

CONSULATE OF MALTA IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA NEWSLETTER

July 2013 FRANK L SCICLUNA - HON CONSUL - FULL OF HISTORY AND CULTURE OF MALTA

IN THIS EDITION

1. New Parliament House in Malta.
 2. Stars and Stripes Malta (SASM)
 3. Education in Malta
 4. Lampuki (Dorado fish) - The Maltese Islands' favourite fish!
 5. The Maltese Clock
 6. Capers - Il-Kapparr
 7. ABORIGINAL AUSTRALIANS- What are the problems?
 8. Arts in Malta
 9. Qaghaq ta' I-Ghasel (Maltese honey rings)
 10. Australian General Election 2013
 11. The PM meets FISEC games athletes
 12. Adelaide- The Capital City of South Australia
 13. The Carob Treet – Il-Harruba
 14. PM Slams door on Asylum Seekers
 15. The Old Telephone Booth
 16. Hypogeum
 17. The Inquisitor's Palace
-

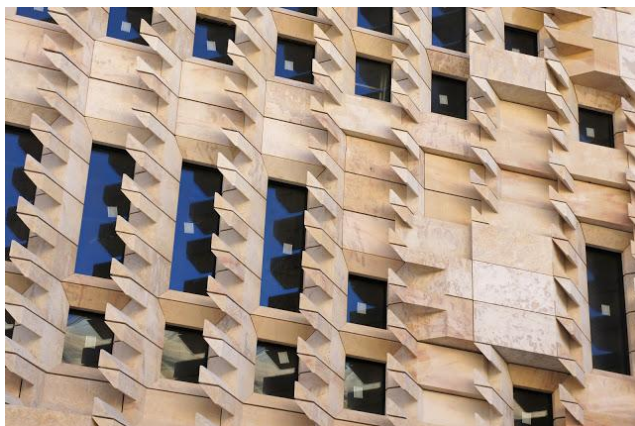
1. New Parliament building in Malta

Miriam Dalli

MaltaToday exclusively visited the new City Gate project in Valletta, this morning before the Speaker of the House together with the members of the House Business Committee toured the building. The project currently under construction includes a new City Gate bridge,

Parliament and theatre. The €82 million project has come under intense scrutiny and in recent weeks the new Labour government has said that it intends to hold a public consultation process to identify how the new buildings can be best utilised.

The Speaker of the House together with the members of the House Business Committee toured the building. The project currently under construction includes a new City Gate bridge, Parliament and theatre.



The €82 million project has come under intense scrutiny and in recent weeks the new Labour government has said that it intends to hold a public consultation process to identify how the new buildings can be best utilised.

The new Parliament building, divided in two separate blocks covering a total of 23,000 square metres, was planned to be completed by September 2013, however the construction is behind schedule and there is no indication of when the buildings would be completed.

Between 120 and 150 workers are on site every day, working around the clock, producing an average of 17,000 tonnes of waste per month, of which 75% is recyclable.

The new Parliament building is divided into to separate blocks, connected with a bridge. The block housing the parliament chamber and the strangers' gallery cannot be modified however the government will explore ideas for the buildings use outside Parliament hours which do not exceed 10 hours per week.



We are happy to act as a repository to the latest edition of this newsletter edited by Frank Scicluna from Adelaide, Australia on our website. You can read this publication by clicking the appropriate link on the menu on the left hand side of each page. If you prefer to bookmark the page directly, the link is <http://www.starsandstripesmalta.com/COMISAN.html>. Relevant news as well as information about forthcoming events should be sent to honconsul@live.com.au so that they may be considered for inclusion in this publication.

We need you to spread the word about SASM. The most effective way to do this is to invite a person to join. Membership is free and can be completed by filling the form at <http://www.starsandstripesmalta.com/Join.html>. **Alan C. Bonnici**

3. Education in Malta



Campus of the University of Malta – Tal-Qroqq

Education in Malta is compulsory through age sixteen and is offered through three different providers: the state, the church, and the private sector. The state is responsible for promoting education and instruction and ensuring universal access to education for all Maltese citizens the existence of a system of schools and institutions accessible to all Maltese citizens. The objectives of education in Malta include intellectual and moral development and the preparation of every citizen to contribute productively to the national economy. Although Maltese citizens had access to education during the Arab occupation of 870 to 1090, the arrival of a number of religious orders in the following four centuries brought religious-based education to the island for wealthy families. The

arrival of the Knights Hospitaller saw the establishment of the University of Malta, around which a number of primary, secondary and post-secondary institutions were established. Education in Malta has been universally available at the primary level since the ejection of the Knights Hospitaller by the French in 1798, when state-funded elementary schooling was established. In 1878, English replaced Italian as the primary language of instruction, and education was made compulsory in 1946 in response to a number of children not attending school due to poverty between World Wars One and Two. The age at which education became compulsory was lowered to five years in 1988.

