



Numerous civilizations have influenced Maltese architecture.



The Grand Master's Palace was built in the 16th century.

A New Era for Malta's Tourism Sector

Exceptional tourism performance is delivering record economic results.

By Sally Crail

The number of people visiting Malta has been rising rapidly in recent years, with the stunning archipelago welcoming a record 4 million tourists in 2025, 13 percent more than in 2024.

"Malta's greatest attraction is its authenticity," explained Minister for Tourism Jo Etienne Abela. "Our islands occupy a unique position at the heart of the Mediterranean, at the crossroads of Europe, North Africa and the Middle East. Throughout history, this has brought different civilizations to our shores, each leaving its mark. We have preserved this legacy and live in harmony with it." The breadth of that history is evident in remarkable UNESCO World Heritage sites, such as megalithic temples built long before Egypt's pyramids and Malta's 16th-century capital city, Valletta.

"Furthermore, every aspect of our way of life has its own character," Abela said. "Our language, gastronomy and traditions all contribute to the identity of the islands. Even the traditional *fjira*, a humble bread recognized



Jo Etienne Abela
Minister for Tourism

"Malta is not simply a vacation destination. It is a place with a rich past and vibrant culture that also supports niche segments such as faith tourism, wellness, business events and diving."

Jo Etienne Abela, Minister for Tourism

by UNESCO, is part of what makes us distinct. Malta is not simply a vacation destination. It is a place with a rich past and vibrant culture that also supports niche segments such as faith tourism, wellness, business events and diving in sites considered to be among the best in the world."

The Maltese tourism sector has boosted the quality of its offering and made it easier for travelers to engage with the islands' year-round delights.

As a result of these efforts, visitor expenditure rose by nearly 19 percent in 2025 to \$4.5 billion, and the smallest state in the European Union (EU) is one of the bloc's least-seasonal countries for tourism.

According to Carlo Micallef, CEO of the Malta Tourism Authority (MTA), "Malta has become a destination of choice and an experiential destination—a place for people who want to discover culture, history and heritage, and experience the spirit of Malta and how we live." MTA's focus is on preserving the archipelago's authenticity and celebrating its uniqueness.

"We are currently riding a wave of success, but we need to make sure it does not compromise residents' quality of life," said the CEO.



Carlo Micallef
CEO, Malta Tourism Authority

Expanding International Connections

Global airlines have added more connections to Malta to satisfy traveler demands. For example, while the country has always been simple to reach through large European hubs, its first direct service from the U.S. started this year. "Delta Air Lines' New York flight is a major achievement for Malta and has contributed to the strong growth of our American market," said Micallef. "From January to May, arrivals from the U.S. were up around 30 percent. After Delta's launch in June, growth was 36 percent. The route's early performance is very encouraging, with good passenger loads, and we hope to expand our connectivity with North America."

Another strong endorsement of Malta's potential is that leading international hotel brands are beginning to enter the market. As one of the EU's fastest-growing economies, the pro-business nation has already attracted numerous investors to other diverse sectors, including financial services, interactive gaming and digital industries, shipping, aviation and advanced manufacturing. "Malta's location, connectivity and infrastructure make it an ideal base for businesses," Micallef said. "It is also a great place to live, offering the best of both worlds: the benefits of an island and the energy of a city. Many foreigners go beyond investing here; they integrate into the community and embrace our way of life. Being welcoming is a key part of authentic Malta."

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