



10 Day Family Itinerary May 18th - 27th, 2017

The Maltese Islands

Malta has been fought over for thousands of years, has temples that pre-date the pyramids at Giza and Stonehenge, has some of the clearest waters in the world, and boasts a capital city that is a baroque masterpiece. Like Croatia of 20 years ago, Malta has just now become a newly discovered travel destination for the cultural enthusiast and not as a second thought. The Maltese Islands, although small in size, offers travelers a rare opportunity to see a well preserved history and exciting present day culture.



DAY 1 - Thursday, May 18th - Arrival in Malta

Arrive in Europe for your connection and then to Malta arriving by mid afternoon. Transfer to your first boutique hotel in Valletta, Casa Ellul in Suite 5, for the next 2 nights. Dinner arrangements to be discussed.

DAY 2 - Friday, May 19th - Valletta Capital City (B,L)

For your first full day in Malta, discover the magnificent capital city - Valletta. Learn about the landmark and UNESCO World Heritage city that the Knights of St. John built, boasting more than 320 monuments in a .2 square mile radius making it the most densely populated in the world . Most of the touring today will be by foot, so be prepared with comfortable walking shoes and appropriate clothing. In order to set the appropriate tone for today's touring, you will watch the Malta 5D movie. You'll feel the "real" emotions of the movie through colorful and impressive episodes of Maltese history and culture, magnified with 3D film, moving seats, water spray, air blasts and even leg ticklers! Visit the Upper Barrakka Gardens and stroll down Merchant and Republic Streets to see magnificent palaces and colorful balconies.

Lunch will be enjoyed in an old bakery that has been converted to a restaurant. Every Mediterranean country has its unique shape and form of bread. They also have their own fillings. The Maltese opt for vegetarian or fish fillings and the bread is a disc-shaped semi flat bread that has a glorious texture. The restaurant that we will be dining in has brought back many of the traditional flavours of Malta right under one roof. The best part of the lunch is that your family will partake in the creation of your meal!

The grand finale of the day and something not to be missed is a tour of Valletta's greatest attraction - St. John's Co-Cathedral – the Church of the Knights of St. John. Inside you will discover a treasure trove of magnificent art and the opulence of the vaulted ceilings and tombstone flooring. It is here that perhaps the most famous work of art of famed artist Caravaggio is displayed - “The Beheading of St. John the Baptist” – which is his only signed piece in the world. Following this we will take you back through the Upper Barrakka Gardens and down the elevator to the harbor to join your private Maltese dgħajsa boat tour ending back in Valletta. We will have a variety of suggestions for dinner.

DAY 3 - Saturday, May 20th - Free Day to Explore (B)

Take the day to explore more of Valletta on your own with suggestions from your Tour Manager. Ideally, we recommend incorporating on this day or Sunday - a water taxi from Valletta to Birgu (one of the three cities) to arrive to visit the people at Rolling Geeks for a self drive leisurely fun tour of The Three Cities on their “geek mobiles”. On this day you will be checking out of Casa Ellul and checking into Su29

DAY 4 - Sunday, May 21st - Countryside Walk, Fish Market and Evening Festa (B,L)

This morning, head out for a countryside walk from the village of Marsaskala to the Delimara Lighthouse and along the coast to bare witness sheer beauty. For lunch, take a short drive to the neighboring village of Marsaxlokk where the fish market is in full swing. Once a week, the fish market shares the local catch with locals and visitors alike for the freshest of fresh meals. While in Marsaxlokk,



enjoy a wonderful fish lunch at a highly recommended restaurant. Return to your accommodations for some downtime. At 6PM, depart for St. Augustine Parish in Valletta for your evening village feast experience. These feasts or "festas" celebrate the patron saint of the church and in this case it is St. Augustine. You'll enjoy a band, fireworks, singing, praying and an overall joyous occasion. Enjoy snacking on Maltese food and the regular street meat. It's all about the experience!

DAY 5 - Monday, May 22nd - Northern Malta and Gozo Island (B,L)

Pack your bags as you head west and then north to Gozo Island for a 3 night stay. You'll make a stop for one of the best views in Malta at Ghajn Tuffieha in North Western Malta and approach a watch tower to see the beautiful beach area of Riviera. The typical rural landscape with terraced fields hosts a variety of interesting features that make this locality unique. You will then meet a gentlemen at the picturesque area of Bingemma and arrive at an olive grove for a Maltese delicacy lunch. Malta has this saying when it comes to farm to table meals - "Zero Kilometers" since ultimately what is grown in most regions is consumed within a kilometer radius or less! As an added bonus, we will be bringing musicians to demonstrate Maltese Ghana singing - a traditional folklore style that originated in one of our Southern villages.

Next travel to Anchor's Bay to find the film set of Popeye which has since become an amusement park - fun for the whole family. Here we find a variety of animation shows, a comic museum, silver smith demonstrations, Santa's Toy Town, a nine-hole mini golf course and more! Your last stop before boarding our ferry to Gozo Island is at the Red Tower - also known as St. Agatha's Tower. The tower is a large bastioned watchtower in Mellieħa and was built between 1647 and 1649. Explore the interior of the tower, the rooftop and even try on some armour.

Your 25 minute ferry crossing to the Island of Gozo will take you by little Comino (to be enjoyed on another day) and then to the harbour of Mgarr. Gozo affords a certain charm and tranquility that sets it apart from the main island. Your accommodations for the next three nights are at Ta' Cenc Hotel in a Trullo suite. Dinner can be enjoyed on own at the hotel this evening.

