

# IL-BERĠA TA' KASTILJA

## AUBERGE DE CASTILLE











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“Il-belt Valletta hi ġawhra  
li ġġegħelna niftaħru  
bil-Maltin li ġew qabilna  
li użaw il-ġebbla Maltija,  
u ħallewlna tant teżori  
li ma jiqdiemu qatt

Illum il-ġebbla Maltija qed tintuża  
fil-proġett li qed isir fid-dahla  
tal-Belt Kapitali li fl-2018 se tkun  
il-belt kapitali Ewropea tal-kultura.

Din se tkun okkażjoni oħra  
biex nesponu aktar it-teżori  
li għandna f’pajjiżna”



# KBURIN BIL-MERAVILJI TA' PAJJIŻNA

Sa mill-bidu tagħha ċ-ċiviltà Maltija għarfet il-kwalità sabiha tal-ġebbla Maltija. Biha nbnew it-tempji preistoriċi u minnha tħaffru l-katakombi. Biha wkoll, bil-ġebbla Maltija, inbnew il-knejjes u l-kappelli mxerrdin ma' kull rokna ta' pajjiżna.

Il-ġebbla hi riżorsa naturali li lil Malta tatha storja, dinjità u karattru distintiv. Il-wirt ta' Malta fil-ġebel hu wirt li jisthoqqlu jithares għaliex hu element li jagħmilna nazzjon, kburi bl-identità ghanja tagħna. Dan il-wirt irridu nġożżuh, nġhallmuh lit-tfal fl-iskejjel kollha, u nipprezentawh anki lit-turisti biex ikun apprezzat barra minn xtutna.

Il-ħajt tas-sejjeħ, il-girna, ir-razzett, id-dar raħlija huma parti minn dan il-wirt li missirijietna u ommijietna, ħallew għalina biex illum aħna nistgħu nġhidu li għandna teżor, u hu teżor li hu misluf lilna biex nġhadduh lil ta' warajna. Minn dan il-mod kif intużat il-ġebbla Maltija fil-bidu, għaddejna għal kostruzzjonijiet akbar, differenti, imnebbħin mill-aqwa stili arkitettoniċi li ħakmu fl-Ewropa, u mbaġħad f'kontinenti oħrajn ukoll. Hekk huma l-katidrali tagħna, hekk huma diversi knejjes, u hekk huma s-swar u l-bereġ.

Mingħajr il-ġebbla Maltija, ma hemmx Malta kif nafuha llum. Fl-istili differenti tal-forom tal-arti, bħall-arkitettura, il-pittura u l-iskultura, fl-isfond tal-Barokk u ta' stili prominenti oħra, aħna llum nagħrfu d-dinjità tagħna quddiem kontinent sħiħ u anki quddiem dinja sħiħa. Fic-ċokon tagħha Malta hi meravilja: meravilja li ħolqot Malta tal-ġebbla maħduma,

minquxa, imbidla skont il-ħsieb tal-arkitett u ta' kull artist ieħor li nqeda biha.

Il-belt Valletta, hi minnha nnifisha mużew. Inti u timxi tħoss li trid tistaqsi, u tkun taf aktar; għaliex kull triq, kull kantuniera, kull bini jitolbu spjegazzjoni, u għandhom sfond storiku, kulturali, marbut dejjem mal-Maltin għeżieħ ta' qabilna. Il-Berġa ta' Kastilja hi waħda mill-bosta monumenti li hi mimlija bihom il-belt ewlenija tagħna u Malta fiha nnifisha. Hi monument f'kull aspekt u f'kull rokna. Il-belt Valletta hi tassew wirja permanenti għalina u għal kulħadd. Hi gawhra li gġegħelna niftaħru bil-Maltin li ġew qabilna li użaw il-ġebbla Maltija, u ħallewlna tant teżori li ma jiqdiemu qatt.

Illum il-ġebbla Maltija wkoll qed tintuża fil-proġett li qed isir fid-daħla tal-belt Valletta biex ikollna entratura dinjituża li tixraq lill-Belt Kapitali tagħna li fl-2018 se tkun il-belt kapitali Ewropea tal-kultura. Din se tkun okkażjoni oħra biex nesponu aktar it-teżori li għandna f'pajjiżna. Aħna impenjati li nxerdu l-għarfien dwar l-istorja, l-arkitettura, il-lingwa, l-ambjent, l-identità u dak kollu li jagħmilna Maltin, fostna l-Maltin u mat-turisti.

Aħna kburin bil-meravilji ta' pajjiżna. Meta napprezzaw lil pajjiżna nkunu qegħdin nuru li għandna apprezzament u stima lejna nfusna, lejn dawk li ġew qabilna u rispett lejn il-ġenerazzjonijiet li ġejjin li se jgawdu l-wirt li għandna f'pajjiżna.

Lawrence Gonzi  
Prim Ministru







# L-ORDNI TA' SAN ĠWANN

L-Ordni ta' San Ġwann twaqqfet f'nofs is-seklu hdax bhala spatar għall-pellegrini Nsara f'Ġerusalem u qatt ma kienet intenzjonata li tkun ordni militari, imma peress li kien żdied il-bżonn għall-protezzjoni tal-insara u tal-postijiet imqaddsa, il-ħtieġa ta' attività militari kienet evidenti.

Matul is-seklu erbatax, l-Ordni ta' San Ġwann waqqfet l-amministrazzjoni u t-tmexxija tagħha, biex fl-1327, il-Kapitlu ta' *Montpellier* iddeċieda li jorganizza lill-Kavallieri fi tmien lingwi – Franza, l-Ingilterra, l-Aragona, Kastilja, il-Ġermanja, *Auvergne*, Provenza u l-Italja. Kull Kavallier kellu joqgħod mal-membri tal-Lingwa tiegħu.

Kull Lingwa kienet rappreżentata f'Kunvent (il-Palazz, il-Knisja, l-Isptar, u l-Bereġ) b'*Pilier* li kien ikun responsabbli mill-Berġa u kull *Pilier* kien ikollu titlu ufficjali li kien iġorr miegħu ċertu drittijiet u dmirijiet.

Il-*Pilier* ta' Kastilja kien il-Gran Kanċillier, responsabbli mir-reġistrazzjoni u l-kustodja tal-ligġijiet u d-digrieti ddikjarati mill-Ordni jew mill-Gran Mastru, kif ukoll mid-dokumenti u ittri li kienu joħorġu mill-Ordni u minn Awtoritajiet oħra. Il-Gran Kanċillier kien assistit mill-Viċi Kanċillier li kien jinħatar għal haġtu mill-Gran Kanċillier u li kien ikun responsabbli mix-xogħol ta' kuljum u jattendi wkoll għall-Kunsill tal-Ordni.

**Kull Lingwa kienet rappreżentata f'Kunvent... b'*Pilier* li kien ikun responsabbli mill-Berġa u kull *Pilier* kien ikollu titlu ufficjali li kien iġorr miegħu ċertu drittijiet u dmirijiet**







# IL-BERĠA

Il-kelma “berġa” oriġinat fi żmien il-Gran Mastru *Claude de la Sengle* u kienet tirreferi għall-ospizji u d-djar tal-Kavallieri. Dawn il-Bereġ imbagħad saru centri internazzjonali ta’ kull Lingwa.

Matul l-ewwel snin tagħhom f’Malta, il-Kavallieri kellhom iservu f’wiehed mit-tliet sptarjiet u kienu jgħixu f’waħda mill-Bereġ tal-Lingwa tagħhom b’xejn.

Fil-Bereġ, il-*Pilier* kien ikun responsabbli mit-tmexxija u l-Ordni kienet tgħaddilu kull sena somma flus jew l-ekwivalenti f’qamħ għall-bżonnijiet tal-membri taħt ir-responsabbiltajiet tiegħu.

Għall-osservanza tad-dixxiplina kien iddaħħal statut speċjali. Normalment l-ikel kien ikun servut f’hinijiet fissi u l-Kavallieri kienu marbuta li jieklu l-Berġa minn tal-inqas erba’ darbiet fil-ġimgħa. L-iklet li kienu jkunu organizzati fis-Sala kienu jkunu preседuti mill-Kap tal-Lingwa li kien ikun fuq mejda separata, impoġġija fuq pjattaforma bil-privileġġ li jkollu tapit u mhadda taħt saqajh.

Il-Kavallieri kellhom żewġ ikmamar għalihom fil-Berġa u kienu assistiti minn servjent li kien iservihom f’kull ma kellhom bżonn.

Il-Bereġ kienu mifruxa madwar il-Belt, kull waħda mibnija viċin il-fortifikazzjonijiet u mhux ‘il bogħod mill-Kon Katidral ta’ San Ġwann. Il-Bereġ kienu jkunu mibnija b’żewġ sulari b’faċċata rikka imma mhux b’hafna dekorazzjonijiet żejda, kif ukoll biha interna. Kien ikollhom ukoll taraġ monumentali bil-kmamar ċerimonjali fil-livell t’isfel u l-kmamar tas-sodda fil-livell ta’ fuq.

