

MALTA

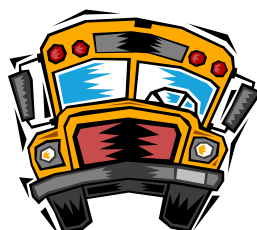
We arrive in Malta around midday after some stormy weather at sea. The weather is pleasantly warm and we are able to walk around the city of Valetta with just our T-shirts and shorts.

Tour buses take passengers from the quayside, around the peninsula that is Valetta, and onward to the main bus station. On the way our guide tells us a little of the history of Malta, and also the most interesting places to visit. When we arrive in the bus station 15 minutes later, he then walks with passengers to the main square where he points out the many different churches and buildings. The cost of this service was just one euro return per person!

As we have visited Malta on a few occasions, we decide we will just spend some time with our fellow lecturers, strolling around Valetta itself, window shopping and stopping for a drink near the main square. Fellow lecturer Tony is fascinated by the old buses, and we lose him halfway through the afternoon as he wanders around the bus station photographing all the 50's and 60's Bedfords, AEC's and Fords!



The main street of Valetta is busy when we first arrive, and then gets even busier as the shops re-open at four o'clock. The side streets are very narrow with covered balconies which almost seem to span the street. The buildings are several stories high and are made of yellow limestone blocks. This is the only naturally occurring stone in Malta, and as it is so soft, the buildings are weathered.





We learnt from our bus guide that Malta will be changing over to the euro in January, so we will have to use up all the Maltese Lira that we brought with us. This is a good excuse to do a little duty free shopping!



Rather than return to the ship by bus we choose to walk back. There are literally hundreds of steep steps to get from the main street to the quayside, but at least we are going down them! Some fellow passengers choose to walk the whole journey, and they look very tired when they return to the ship this evening.

We enjoyed re-visiting Malta, and board the Van Gogh bound for Egypt!