Malta's educational system is structured in four stages: pre-primary (ages 3–5), primary (ages 5–11), secondary (ages 11–18) and tertiary. Pre-primary education is optional but fully funded by the state. In their last two years of primary education, students are placed on tracks based on educational attainment, and at the age of eleven, students sit an eleven plus examination to determine a student's secondary schooling direction. Success in the eleven plus exam places a student in a junior lyceum - a prestigious secondary school - while mediocre performance or not sitting the examination places a student in a less competitive secondary school. Secondary Education Certificate (SEC) examinations are taken at age 16, and matriculation examinations are taken at age 18 to determine university entrance eligibility. In 2008, 26,711 primary students, 25,793 secondary students, 5,719 post-secondary students, 9,472 tertiary students and 6,268 vocational students were enrolled in educational courses in Malta. Approximately 30 per cent of Malta's primary and secondary school students are enrolled in private schools, most of which are operated by the Catholic Church. Malta's highest post-secondary institution is the University of Malta, which has operated since 1592.

Teacher development - Primary and secondary school teachers begin their teacher education at the University of Malta by gaining a Bachelor of Education (Honours), which typically takes four years of study to achieve. To gain entry into the University to study primary or secondary education, students must not only meet the University's general entry requirements but also a number of other special course requirements. University students seeking to enter the teaching profession may also become qualified by gaining a postgraduate certificate in education. Two years of professional teaching practice is also generally required. The Minister for Education may also grant a temporary warrant to teach, valid for one year, to any person the Minister believes has the ability to teach in the country.



4. Lampuki (Dorado fish) The Maltese Islands' favourite fish!

Lampuki (in the plural) or Lampuka (singular) is the Maltese name for the dorado fish. It goes by two other names as well - dolphin fish or mahi mahi fish. The lampuka has a beautiful silver and golden colour.

This migratory fish visits the Maltese Islands' waters from the end of August till early December, therefore fishing for this type of fish takes place between August (towards the end) and November.

How do Maltese fishermen fish for lampuki?

They weave nets from palm trees into flat rafts. They then place the rafts on the surface of the sea. What happens is that the lampuka (dorado fish) schools under the rafts because these large rafts provide shade and shelter from the scorching sun. In Maltese, these types of "rafts" are referred to as *kannizzati*. The fishermen then use nets to catch the dolphin fish. It is believed that this type of fishing method has been in use since ancient Roman times!

The Maltese people are very fond of this type of fish and when in season, you can usually spot many lampuki vendors roaming the streets with small vans. In some old villages you will also come across women with prams selling them! Yes prams ... without the baby of course :)

What they do, is use the pram as a sort of trolley to carry the wooden fish crates on. (The type of prams that they use are usually very old, no longer in use ones). In the old days, women used to put the wooden fish crates on their heads and hit the streets to sell them. The lampuka grows really fast but the local fishermen usually aim to catch it when it weighs from 1 to 1.5 kilos maximum - just enough to sit nicely on a plate. This fish is a good source of vitamin B12, B6 and B3. The lampuka is a delicious fish and there's a huge demand for it. So much so, that local fishermen also export their catch to other countries.

How is the lampuka cooked?

This popular fish can be cooked in various ways. However in Malta, the favourite way to cook lampuki is to make a pie with it. You can also simply plain shallow fry it. Another option is to cook it with tomato sauce, capers and green peppers. If you're visiting Malta from August till November, make sure to try this exquisite fish at least once!

Turn your Lampuki Leftovers... into a Foodilicious Lampuki Fish Pie! Take out your Lampuki leftovers this month to turn them in one of Malta's most desired pies... *Lampuki Pie*. With many variations being produced since this recipe was invented, I've always wanted to recreate this tasty Lampuki Pie. With the Lampuki fish in season and you pay a cheaper price this month. This will suit everyone's needs as even with your leftovers you might have left in your freezer, this will turn to be a Pie feast. In my Lampuki Pie I use my Oregano Short-Crust Pastry, together with mashed up potatoes and spinach. Normally, the traditional Lampuki Pie my grandmother used to prepare is without using any spices and herbs which was still tasty.



5. The Maltese Clock

"The origin of the Maltese clock is unclear. What is remarkable is that Malta – a small island country – was able to sustain an indigenous clockmaking trade. They were produced over a period of around one hundred and fifty years solely for the local market at a time when only the aristocracy and the Church could afford them."