*Il-Pilier* kien ikun responsabbli mit-tmexxija u l-Ordni kienet tgħaddilu kull sena somma flus jew l-ekwivalenti f’qamħ għall-bżonnijiet tal-membri taħt ir-responsabbiltajiet tiegħu

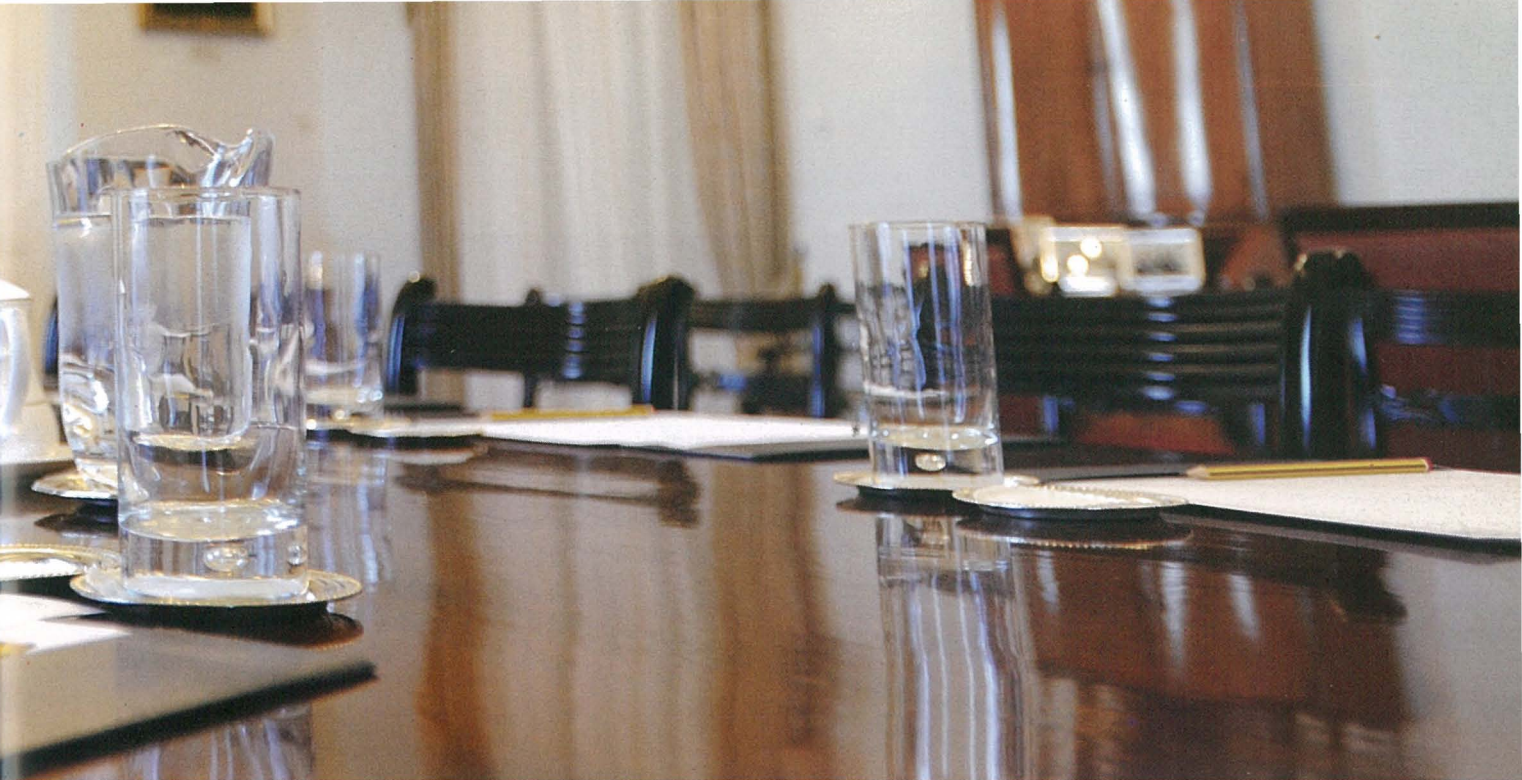




Is-sit fejn il-Kavallieri kienu jagħzlu li jibnu dawn il-Bereġ kien jigi determinat mill-possibbiltà li jibnu Knisja Konventwali, il-Palazz, il-Berġa u d-djar għall-Kavallieri Anzjani

Is-sit fejn il-Kavallieri kienu jagħzlu li jibnu dawn il-Bereġ kien jigi deċiż mill-possibbiltà li jibnu Knisja Konventwali, il-Palazz, il-Berġa u d-djar għall-Kavallieri Anzjani.

Il-komunità tal-Lingwa ta' Kastilja kienet meqjusa bhala distrett wiehed fiċ-ċentru tal-Belt Valletta li kien jinkludi wkoll lil Triq San Ġwann, Triq Żakkarija, Triq Melita u Triq il-Merkanti. L-identità



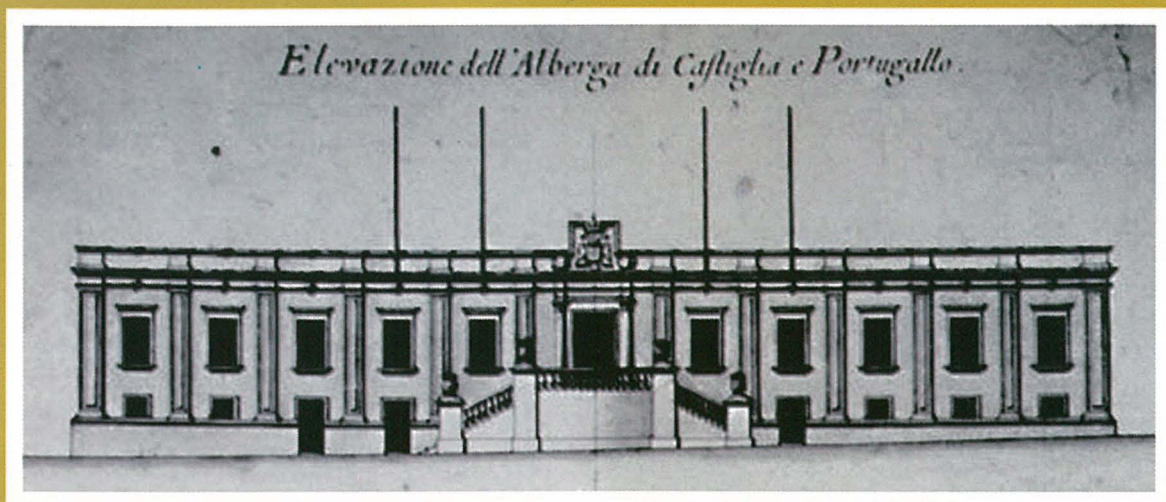
*Is-sala fejn jitlaqqà l-Kabinet* ▲



tal-perit li kien fassal dan id-distrett sfortunatament mhix magħrufa imma l-probabbiltà hi li kien Ġormu Cassar, li kien fassal il-bini tal-Belt Valletta.

Fil-bidu l-membri ta' din il-komunità kienu jgħixu go tined tal-injam imma fis-26 ta' Awwissu 1569, il-Kavallieri Spanjoli li kienu miġbura fil-Berġa fil-Birgu ddecidew li jibnu Berġa ġdida fil-Belt Valletta.





Il-Pjanti tal-faċċata ta' kif kellha tkom l-ewwel Berġa ▲



## L-EWWEL BERĠA

L-art li fuqha hemm mibnija l-Berġa ta' Kastilja għaddiet għand il-Kavallieri fl-1569 u fuqha kellu jinbena bini maestuż li kellu jkun jismu *Casa Grande* bil-faċċata tagħti għal Triq San Pawl. L-ispejjeż biex tinbena din il-Berġa ġew iffinażjati minn taxxa li kienet saret fuq il-membri ta' din il-Lingwa fl-1570. Din id-dar, li kienet tista' takkomoda biss lill-Kap tal-Lingwa u numru limitat ta' Kavallieri, intużat bħala berġa bejn l-1571 u l-1573 sakemm il-Kavallieri tal-Lingwa li kienu għadhom jgħixu l-Birgu ddeċidew li jergġhu jibnu berġa akbar.

L-art li fuqha hemm mibnija l-Berġa ta' Kastilja għaddiet għand il-Kavallieri fl-1569 u fuqha kellu jinbena bini maestuż li kellu jkun jismu *Casa Grande* bil-faċċata tagħti għal Triq San Pawl





## IT-TIENI BERĠA

Il-Kavallieri ppruwaw ibiddlu l-karatteristiċi militari mill-bini u bnew binjiet godda billi introduċew l-istil Barokk b'dekorazzjonijiet elaborati. L-espressjoni ta' saħħa u prestigju f'dan l-istil ta' bini tant intgħogbot illi bdiet tintuża f'diversi bini u djar ta' nies għonja madwar il-gżejjer.

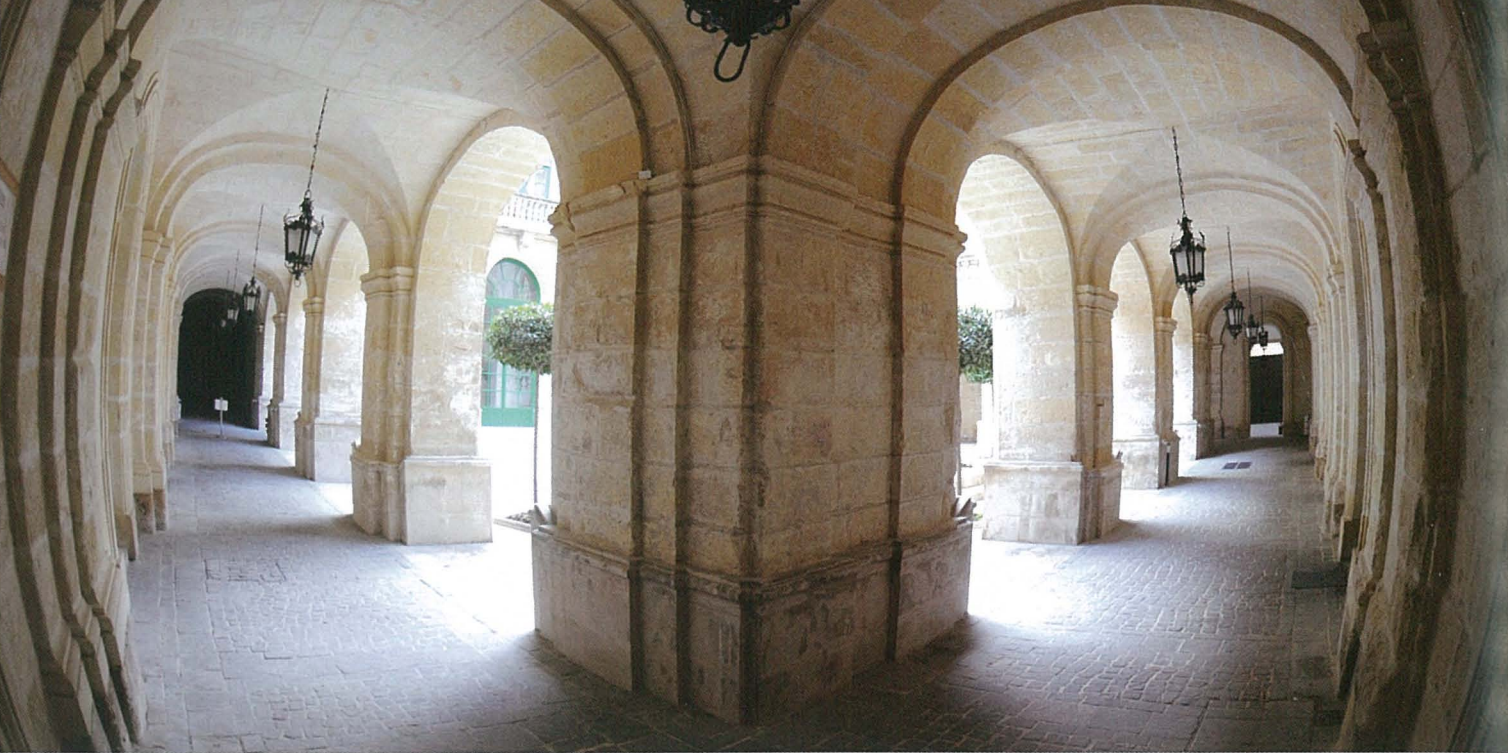
Il-Berġa l-ġdida nbriet bejn 1741 u l-1745.

