

DISCOVER THE WONDERS

SPIEKERMANN

TRAVEL  SERVICE



MALTA

ISLAND OF HISTORY & MYSTERY

April 21 - April 27, 2025
Led by Local Guide

Can be combined with Cyprus, Crete, Rhodes, and Santorini tour (April 27 - May 13, 2025)

Megaliths, medieval dungeons, and Calypso's Cave – The Maltese Islands are positively mythic. The narrow meandering streets of their towns and villages lead to the main square, which is invariably dominated by the huge baroque church. As the countryside is dotted with medieval towers, wayside chapels and the oldest known human structures in the world, the Islands have rightly been described as an open-air museum. The Maltese archipelago lies virtually at the center of the Mediterranean and consists of three islands: Malta, Gozo, and Comino.

Ihab Zaki
Managing Director

Monday, April 21
Arrive in Valletta (MALTA)



Upon arrival at **Malta International airport**, meet your guide and transfer to *Victoria Hotel* located to the seafront for check-in, the rest of the day is free at leisure and overnight at the *Hotel*. **(D)**

Tuesday, April 22
Valletta (Central Malta and the Old Capital)



After breakfast, begin the full day tour of the central and western parts of the island with a drive to the **Dingli Cliff**, which are the highest point on the Maltese Islands (253 meters) above sea level. The Cliff offers a majestic, and overlooking the small, terraced fields below, the open sea and Filfla & the small uninhabited island. Visit **Mdina**, the old capital city of the island, and the Silent and Medieval city also known by its titles "Città Vecchia" or "Città Notabile", a fortified city in the Northern Region of Malta, which served as the island's capital from antiquity to the medieval period. The city was founded as Maleth around the 8th century BC by Phoenician settlers and was later renamed "Melite" by the Romans.

Enjoy lunch at an authentic cuisine in the narrow back streets of Rabat to enjoy a Maltese dish, then head to visit **St. Paul's Church** and **Grotto**, as well as the **St. Paul's Catacombs** in the suburb town of Rabat, which are a typical complex of interconnected underground Roman cemeteries, that were in use up to the 4th century AD. They are a fascinating labyrinth of the 3rd century AD subterranean tombs and the earliest archaeological evidence of Christianity in Malta. 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*. The Christian, Jewish and Pagan Catacombs of St. Paul are not associated with Paul but derive their name from their proximity to St. Paul's Church and Grotto. Also head to visit the **Mosta Dome Church**, the 3rd largest unsupported dome in the world after St. Peter's in Rome and St. Paul's in London.

End the day at **Palazzo Parisio**, sometimes called the "miniature Versailles of Malta" with its ornate interior and shaped gardens located in the town of Naxxar. Enjoy a luxurious high tea experience before returning to the *Hotel* for overnight. **(B,L,D)**

Wednesday, April 23
Valletta (City tour)



After breakfast, begin the drive to the capital city, **Valletta**. Our first full day introduction to Malta is in the **grand baroque city** of Valletta. It has been said that it is the city that was "Built by Gentlemen for Gentlemen". Your guide will take you along **Republic, Merchant, and Old Bakery Street**.

Visit the Malta **Experience film** depicting the complete history of the Islands and on to **Hospital of the Knights of St. John**. Enjoy lunch at an Old Bakery that turned into a traditional restaurant, then in the afternoon, head to visit **St. John's Co-Cathedral**, the mother church of the Knights of St. John; a historical gem, which houses famous tapestries by the artist Caravaggio. Visit the **Upper Barrakka Gardens** with their spectacular views of the Grand Harbor. Built by the Knights of St. John in 1567 after the Great Siege by the Ottoman Empire, Valletta remains a stronghold of the Maltese. Return to the *Hotel* for dinner and overnight. **(B,L,D)**

Thursday, April 24
Valletta (Senglea, Cospicua and Vittoriosa)



Enjoy breakfast, then begin the drive to the historical cities of **Senglea, Cospicua** and **Vittoriosa**, the first bases of the Knights of St. John. In **Senglea**, visit the **Gardjola Gardens**, which overlook the harbor and the historical viewing tower also the symbols sculptured of an eye, an ear, and the crane bird, representing guardianship and observance protecting the Maltese shores.

