

Ghar Dalam- a prehistoric cave



Ghar Dalam

- Ghar Dalam Cave is a very important find as it was here that the earliest evidence of human settlement on Malta, some 7,400 years ago, was discovered. The site consists of a cave and a museum. The history of the cave and of the Islands can be decoded from Ghar Dalam's stratigraphy. The lowermost layers, more than 500,000 years old, contained the fossil bones of dwarf elephants, hippopotami, micro-mammals and birds. Above the pebble layer that follows, is the so-called 'deer' layer, dated to around 18,000 years ago. The top layer, or 'cultural layer', dates to less than 10,000 years and holds evidence of the first humans on the Island.

Domus Romana





- It was discovered in 1881 and depicts how the Romans lived while they were ruling over Malta.
- This is a statue of Emperor Claudius

This Roman house is famed for its mosaic floors



Mdina – the silent city

- Mdina was Malta's capital city until the Knights of Malta arrived in 1530
- The region was first inhabited in 700 BCE
- Built at a strategic military location with clear sight of surrounding areas

Mdina



- The fortifications of Mdina are a series of defensive walls which surround the former capital city of Mdina, Malta. The city was founded as Maleth by the Phoenicians in around the 8th century BC, and it later became part of the Roman Empire under the name Melite. The ancient city was surrounded by walls, but very few remains of these have survived.
- The walls have been rebuilt a number of times as it withstood a number of sieges.



- The inner portal of Greeks Gate, one of the few visible remains of the medieval walls

Misrah Ghar il-Kbir (informally known as Clapham Junction)

- It is best known for its "cart ruts", a complex network of tracks carved in the rock. The age and purpose of the tracks is uncertain. In general, most archaeologists presume that the site developed about 2000 BC after new settlers came over from Sicily, starting the Bronze Age in Malta.
- It is reported that the "Clapham Junction" nickname was given by an Englishman, who later reported that it reminded him of the busy railway station Clapham Junction in London.

- The ruts are up to 60 centimetres (24 in) deep and have an average distance between them of 110 to 140 cm (43 to 55 in). Some cross while others form junctions, creating the illusion of a great railway station switching yard.



Buggiba temple



- This temple was in the grounds of our hotel- the Dolmen Hotel.
- Dolmen means a megalithic tomb with a large flat stone laid on upright ones,



The legend of Saint Paul

- Christianity has been the prominent religion in Malta for nearly 2000 years, and it is said that it was St Paul that first introduced the religion to the Maltese people around the time of AD 60. His fabled arrival on the island was actually as a result of an accident, as the ship he was sailing on was caught in a violent storm. St Paul and 270 other people were travelling by ship to Rome, where he was being taken to be tried as a political rebel, and the storm they encountered caused the vessel to become shipwrecked, and all aboard were forced to swim to safety on a seemingly barren and uninhabited island. The site of the shipwreck is known as St Paul's Island, some 80 metres off the coast of Mellieha, where today it is home to a statue of St Paul that marks this historically significant event.

- Once ashore, they soon discovered that the island was in fact inhabited and was named Malta. The locals they encountered showed great care and hospitality towards the men), and St Luke describes the welcome given to the survivors in the Acts of the Apostles
- “And later we learned that the island was called Malta. And the people who lived there showed us great kindness, and they made a fire and called us all to warm ourselves...”

- St Paul was then bit by a snake and the inhabitants expected him to die. But he didn't and this gave rise to believing him to be a god.
- Paul stayed on the island for 3 months preaching Christianity
- As a result of this there are several churches and cathedrals named after him
- The 2 main cathedrals are in Mdina and Valletta.

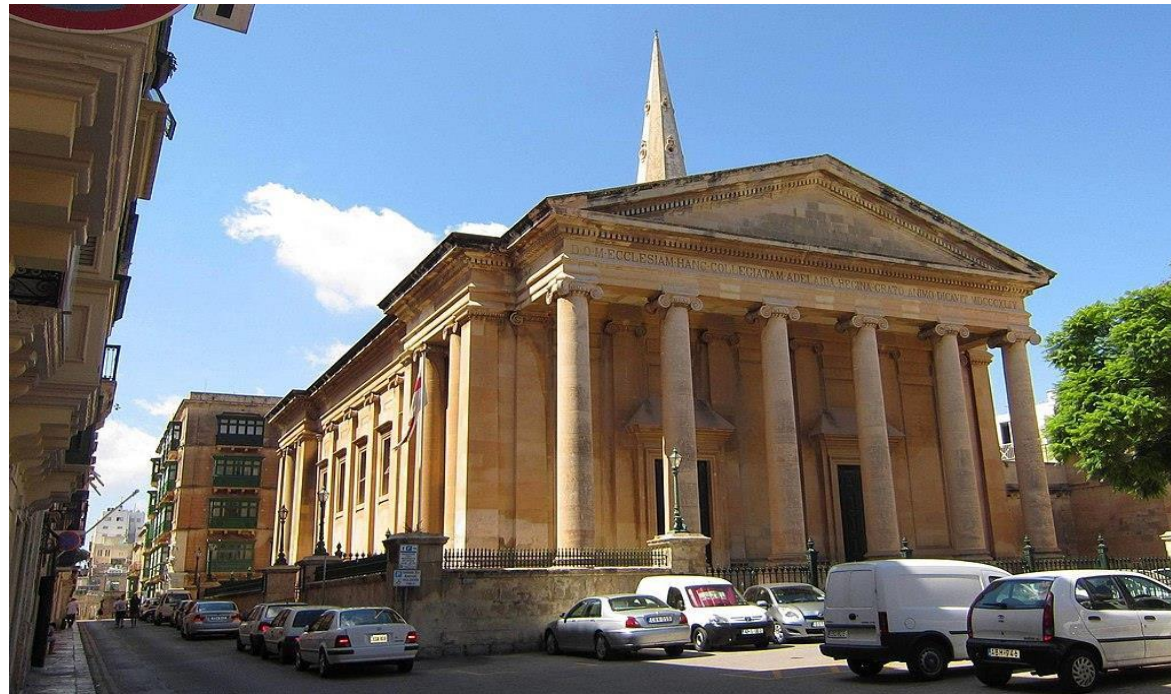
St Pauls cathedral in Mdina

- The ceiling contains frescoes depicting the life of St. Paul



St Pauls co-cathedral in Valletta

- The cathedral was commissioned by the Dowager Queen Adelaide during a visit to Malta in the 19th Century when she found out that there was no place of Anglican worship on the island. Prior to this Anglican services were held in a room in the Grand Master's Palace.



St Pauls co cathedral interior is truly spectacular



St Pauls co cathedral is home to a special painting

- The beheading of John the Baptist is a painting by the Italian master Caravaggio in 1608, housed in the Oratory of St John's Co-Cathedral, Valletta. It is the only work by Caravaggio to survive with the artist's signature, which he placed in red blood spilling from the Baptist's cut throat. It reads 'fra ['frater' or 'brother'] michelan[gelo da Caravaggio]', It was the largest altarpiece which Caravaggio would ever paint



