

Malta PRIDE2 Diving Trip Review

This trip was initially described as a beginner diving project to Malta with lectures to provide the background maritime history of the islands as well as to give a context to some of the diving sites we would visit. This appealed to me as I am a previously certified diver and the maritime history of the Mediterranean interests me greatly. Our host, Gabriel Farrugia, was extremely accommodating and knowledgeable in this area and provided lectures and tours of an excellent degree of quality. Some of these included visiting the old capital Mdina, explaining its important role in the island's evolution as well as visiting Tigne Point to recount the French invasion of 1798 as outlined in the archival documents. At every site we visited, Gabriel was able to provide a wealth of information which dovetailed into other parts of the project.



Gabriel describing the role of the Carrack ship type to the Knights of the Order of St John. Taken at the Malta Maritime Museum, Birgu.

On the diving side of the placement, when both Gabriel and DiveSystems were made aware of the various students' levels of diving (Two beginners, two having previously dived), they were very open to training one of the students up to the Advanced Open water level while also providing a new diving experience to the other students. This allowed us to expand upon the material covered in the lectures and discussions which all of us thoroughly enjoyed. DiveSystems was a well-run organisation and took us to some phenomenal diving sites- we thought each dive was the best until the next one trumped the previous.



Students on the Advanced Open Water dives visited a WW2 wreck of a German minesweeper off Comino, among other dives.

Main Takeaway Points

The lectures and discussions provided by Gabriel were full of information about Malta's maritime history and the types of sources available to historians and researchers alike. As a lot of my work is Malta-related, this trip has provided some significant avenues for research and Malta's maritime history for myself. Finally, while the diving was thoroughly enjoyable, it also allowed me to further enhance my skills which will prove useful for my future diving.



One of the students studying for his advanced open water diving qualification.