



GOZO DIVE INTO BEAUTY





BLUE HOLE

Known to many as the most distinctive landmark on the Western coastline, the true beauty of the Azure Window reveals itself to scuba divers below the surface. Its entrance forms the “Blue Hole”, which ranks among the most famous dive sites in the Mediterranean. Following the short walk from the car park over the rocky coral limestone plateau, the delightful sight of the circular pool is a handsome reward. Surrounded by welcoming clear green and blue waters, the sheltered entrance is where divers should

finalise preparations to their equipment before descending. The sunlit upper walls are rutted and covered by flat sponges and even some yellow stony cup corals (*Astroides calycularis*). A spacious cavern on the back of the Blue Hole is a place worth discovering towards the end of the dive. Once divers venture past the impressive arch, which opens towards the sea at about 8 metres depth, they have to decide which way to go since every direction leads to further attractions.

AZURE WINDOW

To the right side of the Azure Window, big rocks and boulders dominate the landscape. The flat sponges and algae are home to tender *Flabellina nudibranches*, which are easy to spot thanks to their purple colour. Ornate wrasses (*Thalassoma pavo*) and painted combers (*Serranus scriba*) swim in the blue, whereas small caverns are the places to look for shoe lobsters. Soon enough, the topside silhouette of the massive Azure Window will shine through the water all the way down to the bottom – a stunning sight in itself, and an exceptional moment to experience as one dives through the archway! The vertical wall facing the land is also covered in tender vegetation, whereas the arch's base towards the open sea is the place where to encounter big groupers (*Epinephelus marginatus*), which find shelter on the rubble bottom.



CHIMNEY AND CORAL CAVE

Turning to the left, outside the Blue Hole, divers will find a narrow "chimney" in the wall in between 7 and 18 metres of depth. This dive-through works as a shortcut to the outer wall and, given sufficient air reserve on the tank, one can even reach the aptly called Coral Cave. Its entrance and the cave itself are wide in dimension while the white sandy bottom is situated at approximately 27 metres. Yellow sunset cup coral (*Leptosammia pruvoti*) and red sponges (*Reniera fulva*) lend striking colours to the rocks that form the portal. Not only does the bottom harbour delicate cylinder anemones (*Cerianthus membranaceus*), even Brown Groupers (*Epinephelus marginatus*) and dense schools of anthias are to be found here.

Photo by Gerard Nowak

Location: Dwejra
Type of divesite: rocky landscape, cavern, drop-off
Entry: from land
Average depth: 30 m
Requirement/level: AOWD

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Location: Dwejra
Type of divesite: rocky landscape, cavern, drop-off
Entry: from land
Average depth: 30 m
Requirement/level: AOWD

Hidden behind a steep wall, the Inland Sea is connected to the Mediterranean only by an 80 metre tunnel in the rock. This “geological marvel” attracts divers, tourists and fishermen likewise. Since sea excursions in this area are popular with tourists, divers are actually often “guided” by the pleasure boats on the surface. While the opening in the wall appears to be wide above sea level, it quickly narrows down to a mere narrow crack below the surface. The entrance to the canyon is situated at 6 metres, but once the tunnel meets the open sea, the depth gauge will display about 30 metres. Divers are not only rewarded by the tunnel walls, outcrops and overhangs – these

INLAND SEA

merely form the frame to the spectacular view into the famous deep azure of the Mediterranean. This sight is truly unparalleled and keeps divers enchanted even after many visits !

Adjacent to the canyon, steep walls with numerous cracks and vertical crevices lead to the individual point of return. Algae, bryozoans and different kinds of sponges form the typical vegetation on the walls. Looking into the blue, one might be rewarded with sightings of groups of barracudas (*Sphyræna sphyraena*) or big amberjacks (*Seriola dumerilii*).

