

# DOMVS ROMANA: ACCESS STATEMENT

## INTRODUCTION

We at the Domvs Romana welcome all kinds of visitors and strive to make your stay with us as enjoyable as possible. The site is fully wheelchair accessible, if you have got any accessibility concerns please contact us before your visit, and we will help address these concerns.

The Domvs Romana sheds light on the private life and habits of an ancient Roman aristocrat. Very little was recovered of the noble Roman town house (domvs) itself, but the intricate mosaics and other artefacts that survived for centuries are testimony enough to the original richness of this dwelling.

Accidentally discovered in 1881, this site and the mosaics within, had the first ever purposely-built structure in the Maltese Islands meant to protect an archaeological site and collection.

Most of the Roman artefacts and antiquities, including the few remaining marble pieces scattered in the streets of Mdina, were transferred to this museum, which officially opened in 1882. The museum then continued to serve as a repository for all the Roman artefacts found around the Island.

Throughout the years, the museum went through various renovations which included the addition of a façade with a triangular pediment and a large rectangular display room. The museum was closed during World War II, during which it was used as a small restoration centre. It was eventually re-opened to the public in 1945.

The Victorian-style displays were also modernised along the time. Apart from showing the complex history of the site, the current museum display is, in fact, designed to take the visitor through the various aspects of a Roman aristocratic family and household, with aspects ranging from the actual division of roles in a Roman family, to fashion, education, entertainment, and food and drink.

## PRE-ARRIVAL INFORMATION

The journey can be planned visiting <https://www.google.com/maps/>. Simply input 'Domvs Romana, Mdina' and follow the directions from your location. The Domvs Romana can be reached by bus with the closest bus stop only a few metres away from the site.

For the most up-to-date information about bus routes and timetables please see - <https://www.publictransport.com.mt/en/visiting-malta>. The Bus Stops called 'Rabat 1' and 'Rabat 2' are the ones closest to the Domvs Romana. Descending from the bus, walk in the direction of the roundabout whilst keeping on the same sidewalk. Cross the road leading to the Mdina Ditch and keep on walking straight on the same sidewalk until you arrive at the Domvs Romana's entrance. The total journey time is of around 3 minutes. Street signs from Saqqajja and the Rabat town centre also clearly indicate the path to the site. Coaches and minivans have designated boarding and alighting areas adjacent to the site.

Free public parking bays are available on the streets surrounding the complex, with free public car parks being situated opposite the complex and in the Mdina Ditch nearby. The roads around the site are all asphalted. Two blue badge parking bays are available free of charge in front of the entrance. The North Route of the Hop-on Hop-off Bus Malta takes you to the Mdina main entrance gate, from where you can walk to the site.

## MAIN ENTRANCE, RECEPTION, GIFTSHOP AND TICKETING AREA

### Main entrance

Entrance to the site's forecourt is through a gate 198cm wide that is always kept open during visitor hours. The main door of the visitor centre serves as both the entrance and the exit of the site. It is 130cm wide and is kept open during opening hours. Three steps each 13cm high lead to the main door of the visitor centre. A ramp adjacent to the forecourt's gate leads wheelchair users to the main door of the site which opens automatically.

### Reception Area, Ticketing & Gift Shop

The reception, giftshop and ticketing area occupy the same space at the building's entrance. The floor is tiled, and the area is illuminated by means of overhead lighting.

The gift shop is situated opposite the main entrance door. Items that can be purchased from the giftshop include books, jewellery and site-specific souvenirs. Whilst the shop is wheelchair accessible visitors should ask staff for assistance when they would like to see shop items situated on high shelves. Visitors are given a brochure which explains the site's highlights. Whilst information panels are in Maltese and English, visitors can ask for Gallery Site Sheets in Italian, Spanish or French which are available from reception. Access to the display area is through turnstiles.

## THE DOMVS ROMANA

Proceeding through the turnstiles the visitor encounters artifacts in glass cabinets, large stone sculptures, and a mixture of audiovisual interpretation narratives and information panels in both Maltese and English. These guide the visitor through the site's discovery, some of the remains found within, and facets of life in Roman Malta. Some artifacts in display cases might not be visible below 81cm.

8 steps each 17cm high leads the visitor down a flight of stairs to the Mosaic floors which were found in the Roman dwelling. A lift is available for wheelchair users. Apart from the mosaic floors this area of the site contains explanations on different architectural elements and spaces of the site and the best existent example of Roman statuary found on the Maltese Islands. A bench is available in this area for visitor comfort.

A door 190cm wide leads to a partially sheltered area at the back of the site where other remains dating to the Roman and Islamic periods in Malta can be observed. Interpretation panels explaining the remains and their surroundings are also found in this area.

## RESTROOMS

Restrooms are located on the ground floor of the complex just before the flight of stairs leading to the peristyle area. The door to the unisex toilet opens inwards to the left and the opening is 74cm. The toilet is 140cm deep and 104cm wide. A unisex wheelchair accessible toilet is also found in the same area. The door to the accessible toilet opens outwards to the left and is 90cm wide. The accessible toilet is 230cm long and 135cm wide. In the accessible toilet one finds a wall mounted nappy changing table that conforms to the requirements of CEN1221.

The toilet areas are well lit by means of sensor-operated fluorescent lighting.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

All of our staff have been trained in customer service and will strive to make your visit as pleasant as possible. Our staff will happily answer queries about Rabat and Mdina and areas of interest nearby. Questions with regards to curatorial aspects will be forwarded to the curators of the site and answered in a timely manner. We welcome trained assistance dogs. We regret that pets are not permitted anywhere in the Domvs Romana.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

**Address:** Domvs Romana, Wesgħet il-Mużew, Rabat, RBT 1202, Malta

**Telephone number:** +356 21454125

**Email:** [info@heritagemalta.org](mailto:info@heritagemalta.org)

**Website:** [www.heritagemalta.org](http://www.heritagemalta.org)



(Base map: ERDF I56. Orthoimagery 2012)

## OPENING HOURS

The Domvs Romana is open on Tuesdays and from Thursdays to Sundays between 9.00 and 17.00 in January and February. From March to December the Domvs Romana is open from Tuesdays to Sundays between 9.00 and 17.00. The site is not open on the 24th, 25th & 31st of December, 1st of January, and on Good Friday.

If you have any problem or suggestion regarding the accessibility of this portal, please write to us to enable us to respond in a helpful manner. Do let us know the nature of the problem along with your contact information.

## FUTURE PLANS

Current archaeological investigations are revealing more insights into the Domvs Romana and its surroundings. Plans are in hand to open more areas of the site to visitors when these archaeological investigations are concluded. Some of the finds retrieved from these investigations will also be on display within the site. A guidebook and a multi-lingual audio guide are also planned for the site.