The Maltese Clock's real origin is difficult to trace. However, tradition has it that they adorned houses of the Maltese nobility as far back as the 17th century.

The clock was made of wood suitable to take on several layers of gypsum, which was then engraved and decorated with gold. The case had two doors. The inside door incorporated the hand-painted dial to which a handmade clock mechanism by Maltese Clock Master Makers was fixed from behind. Further down in the clock face the moving pendulum could be seen through a decorated aperture. On the front there was another door, which was framed with glass to protect the dial and ornate hands. The clock case

was then painted and abundantly decorated with flowers typical of the colourful finish for which the clock is renowned. These clocks were made either as wall hanging or table clocks. The former were, however, the most popular. Today, the original Maltese clocks are collectors items and very hard to find for acquisition as they fetch very high prices running into thousands of euros.

However, the tradition goes on with the reproduction of these clocks. They are made in the same original manner using the same technique. The only difference is that one cannot find the original hand-made clockwork. Two types of movements are used nowadays: a mechanical movement, which is adapted to be wound from the inside of the clock or a quartz battery movement. The latter is more commonly used being more practical. The Maltese Clock reproductions come in different colours, the most popular being green, black and terracotta (maroon colour). Mass production is not possible! Malta has a tradition of making some remarkable clocks, in designs unique to the Islands.

The industry today is small, but has a fascinating history. These clocks are nicknamed 'Arlogg tal-lira' clocks. The clocks are laboriously made in intricate stages. Their casings are finely painted and gilded.

6. Capers - Il-Kappar



Capers (kappar) have been a part of Mediterranean cuisine for thousands of years. In fact, they were often used as a type of currency among merchants travelling ancient trade routes. Soon, capers became favorite additions to fish sauces and marinades, along with brined and dried anchovies. The indigenous bush which produces capers is very well-suited to the sandy and nutrient-poor soil found in Malta. Caper bushes can often be found growing between the cracks of



sidewalks and broken roads.

The salted and pickled caper is a distinctive ingredient in Maltese cooking: often used as a seasoning or garnish. The buds, when ready to pick, are a dark olive green and about the size of a kernel of corn. Capers ready for the market place are usually packed into distinctive **ve glass** jars filled with coarse salt or vinegar brine. They are used in salads, pasta salads, pizzas, fish dishes and pasta sauces. Examples of uses in Maltese cuisine are the "Hobz biz-Zejt", "iz-Zalza tal-Lampuki". (Dolphin Fish sauce)

A number of kitchen supply stores and grocery stores in Malta sell bottled capers, so cooks should not have difficulty finding enough for a recipe. Capers straight out of the jar are far too salty for consumption, so it's recommended placing them in a small strainer and rinsing them under running water before adding them to sauces or to fish. Because the flavor can be so intense, most recipes only require a few capers to add sharpness to a savory dish or sauce.

I still remember those days when our parents used to take us siblings for a walk in the countryside and to keep us occupied they used to give each of us a plastic bag to pick the capers from the bushes. It was kind of tedious but I used to love exploring all the nooks and crannies around me. Those were the days!



7. ABORIGINAL AUSTRALIANS- What are the problems?

Many Aboriginal communities and families fracture and break down because Aboriginal people cannot deal with their current situation, but also because many governments have neglected basic services and infrastructure for decades.

Jim Morrison, Aboriginal co-chair of the National Stolen Generations Alliance, explains how Aboriginal people have come to suffer from transgenerational trauma.

Morrison says that in the first generation of Aboriginal people after colonisation “Aboriginal men and boys were killed, imprisoned, enslaved, driven away and deprived of the ability to provide for their families. Women became single parents and many children were conceived through rape and forced prostitution.”

In the second generation, “Aboriginal people were rounded up and sent to missions and reserves where they were further removed from being able to obtain work, balanced diets, housing, sanitation, health care and education. This is the stage that the misuse of alcohol and drugs became embedded as a mechanism for coping with grief and the profound loss of dignity.”

In the third generation, “Aboriginal children were removed from their fractured families and placed into non-Indigenous care environments where they suffered the horrors of forced inferiority, deprivation and abuse, documented for all to read in the Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal Children from their Families in April 1997. The majority of these children became parents without exposure to parenting and therefore the opportunity to develop parenting skills.”

