

Malta Discovery Tour

Destination: Maltese Islands

Trip code: MWLEL



HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

The strategically useful location of Malta in the Mediterranean led to it being ruled successively by the Phoenicians, Greeks, Carthaginians, Romans, Byzantines, Arabs and the Order of the Knights St John. This rich history – and that of even earlier times - is evident in many parts of the island and will be a focus for this Guided Discovery Tour. Valletta – Malta's UNESCO-listed capital – has one of the most concentrated areas of ancient monuments in the world; our guided tour will provide insight and context. Other highlights include visiting the 6,000-year-old underground burial chamber known as the Hypogeum, a trip to the island of Gozo and exploring the ancient walled city of Mdina to admire its medieval and Baroque architecture.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Half-Board en-suite accommodation
- The services of an experienced HF Holidays leader
- Full day excursions with all essential transport
- 'With flight' holidays include return flights from the UK and hotel transfers

HOLIDAYS HIGHLIGHTS

- Guided tour of UNESCO listed Valletta - packed with ornate Baroque architecture

- Discover Malta's Hypogeum - believed to be the oldest underground temple in the world
- Visit the ancient walled city of Mdina with its mix of medieval and Baroque architecture
- Boat journey to the tiny island of Gozo with its Neolithic temples and old windmill

TRIP SUITABILITY

Discovery holidays involve active sightseeing and you should expect to spend lots of time on your feet. Optional short walks of approximately 2½ miles allow you to stretch your legs and see the best of the local scenery.



ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrival Day

Welcome to Hotel Solana. Unpack and settle in.

Day 2: Malta's Southern Coast

Our day starts at Buskett Gardens, once used by the Knights as a hunting ground, and the nearby Verdala Palace is now the summer residence of the President of Malta. From here we continue to Dingli Cliffs, the highest point in Malta and Misrah Ghar il-Kbir, a prehistoric site best known for its 'cart ruts'. After lunch at Ghar Lapsi, we continue to Hagar Qim and Mnajdra temple sites, before rounding our day off at the Blue Grotto, with the possibility of a boat trip.

Day 3: Valletta - Malta's Capital

Our first stop is Mosta Dome, where we can see the Rotunda - a huge round church with the third largest unsupported dome in the world. Then it's on to the UNESCO World Heritage City of Valletta where we enjoy a guided tour. After lunch, you are free to explore the city at your own leisure.

Day 4: Rabat & Mdina

We begin our day at the restored Ghajn Zhuber Tower, originally a farmhouse that was fortified in the 19th Century and last used during the Second World War as a lookout post. We continue to the Victoria Lines which are fortifications that run along the natural line of the cliffs, originally built to protect Malta from invaders. We will spend the afternoon in Rabat and its twin city Mdina.

Day 5: Free Day

On our 7-night holidays, we allow one free day where there is no organised excursion. This is an ideal opportunity for you to relax, enjoy the hotel facilities or explore the area independently. Some options for your free day may include:

Valletta: Although we visited Valletta on day 3, it is impossible to fully explore this World Heritage City in one day. On a return visit options available are the National Museum of Archaeology, where a fascinating collection of artefacts from Malta's prehistoric sites are housed; the War Museum, which tells the story of the siege of Malta during the Second World War; Manoel Theatre (a beautiful old theatre), and an inhabited 16th century patrician town house.

Wine Tasting Tour: All the main wineries organise guided wine tasting tours where you can learn about the production of the local vintages. Your leaders will be able to advise which ones are available.

Boat Trips: Appreciate the beauty of Malta's coastline from the vantage point of a boat. There are various options which leave from Mellieha Bay including a trip to Comino Island.

Day 6: Gozo

No visit to Malta is complete without hopping across to its smaller sister island of Gozo. We will visit the church at Xagra as well as the Ta Kola Windmill and the Ggantija prehistoric temples. After lunch at the fishing village of Xlendi, we continue to Dwerja Bay and Ta Pinu Basilica, ending the day in Victoria, the capital of Gozo.

Day 7: South East Malta

Our day begins with a visit to the Hypogeum and Tarxien temples in the south east of the island. After a picnic lunch on the idyllic Mediterranean shore, we take a short ride along the coast to the colourful harbour of Marsaxlokk.

Day 8: Departure Day

Depart following a leisurely breakfast.

ACCOMMODATION

Solana Hotel - Malta

The 4-star Solana Hotel is located in Mellieha village, one of Malta's few traditional villages, away from the hustle and bustle of the main resorts and make it an ideal base for exploring Malta. The local shops and amenities are just a few minutes walk away and the hotel offers an indoor and outdoor swimming pool, wellness centre and two restaurants.

