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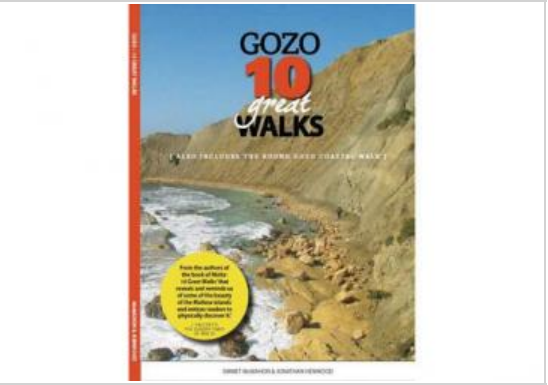
A charming Gozo itinerary

Emmet Mcmahon & Jona- Than Henwood: Gozo 10 Great Walks, 2012. 96pp.



As attractive as our sister island is, Gozo can be something of a tourist trap, with visitors confining themselves to the obvious places that are marketed in travel guides world-wide.

This 'trap' applies as strongly to the Maltese as it does to those who visit from further afield. How many times do we catch ourselves frittering our relaxing weekend in Gozo re-visiting the obvious haunts – the inland sea in Dwejra, the Citadel, enjoying an ice cream in Xlendi and so forth. Beautiful as these locations are, the island has a lot more to offer and much of it is off the beaten-track.

Definitely a handy publication to

- Ramona Depares

This is where Emmet McMahon and Jonathan Henwood's Gozo 10 Great Walks comes in handy. The booklet, which is conveniently sized to fit your pocket or handbag, comes with a totally charming glossy cover that reminds us exactly why we all love Gozo and why we should really make more of an effort to discover more of the island.

The authors know their stuff and it is immediately obvious that they have taken great pains to actually experience for themselves every itinerary that's covered. They have wisely opted to follow the same formula they employed in their earlier offering, Malta: 10 Great Walks. This formula includes pretty visuals that make you want to reach for the phone to book that holiday and very detailed, easy-to-understand instructions to accompany each walk.

The book starts with a general introduction about Gozo, information about buses, historical anecdotes, key attractions and the like – stuff that tourists will find useful.

The walks themselves cover the majority of Gozo. There's Mġarr and the South Coast; Ta' Ċenċ Cliffs and Xlendi Bay; the Azure Window and Inland Sea; the northwest coast and valleys; the saltpans; megalithic temples and Ramla Bay; Nadur and its bays; the east coast and Qala; the island of Comino; and finally, the round Gozo coastal walk. The latter is extremely popular but highly elusive if you don't have a good guide or if you are not very familiar with the whole island.

As you can see, the beauty of these walks is that by following them you do get to enjoy the top tourist sights.

However, these are cleverly combined with the lesser known locations. Extremely handy is the summary of walks that is found at the very beginning of the booklet; here you find information about the length of the walk, approximate time needed, the level of difficulty, amenities you will encounter on the way and even possible situations to avoid. Every walk also contains detailed instructions and background information about the villages/attractions you will encounter along the way.

The booklet is well-presented and offers the kind of information that even regular visitors to Gozo will appreciate. Definitely a handy publication to pack in your weekend bags.

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