
Gran Castello Historic House

Set foot into a time warp hurling you three centuries back, just by walking into the Gran Castello Historic House, nestled inside the impenetrable walls of the Citadel in Victoria, Gozo. The house is a cluster of five distinct properties dating back to the late Middle ages, which were fused into one big property with the opening up of interlinking doorways, at some stage during the late 19th or early 20th centuries. On the 20th November, 1984 it was opened to the public as a Folklore Museum.

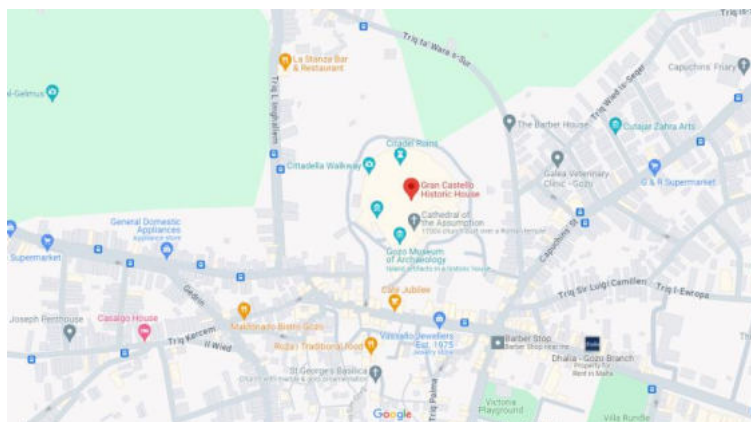
PRE-ARRIVAL INFORMATION

Before visitors visit the Gran Castello Historic House all relevant information about the site can be easily accessed from the Heritage Malta's website. Such information includes opening and closing hours, highlights of the sites and admission fees. Besides, from the Heritage Malta website one can access full details and maps which explain how to reach the museum. On the Website as well, there is a virtual experience video so the visitors will be able to have a look at the site prior to their visit.

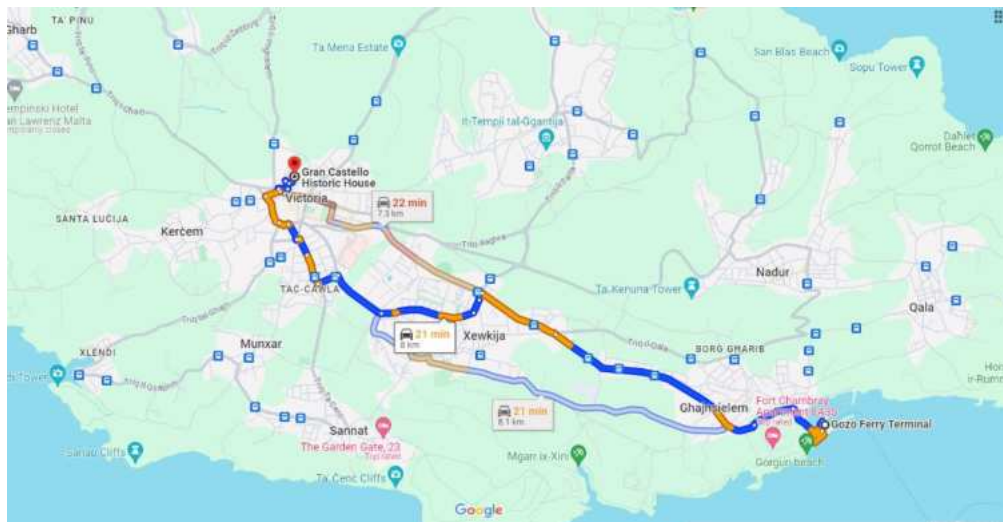
Heritage Malta museums target different audiences of varying age groups. Hence, we offer admission fees to Adults, Seniors, Students, Children and persons with disability amongst others. Nonetheless, service dogs are also most welcome.

Getting to The Gran Castello Historic House

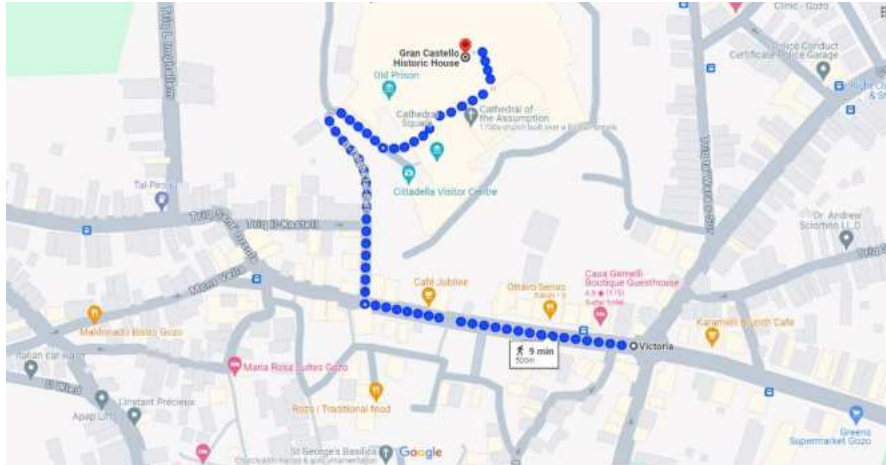
The Gran Castello Historic House is located in the Citadel at Victoria, the capital city of Gozo. (below photo refers).