Continue the drive to **Cospicua**, a beautiful quaint town, then onto **Vittoriosa**, which witnessed the victory of the Great Siege, hence its name. In Vittoriosa, visit the **Inquisitor's Palace**, where the Inquisition played a very

important role in the island's history, as it did in Europe at that time. Walk through the old town, which houses the various residences of the Knights, the Auberges, then on to the water's edge. Then, head to visit the **Maritime museum**, for a brief explanation of Malta's maritime history. Enjoy lunch at a restaurant on the water's edge then return to the *Hotel*, for some rest. in the late afternoon, head out to **Ta' Marija Restaurant** and enjoy dinner and a folklore show at the Ta' Marija Restaurant then return to the *Hotel* for overnight. **(B,L,D)**

Friday, April 25

South Malta



After breakfast, begin the day with a visit to **Ghar Dalam cave** means "**Cave of Darkness**" in Maltese. It is the oldest pre-historic site in all of Malta and where fossils and human remains were found and giving insight into the first settlers of the island. Head to the southern fishing village of **Marsaxlokk**, picturesquely dotted with colorful fishing boats, and have lunch on the water.

After lunch, head to visit the **Hagar Qim and Mnajdra** temples, excavated for the first time in 1839, dating to 3600 - 3200 BC. It stands on a hilltop overlooking the sea and the islet of Filfla just 500m away. Then continue to the **Blue Grotto** for a boat ride through the magnificent sea caverns, Return to the *Hotel* for overnight **(B,L,D)**

Saturday, April 26

Island of Gozo



After breakfast, begin the drive to Gozo ferry terminal for a full day excursion of the **Gozo Island**, a 25-minute ferry will take us across the sea channel, to this green, rural, and traditional island of Malta; it has been rather untouched from the modern world. The island has been linked with Ogygia, home of the nymph Calypso in Homer's Odyssey. Visit the **Temples of Ggantija** (Palace of the giants); consist of two megalithic temples surrounded by a massive common boundary wall, that date to 3600 - 3200 BC. Continue to **Dwejra bay**, famous for the **Azure window**, naturally carved through the rock face and have a boat ride through the cave and enjoy spectacular cliff views. Visit the capital of the island: **Victoria**, and have some free time to shop followed by lunch at Ta Rikardu's restaurant

Head to visit the **Citadel** or "**Cittadella**", first fortified during the Bronze Age and later developed by the Phoenicians and continues development and by Roman times, it had become an Acropolis complex. It is perched high up on the hill of Victoria; 360 views of the island can

be enjoyed from the top of the hill. Return to the *Hotel* for overnight. **(B,L,D)**

Sunday, April 27

Valletta - USA

OR continue to **CYPRUS, CRETE, SANTONRINI, AND RHODES ISLANDS**



After breakfast, transfer to the airport for your flight back to the US. **(B)**

OR join us on the exciting journey to **CYPRUS, CRETE, SANTONRINI, AND RHODES ISLANDS.**

"We reserve the right to change the order of activities/visits or sites due to unexpected events such as flight cancellations or changes of schedule, or any other reasons beyond our control. We will do our best to ensure that any necessary changes when/if needed to meet the needs of our clients".



Tour Cost (Land Only): \$2,995.00

Per person sharing in double occupancy

Single Supplement: \$595.00

Price based on minimum of 6 participants and maximum of 10 participants

Trip Grade: I Lodging Level: ****



Tour Includes:

- Airport/Hotel/Airport transfers with meet and greet service at the airport.
- Accommodation at *Victoria Hotel (4*)* or similar.
- Meals as mentioned in the itinerary (B: Breakfast, L: Lunch and D: Dinner).
- Bottled water during touring days.
- Luxury air-conditioned vehicle on tour with qualified and licensed English-speaking guide.
- All entrance fees to mentioned sites as per the itinerary.
- Harbor cruise and boat ferry to Gozo & Dwejra.
- All lunches include beverage package of ½ bottle of wine, ½ bottle of water and coffee.
- All local taxes.

Tour does not include:

- International air USA-Malta-USA or Malta-Larnaca.
- Malta Visa (currently gratis for US citizens).
- Tips and gratuities to drivers, guides, restaurant staff, etc.,
- Items of a personal nature (camera fees, laundry, excess luggage, etc.).
- Transfers if not arriving/departing on tour dates.
- Dayroom/overnights necessitated by changes in airline schedules or misconnections.
- Trip surcharge to operate below required minimum participants.
- Travel protection insurance (RECOMMENDED).

Trip Grade:

I Easy – Reasonably paced sightseeing, easy walking, and leisurely days. No physical challenges.

Lodging Level:

★★★★Luxury - Regular style - usually large hotels, typical western standard with ample venues and full amenities (4 or 5 stars).

