The beautiful island of Gozo, in the heart of the Mediterranean, is the second largest of the islands in the Maltese archipelago and is an ideal location for an active break. Wander off the beaten track to explore the red sand and clear turquoise waters of its beaches. Take in the stunning views of cliffs and valleys by walking, climbing, cycling or kayaking around the island, or simply absorb the history and relaxed lifestyle of the quiet Mediterranean villages.
GOZO WALKING

For a walking holiday with a difference, look no further than Gozo. From the wildflower meadows in spring to the benign winters – the island attracts walkers all year round.

Although small in size, Gozo has a great coastline and varied terrain – making it perfect for exploring on foot. The island has only 30,000 inhabitants, so there’s plenty of opportunity to truly lose yourself by following one of many walking trails. Some routes follow the coast, offering the chance to take a dip in the azure waters on warm days. Other trails cross the island, passing idyllic rural villages and taking in 7,000 years of island history.

With a temperate Mediterranean climate of warm, dry summers and mild winters, Gozo is perfect for an out-of-season walking holiday. Over 300 days of sunshine a year make the island an ideal destination for walking, particularly during the spring and autumn months.

GHARB TO WIED IL-MIELAH COUNTRY WALK

This new circular walk around Gharb, one of the oldest villages in Gozo, takes in the exceptional natural beauty of the Wied Il-Mielah Valley, and the culture and history of the rural community. Gharb is a winner of an EDEN (European Destination of Excellence) award due to the restoration project that took place at Wied Il-Mielah, which translates as 'sally valley'. Previously a wasteland, it has been transformed into a sustainable tourist attraction full of wildlife for walkers and locals to enjoy.

The walk passes a famous site of pilgrimage on the island, the Ta Pinu Sanctuary, a stunning church with many mosaics and stained glass windows. The landscape here is shaped by the upper coastline limestone – seasonal flowers line the route, including cape sedge, caper and Mediterranean thyme. It follows the river as it flows through the valley into the sea, and continues along the coastline, passing a number of popular diving sites, including the Wied Il-Mielah window, a natural archway over the sea. The route then passes through beautiful Gozitan countryside before reaching the harbour, Ting Birubba. This area is rich in the culture and traditional crafts of Gozo, with pottery making and lace-making on view. There are also a number of museums to visit as the route circles back to the starting point.

Download the details of the full walk from: http://wiedilmielah.gharbnet.com/wiedilmielah2/map.html
Gozo: History and Culture

A diverse history dating back 7,000 years has informed the culture and architecture of the island of Gozo.

Tas-Salvatur, the Marsalforn Statue
High on the hill overlooking the town of Marsalforn stands a statue of Jesus Christ, a scaled-down version of the statue in Rio de Janeiro. A statue has stood on this spot since 1904, but this model has stood here since the 1970s, made of reinforced concrete so that it is more resistant to the elements. The statue looks out over Marsalforn Bay, a popular resort in summer with pebbly beaches and great spots for diving and swimming.

Ggantija Temples
History buffs will be excited to learn that Gozo is home to the world’s oldest free-standing structure. The megalithic stone temples of Ggantija date back to 3,600 BC – predating the pyramids of Ancient Egypt by 1,000 years. They are a UNESCO World Heritage Site and offer a glimpse into the lives of a mysteriously complex society that lived on the island.

Citadel
Victoria, in the centre of the island, is considered the capital of Gozo. A medieval fortress town, known as the Citadel, towers over the city. It’s well worth the climb up to the highest point in the city for the sweeping countryside views of Gozo, and to soak in the history of its cathedral and many museums.

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Cultural events
There are many beautiful Baroque churches whose towers spring up from the villages of Gozo, worth stopping to take a look at while walking the island. From festivals and feasts throughout the year to theatres, bars and restaurants, Gozo has a thriving cultural scene – perfect for winding down after a day’s activity.

Above: These mysterious stone structures are megalithic temples. Right: Relax and absorb the fantastic view of Gozo's Xewkija Dome.
A simple way of life far from the hustle and bustle makes Gozo the perfect holiday hideaway

The island of Gozo, which means ‘joy’ in Castilian, is a peaceful island with a slower pace of life – perfect for getting away from it all. Five kilometres north of Malta, the island has its own distinct way of life, rooted in fishing, farming and simple rural pleasures. The charm and tranquillity of Gozo lies in the rustic villages, where time seems to stand still. The villagers themselves treasure this calm and quiet lifestyle. For the authentic Gozitan experience, many visitors choose to stay in one of the island's traditional farmhouses that are hundreds of years old, now updated to feature all the mod cons, sometimes including a swimming pool.

With this relaxed Mediterranean lifestyle on offer next to the exciting activities available on Gozo, it’s little wonder that actors, artists and other celebrities have snapped up a quiet corner of this island paradise.

TASTE GOZO

After an active day, there’s nothing better than sitting down to home-grown, mouth-watering traditional Gozitan dishes

The food of Gozo is rich and bursting with Mediterranean flavours. Food is grown on the island and still processed in a traditional way, which visitors to some farms can take part in. Family recipes that have been passed down for generations are now back in fashion, using fresh natural produce such as sun-dried tomatoes, organic olive oil, herbal liqueurs, jams, cheeses and wines. Local chefs and restaurants prepare delicious dishes with these ingredients, competing with one another to combine tastes to make a very distinctive modern Gozitan cuisine.
FEEL FREE ON TWO WHEELS — GOZO'S SUNNY MEDITERRANEAN CLIMATE IS IDEAL FOR ACTIVE SPORTS SUCH AS CYCLING

GOZO CYCLING

The island has a variety of attractive cycling routes that will appeal to all ages

With roads largely empty of traffic and few steep hills, Gozo is a great destination for cyclists of all ages and abilities. Routes follow the island's roads or simple shepherd's trails across the countryside, passing small, sleepy villages. The sea is never far away, so stopping for a cooling dip or a picnic on the beach is easy. Bikes and helmets can be hired on the island.