Il-Bini tal-Berġa ta' Kastilja ċertament huwa l-aqwa xogħol arkitettoniku ta' stil Barokk tat-tmintax-il sekl u fil-Belt Valletta. Il-faċċata tal-Berġa hija rikka iżda mhux b'hafna dekorazzjonijiet żejda, filwaqt li l-proporzjon tal-bini, speċjalment it-tqassim u l-għamla tat-twieqi, huma partikularment pjaċevoli li l-qofol tagħhom hija xbiha tal-Gran Mastru Pinto. Is-simbolu tal-Gran Mastru, il-qamar, issibu kważi f'kull parti tal-bini. L-arma tal-Gran Mastru Pinto ssibha wkoll bi prominenza fuq it-tieqa ċentrali mal-faċċata. Fuq nett tal-entrata hemm ukoll iż-żewġ emblemi tal-Lingwi tal-Portugall u Spanja.









## IL-BERĠA WARA LI TELQU L-KAVALLIERI



### Il-Francízi

Il-miġja ta' Napuljun u l-forzi tiegħu fl-1798 ġabu bidla. Fl-20 ta' Ġunju, l-Ispanjoli ġabu permess biex ikunu jistgħu jitolqu minn Malta u jieħdu magħhom il-propjetà mobbli, u l-Francízi okkupaw il-Berġa ta' Kastilja u kienu jużawha bħala l-Kummissjoni tal-Propjetà Nazzjonali.



### **Żmien l-Ingliżi**

Fl-1800, Malta reġgħet kienet f'idejn il-Maltin bl-ġhajnuna tal-Ingliżi u b'hekk Malta saret kolonja Ingliża. L-Ingliżi u l-Maltin iċċelebraw din ir-rebħa fil-Berġa ta' Kastilja. Fl-1805, il-Forzi Armati waqqfu l-Kwartieri tagħhom ġewwa l-Berġa ta' Kastilja u kienu jużawha wkoll biex joqogħdu fiha l-Uffiċjali Ingliżi.

Fl-1814, il-Berġa kienet intużat ukoll biex jiġi akkomodat kontingent tal-armata Eġizzjana. Fl-1840 waħda mill-kmamar fl-ewwel sular kienet mibdula f'Kappella għall-Protestanti, l-ewwel waħda f'Malta. Fl-1860, reġiment Ingliż li kien okkupa l-Berġa ta' Kastilja kien installa apparat li jibgħat sinjali lill-bastimenti tal-Gwerra li kienu jkunu fil-port.

Sas-seklu dsatax fil-Berġa ta' Kastilja kienu allokati l-Uffiċjali tal-*English Garrison*, ir-*Royal Engineers* u xi drabi wkoll l-uffiċjali tar-*Rifle Regiments*. Il-Berġa ta' Kastilja qdiet funzjoni residenzjali u fiha kont issib il-kwartieri privati li kienu jinkludu kamra tal-*billiard*, kif ukoll librerija. Qdiet

ukoll funzjoni uffiċjali u fiha kienu wkoll miġbura l-uffiċini tal-Brigadier Ġenerali, Inġiniera u wkoll uffiċini militari oħra fosthom is-Sala tal-Qorti Marzjali.

L-użu tal-Berġa ta' Kastilja mill-forzi Brittaniċi komplew sas-seklu għoxrin.

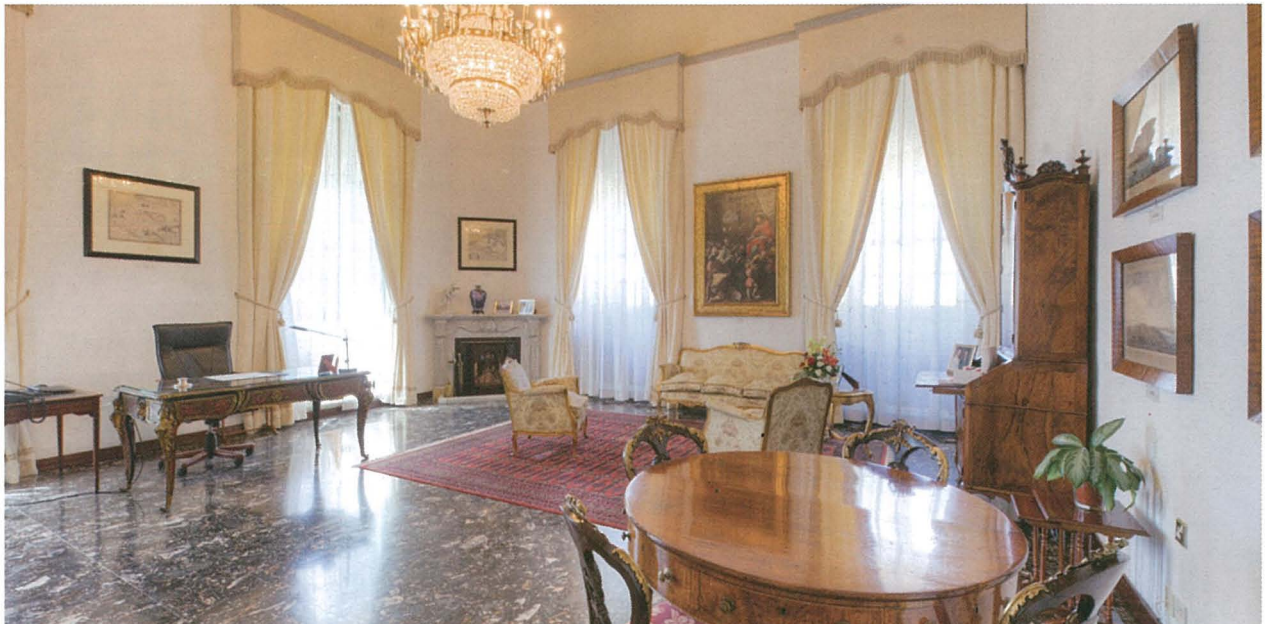
Il-Berġa ta' Kastilja għamlet xi żmien tintuża wkoll bħala Kwartieri Ġenerali tal-Armata għal Malta u l-Libja, kif ukoll għal Ċipru wara li l-istess armata kienet sospiża mill-Eġittu fl-1954.

Fl-1942 waqt it-tieni Gwerra Dinjija, il-Berġa ta' Kastilja ntlaqtet fuq in-naħa tal-lemin tal-entratura.

### **Uffiċċju tal-Prim Ministru**

Mill-4 ta' Marzu 1972, il-Berġa ta' Kastilja bdiet tintuża bħala l-Uffiċċju tal-Prim Ministru. F'dan il-bini l-Prim Ministru jmexxi x-xogħol tal-Gvern u darba fil-ġimgħa, nhar ta' Tnejn, jlaqqa` l-Kabinett tal-Ministri.

*L-Uffiċċju tal-Prim Ministru*





## RESTAWR TAL-FAĊĊATA TAL-BERĠA TA' KASTILJA

Fl-Lulju 2009, beda xogħol estensiv ta' restawr fuq il-faċċata tal-Berġa ta' Kastilja. Ix-xogħol ta' restawr inqasam f'disa' fażijiet bl-ewwel fażi tkun dik fi Triq il-Merkanti.

Apparti t-tindif tal-ġebel, inbidel ukoll xogħol ta' skultura li kien tkisser u li ġie restawrat permezz ta' teknika li tissejjaħ *plastic repair*, fejn intuża tip speċjali ta' tafal. It-teknika li ntużat hija sensitiva għall-gebla, kif isir dejjem waqt restawr ta' bini storiku. Dan ix-xogħol fuq il-ġebel sar kollu fuq il-post.

Ix-xogħol ta' restawr sar kollu mill-haddiema tar-*Restoration Unit* fi hdan il-Ministeru għar-Riżorsi u Affarijiet Rurali.





















# PATRIMONJU FIL-BERĠA TA' KASTILJA

Il-Berġa ta' Kastilja toffri kollezzjoni ta' patrimonju li tirrifletti l-istorja ta' din il-gżira tul is-snin. Dan il-ktejjeb fih firxa rappreżentattiva ta' oġġetti li jinkludu ghamara, pittura kif ukoll rigali li nġhataw lill-Poplu Malti minn Gvernijiet barranin f'okkażjonijiet storiċi.





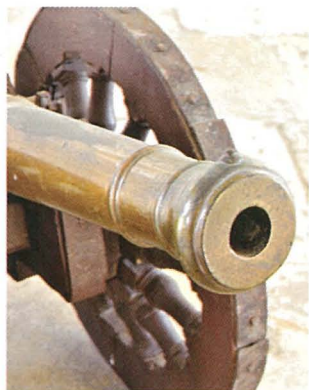
## IT-TARAĠ EWLIENI

- ◀ *Mezza - Armatura tal-Infanterija, Armier ta' Nofs is-Seklu 16*  
Din hi armatura tal-infanterija għalkemm it-tip ta' elmu f'dan is-sett kien l-aktar jintuża għat-taħriġ militari. L-erba' settijiet ta' armaturi li naraw f'Kastilja oriġinarjament kienu fl-Armerija tal-Palazz tal-Granmastru.