Photo by Chris Migeon

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SAN DIMITRI POINT

Cliffs rising up to 80 metres above sea level form the westernmost point of the island. At the same time, the spot shelters dive boats and divers alike, when descending and ascending over the seabed in 6 metres depth. Just like most places around the island, the shallows are populated by various kinds of algae and bryozoans. Big boulders frame the plateau sloping down to 30 metres, and while ledges and niches are home to small and large scorpionfishes, loose schools of saupes (*Sarpa salpa*) and different species of seabreams (*Diplodus*) can be seen bustling around the rocks. The exposed sea bed in front of the headland is the preferred hunting ground for predators such as jacks and even tunas (*Thunnus*), which divers

occasionally spot. Several schools of barracudas – formed by both juveniles and adults - and also some “top dogs”, have remained faithful to the habitat of San Dimitri Point over the years. Other interesting dive spots are situated to the left and right side of the headland. To the East, various picturesque caves wait for their discovery: notably the huge Gudja Cave, which starts as shallow as 9 metres, with its impressive archway. The Tac-Cawla Caves designate a compound of four caves that stretch as far as 130 metres into the island’s mainland! Their tail ends, host air-filled sections that allow for ascending above the waterline. On the way back, the sight of the vibrant blue sea is pure magic!

Location: San Dimitri Point
Type of divesite: drop-off, rocky landscape, cave
Entry: from boat

Average depth: 30 m +
Requirement/level: AOWD



DOUBLE ARCH

Due to its unique scenery and unusual location, Double Arch possibly ranks among the most extraordinary dive sites within the Maltese archipelago. Unlike most of Gozo's dive spots, that can easily be accessed by land, its main attraction is located 200 metres offshore. Although it is well possible to swim all the way from Xwejni Bay, it will be easier to use a boat. Emerging from the seabed at 40 metres, the steep wall is interrupted by two impressive arches created by erosion. The archways themselves are dipped in colour thanks to a dense growth of red sponges (*Crambe crambe*), orange sponges (*Reniera fulva*) and yellow sunset cup corals (*Leptosammia pruvoti*). The smaller arch reaches up to around 20 metres of depth while the bigger one below stretches down to the bottom at 40 metres. Thanks to the exposed nature of this dive site, encounters with barracudas and groupers are very pleasant occurrences. The number of fish around the twin arches and the small rocks scattered on the adjacent white sandy seabed is exceptional.

Location:	Xwejni Bay
Type of divesite:	drop-off, rocky landscape, open sea
Entry:	either by boat or from land
Average depth:	40 m +
Requirement/level:	AOWD



CATHEDRAL CAVE

Just as its name suggests, Cathedral Cave is capacious, bright and friendly not only due to its location just below the water surface but thanks to its huge air-filled dome, which features a second hole, supplying the cave with both fresh air and additional light. Divers lacking any cave experience, or even newly qualified divers, will experience a suitable and attractive playground as the access is easy, the water shallow and the cave basically lit-up. The vibrancy of the bright blue water radiating deep into the cave is exceptional and adding to the mystic atmosphere of a "Blue Grotto", in this stunning place.

Location:	Wied il-Ghasri	Average depth:	40 m +
Type of divesite:	cavern, cave	Requirement/level:	AOWD
Entry:	by boat or from shore		



BILLINGHURST CAVE

This dive is the real thing when it comes to thrilling cave experiences – however, it does require suitable training. The best way to access this dive site is the ladder at Reqqa Point, with the cave itself located nearby. Its entrance starts in the shallows while the bright sandy seabed stretches down to 26 metres. Just a few metres upwards into the cave, with its now all-rocky bottom, the path turns sharply. Bereft of any ambient light, divers are forced to rely on their torches for the last 50 metres until they reach a huge air-filled dome inside the rock. After spending minutes in the darkness, the intense blue of the exit makes for a both magical and memorable sight.

Location:	Reqqa Point
Type of divesite:	cave
Entry:	from land
Average depth:	40 m
Requirement/level:	AOWD

XATT L-AĦMAR

Situated in the south of Gozo, the wide bay of Xatt L-Aħmar faces the islands of Comino and Malta. Like everywhere else in the archipelago, the crystal-clear water shines in all shades of blue. This place proved to be the ideal location for some additional artificial attractions sunk exclusively for divers. On August 12th 2006, two decommissioned ferries were successfully scuttled on the white sand seabed. Counting in the "MV Xlendi", which was sunk here some years earlier, there are now three wrecks resting side-by-side. Each of them is located at a distance of about 60 metres from each other in transverse direction to the bay. In short: Xatt L-Aħmar makes for an unique wreck-o-rama! In favourable weather conditions, two of them can be visited within a single dive. However, it certainly does more justice to each of the wrecks' unique features to explore them one by one. They actually do deserve the time. The entry to the bay is as easy as can be, by ladder.

