A wealth of activity above and beneath the waves
Gozo places pampering at

Spas are an increasingly popular feature on incentive programmes and immediately increase energy levels. The mild climate also allows the island to be accessible throughout the year. Winter is an excellent time of year to visit for a wellness incentive – the island is green, the air fresh and the villages are busy, while the island’s small size is an added bonus as valuable time is saved in travelling from place to place.

Most of the wellness outlets are in contemporary upgrade, with state-of-the-art equipment and highly qualified staff, making it easy to enjoy the best treatments and products.

Many hotels offer packages, which include specialist treatments along with unlimited use of their fitness facilities. One such example is the five-star Kempinski San Lawrenz, its spa and marine centre offers a range of treatments, such as Swedish jet-baths, algae body wraps, Vielhy and Blitz showers, massages and more.

Team-building activities

There are a mind-boggling variety of activities that Gozo offers for groups in search of team sports. A treasure hunt hike, a cycling race or a mystery jeep trail (on or off the beaten track), have all proved popular with corporate groups. Locals also extol the virtues of sport climbing, hauling yourself up a rock face on permanent holds. All groups need are comfortable shoes as all equipment is supplied.

Launched in 2008 to raise standards, the Malta Tourism Authority now runs a voluntary Quality Assured seal scheme for DMGs, which offer a complete package for the meetings, incentives, conferences and events market.

Team appeal: DMCs recommend sport climbing, which does not require experience

Strengthening bonds

From trips to the farm to climbing, Gozo can forge teamwork.
Gozo is home to some of the region's leading spas and wellness centers. 

the top of the agenda

Sustainable Approaches

Down on the farm the Gozo Experience makes groups to get back to nature.
Fruit from the vine, and food

Gozo vine production dates back 2,000 years, and its wines are the

**Fruit of the vine**

The history of wine-making in Gozo dates back more than 2,000 years to the time of Roman rule. Grapes were grown in medieval times, but it was the Knights of St John who revived production.

The first professional importers started around 1926, but it was not until the early 1970s that an indigenous wine industry began in earnest on the island. Most grapes grown locally until then were table varieties. In the past decade, there have been initiatives such as 'Vines for Wines', which have encouraged many farmers to take up viticulture by giving them training and financial support.

The plan has converted a lot of land into vineyards. Although the demand for local vineyard production continues, the shortfall in grapes is made up by imported quality grapes from northern Italy and France.

Groups can have first-hand experience of the local environment on Gozo by learning how vines are grown in different ways, as well as experiencing the wine-making process - from the harvesting of the grapes, pressing to fermentation, aging, blending and finally the bottling of a home-made vintage.

Several vineyards are happy to play host for the day and elaborate on how they make their own wines, followed by tours of the estate and the inevitable tastings.

**ITINERARIES**

Ggantija: the temples date back to 3,000BC and their construction remains a mystery

**Archeology and culture**

A treasure trove of prehistoric remains, Gozo’s history can be traced back to 5,000BC, when Sicilians first crossed the 35 miles of sea that separates the two islands. The first Neolithic people probably lived in the caves, which can still be visited outside San Lawrenz village.

However, the most impressive ancient site on Gozo is that of the Ggantija ('gigantic') Temples in Xaghra, which date from 3,000BC and thus claim to be the oldest free-standing structures in the world, beating Stonehenge and Egypt’s pyramids. The temples have long baffled historians; it remains a mystery how the huge stones were quarried and taken to the site. Even today, its quiet, exposed atmosphere is almost spiritual.

In Victoria, the capital, is the archeology museum, which contains many finds from the temples, as well as a model of what they would have looked like when they were intact. The museum is situated in the town’s former Citadel, which is well preserved and entered by ancient gates that boast Roman inscriptions.

Energetic visitors should climb the steps to reach the upper fortifications to admire the fortifications and the city walls, behind which Gozitans had to retreat every night for safety until the 17th century. Walking along the narrow alleys of this part of the city is a treat in itself, looking at craft shops, taking in the views from St Michael Bastions, or visiting the 18th-century Cathedral with its magnificent trompe l’oeil painted ceiling.

The island has 7,000 years of history for groups to discover

**Bringing history to life**
Perfect accommodation to the island's bountiful land and seas from both land and sea.

Gozo Food & Drink

The taste of excitement

Adventures in Gozo include climbing and kayaking among the classic cliffs.
A warm welcome at venues culture and relaxation

Gozo may be small, but it packs a punch with its accommodation offer, pristine beaches and historic icons to top-flight accommodation.

