

= Floriana Lines =

The Floriana Lines (Maltese : Is @-@ Swar tal @-@ Furjana) are a line of fortifications in Floriana , Malta , which surround the fortifications of Valletta and form the capital city 's outer defences . Construction of the lines began in 1636 and they were named after the military engineer who designed them , Pietro Paolo Floriani . The Floriana Lines were modified throughout the course of the 17th and 18th centuries , and they saw use during the French blockade of 1798 ? 1800 . Today , the fortifications are still largely intact but rather dilapidated and in need of restoration .

The Floriana Lines are considered to be among the most complicated and elaborate of the Hospitaller fortifications of Malta . Since 1998 , they have been on the tentative list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites , as part of the Knights ' Fortifications around the Harbours of Malta .

= = History = =

= = = Background , controversy and construction = = =

The city of Valletta was founded on 28 March 1566 by Jean de Valette , the Grand Master of the Order of St. John . The city occupied about half the Sciberras Peninsula , a large promontory separating the Grand Harbour from Marsamxett Harbour , and was protected by traces italiene fortifications , including a land front with four bastions , two cavaliers and a deep ditch . Although these fortifications were well designed , by the early 17th century they were not strong enough to resist a large attack due to new technological developments which increased the range of artillery .

In 1634 , there were fears that the Ottomans would attack Malta . Grand Master Antoine de Paule asked Pope Urban VIII for help in improving the island 's fortifications . The Pope sent Pietro Paolo Floriani to examine the defences , who in 1635 proposed building a second line of fortifications around the Valletta Land Front . Some members of the Order and a number of military engineers strongly opposed these plans , since the large garrison needed to man the lines was deemed too expensive . Eventually De Paule decided to construct the lines , since it would have been improper to disagree with the Pope 's military engineer . The Bailiff Gattinara resigned from his post in the Commission of Fortifications in protest .

Work on the lines began in 1636 , but no ceremony was carried out to commemorate laying the foundation stone due to controversy surrounding the construction . Since fortification was expensive , the new Grand Master Giovanni Paolo Lascaris imposed a new tax on immovable property . This tax created dispute between the Order and the clergy , who protested to the Pope . Some priests also influenced the population to take part in a national protest , but plans leaked out to authorities and the leaders were arrested .

The fortifications were named the Floriana Lines after their architect . By June 1640 , the lines were considered partially defensible , although still incomplete .

= = = Improvements and modifications = = =

Fears of an Ottoman attack rose again after the fall of Candia in 1669 , and the following year Grand Master Nicolas Cottoner invited the military engineer Antonio Maurizio Valperga to improve the fortifications . At the time the Floriana Lines were still under construction , and a number of weak points had been identified in their original design , especially since the demi @-@ bastions forming the two extremities of the land front were too acute and could not be well defended . Valperga attempted to correct these flaws by making a number of alterations to San Salvatore Bastion on the western end of the lines , and constructing a faussebraye around the entire land front and a crowned hornwork near the eastern end . In the 1680s some minor modifications were made by the Flemish engineer Carlos de Grunenbergh .

Work on Valperga 's modifications to the lines progressed slowly , and by the beginning of the 18th century the outworks , glacis and enceinte facing Marsamxett were still unfinished . Works continued

under a number of other engineers , including Charles François de Mondion , and the lines were largely complete when Porte des Bombes was constructed in 1721 . Further alterations were made over the following decades , such as the construction of the Northern Entrenchment in the 1730s .

In 1724 , the suburb of Floriana was founded in the area between the Floriana Lines and the Valletta Land Front . The suburb was named Borgo Vilhena after Grand Master António Manoel de Vilhena , but it was commonly known as Floriana . It is now a town in its own right .

= = = French occupation and British rule = = =

French forces invaded Malta in June 1798 , and the Order capitulated after a couple of days . The French occupied the island until September , when the Maltese rebelled and blockaded the French forces in the harbour area with foreign help . The Floriana Lines remained under French control throughout the blockade , and the Maltese built Tas @-@ Samra Battery and a battery on Corradino in order to bombard them .

After the British took over Malta in 1800 , the lines remained a functional military establishment . A number of minor alterations were made , including the enlargement of Porte des Bombes , the demolition of a lunette and some other gates , and the addition of gunpowder magazines and traverses .

= = = Recent history = = =

The fortifications were included on the Antiquities List of 1925 , and they are now also listed on the National Inventory of the Cultural Property of the Maltese Islands .

In the 1970s , parts of the covertway and glacis were destroyed to make way for large storage tanks . Today , the lines are still more or less intact , but some parts are in a rather dilapidated state and in need of restoration .

