

walk



Tips for the road

- Plan ahead and follow all the signs throughout the route. This is the **Pink Walk** so please follow the pink 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.
- 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



walk

The walk starts at the area known as il-Fiddien. It is possible to use your own transport to reach this area or else you can get there by bus no 109.

To start this walk, take the road on the right leading to Baħrija. (Note that the road on the left will be your return route from Mtahleb). The first part of the road to Baħrija is lined with Mulberry trees. On the right, you will soon notice the huge covered reservoir of is-Sentini. This collects spring water from the surrounding area.

The road starts ascending, flanked by fields enclosed in rubble walls and a few farm buildings. On your right you can see fertile agricultural land and further down, Ta' Koronja valley. No wonder the Knights tapped the abundant springs here to supply their new capital city, Valletta, with that precious commodity - water. Beyond a farm livestock unit on the left and a few Aleppo pines, you reach a road junction. Take the road on the left and walk towards the hamlet of Baħrija. On the other hand, if you turn on your right, one can take a detour to the area known as il-Kunċizzjoni, however, be prepared to retrace your steps back to this point in order to continue the walk.

On your left, you will see the tall radio antennae of the Wied Rini Maritime Coastal Station of the Civil Aviation Department. Walk along the main road to Baħrija hamlet until you reach a large square. In this square there are catering facilities, a small public garden with public toilet facilities and a children's playground.

Across the road from the public garden a low rubble wall encloses a corbelled hut, underneath which there is an ancient underground rock tomb. This site is private. From here you can also see, to the North behind the new buildings, the old 16th century church of St. Martin the Bishop. Continue along the main road flanking the garden. Beyond the primary school, the road starts going slightly downhill until you reach a road junction. Turn left into a country road passing over the stream bed, turn right following the path running alongside, but slightly above the stream bed for approximately 200 metres until the path turns uphill to your left.

In wet conditions watch your step. Note the wetland flora of the streambed. Towering above is the Il-Qlejgħa rocky outcrop behind which is the site of a Bronze Age village. Once the path reaches a junction just beneath the rocky outcrop, the walk continues to the left. However if you wish to catch a glimpse of the site of a Bronze Age village, turn temporarily to the right following the footpath for about 100 metres. The narrow path passes through a cleft in the rocky outcrop and slopes slightly down to another path at a lower level. To your right you can see a number of caves ensconced in the rocks and having their entrances walled up by rough hewn stones. Retrace your steps to. Walk uphill for a few metres, and beyond the cliffs you can enjoy a good view of the islet of Filfla.

The path continues uphill and passes a weathered rockface on your right studded with caper plants. On the left, across the valley, the Baħrija hamlet stands out on the ridge. A few more metres ahead and to the left one reaches a solitary villa. The path now develops into an asphalted countryside road. Proceed further and soon, on your right, you pass by a solitary farm building perched on the edge of the cliff. At the next junction, walk straight on to walk closer to the cliffs or take the road to the left that also leads to Mtahleb but through a route away from the cliffs. The road continues onwards for a few metres up to a junction *. Both roads lead to the same path but the one on the right is suggested for a good bird's eye view of the intensely cultivated terraced fields.

The walk continues its winding way along a stretch of rocky landscape. The path soon meets the elbow of an asphalted road. Turn left. At this point, if you wish to take a detour and are prepared to tackle the steep return walk to this point, you can turn to your right down the asphalted road to reach the spectacular view point of Miġra l-Ferha. The road winds downhill for about 1.5 kms flanked by a mixture of tall trees. At the end of the asphalted road and before the car park is reached, there is a gorge, which runs down to the sea. The road ends up in a car park. Avoid walking close to the cliff edge due to occasional sudden gusts of wind as well as the continuous erosion of the cliff face. This is a spot to feast one's eyes on the blue Mediterranean Sea below as well as the surrounding cliffs. The detour ends here.

Retrace your steps slowly uphill until you reach. Proceeding along the country road, you pass by a solitary farm on your right. The cliffs overlooking the sea are on your right. Stretches of garigue flank the road on both sides. The winding road soon passes by a cluster of farmhouses on your right. When the road starts narrowing, you should see on your left old Roman quarries still carrying the signs of the preparatory chisel work needed to quarry blocks of stone. Although situated on private land, they can be easily seen from the road which flanks them.

As the road veers away from the cliff edge, lush deep valleys can be seen below. The presence of a number of springs makes for more intensive farming activity. Soon you will see across the wide valley the church of Mtahleb hamlet perched on the edge of a cliff overlooking the valley. Although the farmhouses and church stand on a private estate, the church is open to the public for religious functions. The road continues along the edge of the cliff and proceeds through rocky area until a T junction is met. From the church parvis one gets a stunning bird's eye view of the countryside below as well as a peep at the simple abodes nestling in the rock face below. The church, the fertile valley below, the farms sheltering under the cliffs, the rich macquis and a solitary clump of a date palm provides countless opportunities for photographic enthusiasts. You should walk back to the main road and turn right. Ahead are a number of wind-powered water mills towering above irrigated fields, while on the right there are stretches of garigue. Soon the road starts going slightly downhill, past some farm buildings. The walk continues straight on downhill.

The road passes through a small cluster of farmhouses and continues downhill. Soon you will reach a side road on your right. This indicates the way to Dingli Cliffs. Continuing along the main road, you should meet a row of tall eucalyptus trees flanking the road. They are growing along a ditch which actually is the beginning of a valley, Wied il-Busbies (Valley of Fennel). The road is now flanked on both sides by fertile fields, many of which are irrigated offering a wide range of vegetables. Walk along the main road. A few metres beyond the left turning to L-Andrijet, there is a second left turning to Fiddien. Turn left here. The walk ends at il-Fiddien. Keep going uphill following the road sign to Rabat if you would like to visit this nearby historic town.

Bus route No 109 operates the following route:
Il-Baħrija - Ir-Rabat - Mdina - Ta'Qali - H-Attard - Haż-żeppu - Is-Siġġiewi - Lapsi

Length of walk approx 9.9km

* 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.