Communities are neglected, exhausted

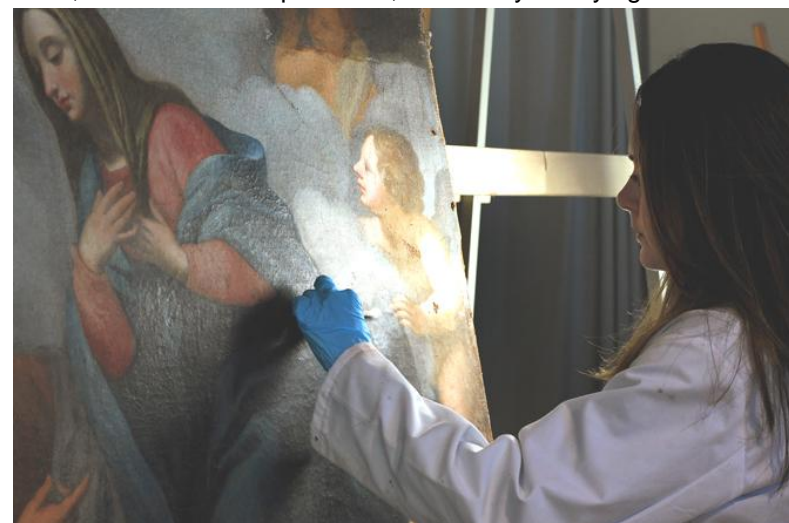
Aboriginal communities are also suffering from a mix of issues:

- Lack of services. Communities lack medical and disability services, and often have no Home or Community Care services.
- Lack of medical care. For example, there might be no dental care.
- Little education. Communities record a decline in education services and school attendance.
- High unemployment. The already scarce jobs in remote communities are often further reduced by drought.
- Staff exhaustion. Staff supporting communities exhaust quickly which for instance leads to a large turnover in the number of nurses.
- Decaying infrastructure. There are problems with sewerage and clean water provision. Children are swimming in sewerage ponds because local pools are not operational
- Broken families. Children have no real home due to a failure to approve foster carers.
- People are bored. Because there is so little to do especially for young people they become bored and commit crimes, often just to “get a chase off the cops”.
- Ineffective government programs. There is an abundance of government programs (more than 50 organisations run by the state, federal or community in Bourke alone) that receive millions of taxpayer dollars each year, but they are ineffective and lack co-ordination because they have not been designed *with* Aboriginal people, but *for* them. Power politics are a common problem. For the tens of thousands of Australians who have joined the Close the Gap campaign the choice is clear. Now is the time to be visionary; to tackle the root causes of the problems affecting some Aboriginal communities, and to work in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to close the gap.

~~~~~  
**WHEN YOU ARE IN MALTA VISIT THE NEW ANZAC WAR MEMORIAL  
AT THE ARGOTTI BOTANIC GARDENS FLORIANA**  
~~~~~

8. The Arts in Malta

Malta, and Valletta in particular, is already readying itself to host the European Capital of Culture in 2018. Culture is therefore high on the national agenda, and the arts have never been as prevalent in the country as they are now.



For starters, Malta’s theatrical scene is thriving, with more and more productions being staged in both English and Maltese year on year. If you’d like to watch a local (or touring international) show, then there are various venues to do so.

These include the Manoel Theatre, which is reputed to be Europe’s third-oldest working theatre. It was built in 1731 by Grand Master Antonio Manoel de Vilhena and today hosts various dramas, concerts and operas throughout the year, as well as the popular local pantomime at Christmas. Guided tours of the theatre and its museum are held daily.

The Manoel Theatre is also one of the venues that features concerts by the Malta Philharmonic

Orchestra. The Orchestra season covers 11 months of performances, featuring favourite and contemporary orchestral masterpieces, unfamiliar gems from the 17th to the 21st centuries by Maltese composers, community concerts, family oriented performances and children’s workshops. The Orchestra also performs at other popular venues which include the Mediterranean Conference Centre, St James Cavalier and Robert Samut Hall.

Recently Malta has also become known for its arts festivals, usually held in the summer months. These include the Malta Arts Festival, which boasts top-notch local and foreign performances in various locations across the Island, and the Malta

Jazz Festival, which is held every July at the stunning waterside venue of Ta' Liesse in Valletta. The latter features a line-up of top Maltese and international artists who perform an extensive mix of jazz styles.

Also celebrating the arts, but this time on the Island of Gozo, Festival Mediterranea is an annual mid-autumn celebration of culture and the arts in Gozo. Here you can listen to local music, join interesting walks and talks in historic places, and sample typically Mediterranean food and drink.

And for something truly traditional to the Islands, try the National Folk Singing Festival. This is a three-day celebration of Maltese folk music (ghana) as well as foreign folk singing, with craft demonstrations and typical local food also available.

