



GOZO
EXCURSION



ecclesiastical emblems, while its ceiling has a remarkable trompe d'oeil painting depicting the interior of a dome that was never built.

Xlendi

The delightful sea inlet, known as Xlendi Bay, lies at the end of a deep, lush ravine which was a river bed. Until the mid 20th century, Xlendi was a small fishing port and a restful summer resort for a few locals and Maltese. The bay is now on the must-visit list of most day-trippers to the Island. The Bay still retains a peaceful atmosphere and is

surprisingly undeveloped though there is a good choice of accommodation from apartments to hotels; most options have sea views. Xlendi is flanked by steep cliffs. For some of the best views, climb the stairs up the cliffs to the right. On the left side of the bay, two tiers of pathways provide ample space for both a walkway and a flat space to spread out a towel and sunbathe. On the promontory one can find Xlendi Tower, built in 1650 which commands superb sea views and stands on a scenic coastline pitted with hand-dug salt pans.



IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

- Always stay with either your guide or in groups of at least three.
- Please refrain from eating or drinking in the coach.
- In case you have a problem, the school's emergency number is +356 9946 7078. Please follow your guide's instructions.

Have fun!!!

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Dwejra

Dwejra is perhaps the archipelago's most spectacular natural landmark. Here, geology, time and sea have worked together to produce some of the most remarkable scenery on the Islands – The Azure Window, the Inland Sea, Fungus Rock, sheer cliffs and a rocky coastline yielding fossilised remains of sea creatures dating from the Miocene period. Apart from the topography visible above sea and ground, there are also some fascinating underwater caves which provide excellent dive sites. The Azure Window, a table-like rock over the sea, is one of the most photographed vistas of the Islands, and it is particularly spectacular during winter when waves crash high inside the arch. The Inland Sea and Dwejra Bay, were created millions of years ago when two limestone caves collapsed. The shallow inland lagoon is linked to the sea via a 100-metre cave. The 'Sea' is used by fishermen, swimmers and as access point for divers. Overlooking the lagoon is the Chapel of St. Anne, built in 1963 on the site of a much older church. The other natural landmark here is the legendary Fungus Rock. It is home to a plant, mistakenly called a fungus, which was reputed to have exceptional medicinal properties. It

was so highly-prized by the Knights that they placed a sentinel in Dwejra Tower (built in 1651) to safeguard the plant for their use only.

Ggantija Temples

The Ggantija Temples (place of giants) are thought to be the oldest free-standing structures in the world. They are among the best preserved temples and are certainly the most visited historical site on the Maltese Islands. Excavated between 1816 and 1820, the complex comprises two Neolithic temples dating from the third millennium B.C. (3,600 to 3,000 B.C.). The temples are made up of two separate units enclosed by a wall and sharing a common façade. The concave walls of the temples suggest that the whole



structure was once roofed. In both temples, the inner apses have niches with rudimentary altars. The outer temple walls are impressive: the largest megaliths are round six by four metres and the wall may once have stood at a height of 16 metres. Traces of mortar indicate the temples were once plastered over. The large forecourt suggests that congregations would have gathered outside to attend rituals, while the inner rooms of the temple may have been reserved for the shaman or priest. During the 1827 excavations, pottery, vases and statuettes were unearthed. These are now displayed in the archaeology museums in Victoria and Valletta.

The Citadel

The Citadel owes its roots to the late medieval era, but the hill has been settled since Neolithic times. After the Great Siege of 1565, the Knights set about re-fortifying it to provide refuge and defence against further attack. Until 1637, the Gozitan population was required by law to spend the night within the Citadel for their own safety. In later, more peaceful times, this restriction was lifted and people settled below its walls, creating the prosperous town of Rabat, also known as Victoria.



An earthquake in 1693 damaged many of the buildings within its walls but today, with the help of UNESCO, these are being carefully restored. The Citadel, like its Maltese counterpart Mdina, seems lost in time, though not abandoned. Its narrow alleys houses shops selling local crafts and produce. The Citadel's fine baroque Cathedral is a masterpiece designed by Lorenzo Gafa', the Maltese Architect who was responsible for the magnificent Cathedral of Mdina. The site on which it stands may well have been that of the Roman Temple of Juno, mentioned by Cicero in his writings. The Cathedral, built early in the 17th century is small but graceful. Its floor is made up of a mosaic of marble tombstones and