

TRIP OVERVIEW

This short swimming escape in Malta boasts perfect turquoise seas, great underwater visibility, and epic backdrops of sheer cliffs, allowing you to discover the best swim spots the Southern Mediterranean has to offer. With chances to explore the many island coves and secrets of the Gozitan coastline, you'll have total freedom to roam the most southerly reaches of Europe with us.

The Maltese archipelago features three main inhabited islands: Malta, Gozo, and Comino. Gozo is where we will spend the majority of our trip, but we will have plenty of opportunities to swim alongside each of the islands. A quiet but beautiful island, you'll find a laid-back approach to life on Gozo, which makes it the ideal setting for a SwimTrek trip. Our base for the trip is the Duke Boutique Hotel, where you can relax in comfort in the island's capital Victoria (aka Rabat) right at the heart of the island. It features an impressive medieval citadel and the Gozo Cathedral, adorned with ornate, baroque decorations and painted ceilings.

This trip sees us visit great swimming spots across the archipelago, taking on the iconic Gozo to Malta swim and getting up close to several of the island's notable sites.

WHO IS THIS TRIP FOR?

This swimming Short Escape is ideal for those who are looking to combine some early season swimming with a chance to relax and enjoy a charming city after a day's swim.

Swimmers should have a sound understanding and experience of swimming in strong sea conditions and be capable of completing the average swim distance of 3km. The average daily swim distance is around 6km (split over a minimum of two swims) prior to the start of the trip.

We have given this trip a Moderate grading. Most swimmers comfortable in the open water will be able to take part and enjoy one of these trips.

LOCATION SUMMARIES

Gozo

With its own distinctive style and pace, the island offers great walking routes, superb coastal scenery, and fabulous cliffside swimming. As the trip is primarily based in Gozo, it is here that you will do most of your bay and coastal exploration.

Victoria

Victoria (aka Rabat) is not just the geographic heart of Gozo - it is also the centre of everyday activity. Bars, restaurants, and opera theatres dominate the centre, while the Citadel rises majestically above. Victoria also boasts the Villa Rundle Public Gardens, which is a restorative green lung in the middle of the city.

Comino

Home of the picturesque Blue Lagoon, Comino is a small island between Gozo and Malta. Its shallow reef causes a beautiful gradient of different blue water hues, with the lightest aquamarines making boats appear as if they are floating in the air.

North-West Malta

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

TRIP SCHEDULE

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Start Point | The Duke Boutique Hotel, Victoria, Gozo www.thedukehotelgozo.com |
| Start Time | 16:00 on Day 1 |
| Finish Point | The Duke Boutique Hotel, Victoria, Gozo |
| Finish Time | 14:00 on Day 4 |

Daily Itineraries

Please note that the below daily itineraries are an example of the swims that may take place during your trip, however, actual swim locations and distances will vary according to local weather and sea conditions. Your SwimTrek guides and local boat pilot will determine the most suitable swim locations each day and will communicate the plan with all guests as soon as possible.

Day 1

We meet at the open-air terrace at the Duke Boutique Hotel in Victoria for a pre-trip briefing, where you will meet your guides and fellow swimmers. You'll enjoy stunning views over Gozo's north coast from here and the sight of the citadel illuminated at night. After the safety briefing, there's time to enjoy a group dinner together before we start our swims the following morning.

Day 2

On our first morning, we head down to Mgarr harbour to meet our support boat and local skipper. From here, we head west to Xlendi Bay and start swimming from the dramatic cliffs of Gebel Ben Gorg along Gozo's western coast. We finish at Dwejra Bay, which is afforded protection from sea swell and breakers by the imposing Fungus Rock. We stop off in this idyllic bay and have lunch on the boat.

The afternoon is given over to a shorter coastal swim, which takes us past the ruins of the now collapsed Azure Window. It's an ideal way to prepare for the next few days as we'll encounter both open seas and more sheltered waters.