WRECKS

MV Xlendi

In 1999, the former car ferry “MV Xlendi” was scuttled off the Western side of the bay. Unfortunately, it turned in the process and sunk way deeper than expected. Today the 80 metres-spanning wreck lies upside down on the sandy seabed at 40 metres depth. Mulletts (Mullidae) and Two-banded sea breams (*Diplodus vulgaris*) are among the typical inhabitants of the wreck and smaller schools of fish make ideal photo subjects. Equally picturesque is the near-by car wreck with its fancy vegetation.

Location: Xatt L’Ahmar
Type of divesite: wreck
Entry: from land
Average depth: 40 m
Requirement/level: AOWD, wreck diver (where required)

The shallow coastal surroundings are home to numerous octopi, whereas cuttlefish (*Sepia officinales*), can be found in the open water column.

MV Cominoland

When the smallest ship of the Xatt L-Ahmar trio was still being operated, it served both as cruise vessel and as a ferry, with a capacity of 250 passengers. These days it is to be found on the easternmost side of the bay, at 38 metres, next to a steep wall. Algae and flat sponges are part of the dense vegetation throughout the hull. They serve as the foundation of a vast food supply for a variety of species such as parrot fish (*Sparisoma cretense*), several kinds of wrasses (*Labridae*) and nudibranches. Safety for divers penetrating the wreck was enhanced. Rough edges were smoothed and glass was removed. The build-ups reach up as shallow as 26 metres and are home to shrimps, anthias and large scorpion fish. Moreover, the deformed stern is testimony to the

force of water pressure when the ship was first sunk.

MV Karwela

Originally registered with German shipyard Meyer-Papenburg, the MV Karwela continued its international “career” as a ferry for 450 passengers in Maltese waters, before it became a cruise vessel. Eventually it came to rest on white sands at 43 metres depth just 80 metres off the coast, which makes it a comfortable site for land-based diving. While the wreck’s bow is precisely pointing at the neighbouring MV Cominoland, its upper deck lies in no lower than 30 metres of water. This wreck was also equipped for recreational divers – the upper deck has additional hatches to facilitate easy penetration. Along the staircases and passenger lounge, light beams create wonderful settings for photographers. Although the wreck was basically scuttled for recreational scuba divers, it is also an ideal site for extensive tech dives.



BEACHES

Gozo has some of the best beaches anywhere in Malta and they tend to be more peaceful and natural too. The sun shines some 300 days per year and sunbathing weather is more or less guaranteed between June and September and regularly stretches from May to November.

The water is a crystal clear azure and warm for most of the year – perfect for swimming, snorkelling, diving or just splashing about. Gozo has two beautiful red sandy beaches – Ramla and San Blas – with space for games and sand castles, as well as a couple of smaller yellow-sandy shores at Marsalform and ix-Xlendi. There are also plenty of good rocky swimming areas.

Being such a small island, if there is wind on one side of Gozo, you need only hop a couple of kilometres along the coast to find another bay that is calm and tranquil - so there is almost always a beach within reach, to serve your purpose.



OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

Gozo's climate and geography combine to make it an ideal playground for outdoor activities. Gozo offers a wide selection of sports for both the spectator and active participant. From the gentle to the high-octane, there is sport on land and sea for experts and novices alike. Why not come and enjoy an established hobby or try something new?

The island's mild winters are perfect for country walks, biking and climbing, while the hot summer months (June to September) attract everyone to the coast for swimming, snorkelling, and cruising around in boats. Diving and sea kayaking can be done year-round.

And as if that's not enough, there's also good food, historic sites, local Festi, friendly people and easy communication in English (or Italian) - and all just a short haul flight within Europe!

Gozo is just 14km x 7 km, so the rambler or cyclist is rapidly rewarded with a great variety of landscapes, from pretty villages in rural countryside to prominent hills and dramatic coastlines. The naturally rocky terrain (excellent for climbing and technical bike riding) is sun-baked in summer, but becomes lush with green grass, crops and wild flowers in the spring months which are particularly popular with ramblers.

Gozo's coastline has a few glorious sandy beaches but for sports enthusiasts, the steep rocky cliffs, bays of boulders and caves are perfect playgrounds and ideal for exploring by sea kayak. The fun continues under the water too. Gozo is known for its world class cave and tunnel dives and the excellent light penetration makes any dive an event to remember.

A scenic view of a coastline with high, layered cliffs and a small boat on the water under a blue sky. The cliffs are illuminated by warm light, and the water is a deep blue. A small boat with several people is visible in the foreground, and another boat is further out in the distance. The sky is a clear, vibrant blue with some light clouds.

