Gozo

Discover Gozo in 100 Moments of Happiness
Happiness is an island called Gozo

Gozo, meaning “joy” in Castilian, is the second largest island of the Maltese archipelago, with approximately 30,000 inhabitants. At 67km², Gozo is small enough for a day-trip but a longer stay will give you time to uncover a myriad of hidden gems.

This small island is a treasure trove of wonders. Round every corner is another jaw-dropping site, another church to visit, a temple to photograph, another fort to gape at, down that valley is another secluded bay to discover and so much more to explore.

A mere 5km stretch of sea separates Malta from its sister island but the two could not be more different. More rural and serene, Gozo’s culture and way of life are rooted in tradition, yet open to the present. Gozo is a haven of tranquillity where you can truly rest, relax and recharge.

Walk, climb, dive, swim, sail, explore, bike, sunbathe, eat, drink, or simply be, but above all experience the joy of Gozo.
1. **Arrival**

A 25 minute ferry crossing transports you from Cirkewwa in the north of Malta, past tiny Comino, to an island where myth, megalithic temples and medieval villages sit in a dramatically rugged landscape dotted with baroque churches and ancient stone farmhouses, where the humdrum of the daily grind slows down to the lazy sound of crickets. Ferries depart daily every 45 minutes. For schedule details go to: www.gozochannel.com

2. **Gozo, the Ten Minute Island**

All roads lead to Victoria, the capital in the centre of the island. At just 14 km in length and 7 km wide, Gozo is easily accessible and no village or tourist attraction is more than a 10 minute drive away. The island is perfect for a day trip, taking in most of the main attractions. However, a longer stay offers you the opportunity to discover more of Gozo’s many hidden gems.

3. **Arriva**

There are fifteen different bus routes running at hourly intervals and operated by the public transport company Arriva. The network extends all over the island and the main bus terminus is in the capital Victoria. Buses also run on weekends and public holidays. Further information at www.arriva.com.mt/gozo-routes

4. **The journey is the destination**

Hop on an open-topped double-decker bus at Mgarr harbour for a sightseeing tour taking in all the main attractions on the island. Plug into the on-board multi-lingual audio guide, sit back and enjoy the ride through picturesque villages dominated by imposing churches, past megalithic temples and the historic citadel, onwards through winding country lanes to a dramatic rocky coastline. The service departs Mgarr every 45 minutes. Further information at www.visitmalta.com/en/tour-buses
5.

$6^\circ 10' 36'' \text{ N}$

$8^\circ 1' 46'' \text{ E}$
6. Cafe’ culture, Mediterranean style
Take a leisurely stroll around “It-Tokk”, the buzzing heart of the capital Victoria (Rabat, in Maltese). Take time to browse around the little shops in the narrow lanes that snake off the square then pick the best seat at a cafe’ on the piazza and join the locals in their favourite pastime: people watching.

7. Carpets of colour in spring
After a scorching hot summer, the countryside is reborn with a sea of colourful flowers and scented wild herbs: a veritable open air flower display, a full range of colours punctuated by lush green that lasts from October to May.

8. “One of my favourite bays is Ghajn Barrani in the North of the island. It can only be reached on foot. The deep blue sea, the grey cliffs, the red rocks above and the green hills surrounding the bay all together create a magical palette of colours.”
John Michael Mizzi, Software Developer

9. A Gozitan journey through time: a centuries old “graffiti” in Victoria’s citadel

10. A taste of the sea
The historic Xwejni Salt pans on the northernmost shore of Gozo were hewn out of the rocks by the Romans and are still in use today. They formed part of the island’s first industry when salt was used as a bartering currency for goods not available locally. Harvested between May and September, Gozitan sea salt is particularly soft, easily soluble and rich in magnesium.
www.visitmalta.com/en/info/saltpans

11. Sunset on the Holy Hill
Cheesy as it may sound, sunsets don’t get any more romantic or breathtaking than this. Follow the path leading uphill opposite the church of Ta’ Pinu near Gharb to a small amphitheatre for a picture postcard perfect view. As the last rays of the sun start to sink in the Mediterranean sea, the island’s limestone shines bright gold, a stillness reigns, a moment of quiet reflection.

