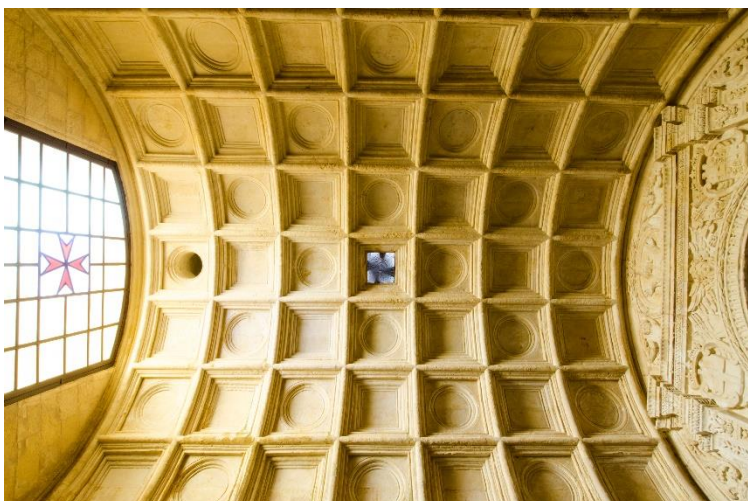


Fort St Elmo And The National War Museum



Fort St Elmo has opened for the very first time to the public in May 2015. The visit in Fort St Elmo gives you the opportunity to visit also the National War Museum. Fort St Elmo was built in 1552, and ever since, it has been a major part of the defense of the Maltese islands. It proved important during the Great Siege of 1565 and during the Second World War. As for the Museum, it displays chronologically a superb collection of artifacts spanning from the prehistory to recent history, focusing mainly on the Great Siege and Second World War. We offer an experience where Fort and Museum are interconnected in the historical account. All information is displayed as written or interactive, in Maltese and simple English. More information is given on:

<https://heritagemalta.mt/explore/fort-st-elmo-national-war-museum/>

Opening Hours

January till February

Mondays, Wednesday till Sunday

From 9:00 till 17:00, last admission at 16:30

March – December

Monday till Sunday

From 10:00 till 18:00, last admission at 17:30

Closing days:

1st January, Good Friday, 24th December, 25th December, 31st December.

Tickets

We offer Adult, Senior, Students and Children tickets. Infant up to 5 years old enter for free. People with a disability card are given a concession.

We offer free entrance to various entities such as: ICOM card holders, MTA licensed guides, Local teachers card holders and careers accompanying people with disabilities are given free entrance. School children enter for free and we also offer guided tour for free. Guide dogs are allowed in all areas accessible to the visitors. We also offer a 10% discount is provided to groups of more than 10 individuals. As all open HM sites, we accept the HM passports schemes.

Special combined tickets are available from the main reception, and the majority are available for sale online. These will give access to multiple sites and museum, at a reasonable price.

To buy combo tickets, access <https://heritagemalta.mt/store/> and choose the tickets category.

From our reception we also sell the Hypogeum last minute tickets.

We offer a wheelchair service and lockers for free.

Social media : <https://www.facebook.com/FortSaintElmo>

Visiting Fort St Elmo and the National War Museum

The Entrance to the Fort is exactly on the main road that goes round the capital city. The fort is at street level and reachable by private transport and also public transport. Parking spaces are found on the main road along the fort. During the busy hours of the day it will be a bit difficult to find parking, but we allow people with mobility issues to park inside the fort, as we have a small parking which is normally reserved for employees. On the other hand, one can reach the Fort quite easily using public transport. Bus stops are just outside the fort. The Hop-on Hop-off Malta service stops right in front of the entrance of the fort; as well as private coaches, taxis and horse-carriages