SAILING TRIPS

Sailing trips around the three islands reveal a dramatic and untouched coastline, a marvellous expression of nature in rock that descends in slopes or sharp drops to the Mediterranean. Trips include pick ups from hotels and often give access to otherwise unreachable, secluded beaches.

Fishing trips can be planned for individuals, groups or families for up to four hours of coastal fun, where one can also stop for swimming and snorkelling.

Choose from organised team building activities on land or at sea, including rafting and kayaking activities, making the most of Gozo's beautiful landscape or crystal clear sea.

FESTI

A summer trip to Gozo would not be complete without a visit to a village festa. These are held between the last weekend in May and mid-September. Each town/village holds its annual feast dedicated to its patron saint. A typical 'festa' lasts three days or longer. The church and village are decorated with lights and bunting and the colourful festa statues of Saints stand outside the church. The main festa statue of the patron saint is paraded through the streets and local musicians provide extra support to the priest and choir in a special mass.

Gozitan Festi are not only religious in nature however and there is plenty of secular fun as well. Bands march through the streets of the village and fireworks light up the skies as crowds enjoy traditional as well as fast food from the many street stalls. Tourists are always welcome and joining a festa is a great way to get a real taste of local life.



FOOD AND DRINK

Tradition seasons the food and drink of Gozo. Here, tradition is alive and vital, enriched with a history of Phoenician, Roman and Arab visitors leaving their trace, then more recently, Italian, French and British colonial rule. Today, Gozitan cuisine promotes the small and local. Look out for traditional sheep milk cheeses known as gbejniet, a local favourite, or for savoury pastizzi - miniature pastries. Dip fresh bread into local olive oil and enjoy other delicacies ripened by the Mediterranean sun.

Distinctive Gozitan wines and craft beer are a must. The strong sun and cooling sea breezes here create round-bodied, fruity wines with good structure. Tal-Massar Winery and Ta' Mena are agricultural holdings that offer popular tours and tastings. Beer lovers, meanwhile, can sup Gozo's very own artisan brews courtesy of the Lord Chambray microbrewery – they have tasting visits too.

Visit the famous saltpans near Qbajjar Bay and look for veteran Manuel Cini, often perched on a wall here to sell his wonderful sea salt - a timeless tradition reborn in the 21st century. Or look out for cottage, pure honey in the idyllic Wied Rihan Valley.

(Responsible Travel ezine feature - Gozo (March 2015))

Maltese cuisine is an eclectic mix of flavours, full-flavoured and Mediterranean, appropriate to a country that lies between Sicily and North Africa. Choose between the many excellent restaurants scattered around the island, located by the sea or tucked in village cores.

Village Festi feature sweet street foods like imqaret (date pastries) and Qubbajt (nougat) to enjoy along with the fireworks and processions. Special occasions merit serious dishes like Ross fil-forn, (Baked Rice), Imqarrun (baked Macaroni) or Timpana (a very special rich pasta baked in a pastry case) often followed by rabbit or meat dishes served with local potatoes and vegetables.

Desserts depend on the occasion; there are easter figolli (almond stuffed pastry figures), Christmas qagħaq tal-għasel (honey rings), cassata, (ricotta filled sponge with marzipan) or kannoli, (ricotta-filled fried pastries).



HISTORY

Gozo boasts some of the oldest freestanding stone buildings in the world, the **UNESCO World Heritage Ggantija Temples**, as well as the stunning baroque architecture inherited from the **Knights of St John**. Another important legacy of the knights are the mosaics of salt pans which dot Gozo's coastline.

From Knights' watchtowers to mythical caves, tiny chapels to the towering **Gozo Citadel**, nineteenth-century aqueducts to timeless hills and valleys, Gozo has plenty of sights to see both natural and historic – and all conveniently packed into a small island that is easy to get around and always welcoming.

Other Events

January

1st Jan - New Year's Toast The Gaulitanus Choir at 7.45pm.

17th Jan - Traditional Feast of St Anthony Abbott, Xaghra
Traditional blessing of animals, dog show, cat show, races for children and other activities organised by Saint Anthony Church in collaboration with Xaghra Local Council

24th Jan - Feast of St Paul, Marsalforn

31st Jan - Feast of St John Bosco, Victoria

31st Jan - The Best of the Gozo Youth Wind Band - DON BOSCO GRAND CONCERT, Victoria
During this concert new repertoire is performed following intensive preparations from 50 youths hailing from all over Gozo. This year music excerpts will feature the best mixage of the vast repertoire performed during the last 14 years of the Youth Band's concerts.