12. “I always feel the weight lifting off my shoulders as Mgarr comes into view from the ferry and I know I’m nearly back to where I’m happiest. It’s a bit like Ireland, but without the rush”.
Pete Bullen, Local diver & photographer

13. Life’s a beach
Gozo’s rugged coastline hides numerous fjord-like bays and you are never far from an idyllic bathing spot. Even in the peak of summer you could still find a secluded little beach where you can chill out in peace.
www.visitmalta.com/en/gozo-places
www.visitgozo.com
15. 
**Mgarr ix-Xini bay**
Shhh! Don’t tell anyone, but one of Gozo’s quietest and most picturesque bays is tucked away on the island’s south coast. Mgarr ix-Xini bay is reputed to be one of the harbours used by the Knights’ galleys. The small pebbly beach is at the end of a deep and beautiful valley sheltered from the prevailing Northwestern winds. Extremely peaceful, the bay is also a popular dive site, especially for night dives.

www.visitgozo.com

16. 
**Ir-Ramla l-Ħamra**
Two words you need to learn for the perfect beach holiday on Gozo: Ramla l-Ħamra. A bit of a tongue twister but there’s no joking about this little gem with its trademark golden red sand (“ramla” means sand, “hamra” means red). Undoubtedly the most popular beach on the island, the largest sandy bay on Gozo remains blissfully quiet and unspoilt even in summer.

www.visitmalta.com/en/info/ramlabay

17. 
**Window to the Sea**
One of the most iconic images of Gozo, the Azure Window at Dwejra on Gozo’s West coast is perhaps the most spectacular natural landmark on the Maltese Islands. Get a close up on board a fisherman’s luzzu from the Inland Sea nearby.

www.visitmalta.com/en/info/azurewindow

18. 
**Wied il-Mielah, Azure Window’s little-known sister**
Wied il-Mielah, outside the village of Gharb, is one the most impressive valleys on Gozo. Walk through lush landscape full of history and legends, down a small valley until you reach a “fjord” leading on to a rock arch over the sea, a second Azure Window. Only reachable on foot, this “window” is not as famous as the other one a few kilometres further West but it is nonetheless just as breathtaking. On a clear day, you might be able to see the coast of Sicily on the horizon.

www.greatwalksmalta.com
19. Panoramic views from the Citadel
Sitting atop a hill above the capital Victoria, the Citadel dominates Gozo’s skyline like a crown. It’s a steep climb up to the ancient fortifications but the 360° views from the ramparts make it well worth the effort. Take in sweeping vistas of hills and valleys stretching down to the sea and the Italian coast in the far distance.
www.visitmalta.com/en/info/citadel
www.gozo360.com.mt

20. Sannat
Take an early morning walk from the quiet village of Sannat to the majestic cliffs of Ta’ Ċenċ rising some 130 metres above sea level. Standing atop this peninsula you will enjoy magnificent views of all the three main islands of the Maltese archipelago.
www.barbarossa-excursions.com
www.gozopridetours.com

22. Sensual pleasures: the smell of a freshly cut Gozitan orange.

23. It can hardly get any more romantic than this: sailing to Gozo.
www.visitgozo.com

24. Breakfast in the courtyard of Ta’ Ċenċ hotel
Need some R&R? Check-in at the five-star Ta’ Ċenċ, an oasis of peace and tranquillity, a veritable hideaway. There’s no more indulgent way to start the day than a relaxing breakfast in the hotel’s courtyard in the shade of a 400 year old carob tree. Set over 150 hectares of pristine countryside in a remote area of outstanding natural beauty, the hotel features a number of original stone bungalows, several swimming pools, a wellness centre and a private beach.
www.tacenchotel.com

25. Ayurveda at the Kempinski
Yield to the healing touch of ancient Ayurveda. No need to fly to India or Sri Lanka for the ultimate in spa therapy treatments. Gozo’s five-star Kempinski San Lawrenz Hotel features the largest authentic Ayurvedic centre in Europe. The Softouch Ayurveda experience includes free Skype sessions before you travel.
www.kempinski.com/gozo

