.

Drinks

The hotel has a well-stocked bar serving beer, wine and spirits.

ROOMS

Your room at the Grand Hotel

The hotel has 93 en-suite bedrooms, many of which have a balcony with either sea views over Mgarr Harbour or the open countryside.

All bedrooms have:

- En-suite bathroom with bath with shower
- Air conditioning
- TV
- Telephone
- Mini-bar
- Hairdryer
- Free Wi-Fi

ABOUT YOUR STAY

Facilities at the Grand Hotel

The hotel has a range of facilities to enjoy after a day's walking, including a:

- Lounge bar
- Games room
- Mini cinema
- Outdoor swimming pool
- Sauna
- Jacuzzi
- Gymnasium
- Indoor pool

TRAVEL DETAILS

Address

Grand Hotel
St Anthony Street
Mgarr
Gozo
GSM 9026

Tel: 00356 2156 3840

LOCAL AREA

Gozo lies 20 minutes away from Malta by ferry, is about one third of its size and has a character quite distinct from its neighbouring island. It is more rural, with an extensive farming community and the countryside is greener and more scenic. Controls over building developments enabled Gozo to keep its rural charm. Flat-topped hills and intensely cultivated fields characterise the landscape whilst the coast has rugged cliffs, steep valleys and beautiful inlets. Baroque churches and old stone farmhouses dot the countryside. The islands also come complete with historical sites, forts and amazing panoramas, as well as one of the archipelago's best-preserved prehistoric temples, Ggantija. The strong religious beliefs of the Maltese people are evident in the numerous churches and other religious attractions are also abundant on the island.

Comino

Named after the cumin seed that once flourished in the Maltese islands, Comino is noted for its tranquility and isolation. It has a permanent population of only four residents. One priest and one policeman commute from the nearby island of Gozo, to render their services to the local population and summertime visitors. Today, Comino is a bird sanctuary and nature reserve and can be reached by boat from Mgarr.

Malta

The largest Maltese island, Malta has a rich history. Most notably, the Capital City of Valletta, which is a fortified city, sitting on a peninsula between two natural harbours. The city was founded by the Order of St. John and named after their Grand Master, John de Vallette. When the Order left the islands in the late 18th Century, the French occupied Valletta, this was followed by British rule in the 19th Century. The city has many interesting and historic sites to visit, including churches, museums, and you can even take a harbor cruise, to see Valletta from a different vantage point. In 1980 it was named a UNESCO World Heritage site, and in 2018, Valletta is the European Capital of Culture. Malta can be explored by ferry from Mgarr, the local bus services on the island are very extensive.

Did you know?

Victoria is the name given in 1897 by the British government on the occasion of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee.

TRIP INFORMATION

EU Walking Safety

We are committed to running our Guided Walking holidays in a safe manner and your co-operation with this is much appreciated. No outdoor activity can be 100% risk free; however, if you take sensible precautions and adhere to your leaders' instructions, your holiday will be both safe and enjoyable. On the first evening of your holiday (dependent on arrival time), the leaders will give a short talk about safety on the walks – we would ask everyone to attend.

Walking as a group: Our leaders always consider the safety of the group as a whole, and will show more caution over potential risks (such as bad or exceptionally hot weather) than an individual or couple might make on a private outing. Walks may be modified or cancelled following the leaders' assessment of the day-to-day situation. Your leaders will refuse to accept any guest whose clothing, equipment, behaviour or walking ability is considered unsuitable, and where it could affect the safety and enjoyment of other guests on the proposed walk. It is your responsibility to follow the leader's guidelines, for the benefit and safety of the group as a whole. If you leave the group, then your leader will no longer have responsibility for you. For safety reasons, we stipulate a minimum party size of two guests in addition to the leader. First aid: In line with current practice, each leader carries a group first aid kit but is not able to supply any 'medication', including aspirin, paracetamol, antihistamines and antiseptic cream.

Hydration: In warm weather it is very important to keep hydrated. You will need to carry a minimum of two litres of water with you on walks, more during hot weather or on more demanding walks. One good way of hydrating is to use a two litre hydration pack which allows drinking without constant stopping. This can then be filled up from additional water sources as required. Your leader will inform you of the possibilities for replenishing your water during the walks.