Accommodation Info

Rooms

The hotel has 183 en-suite rooms and are all of excellent standard. Each room is decorated in a modern-contemporary style and has

- Individually-controlled central heating and air-conditioning
- Satellite TV
- Tea and coffee making
- Mini-bar
- Hairdryer
- Telephone
- Wi-Fi

Facilities

Solana's rooftop pool offers impeccable views of the sea and Malta's sister islands, with a pleasant outside seating area. There is also an indoor pool (heated October - May).

Food & Drink

Guided Walking holidays at the Solana Hotel are on a half-board basis and includes breakfast and your evening meal.

Our Self Guided holidays are on a bed & breakfast basis with an option for HB.

Breakfast

Breakfast is available at the Bellini Restaurant and is a self-service buffet. There is a selection of cereals, fruit juices, breads, pastries and cakes, as well as a hot selection, cold meat and cheese, and fruit.

Lunch (Payable Locally)

There are several shops and local supermarkets, a short walk away, in Mellieha Village, where you can buy the ingredients to make your picnic lunch. There will be opportunities to eat in a local café during the day and our leaders will advise you of all the options and directions to the nearest shops.

Evening Meal

A buffet style evening meal is served to our guests in the Bellini Restaurant, five times a week. There is a good selection of international dishes as well as fish and local meals, as well as antipasta dishes and salads as starters. Desserts will be followed by tea and coffee. On the other two evenings, we will be dining at the Tosca Restaurant which is a served 3-course meal which pre-selected choices.

The hotel does cater for most dietary requirements but we would advise you to speak to our reservation staff and also ensure that you speak to our hotel staff on arrival to avoid disappointment.

Drinks

There is a well stocked bar offering a variety of pre-dinner drinks, wines, beers and local spirits including an interesting prickly pear liqueur.

Your Evenings

The friendly atmosphere of your holiday continues into the evening. Enjoy a glass of wine or local beer before hearing about the next day's activities. On some evenings, there will be some kind of entertainment; an excursion to Mdina to see it by moonlight - the effect is amazing; or just relax in the bar area and speak to your fellow guests about your day.

TRAVEL DETAILS

THE HASSLE FREE OPTION

Book your holiday 'with flight' and choose between Heathrow and Manchester flights to Malta airport. For flight times and prices please see the Dates & Prices tab.

If you choose this option we automatically include return transfers between the airport and the hotel. The coach transfer takes approx 45 minutes to the Solana Hotel.

THE FLEXIBLE TRAVEL OPTION

Alternatively, tailor your journey to suit you by booking your holiday 'without flight' allowing you the freedom to book your own flights from your local airport.

If you choose this option, transfers are not included in the price. However, below are some suggestions to help you reach your destination:

- We can book you a seat on the **HF Holidays' transfer coach** from Malta airport. This is timed to meet the HF Holidays' flights* (provisional flight times can be found on the dates and prices tab or you can call us on 020 8732 1220 for more information). Cost per single journey is £17.
- Why not let us book you a **private taxi transfer?** price on request.

Transfers must be pre-booked. Please call 020 8732 1220 for more details

* Please note that HF Holidays is not responsible for your onward travel if you fail to meet the transfer coach

USEFUL HOLIDAY INFORMATION

Holiday Information

Situated in the heart of the Mediterranean, Malta has been influenced greatly by its neighbours, historically, culturally and linguistically. Life is usually taken at a more leisurely pace than you may be used to. The warmth of the Maltese people and the fascination of the island's 7,000 years of history enchant many of its visitors to return time and time again. The landscape of Malta is one of low hills with terraced green and brown fields. The coastline, although only 85 miles in total, is extremely varied, with cliffs, harbours, bays, creeks, sandy beaches and rocky coves. The combination of natural beauty, together with the many prehistoric sites found in every corner, make Malta an ideal island for sightseeing.

What To Bring

To enjoy your holiday comfortably and safely, it's essential that your clothing and footwear is suitable for the conditions likely to be encountered. Changeable weather is possible throughout the year, so our advice is to come prepared for all eventualities – hot, cold, wet or dry.

All of our Discovery Tours involve active sightseeing and you should therefore be prepared for walking between the sights and wear flat, comfortable shoes. In the evening most guests wear casual clothing. You will probably find a small rucksack or cross-body bag useful for carrying spare clothing, camera, sun protection, drinks (at least 2 litres) etc during the day. A money belt is always a good idea.