21. “I love Gozo and I miss the country walks to St. Dimitri Chapel, Dbiegi, Ghammar and Gordan Hills, as well as the high cliffs of the North West of Gozo.”
Joseph Galea, Heart Surgeon

26. “The sheer volume and scale of what’s on offer in Gozo’s cultural scene, never fails to impress and inspire me.”
Jo Caruana- writer
28. **Sailing around Gozo**

There is only one way to experience the full beauty of Gozo’s awe inspiring coastline - by taking to the water. Let Captain Bob do all the hard work while you sunbathe on board your private chartered yacht. Drop anchor in a secluded bay, dive in for a refreshing swim while fresh fish and sausages sizzle on the BBQ. Whether it is a full day on board or just a short trip on a traditional fisherman’s luzzu, sailing around the island is a must.

www.sailgozo.com

29. **Comino**

The tiny island is situated halfway between Malta and Gozo and is practically uninhabited. It has one hotel, one small chapel, three full-time residents and one policeman. However, divers, snorkelers, ramblers and sun worshippers flock to this little paradise to gaze in wonder at its most famous asset: the glorious Blue Lagoon.

www.visitmalta.com/en/island-of-comino

30. **“When I get on the ferry to Gozo I know I am home. I can feel the stress lifting off me as a slower and friendly atmosphere awaits me.”**

_H. Sammut, Artist_

31. **“The underwater world of Gozo offers many spectacular caves, caverns and tunnels which you can explore on a dive. The experience of diving through a dark tunnel and then emerging out into the sunlit blue waters outside is like being born again.”**

_Tanja Möller, Calypso Diving in Gozo_
32. “I have been sea kayaking for three years now and I still discover new rock formations and caves.”

Xavier Hancock

33. San Blas Bay

Imagine a beach so quiet, you could almost consider it your very own for the day. Replace your flip flops with hiking boots and walk down the steep path that winds down to the picturesque bay of San Blas on Gozo’s Northeastern coast. Your efforts will be well rewarded. The golden red sand and crystal clear water is all yours. Another of Gozo’s hidden gems.

www.visitgozo.com

34. Diving at the “Blue Hole”

Gozo is well known for having some of the best dive sites in the Mediterranean and the Blue Hole opposite the Azure Window is one of the most famous. Caves, drop offs, boulder slopes and a chimney make this a fantastic dive. The crystal clear and generally calm waters around Gozo are ideal for beginners yet offer a wealth of underwater caverns, reefs, tunnels and wrecks for the expert diver to explore.

www.visitmalta.com/en/info/theblueholethechimney

35. “Happiness? To see what a great time children have when they go diving.”

Thomas Zurawski, Nautic Team

36. “The infinite stillness, the crystal clear water and the blue light curtains with a shoal of fish cutting across them: in Gozo diving becomes a synthesis of the arts.”

Jürgen Strauß, Extradivers Gozo
38. Sit in the shade of a tree outside a cafe on Pjazza San Frangisk in Victoria and enjoy some coffee and pastizzi (Gozitan pea/cheese cakes).

39. “For me Gozo’s appeal is year round. The beaches, swimming and festas in summer are how tourists usually experience the island; but it’s just as good when walking in fields of wild flowers in spring, trying the new olive oil and wine in autumn or partying at carnival in winter.”

Rachel Robinson
www.pricklypeargozo.com

40. Picnic Gozitan style
Pack a picnic of crusty Gozitan bread, locally known as hobza, fresh goats cheeselets or gbejniet, tomatoes, olives and of course some wine and enjoy your little feast al fresco. The only problem will be choosing your favourite picnic spot: coast or countryside? Valley or hillside? Location, location, location.

41. Wine tasting at Tal-Massar
Vineyards are making a welcome comeback to the Maltese Islands, with outstanding yields. Raise a glass, or two, at Tal-Massar, a family-run boutique winery on the outskirts of the medieval village of Gharb. Take a tour of the estate with Anthony, the owner. He will explain the special characteristics of Gozitan viticulture as you taste four different local wines, accompanied by some tasty Gozitan snacks. A gourmet evening.
www.massarwinery.com

42. “Why do our oranges, tomatoes and potatoes taste so good? Plenty of sunshine, the clay in the soil and the sea spray blown all over the island by the wind all give our fruit and vegetables their intense flavour.”

