

The Malta National Community Art Museum

MUŻA is Malta's brand-new visual arts institution and legacy project for Valletta 2018 European Capital of Culture title. In 2018, the project has been flagged by the Guardian as one of 13 must see new European museums and by Architecture Digest as one of 15 noteworthy brand-new worldwide museums which opened in 2018.

PRE-ARRIVAL INFORMATION

Before visitors come to MUŻA, all relevant information about The Malta National Community Arts Museum can be easily accessed from the Heritage Malta's website. Such information includes opening and closing hours, highlights of the sites and admission fees. Furthermore, Information leaflets are also available in museums and in tourist information offices.

Besides, from the Heritage Malta website one can access full details and maps which explains how to reach the museum. In addition, we have also recently published on our Facebook page a video which explains how to get to the museum from the Triton fountain located at the main entry point of Valletta.

Heritage Malta museums target different audiences of varying age groups. Hence, we offer admission fees to Adults, Seniors, Students, Children and persons with disabilities amongst others. Nonetheless, service dogs are also most welcome.

Visiting The Malta National Community Art Museum

Transport and Parking

The museum's main entrance is located in Merchant Street just a few minutes' walk from city gate and the new Renzo Piano Parliament building at the entrance to Valletta. Thus, the museum is very close to the Malta Public Transport located next to the city gate of Valletta. This link below provides all the information and the routes that Malta Public Transport's provide from villages around Malta to Valletta. <https://www.publictransport.com.mt/>

Other sources of transportation within Valletta are Electric City Cabs, taxis, Hop on Hop off buses and Fun Trains.

Should one decide to use a private car, there are various parking areas just outside Valletta, such as the Malta Car Park (MCP), located next to the Malta Public Transport terminus.

Furthermore, Transport Malta also offers the Park and Ride service located in Floriana, where they offer an easy, quick and low-cost solution, with over 750 spaces and a regular high-frequency shuttle service directly to Valletta.

Main Entrance, Reception and Ticketing Area

Main Entrance and Building

The building was the historic seat of the Italian knights of the Order of St John with over 400-year-old history and thus the building itself is a prime historic site, meticulously restored to expose historic layers. Contemporary interventions reveal various historic features within the Auberge, such as the main staircase.

The main entrance of MUŻA is found at Ground floor at Merchant Street. On the right-hand side, one will find a door together with two steps to enter the MUŻA reception. MUŻA reception may also be accessed through alternative access for all entrances at the corridor leading to the central courtyard.



Figure 1: Main entrance to MUZA museum

Furthermore, one can walk into the Main Courtyard, which is a public space in its own right to discover the beauty of the building.

There is also another entrance to the Museum overlooking Piazza de La Vallette. A ramp running along the perimeter of Piazza de La Vallette leads you to MUŻA's alternative entrance. From this entrance one can reach the Museum reception by going around the main corridor surrounding the central courtyard.



Figure 2: Entrance to the Museum from Piazza de La Vallette

Shop and Reception

Once entering the right-hand side door from the main entrance one can immediately view the reception desk and the gift shop. From MUŻA’s gift shop, visitors will be tempted to buy something from the variety of selection found there targeting different ages. Some of the items include postcards, small souvenirs, stationary items such as pencils, HM notebooks, brick eraser, colouring books for children, MUŻA branded T-shirts for both adults and kids, puzzles, art books, history books and cooking books amongst others. Furthermore, many of these books are available in different languages. All the signage and prices are clear and visible.



Figure 3: Items found at MUZA Gift shop.



Figure 4 & 5: Price Tags In front of items



From the reception desk visitors can buy their tickets, thus the reception is always manned by the front of house personnel who received customer care training. Furthermore, all employees working with Heritage Malta are given a name tag which also shows their role within the agency.

Once visitors purchase their tickets, the Front of house (FOH) personnel will give instructions to visitors to place their bags in the locker room. Visitors are given a key to one of the lockers which they return back to the reception before leaving. The locker room is situated next to the Cameron Hall.