9. Qaghaq ta' I-Ghasel (Maltese honey rings)



Somehow doing all that work for a cake doesn't seem so bad. I think the recipe for *Qaghaq ta' I-Ghasel* came from the same source. The actual definition for *Qaghaq ta' I-Ghasel* is honey rings. Instead of raspberry jam, treacle is wrapped in dough and sliced. The British call molasses "treacle". Oh, the treacle is mixed with cocoa. Ma made this regularly for Christmas. Tradition and all. It wasn't one of our favorites. The g measurement is by weight - grams. I've translated to an Imperial equivalent. Here is the recipe:

Qaghaq ta' I-Ghasel

Grease a baking pan
Preheat oven to 400°
Bake 20 minutes

Combine in a large bowl
400 g (13 oz) flour
75 g (2 1/2 oz) semolina

Rub in

150 g (5 oz) margarine

Mix in

100 g (3 oz) sugar

Knead, adding enough water (or milk)
to form a smooth dough.

Combine in a large saucepan

400 g (13 oz) treacle (molasses)

400 g (13 oz) sugar

2 tablespoons cocoa

2 or 3 tablespoons anisette

rind of an orange

rind of a lemon

a pinch of ground cloves

1/2 teaspoon allspice

250 ml (1 cup) water

Gently bring to a boil.

Add, stirring constantly

1 tablespoon semolina

Simmer until the mixture thickens,

Remove from heat and cool.

Roll out dough into 6 long strips (8 cm x 30 cm long).

Place a portion of the filling down the center of each.

Roll pastry over the filling and join each end of
the roll to form a ring.

At intervals of 6 cm cut small slits.

Put rings on baking sheets.

Bake 20 minutes, or until gold

10. Australian Elections 2013 - Frequently Asked Questions

Updated: 8 July 2013

Prime Minister Kevin Rudd and Opposition Leader Tony Abbott

Has the date been set for the 2013 federal election? - No, the date for a federal election is at the discretion of the Governor-General on advice from the Prime Minister of Australia.



What are the earliest possible dates for the next federal election? - The earliest possible date for a joint House/Senate

e election is Saturday, 3 August 2013. The earliest possible date for a House of Representatives election is any Saturday, 33 days after issue of writs. The earliest possible date for a Senate election is Saturday, 3 August 2013.

What are the latest possible dates for the next federal election?- The latest possible date for a joint House/Senate election is Saturday, 30 November 2013. The latest possible date for a House of Representatives election is Saturday, 30 November 2013. The latest practicable date for a Senate election is *Saturday, 24 May 2014.

* The Constitution (section 13) requires the election to be completed by 30 June 2014. Following polling day, the Australian Electoral Commission needs up to five weeks to allow for the receipt of postal votes; then distribution of preferences; followed by return of Writs.

When does the AEC secure the polling places it needs for a federal election? - As the AEC generally does not know when an election will occur it must check and investigate the availability and suitability of polling places as part of its routine preparation. The AEC hired approximately 8,000 polling places for the conduct of the 2010 federal election. Due to the size of this preparation task, checking takes a number of months and possible polling place locations are refined and updated well in advance of each federal event. The AEC also actively

seeks to secure polling places with access for people with disabilities in accordance with legislative requirements.

What was the voter turnout figure for the 2010 election? - The percentage of enrolled electors that voted in the 2010 federal election was 93.22% for the House of Representatives and 93.83% for the Senate.

How many people are employed by the AEC on polling day? - Almost 70 000 people work for the AEC on and around polling day.

What is a Scrutineer? - Scrutineers are appointed by candidates to observe the voting, and counting of the votes. Scrutineers have the right to be present when the ballot boxes are sealed and opened and when the votes are sorted and counted so that they may check any possible irregularities..

What is a double dissolution election? - This is a simultaneous election for all members of both the House of Representatives and the Senate. Under the Constitution, the Governor-General may dissolve both the Senate and the House of Representatives at any time (except within the last six months of the House of Representatives term) provided the special circumstances as set out in s.57 of the Constitution are met..

What swing is required for a seat to change hands? Anything more than an absolute majority (50% + 1 votes) is the swing required for the seat to change hands (for example: if a member holds a seat with 56% of the vote a swing of greater than 6% is required for the seat to change hands).

What is a Writ? - A writ is a document commanding an electoral officer to hold an election, and contains dates for the close of rolls, the close of nominations, the polling day and the return of the writ. The Governor-General issues the writs for House of Representatives elections and the State Governors issue writs for States' Senate elections.