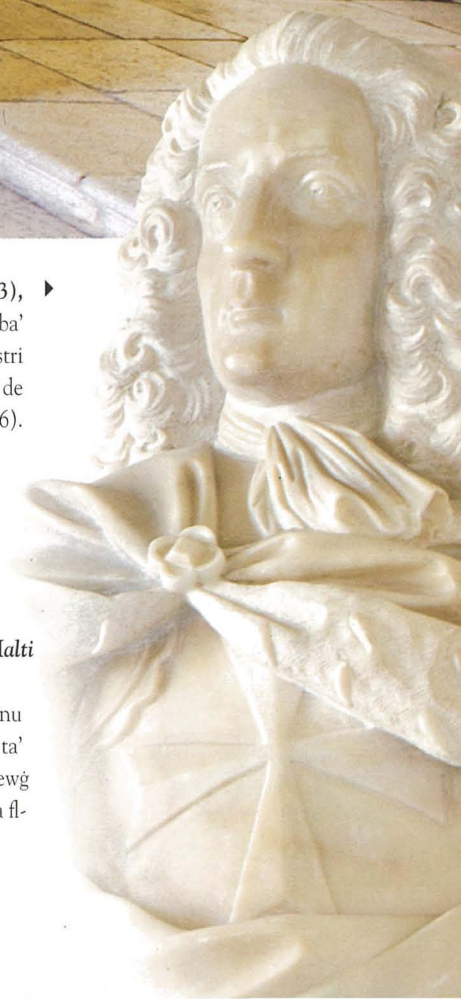


► **Bust tal-Granmastru Manoel Pinto de Fonseca (1741-1773), Irĥam, Skultur Malti tas-Seklu 18** Dan hu wieħed minn sett ta' erba' bustijiet ta' Granmastri Portugiżi maħdumin fl-irĥam. Il-Granmastri l-oħrajn huma Manoel de Vilhena (1722-1736), Louis Mendez de Vasconcellos (1622-23) u Alphonso tal-Portugal (1203-1206).



◄ **Kanun żgħir, Funditur Malti tas-Seklu 17 (dettall)**

Dawn it-tip ta' kanuni kienu jintużaw l-aktar għal skop ta' taħriġ jew spjega. Jeżistu żewġ eżemplari tal-istess għamla fl-Armerija tal-Palazz.







## IS-SALA TAL-AMBAXXATURI

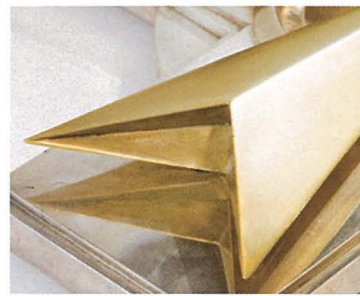
### ◀ Mera, *Skultur tas-Seklu 17*

Il-gwarniċ indurat ta' din il-mera hu xogħol fin minqax fl-injam. Fil-Palazz ta' San Anton (H' Attard) jinsabu żewġ mirjiet pariġġ din li nsibu f'Kastilja. Il-mirja l-oħra li jinsabu fl-istess sala huma xogħol tas-seklu 18.





▲ Rigal Uffiċjali mill-Konsorzju Smartcity lill-Prim Ministru Lawrence Gonzi waqt iż-żjara uffiċjali tiegħu f'Dubaj - 2007 (dettall).  
Dan hu mudell ta' *Dhow*, dgħajsa tipika tal-Golf Gharbi, maħdum f'metall prezzjuż.



▲ Rigal Uffiċjali mingħand il-Gvern Inġliż lill-Poplu Malti fl-okkażjoni tal-kisba tal-Indipendenza- 1964 (dettall)  
Is-salib tat-tmien ponot ibbanjat bid-deheb hu mqiegħed fuq sfond tal-fidda maħdum fl-għamla tal-George Cross mogħti lill-poplu Malti mir-Re Ġorġ VI tal-Ingilterra fl-1942.





◄ **Tbissim, Irĥam, Antonio Sciortino (1876-1947)**

Dan hu xoghol fl-irĥam li Sciortino stess ħadmu biex jesibih f'wirja fl-Amerika. Il-mudell fil-gġibs għal dan ix-xoghol jinsab fil-Mużew Nazzjonali tal-Arti.



▲ **Platun iħarreg liż-żagħżuġh Dionisju ta' Sirakuża, Żejt fuq Tila, Stil ta' Mattia Preti (1613-1699)**

Il-kwadru ispirat mill-kitbiet tal-Filosfu Platun li jirrakkonta l-impenn tiegħu biex jgħin lil Dionisju jwettaq riformi politiċi. Il-pittur Mattia Preti (1612-1699) hu fost l-aktar pitturi importanti tal-Barokk li ħadem f'Malta.





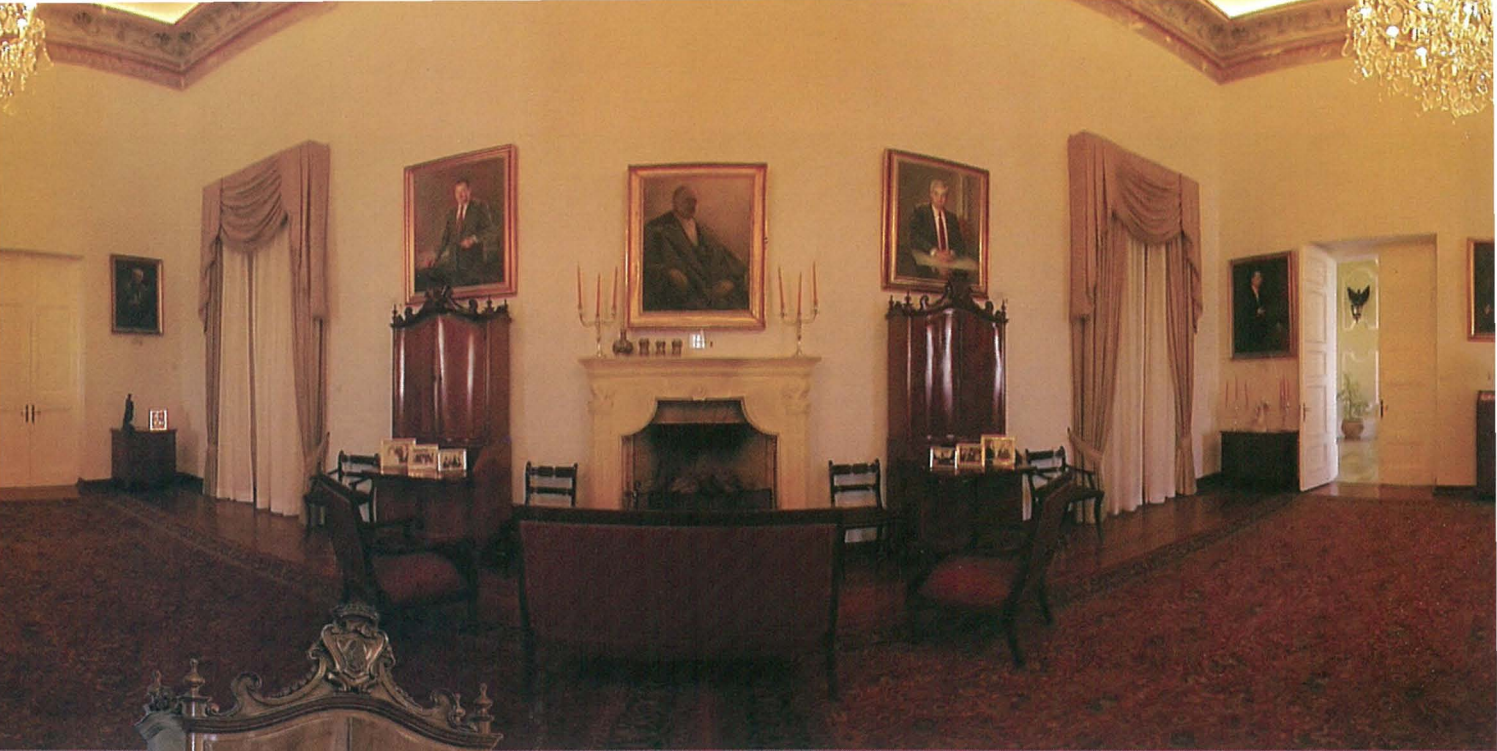
▲ Rigal Uffiċjali minghand il-President Franċiż lill-Poplu Malti fl-okkażjoni tal-kisba tal-Indipendenza (1964)  
Dan il-vażun fl-istil Neo-Klassiku hu xogħol fin tal-fabbrika tal-porċellana Sevres li għadha ssawwar xogħol tal-porċellana maħdum bl-idejn sal-lum.

▲ Rigal Uffiċjali tal-Viċi President tar-Repubblika taċ-Ċina Xi Jinping lill-Prim Ministru Lawrence Gonzi (2009)  
Dan il-kontenitur hu magħruf bħala l-vażun tal-porċellana tal-glorja u l-prospertà. Il-vażun hu xogħol fl-aqwa tradizzjoni tal-porċellana Ċiniża maħdum b'kuluri vivaċi, disinn sempliċi u stil eleganti.

▲ Rigal Uffiċjali mogħti mir-Reġina Eliżabetta II tal-Ingilterra lill-Prim Ministru ta' Malta Giorgio Borg Olivier matul iż-żjara tagħha f'Malta bħala Reġina ta' Malta fl-1967

Din hi replika tal-kaxxetta li tqiegħdet taħt l-ewwel ġebbla tal-breakwater tal-Port il-Kbir mibdi fl-1903. L-ewwel ġebbla tqiegħdet mir-Re Dwardu VII tal-Ingilterra li jigi l-bużnannu tar-Reġina Eliżabetta II tal-Ingilterra.





## IS-SALA TAL-KABINETT

◀ *Bureau, Artigġjan Malti tas-Seklu 18 (wieħed minn par)*

Dan il-par għamara maħdum fil-ġewż hu l-istess bħal dak li nsibu fl-Uffiċċju tal-Prim Ministru. L-arma tal-Lingwa ta' Aragona fi ħdan l-Ordni ta' San Ġwann tidher fuq il-gwarniċa prinċipali.





◀ Alberello tal-Majolica, *Artigġjan Sqalli tas-Seklu 18*  
Dawn ir-riċipjenti tal-Majolica kienu jintużaw ukoll fl-Isptar tal-Ordni ta' San Ġwann (*Sacra Infermeria*). L-għamla tagħhom kienet tagħmilha aktar faċli li jinqabdu tajjeb waqt il-garr minn post għall-ieħor.

