

Two sights of Malta which I would like to visit .

So many countries, so many customs.

Modern life is impossible without travelling. For more than 70 years our country was a “closed” country, but now the whole world is opened. Millions of people all over the world spend their holidays travelling. They travel to see other countries and continents. It is always interesting to discover new things, to see different ways of life, to meet different people, to listen to different music. Nowadays the main destinations for Russian people are Turkey, Egypt or Thailand, but as for me I would like to visit Malta. Why Malta? First, there are a lot of interesting places to see; second, you’ll have an opportunity to swim in the calm and welcoming Mediterranean Sea (if you come in summer of course), and third, you’ll be able to improve your English in one of the English language centres.

When someone speaks about Malta I imagine feast of colours, fantastic weather, the Sun, the sea, the golden sand beaches, flocks of tourists, Mediterranean cuisine and the Maltese Cross, of course. I don’t see far and wide, but from the History lessons I remember that Maltese Cross was a symbol of an Order of Christian warriors known

as the knights of Malta and it is one of the National symbols of modern Malta. This famous 8 pointed Maltese Cross symbolizes the 8 obligations of the knights of St.John: truth, faith, repent of sins, humility, justice, merciful, sincere and enduring persecution. The Maltese Cross was depicted on the coin in the old Maltese currency and now is shown on the back side of the one and two Euro coins.

Malta has a very colourful history. BC it was under the Roman political control, the Norman and Spanish traces were also found in governance over Malta. The period of the Knights of St.John is often referred to as Malta’s Golden age. The Sicilian influence is also evident in religious traditions of Malta. The French rule was brief but impressive: slavery was abolished and secondary school system was established. British rule radically transformed the language, culture and politics of Malta. In 1964 Malta gained its independence. British traditions that live on in Malta include an efficient civil service, military based on the British model and Westminster style Parliamentary structure.

From the Geography lessons I remember that Malta is an island in the Mediterranean Sea, the largest of three ones: Malta, Goso and Comino. The capital city of Malta is Valletta. It was named after its founder the Grand Master of the Order of St.John’s Cathedral Jean Parisot de la Valletta. Valletta is a historical city, a masterpiece of the Baroque style. Valletta is announced by UNESCO as European capital of culture 2018. There is an abundance of interesting places worth visiting.

Which two sights of Malta I would like to visit? As I am very interested in ancient history, first and the most I would probably visit historical monuments, Hypogeum of Paola, for example.

Hypogeum of Paola is a subterranean structure dating to 3000-2500 BC. It was a necropolis in prehistoric times and the remains of more than 7000 individuals were found there. It is the only known prehistoric underground temple in the world. It was accepted by UNESCO in the World Heritage Site list. Hypogeum was accidentally discovered in 1902 when workers cutting systems for a new housing broke through its roof. There are several levels in the structure. The first level is only 10 metres below the surface. The second level has several important rooms: the Main Room, the Holy of Holies and the Oracle Room. The main Chamber is circular. It was in this room that the statuette of the sleeping lady was found. Now it is exhibited in the Museum of Archaeology in Valletta. The Hypogeum of Hal Saflieni is a very popular tourists’ attraction. However because of its age the government body that looks after historical sites allows only 60 persons per day to visit the Hypogeum. I wish I would be one of these 60 persons one day!

The second place which attracts my attention in Malta is 5000 year old Hagar Qim megalithic temple. It is located about 2 km. from the village of Qrendi in Southern Malta. It dates to 3600-3200 BC. One of its characteristics are large upright stones at

the corners. The interior of the temple is more closed off than in other Maltese temples and its view seems to have been limited by porthole slabs. A stone decorated with spiral designs and a free standing altar is decorated on all sides. The right apse has an interesting inner enclosure made of low stone slabs. The left apse has 3 high table altars and a low standing pillar at the end. One of the upright stones is 6,4 m.long and almost 20 tons in weight. To my mind, Hagar Qim is very like Stonehenge in Britain, but it is rather older.

From the advertisements of tour agencies I know that there are varied interactive shows to watch such as Malta Experience and the Mdina Experience. There is a choice of museums both in Valletta (such as the Museum of Natural History and the National Museum of Archaeology which exhibit a multitude of interesting items related to life in Malta throughout its long history) and in most other parts of Malta. I would like to experience some of Malta's more brutal past by visiting the Inquisitor's Palace and Malta Maritime Museum.

In conclusion I would say that visiting Malta one must be prepared to taste a little bit of everything: I would taste Maltese cuisine, which is typically Mediterranean and has a great deal of Italian influence, I would take walking boots to experience the vast panoramic views of the island, I would try diving to wander beneath the waves, I would take a car at the car rental agency to visit the cities and villages, I would enjoy the nightlife in one of the clubs, lounge bars, restaurants, and of course I would be consistently improving my English at the lessons and during communication with the native speakers.

I think that all this will create a whole new view of this fascinating little island!