BUILDING VIRTUAL BRIDGES

Maltese Language School of Adelaide- Australia



VISIT THE SCHOOL WEBSITE TODAY AT www.ozmalta.page4.me

11. The PM meets FISEC games athletes



Photo - DOI - Reuben Piscopo

The Prime Minister Joseph Muscat, met young athletes who took part in the FISEC games which were held in Hungary last week. (Photo left)

In the games, fourteen swimmers won eleven gold medals, five silver and five bronze medals. Twenty one athletes won a gold and silver medal.

The Prime Minister, while congratulating the athletes for their success, said that the next major challenge for local athletes will be next year's Commonwealth Games in Scotland.

FISEC is the International Sports Federation for Catholic Schools and counts fourteen member countries

12. THE CAPITAL CITY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA – ADELAIDE – THE CITY WHERE I LIVE



Australia's most liveable city

Adelaide is easy to get around. The city rises from the middle of a tree-covered plain, between rolling hills to the east and beaches to the west.

With a population of slightly more than one million, Adelaide is the “20 minute city”. The airport is only seven kilometres from Adelaide city. The Adelaide Hills and major beaches are less than half an hour away by car. That's what we call liveable!

You Gotta Try...

Heard so much about the Adelaide Central Market but didn't know where to start...before this film. By Matt Salleh and Rose Tucker from Urtext Films.

A master plan

When Colonel Light founded Adelaide in 1836, he had a simple plan: a one square mile city centre and lots of open space. He laid out the streets in a grid, surrounded by a ring of what are now State Heritage Listed parklands.

Adelaide weather is moderate. Year-round big blue skies mean average winter temperatures of 16 degrees Celsius (°C) and 28°C in summer. Hot days can be real sizzlers and easily reach 40°C.

Urban cool

Join the café culture lifestyle. Adelaide has a diverse cultural mix that guarantees the food is sensational. Accommodation is competitively priced. We're proud to be Australia's wine capital, with numerous regions on our doorstep. You'll be spoilt for choice.

A brilliant blend

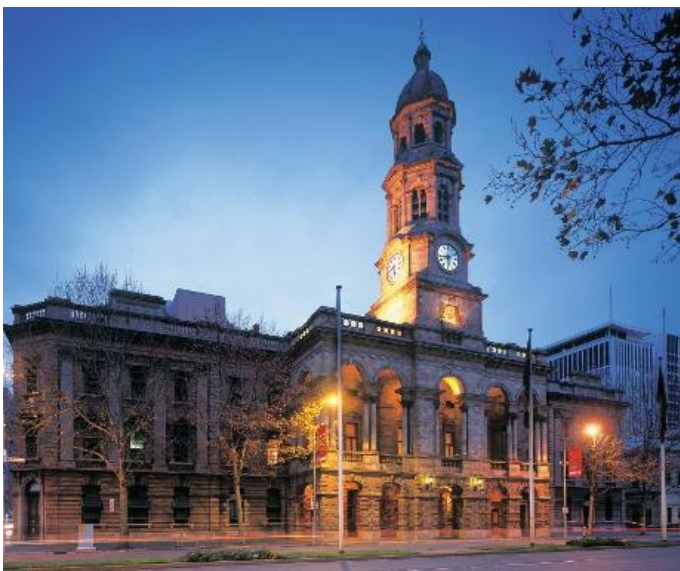
There's the Barossa Valley and Coonawarra (reds) and the Clare Valley (Rieslings). The Adelaide Hills has some stunning whites, then there's McLaren Vale and Langhorne Creek on the Fleurieu Peninsula.

Kangaroo Island is the jewel in our tourism crown. It has pristine beaches, unique wildlife, awesome sunsets and a “drop” of wine. Don't miss this iconic destination, just two hours' drive and a short ferry ride south of Adelaide.

Adelaide loves to party

See the Adelaide Festival, Adelaide Fringe and WOMA Adelaide (to name just three events). Sports fans will love the award-winning Santos Tour Down Under and Clipsal 500 V8 car race. March is event season when the weather in Adelaide is at its best.

We're proud to be Australia's most sustainable city, with buildings, transport and many other “green” projects to enjoy. The world-class convention facilities also make Adelaide a great place to do business. You'll love Adelaide. We do.



13. The Carob Tree - Il-Harruba



The Carob Tree (il-Harruba) is quite common on the Maltese Islands and could still be found in its natural habitat. The carob is one of the Mediterranean's oldest trees, and grows without care or cultivation, surviving on meagre rainfall. This low-spreading tree with its characteristic canopy effect is part and parcel of the Maltese rural landscape and is protected by law.

The carob is indigenous to the eastern Mediterranean, and the Bible is replete with references to what are likely to be carob-pods, like the pods that the prodigal son fed to pigs when he wasted his father's inheritance and was forced to become a humble swineherd.