Arlogg tal-kaxxa twila, *Xogħol Inġliż tas-Seklu 18* ▶  
L-artigġjan li hadmu halla ismu, Wiliam Frippet of London, fuq il-faccata tal-arlogg.



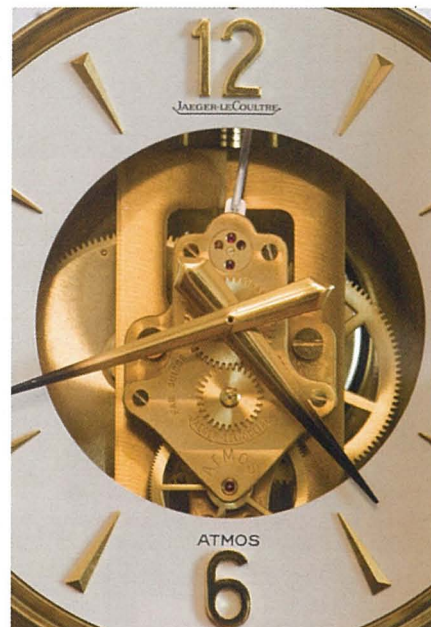






◀ Mejda tal-Kabinett, *Xogħol modern Malti*

Din il-mejda ovali tintuża waqt laqgħat tal-Kabinett tal-Ministri mmexxija mill-Prim Ministru.



▲ Kontenitur tal-Majolica

*Artigġjan Sqalli tas-Seklu 18*

Dan il-kontenitur seta' kien parti minn sett ferm akbar li nġhata mill-Granmastru Manoel de Vilhena lill-isptar ta' Santo Spirito (Rabat, Malta) fil-bidu tas-seklu 18.

▲ Kontenitur tal-Majolica (għamla ta' bomba), *Artigġjan Sqalli tas-Seklu 18*

Il-figuri li jidhru fuq kull naħa tal-kontenitur jirraġunaw Insara u Ottomani. Dawn it-tip ta' kontenituri kienu jintużaw fl-Isptar tal-Ordni ta' San Gwanni magħruf bħala s-Sakra Infermeria.

▲ Riġal Uffiċjali tal-Indipendenza mogħti

mill-Isvizzera lill-Poplu Malti (1964)

L-arloġġ hu xogħol id-ditta magħrufa Svizzera Jaeger Le Coultre li taf l-origini tagħha lil Antoine Le Coultre (1803-1881). Le Coultre kien l-ewwel persuna li mnexxielha tkejjel id-daqs ta' mikrometru.







**Gredenza, Xoghol Malti-Taljan ▶  
ta' Nofs is-Seklu 18**

Din il-gredenza fiha xoghol fin tal-interzjar fl-injam taż-żebbuġ u injam iehor maqtuġh u mqieghed f'ghamla ta' xewka tal-huta. Il-kisra fil-parti ċentrali taż-żaqq mhix komuni fl-ghamara ta' dan il-perjodu.

## L-UFFIĊĊJU TAL-PRIM MINISTRU

- ◀ **Skrivanija tal-Prim Ministru, Artigġjan Franciż tas-Seklu 19**  
F'din il-mejda jidher xoghol ta' interzjar bil-qoxra tal-fekruna u bir-ram abjad. Id-dekorazzjoni fil-bronż hi indurata b'deheb fin. Ghamara oħra maħduma f'dan l-istil hekk imsejjah Boule tinsab fis-Sala tal-Ambaxxaturi.







▲ Rigal Uffiċjali tal-Papa Benedittu XVI lill-Prim Ministru Lawrence Gonzi - 2007 (dettall)

Il-pinna nħadmet fid-deheb u l-bronz mill-kumpanija Taljana Stella dell'Orso (Ruma). Id-disinn hu ispirat mit-tribuna tal-Vatikan, xogħol l-iskultur Barokk Gian Lorenzo Bernini (1598-1680) u rreġistrata bħala l-248 mudell minn total ta' 500 eżemplar.



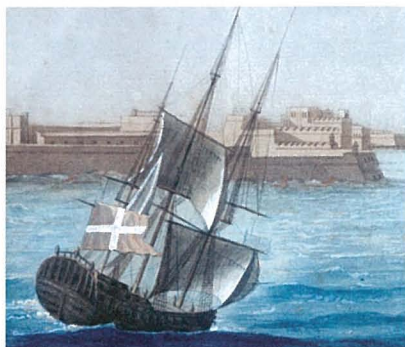
Kabinet, Artigġjan Malti tas-Seklu 18 ▶

Din il-bieċa għamara ġġib l-arma tal-Monte di Redenzione mwaqqaf minn Caterina Vitale fis-seklu sbatax bil-ghan li jifdi l-insara mill-jasar. Jidhru wkoll tliet serraturi fuq kull bieba.





▲  
 Veduti tal-Port ta' Malta  
 Inċiżjonijiet kkuluriti bl-idejn  
 Xogħol ta' Giuseppe Bardi minn  
 Firenze (1781-1801) maħdum fuq  
 inċiżjonijiet fuq pjanċi tar-ram xogħol  
 Giacomo Moro (1797)

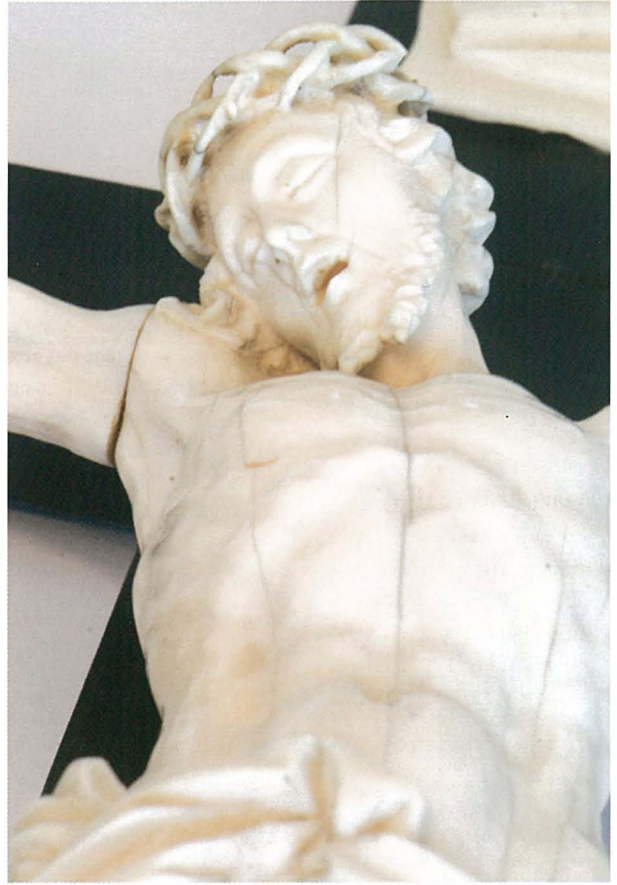


◀ Rigal Uffiċjali minghand il-Gvern Mawritan lill-Poplu Malti  
 fl-okkażjoni tal-kisba tal-Indipendenza (1964)  
 Dan hu xogħol fil-fidda fl-istil Barokk tal-perjodu tar-Regina  
 Vittorja tal-Ingilterra. L-istemma ta' Malta (tal-Indipendenza) u  
 dik tal-gżira tal-Mawritanja, li fl-1964 kienet ghadha kolonja tal-  
 Imperu Brittaniku, huma minqixin fuq kull naħa tar-reċipjent.





▲ It-Trionf ta' Tolo, Żejt fuq tila, Artist tas-Seklu 18  
 Jinghad li dan il-kwadru hu kopja tal-original, xogħol  
 Gwido Rein (1575-1642) li jinsab fil-Katidral  
 ta' Notre Dame, Pariġi (Franza).



▲ Kurċifiss, Avorju, Skultur tal-bidu tas-Seklu 18 (dettall)  
 Din it-tipoloġija ta' Kurċifiss tissejjaħ Cristo Morto  
 hekk kif Kristu jidher mejjet fuq is-salib. Ix-xbiha  
 ta' Kristu hi maħduma b'finezza u dettall.



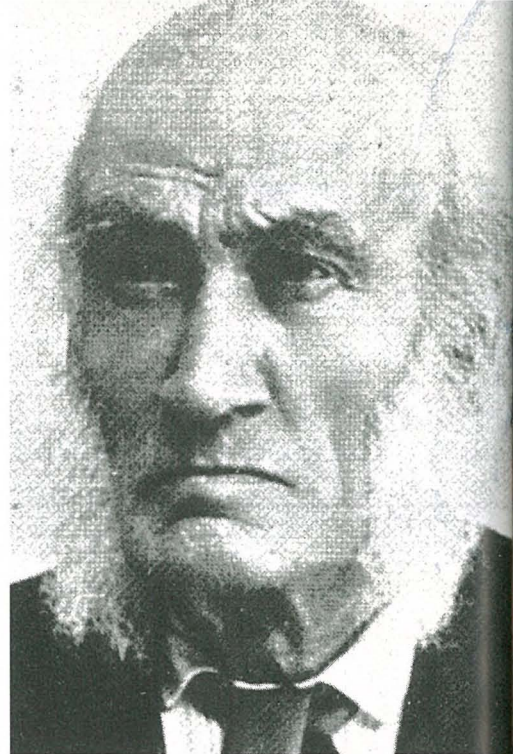


## L-ARLOGĠ TA' MIKELANG SAPIANO

Mikelang Sapiano tweled l-Imqabba fl-1826. Jeżistu dokumenti li juru li kien apprendist kmieni f'żgħozitu ma' Kalcidon Pisani u Ġan Anton Tanti, it-tnejn arloġġara. Huwa fetaħ għal rasu meta kellu biss erbatax-il sena u baqa' miexi 'l quddiem sa ma miet fl-1912 u maż-żmien kien meqjus bħala ġenju saħansitra minn arloġġara barranin. Sar magħruf l-aktar għall-arloġġi li bena f'diversi turretti tal-knejjes u bini pubbliku ieħor. Kienu jarawh bħala raġel eċċentriku minhabba l-mod kif għix, l-esperimenti u invenzjonijiet li kien jagħmel bħall-*iscooter*/il-bicikletta (rota) – snin qabel ma dawn dahlu fis-suq. Ix-xogħlijiet tiegħu kienu jinkludu arloġġi tad-djar bħall-arloġġi tal-ħajt u arloġġi f'armarji twal. Madankollu l-maġġoranza l-kbira ta' dawn iż-żewġ tipi ta' arloġġi kienu jsiru għall-istituzzjonijiet tal-knisja bħal dawk għas-sagristiji, kunventi u monasteri.