You'll also need to bring your:

- Booking confirmation
- Travel insurance cover note and contact details
- European Health Insurance Card (if applicable)
- Completed guest registration form
- Photocopy of photo page of passport
- Sunhat, sun cream and sunglasses
- **Medication:** If you require any medication, please take adequate supplies for the duration of your holiday. It's advisable to carry your medication in your hand luggage instead of packing it in your suitcase

Essential Information

Travel Insurance

We strongly recommend that you take out travel insurance and any other personal insurance relevant to you and the holiday. It is particularly important with the possibility of flight changes and cancellations due to the challenging weather conditions that can occur on the islands and might impact your onward travel arrangements.

Dietary Requirements

Vegetarians and special diets can be catered for if requested in advance of the holiday.

Useful Information

The local languages are Maltese and English.

Tap water is considered safe to drink, but if you prefer, bottled mineral water can be purchased from the hotel or local supermarkets.

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

Luggage

We suggest that you take just one small or medium size suitcase/holdall with wheels and a smaller bag/rucksack that can be used during your Discovery Tours.

Local Currency

The local currency for Malta is the Euro.

Electricity

220 Volt AC with 3-pin plugs as per UK.

ATM Availability

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

HOW TO BOOK

When you're ready to book, you can choose to **book online** or book **over the phone**. Our website offers secure online booking for our holidays, is available 24/7, and offers more in-depth information about all our holidays. If you prefer to call us, our experienced and knowledgeable team are available to answer any specific questions you have and can offer guidance as to which holiday is best suited to your needs.

Our office is open: Monday to Friday: 9am – 7pm Saturday: 9am – 1pm Sunday & Bank Holiday Monday: closed

PAYING YOUR DEPOSIT

To secure the holiday of your choice, you will need to pay a deposit: UK & European Holidays: £150 per person and Worldwide Holidays: £250 per person. You can pay your deposit by debit or credit card with no additional card fees charged or make an online BACS payment directly into HF's bank account, please see details under BACS payments. You can also pay your deposit by cheque within seven days of booking. Cheques should be made payable to 'HF Holidays Ltd' with your booking reference / Order ID on the back.

NON-MEMBER FEE

Non-members can join our holidays by paying a Non-Member's fee of £20 per person per holiday. Alternatively, full membership is available from £100 – visit hfholidays.co.uk/membership for details.

BACS PAYMENTS

Please quote your booking reference / Order ID when you make your payment online: Bank Name: Svenska Handelsbanken AB (publ) Account Name: HF Holidays Ltd Account Number: 35923304 Sort Code: 40-51-62 IBAN: GB92HAND40516235923304 Swift / Bic Code: HANDGB22

Once we have received your booking and deposit, we will send a confirmation invoice to the lead name. Please check this carefully. For bookings 'with flights' it is essential that the names on your booking confirmation invoice match those on your passport for bookings overseas. Please advise us immediately of any errors. Any name changes after the balance of your holiday has been paid will be subject to a fee levied by the airline.

MANAGE MY BOOKINGS

Payments can also be made through the Manage My Booking function on our website. Click on the link at the top of our homepage. This is available to all customers who provide an email address at the time of booking.

YOUR FINAL BALANCE

The balance is due 10 weeks before departure. As with paying your deposit, you can pay your final balance by debit or credit card, make an online BACS payment directly into HF's bank account or pay by cheque.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Travel insurance is an important part of any booking and essential for one of our holidays. HF Holidays works with specialist. Insurance Brokers Campbell Irvine Direct. For more information or to obtain a quote call them on 01702 427 236 or visit hfholidays.co.uk/insurance

PEACE OF MIND

ATOL:

The air holidays and flights in this brochure are ATOL-protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's Licence granted by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is ATOL 710. In the unlikely event of our insolvency, the CAA will ensure that you are not stranded abroad and will arrange to refund any money you have paid us for advance bookings. For further information visit the ATOL website atol.org.uk

MEMBER OF ABTOT:

HF Holidays is a member of ABTOT (The Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited) which provides financial protection under the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992 for HF Holidays Ltd and in the event of their insolvency, protection is provided for the following: 1. non-flight packages commencing in and returning to the UK; 2. non-flight packages commencing and returning to a country other than the UK; 3. flight inclusive packages that commence outside of the UK and Republic of Ireland, which are sold to customers outside of the UK and Republic of Ireland. 1, 2 and 3 provides for a refund in the event you have not yet travelled. 1 and 3 provides for repatriation. Please note that bookings made outside the UK and Republic of Ireland are only protected by ABTOT when purchased directly with HF Holidays Ltd.

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.

PRICE GUARANTEE

We promise that our earliest published prices will always be the best and if we reduce our holiday price after your booking has been confirmed, we will pass this reduction on to you. Our price promise applies if any subsequent offer price is for an identical holiday, duration, location and date and does not cover any optional extras, flights or additional services.

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