Maryanne Portanier

43. “Our olive oil has got the lowest degree of acidity in the world and therefore is incomparably mild.”

Sharon Dimech, Chef

44. “Many years ago I found some handwritten cake recipes among my grandmother’s papers by a relative of ours, Sister Serafina. She was born in 1892 and had entered the convent when she was quite young. She regularly treated us to her baked sweet delights. When we were children, we used to love her cakes. Today, the ‘Torta ta’ Sor Serafina’ is my favourite Savina product.”

John Magro, Owner and Chairman of Savina (Gozitan Food Specialities)
www.savina.com.mt
45. Go Green in Gozo
Pick up some fresh organic local produce and other fair-trade international brands from “Organika” in Victoria. The small shop supplies some of the best Gozitan organic products such as jams, honey, olive oil and natural sea salt. It’s ideal for some souvenir shopping, with a conscience. Choose from a wide selection of Maltese crafts and international fair-trade accessories, jewellery, cosmetics, and other gift ideas, all organic of course.
www.organika.com.mt

46. Gozitan Pizza with Potatoes
Tuck in to a traditional, oven-baked, crispy “ftira” topped with potatoes, tomatoes, cheese, olives and capers for a decadent lunch on-the-go. Add Maltese sausage, tuna or anchovies for a more filling ftira. A hearty meal on a budget. Join the queue at Maxokk or Mekren Bakery in Nadur, or follow your nose to David’s Bakery in Zebbug.
www.visitgozo.com

47. “Whenever I land in Gozo, I breathe a deep sigh as all the cares of the rest of the world slip away. You can’t help but relax in Gozo. The sun shines (almost always), the historic limestone buildings glow and the sea sparkles. There is delicious Mediterranean food and everyone has time for you.”
Juliet Rix, Writer

48. A glass of Gozitan red wine: 300 days of sunshine in a bottle.

49. Imqaret
The date-, fig, and honey-cakes which are hand made in the bakeries and delivered fresh to the coffee shops.

50. Coffee break
Take a seat at one of the cafes in the large piazza in front of the Church of Maria Bambina in Xaghra. While you sip your cappuccino and idly watch the world go by, notice the discrepancy between the two clocks on the church tower. In keeping with tradition, one clock always shows the wrong time - a clever trick to keep the devil away from Mass.

51. The taste of a Gozitan tomato: a heady aroma and that juicy, sweet, succulent taste of sunshine. Exceptional.

52. Hands on holidays at Ta’ Mena Estate
Don’t just sit there. Roll up your sleeves and get stuck in at Ta’ Mena agritourism estate harvesting oranges, grapes or olives. Join a cooking class and learn to prepare some local dishes using Gozitan produce such as capers, olive oil, thyme honey, sun dried tomatoes and goat cheese (gbejniet). Or simply take a stroll around the estate and sip their own wines. An all-round Gozitan gourmet experience: from the field, to the kitchen to the dining table.
www.tamena-gozo.com

53. Nothing beats the unique, juicy fragrance of a prickly pear. Growing wild in rubble walls all over the Maltese and Gozitan countryside, the prickly pear was first used by the Knights as a moisturiser. Peeled with a pair of thick gloves, the soft dark red or yellow fruit is harvested in summer. Delicious served with ice cream. Take some home with you in the form of prickly pear liqueur.
Zalza Pikkanti
Caper sauce for fried or grilled fish

**Ingredients:**
- 2 tsps olive oil
- 6 peeled tomatoes (or canned tomatoes)
- 3 cloves of garlic
- 4 - 5 black olives (pitted)
- 2 tsps capers
- A dash of good red wine vinegar
- 1/2 tsp sugar
- salt and freshly ground pepper

**Method:**
Dice the tomatoes and finely slice the olives. Fry the whole garlic cloves in oil, add the chopped tomatoes and the sugar and let it boil down a little. Stir in the olives, capers and red wine vinegar. Season to taste with salt and pepper and simmer gently for about 10 minutes.