Day 3

This is the day of the iconic crossing from Gozo to Malta - a journey of 5km. During the crossing we will start underneath the cliffs of Qala before striking out towards Comino's eastern coast. Upon reaching the island we then swim in its shallows and pass the iconic Elephant Rock. The last leg is from Comino to Malta where we finish near the White Tower - a former watchtower built in the 17th Century.

We then have a well-deserved break on the boat as we cruise back to Comino, where we'll stop for a hearty lunch in the beautiful Santa Maria Bay. After a short walk to Comino Tower, which offers a stunning view of the morning's crossing, we swim into the crystalline waters of the awe-inspiring Blue Lagoon. This is a truly wonderful way to finish off a great day of swimming.

Day 4

This half day includes a fantastic swim under the sheer Ta Cenc cliffs which rise over 470-feet above the sea. You'll enjoy superb water quality and will be able to see the fish play in the underwater alcoves of the cliffs. The swim ends in the tranquil bay of Mgarr ix-Xini - the historic home to ships and galleys of the Knights of Malta. We'll enjoy one last lunch together before our Short Escape draws to a close.

TRIP INFORMATION

Group Size

This trip has a maximum group size of 15. The group will be split into a maximum of three groups, based on speed, with each group being accompanied by their own safety vessel/escort.

Boat Support

Boat support on this trip includes one main boat and two support boats to be piloted by your SwimTrek guides and a local boat pilot. Please note that this boat support is subject to change without notice and cannot be guaranteed.

Equipment Checklist

In addition to your daily non-swimming clothes, we also recommend that you bring the following items:

| ✓ | ITEM | ✓ | ITEM |
|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Swimming Costume (x 2) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Towel |

| | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Swimming Goggles (x 2) * | <input type="checkbox"/> Sweater / Fleece |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sun Hat and Sunglasses | <input type="checkbox"/> Waterproof Jacket |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waterproof Sun Cream | <input type="checkbox"/> Trainers / Sandals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Small Daypack | <input type="checkbox"/> Aqua Shoes / Sandals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Drinks Bottle (x2) | <input type="checkbox"/> Protective swimwear rash vest/wetsuit |

For more information, please visit our [packing list](#) page on the website.

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

SwimTrek will supply swim hats, water, and electrolyte drinks. The guides will no longer distribute shared drinks bottles but will fill your personal drink bottles. Please ensure these are clearly marked to help our coaches identify yours. For more information on suitable protective clothing to reduce the effects of stings, please see our packing list page.

TRIP GRADING

Swimming Distances

| Swim | Distance | Swim | Distance |
|-------------------------|----------|-------------------------------|----------|
| Xlendi - Dwejra Bay | 4½km | Dwejra Bay - Inland Sea | 1½km |
| Gozo - Malta | 5km | Santa Maria Bay - Blue Lagoon | 2½km |
| Ta Cenc - Mgarr ix-Xini | 3½km | | |

Swimming Conditions

Swimming in the sea is a fantastic experience, and our SwimTrek trips offer some amazing marine life for you to swim amongst. However, you should be aware that certain marine life such as jellyfish and sea urchins are likely to be present during your swims. While we work with our local boat pilot and team to reduce the chance of you meeting these fantastic creatures, we strongly advise that you bring protective swimwear such as a long-sleeved rash vest or wetsuit as some swims may require all swimmers to wear protection. Importantly, if you suffer from anaphylaxis, you must consult the office prior to booking.

Walking Conditions

Walking is not a major part of the trip, and we will generally walk on sealed paths to and from the bays and beaches that we start and finish our swims on. There is also a short walk on Comino. Appropriate footwear should be worn for these walks.

Temperatures

| Month | Water Temperature* | Air Temperature* |
|---------|--------------------|-------------------|
| October | 21-24°C / 70-75°F | 21-25°C / 70-77°F |

* Please note that these temperatures are indicative and should be used as a guide only.

Weather Caveat

For safety reasons, we rely on decent weather conditions when carrying out our swims. Therefore, open water swimming holidays require a certain degree of on-trip flexibility which can result in changes to the planned itinerary. These changes often add a touch of uniqueness to your trip and will be communicated to you by your SwimTrek guides as quickly as possible.