Gozo has raised its game in terms of accommodation and now has a good range of hotels, as well as dozens of self-catering farmhouses and villas to suit all budgets. Here is a brief accommodation overview; a more comprehensive directory is available at www.visitsmalta.com.

Five-star

At the top end, the five-star Kempinski San Lawrenz on the west coast is surrounded by eight acres of gardens and is built in traditional Maltese hunting lodge style.

It has two pools and 122 fully air-conditioned rooms, including 48 suites, most of which have a private balcony or terrace.

A large, mezzanine style banquet hall and several other interconnected meeting rooms equipped with state-of-the-art technology makes it the ideal venue for a large conference or gala dinner.

A smaller luxury option, Ta' Cenc in Ramla, offers 83 rooms are ideal for hiking and walking. Sandy retreat: Ramla is the biggest beach on the island.

Gozo’s principal flea market. As a devoutly Catholic country, many of the island’s churches are stunning, tangible displays of devotion, which are well worth a visit (but ensure delegates are in appropriate attire so as not to offend sensibilities).

On the site of a place of worship since the 17th century, Ta’ Pinu Basilica, outside the village of Gharb, is an impressive neo-Gothic church and Gozo’s most popular place of pilgrimage. The island’s other basilicas, St George’s, in the capital Victoria (also known as Rabat), is covered in marble, with a bronze and gilded canopy over the altar.

To cool off with a swim, make for the Hondoq Ir-Rummien. The small bay lies opposite Comino and has a small sandy beach, which is popular with locals in summer. Or take a walk through a restored ancient footpath from the bay to the 17th-century tower at Mgarr Ir-Xini. The unobstructed views from Gaia Belvedere of Comino are breathtaking.

One of Gozo’s most impressive and unusual sights are the Qbajjar Salt Pans, which were carved out from the limestone rock to make collection pits for salt water to evaporate, leaving behind its mineral-rich salt. These date back to Roman times and are still in use.

End the day with a good meal and perhaps a drink and a dance at Le Grotto, on the hill that leads from Victoria to picturesque Xlendi Bay.
Make a date with history, for all groups and budgets.
Gozitian specials and fine convenience and style

A variety of styles, quality local produce and settings from wine cellars of the adventure, be it a brief ferry trip or a seaplane arrival

Thanks to a mix of culinary influences over the centuries, Gozitan cuisine caters for a variety of tastes. With restaurants and cafes offering local dishes and continental menus, visitors can also enjoy themed restaurants such as Chinese and Indian, as well as fine dining at luxury hotels, such as Il-Carnino at Ta' Xbiex.

The most famous restaurant in Il-Mun, set in a 17th-century farm house, was opened by chef patron Patrick Buttigieg has won food and wine awards galore since opening six years ago. The dining area is spacious and there are separate rooms for functions, catering for groups of 32–150 each. The menu is seasonal and the wine list is extensive. This is the perfect setting for a special occasion.

Another option is Ta’ Frenc, off Marsaxlokk Road. A charmingly decorated, converted 17th-century farmhouse, where guests enter via the restaurant’s herb garden. It also grows its own vegetables and olives and bakes its own bread. The local produce is cooked by executive chef Mario Schiavoni, who runs a staff of around 125 serving up Gozitan creations to restaurants and hotels in mainland Europe.

Flavours and rabbit ravioli are the house specialties. For real gourmets there is a Chefs’ Gourmet Menu. The wine cellar, which has a seating capacity for 32, holds more than 700 bottles.

Getting around

Car hire on Gozo is strongly recommended, as it is the best way to take in the island’s beautiful scenery and unspoilt, rustic charm. Not only that, but there is little traffic on the roads.

More importantly for UK visitors, all the island’s road signs are in English and Gozitan drive on the familiar left side of the road, making in-car building room to organise and implement. Cycling is another ideal way round transport and motor bikes and bikes may be hired from a variety of outlets.

Public transport to villages or beaches by bus. All routes are circular, starting at the Victoria Bus Terminus in the Victoria Bus Terminus in Independence Square.

