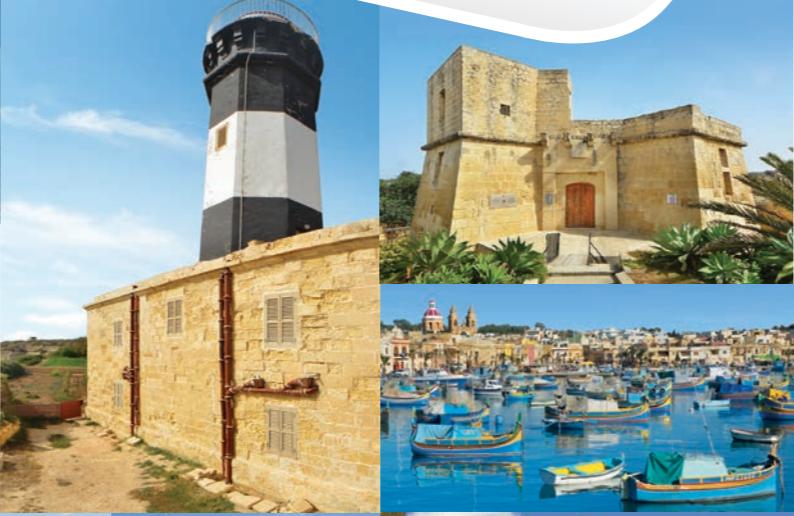


MALTA GOES RURAL

Ta' Silġ (Marsaskala - Marsaxlokk)

walk

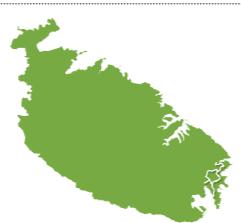


Tips for the road



- Plan ahead and follow all the signs throughout the route. This is the **White Walk** so please follow the white 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, *Gnien* - Garden, *Fortizza* - Fort and *Bajja* - Beach.
- Please keep in mind that in 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.
- More information on places of interest such as churches, can be found on the informational panels that are installed along this route.
- Emergency Number: 112**



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MALTAGOESRURAL

Rural Development Programme for Malta 2007 - 2013

Axis 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



MALTA GOES RURAL

Ta' Silġ (Marsaskala - Marsaxlokk)

walk



Brief description: This walk is a fairly easy one. It takes one along the coast, around parts of the Marsaskala and Marsaxlokk villages, St. Thomas Bay, and the pristine coasts of Munxar and Delimara. The first part of the walk is the same for everyone. However from the St. Thomas Bay area, one has the option to take either Route A or Route B. Both routes finish in Marsaxlokk.

The former route takes one through the countryside, and does not follow the coast, while the latter one follows country roads around the coast for most parts of the walk. Both are enjoyable routes with plenty to see. Route A can be followed on foot and by bicycle whilst Route B can only be followed on foot.

Start your walk in front of Marsaskala parish church dedicated to St. Anne (near the Bus Stop Sign). Take time to explore the immediate area around the church, where one can see among other things the Police Station located in a 17th century coastal battery. One can easily take a walk along the shore, where one would end up near a number of salt pans (similar to others that are to be found on the other side of the bay). Along the shoreline one notices the various sea vessels. While some are of the leisure type, there are also the fishing trawlers, and the local luzzu. One might also meet with local fishermen, mending their nets or preparing their vessels for the fishing season.

Before the walk one may also enjoy some coffee or replenish oneself with a bottle of water since for most parts of the walk there will not be any shops. In the first part of the walk one can also find some ice-cream shops and if the day is hot, we suggest you try one of the many flavoured ice-creams sold here.

Start walking along the promenade, keeping the church behind you, and walking towards the inner part of the bay. The walk along the promenade will take about 40 minutes.

At the innermost part of the bay, on the other side of the street, there is an enclosed area, known as Il-Magħluq. This area is of environmental importance and is thus protected against modern development. Keep on walking along the promenade. Looking towards the rocks one will notice the presence of a number of shallow basins, cut into the rock. These are small salt pans, and some of these are still in use. At the end of the promenade, you will notice a large 17th century tower, known as St. Thomas Tower. This tower was erected to guard the entrance to both bays, namely Marsaskala and St. Thomas.

Take the last street on the left of the tower, and walk up through Triq il-Kannizzata, and then turn left into Triq il-Qaliet. Continue walking along the street, with villas on the right hand side, and the open sea and rocky beach to the left. When you reach the main road, you must choose which route to follow - right for Route A (can be followed on foot or by bicycle) or left for Route B (on foot only).

Route A takes one through the outskirts of the village, finishing in the picturesque fishing village of Marsaxlokk. Route B is slightly longer since by following it one has the option to follow two length detours which will give one the opportunity to have spectacular views of the cliffs and the bays below.

