

## DESTINATIONS

FOOD & DRINK HOLIDAYS | MALTA



### MALTA FOOD EXPERIENCES

As *Ainsley's Taste of Malta* TV series returns this autumn, **India-Jayne Trainor** finds how to follow in Harriott's footsteps



#### FIND FARM-FRESH PRODUCE

Malta's produce is as varied as its landscapes, from sweet sun-dried tomatoes to blood oranges, potatoes, seafood and olive oil. At Tulliera Farm Deli near the fishing port of Marsaxlokk, visitors can recreate Ainsley's eco-farm experience with a tasting menu and farm tour. Farther north in Mgarr, guests can visit family-run farm Malta Sunripe, where the tour includes a home-cooked lunch plus wine and deli tastings of bread and jams.

**Book it:** Explore's eight-day Malta and Gozo Discovery tour costs from £1,725 including accommodation, breakfast, activities and visit to Malta Sunripe; based on an October 26 departure. [explore.co.uk](http://explore.co.uk)

#### VISIT A VINEYARD

Viticulture in the Maltese islands dates from the Phoenicians in the 8th century BC and today, there are dozens of vineyards and wine estates. Whether it's a local girgentina white wine or a classic merlot red, visitors can replicate Ainsley's wine tasting in a variety of locations. The San Niklaw Wine Estate in Zejtun is featured in the show, while the Meridiana Wine Estate near Mdina also offers tours and tastings.

**Book it:** Riviera Travel's eight-day Malta Uncovered tour starts from £1,099, with flights from Gatwick on November 21, transfers, accommodation and daily excursions including a visit to a winery near Mdina. [rivieratravel.co.uk](http://rivieratravel.co.uk)



#### DINE OUT IN MDINA

There are no cars in Malta's ancient capital, making it feel like you've stepped back in time after passing through the towering entrance gate. Bars and restaurants dot the streets and squares – suggest upscale Maltese cuisine at The Medina Restaurant or the Fontanella Tea Garden for a *pastizz* (a savoury pastry typically filled with cheese or curried peas) with a view.

**Book it:** Cyplon Holidays offers seven nights in Mdina from £2,235, staying at The Xara Palace Relais & Châteaux, including flights from Gatwick, private transfers and luggage, departing October 16. [cyplon.co.uk](http://cyplon.co.uk)

#### EAT YOUR WAY AROUND VALLETTA

No visit to Malta is complete without taking in its capital, Valletta. The cobbled city is brimming with historic sites such as the gold-adorned St John's Co-Cathedral and scenic Upper and Lower Barrakka Gardens. A street-food tour is great for tapping into local dining spots – expect to try specialities such as date-stuffed pastries, *fiira* (filled bread) and fried ravioli, washed down with a glass of local beer or Kinnie, a popular bittersweet soft drink.

**Book it:** Tui Musement's Valletta street food and culture walking tour costs from £39 and includes a guide, tastings and a souvenir. [tuimusement.com](http://tuimusement.com)



#### LEARN THE SECRETS OF SALT

Neighbouring island Gozo has a latticework of salt pans that have been used for sea salt production for centuries. Visitors can see salt harvesters at work in the summer, when the shallow pools of seawater begin to evaporate. Look out for the Xwejini salt pans on *Ainsley's Taste of Malta* then send clients to tour them in person and pick up a packet of salt to season their own Ainsley-inspired dishes.

**Book it:** Cox & Kings' six-night Majestic Malta tour includes an excursion to the Xwejini salt pans and costs from £1,595, including flights from London, transfers, accommodation and select meals, departing October 18. [coxandkings.co.uk](http://coxandkings.co.uk)