Info: gozowindbandorchestra@yahoo.co.uk

31st Jan - Organized Carnival, Nadur

February

5th – 9th Feb - Carnival Activities in Victoria

5th – 9th Feb - Spontaneous Carnival, Nadur
Sunset invites a multitude of masked and hooded creatures to throng the streets of Nadur. The creativity of those taking part and the many visitors have earned it other names such as the grotesque carnival. A unique experience.

6th Feb - Carnival Activities, Nazzarenu Square, Xaghra

A varied Carnival programme including Carnival competitions and dance by local companies. The traditional kukkanja will also be presented. Activity is organized by the Xaghra Local Council.

7th Feb - Carnival Activities, Victory Square, Xaghra
A varied Carnival programme including defilé of Carnival floats, dance by local companies etc.

March

12th – 13th Mar - FMVA Vintage Motors Festival

13th - 27th Mar - Two weeks of activities to celebrate the Easter season.

13th Mar - Via Crucis at Ta' Ghammar Hill with meditations based on the teachings of Pope Francis.

18th Mar - Our Lady of Sorrows. An open air mass

and religious, traditional procession in Victoria. Xewkija village organises an animated pageant along the old streets of the village.

20th Mar - Good Friday Procession organised in Victoria and Qala

25th Mar - Good Friday Procession organised in Nadur, Victoria, Xaghra and Zebbug.

27th Mar - Christ the Risen Processions held in San Gor , Kercem, Nadur, Xewkija, Cathedral, Zebbug, Qala, Xaghra and Gharb

27th Mar - Easter Concert, Victoria

27th Mar – 24th April: Gaulitana, a Festival of Music

31st Mar - Freedom Day

Mar/Apr - Oasi Family Fest

April

23rd Apr - Opera Il-Barbiere di Siviglia, Gaulitana Festival

24th Apr - Gozo Half Marathon. Run for it! The 41st edition of the Gozo Half Marathon.

The Gozo Half Marathon was organised for the first time in Xaghra, Gozo on the 6th of February, 1977. The first Marathon was made up of only 35 competitors who were mainly Xaghra youths. This

number has increased dramatically over the years with people from other Maltese and Gozitan villages, and more recently even foreign participants, coming all the way to Gozo to take part in this annual event. Apart from the half marathon, the event hosts an 8 mile (12.9 km) run, and a 4 KM and 2 KM races for younger athletes, making it an ideal event for the whole family. The half marathon route is of varying elevation and takes the participants through various Gozitan villages and breathtaking views of the Gozitan landscape.

May

30th May - The Gozo Ultra, the most scenic route in the Mediterranean returns on Saturday the 30th April 2016.

The trail route is over 55km with 4 checkpoints. The course is a gorgeous circumnavigation of the island which covers cliff edge single tracks, lush valleys and water courses, seaside salt pans, sandy beaches and rocky terrain – in short, you will experience the whole of the Mediterranean in one race!

June

4th Jun - Bis-Sahha Wine Festival in Santa Lucija Square. A festival of wine, live music and local food. Entrance is free.

* Rockastra - The fourth edition of ROCKASTRA, Victoria

* Leone Goes Pop – Pjazza Indipendenza (It-Tokk), Victoria Swing, rock, pop to the 9th edition of Leone Goes Pop, which is set to entertain the heart of Gozo's town - the central square, It-Tokk. The Leone Band returns for another year round with a night of pop, rock and swing music, that keeps a crowded square entertained for hours.

7th Jun - Sette Giugno – Xaghra

* **Jun** – 7th Edition of the Figs Festival, Xaghra

8th Jun – 11th Jul: 19th Edition of the Victoria International Arts Festival.

11th – 12th Jun - Festival "Fiori d'Argenta", Xewkija; On the 11th June at 7.30p.m. at St John's square - a festival of culture, music, and traditions. On Sunday 14th June a horse parade starting St. Bert Street ending at St. John's Square.

18th – 19th Jun - Agricultural Fair, Nadur

25th – 26th Jun - Farm to Fork, Gozitano Complex, Xewkija

* **Jun** - Oasi Day Weekend Celebrations

July

3rd Jul - Infiolata

An intricate carpet of fresh flowers arranged in

thematic designs. The Infiolata is an old Italian tradition, the oldest one originating in 'Gerano' the twinned village of Gharb which is found in the outskirts of Rome Italy and which Gharb adopted as an annual event since 2003.