GETTING THERE

As SwimTrekkers come from all over the world, and join our swimming holidays in numerous destinations, we don't currently offer flights as part of our SwimTrek packages. We do however want to do as much as we can to ensure that our guests get the best deals when travelling to one of our trips so check out our [SwimTrek flight tips](#) page on the website.

Whichever route you choose to take, we recommend confirming your flights and other travel arrangements as early as possible to avoid price rises and availability issues.

The easiest way to reach the start of your trip is to fly into Malta International Airport (MLA) and take a private transfer to the hotel via a ferry from Malta's northernmost point of Ċirkewwa to Mgarr, Gozo's main harbour.

Private Transfer from Malta International Airport to Hotel

After you arrive at the airport, you will find a chauffeur waiting for you with a name on a sign in the arrival's hall. They will drive you to the ferry port in Malta where you will board the ferry to Gozo as a foot passenger. Once in Gozo, another taxi chauffeur will be waiting for you for your transfer to the hotel. To book your split private transfer, please email your flight arrival details to info@xlendi.com as soon as possible.

| NUMBER OF GUESTS | TRANSFER PRICE |
|------------------|---|
| 1-3 Guests | €50 to be split between all passengers (one way) |
| 4-8 Guests | €65 to be split between all passengers (one way) |
| 9-17 Guests | €120 to be split between all passengers (one way) |

Please note that the cost of the ferry ticket is not included.

It is also possible to be picked up from an alternative location to the airport. Please email info@xlendi.com directly to arrange an alternative pickup location. If you encounter any problems with your arrival, you can contact Xlendi Tours on their 24-hour emergency phone line (+356 99422810).

Direct Private Transfer from Malta International Airport to Hotel

The chauffeur that picks you up from the airport will board the ferry to Gozo with you and will drive you directly to the hotel. This will save you boarding the ferry on foot and handling your luggage. To book your direct private transfer, please email your flight arrival details to info@xlendi.com as soon as possible.

| NUMBER OF GUESTS | TRANSFER PRICE |
|------------------|---|
| 1-3 Guests | €90 to be split between all passengers (one way) |
| 4-8 Guests | €110 to be split between all passengers (one way) |
| 9-17 Guests | €190 to be split between all passengers (one way) |

Please note that the cost of the ferry ticket is not included.

It is also possible to be picked up from an alternative location to the airport. Please email info@xlendi.com directly to arrange an alternative pickup location.

Bus from Malta International Airport to Ċirkewwa Ferry Port

There are several routes to Ċirkewwa from various towns and villages across Malta. There is a direct bus line (X1) from Malta International Airport to Ċirkewwa Port, departing every 40 minutes. For more details, visit www.publictransport.com.mt.

Ferry from Ċirkewwa Ferry Port to Mgarr Ferry Terminal (Gozo)

There are regular ferry services that run from Ċirkewwa Ferry Port to Mgarr Ferry Terminal daily. A standard foot passenger fare is €4.65 and are only sold at the Mgarr Gozo terminal on a return basis. Customers boarding the ferries at Ċirkewwa in Malta do not have to be in possession of a valid paid ticket and can purchase their return ticket before making their return journey from Gozo. For more details, please visit www.gozochannel.com/en/home.

Bus from Mgarr Ferry Terminal (Gozo) to Duke Boutique Hotel

The 301 buses between Mgarr (ferry terminal) and Rabat (Victoria) operates every 30 minutes. Passengers can travel using the same bus cards and tickets used in Malta. The cost per trip varies from €1.50 to €2. Tickets can be bought either online, from the booth machines or once you hop on the bus. Buses operate daily between 05.30hrs and 23.00hrs. Further information can be found at www.publictransport.com.mt. From the main bus terminal in Victoria, walk down Main Gate Street onto Republic Street. Walk for 350m down to the Duke shopping complex and take the lift to the reception

on the 4th floor.