Serve with fried or grilled fish.
55. **Happiness on a plate**
Do as the locals do and enjoy a scrumptious pizza washed down by a bottle of local Cisk beer in Zebbug, with a view of the lighthouse, the hills and the sea. Good food, great company, good times.

56. **“Warm, freshly baked, crusty bread, mouthwatering fresh gbejna, drizzled with pure bees honey will tingle your taste buds.”**
George Borg, chef

57. **Lampuki and more**
If you are a seafood lover, this is the place for you. Enjoy the freshest “catch of the day” and if you visit Gozo in early autumn, make sure you taste Lampuki and fresh fish in one of the many restaurants on the island.
www.visitgozo.com
www.restaurantsmalta.com

58. **A gourmand’s paradise**
This is no time to diet. Food features heavily in Gozitans’ social life and comes in generous portions and rich flavours. It is a reflection of local culture and produce with time-honoured recipes like rabbit fried in red wine sauce, suckling pig, bragioli (beef olives), roast lamb and Gozitan pizza. All washed down with homemade red wine.
www.visitgozo.com

59. **If all this peace and tranquillity gets too much, Gozo does have a buzzing nightlife which reflects the locals’ natural exuberance and sense of hospitality. Xlendi and Marsalforn have a great selection of bars where, in summer, the nightlife spills out onto the promenade. Qala and Xaghra are the place to be on a Friday night.**

60. **Gozitan “ravjul”**
Another great local dish: pasta pockets filled with gbejniet goats cheese and served with a fruity tomato sauce. The best meal on the island, should be enjoyed al fresco on a balmy evening with some Gozitan red wine.

61. **Antipasti, the Gozitan way**
Olives, fresh and marinated Gozitan goats cheese, onions, capers, fresh and sundried tomatoes, all drizzled with local mild olive oil and served with crusty local bread. A delicious start to any meal or simply a tasty accompaniment to evening drinks with friends.

62. **Sleep in a bakery**
Choosing where to stay is not just about the accommodation but more about the experience. If you prefer something eclectic, book an old bakery. While the oven may not be in commercial use anymore, you can still enjoy all the bakery’s rustic charm and centuries old character with luxurious mod cons.
www.visitmalta.com/en/where-to-stay
www.visitgozo.com

63. **“Tuna, barracuda, lampuki or swordfish are the fish we catch during the day on our fishing trip.”**
Louis Attard
www.xlendicruises.com

62. **This old stone oven stopped baking bread in the 1980s but still offers a warm welcome to guests at this unique property.**
64. As the sun sets and casts longer shadows, I read a few more pages of my book while paddling in the swimming pool.

65. Gozo for all seasons
As the first autumn showers drench the parched earth after a scorching summer, the countryside blossoms with wild flowers and lush greenery. While sun-worshippers prefer sizzling June to September, the rest of the year Gozo unfolds its multi-faceted beauty inviting walkers go exploring in pleasantly mild weather.

www.visitmalta.com/gozo
www.visitgozo.com

66. “My children and I only found true happiness when we moved back to Gozo from Australia.”
Philip Spiteri, restaurant owner

67. Bed and Breakfast with a local family
Join the family at a local guest house. Tuck in to a freshly prepared breakfast while the landlady fills you in with local gossip. A true taste of Gozitan life.
www.visitmalta.com/en/guesthouses
68.

**Village life**

There is a popular local song that extolls Gozo as a “diamond in the middle of the Mediterranean”. And, once you have visited this hidden gem, it’s easy to see why. Passengers on the ferry to Gozo often say they feel all their stress and worries ease away as they approach the shore and prepare to live life at a slower, more relaxed pace, on the island where time stood still.

With 7,000 years of history, myths and legends abound on Gozo. The mythical island of Calypso where Ulysses was held a “prisoner of love” for seven years, is home to the oldest free-standing temples in the world, stunning baroque churches, a medieval Citadel and a majestic coastline surrounded by crystalline waters perfect for diving. Despite its famous relaxed attitude, Gozo has its own buzzing nightlife, busy cultural calendar and some unique gastronomic treats. Small wonder that this quaint corner of green is now home to several international celebrities who have fallen in love with its secret hideouts tucked away in unassuming Gozitan villages.

