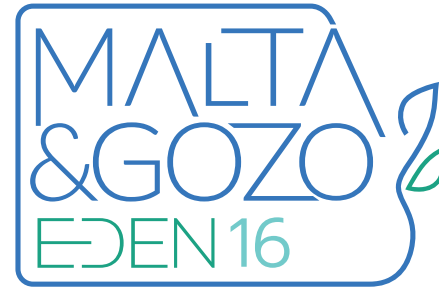


EDEN 2016

Tangible Cultural
Offer Award



AWARD 2016

European Destinations of Excellence (EDEN) is a project promoting sustainable tourism development models across the European Union. The project is based on a national competition that takes place every other year and results in the selection of a tourist "Destination of Excellence" for each participating country. Through the selection of destinations, **EDEN** effectively achieves the objective of drawing attention to the values, diversity and common features of European tourist destinations. It enhances the visibility of emerging European destinations, creates a platform for sharing good practices across Europe and promotes

networking between awarded destinations. This European quest for excellence in tourism is developed around a theme, chosen biennially by the Commission together with Member States and candidate countries. The relevant tourism bodies implement the projects at a national level. To date, the themes have included Best Emerging Rural Destination, Tourism and Intangible Heritage, Tourism and Protected Areas, Aquatic Tourism, and this year's edition of Tangible Cultural Offer. This promotional brochure showcases beautiful, lesser-known destinations that host very interesting yet less-visited cultural assets in the Maltese islands.

Qrendi

Winner of the EDEN award for tangible cultural heritage



This year's winner of the EDEN award for tangible cultural heritage is Qrendi, a small village in the southern region of Malta. A true gem, Qrendi hosts top attractions, including UNESCO world heritage historic sites Ħaġar Qim and Mnajdra Temples, various observation decks and towers, as well as the geological formations of Maqluba. Qrendi is also a superb attraction for scuba divers, mainly due to the exceptional sites of Wied iż-Żurriq and Blue Grotto. Qrendi - the place where history, culture, scenery and nature intersect.



Għajnsielem

First runner-up

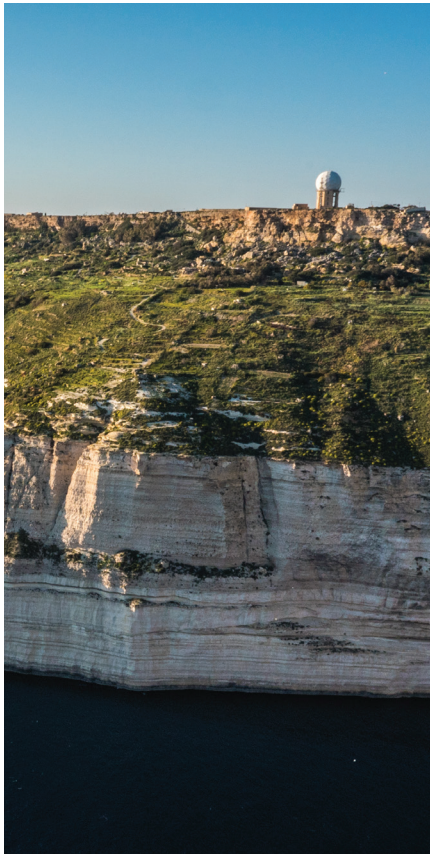


In Għajnsielem, just five minutes away from Mġarr Harbour, 20,000m² of once-neglected land has been transformed into a re-creation of Bethlehem, making it arguably one of the most popular Christmas events in the Maltese Islands, with visitors surpassing 100,000 annually. Over fifteen different NGOs and private businesses are involved in running this site. One hundred and fifty actors take visitors back in time to Judea of 2000 years ago. Horses turn mills, villagers go about their jobs, shepherds inhabit caves, animals roam in enclosed spaces while the scene of the nativity is re-enacted to the joy of all. Definitely a Christmas experience not to be missed.



Dingli

Second runner-up



Dingli's outstanding heritage is reflected in its village square. The square embodies Dingli's heart and soul as it links most of the village roads, the Parish Church, Ġużè Abela's monument, and the band club. The vegetables and fruit market, together with all-year-round activities, make this small village a must-see for both domestic and foreign tourists.

Mellieħa

Third runner-up



Mellieħa, 2009 EDEN award-winner for Tourism and Protected Areas, showcases sites of cultural, religious, and natural history to complement its fine sandy beaches. The village of Mellieħa is perched on a hill, commanding distant views of Comino and Gozo. Mellieħa boasts spectacular attractions including the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Mellieħa, the labyrinth of war-time air-raid shelters, Popeye Village and seaside sites.



Ta' Xbiex

Fourth runner-up

Located in the central region, the small town of Ta' Xbiex is home to about 1800 inhabitants, many of whom are foreigners. Ta' Xbiex hosts a number of foreign embassies together with the yacht marina, both situated by the pleasant Ta' Xbiex seafront, overlooking the magnificent Grand Harbour.



The following localities also participated in the competition with excellent entries.