Your health: It is essential that you describe on your guest registration form any health condition or disability you may have. The leaders will treat this confidentially and may be able to take it into account on the walks; for example, by not delaying lunch if they know they have someone with diabetes in their party.

VACCINATIONS & HEALTH

Vaccinations & health information

Before booking, you should check with your doctor to see whether any health precautions are needed for your trip. Health advice and requirements can change, so we recommend doing this in good time before travel.

As a general rule, travellers should ensure they are up to date with routine UK vaccinations and boosters, including, for example, MMR and diphtheria, tetanus and polio. Some countries may require you to have specific vaccinations such as Malaria, Rabies and Yellow Fever. Please check with your GP if you are unsure.

Please note that the use or possession of some common prescription or over-the-counter medicines is restricted or banned in certain countries. If you will be carrying medication, you should check with the relevant embassy or consulate before travelling. As an extra precaution, we recommend keeping medication in its original packaging, carrying a copy of your prescription, and, where possible, asking your pharmacist to provide the medication name in the language of the country you are visiting.

For further country-specific health advice, visit www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk or www.traveldoctor.co.uk. If you are travelling from outside the UK, please consult your own doctor and check local entry requirements.

PASSPORTS & VISAS

Passport & Visa information

This information is for those travelling with a full 'British Citizen' passport; for all other nationalities or passport holders, please check with your local consulate for advice.

Passport Requirements

This information applies to travellers holding a full British Citizen passport. Entry requirements vary by destination and can change at short notice. For most EU and worldwide destinations, passports must be valid for the entire duration of your stay. Some countries also require a minimum period of validity remaining on your passport (often up to 6 months beyond your return date), even if you are not staying that long.
We strongly recommend ensuring your passport has at least six months' validity remaining at the time of travel to avoid any issues.

If you hold a different type of British passport or a passport issued by another country, you must check the requirements with the relevant embassy, consulate, or official government website.

Visa Requirements

Visa rules depend on your nationality, destination, length of stay, and purpose of travel, and they can change frequently. It is your responsibility to check whether you require a visa before travelling.
British passport holders should check the latest entry, passport validity and visa requirements for their destination on the UK government's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) website:
https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Packing list

It's best to be prepared for all weather conditions. To make it easier, here is a list of items you should consider packing.

Essentials

- Walking boots
- Waterproof jacket
- Waterproof trousers
- Insulated jacket/top
- Walking clothing
- Walking socks (plus spares)
- Sunhat
- Gloves/mitts and warm hat
- Water bottle (minimum 2 litre capacity)
- Headtorch
- High-factor sunscreen (minimum SPF 30)
- Swimcap (compulsory in Itialian resorts)
- Sunglasses with a dark lens
- Rucksack (15-30 litres)
- Mobile phone
- Personal first aid kit (containing your medication, blister plasters, etc.)
- Passport
- Visa (if applicable)
- Copy of your travel insurance policy
- UK Global Health Insurance Card (**formerly known as EHIC**)

Recommended

- Collapsible walking poles
- Swimwear and travel towel
- Snacks
- Dry bags

- Rubbish bags
- Insect repellent

Optional extras

- Camera
- Sit mat
- Flask for hot drinks
- Durable lunch box
- Gaiters
- GPS device (excluding Bhutan, Georgia and India)

JOINING INSTRUCTIONS (WITH FLIGHTS)

With flights

Book your holiday 'with flights' and you can choose to depart from selected UK airports* to your destination. For latest flight times and prices please call us on 0203-974-8865 or email reservations@hfholidays.co.uk

If you choose to book your flights with us, we automatically include return transfers between the destination airport and hotel.

JOINING INSTRUCTIONS (WITHOUT FLIGHTS)

Without flights

If you are booking on a land-only basis, you can join the group transfer at an additional cost. To do so, your arrival and departure times must be in line with the scheduled group flight timings. Guests travelling at different times will need to arrange their own transfers. Please contact us before booking to discuss the available options and costs.

USEFUL INFORMATION

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is a condition of booking. Therefore, if you have not already arranged insurance, it is imperative that you do so before you travel.

