EDUCATION SYSTEMS IN AN INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL CONTEXT  
EDFD449 & EDFD549  

MALTA STUDY TOUR 2012

ITINERARY for MALTA STUDY TOUR  
Depart: Australia – Friday 24th November 2012  
Arrive: Saturday 24th November 2012 – Malta

Undertaken in Spring Semester b

Approximate cost starts from $3250

Cost includes: Airfare and taxes, accommodation for 21 nights including breakfast, entrances fees, services of a guide and coach (where applicable).

Cost subject to change pending final payment

A deposit of $250.00 to secure place on the Malta Study Tour

Sliema
1. Saturday 24th November
   Travel by coach from Malta International Airport to the Sliema Chalet Hotel, 117 Tower Road, Sliema. Official welcome and orientation of programme and an exploration of the local area

Valletta
2. Sunday 25th November
   Depart by public transport to Valletta the Capital City. Valletta was built by the Knights of St. John in 1565. We have a rare opportunity to attend a High Mass at St. John’s Co-Cathedral in Latin and an English translation is provided. After High Mass we walk through the city’s streets and admire several Palaces dotted along the way to the Sacra Infermeria on the Grand Harbour. We pass through an underground tunnel to view a documentary on Malta titled ‘The Malta Experience’. At the conclusion of the documentary we proceed to the location of the University of Malta, Valletta Campus on the way to Upper Barracca Gardens which offer stunning views of the Grand Harbour and a geographical view of the magnificent fortifications surrounding the city and Cottonera districts.

Valletta
3. Monday 26th November
   Travel by Ferry to Valletta and visit the Museum of Archaeology. We then proceed to the University of Malta, Valletta Campus for a welcome and lecture by the Dean of the
Education Faculty, Professor Valerie Sallares, followed by a guided tour of the University of Malta Valletta Campus. We then proceed to a guided tour of Casa Rocca Piccola, a stately home still lived in by Marquis de Piro and his family. Marquis de Piro himself intends to provide us with a guided tour of his family home. Casa Rocca Piccola contains over 50 rooms, many of which are open for viewing. The Air Raid Shelters of World War II have provided a dramatic and exciting addition to the tour of the house. The value of Casa Rocca Piccola lies in its ability to provide unique historical evidence into the customs and traditions of the Maltese nobility over the last 400 years. You can also see a collection of furniture, silver and paintings that add to the aesthetic riches of Malta. There is also an Art Gallery which features exhibits of local painters and artisans. After the tour you may wish to go to the University of Malta, Valletta Campus and use the library for independent study and assignment preparation or return to the hotel by public transport.

Hagar Qim, Mnajdra and the Blue Grotto
4. Tuesday 27th November
We visit the south west part of the island where the megalithic temples of Hagar Qim and Mnajdra stand high above the sea with a view of the islet of Filfla. This ancient temple site is set in a rural area and the temple of Hagar Qim is particularly interesting as it has the largest and heaviest megaliths out of all the temple sites on the Maltese islands, some slabs weighing as much as 20 tons. This morning the final stop of our tour is a visit to the Blue Grotto at Wied iz-Zurrieq. This exquisite grotto and its neighbouring systems of sea caverns mirror the brilliant phosphorescent colours of underwater flora. A Boat trip (which is optional and not included in the overall price of the tour as it operates subject to weather conditions, Eur7.50 paid on the day) will take you along the coast to explore these sea caverns lasts about 25 minutes. This evening we attend a welcome function hosted the High Commissioner Ms Anne Quinane.

Hal Saflieni, Ghar Dalam and Marsaxlokk
5. Wednesday 28th November
Our first stop is UNESCO's Hal Saflieni “Hypogeum” a unique underground labyrinth on three levels hewn out of the rock, dating back to Circa 3000 BC. It is a place of burial and worship. The most impressive part of this underground temple is the “Holy of Holies”. We then drive further south to arrive at the prehistoric water worn cave of Ghar Dalam which was home to many generations of Maltese inhabitants for centuries. This cave contains fossilised remains of large animals found in Malta millions of years ago. We then proceed by coach to the picturesque village of Marsaxlokk, an opportunity to experience a little local culture in a traditional fishing village which is characterised by low lying buildings and the colourful local fishing boats known as the ‘luzzu’. A small market lines the seafront and if you would like to sample fresh Mediterranean fish this is the place. After lunch we have a short guided tour of Marsaxlokk followed by some time to explore on your own.
Later you may wish to explore Sliema and its surrounds or perhaps take a Harbour Cruise round the famous Grand Harbour. The cruise around the two natural harbours on either side of Valletta – Marsamxett Harbour and of course the Grand Harbour takes about one and half hours. A detailed commentary will unfold the history of the two Great Sieges of 1565 and 1942, as well as many places of interest dotted around the harbours. *(This is optional and not included in the overall cost of the tour).*