* **Throughout Jul** - activities forming part of Summer Nights programme are organised with the participation of Local Musical Bands

August

1st Aug - OPERA VS POP UNDER THE STARS 9th EDITION, Victoria

Following the eight previous successful editions of Opera vs Pop Under the Stars, The Gozo Youth Orchestra in collaboration with The Ministry for Gozo and Embassy of the United States of America presents: "Opera vs Pop Under the Stars – 9th Edition" by the Gozo Youth Orchestra. Programme will include classical and operatic songs and arias, followed by an array of lighter pop arrangements from soundtracks and musicals.

Info and Reservation: gozowindbandorchestra@yahoo.co.uk

6th Aug - Gozo Ceramics Festival, Xlendi Gozo
Presentation of ceramic artefacts by local artists who will be working live, demonstrating different techniques such as throwing, coiling, modelling, slab building and also firing.

6th Aug - Riflessi Sajfin

An open-air festival organised by Oasi Foundation's primary prevention team, Marsalforn

19th - 21st Aug - Festa ta' Kemmuna

26th - 28th Aug - The Delicata Classic Wine Festival, Kunsill Gardens, Nadur

29th Aug - Feast of St John Martyr, Xewkija.

Traditional village square dinner is organised with songs and music at St. John's square, culminating in a traditional bonfire.

* **Throughout August** - activities forming part of Summer Nights programme are organised with the participation of Local Musical Bands

September

2nd Sep - STAGE AND PROMS ON THE SEA – 2nd Edition, Mgarr Marina

The Gozo Youth Wind Band (GYWB) will present the 2nd Edition of this successful spectacular evening. Staged on a large floating platform at Mgarr Harbour, this concert offers a unique Mediterranean setting where music can be enjoyed against a backdrop of seacraft and a moonlit sky.
Info and Reservation: gozowindbandorchestra@yahoo.co.uk

3rd Sep - Jazz Do Festival, Mgarr Harbour

7th Sep - Commemoration of the Two Sieges, Xaghra

16th – 18th Sep: 11th edition of the Qala International Folk Festival

***Sep** - Youth 4 Youths

October

8th - 9th Oct - Festubru – A festival of folk and traditional food organised in the picturesque valley of Lunzjata.

8th Oct - Preludio all Opera

9th Oct: Fjakkolata: a Festival of Lights

15th Oct - Opera Carmen, Aurora Theatre, Victoria

21st Oct: A Symphony of Lights Festival

27th, 29th Oct - Opera Aida, Astra Theatre, Victoria

27th Oct - 19th Nov: 11th edition of the Festival Mediterranea

30th Oct - Halloween, Nadur

***Oct** - OASI Cup run

December

*Dec - Gozitano Christmas Village

The Gozitano Christmas Village will be hosting a series of events and activities. The site of the Gozitano will be transformed by music, illuminations and food stalls offering an impressive selection of wine from 17 different countries and 37 different wine regions. Gozitano attractions include production of traditional Christmas sweets, with the participation of artists, choir singing, local band and father Christmas distributing presents.

3rd Dec - 7th Jan: Christmas, an island of Joy

8th Dec - Feast of the Immaculate Conception – Victoria & Qala

10th Dec - Festival of Light organised by Fondazzjoni ta' Klula. Santa Lucija square is decorated with flaming lanterns, bonfire and animated by children carrying candles in a procession

11th Dec - Feast of Santa Lucija

*Dec - Carols by Candlelight by the Schola Contorum Jubilate

25th Dec - Christmas Day

25th Dec - 'Twas the Night Before Christmas – St George's Square

'Twas the Night Before Christmas - Christmas Eve from 01:30-02:30hrs at St George's Square by The Gozo Youth Wind Band & Orchestra presents a spectacular concert including guest pop singers with evergreen Christmas songs, carols, arrangements, medleys amongst others. During the concert patrons will be asked to contribute in aid of I-Istrina organized by The Malta Community Chest Fund. Sunday 25th December, 2016 – 1.30a.m. (in collaboration with Grapes Wine Bar)

31st Dec - New Year's Eve in the City, Victoria

The Rabat, Citta' Victoria Local Council and the town's commercial community create a popular meeting place for a festive celebration of the New Year. The thousands of people who literally flock to Victoria on the day have the opportunity to celebrate together in a historic context. Participation is free of charge. Event takes place in Independence Square and Saint George's Square.