L-arloġġ tal-armarju t-twil ta' Sapiano fil-Berġa ta' Kastilja huwa eżempju tajjeb tas-sengħa ta' dan l-imġhallem. Jahdem bil-pendlu, l-ingranaġġi kollha huma mibnija gewwa qafas tal-azzar, u jdoqq il-kwarti u s-sigħat bħal dawk tal-kampnari tal-knejjes. L-armarju huwa tal-kewba, li fiha innifsu huwa rarità għar-raġuni li s-soltu l-arloġġi ta' Sapiano kienu jkunu fl-injam tal-aħmar. L-arloġġ iġib il-firma ta' min għamlu fuq plakka żgħira ta' ram isfar imwahnha fuq quddiem li gġib l-iskrizzjoni 'M. Sapiano – Casal Luca'.

◀ L-Arloġġ ta' M.Sapiano



▲ Mikelang Sapiano







# ТАҢТ КАСТИЛЈА



# TAHT KASTILJA

Bhal bosta bini fil-Belt Valletta, il-Berġa ta' Kastilja għandha s-sotterrani tagħha. Waqt il-bini tagħha fl-1570, saru sensiela ta' kmamar u mogħdijiet li tqattgħu fil-blat. Il-ġebel li tqatta' isfel intuża skont kif kienet il-liġi, għall-bini tal-istess berġa fuq. Aktar ġebel ittiehed mit-tħaffir ta' għadd ta' bjar kbar li saru għall-ħażna tal-ilma tax-xita, uħud minn dawn għadhom jidhru fil-kantini. Saret ukoll nišġa ta' swieqi biex l-ilma mill-bjut jinżel fil-herēz ta' dawn il-bjar. Instabu wkoll fdalijiet ta' mini žġhar li x'aktarx kienu parti minn sistema ta' dranaġġ li kienet tinfed mad-dorog kbar li jserrpu taħt it-toroq tal-Belt.

Maż-żmien il-Berġa tkabbret ħafna u l-użu tagħha nbidel kemm-il darba. B'hekk is-sotterrani nbiddlu wkoll skont il-ħtiġijiet. Fi żmien l-Ingliżi, fost hwejjeġ oħra, ħafna mill-kantini nbiddlu f'imħażen għax-xorb. Inbena fuqklar kbar li kien jiffa' s-sħana 'l fuq (speċi ta' *central heating*) li permezz tiegħu kienu jsaħħnu l-kmamar ta' fuq. Matul it-Tieni Gwerra Dinjija meta l-Berġa kienet tintuża għall-skopijiet militari, tħaffru għadd ta' xelters fil-qrib li kellhom aċċess mill-kantini li għadhom hemm sal-lum, għalkemm imbarrati. Meta l-Berġa ta' Kastilja għaddiet għand il-Gvern Malti, sar ħafna xogħol ta' rinnovazzjoni, tisbiħ u manteniment. Ir-restawr tal-kantini għadu għaddej kif ukoll is-sejbiet interessanti.



◀ Bir forma ta' qanpiena xpakkat li juri biċ-ċar is-sura ta' dawn l-imħażen tal-ilma tipiċi fil-Gżejjer Maltin



◀ Taraj li jagħti għal xelter tal-gwerra li tgħaddi minn taħt Triq il-Merkanti u tinfed għall-Berġa tal-Italja







▲ Horża ta' bir ieħor li hawn taħt dan il-bini u li x'aktarx thaffer fl-1576



▲ Wahda mill-kmamar li fija kienu jaħznu fliexken tax-xorb, li l-ismijiet tagħhom għadhom jistgħu jinqraw fuq l-ixkaffi



▲ Kaldarun li kien jintuża fis-sistema tas-central heating f'parti mill-Berġa fi żmien l-Ingliżi



▲ Niċċa maqtugħa ġol-blat li x'aktarx kienet iżzomm bombli tal-fuħħar għal hażna ta' xi sorta ta' likwidu



▲ Dawn l-ixkaffef kienu jintużaw biex jerfgħu fuqhom imbejjed u xorb ieħor fiż-żmien meta l-Berġa kienet f'idejn is-Servizzi Ingliżi



▲ Daħla għal xeltes ieħor li jgħaddi taħt parti minn Triq San Pawl u li fuqu kien hemm kamra msaqqfa bil-konkos għal aktar saħħa









*Žjara Uffiċjali mill-Kanċillier tar-Repubblika Federali tal-Ġermanja, Angela Merkel – 10 ta' Jannar 2011*

# PERSONALITAJIET LI ŻARU L-BERĠA TA' KASTILJA





Žjara mill-Prim Ministru tal-Finlandja, Matti Vanhanen – 16 ta' Marzu 2005



Žjara mill-Prim Ministru tar-Renju Unit, Tony Blair – 25 ta' Novembru 2005



Žjara Statali mill-Majestà tagħha r-Regina Elizabetta II – 25 ta' Novembru 2005





Žjara mill-President tal-Kummissjoni Ewropea,  
Jose Manuel Durao Barroso – 15 ta' Ġunju 2007



Žjara mill-Prim Ministru ta' Franza, Francois Fillon – 8 ta' Mejju 2008



Žjara Uffiċjali mis-Segretarju Ġenerali tal-Ġnus Magħquda, Ban Ki-moon – 21 ta' April 2009





Žjara mill-Viċi President tal-Kummissjoni Ewropea u Rappreżentant Għoli tal-Unjoni għall-Affarijiet Barranin u Politika ta' Sigurtà meta kienet Kummissarju Ewropew għall-Kummerċ, Catherine Ashton – 29 ta' Mejju 2009



Žjara Uffiċjali mis-Segretarju Ġenerali tal-Commonwealth, Kamalesh Sharma – 16 ta' Ottubru 2009



Žjara mill-Prim Ministru tal-Polonja, Donald Tusk – 22 ta' Ottubru 2009





*Žjara Statali mir-Re ta' Spanja l-Majestà tiegħu Juan Carlos I – 26 ta' Novembru 2009*



*Žjara Statali mill-President Taljan, Giorgio Napolitano – 1 ta' Lulju 2010*



*Žjara mill-Prim Ministru tal-Ungerija, Viktor Orban – 22 ta' Novembru 2010*





Żjara Uffiċjali mill-President tal-Parlament Ewropew, Jerzy Buzek – 24 ta' Jannar 2011



Żjara mill-President tal-Kunsill Ewropew, Herman Van Rompuy – 13 ta' April 2011





Žjara mill-President tar-Repubblika Slovacka, Ivan Gasparovic - 7 ta' Settembru 2011

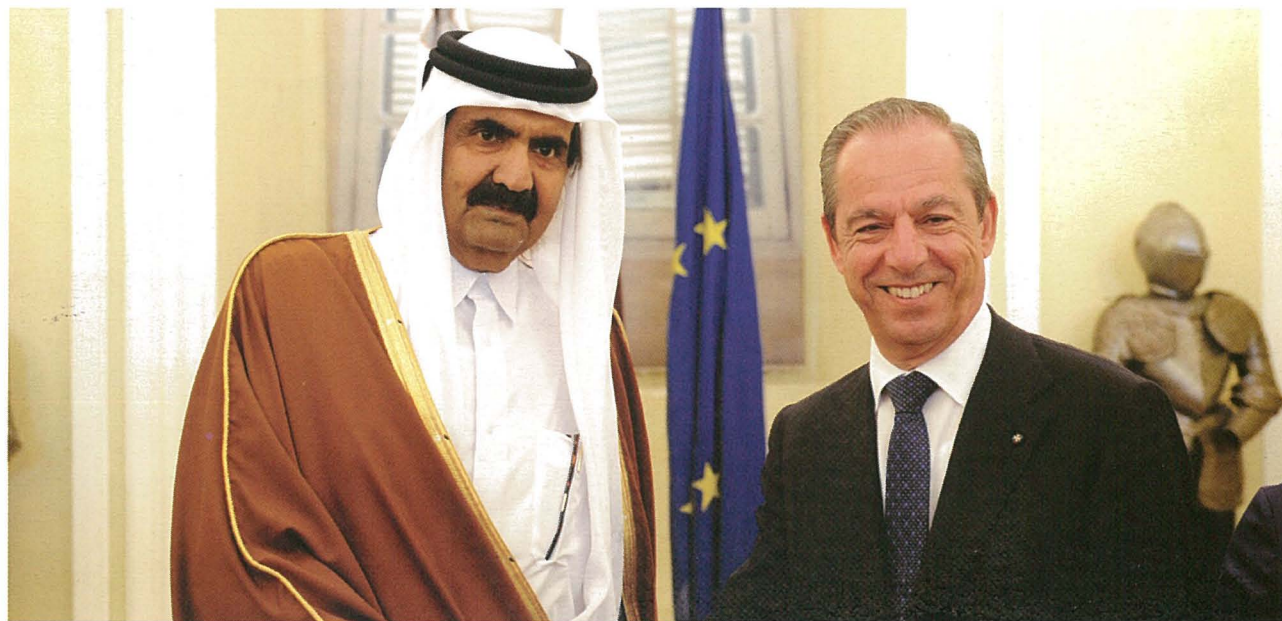


Žjara miċ-Chairman tal-Kunsill Nazzjonali ta' Tranzizzjoni, Mustafa Mohammed Abdul Jalil u l-Prim Ministru tal-Libja Mahmoud Jibril – 18 ta' Settembru 2011





*Žjara mis-Segretarju tal-Istat Amerikan, Hillary Rodham Clinton - 18 ta' Ottubru 2011*



*Žjara mill-Emir tal-Istat tal-Qatar, l-Eċċellenza tiegħu Sheik Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani - 17 ta' April 2012*





# AUBERGE DE CASTILLE





## PROUD OF OUR NATIONAL HERITAGE

Since its inception, Maltese civilization has always recognized the exceptional quality of Maltese stone. It was used to construct prehistoric temples and was excavated to develop catacombs. Maltese stone was also used in the building of churches and chapels which adorn every corner of our nation.

