

Crystal clear seas, stunning underwater vistas and an island far more at ease than it's larger neighbour Malta makes Gozo an ideal SwimTrek location. Based in Xlendi, a tranquil town on Gozo's south-west coast, you are ideally placed for all the swims and walks highlighted below.

Location Summaries

Gozo

With its own distinctive style and pace, the island offers great walking, superb coastal scenery and fabulous cliff swimming. As you are based in Gozo, it's here that you will do the majority of your bay and coastal swimming.

Comino

Home of the picturesque Blue Lagoon, Comino is the interim island between Gozo and Malta. It offers a myriad of shallow reefs and startling rock formations just metres below the surface, and is one of the island crossings you will attempt during the week.

North-West Malta

More rugged than the rest of Malta, the rocky North-West is a delight to explore both on foot and by swimming.

Valletta

The capital of Malta, Valletta is an elegant city and compact enough to explore in a day. There are sights to see on every corner and an excellent location to explore.

Week Schedule

Saturday

After a relaxing afternoon you meet your guides and head down to the beach for a short training swim. Once completed you will meet the assembled group for drinks and a pre-trip safety briefing in which the guides will detail the weekly plan.

Sunday

Your first swim is from Xlendi along dramatic coastline to Fungus Rock by Dwerja Bay. After lunch your swim stroke will be videoed for analysis later in the evening, and following this we walk back from the Azure Window to Xlendi.

Monday

Departing on the boat from Xlendi you will cruise to Hondoq Bay on the south east corner of Gozo and begin your first island hop to Comino. On arrival in the beautiful Santa Maria Bay you stop for a short break on the main boat prior to a walk on the island via a local cave and then to the Comino Tower. With commanding views of both Malta and Comino you will leave the tower and lunch in the glorious Blue Lagoon.

Following this, the afternoon is spent coastal swimming to Lantern Point or along the northern coast .

Tuesday

Up early as we begin our full boat trip around the island of Gozo, with plenty of time to take in some significant coastal swims, including the stunning Azure Window, dramatic Inland Sea and the beautiful Ramla Bay.

Wednesday

The day of our signature crossing from Qala Point on Gozo passing the imposing Elephant Rock on Comino finishing by the White Tower on Malta. After a hearty lunch on the boat the afternoon is yours and you can either relax in Xlendi or sightsee in Gozo's capital Victoria.

Thursday

Starting with a walk from Xlendi to Mgarr ix-Xini, the trek takes you along the dramatic Sannat and Ta' Cenc Cliffs with stunning coastal vistas. After a welcome swim and lunch in Mgarr ix-Xini Bay, the last swim is back to Xlendi Bay taking in the Ras il-Bajda Tower; all before a sunset drink and reflections with the group on an adventurous week!

Friday

A morning swim and then the day is at your leisure to discover some more bays or perhaps a bit of sightseeing around more of Gozo's enchanting interior.

Caveat:

Swimming in the sea is a fantastic experience, but you need to be aware of potential problems. Marine life such as jellyfish, sea urchins and coral could be present on some of the swims, but we will work on minimising. If stung by jellyfish you can normally carry on swimming. However if you do have a problem we can treat you on one of the escort boats. You should contact us prior to booking if you suffer from Anaphylaxis. You should seek medical attention if you develop any infection following contact with the above.

For obvious safety reasons we rely on decent weather conditions when carrying out any swims. As a consequence, open water swimming does require an inherent degree of on-trip flexibility, so required changes in the planned itinerary will not be uncommon and will undoubtedly add to the uniqueness of each tour.

Practical Information

Start Point: San Andrea Hotel, Xlendi, Gozo
(www.hotelsanandrea.com)

Start Time: 6pm on Saturday.

Finish Point: San Andrea Hotel, Xlendi, Gozo

Finish Time: 12pm on Friday

Temperatures:

Water	Temperature (°C)	Air Temperature (°C)
May	20	22
June	22	23
July	25	28
August	27	32
September	25	29
October	23	24
November	21	20

Getting There:

To get to Gozo, you will need to fly into Malta. There are a number of scheduled services operating to Malta from various British and European cities.

The national airline, Air Malta operates flights to and from a number of European capital cities. Other international carriers operate regular scheduled flights to and from Malta.

Scheduled Flights

Air Malta	www.airmalta.com
British Airways	www.britishairways.com
Ryan Air	www.ryanair.com

Charter Flights

For charter flights to Malta try: www.charterflights.co.uk, www.choicehols.co.uk. You will then need to catch a bus/taxi www.busservice@gozochannel.com to the Cirkewwa at Malta's northern point for ferry to Gozo. Ferries are regular. A direct bus shuttle operates between the airport and Cirkewwa (port on Malta for ferries to Gozo.) Full details can be found at www.gozochannel.com/gozoholiday.html Alternatively the Hotel San Andrea can arrange a taxi that takes you from the airport direct to the hotel. Contact them to book the taxi.

Passports and Visas:

You require a full passport, that should be valid for 6 months beyond the expected length of stay. You should check if you require a visa. Most nationalities including EU, US, Canadian, Australian and New Zealand citizens do not require a visa to enter Malta. Visa regulations do change. Please check!

Vaccinations:

There are no essential vaccination requirements for Gozo, but you should ensure that your tetanus and polio are up to date.

Meals:

Included meals are breakfast and lunch. Dinners are not included allowing you to choose where, when and with whom you would like to dine.

Accommodation:

In order to maximise the enjoyment of the tour, our accommodation is of a high standard, based on twin-share and en-suite facilities. We use a locally owned 3 star hotel located directly on the shore. *(Single Supplement Fee = £70)*

Extra Expenses:

You should bring extra money with you to cover such items as entertainment, dinner, souvenirs, etc. The local currency is the Euro €.

Group Size:

Up to a maximum of 15 people, with 2 swimming guides, local boat pilot and 2-3 motorised boat escorts.

Swimming Distances:

<u>Swim</u>	<u>Distances</u>
Xlendi-Ta Cenc	3km
Ta Cenc-Mgarr ix-Xini	2km
Gozo-Comino	2km
Santa Maria Bay-Blue Lagoon	3km
Xlendi-Wardija Point	2km
Fungus Rock-Azure Window	1½km
Gozo-Malta	5km

Remember you can always miss out some of the crossings or jump onto the escort boat if you want to take a rest.

Walking Conditions:

Most walking is on recognised tracks and paths, although there will be cases where we walk over scrub land.

Wetsuit Availability:

We have a range of swimming specific wetsuits available on each trip if required.

Essential Equipment:

In addition to "normal" daily cloths, you will need to bring the following:-

Swimming Costume (2 of)	Sweater/Fleece
Swimming Goggles (2 of)*	Walking shoes
Towel	Sun Hat
Small Daypack	Waterproof Sun Cream
Waterproof jacket	Aqua Shoes / Sandals
	(which you don't mind getting wet!)

* Try to bring 1 clear lens and 1 tinted lens for different light conditions.

Please note that SwimTrek will supply swim hats and has a stock of flippers if required.