WHAT'S NEW

As well as Wied il-Mielah and new coastal walking routes, Gozo is completing a restoration project of its famous Ggantija temples. The island has won many awards including a quality coast award, three European Destinations of Excellence (EDEN) and is recognised for having some of the best bathing waters in the EU.

From the glint of the sun on the water to the sea breeze running through your hair, there’s no more refreshing way to experience the island than by kayak.

GOZO KAYAKING

Take to the waters in a kayak and see the island from a completely different perspective

Unspoiled beaches, spectacular coves and crystal clear waters, teamed with the island’s great weather, make Gozo a kayaking hotspot. There are plenty of beautiful spots around the island’s coastline, perfect for seasoned paddlers or those trying it out for the first time. The hidden coves and gullies once used by pirates and smugglers can be explored, as can the dramatic cliffs and ledges — some of which are accessible only by sea. There is a sheltered beach on the leeward side of the island, should the winds become too strong.
GOZO DIVING

Deep, clear waters that house natural phenomena and shipwrecks, make Gozo a unique location for divers, snorkellers and scuba-divers.

The beautiful blue waters around Gozo have excellent visibility all year round - sometimes up to 40 metres - making it a perfect place to learn or practice diving.

Gozo can proudly offer some of the best diving sites in the entire Mediterranean. There are dive spots suitable for all levels of experience, from beginners to practiced divers looking for a new challenge. The Blue Hole in Dwejra is a natural underwater archway that leads to the open sea beyond, and there are also four specially sunk wrecks only a 20-minute boat ride away. Sites are easy to access from beaches around the island, and with sea temperatures never dropping below 13 degrees Celsius, diving off Gozo is possible practically all year round.

TOTA LLY UN WIND

Gozo can offer the ultimate in home comfort, rest and relaxation, with a stay in a 400 year-old restored farmhouse or rustic villa. Offering privacy and comfort, and sometimes a swimming pool, many of these properties are located in the heart of the villages, allowing visitors to be immersed in the real character and gentle rhythm of the island.

If you've always fancied climbing up a large rock face, Gozo's weather and landscape are a great combination for embracing this physical challenge.

GOZO CLIMBING, BOULDERING AND ABSEILING

Gozo is growing in popularity as a climbing destination.

Gozo's surprisingly diverse terrain, from cliffs to deep inland valleys, is popular with rock climbers, abseilers and boulderers. Over 60 bolted routes have been developed by the Gozo Climbing Association and more sea cliff routes for summer sports climbing are planned, catering for different abilities and levels of experience. Originally started by the British Army in the 60s and 70s, climbing on Gozo now draws many visitors in its own right.

Get away from it all in the privacy and comfort of a restored farmhouse.

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ECO-Gozo

The island of Gozo has a sustainable vision for the future, firmly rooted in education and development.

Gozo is dedicated to becoming an eco-friendly holiday destination. The government of Malta is aiming to make the island fully sustainable by 2020, through education, economic development and social progress. By protecting the island’s identity, environment and resources, Eco-Gozo hopes to welcome visitors to the island for generations to come.

THE GOVERNMENT OF MALTA IS AIMING TO MAKE THE ISLAND FULLY SUSTAINABLE BY 2020

ENVIRONMENTALLY AWARE

Eco-Gozo wants to protect the island’s environment and share its resources with all residents. Through sustainable development, the important economic framework of agriculture and tourism is carefully managed. For example, farmers are shown how to get the best from their land through waste disposal and land management, while continuing with traditional techniques used on the island for hundreds of years. The government is also investing in renewable energy, such as solar panels and wind farms, and educating residents on the benefits of saving water, recycling and taking public transport.

With the island’s long history of self-sufficiency and direct relationship with the land, Gozo already has the grounding for a green lifestyle – and with more visitors flocking to experience an unspoilt corner of the Mediterranean, it will be able to fully embrace its eco vision.

GETTING TO GOZO

FLIGHTS & FERRY

Gozo, part of the Maltese archipelago, is an easy destination to reach. Malta lies in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea, 93 kilometres south of Sicily. Flying to Malta from the UK takes only three hours, and then it’s simply a short ferry hop over to Gozo.

Malta International Airport has good connections to most UK airports and airlines. The car and passenger ferry to Gozo is a 25 minute journey that runs regularly back and forth, making Gozo an ideal destination for short breaks and weekends away.

WHERE TO STAY

Gozo is a great island getaway with a range of accommodation to suit all tastes. From being pampered in luxury hotels to contributing to a working farm, Gozo can offer plenty of different ways to get away from it all. There are three, four and five star hotels, along with villas and self-catering options. But for an authentic experience, restored farmhouses are a perfect blend of traditional Gozitan life, comfort and privacy. Many of them offer beautiful country views, and some feature a swimming pool.
GOZO 10 OF THE BEST

There's so much to do on Gozo, it's hard to whittle it down. So here are ten of the best, just to remind you of the culture, history and activities that Gozo has to offer...

EXPERIENCE THE CITADELLA

EXPLORE COMINO

TASTE THE LOCAL CUISINE

VISIT THE GGANTIJJA TEMPLES

TRY SCUBA DIVING

DISCOVER DWEJRA AND THE AZURE WINDOW

SEE THE TAS-SALVATUR STATUE, MARSALFORN

RELAX ON RAMLA BAY

GOZO WALKING

For more information on Gozo contact the Malta Tourism Authority
T: (0)20 8877 6990 | E: office.uk@visitmalta.com
www.facebook.com/visitmalta | @VisitMaltaUK