Maltese stone is a natural resource which has shaped our country's history, dignity and distinctive characteristics. Malta's stone heritage is an integral part of what makes us a nation, proud of our rich identity. It should be cherished, passed down to children in schools and exhibited to tourists to extend its appreciation beyond our shores.

Malta's rubble walls, the "girma", the traditional farmhouse and village dwellings all form part of the rich heritage which has been handed down to us by our forefathers. Today, we can boast of the treasures which we have inherited and which we must pass on to future generations. The traditional uses for Maltese stone have been developed to enable the construction of larger and very diverse structures,

inspired by the greatest architectural styles that dominated Europe and other continents over time. This is how our cathedrals, churches, bastions and auberges were built.

Without its stonework, Malta would not be the country we know today. In the myriad forms of art, in fields like architecture, painting and sculpture, and against the backdrop of Baroque and other prominent styles, we can hold our head high before our continent and even before the entire world. Despite its size, Malta is a wonder: a wonder which has been created by Maltese stone workmanship produced, carved and transformed according to the creativity of each and every architect and artist who has made use of it.

Our capital city, Valletta, is a spectacular museum in its own right. Ambling through its streets, one feels the need to find out more; because every street, every corner and every building tells a unique story and bears its own historic and cultural background, and ties to our ancestors. The Auberge de Castille is one of the many monuments which enhance Malta's capital city

and Malta itself. Its a monument in all its aspect and features. Valletta is truly a permanent exhibition for the Maltese and for all who visit it. It is a gem which makes us proud of our Maltese ancestors and their stonework, leaving us innumerable treasures which will never grow old.

Today, Maltese stone is also being utilised in the Valletta City Gate project which will give us the dignified entrance that befits our capital city which will be the European Cultural Capital in 2018. This will be yet another occasion to display our country's many treasures. We are committed to heighten awareness on our history, architecture, language, environment, identity and every aspect which makes us Maltese, among our fellow countrymen and tourists alike.

We are proud of our national heritage. When we appreciate our country, we show appreciation and respect for ourselves, for our ancestors and for the future generations who will also enjoy Malta's rich heritage.

Lawrence Gonzi  
Prime Minister



# THE AUBERGE DE CASTILLE

## The Order of St John

The Order of St John originated in the mid eleventh century as a hospital for Christian pilgrims in Jerusalem and was never intended to be a military order. However as the need to protect Christians and holy places increased, it became evident that military activity too had to be stepped up.

During the fourteenth century, the Order of St John established its administration and hierarchy. In 1327, the Chapter of Montpeiller decided to organize the Knights into eight Langues – France, England, Aragon, Castille, Germany, Auvergne, Provence and Italy. Each knight was to live with the other members of his Langue.

Each language was represented in a separate Convent (the Palace, the Church, the Hospital and the Auberges) by a Pilier who was responsible for the Auberge. Each Pilier had a particular official title and had certain rights and duties.

The Pilier of Castille was the Grand Chancellor, responsible for the registration and custody of all laws and decrees promulgated by the Order or the Grand Master and all the public documents and letters-patent emanating from the Order or other authorities. The Grand Chancellor was assisted by the vice-chancellor, nominated for life by the Grand Chancellor and responsible for the day-to-day work of the Chancery. He also attended all the Order's Councils.

Translation in Red Window:

The Order of St John originated in the mid eleventh century as a hospital for Christian pilgrims in Jerusalem and was never intended to be a military order.

## The Auberge

The term 'Auberge' was introduced during the reign of Grand Master Claude de la Sengle and referred to the knight's hospices and houses. The Auberges



*The entrance of the Auberge de Castille*

eventually became international centres for every Langue.

During their first years in Malta, the Knights had to serve once a week in one of the three hospitals on the island and lived in the Auberge of their Langue for free.

In the Auberges, the Pilier was responsible for the administration and the Order granted him an annual sum of money or the equivalent in grain for the provision of the members under his charge.

Special statutes were enacted for the observance of discipline. Meals were normally served at fixed hours and knights were obliged to dine at the Auberge on at least 4 days a week. The head of each Langue presided over meals in the Hall at a separate table, placed on a raised platform and had the privilege of resting his feet on a carpet and a cushion.

The Knights had two rooms for themselves in the Auberge and were assisted by a servant who attended to their needs.

The Auberges were spread around the city, each built near the fortifications and not far from St John's Co Cathedral. The Auberges consisted of two stories with an austere facade and an internal courtyard. The lower floor contained the ceremonial rooms while the upper floor, served by a monumental staircase, housed the bedrooms.



*The Auberge de Castille's internal courtyard*

## The Auberge de Castille and Leon

The Knights used to site the convent or Priory's headquarter in areas which could house the Conventual church, the Palace, the Auberge and residential quarters for the older knights.

The priory of the langue of Castille was considered as a whole district in the centre of the city of Valletta, and included St John's Street, Zachary Street, Melita Street and Merchant's Street. The architect of this district is unfortunately unknown, but Glormu Cassar, who designed Valletta, is the most probable candidate.

Initially, the priory comprised of improvised wooden huts but on the 26th August 1569, the Spanish Knights assembled in their Auberge in Birgu and decided to create a new Auberge in Valletta.

Translation in Red Window:

The Knights used to site the convent or Priory's headquarter on land large enough to include the conventual church, the Palace, the Auberge and the houses for the older knights.

## The First Auberge

The site of the Auberge de Castille acquired by the Knights in 1569, was to host a stately structure, referred to as the *Casa Grande* with a frontage along St. Paul Street. The construction cost was met through a levy imposed in 1570 on the members of this Langue. This house, which could only accommodate





*The Cabinet Room*

the Pilier and a limited number of knights, served as the Auberge between 1571 and 1573 when the Knights of the Langue, still residing in Birgu, decided to build a larger Auberge.

The site of the Auberge de Castille, acquired by the Knights in 1569 was to host a stately structure, referred to as the *Casa Grande* with a frontage along St. Paul Street.



*The plan of the facade of the first Auberge*

### **The Second Auberge**

The Knights tried to transform the austere military character of their city by replacing the original buildings with others in a new, flamboyant Baroque style. This expression of power and prestige won popular approval and the affluent sought to build their homes with the trappings of this splendid style.

### **The new Auberge was built between 1741 and 1745.**

The Auberge de Castille is undoubtedly the finest work of Baroque architecture in eighteenth century Valletta. The facade is rich, yet has no excessive decorations, and the building, especially the distribution and shape

of the windows, has pleasing proportions and the main theme is the exaltation of Grand Master Pinto. The Grand Master's symbol, the crescent moon, is displayed throughout the building. The Grand Master's coat of arms is also prominently displayed on the central window of the facade. The coats-of-arms of the Langue of Portugal and Spain are displayed on top of the entrance of the building.



*The Ambassadors' Room*

### **The Auberge after the Knights**

#### *The French*

The landing of Napoleon and his forces in 1798 brought about numerous changes. On June 20, the Spanish knights obtained permission to evacuate Malta with their movable property. The French occupied the Auberge de Castille and began using it as the Commission for National Property.

The French occupied the Auberge de Castille for the use of the Commission for National Property.

#### *The British Period*

In 1800, Malta was liberated by the Maltese people with the assistance of Great Britain, and Malta quickly developed into a British colony. The British and Maltese toasted to their victory in the Auberge de Castille. The Armed Forces established their headquarters in the Auberge de Castille in 1805 and also used it as lodgings for the British officers.

In 1814, the Auberge was also used to accommodate a contingent of the Egyptian army. In 1840, one of the rooms on the first floor was converted into the Protestant chapel in Malta. In 1860, a British

regiment occupied the Auberge and installed a signalling station on the roof terrace to communicate with warships berthed in the harbour.

Up to the nineteenth century Officers of the English Garrison, the Royal Engineers and at times also officers of the Rifle Regiments were stationed at the Auberge de Castille. The Auberge de Castille was used for residential purposes and it housed the private quarters which included the billiard room and the library. It also served official functions and also housed the offices of the Brigadier General, Engineers and military offices among them the Court Martial Hall.

The Auberge de Castille continued to be used by the British Forces until the twentieth century.

The Auberge de Castille has also been used as the General Headquarters of the Army for Malta, Libya and following the expulsion of the Army from Egypt in 1954, for Cyprus too.

The right side of the entrance of the Auberge was damaged by bombs, during the World War II in 1942

### **The Office of the Prime Minister**

Since March 4, 1972, the Auberge de Castille has been used as the Office of the Prime Minister. It is here that the Prime Minister conducts the business of Government. The weekly meetings of the Cabinet of Ministers are also held in the Auberge.

Since March 4, 1972, the Auberge de Castille has been used as the Office of the Prime Minister.



*The Office of the Prime Minister*



# RESTORATION WORKS ON THE FACADE OF THE AUBERGE DE CASTILLE

Extensive restoration works got under way in July 2009 on the facade of the Auberge de Castille. Restoration works were divided into nine phases with the first involving restoration on the facade in Merchants' Street.

Apart from cleaning the stone, the work involved extensive restoration of the sculptured parts of the building which had deteriorated and which were

restored by means of a technique known as plastic repair, where a special type of clay was used. The utilised technique is sensitive to stone as is the practice in the restoration of historical buildings. This stone work was carried out on the spot.

Restoration works were entirely carried out by workers of the Restoration Unit of the Ministry of Resources and Rural Affairs.



## OUR HERITAGE AT THE AUBERGE DE CASTILLE

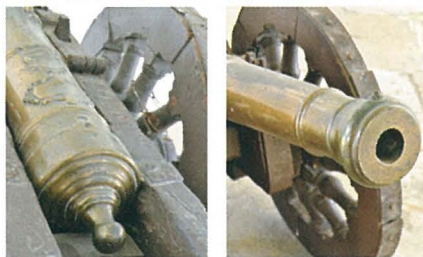


The Auberge de Castille houses a heritage collection that spans throughout Malta's history. This booklet presents a selection of items including furniture, paintings as well as a number of gifts that were presented to the People of Malta by foreign Governments to mark historical occasions.

### MAIN STAIRCASE

*Infantry Half-Armour, Mid-Sixteenth Century Armourer.*

This half-armor was used by infantry although the type of helmet in this composite set was mainly used during training. The four suits-of-armor at Auberge de Castille originate from the Grandmaster's Palace Armoury.



