



Monday · April 23rd, 2018

#21 - (HT) Full Day Exclusive Knights of St. John Experience

The Knights of Malta
Manoel Theatre
Grand Master's Palace Staterooms & Armoury
Private visit to the Hospital of the Knights
Upper Barrakka Gardens
Grand Harbour Water Taxi to the Three Cities
Lunch
Private Visit to St. Joseph's Oratory - The Sword & Hat of La Valette
Private Visit to Upper Fort St. Angelo - home to Knight Resident Fra. John Critien
St. John's Co-Cathedral - Private Afterhours Visit

Itinerary Inclusions
Itinerary Exclusions
Value (Per Person Based on Two People)

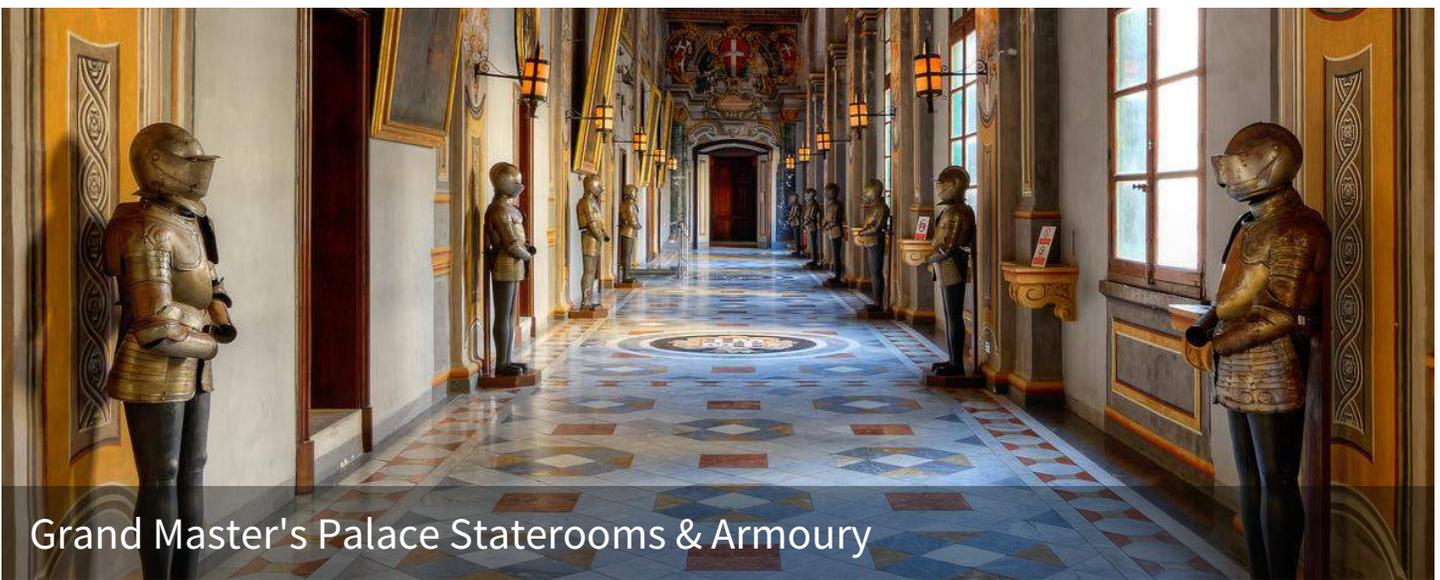
The Knights of Malta

It is hard to miss the legacy of the Knights in Malta. They gave the Islands one its best-known faces to the world, the eight-pointed Maltese Cross. No era has left such an imprint on the Islands as the 268-year rule of the Order. From their daily lives to their valiant battles, all is documented in the archives, architecture and folklore of the Maltese Islands.



Manoel Theatre

The Manoel Theatre is one of the oldest working theatres in Europe. Constructed in 1731 by the Grand Master Antonio Manoel de Vilhena "for the honest entertainment of the Knights"; the theatre is a baroque gem with wonderful acoustics and a full calendar of events populated by local and international performers, with productions in English and Maltese. Maybe there is something on the calendar during your stay?



Grand Master's Palace Staterooms & Armoury

The Grand Master's Palace has been the administrative centre of Malta for almost three and a half centuries. The original palace, built in 1571, was the seat of the Grand Master of the Knights Hospitalliers of St. John and later, during the British colonial period, served as the Governor's palace. Today it is home to the House of Representatives of Malta and the office of the President of the Republic of Malta.

Your visit will include viewing the state rooms that are adorned with beautiful frescos and house rare collections. As an added bonus, visit the Palace Armoury.



Private visit to the Hospital of the Knights

Having been formed in the late 11th Century, the Knights of St. John were a Hospitaller Order whose main function was to care for the sick and poor pilgrims in the Holy Land. This core mission was exercised in Malta and is wholly evident in the grand hospital that they built. It is one of the longest halls in Europe and was recognized as an architectural feat in the 16th century when it was constructed. Enjoy a private tour with their expert guide.



Upper Barrakka Gardens

Image credits: Pixabay

The Upper Barrakka Gardens overlook the Grand Harbour. From their terrace they afford one of the most beautiful panoramic views in Malta as they command a unique view of the only natural harbour in the Mediterranean with the Three Cities as its backdrop.