In fact, the real beauty of Gozo lies in its villages. Peaceful and tranquil, they offer a wonderful respite from the humdrum of modern city life. Gozitan villages reflect the Gozitan way of life, simultaneously rural and refined. Built around superbly proportioned squares which serve as the fulcrum of life, the villages are characterised by impressively creative architecture, carved balconies against golden limestone facades embellished with stone balustrades, roof gardens and climbing bougainvilleas. Each village square is dominated by the parish church, invariably out of proportion to the size of the village but undoubtedly a precious treasure in the eyes and hearts of the community. Holidaying in a local self-catering farmhouse or villa is the best way to experience first hand Gozo’s inimitable village lifestyle and soak up some Gozitan hospitality.

69.

**Our little farmhouse**

Gozo’s self-catering farmhouses are awash with local character and charm. Centuries old properties, lovingly restored and furnished with all the mod cons you may wish for, they are packed with authentic features and style. Chill out by the pool or cook dinner on the BBQ. A great way to immerse yourself in local village life.

www.visitmalta.com/en/farmhouses
www.visitgozo.com

70.

“Gozo is the perfect holiday destination, easy to access and filled with unique historical and archaeological sites. The pleasure of the Island is not only the incredible scenery but also the food and the people on the Island. For the gastronomical tourist it is the best place to experience true Maltese food in all its diversity. The tastes and flavours of Gozitan food makes the whole experience a delight and lasts with you long after your journey has concluded. It is a must holiday destination!”

*Mark Avellino, Photographer*

71.

“During the holidays we used to go to Malta or further away. For some time now I prefer spending my holidays in Gozo together with my family in a farmhouse. It is just the most relaxing way to spend time together.”

*Paul Scicluna*

72.

“It’s a great life here. I hope it remains the well-kept secret that we know it to be.”

*Charles Coyne, British writer living on Gozo*
73. “I have truly seen many places in the world but Gozo’s rocky coast, with its amazing formations and incredible colours is, and always will be, a magical place for me.”
Stevie Haston, British All-round Climber

74. Adrenalin Junkies
Scale new heights and get to grips with Gozo’s impressive cliffs and deep inland valleys. Gozo is an undiscovered paradise for rock climbers. Enjoy the thrills of deep sea soloing in summer and the exhilaration of exploring new rock climbing lines in mild winter weather. Gozo also offers numerous boulder problems.

75. Discover Gozo by electric bike
Keep your carbon footprint to a minimum by renting an electric bike to cycle around the island. Perfect for exploring those narrow country lanes and little village streets off the beaten track. And it makes light work of those hills. No sweat.
www.ecobikesgozo.webs.com

76. Explore Gozo on horseback
Horse-drawn carriages and carts were the order of the day in the not too distant past. Park your rented car and experience public transport of yesteryear by exploring Gozo on horseback.
www.visitgozo.com

77. Walking tour from Mgarr to Qala
Gozo is best explored on foot, especially in the mild wintry months between October and May. One of the most impressive hikes is from the harbour town of Mgarr heading East along the coast towards Qala with views across the Gozo Channel of the islands of Comino and Malta. Along the route you can stop for a picnic and a refreshing swim in the turquoise waters of Hondoq ir-Rummien bay. The walk continues inland through terraced fields and meadows to the village of Qala and loops back to Mgarr.
www.visitmalta.com/gozo

78. Kayaking
Explore the island’s fascinating coastline on a sea kayaking tour taking in hidden caves, natural sea arches and bays which can only be reached from the sea. Take a break from paddling and enjoy a spot of snorkelling before stopping for a picnic lunch on a rock or beach. A fun way to keep fit on holiday.
www.gozoadventures.com

79. Abseiling
New to climbing but want to test your limits? Try abseiling. Overcome your fears and conquer that cliff face. Feel that exhilarating rush of unbridled joy as you whizz down the steep cliffs into the valley of Mgarr ix-Xini. The sense of achievement and feeling of pride lingers on. You did it.
80. 
**Play Boċċi**
The genteel game of Boċċi is as popular in Gozo as boules is ubiquitous in France. Practically every village has its Boċċi Club, a small square with a low stone fence around it where the men gather to play their traditional game and socialise.