Birżebbuġa



Apart from being a beautiful, sandy beach with clear, blue sea, this southern bay incorporates a mixture of recreational areas including the promenade, a Greek Theatre, a children's playing field, a sports pitch, a skate park, and also a basketball court. It also hosts numerous entertainment and leisure bars, as well as many popular restaurants. Pretty Bay is definitely a place for all the family!

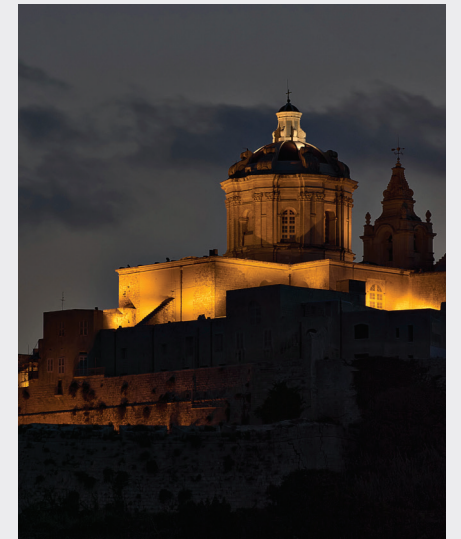
Kalkara

Situated in the southern area of Malta, adjacent to the Three Cities, the charming village of Kalkara boasts a diversified offer to both domestic and foreign tourists: from the neo-classical architecture of Bighi Naval Hospital, the Victorian polygonal Fort Rinella, all the way to the new modern, high tech Interactive Science Centre, Esplora. This vibrant yet peaceful village is truly an attraction worth exploring.



Mdina

A true artistic and historical paradise, Mdina hosts a plethora of notable architectural gems including Casino Notabile. Built in 1887 on a podium overlooking the hill on the limits of Mdina, the Casino was meant to be a club for high society living in Mdina and Rabat. In 2015, it was converted into a cultural hub. The Casino Notabile is truly an eye-catching building to visit and experience.



San Lawrenz



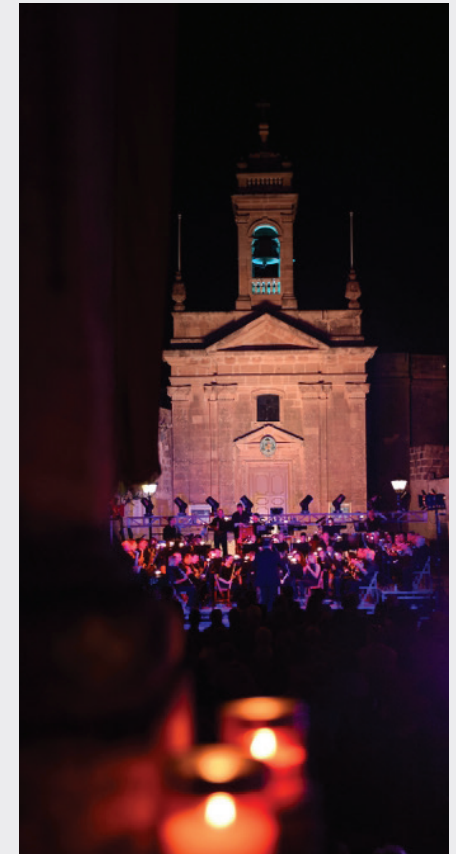
Built on a plain surrounded by three hills – Għammar, Gelmus and Ta' Dbiegi – San Lawrenz is a mixture of sea, history, arts, nature, food, and culture. The hill-top of Ta' Dbiegi rises 195 metres above sea-level and is the highest point in Gozo. Despite being relatively new and small, the village of San Lawrenz has quite a significant history and archaeology.



Santa Luċija

Hamlet of Kerċem, Gozo

An EDEN award winner for its local intangible heritage in 2008, Santa Luċija also presents a very interesting tangible heritage offer, including the British water tunnels leading to aqueducts, an old means of transporting water from the Mixta area to Victoria for the whole island. This tunnel is currently being restored and valorised for the pleasure of the general public, particularly history lovers.



Senglea

One of the historic Three Cities which lie across the Grand Harbour from Valletta, Senglea is redolent with maritime heritage and fortifications, dating back to the 16th century, including the Sheer Bastion – where a device to mount masts on wooden ships originally stood atop the ramparts. A Knight's period watch-tower, adorned with carved eyes and ears overlooks the magnificent Grand Harbour. It can be accessed from a popular garden known as il-Gnien tal-Gardjola.



Żebbuġ



Also known as Città Rohan, after Grand Master Emmanuel de Rohan, Ғaž-Żebbuġ is one of the oldest towns in Malta, with a population of 11,900. Ғebbuġ is mostly known for its stone-covered city gate, its imposing parish church, and for the religious devotion of the residents toward St. Philip and St. Joseph. Ғaž-Żebbuġ is a stone's throw from Mdina, and can be combined conveniently in a tour of this part of the island.



COSME Work Programm (2014-2020)
EDEN - European Destinations of Excellence
European Destinations of Excellence - Selection 2016
Co-financing rate: 50% EU funds; 50% National Funds