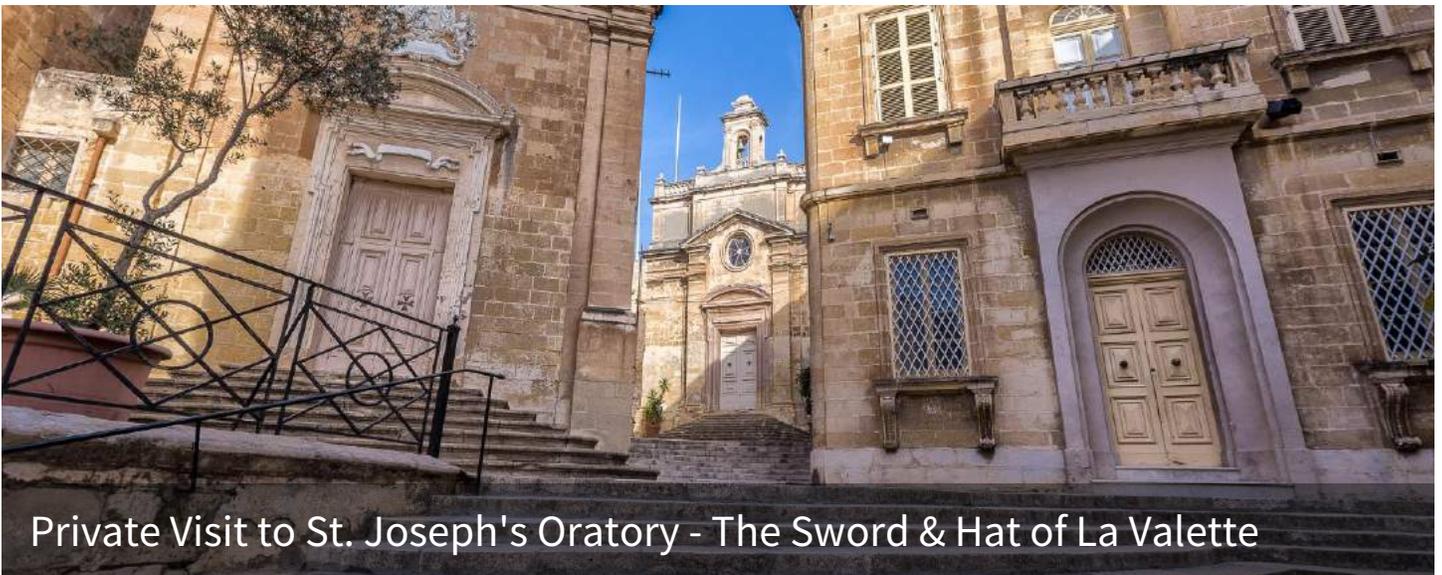


Grand Harbour Water Taxi to the Three Cities

Travel down the Upper Barrakka elevators to arrive at the old Customs House where a traditional Maltese boat (Dghajsa) and boatman will be waiting for you to transfer you to the city of Vittoriosa - the main harbour city that the Knights settled at when arriving in Malta in 1530.

Lunch

Enjoy an included lunch stop after arriving in Vittoriosa



Private Visit to St. Joseph's Oratory - The Sword & Hat of La Valette

A very interesting find in the quaint city of Vittoriosa is within the Oratory of St. Joseph. A centuries-old tale has it that at the end of the Great Siege, de Valette laid down his sword and hat at the altar of the chapel of Our Lady of Damascus, in Vittoriosa, as a votive offering. It was in front of the icon of the Madonna that de Valette was praying during the crisis of the siege. He later returned victorious and laid down his sword in acknowledgement of the Order's gratitude. Historians agree that the tale is very probably grounded in fact.



Private Visit to Upper Fort St. Angelo - home to Knight Resident Fra. John Critien

An exclusive opportunity awaits you in Vittoriosa. Fort St. Angelo is steeped in history - it having been known as the Castle by the Sea when the Knights of St. John arrived. The fort had been built up during the knights period and played a crucial part during the Great Siege of 1565 against the Ottoman Empire. Atop the Fort is the private land of the Knights of St. John where Resident Knight Fra. John Critien resides. This area of the fort is where the first Grand Master of the Order in Malta resided up until Jean Parisot de la Vallette. Enjoy a private tour led to include the grounds, private chapel as well as a few other surprises.



St. John's Co-Cathedral - Private Afterhours Visit

Return to Valletta by boat and venture back up the elevator and make your way to St. John's Co-Cathedral to complete today's story-line.

Built shortly after the Great Siege of Malta (1565), St. John's Co-Cathedral's austere exterior is in drastic contrast to its sumptuous high baroque interior. You'll be in awe at the artistic masterpiece - from its tombstone laid floors to the vaulted ceiling painted in the life of John the Baptist. Around the corner and into the oratory, stand before two wonderful masterpieces by the artist Caravaggio - St. Jerome and his only signed piece - The Beheading of St. John the Baptist. The best part of this experience is that you'll be experiencing the Cathedral when it is closed to the public. What a treat!

Itinerary Inclusions

- Expert guiding and water taxi transfers
- A multitude of exclusive experiences
- Light lunch in Vittoriosa
- Entrance to attractions indicated on the itinerary

Itinerary Exclusions

- Attractions and meals not identified in the itinerary
- Gratuities for guide

Value (Per Person Based on Two People)

769 Euro