81. 
**Mountain biking to the Salt Pans**
While the highest point on the island is no more than 450 metres above sea level, Gozo’s hills are still challenging enough to stimulate cyclists of all levels. One of the most pleasant cycling routes starts at the church of Ta’ Pinu in Gharb. With the sea always in sight, the track continues along small bumpy roads until finally reaching the centuries old Salt Pans at Xwejni on Gozo’s north coast. Pedal on to the coastal resort town of Marsalforn for a well-earned cool beer.

82. 
**Yoga with Michelle Bartolo**
Pack your yoga mat and book a holiday for the body, soul and mind. Join yoga teacher Michelle Bartolo on a week-long retreat in a spacious farmhouse with a swimming pool where she will guide you in daily three-hour long yoga sessions. The morning class is an energising, heat-building session while the evening class includes 30 minutes guided meditation. Namaste.

83. 
**“Gozo is a unique destination for the artful traveler. The historical footprint is huge. It has open spaces, magical seascapes and some of the oldest free standing man-made structures in the world. The calm energy is intoxicating you will love it. Just come and be creative.”**

Martin Bonnici

84. 
**“Whenever friends intend to stay on Malta and visit Gozo, I say ‘No, visit Malta and stay on Gozo’ , especially in spring when the wild flowers bloom so spectacularly. As a painter I tutor friends at locations all over Gozo, enjoying the tranquility and simple charm of Lunzjata valley, Hondoq and its view of distant Malta, the straits and the ‘blue lagoon’, the sea cliff spectacle of Dwejra, the fishing Harbour at Marsalforn. We also savour the local cuisine of a welcoming family-run hotel in Xlendi, where they know that bigilla (broad bean pate), local hard cheese and quite delicious strawberries are high on the menu for me. Follow all that with tutorials on the hotel terrace as the sun sets in the sea, a glass of local wine at my elbow. Well, it doesn’t get any better than that. Mere ‘happiness’ gives way to a deeper contentment.”**

Roger R. Jones, Painter & Gozo Fan

85. 
**“I find the slow pace of life on Gozo, its serenity and tranquillity can provide me with all the inspiration I need to create, design and carve Gozitan limestone. The rounded hilltops and the baroque church domes inspire me to transform my ideas into sculptures.”**

Joe Xuereb, stone sculptor and artist

86. 
**Mill wheels are clacking ...**
And not only in Holland. The Knights of St John built as many as 12 windmills in Gozo in the 18th century. The Ta’ Kola Windmill in Xaghra, built in 1725, is the last working mill on the island. It also houses a small museum providing a glimpse into domestic life of times gone by.
87. **“I love Gozo. It is my Island home. I know it like the back of my hand. I adore walking around the island and know the people here very well.”**

*Anton Grech*

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88. **Ulysses in Gozo**

Legend has it that Gozo is the setting for Homer’s Odyssey in which Ulysses is held a “prisoner of love” for seven years by the nymph Calypso in a cave overlooking the golden red sands of Ramla Bay. Whether or not Gozo is truly Homer’s Ogygia is debatable but the mythical beauty of the view from Calypso’s Cave is all true. While the cave is not accessible anymore, you can still enjoy the vista that bewitched Ulysses from a nearby platform.

www.visitmalta.com/en/info/calypsoscave

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89. **Ta’ Pinu**

The Basilica of Ta’ Pinu outside the village of Gharb is the holiest and most revered shrine for local Catholics and a place of pilgrimage. It is believed that a local woman heard the voice of the Virgin Mary in 1883 in a chapel. Today, many flock to the site to pray for the Virgin Mary’s intervention for their (mostly medical) problems. One of the halls within the church building is covered with a poignant display of ex-voto offerings from grateful believers whose prayers had been answered.

www.tapinu.org

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90. **Ġgantija Temple, Xagħra**