There are also two stands at the Victoria Bus Terminus, as well as Mgarr Harbour. The island’s official taxi are white. There are plenty of companies offering guided tours and excursions, by traditional fishing boats, motor cruiser, private yacht charter, jeep or bus.

A scheduled ferry also goes to the smaller, sister island of Comino all year round (a 20-minute journey). Ferries depart regularly every day from Mgarr Harbour, operated by Comino’s only, family-owned four-star hotel.
Getting to Gozo

With no direct air link to the island, getting to Gozo from Malta is part of the adventure itself. The ferry service from Mgarr to Mgarr in Gozo operates throughout the day and is a popular means of transport for both locals and tourists. Kaikoura Lines operates a regular service, providing a comfortable and scenic journey.

Getting to Malta by Air

Malta International Airport is located in Attard, just a short distance away from the island of Malta. The airport is well connected with direct flights from various destinations around the world. The airport is equipped with modern facilities and offers a seamless travel experience.

Getting around Gozo

Gozo is well-connected by public transport, with frequent bus services that cover most parts of the island. The buses are a convenient and affordable way to explore Gozo. For those looking for more flexibility, there are also taxi services available.

Getting around Malta

Malta has an extensive network of public buses that cover the entire island. The buses are clean, efficient, and offer a comfortable ride. In addition, there are several private taxi services available, providing a convenient and personalized transport option.

Travel Tips

- Pack light and bring suitable clothing for the season as the weather can be unpredictable.
- Do not forget your sunscreen, as Malta can be sunny and hot.
- Explore the local cuisine and try the traditional Maltese dishes.
- Gozo is known for its beautiful beaches and crystal-clear waters, so don't miss the opportunity to go swimming or snorkeling.
- Take a day trip to other islands like Comino or St. Paul's Islands to experience the rich historical and cultural heritage of the Maltese Islands.

Plan your trip to Malta and Gozo with these tips in mind, ensuring a memorable and enjoyable experience.
INTRODUCING GOZO

best-kept island secrets
beaches, retreats, cuisine and culture are relatively undiscovered

GOZO, THE SECOND LARGEST AND MOST NORTHERLY OF THE ISLANDS IN THE MALTESE CHAIN, HAS A FASCINATING HISTORY AND A CHARACTER OF ITS OWN

A NEW service, scheduled to commence during May 2009, will offer flights from Malta International Airport to Gozo Marine by means of an amphibious Twin Otter aircraft seating up to 17 passengers. This aircraft has the capability of landing both on land and on sea. This innovative service will certainly enhance tourism quality to Gozo by giving the opportunity to all international Gozo-bound arriving passengers to hop onto the seaplane shortly after their Malta arrival at the airport itself. Besides getting to Gozo 'in style', this will save travelling time to every holiday-maker in arriving to their Gozo destination resort.

Harbour Air also offers private charter flights and the facility to tailor-make flights of one's choice within and around the Maltese Islands. Other destinations (Sicily and Tunisia) are also being explored for the near future.

For further information visit our website on www.harbourairmalta.com
Or contact sales department on info@harbourairmalta.com
Or you can call us on (00356) 2122 8382 / 2122 8298

For UK visitors, Gozo has the added advantage of English being the second official language and cars are driven on the left-hand side of the road.
Corporation Gifts

Arts and Crafts

Handmade crafts include lace and silver filigree jewelry.

Unveiling one of the Med's...
From Italian opera to village
Gozo’s calendar of cultural events features international opera stars to...
Festivals

Diary of Events
A glittering Mediterranean jewel

Welcome to C&IT's Mini Guide to Gozo, published in association with Malta Tourism Authority. This mini guide serves as an introduction to Gozo, one of the Mediterranean's largely undiscovered island gems. Discover the history of the island and its traditional hospitality and find out more about Gozo's bid to become an eco-island, plus its array of accommodation, from luxury five-star options to welcoming farmhouses.

While the island may be diminutive in size, it is packed with activities for both adrenaline junkies and those wishing to relax and be pampered. From opulent spas to pristine diving spots, the island offers a plethora of options including snorkelling by Comino, water-skiing and Jeep trails, or simply enjoying one of the colourful carnivals and feasts that take place across the year.

And with its fine cuisine, dramatic landscape and peaceful, welcoming ambience — it's no wonder that Gozo is the Castilian for joy.

Yasmin Arrigo, Editor
yasmin.arrigo@haymarket.com