= = Layout = =

= = = Land front = = =

The Floriana Land Front is the large bastioned enceinte enclosing the landward approach to the Floriana . It consists of the following :

Bastion of Provence , also known as San Salvatore Bastion or Sa Maison Bastion ? a retrenched demi @-@ bastion which was heavily altered over the course of the 17th and 18th centuries .

Notre Dame Curtain ? curtain wall linking San Salvatore and St. Philip Bastions . It contained the Notre Dame Gate , which was partially demolished in the 1920s to accommodate for traffic requirements .

St. Philip Bastion ? a large obtuse @-@ angled bastion at the centre of the land front . It is retrenched with the following bastions :

St. James Bastion

St. Luke Bastion

St. Anne Curtain ? curtain wall linking St. Philip and St. Francis Bastions . It contained St. Anne 's Gate , which was replaced by a larger gate in 1859 . The larger gate was also demolished in 1897 to facilitate the flow of traffic .

St. Francis Bastion ? a large demi @-@ bastion linked to the Polverista Bastion of the Grand Harbour enceinte . It is retrenched with St. Mark Bastion .

The land front is surrounded by a ditch , which contains the following outworks :

San Salvatore Counterguard ? a counterguard near San Salvatore Bastion .

Pietà Lunette ? a pentagonal lunette between San Salvatore Bastion and Notre Dame Ravelin , facing Pietà Creek . It was damaged by aerial bombardment in World War II .

Notre Dame Ravelin , also known as the Lower Ravelin ? a pentagonal ravelin near Notre Dame

Curtain , between San Salvatore and St. Philip Bastions . A number of modern government buildings are located in the open area within the ravelin .

a pentagonal lunette between Notre Dame Ravelin and St. Philip Bastion . It was damaged by aerial bombardment in World War II , but the damage was repaired .

Porte des Bombes Lunette ? a lunette between St. Philip Bastion and St. Francis Ravelin . It was demolished in the early 20th century to make way for the modern road to Valletta .

St. Francis Ravelin , also known as the Upper Ravelin ? a pentagonal ravelin near St. Anne Curtain , between St. Philip and St. Francis Bastions . The Malta Environment and Planning Authority (MEPA) offices are located in the open area within the ravelin .

The outworks are surrounded by a faussebraye , advanced ditch , covertway , and glacis . In the 1720s , a gate known as Porta dei Cannoni was built in the faussebraye . The gate was enlarged by the British , and became known as Porte des Bombes . It was eventually detached from the faussebraye to facilitate the flow of traffic , and it now looks like a triumphal arch .

A crowned hornwork consisting of an inner hornwork with two demi @-@ bastions and an outer crownwork with one full bastion and two demi @-@ bastions is located near St. Francis Ravelin . The crownwork was protected by a musketry gallery overlooking Marsa and by two lunettes , one near the its land front and another near its flank .

= = = Marsamxett enceinte = = =

The enceinte along the side facing Marsamxett Harbour starts from San Salvatore Bastion of the Floriana Land Front , and originally ended at St. Michael 's Counterguard of the Valletta Land Front . It consists of the following :

La Vittoria Bastion ? a small casemated bastion grafted onto the Bastion of Provence which forms part of the land front .

Polverista Curtain ? a long casemated curtain wall between La Vittoria and Msida Bastions . It overlooks the AFM base at Hay Wharf .

Msida Bastion ? a polygonal asymmetrical bastion with a demi @-@ bastioned retrenchment . A cemetery was built on its upper part in the 19th century .

an unnamed curtain wall between Msida and Quarantine Bastions

Quarantine Bastion ? a polygonal asymmetrical bastion with a demi @-@ bastioned retrenchment . It is breached by a modern road .

In addition , a bastioned enceinte known as the North Entrenchment is located behind the entire Marsamxett enceinte , acting as a secondary line of defence .

= = = Grand Harbour enceinte = = =

The enceinte along the side facing the Grand Harbour starts from St. Francis Bastion of the Floriana Land Front , and ends at St. Peter and St. Paul Counterguard of the Valletta Land Front . It consists of the following :

Capuchin Bastion , also known as Dhoccara , Magazine or Polverista Bastion ? a demi @-@ bastion linked to St. Francis Bastion of the land front . It contains an 18th @-@ century gunpowder magazine .

a curtain wall linking Capuchin Bastion to the platform near Crucifix Curtain

a flat @-@ faced platform or bastion near Crucifix Curtain

Crucifix Curtain ? curtain wall linking the platform to Crucifix Bastion

Crucifix Bastion ? a large asymmetrical bastion containing a 19th @-@ century gunpowder magazine . It also had a concrete emplacement for a 9 @-@ inch BL gun , but this has been removed .

Kalkara Curtain ? curtain wall linking Crucifix and Kalkara Bastions . It is breached by a modern road .

Kalkara Bastion ? a bastioned enceinte linking to St. Peter & St. Paul Counterguard of the Valletta Land Front .

