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## The Old Prison

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The oldest surviving prison in Gozo still reverberates with the memories of its numerous inmates who have incised their mark on the aged walls of its cells and corridors. Presenting the largest known collection of historical graffiti in one single place on the Maltese Islands, this site provides an intriguing glimpse into the conditions in which inmates were kept at the time.

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### Pre-Arrival Information

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Before visitors arrive at The Old Prison, 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. 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.

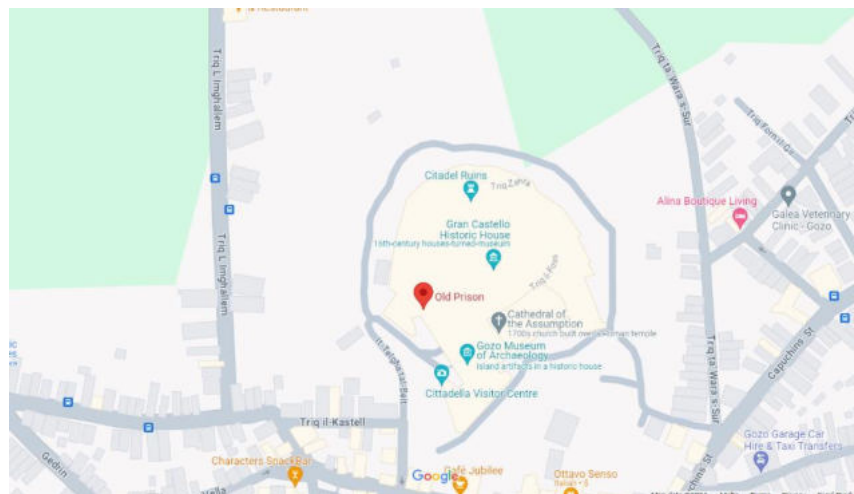
Heritage Malta museums target different audiences of varying age groups. Hence, we offer admission fees to Adults, Seniors, Students, Children and persons with disability amongst others. Nonetheless, service dogs are also most welcome.

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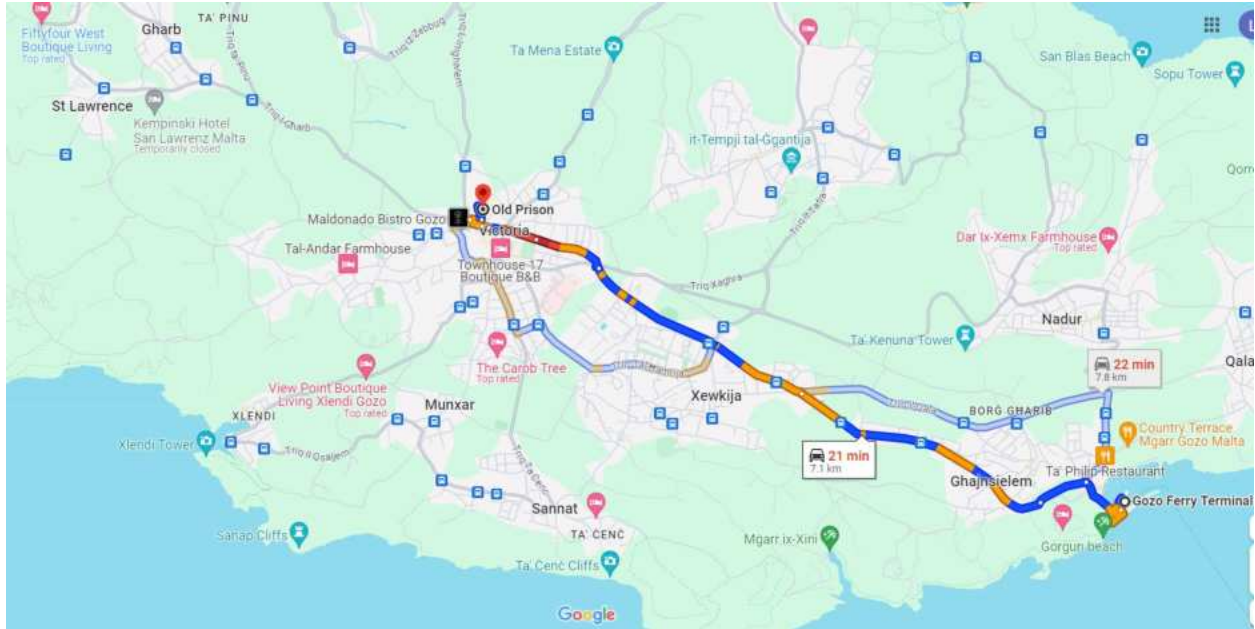
### Getting to The Old Prison