FOH personnel explain the procedure to the visitors once purchasing the ticket. After placing their bags in the lockers, visitors will be directed to proceed through self-operated turnstiles (found in front of the Museum reception) to start their tour from the Ground Floor galleries.



Figure 6: Locker room at ground floor level

Access to the Museum Galleries

The permanent exhibition unfolds along 4 main narratives over two floors. All galleries are fully accessible to persons with mobility issues compliant to the Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disability (CRPD). Starting from The Artist gallery on the ground floor. One reaches the first-floor galleries by going up the glass staircase (with handrails throughout) to experience the Mediterranean, Europe and the Empire galleries. Persons with disabilities can easily access first floor galleries by using the panoramic lift situated next to the glass staircase. In the first-floor galleries there are also some stairs which divide galleries into two levels. A platform lift (Figure 7) and passenger lift (Figure 9) provide unhindered access to all galleries at first floor level.



Figure 7: Staircase + the lift on the left side of the picture (found at Ground floor level).



Figure 8: lift next to the staircase (found at Ground floor level).



Figure 9: platform lift found inside the First-floor galleries.



Figure 10: lift found in First floor galleries.

Restrooms and other facilities

Restrooms

At MUŻA, visitors can make use of the restrooms found at Ground floor level and those found in First-Floor level in the galleries area.

At ground floor level, restrooms are accessible via a code entering system (code is printed on the entrance ticket). These restrooms are unisex where one can find 6 cubicle toilets together with one separate unisex access for all restrooms. In this restroom there is also a nappy changing facility.

At the first-floor level, restrooms are divided according to gender. There is one restroom which is at ground floor level it also has a nappy changing facility. Furthermore, there is one restroom for females which have 2 cubicles and another restroom for males which have 1 cubicle and 2 urinals.

Next to the restrooms there is a lift which can be used by people in possession of a wheelchair, pushchair etc. Besides, there is also a small seating area just in front of the lift where visitors can rest.



Figure 11: Ground floor unisex restrooms

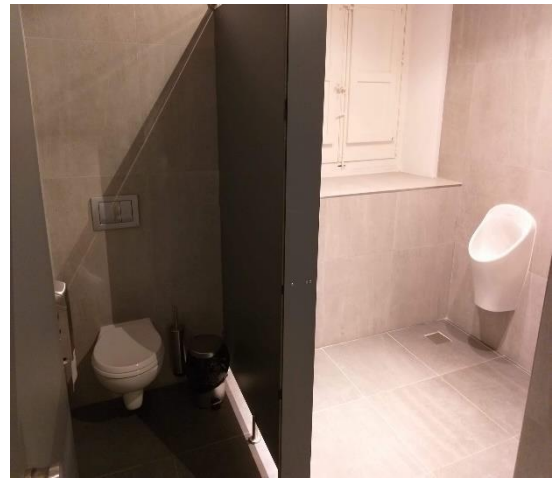


Figure 12: First Floor Men's Restroom



Figure 13: First Floor Ladies Restroom



Figure 14: The lift next to the First Floor Restrooms

Signage

Another important tool to help with visitor orientation is the way-finding signs along the floors. Throughout the museum there are visible panels which indicate for instance where the reception, galleries, restrooms and lockers are located. Whilst in the galleries themselves there are also panels which indicate the visitor's different section of the galleries. Furthermore, every artwork is labelled with a caption, all of which are written in a large format both in Maltese and English.