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**Rabat and Mdina**

6. Thursday 29th November

We travel to Rabat to visit a first century Roman villa, Domus Romana. The Domus houses one of the world’s magnificent mosaics as well as marble statues dating back to the Roman period. We then proceed to walk through the gardens to pay a guided visit to the Silent City of Mdina, so called because it inspires tranquillity at any time of day and night. It is built on a plateau in the centre of the island. The old Baroque buildings, Cathedral and magnificent bastion walls dominate the rural skyline. It is difficult to date the origins of this city, suffice to say that there existed a village during the Bronze Age Period. Mdina had many names including Melita (Roman occupation), Medina (Arabic occupation), Citta Notabile (Knights of St. John) and Citta Vecchia (after Valletta was built). The only way to really experience and enjoy this city is to explore it on foot. Walk through the narrow streets and alleys; admire the historic buildings and magnificent views from the high bastions. After lunch we head to Rabat for a tour of St Paul’s Grotto and then to St Agatha’s Catacombs followed by afternoon tea hosted by the Missionary Society of St Paul.

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**Gozo**

7. Friday 30th November

Tour of the Island of Gozo, *where time stood still*, as it is still largely unspoilt. We start our tour to Gozo with a pleasant 25 minute ferry crossing. The charm of Gozo is apparent the moment you set eyes on the island; it is greener, more rural and smaller than Malta. Our tour is a combination of local culture, scenic spots and historical sites. On our way to the oldest freestanding temples in the world, The Ggantija Temples, we will pass through various quaint villages with towering churches. The church at the village of Xewkija dominates the horizon. The Ta’ Kola Wind-Mill is found nearby; a visit to this humble abode gives us an insight of daily life in by gone days. A drive to Gharb to visit the Sanctuary of Ta’ Pinu where in 1883 Our Lady is said to have spoken to Karmni Grima who was walking past the now run down church and heard a voice asking her to recite the Hail Mary three times. Over the following years miracles were attributed to the grace of Our Lady of the Assumption to whom the church was dedicated. In 2010 Pope Benedict VI prayed at Sanctuary of Ta’ Pinu. A short drive leads us to stunning sites such as the Azzur Window and Inland Sea. Here you can take an optional boat trip *(the boat trip is not included in the overall price as it operates subject to weather conditions Eur 7.00 is paid on the day)*. Lunch will be at the picturesque fishing village of Marsalforn. You will have time for a spot of shopping for popular buys such as lace. After lunch before heading back to the ferry for Malta, we visit the main
town on Gozo, Victoria and the Citadel. The Citadel is a small fortified city that dominates the heights above Victoria. The history of The Citadel dates back to the period when Gozo was under Roman and Arab occupation. The views from its fortified walls offer a 360 degree panorama of the whole island. Time permitting we visit the Folklore Museum. Our tour comes to an end and we make our way back to the ferry terminal for our return back to the main island.

Sliema
8. Saturday 1st December
Today is an opportunity to visit and use the local public transport to work out the best way to travel to your assigned school which you will be attending each day next week. It is also an opportunity to do some independent study in preparation for the presentation of your first assessment task.

Hal-Milleri and Bir-Miftuh
9. Sunday 2nd December
Today is an independent day where you may choose to explore parts of Malta that are of interest to you. One option is to visit the Medieval Chapels known as Hal- Milleri and Bir-Miftuh chapels which open on the first Sunday of every month (9.00am-12.00pm). You may wish to take local transport to visit these chapels. A donation is expected from the curators of the chapels which belong to Din L-Art-Helwa.

Experiencing an Early Childhood or School Community
10. Monday 3rd December to Friday 7th December
During this week you will join an early childhood or school community to observe first hand education in Malta. You are encouraged to participate in all activities made available to you and to keep a journal noting particularly the educational similarities and differences between the school under observation here in Malta and schools you have experienced in Australia.