ACCOMMODATION

The Duke Boutique Hotel is situated in the heart of Victoria and enjoys excellent views all around the island. The owners, Jason & Sharon Galea are long standing friends of SwimTrek and having hosted our trips to Gozo since 2010, they have an excellent understanding of your needs during this trip. Guests can choose from 5 distinctly designed room types and suites in this 4-star boutique hotel, many commanding magnificent views of the Citadel or the Villa Rundle Gardens. Room choices include standard and garden view rooms, or alternatively, there is the option to upgrade to a jacuzzi terrace room, junior suite, or presidential suite, which are available upon request.

Pre/Post Trip Accommodation and Trip Extension Options

If you would like to extend your stay in Gozo and need to book additional nights' accommodation before or after your trip, please contact Jason & Sharon directly via: info@thedukehotelgozo.com.

Food and Drink

Three breakfasts are included during your trip, as well as lunch on Days 2, 3 & 4. Other meals are at your own expense. This gives you a fantastic opportunity to explore and experience the local cafes and restaurants of your choice in Victoria over the course of your trip. In Gozo, the average price of a meal in a local restaurant is approximately €15-25.

For more information, please visit our [food and drink](#) page on the website.

TRAVEL ADVICE

For more information on any of the following sections please visit the [Travel Advice](#) page of our website.

Money, Extra Expenses and Tipping

You should bring extra money with you to cover such items as lunches, dinners, drinks, entertainment, souvenirs, etc. The local currency in Malta is the Euro (€). You can exchange currency at the hotel or withdraw money at ATMs that can be found on Republic Street, where the Duke Boutique Hotel is based. Please note a tourist tax will need to be paid on location, currently €0.50 per person per night.

In some countries, tipping (gratuities) is not part of the culture - in others it has become an expected norm. We believe that tipping is done entirely at your own discretion. If you have been provided with excellent it may be something you wish to do. Your SwimTrek Guides can advise on local norms for service providers like boat crew, waiters, or taxis. Nothing is expected for your SwimTrek Guides, but many groups like to present something to the Guides at the end of the trip.

Responsible Travel

SwimTrek is conscious of the importance of protecting the world's natural wonders. We are acutely aware of our responsibility to not only take care of the natural environments which we are lucky enough to explore, but also to educate our guests about the importance of conservation efforts and responsible tourism. It's for this reason that we have worked so closely with our partners to ensure that our trips are conducted in the most responsible and sustainable way possible, working tirelessly to minimise the impact of our presence on local marine life and the natural habitat.

For more information, please visit our [Responsible Travel](#) page on the website.

Passports and Visas

Malta is part of the European Union. Non-residents of Malta require a full passport to enter the country, which should be valid for six months beyond the expected length of stay. Citizens of all E.U. member states, the US, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand do not require a visa to enter Malta. Please note that visa regulations are always subject to change, and we advise you check visa requirements prior to travel.

Travel Insurance

We consider comprehensive travel insurance to be essential, and we strongly recommend that you purchase insurance which includes, but is not limited to, cover for illness, accident, emergency repatriation, ambulance, air ambulance, helicopter rescue services, cancellation, lost luggage, and delays. Your travel insurance should also cover you for open water swimming and any other activity listed in your trip itinerary (including races and competitions, where applicable). Please read your policy details carefully and remember to take them with you on your trip for your own reference. For further information, please visit our [Travel Insurance](#) page on the website.

Health Information and Recommended Vaccinations

Here at SwimTrek we pride ourselves on our focus on safety and the well-being of all our guests. As we operate in some beautiful and remote locations medical facilities are not always easily accessible. SwimTrek Guides, and many staff working for our local partners, are first aid trained. However, we ask that you read our [Travel Health](#) page to ensure that you are informed about general Travel and Swim Health precautions.

Internet Access Travel Plugs & Electricity

There is complimentary high-speed Wi-Fi across the hotel.

For a useful source of information on the different electrical outlets, electrical plugs, and electric sockets, please visit worldstandards.eu.