* Content is indicative of highlights of the Gozo cultural calendar and is not comprehensive of all events. Full details, changes to the original programme that may occur due to organisations' needs and for other unlisted events, please check visitgozo.com.



DIVING SAFELY RULES & REGULATIONS

“The Recreational Diving Service Provider Regulations LN 359 of 2012”, were published in 2012. The objective of these Regulations being, to ensure that all divers in Malta encounter the most pleasurable diving experience under the safest diving conditions possible.

These Regulations aim to:

- Maintain and improve upon, the high level of care already administered by the licensed divecentres of the Maltese Islands. To this end, all dive centres will now have to be licensed by the Malta Tourism Authority, which has defined minimum standards for facilities, equipment and service. Only licensed diving centres will be allowed to provide diving services to the public.
- Achieve conformity with new European CEN Standards for Recreational Diving Service Providers. These new standards provide the basis for the operational procedures detailed in the Maltese Regulations.

The notable differences for divers on their next visit to Malta will be as follows:

Enforcement

Enforcement is facilitated through the Enforcement Section of the Malta Tourism Authority. Diving services are now subject to the Malta Travel and Tourism Services Act which stipulates both fines and possible imprisonment for those failing to comply.

Independent Divers

Under Maltese regulations, divers are only permitted to dive independently if they have a diving certification that allows them to dive to a depth of 30m, otherwise they must be accompanied by a licensed instructor.

Illegal Fishing

The following are prohibited:

- Spear fishing with SCUBA;
- Spear fishing or any other form of fishing within the Marine Conservation Areas;
- Spear fishing between dusk and dawn

Instructors

Only licensed operators are allowed to offer scuba training or other recreational diving services. Qualified Instructors who wish to supervise training or diving for those less than PADI Advanced Open Water, CMAS 2 Star or equivalent, must do so through a licensed dive centre. The Instructor will first have to register with a dive centre, presenting his Instructor qualification and a copy of an annual medical examination by a Doctor specializing in diving medicine.

Medicals

Divers will be required to complete and sign a medical questionnaire. If any prescribed medical condition is indicated, divers will be required to produce a ‘fit for diving’ medical, signed by a doctor specialising in hyperbaric medicine.

Minimum Age

There are no restrictions on age. The decision on minimum age will be as stipulated by the training agency for those undertaking a diving qualification. Written parental/guardian consent required for all divers under 18 years of age.

Technical Diving

The use of Rebreathers, Enriched Air and Trimix are sanctioned, subject to the normal restrictions of training and experience.

For regulations updates please check on <http://www.pdsa.org.mt/index.php/dive-locations/rules-a-regulations>

Public Health Services at the Gozo General Hospital are also supplemented with a hyperbaric chamber. Services are provided by specialised personnel trained to handle diving-related illnesses. In cases of emergency, dial 112 for assistance.

DIVE CENTRES

Atlantis Diving Centre | Triq il-Qolla s-Safra, Marsalforn | t: 2219000 | diving@atlantisgozo.com
www.atlantisgozo.com

Blue Waters Dive Cove

Triq il-Kuncizzjoni, Qala | t: 2156 5626 | info@divebluwaters.com | www.divebluwaters.com

Bubbles Dive Centre

17, Triq il-Forn, Marsalforn | t: 27028299 | info@diving-gozo.com | www.diving-gozo.com

Calypso Diving Centre

Triq tax-Xtut, Marsalforn | t: 21561757 | info@calypsodivers.com | www.calypsodivers.com

Comino Dive Centre

c/o Comino Hotel & Bungalows, island of Comino | t: 21338558 | w. www.divemalta.com

Extra Divers

Extra Divers, St. Anthony Street, Mgarr | t: 2756 9007 | email gozo@extradivers.org
www.extradiversgozo.com

Gozo Aquasport

Falcon Court, Triq ir-Rabat, Marslafor | t: 21563037 | dive@gozoaquasports.com | www.gozoaquasports.com

Gozo Technical Diving

Triq l-Imgarr, Xewkija | m: 79009565 | tom@gozodiving.com | www.gozodiving.com

Moby Dives Co. Ltd.

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Scuba Kings (Gozo) Dive Centre

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