

MALTA GOES RURAL

## Girgenti Walk (Buskett - Siggiewi Walk)

walk



### Tips for the road

- Plan ahead and follow all the signs throughout the route. This is the **Green Walk** so please follow the green signs. It is very easy to get distracted by the surrounding scenery while taking your country walk. Short cuts are to be avoided as many fields are privately owned. You will encounter many 'RTO' signs meaning 'Riservato'. The markings indicate private property.
- Maltese is the official language of the Maltese Islands and an official EU language. The Maltese language is spoken only on the Maltese Islands. Road signs in Malta are in Maltese. Some basic translations that will help you throughout the walk: *Triq* - Street, *Vjal* - Avenue, *Sqaq* - Alley.
- Please keep in mind that on the Maltese Islands, cars drive on the left hand side.
- In some of the walks you will come across churches and other places of religious devotion. Please keep in mind that these are places of worship and due respect must be given if approaching or entering such places. One should not wander in such places if an official religious function is underway.
- Be Prepared... be sure to wear a comfortable pair of walking shoes and clothing which is appropriate for the time of the year. Allow enough time to complete the walk in broad daylight. Make allowances for time required for resting, taking photographs and observing nature and/or places of interest.
- Bird trapping and hunting are practised in the countryside. There are, however, strict regulations determining areas where such activities are permitted and the time of the year when no such activities are allowed.
- Cliff tops are magnificent areas but they also present potential hazards. Always keep a safe distance from the cliff edges, especially on windy days, or if the ground is covered by loose gravel or is slippery due to rainfall.

- In some valleys and gorges, mobile phone reception may be poor or there may be none at all.
- Respect the fragility of the countryside. Do not climb over rubble walls or throw stones into valleys or over cliffs. Refrain from taking any 'souvenirs' back home with you. Do not disturb animals, plants or their natural habitats. Leave only your footprint behind you and nothing else.
- Be culturally sensitive and respect local customs. Take photographs but respect the privacy of others.
- Emergency Number: 112**



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Rural Development Programme for Malta 2007 - 2013

Axix 3 - Improving the Quality of Life in Rural Areas  
Project part-financed by the European Union  
The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development:  
Co-financing Rate: 75% European Union, 25% Government of Malta  
Europe Investing in Rural Areas



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**The walk starts from the bus stop near the entrance to Buskett. <sup>1</sup> Before starting the walk, you can spend some time exploring Buskett gardens. The road to Buskett is at the crossroads a few metres away from the bus stop.**

If you have spent some time visiting Buskett, return to the walk route by facing the entrance to Buskett then turning first right then left. After a couple of metres you will come to a Y-junction; take the road on the right hand side and after a few metres, on the right you can see a lane that leads onto a large rocky area. This is Clapham Junction (**prehistoric cart ruts**). Walk along this path. When approaching the top you will see a large cavity below. This is **Għar il-Kbir** (meaning the Big Cave). After having seen Għar il-Kbir, walk back to the footpath, turn right and keep walking straight. Explore this area to discover small caves which contain **Punic tombs**. Return to the pathway and continue walking straight following the signs along the winding road, until the road's end, then turn right into a wider road. Please keep in mind this is a busy road.

From here, you can see the fertile Girgenti Valley below, and across the valley, **Girgenti Palace**. This was built by Inquisitor Onorio Visconti in 1625 and now it is used as the country residence of the Prime Minister of Malta. Keep walking straight uphill toward the quarry. Next to the quarry entrance turn left and admire a wayside shrine dedicated to our Lady. Keep walking straight on the left-hand side until you reach sign <sup>6</sup>.

Walk on a few metres, on the left-hand side of the road, until you reach sign <sup>7</sup>. Walking along this road you can get a view of both Girgenti and **Verdala Palace**, various cupolas and the coast which is also visible in the distance. The countryside road winds amongst the fields where you may notice some farmers working and occasionally one may encounter a shepherd tending to his flock. As soon as you reach a Y-junction, take the road on the right-hand side. Soon you will come to a small opening amongst the fields. Take the right road. The path ends at the Annunciation Church. Next to the church stands a huge bronze cross known as Laferla Cross. This area is known as is-Salib tal-Ğolja (the Cross on the Hill). This is an interesting place where one can rest and admire the countryside and most of the island below. The area becomes an area of devotion very popular with the locals during Good Friday and is specially popular for religious activities held on Maundy Thursdays.

After this short rest proceed along the downward path <sup>8</sup>. While going down the path you will notice 4 niches containing statues that depict stages from the passion of Christ. The path ends in Fawwara Road. Turn right <sup>9</sup> and keep walking straight for a few metres. On reaching the crossroad, walk straight ahead <sup>10</sup>. Soon you will pass by the Wied Zikku borehole <sup>11</sup>. Take the road to the left of the borehole. The path is narrow and flanked by raised fields. Keep to the road on the left <sup>12</sup>.

Continue straight ahead along this road. At the end of the road turn right <sup>13</sup>. Soon you will reach the main road leading from Siggiewi to Għar Lapsi <sup>14</sup>. Cross the road carefully (keeping in mind this is a very busy road) and turn left. Proceed for a few metres and take the road on the right which will lead you to il-Kappella tal-Providenza (**Church of Our Lady of Divine Providence**). Visit the chapel if open and maybe rest a bit before proceeding to the last part of the walk. Once rested, with the church on your right take the road on the left <sup>15</sup>. Walk straight downward, and at the end of the road take the second road on your right <sup>16</sup>. Walk straight ahead and at the next Y-junction turn left <sup>17</sup>. Walk straight down the winding road. Continue walking toward the village periphery up to the road junction <sup>18</sup>. Cross to the other side and continue walking straight along this road towards the **village core**. Follow signs <sup>19</sup> and <sup>20</sup> which will soon come into view. The walk has now reached the main square of the village.

Take some time to visit the Siggiewi village core with the three churches (dedicated to St. Mary, St. John the Baptist and the Parish church to St. Nicholas of Bari) which one can find here. The imposing façade of the **Parish Church** as it now stands is a credit to the architect, craftsmen and the local population who worked hard over the years to improve it.

The walk ends here <sup>21</sup>. You can remain for a while and enjoy some food in one of the local pubs or village band clubs or else take the bus back to Valletta.

<sup>1</sup> **Bus route No 202** operates the following route:  
Dingli - Rabat - Mdina - Ta' Qali - Attard - Mosta - Birkirkara - Santa Venera Mater Dei - Msida - Gzira - Sliema - San Giljan - Swieqi - Pembroke (P&R)

**Length of walk approx 7.7 km**

\* It is the responsibility of individuals to approach outdoor activities with caution. Walking and any other countryside activity can be strenuous or dangerous and individuals should ensure that they are fit enough before embarking upon it. The MTA will not be held responsible for any loss of personal items and injuries of individuals following this walk.

Bus Routes number can change. Check with the arriva website ([www.arriva.com.mt](http://www.arriva.com.mt)) before starting this walk.