The pods are also known as St. John's bread or locust beans because the pods were once thought to have been the "locusts" that were eaten by John the Baptist in the wilderness. In the past carob seeds were used to weigh gold, hence the word "carat."

During the second World War, carobs fetched the highest price ever at a penny a pod. The seeds were ground along with precious and rare supplies of coffee-beans to make it last, something that the French did at the same time with acorns. In Malta and Sicily up to fairly recent times, carob syrup was used to soothe sore throats and ease coughs. I remember quite clearly when I developed a whooping cough and there was this old farmer (whose farm was situated in front of our home) who used to bring mum a lot of carob pods. She used to prepare this brownish mixture which she then made me drink. It didn't look appealing but it really soothed my horrible and intense coughing bouts.

Carob sweets (il-karamelli) are still popular, and often sold at Good Friday processions because they are deemed traditionally to be the only sweets allowed during Lent, having supposedly medicinal properties. These sweets are made from the carob pods. According to an old Sicilian recipe for 'Caramelle Di Carrube' one needs to prepare equal amounts of carob pods and honey and have them boiled together until caramelised. The mixture is then strained and poured onto an oiled surface, marked into little squares and allowed to cool before being cut up into sweets.

Carob-pods, are now making a comeback as a health food in Europe. The carob-flour is made by grinding carob-pods that have been dried and roasted. It has a very strong flavour and must be used with care. The taste is a little like honeyed chocolate, and in fact carob is sometimes used as a substitute for chocolate. The dark-brown carob pods are not only edible but rich in calcium, sucrose and protein. Moreover, the pod has vitamin A, B vitamins, and several important minerals. And although carobs are very sweet, they contain far fewer calories than chocolate!! They are sold at high prices in many European food-markets, but in Malta they are no longer even harvested as food for animals!! Are carobs set for a revival in Malta too?



14. PM Rudd slams door on asylum seekers



The Hon Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister of Australia (July 2013)

The Australian government has announced that all asylum seekers arriving by boat will be refused entry and sent to Papua New Guinea. Australia has been experiencing a sharp increase in the number of refugee boats arriving on its shores from Indonesia. Labour Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's strong stance on the issue comes just weeks before Australian elections are due.

At a news conference alongside Papua New Guinea's Prime Minister Peter O'Neill, Rudd explained: "Our governments intend to make sure that the message is delivered loud and clear to people-smuggling networks around the world and those criminal elements within Australia who may be supporting them, that the

hopes that they offer their customers for the future are nothing but false hopes."

Kevin Rudd has moved ruthlessly, decisively, to neutralise what is arguably the biggest card still in Tony Abbott's hand, and allay voter concerns about what the Opposition Leader calls a "national emergency". His trump is to not only transfer new asylum seeker arrivals to Papua New Guinea for processing, but to leave them there forever if they are found to be refugees.

Canberra will fund expansion of detention centres in Papua New Guinea's Manus Island as part of the agreement. Amnesty International has criticised the new plan. "Mark this day in history as the day Australia decided to turn its back on the world's most vulnerable people, closed the door and threw away the key," said Amnesty's regional refugee coordinator Graeme McGregor.

15. The Old Red Telephone Booth



The island of Malta, due to its strategic importance has been conquered by a sequence of powers including the Phoenicians, Romans, Spanish, Sicilians, Knights of St John, French and British.

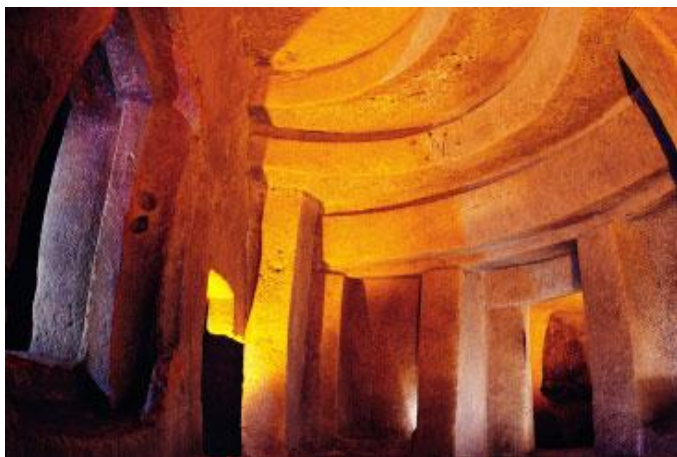
It was in 1800, that Malta voluntarily became part of the British Empire. The British took over Malta, and transformed the island into a Naval base. It wasn't until 1964, after 100 years of British rule, that the islands were granted independence and eventually became a Republic in 1974.