Feast of the Immaculate Conception, Cospicua
15. Saturday 8th December
Today is one of the highpoints in the Maltese calendar. It is a public holiday to celebrate the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. One of the churches named after the Immaculate Conception is in Cospicua and a large public celebration is held in the City. It is a great opportunity to gain a significant insight into aspects of the religious and cultural identity of the Maltese people.
Advent and Christmas

16. Sunday 9th December

Today is an independent day where you may choose to explore parts of Malta that are of interest to you. You may wish to return to Gozo and visit the live recreation of Bethlehem during the time of the birth of Jesus. It is vital to check the starting date of the spectacular presentation. Alternatively you may wish to visit Mdina or Rabat or some of the many Church’s through the islands. It is a day where you also do some independent study in preparation of the presentation of your first assessment task which will be held on Thursday 13th December.

The Cottonera

17. Monday 10th December

Coach drive through Cospicua before arriving to the most important city of the Grand Harbour, which is Birgu the ‘victorious city’, which played a vital role in the Great Siege of Malta in 1565. In 1530 the Knights of St. John first settled in this old city, our walking tour will take us to the very heart of the city and our guide will give an insight to the past era dominated by the Knights of St. John. The narrow streets and quaint alleys, which form part of the area known as the “Collachio” was exclusively occupied by the Knights and during the tour you will see the magnificent old palaces which were occupied and which survived the ravages of World War II. We also visit the Inquisitor’s Palace complete with torture chamber and cells followed by visit to a wartime shelter which is open to the public and which depicts life during the Second World War. Walk past St. Lawrence Church which was the original church of the Order and end up on the stunning Birgu waterfront where Galleys use to berth, today it is a beautiful Yacht Marina. Lining the waterfront along the Maritime Museum, which we will visit are the old authentic buildings once used by the Knights. Today they have been turned into restaurants and cafes. We return by coach to the hotel.

Valletta

18. Tuesday 11th December

A walk down Republic Street, where you can admire numerous historical buildings built by the Knights of St. John amongst which are 8 Auberges, the Grand Master’s Palace and St. John’s Co-Cathedral. This was the Conventual church of the Order of St. John and in which you will see Caravaggio’s masterpiece, the “Beheading of St. John the Baptist” amongst other treasures. From here we proceed to the splendour of the Grandmaster’s Palace followed by The Armoury, which contains fine examples of medieval armour and weapons used by the Knights of St. John. Later in the day we will be welcomed by the Minster for Education, Mrs Delores Cristina. The Minister will also share with us her vision for education in Malta and the influence of the European Union on education in Malta.
Mosta, Dingli, Buskett Gardens and Rabat

19. Wednesday 12th December

We travel to Mosta Church with the third largest unsupported dome in the world which also survived a miraculous bomb attack during World War II. We then proceed to Chadwick Lakes the only natural lakes on the islands. Then we head to Dingli Cliffs which are characterised by predominantly vertical rock faces escalating 130 metres above sea level, followed by a short visit to the Prehistoric Cart Ruts and then on to Buskett Gardens for an authentic Maltese picnic lunch. Later in the day we look forward to a lecture and welcome by Dr Rose Anne Cuschieri, Director of Educational Services, Secretariat for Catholic Education.

Assessment Task 1 Presentation

20. Thursday 13th December

Today we spend the day at the University of Malta, Valletta Campus. We have an opportunity to present assessment task one for assessment. Invited guests will include academics from the University of Malta, Representatives for Catholic Education and other Public Education Departments, the Maltese Community Council Victoria. After the presentations there will be an address by the Dean of Education from the University of Malta.

The Northern Region

21. Friday 14th December

Today is a relaxed drive by coach to the northern end of the island taking you off the beaten track to some of the more secluded areas which most visitors do not have the opportunity to explore. We start with a drive to west of the island to the villages of Zebbieh and Mgarr. Mgarr is a farmer’s village and very popular with the locals that flock to dine at one of the many local speciality restaurants. Via Bingemma Gap we continue onto Gnejnaj Bay and GhajnTuffieha Bay a great opportunity for a photo stop with a view of the north of Malta and the island of Gozo in the background. Through the small town of Manikata surrounded by beautiful rural scenery, we drive to Popeye Village at Anchor Bay. Time is given to visit Popeye Village (entrance fee not included in overall cost of the tour). Return to hotel en route passing through Xemxija Bay and St. Paul’s Bay.

Depart Malta

22. Saturday 15th December

Depart Dubai

23. Sunday 16th December

Arrive Melbourne 6.35am

24. Monday 17th December

Itinerary subject to change