DAY 6 - Tuesday, May 23rd - A Day Exploring Gozo Island (B,L)

After breakfast, meet your local guide for a fun filled day of Gozitan culture. The first stop of the day will be at the Roman salt pans a short drive from Marsalforn. Learn about the long tradition of sea salt production in Gozo that continues until this day. Other site visits include the citadel of Victoria, Ggantija Temples and the Azure Window. The Citadel or Citadella is an area known to have been first fortified during the Bronze Age and later developed by the Phoenicians and continues development until, by Roman times, it had become a complex Acropolis. Up until the 18th Century, it was the only fortified refuge against attack for the inhabitants of the island. Within the walls of the Citadel you'll be paying a visit to the old prison (for a short time).

Late morning, meet famed Gozitan chef for all things food. Start by shopping for local produce, meats and at a fishmonger and then take your collected ingredients to the kitchen for a hands on experience in preparing your lunch. Great for the whole family!



After your culinary experience, visit the beautiful Azure Window - a coastal landmark that features a bridge or table-like rock that reaches across the sea to an eroded pillar. If you're a Game of Thrones fan then you'll surely recognize it from a scene from the second season and if the weather is just right, there is a neat boat tour here that will take you from the inland sea, through a caved, to the open sea. Return to the hotel for some down time and dinner on own.

DAY 7 - Wednesday, May 24th - Dreaming of Horses and Sustainable Art (B,L,D)

After breakfast visit the studio of local artist Hermine Sammut. Hermine's Connect 2 Gozo studio oozes sustainable art through the utilization of local flowers from her fields to create paintings. You will have the opportunity to share in her experience through a painting session - using your senses as you connect to Gozo and its nature. A light lunch will be prepared on site. *Instead of this experience, you can be out on the water kayaking.*

This afternoon you will visit Victor Muscat and his Dreams of Horses farm. His mission is to inspire people to advance their highest potential by incorporating horses into therapeutic and learning programs. Owner Victor's intuitive gift of communicating with rescued animals will amaze you. You'll enjoy interactions with the horses such as brushing them and taking a pony for a walk to nearby Ramla Bay. Other possibilities can be discussed.

Arrive back at the hotel and freshen up for your dinner outing to Xlendi Bay. Arrive at a favorite of ours in one of the most beautiful settings in Gozo.

Day 8 - Thursday, May 25th - Comino Island and the Blue Lagoon (B,L)

Relax this morning and enjoy your surroundings. To complete your Maltese Islands experience, you'll be spending the day on the water with a visit to Comino Island and its Blue Lagoon. A picnic lunch will be included while onboard. Situated between Malta and Gozo, the smaller island of Comino is a paradise for snorkelers, divers and windsurfers. Only 3.5 square kilometers, Comino is car-free and apart from one hotel, is virtually uninhabited.

Depart lovely Gozo mid-afternoon for Malta for your final two nights at the Xara Palace in the old capital city of Mdina - Malta's only medieval city. Once you arrive near the Roman Villa, you'll be greeted by a horse drawn carriage that will bring you through Mdina gates for a fun tour - arriving at your hotel shortly after. To further the experience, we can arrange for Lulu to be presented with a cloak and Maltese Cross. In the meantime, your bags will be taken to the hotel and then check in process will have begun. You will fall in love with Mdina inasmuch as the families who continue to live here throughout their generations. Dinner can be arranged at one of the fine restaurants within its majestic walls.



DAY 9 - Friday, May 26th - Rabat and Mdina Morning, Optional Afternoon Activities (B,L,D)

After breakfast, enjoy getting to know Mdina and its neighboring suburb of Rabat. The Arabs, during their 200 years of rule, divided the old Roman City of Melita into two: the citadel became known as Mdina and the rest of the area as Rabat. In Rabat you find catacomb sites and hear about the story of a shipwrecked St. Paul in Malta. The Catacombs of St. Paul are not themselves associated with Paul but derive their name from their proximity to St. Paul's Church and Grotto. They are a fascinating labyrinth of 3rd-century AD subterranean tombs and the earliest archaeological evidence of Christianity in Malta.

For a quick lunch, stop in at Ta' Doni for the freshest of lunches - tasting local ingredients. Next door, we've arranged for a private visit to an esteemed glider who creates Maltese clocks and works on religious statues. Witness as he demonstrates his trade of creating these clocks - it's more than you could imagine.

AFTERNOON OPTION 1:

David travels to the outskirts of Rabat for metal detecting while the rest of the family travel a short distance to the village of Siggiewi and arrive at Malta's only Falconry Center. With this 3 hour experience, the center will introduce the family to the basics of falconry and how the falconry birds are trained.

AFTERNOON OPTION 2:

David travels to the outskirts of Rabat for metal detecting while your nanny will enjoy taking Lulu to the Playmobil FunPark. While here, Lulu will engage in craft workshops, face painting and other fun and learning activities. There is also a factory tour that can be taken. While Lulu is enjoying the afternoon at Playmobile, you will meet a guide at the Dingli Cliffs for a beautiful countryside tour which include cave visits, the mysterious cart ruts and the overall beauty you experience along the coast.

A farewell and included dinner is at a favorite place of ours in the middle of nowhere - Rogantinos.

DAY 10 - Saturday, May 27th - Departure Day (B)

We trust that you will leave with fond memories of unbelievable experiences. Thank you for the opportunity to share these lovely islands with you and your family.



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink.

Damon Camilleri Allan
Chief Travel Designer