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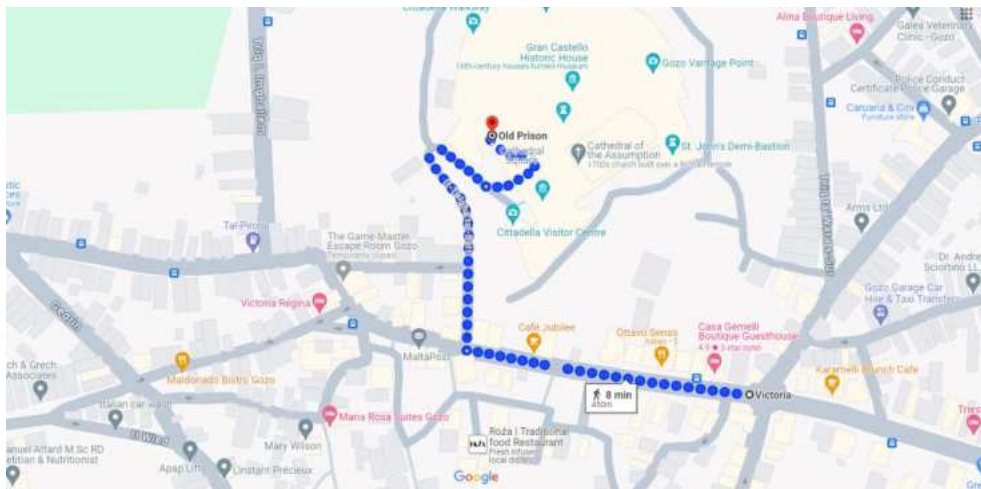
The Old Prison is located in the Citadel at Victoria, the capital city of Gozo. (below photo refers).



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 Old Prison. (below photo refers).



An 8 minutes' walk will take you from the Victoria capital streets to The Old Prison. (below photo refers)



Situated in the Citadel in Victoria, Gozo, The Old Prison stands adjacent to the Courts of Justice, to which it was originally connected.



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. Against a fee of € 2.00. 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.

## Main Entrance, Reception and Ticketing Area

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### **Main Entrance and Reception**

The main entrance of The Old Prison is through 3 steps. For persons with mobility issues in order to avoid the 3 steps which one have to pass through in order to reach the reception, there is a side door along the street of St. Martin Quarter which gives another access to the building.



*Side door at St. Martin Quarter Street for persons with mobility issues used as entry and exit point.*



Once entering the main entrance one can immediately view the reception desk and a small gift shop. From this 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, colouring books for children, puzzles, art books, history book amongst others. Furthermore, many of these books are available in different languages. All the signage and prices are clear and visible. Staff on duty will offer assistance whenever it is requested.



*The reception area is located immediately upon entrance.*



*The museum shop offers a wide range of souvenirs that are displayed on shelves of various levels, some of which are also accessible from a seated position.*

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. Once the ticket is bought the visitors will be able to start their experience by viewing an interpretative exhibition on graffiti in Gozo at the entrance hall.

The 6 steps found at the reception takes you to a narrow corridor leading to 6 individual cells, overlooking a central courtyard still retain much of their original state.



*6 steps found at the reception leading to the corridors where the cells are located*



*Narrow corridor leading to all the 6 Prison cells*

The massive low doors with their heavy locks are also the original ones. Visitors will be able to view these original cells from outside the doors to the exception of the first cell where visitors are able to go inside the cell by going up one step. Once visitors have seen all the cells they exit the site by going back to the reception and by using the reception door since it serves as an entry and exit point. For persons with mobility issues, they will be able to exit through the same side door that they've entered from which takes them to St. Martin Quarter Street.



*The only open cell that visitors can access.*

The graffiti are certainly the highlight of this site. They include mainly sea vessels and date to different periods. However, visitors may also note marks of palm prints, crosses, names, dates, games, and anthropomorphic figures. Some inmates also appear to have scratched a record of their length of stay behind bars. The representations most frequently met with in this corpus of graffiti are those of ships of different types and from different periods, the left handprint, Knights' crosses, and various other types of crosses. Names, dates, numerals, mathematical calculations, stars of David, wind roses, calendars, games, flags, windmills and anthropomorphic figures are not lacking either. These graffiti are in a very good state of preservation and can be admired by anyone visiting the Old Prison.



Information is available throughout the site through the information panels which are distributed along the site. The panels have been designed to be highly visual and offer a good balance of text and imagery.



Furthermore, site information leaflets are also available in different languages such as Maltese, English, German, French, Italian and Spanish. Furthermore, at the reception there is also a video which provides further information in audiovisual format and includes subtitles. Guided tours can be facilitated upon request and special themed sessions can be catered for school children.

## Future Plans

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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, a number of ongoing projects such as the implementation of an audio guide system, specialised staff info sessions and training will hopefully accommodate a wider range of audiences and ensure their enjoyment of the site.

## Contact Information

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**Address:** Cathedral Square, Victoria, Gozo

**Telephone:** 21565988

**Opening hours:** During January and February, The Old Prison 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 site 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/the-old-prison/>