A 21 minutes' drive from the Gozo ferry Terminal, the single point of entry for visitors crossing the sea channel from Malta, takes you to the Gran Castello Historic House. (below photo refers).



A 9 minutes' walk will take you from the Victoria capital streets to the Gran Castello Historic House. (below photo refers)



The museum is very close to the Malta Public Transport bus terminus located in Victoria as well. This link below provides all the information and the routes that Malta Public Transport's provide from villages around Gozo to Victoria. <https://www.publictransport.com.mt/en/routes-timetables>. Other sources of transportation around Gozo are taxis, ride hailings including bolt, ecabs, uber and Sightseeing buses. Furthermore, should one decide to use a private car, there are various parking areas, such as a private car park at the Citadel. However, one must pay €2.00 in order to park his car there. Furthermore, located next to the Malta Public Transport terminus, there is the Main car park which is free of charge and next to it there is also another private carpark where one can park against a donation of €2.00. Additionally, one can also park the car along the streets of Victoria.

Building, Reception and Ticketing Area

Building and Main Entrance

Along with the regeneration plan of the Citadel, Heritage Malta embarked into an aspiring project of converting what was the Folklore Museum of a Historic House concept. Sandwiched between Bernardo de Opuo and Zenqa Street, the Gran Castello Historic House is the oldest cluster of standing buildings in the Citadel. The three dwellings overlooking Bernardo de Opuo street, sitting in a row along one side of a typical narrow and short street, provides enlightening information on the appearance of a characteristic late-medieval urban streetscape. The other two properties overlooking Zenqa street, consist of a mule driven mill and a squarish garden with local fruit trees such as a vine and



lemon tree amongst others, alongside local flowering plants and herbs. The origins of the Gran Castello Historic House go back to the late 15th and early 16th centuries. Their architectural features reveal some Sicilian and Catalan influences and illustrates a sophisticated Late Gothic style. The façade of the house bears fine architectural features, with rounded doorways, double windows divided by a slender column and a finely carved stone frieze marking the intersection between the two floors. The main entrance of the museum is distinguished by unique architectural features of the period with various arches and an impressive staircase.

Reception and Ticketing Area

The reception and ticketing area are at the main entrance of the museum. Thus the reception is always manned by the front of house personnel who received customer care training. Guided tours can be facilitated upon request and special themed sessions can be catered for school children.

The rooms at the ground floor are of one level and accessible to all. Once visitors purchase their ticket from the reception they will start their visit by entering the audio-visual room featuring an artistic impression of The Citadel as a medieval city and the historic house at the time when it was built and inhabited.



The reception area is located immediately upon entrance.



Audio-visual room with seating area

Furthermore, the ground floor of the main house entails an array of agricultural tools and accessories including a beast-driven mill used for grinding wheat into flour, a remarkable element in local domestic architecture of past centuries. Afterwards through the main staircase visitors continue their visit by proceeding to the rooms upstairs. The rooms of the right wing of the house are a reconstruction of an 18th century house, incorporating a main and a child's bedroom, a birth room, weaving room, dining room and a laundry and contain antique furniture dating from this period. Besides the reconstruction of an 18th century kitchen equipped with earthenware kitchen accessories, there is also the original kitchen of one of the houses containing its original stone stove. In the left wing of the house the exhibition displays consist of the servants' quarters which shows the distinctive standard of living between the resident wealthy family and the servant.



Information is available throughout the site through the information panels and several audio-visual screens which are distributed along the site. The panels have been designed to be highly visual and information is available both in Maltese and in English. Guided tours can be facilitated upon request and special themed sessions can be catered for school children.



Seating is available throughout the museum through chairs and benches distributed in the museums display areas and also in the Historic House Garden and terrace areas.



Being a historical house of such importance, certain amenities are impossible to implement, in fact to visit both wings of the house – right and left wing visitors need to make use of the stairs to visit all the exhibition areas. However, persons with mobility issues can visit the ground floor of each house since each house have a separate entrance which can be opened by Front of House personnel upon request.

These houses are considered as an outstanding example of late medieval domestic architecture and are the only remaining such examples in Gozo.

RESTROOMS

The restroom of the Gran Castello Historic House is found at the museum's main entrance, where there is one unisex accessible toilet with low level towel dispenser and a wash hand basin in the common area. Lighting is of a good standard and includes emergency lighting.

Future Plans

Our goal is to continue to identify areas that are in need of improvement in terms of physical, sensory and intellectual access within our sites in order to accommodate more our visitors.

Furthermore, several ongoing projects such as the implementation of an audio guide system and implementation of site leaflet in different languages with more information about the site are currently in progress in order to enhance the visitors experience and ensure their enjoyment at the museum.

Contact Information

Address: Bernardo DeOpuo Street, Victoria, Gozo

Telephone: 21562034

Opening hours: During January and February, The Gran Castello Historic House opens on Tuesday, and from Thursday till Sunday from 9:00hrs till 17:00hrs (last admission at 16:30) on Monday and Wednesday the site will be closed. Between March and December, the museum opens from Tuesday till Sunday from 9:00hrs till 17:00hrs (last admission at 16:30) on Monday the site will be Closed.

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

Website: <https://heritagemalta.mt/explore/gran-castello-historic-house/>