It's been 35 years now since the Britons left our country but so many things around us still bear traces of their influence on our country. The famous red telephone booths which can be spotted in certain old streets in Malta are one such example .

The red telephone box was designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott. It's not only a familiar sight on the streets of the United Kingdom and Malta, but also in Bermuda and Gibraltar - the latter two being also ex-British colonies. Sir Scott originally suggested mild steel colour for the kiosks but the British Post Office chose the colour red to make them easy to spot.

Some of these phone booths in use today have been converted to internet kiosks.

16. HYPOGEUM - Burial Street, Paola, Malta



The Hypogeum, or underground cavity, is a unique monument and superb example of architecture in the negative. Excavation has yielded a wealth of archaeological material including pottery, human bones, personal ornaments such as beads and amulets, little carved animals and larger figurines.

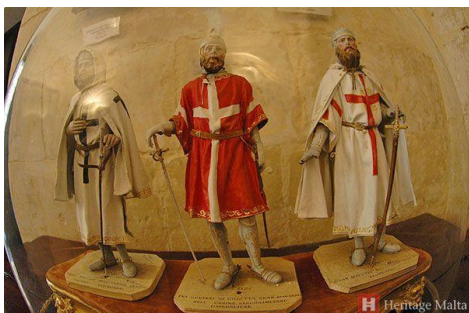
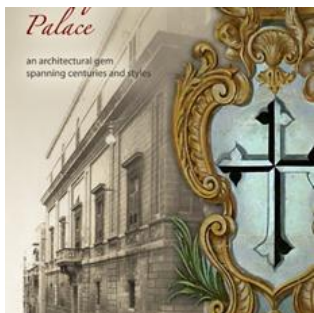
The Hypogeum consists of halls, chambers and passages hewn out of the living rock and covering some 500 square metres. The rock-cut chambers are of diverse shapes and sizes, finished to different standards of workmanship. The complex is grouped in three levels – the upper level (3600-3300 BC), the middle level (3300-3000 BC) and the lower level (3150 -2500 BC). The deepest room in the lower level is 10.6 metres under road surface. The upper level consists of a large hollow with a central passage and burial chambers cut

on each side. The middle level consists of various chambers very smoothly finished, which give the impression of built masonry.

To ensure its conservation, the site's microclimate is strictly regulated. For this reason, the site is open to a limited number of visitors each day. A tour of the site starts with a brief introductory exhibition and multilingual audio-visual presentation focusing on the temple building peoples and the Hypogeum's relationship to Malta's temple sites. To plan your sightseeing, we advise that you book ahead as tours are often full up to weeks in advance. You can book online for most of the tours by accessing the Heritage Malta website using the links below. Tickets are also available in person from the Hypogeum Visitor Centre in Paola and from the National Museum of Archaeology in Valletta.

From Monday to Sunday, 8 tours will be conducted daily, starting on the hour from 9.00 till 16.00 (last tour).

17. Inquisitor's Palace



Located in the historic town of Birgu (Vittoriosa), the Inquisitor's Palace is one of the very few surviving examples of a style of palace found all over Europe and South America in the early modern period. Many of these palaces simply succumbed to the ravages of time or were victims of the anti-reactionary power unleashed by the French Revolution.

Mgr Pietro Dusina arrived in Malta in 1574 as the first general inquisitor and apostolic delegate of the

Maltese Islands. The Grand Master offered him the unused palace as an official residence. Almost all successive inquisitors sought to transform the palace into a decent mansion. They all shared the same cultural values of clerical baroque Roman society, and by the mid-18th century they had managed successfully to transform the building into a typical Roman palace.

Used by high ranking officials during the French Occupation, turned into a military hospital and later a mess house during British rule, served as a refuge for Dominican Friars, it is today the only Inquisitor's Place open to the public in the world and an architectural gem, representative of the chequered history and European heritage of the Maltese islands.

The collection on display at the Inquisitor's Palace aims to portray the salient aspects of Malta's urban religious culture, placing particular focus on the early modern period and the impact of the Inquisition on Maltese society through the centuries. These two related themes are elucidated by means of a display that brings together the liturgical calendar with the most popular cults and devotions on the island.

Visiting Opening Hours

Monday to Sunday: 9.00-17.00 Closed: 24, 25 & 31 December, 1 January, Good Friday

Tickets Adults (18 - 59 years): €6.00 Students and Senior Citizens (60 years and over): €4.50 Children (6 -11 years): €3.00 Infants (1 -5 years): Free