*Miniature cannon, 17<sup>th</sup> Century Maltese Founder*  
(detail) This type of cannon was mainly used for demonstration or training purposes. Three other similar examples can be seen at the Palace Armoury. The carriage is still original.

*Bust of Grandmaster Manoel Pinto de Fonseca (1741-1773)*  
*Marble, 18<sup>th</sup> Century Maltese Sculptor*

The bust forms part of a set of four Portuguese Grandmasters produced in marble that also includes Grandmaster Manoel de Vilhena (1722-1736), Louis Mendez de Vasconcellos (1622-1623) and Alphonso of Portugal (1203-1206).



### AMBASSADORS' HALL

*Mirror, 17<sup>th</sup> Century Sculptor*

This mirror has a striking gilt ornate frame carved in wood and is similar to two other matching mirrors at San Anton Palace (Attard). Other mirrors in the 18<sup>th</sup> century style can be seen in the same hall.





*Official gift by Smartcity consortium to Prime Minister Lawrence Gonzi during his official visit to Dubai - 2007 (detail)*

This is a model in precious metal of an Arabian sailing vessel known as Dhow used along the coast of the Arabian peninsula.



*Smiling, Marble, Antonio Sciortino (1876 – 1947)*

This marble piece was produced with the intent of having it feature in an exhibition planned by the artist to take place in America. The plaster model for this piece belongs to the National Museum of Fine Arts (Heritage Malta).



*State gift by the British Government to the People of Malta on Independence - 1964 (detail)*

This gift combines an 8-pointed cross of Malta in gilt silver superimposed on cross suggesting the George Cross awarded to the Maltese islands by King George VI in 1942.



*Plato tutoring young Dionisius of Syracuse, Oil on Canvas, Style of Mattia Preti (1613-1699)*

The painting is inspired by the writings of the Philosopher Plato describing his difficulties in mentoring Dionisus intent on carrying out political reforms. The Southern Italian artist Mattia Preti (1612-1699) is one of Malta's most important baroque painters.

*State Gift by the French President to the People of Malta on the occasion of Independence (1964)*

This fine vase in the Neo-Classical style is the work of the famous Sevres porcelain factory that still produces one-off handmade porcelain pieces.



*Official gift from HE Mr Xi Jinping, Vice President of the Republic of China to Prime Minister Lawrence Gonzi (2009)*

This container is referred to as the porcelain vase of glory and prosperity. It is produced in the best tradition of Chinese porcelain with noticeable bright colours, simple yet elegant shape and graceful style.



*Official gift to Maltese Prime Minister Giorgio Borg Olivier by Queen Elisabeth II of England on her official visit as Queen of Malta in 1967*

This is a replica of the original chest laid under the foundation stone of Grandharbour's breakwater in 1903. The first stone was laid by King Edward VII of England, great-grandfather to Queen Elisabeth II of England.



## CABINET ROOM

### *Bureau Cabinet, 18<sup>th</sup> century Maltese Craftsmanship (pair)*

This pair of identical oak cabinets is similar in style and make to the bureau cabinet in the Prime Minister's Office. The coat-of-arms on the pediment belong to the Langue of Aragon within the Order of St John.



### *Majolica Alberello Jar, 18<sup>th</sup> century Sicilian Craftsman*

The typical curved shape of these Majolica vessels, also in use in the hospital of the Order of St John (Sacra Infermeria) would enable a much tighter grip when held.



### *Long-Case Clock, 18<sup>th</sup> Century English Craftsmanship*

The name of its maker, William Frippet of London, is inscribed on the face of the clock.

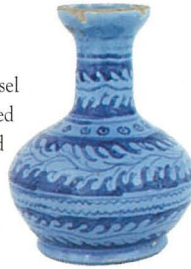


### *Cabinet table, Contemporary Maltese Craftsmanship*

This large oval table is used for Cabinet meetings chaired by the Prime Minister.

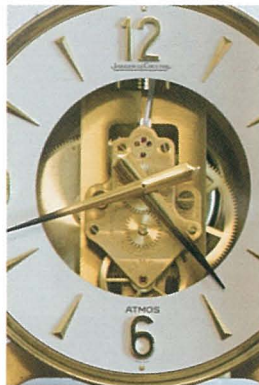
### *Majolica Container, 18<sup>th</sup> century Sicilian Craftsman*

This blue-glazed maiolica vessel might have originally belonged to a much larger set presented by Grandmaster Manoel de Vilhena to Santo Spirito Hospital (Rabat) in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century.



### *Majolica Vessel (bomba type) 18<sup>th</sup> Century Sicilian Craftsman*

The miniatures included on each side of this vessel include allegorical portraits of Christians and Ottomen. Such vessels were in use in the Sacra Infermeria, the hospital of the Order during the times of the Order of St John.



### *State Gift by Switzerland to the People of Malta on Independence (1964)*

The clock is the work of the famous watch making company Jaeger Le Coultre that owes its origins to Antoine Le Coultre (1830-1881). Le Coultre was the first to measure a micrometer.



## PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

### *Prime Minister's desk, 19<sup>th</sup> Century French Craftsman*

This fine desk is veneered with tortoise-shell and brass inlay and mounted with finely gilt bronze decorative features. Other similar furniture items in this style, known as Boule, are located in the Ambassadors' Hall.



### *Chest of drawers, Mid-18<sup>th</sup> Century, Maltese- Italian Craftsmanship*

This furniture piece is veneered with olive and other woods in herringbone motif. The double serpentine front is an unusual feature in these type of furniture pieces.



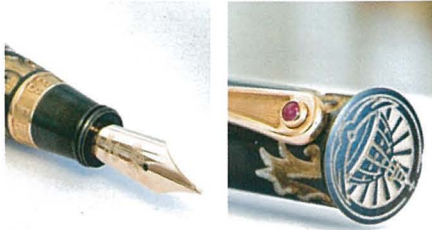
### *Malta Harbour views and Hand coloured Engravings produced in Florence by Giuseppe Bardi (fl.1781-1801) from original copper-plate engravings by Giacomo Moro (fl.1797)*





**State gift of the Government of Mauritius to the People of Malta on Independence (1964)**

This silver receptacle in the Victorian Baroque style includes the Maltese Independence and the Mauritius Coat-of-Arms engraved on either side. The Island Colony of Mauritius gained Independence from Great Britain in 1968.



**Pope Benedict XVI Official gift to Prime Minister Lawrence Gonzi - 2007 (detail)**

The bronze and gold pen is inspired by the columns of the Baldachin produced by the Baroque sculptor Gian Lorenzo Bernini (1598-1680) for the Vatican in Rome. This is the 248th model from a total of 500 produced by the Roman company Stella Dell'Orso.

**Cabinet, 18<sup>th</sup> Century Maltese Craftsman**

The cabinet features the coat-of-arms of the Monte di Redenzione; a charity set up by Caterina Vitale for the redemption of enslaved Christians. Three sets of keys were required to open this cabinet.



**Triumph of Tolo, Oil on canvas, 18<sup>th</sup> century artist**

This painting is said to be a copy after the original by Guido Reni (1575-1642) at the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris (France).



**Crucifix, Ivory, Early 18<sup>th</sup> Century Sculptor (detail)**

This is a finely carved crucifix representing the final moments of Christ on the Cross. Such crucifixes are usually referred to as the Cristo Morto type.



**MIKIELANG SAPIANO'S CLOCK**

Sapiano was born at Mqabba in 1826. He is documented to have been an apprentice in his early youth with Kalcidon Pisani and Gan Anton Tanti, both clock makers. He set up his own shop at fourteen years of age and never looked back until his death in 1912 and was eventually considered as a genius even by foreign horologists. His fame came mainly because of his turret clocks in various churches and other public buildings. He was considered as an eccentric man because of his life style, experiments and innovations which included a scooter/bicycle years before these came on the market. His output also included domestic clocks such as wall clocks and long case clocks. However the greater majority of these two types of clocks were made for the ecclesiastical institutions such as church sacristies, convents and priories.

The Auberge de Castile Sapiano long Case clock is a fine example of the master's craft. It is pendulum driven, the whole clockwork is built inside a steel cage, striking quarters and hours in turret clock fashion. The case is mahogany, which in itself is a rarity since usually Sapiano's long case clocks are mainly cased in red deal. The clock is signed by a small brass plaque fixed on the front on which is inscribed 'M. Sapiano - Casal Luca'.



# UNDERGROUND CASTILLE

Like many buildings in Valletta, Auberge de Castille has its own subterranean spaces. During its construction in 1570, a series of chambers and passages were laid out, most of which were excavated out of the living rock. As was decreed by law, all stone cut during these works was utilised in the construction of the Auberge above. More stone was available after a number of water cisterns were hollowed out below the building, some still visible today. An intricate network of channels was introduced for the procurement of water from the building's



A sheared conical well that clearly shows the shape of these water storage vessels, typically found across the Maltese Islands



A staircase leading to a wartime shelter built under Merchants Street with an access at the Auberge d'Italie



A wellhead of another cistern that is found beneath this building and which was probably excavated in 1576

roof-top into these wells. Remains of diminutive tunnels were also found, these probably being part of a foul-water drainage system which was connected to the main sewers below Valletta's streets.

In time, Auberge de Castille was significantly extended and its uses changed. The subterranean level was thus readapted to serve these changes. During the British era, amongst other things, much of these spaces were transformed into wine cellars. A large furnace was



A niche hewn into the rock most likely to retain an earthenware vessel used for the storage of some type of liquid



One of the chambers in which bottles of alcohol were stored, the names of which can still be read on the shelves



These shelves were used to store wines and other alcoholic beverages in the times when the Auberge was run by the British Services

set up in order to feed a central heating system that warmed the room's above-ground. During the Second World War, when Castille assumed a military use, a number of air-raid shelters were cut deep beneath the surrounding streets which all had access from the Auberge's basement. These are still extant today, albeit blocked-up. When the building was handed over to the Maltese Government, numerous upgrading works were carried out. Restoration of the cellars is ongoing and interesting finds are still being made.



A cauldron that formed part of the central heating system installed in part of the Auberge during the British period



An entrance into another air-raid shelter which underpasses part of St. Paul Street and above which stood a room with a reinforced concrete ceiling for added protection













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