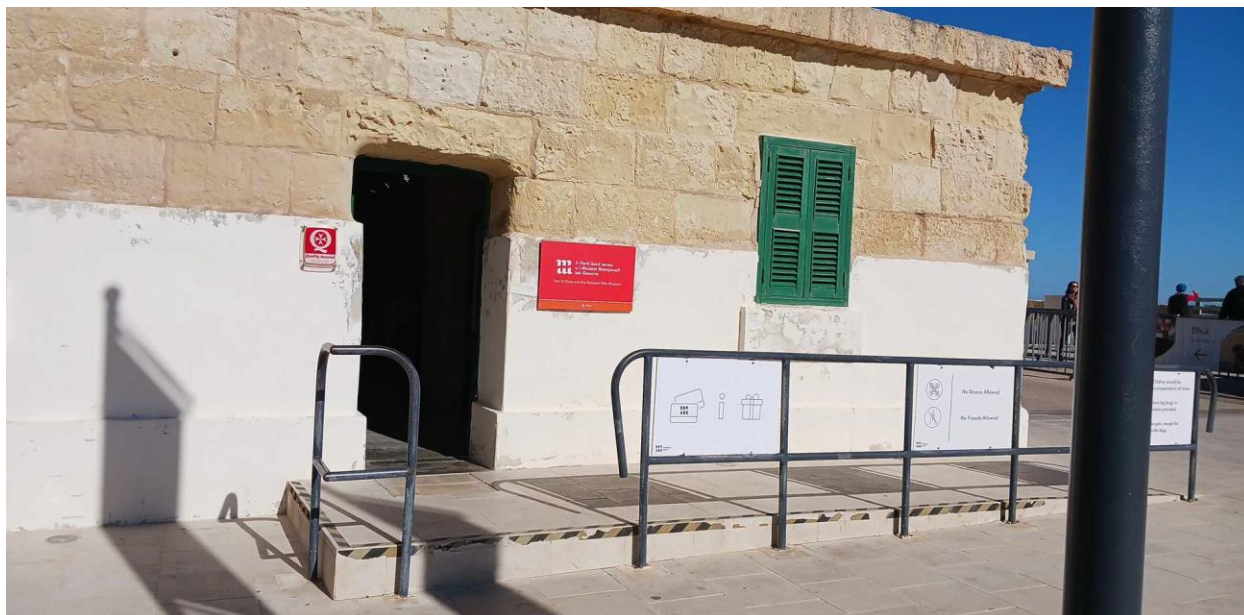


The entrance is clearly marked by Heritage Malta banners

Reception and Gift Shop

At first sight, one would see the main reception and gift shop, where visitors can have all the information required from our front officers. Inside here we have information on display regarding opening hours, tickets and prices and other related information and notices.

Our reception is accessed by going up just one step or ramp which makes it easily accessible for wheelchairs. The reception and shop are incorporated into one room, which is properly lit and air-conditioned. On display we have various items for sale, including beverages and snacks, souvenirs, jewelry and publications. The reception desk has two heights, and therefore it is comfortable for both standing and people making use of wheelchairs.



Entrance to reception area is clearly marked and easily accessible by one step or by ramp.



Reception desk with two heights for more accessibility. Also equipped with Perspex for health and hygiene and also microphone and speaker system.