Figure 15: Restroom signage

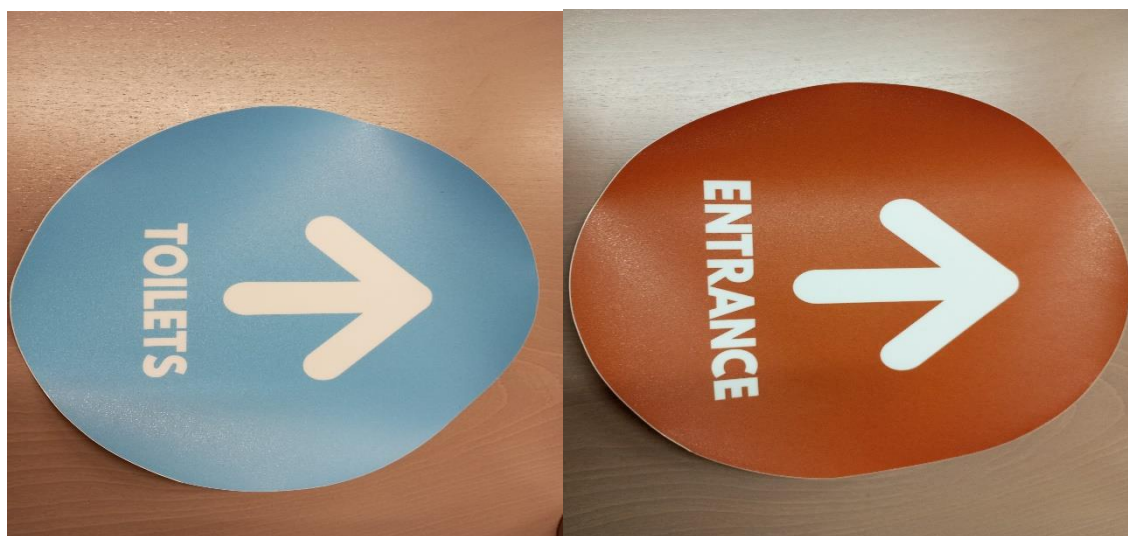


Figure 16 & 17: Additional floor signage



Figure 18: Sign panel with information about every floor



Figure 19: Map of first floor



Figure 20: Sign panel found in First floor galleries.

A net-zero museum

MUŻA is also a net-zero building with virtually no impact on the environment as it generates its energy requirements through photo-voltaic cells purposely installed on its roof and lower consumption thanks to the intelligent use of the thermal mass of the building, double glazing and intelligent LED lighting systems. On the other hand, lighting levels in galleries (both those at the ground floor and the rest at first floor level), are adjusted different due to the nature of the galleries.

MUŻA Restaurant

Together with the museum, there is also a Restaurant located within the remit of MUŻA public space. It opens beyond the museum's opening hours and it is conceived as an extension of the museum experience. Upon approaching the museum through Piazza De Vallette, one can enter by going up the stairs found in front of the entrance. Those with wheelchairs or pushchairs can easily make use of the ramp found on the right-hand side of the entrance.



Figure 21: Entrance to MUZA Restaurant

MUŻA Restaurant boasts three main areas within MUŻA each having a rich history of their own.

The Bar-Cafe area is located within what once was the Auberge's Kitchen. A quaint space where surviving elements from the original historic kitchen including the flagstone flooring, the hearth complete with sooth and grime and other architectural features are combined with and interpreted through modern décor.

The Donato Room is adjacent to the Bar-Café area. The luxurious interior, with shades of blue, red and green is illuminated by the resplendent metal-work chandelier which casts a delicate floral pattern onto the interior. This pattern is inspired by the early 20th century decorative frieze which still survives.

Finally, the typical Mediterranean Courtyard is the ideal open space to unwind and experience the historic fabric of the building itself. This is the MUŻA agora or public space with a prominent arch crowning a well at the center of the Courtyard. This is the place where to enjoy Malta’s Mediterranean weather, to hang out or to just get inspired following your visit to the museum galleries.



Figure 22: MUZA Courtyard

Hence by paying a visit to MUŻA, one can enjoy from a lovely visit at the museum galleries and could also explore the culinary experience at its bespoke cafeteria and restaurant serving dishes inspired by and branded to complement the collection on display. Thus, visitors will surely not disappoint themselves!

Contact Information

Address: Auberge D 'Italie, Merchant Street, Valletta VLT 1170

Telephone: +356 23954500

Opening hours: January – February

Mondays, Wednesdays – Sundays 9am till 5pm

Tuesdays Closed

March – December

Mondays to Sundays 10am till 6pm

Hours of Operation: All year round except 24, 25 & 31 December, 1 January & Good Friday

Website: <https://heritagemalta.org/muza-national-community-art-museum/>; www.muza.mt