For more information about healthcare and its costs, please visit: https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/

Drinking Water

Drinking Water

Standards for drinking water vary widely around the world. In many destinations, tap water may not be safe to drink, brush your teeth with, or use for making ice. Where advised, you should drink only bottled or treated water and ensure that bottle seals are intact before use. If bottled water is unavailable, water should be boiled or filtered.

Staying well hydrated is particularly important in hot climates and during active holidays. Carry water with you and drink regularly.

If you are unsure about local water safety, check official country-specific health advice before travel, or ask your accommodation or local guides for guidance once you arrive.

Telephone Code for Gozo

If the international number you wish to call starts with a 0, you must drop the starting digit when dialling the number.
To dial a UK number 0044
To dial a Maltese number 00356

Language Information for Malta and Gozo

Maltese is the official language of Malta. English is also an official language and is widely spoken, but using a few Maltese phrases is appreciated and often warmly received by locals.

- **Merħba** – Hi / Welcome *(MEHR-ba)*
- **Ħelow** – Hi (informal) *(HEH-low)*
- **Merħba wkoll** – Hi (response) *(MEHR-ba UK-koll)*
- **Kif int?** – How are you? (male) *(KIF int)*
- **Kif inti?** – How are you? (female) *(KIF IN-tee)*
- **Kif inhi l-familja?** – How is the family? *(KIF IN-hee l-fa-MIL-ya)*
- **Ċaw** – Goodbye *(chow)*
- **Saħħa** – Goodbye *(SAH-ha)*
- **Iva** – Yes *(EE-va)*
- **Le** – No *(leh)*
- **Jekk jogħġbok** – Please *(yek YOJ-bok)*

- **Grazzi** – Thank you *(GRAT-see)*
- **Titkellem bl-Ingliż?** – Do you speak English? *(tit-KEL-lem bil IN-gleesh)*

Language Information for Gozo

The local languages are Maltese and English.

HF Holidays airport transfers

HF Holidays airport transfers

Guests booking HF Holidays airport transfers, will travel to Gozo as foot passengers on the ferry, with separate transfers on each side between the port / hotel. The ferry service Malta to Gozo is approx 30 minutes.

LUGGAGE

Luggage information

Baggage allowance

1 piece of checked-in luggage (max 23kg). Please check details of your airline's baggage allowance, as shown on your e-ticket. Remember to also check any connecting flights you may have booked.

Lost/damaged luggage

If your bag or its contents are damaged or lost while in the airline's care, this should be reported to the baggage service agents at the airport on arrival. They will assess the damage; in some cases, the airline may decide to settle your claim immediately.

You will be given a reference to quote to your insurance company if an immediate settlement is not possible - in many cases, baggage claims can only be accepted in writing. A baggage claim form must be obtained from the airport.

LOCAL CURRENCY

The local currency is the Euro (€)

LOCAL TIME

Local time for Malta and Gozo

GMT/UTC +1 hours

ELECTRICITY

Electricity information for Gozo

Same 3-pin plug as in the UK.

ATM AVAILABILITY

ATM availability for Gozo

There are several ATM machines in Mgarr where you can obtain money.

SUGGESTED READING & MAPS

Suggested reading and maps for Malta and Gozo

Suggested reading

- Malta & Gozo, Lonely Planet (2021)
- Walking on Malta and Gozo, Sunflower Guide (2022)

Maps

Although you won't need them, if you'd like any maps of the destination, you can obtain some in advance from The Map Shop: www.themapshop.co.uk

TRIPNOTE VALIDITY

TRIP NOTE VALIDITY These Trip Notes are valid based on the date printed at the bottom of the page. They will occasionally be updated post booking and pre-departure. We will send you the latest trip notes prior to departure through a link in your pre departure documents or we can send you a copy in the post if preferred. In booking this trip you should be confident in your ability to participate in all activities described in these Trip Notes. If you have any doubt about your suitability you should call HF Holidays and ask to speak to one of the team about this itinerary. The information in these Trip Notes is given in good faith. Where differences exist between the Trip Notes and our current brochure, the Trip Notes supersede the brochure. All holidays can be subject to unexpected changes; so please be prepared to be flexible where necessary. At times, it may not be possible to follow the itinerary as planned due to weather conditions, political, physical or other factors. In these circumstances we will make the best possible alternative arrangements to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary.

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