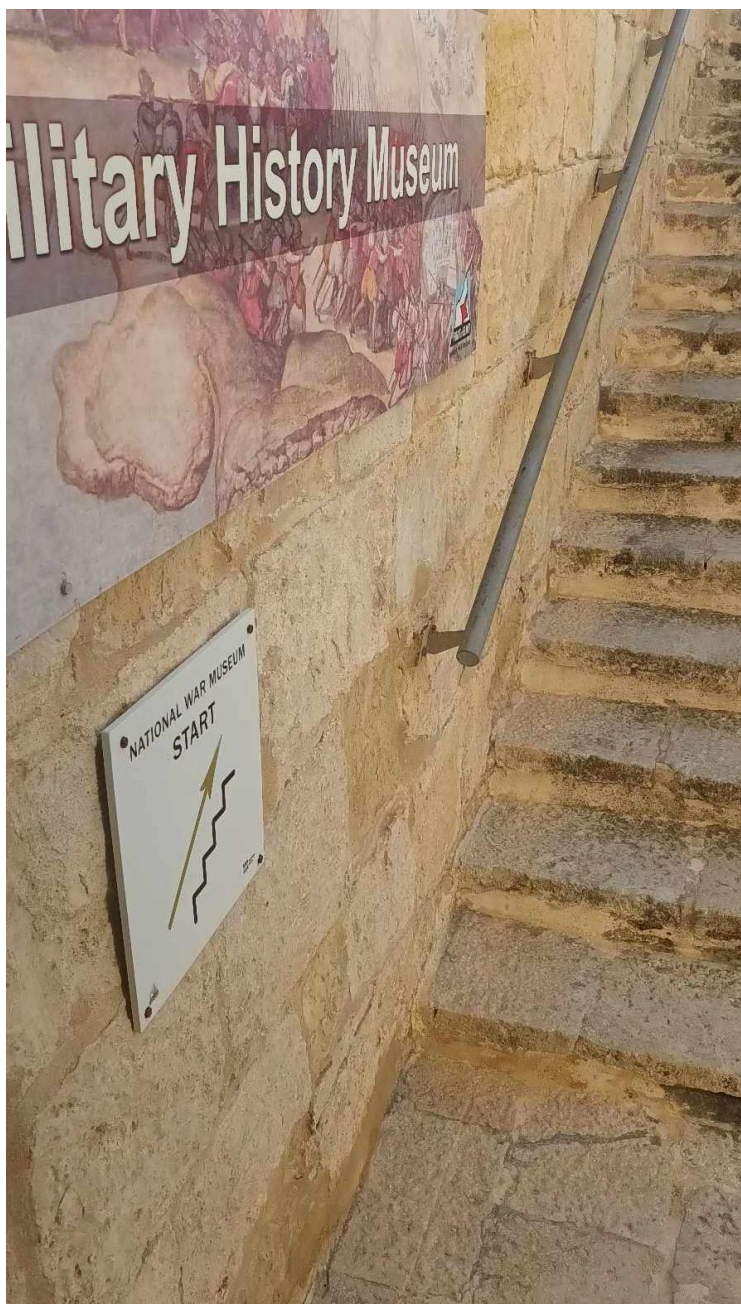
Photo of Shop

Once the visitors buy the tickets, they are given instruction that lead the way to the entrance. At the moment we are replacing the old turnstiles and installing new ones, where visitors scan the ticket to access the Fort and Museum. These turnstiles will also have a swing gate to provide easy access to wheelchairs and pushchairs. Also, at the entrance we have a security officer placed at all times

to help out the visitors if needed.



While walking inside the Fort, there is clear signage which is clearly visible and easily understood since images are universally used.



Signage leading visitor to the National War Museum.
Stairs have hand rails

Museum Area

The parts which are open to the visitors are mainly on two floors, the Ground floor and the first floor where one can visit the majority of the exhibition halls. This is accessed through a flight of steps or by lift. Once up in the museum area, one will find a pictorial map to help visitors to orient themselves. Since Museum is divided in different block, directional signage is found all the way. All blocks are at floor level or accessed by a ramp. All ramps and stairs in the Fort have hand rails. Also the ramps have been designed to have a functional gradient. We have security available on site; together with fire-alarms, different types of fire extinguishers and emergency exits are all clearly marked and functional.



Lift which gives access to Museum



Diagram maps of the Fort scattered in different areas



simple and effective directional signage for the museum blocks



Ramps with handrails where entrances or exits are not at a floor level



Fire extinguishers placed exactly at each entrance/exit

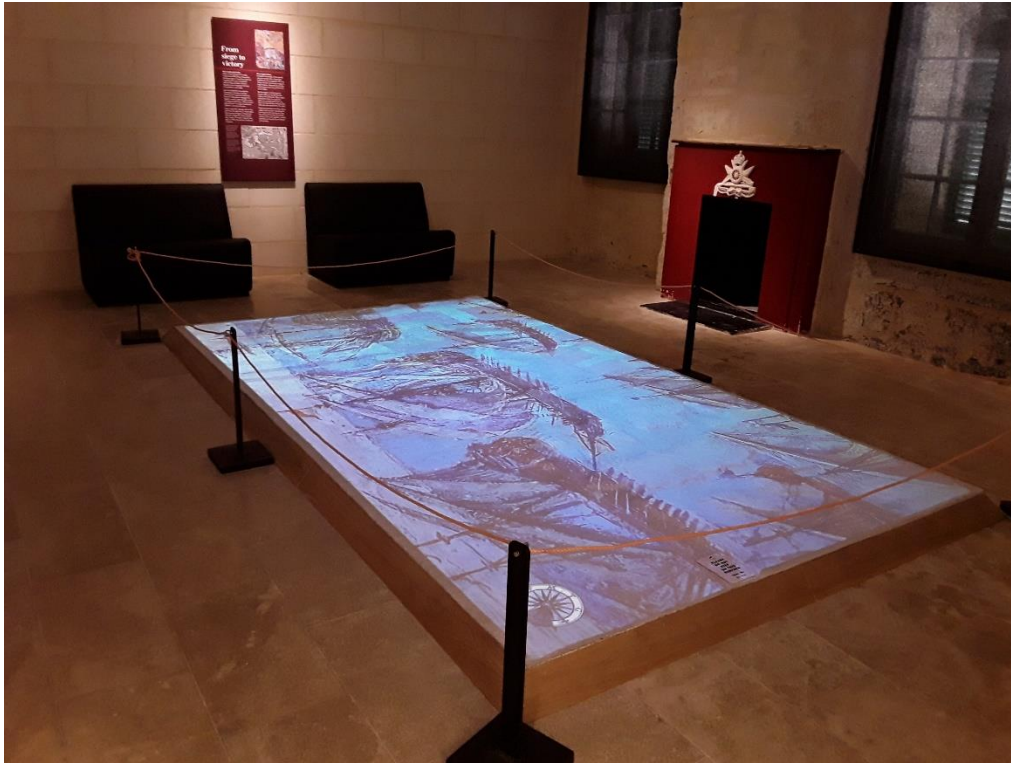
We only have limited areas where accessibility is only by stairs. This is due to the military nature of the site and also due to conservation and structural properties of the site.