The oldest free-standing structures in the world are tucked away in the historic village of Xagħra. Legend has it that the giantess Sansuna carried the huge stones on her head all the way from Ta’ Cenc on the south coast of Gozo and allegedly built the two temples in just one night, holding a baby in her other arm. Whatever the truth, this architectural masterpiece remains an incredible feat of engineering considering it was constructed in 3600BC, before the wheel was introduced on Gozo. The Ggantija temple complex, now a UNESCO World Heritage Site, was possibly the site of a fertility cult and remains today a place of special aura.

www.visitmalta.com/en/info/ggantijatemples
www.heritagemalta.org

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91. **Rhythm is it**

“All our team is from Gozo. If we weren’t living on a small island, where everything is close by, we couldn’t realise our modern dance performances as we all have family and ‘normal’ jobs too. My happiest moment is when I am dancing on stage during a performance. That final moment makes all the hard work worthwhile.”

*Deborah Agius, production co-ordinator and dancer, Naupaca Dance Factory.*

www.naupacadancefactory.com

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92. **Two opera houses in one street**

This small island is big on culture so much so that it supports not one but two opera houses. The Aurora and the Astra theatres are both on Republic Street in Victoria and between them produce an interesting and varied programme of concerts and operas featuring local talent and international stars. Speaking of which, one of the most famous opera stars of our time, tenor Joseph Calleja, started his career in Gozo. Queue here for tickets.

www.teatruaurora.com
www.mediterranea.com.mt
93. The Xewkija Rotunda
Who would have guessed that the third largest church dome in Europe is found on this tiny island. The dome of Xewkija’s church, which is dedicated to St John the Baptist, is outdone only by St Peter’s Basilica in the Vatican and St Paul’s Cathedral in London.
www.visitmalta.com/en/info/xewkijachurch

94. A very traditional Easter
Gozo takes Easter very seriously. Good Friday processions are somber and dignified but highly theatrical with scores of actors in full period costumes re-enacting Biblical scenes. The mood changes into a party on Easter Sunday and figolla almond cakes are the order of the day.
www.visitgozo.com

95. “Mediterranea”
7000 years of history and culture distilled in one annual arts festival. Mediterranea is a showcase of Gozitan artistic heritage held in the first week of November when the island glows in autumnal sunshine. The programme represents the entire spectrum of Gozo’s history and culture from music to architecture and more.
www.mediterranea.com.mt

96. “Our weaving heritage makes us special. After all we’re so much more than a sun and sea destination”
Alda Bugeja

97. “There are so many things I love about Gozo. Explore the back streets of Victoria. Lose yourself in the amazing labyrinth of little alleyways behind the church on St George’s Square. If you’re lucky, you’ll come across a lace maker, a tailor or statue restorer – amazing old trades and lovely people to chat to.”
Comil Wambergue, Adventure Specialist

98. Island Crafts
Souvenirs from Gozo reflect the island’s ancient crafts and age old traditions. Look out for women sitting on their doorstep, their back to the street, with their bobbin resting against the wall, clicking away forming a spider’s web of exquisite lace. Even in scorching summer you will not resist buying one of Gozo’s famous hand-knitted woollen cardigans or a sheep’s wool blanket made by craftsmen from Zebbug. Ta’ Dbiegi Crafts Village in Gharb showcases some of the best of Gozitan artisan work.
www.visitgozo.com

99. Let’s festa!
Summer on Gozo is punctuated by fireworks and brass bands as every town and village celebrates the feast of its patron saint. At any given weekend throughout the summer months several churches are lit up, streets are decorated and confetti are strewn as the statue of the patron saint is carried shoulder high through the town. Join the crowds and festa!
www.visitmalta.com/en/village-festas

100. Carnival in Nadur
Pack your most ghoulish mask and lose yourself in the crowds at Gozo’s “Silent Carnival”. Forget Rio, the carnival in Nadur is unique in its spontaneity and creativity, with a macabre and sombre mood unlike any other mainstream carnival. Grotesque masks are coarsely fashioned out of sack cloth and many participants do not speak to safeguard their identity. Floats are fashioned out of farm carts dressed up as mini-theatre stages on which revellers act out a scene very often with some social comment about contemporary political events. A spectacle like no other.
www.visitmalta.com/en/carnival
Skopri

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