Route A

The first route passes through the village's outskirts (pay attention to the vehicular traffic), a small hamlet and finishes in Marsaxlokk, same as Route B.

To start this walk continue walking right and walk up to the junction, at which point you should turn left, passing by a street niche in the corner. Continue to walk on that side of the road. Part of this route passes through some roads that sometimes can be busy with traffic so attention is needed.

Keep on walking and soon you will reach Mamo Tower, a 17th century coastal fortification, built by a family of land owners. A few metres from the tower, there is the small countryside church dedicated to St. Cajetan, the first ever church in Malta to be dedicated to this saint. Keep to the left-hand side of the road, and keep on walking along this stretch until you reach a large sign indicating Marsaxlokk. Turn left.

After some metres, you will reach Misrah Strejnu, a small hamlet which forms part of Żejtun. There are still a number of small farmhouses in the area, some of which have

been renovated recently. Keep to the left-hand side and continue walking along the main road. When you reach the small church dedicated to St. Nicholas (referred to as San Niklaw), turn left. Very soon you will reach the boundary between Żejtun and Marsaxlokk, and you will notice the boundary wall surrounding the archaeological site of Tas-Silġ. This is one of the most interesting archaeological sites in Malta, and is being excavated by an Italian archaeological team, and another team of archaeology students from the University of Malta.

The path continues downhill, arriving at the large countryside church dedicated to Our Lady of the Snows. From here, keep walking downhill and soon you will reach the largest fishing village in Malta, Marsaxlokk, with its main square dominated by its parish church dedicated to Our Lady of Pompeii.

Route B

By following this route one will experience a totally different aspect of rural Malta since it passes along the coast of the island.

Turn left and continue walking along the coast of St. Thomas Bay. Although legend has it that when Saint Paul was shipwrecked on the islands his boat ran aground in the northern area known today as St. Paul's Bay, some recent studies suggest that the actual place of the landing was in fact St. Thomas Bay.

At the end of the shore, pass through a small gate; on the left there are the ruins of an 18th century coastal battery and behind it there is a passage that takes you to the top of the hill. Keep walking along the passage.

Once on top take some time to look at the magnificent views of the cliffs, always keeping away from the edge. Keep on walking and after some time you will reach a boundary wall. Keep walking keeping the wall to your left until you reach a junction. Here you have the possibility to follow a small detour for better views of the sea, cliffs and surrounding countryside. For the detour, turn left and down towards the coast. You can notice a small church dedicated to St. Paul a small tower, and beautiful views of the surrounding seascapes and countryside. If time permits and you are interested in nature, you can spend some time visiting the Xrobb L-Għażiex Nature Park. Keep in mind that the walk to Marsaxlokk is still quite long so be sure to leave enough time for this.

Return to the junction and continue walking up road. On the right-hand side there are the abandoned remains of St. Paul's Battery, a 19th century coastal fortification. The road continues to meander around the fields, always downhill, until further on, on the left-hand side, one notices a lane that leads to the entrance of Fort Tas-Silġ, another 19th century British fortification. Keep on walking and at the end of the road, you can turn left and take the second detour of this route. In order to follow the second detour, keep to the only road on the left, which will end at the tip of the Delimara peninsula where one can see Fort Delimara, a 19th century lighthouse, and a view of the large Marsaxlokk Bay on one side and Delimara Bay on the other. Remember that you must retrace the way back to this point in order to finish the walk.

If you do not feel like walking and retracing your steps to this point, turn right and continue downhill till you reach the large countryside church dedicated to Our Lady of the Snows. Take the first turning on the left (here you might meet with other ramblers who have opted to follow Route A since the last part of that route is the same as the last part of Route B) and continue until you reach a large roundabout. Proceed downhill until you reach the village of Marsaxlokk, the largest fishing village in Malta, with its main square dominated by its parish church dedicated to Our Lady of Pompeii.

Before going back home take some time to visit the area and Marsaxlokk's centre. On Sundays a very busy open air market is organised here and fish lovers can find some freshly caught fish. The area is also famous for the many restaurants specialising in traditional Maltese platters, particularly fish. Take some time to rest, enjoy a good meal or a coffee while enjoying the beautiful seascapes. A walk along the promenade offers the possibility to see fishermen in action mending their nets or tending to their boats.

Bus route No 91,92,93 operates the following route:
Valletta - Floriana - Hamrun - Paola - Fgura - Zabbar - Marsaskala

Bus route No 81, 85 operates the following route:
Valletta - Floriana - Hamrun - Marsa - Paola - Tarxien - Żejtun - Bir Id-Deheb - Marsaxlokk

Length of walk approx: Route A: 6.76KM - Route B: 6.92KM.
The distances exclude the Delimara Fort detour

* 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.

The bus route number can change. Check the Arriva website (arriva.com.mt) before starting this walk.