In each section/block of the Museum we have Braille text and diagrams available in both the entrance and exit of each building within the site; explaining the layout of the displays and the walk-ways to the next section.



Braille text and diagrams in entrances and exits.

Since our site covers a large area, we gave importance to seating. We have seating distributed around the fort and in the museum blocks, especially where the visitors have to stop to watch audio visuals.



Seating provided for watching audio visual shows



Outside seating between one block to another

Exhibits and interpretation

The interpretation is offered in text, images, original footage videos and animation. All written information is in Maltese and English. We have about 40 audio visuals and monitors in the museum. This makes the museum a highly interactive museum. All audio visuals and videos have written subtitles or spoken English. Written text in showcases and outside the showcases are in font 14 or above and therefore easy-to-read. All staff monitoring the site and Museum are fluent in Maltese and English, amongst most who understand and speak Italian. Some staff also know other languages.

There is a lot of natural lighting within the site since a large percentage of the site is outdoors. The lighting within the buildings is uniform and the use of spotlights is made to attract attention to certain architectural features and/or artefacts on display.

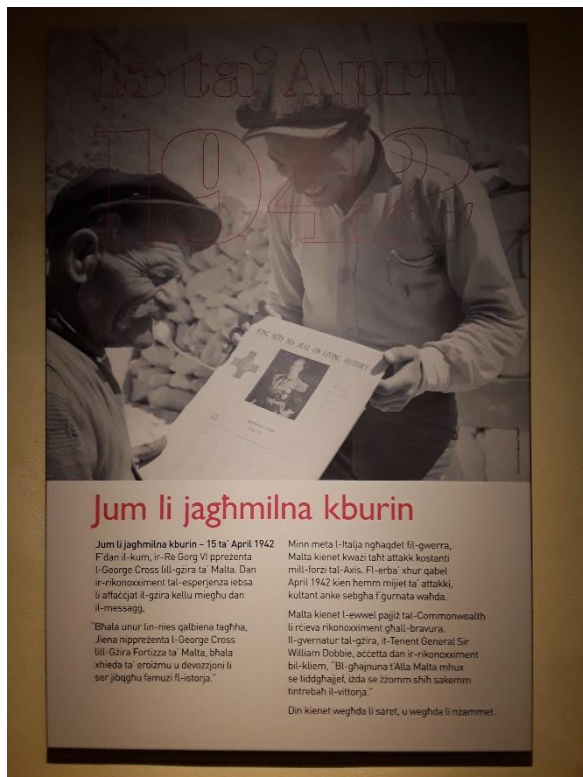
The visitor's flow is very straight forward and displays are arranged to minimize as much as possible any obstacles for visitors.



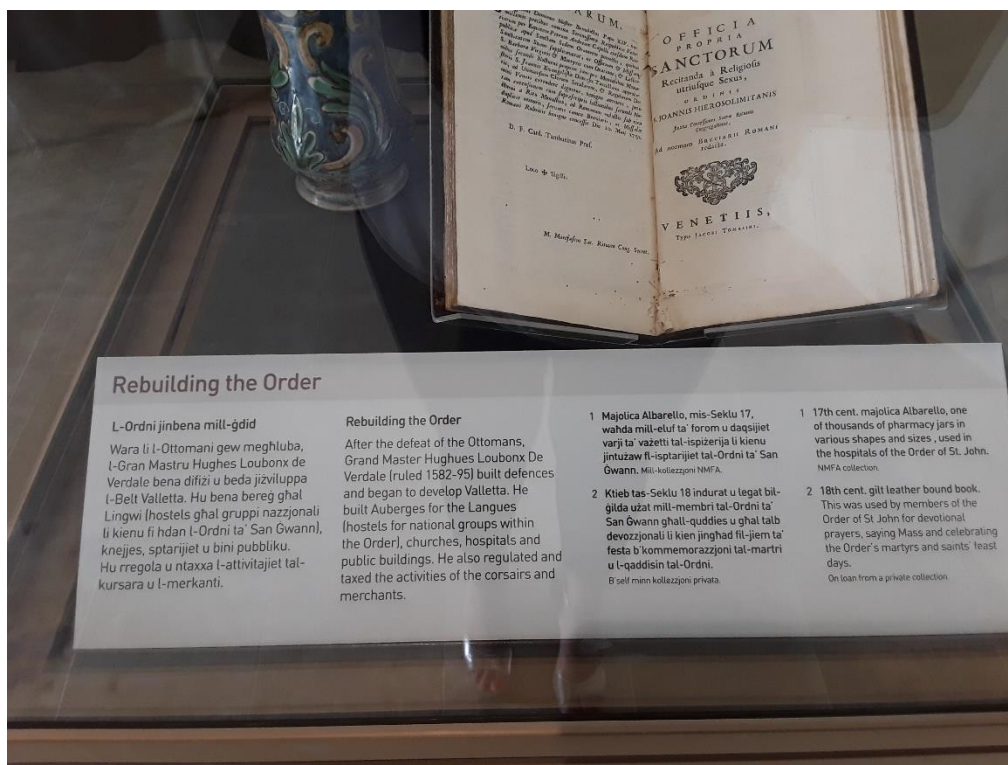
Audio visual set at a comfortable height



Interactive touch screens which are very educational



Information near displays, highly readable. Information is not too long and in simple language.



Fonts inside the showcases can be easily read



Showcases

Toilets

In total we have 9 bathrooms. Considering the whole area which is accessible for the visitors, we have three bathrooms open daily. When it is a busy day we open another one. The others are used by staff or placed in rooms which are not used every day, such as in conference rooms. These bathrooms are distributed in different areas to be more reachable for visitors. Toilets are of different gender types and for people with disabilities. We have nappy changers in some toilets as well. All these are well marked with the proper signage. The bathroom for disabled people follows the Access for all Design Guidelines, provided by CRPD (Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disability) when it comes to dimensions, rails, toilet height etc.



Toilets for people with disabilities

We have a second gift shop in the heart of the Fort, in Piazza D'armi. Although we do not have a proper cafeteria, inside this shop, apart from souvenirs and publications, we also sell beverages and packed snacks. Some tables are also set up outside for people to relax and enjoy the beauty of this Piazza.



Latest updates

During the past couple of years, Heritage Malta has turned the ex-Church of St Anne in Piazza D'Armi into a Memorial. Here we have displayed artifacts, models and most importantly medals of service men and women whose' medals were donated to the National War Museum.



Our latest project is the opening of the Harbour Fire Command. The Harbour Fire Command was built atop Fort St Elmo's cavalier in 1938. Its role was to coordinate all the coastal fortifications entrusted with the defence of the Grand Harbour and Marsamxett harbour, as it did on 26 July 1941. Following its decommissioning in 1956, the complex was abandoned. In the past few years, Heritage Malta has embarked upon a project which saw the restoration and reconstruction of this concrete bunker as per original plans. It is now open to the public visiting Fort St Elmo.





Future Plans

Ever since the site has opened to the public, Heritage Malta has been renting the site for certain events. This secondary income is important for the sustainability of our sites. We intend on keep working hard and invest on this sector to attract different clients. Such events also help to promote Fort St Elmo and the Maltese Heritage around the world.



Another project, even though in its early stages is the regeneration of the ditch.

Report Date : 26/01/2024