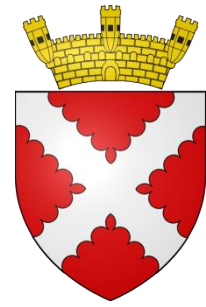


Haż-Żabbar



History

Haż-Żabbar, one of the oldest villages in Malta, was raised to the status of a city over two centuries ago. Zabbar is a residential town situated in the South East of Malta. Its origins are obscure in antiquity, but the population of the area became relatively significant enough to gain parish status under the patronage of Our Lady of Graces in 1615. Another milestone in the history of Zabbar is the elevation of the village to the status of a city by Grand Master Ferdinand von Hompesch on 14 September 1797. On that day the Grand Master decreed that the city be named Graziosa Citta Hompesch. In spite of the fact that this locality has now become a major town and development is taking place all along its outskirts, Zabbar today is still a peaceful and quiet town surrounded by cultivated countryside and a stretch of unspoilt rocky beach overlooking the Mediterranean Sea.

A long time before the election of the German Grand Master Ferdinand von Hompesch, he was a frequent visitor to the Zabbar Sanctuary of Our Lady of Graces. The order of St. John nurtured a deep devotion to Our Lady of Graces, centuries before it set foot on our island in 1530. After settling in Birgu, the Knights used to visit the Zabbar Sanctuary. Here they offered their thanks to God throughout Our Lady by offering small paintings, silver oil-lamps, decorated large candles, parts of tattered sails and hand-cuffs.

After Hompesch's election, the Zabbar Parish Priest, Fr Carlo Caruana, invited the Grand Master to attend the Titular Feast celebrations. Hompesch accepted the invitation and prepared himself for a great welcome by the Zabbarin. As Feast day, the 10th September 1797 got near, streets leading to the Sanctuary were decorated with long green garlands of carob leaves and branches on poles with the flag of the Order and a few of Hompesch.

When worse times came and tried to tarnish the name of this Grand Master, Zabbar kept and respected its connection with this late Grand Master of the Order in Malta. Streets were named after him, shops, clubs and even a theatre and a cinema bore the name of Hompesch. Official documents referred to Zabbar as Civitas Hompesch.

The history of Zabbar did not begin with Hompesch, nor did it end with his departure from Zabbar. Zabbar had its roots in prehistory and branched off through the subsequent centuries right through the twenty-first, always making a contribution towards progress in our beloved Islands.

Attractions in Zabbar

1. The Sanctuary of Our Lady of Graces

Zabbar became a parish on 10th of January 1615. At that time, the vice-parish of the village was that of St. James, a largish church well frequented by the locals; but the choice of a parish fell on the small chapel dedicated to Our Lady of Graces. There were many reconstructions of the Zabbar Parish Church, the first started in 1641, another took place in 1738 in order to renew the façade and to build two steeples and the last one in 1911 enlarged the church by the addition of six naves. The splendid interior of the church is a veritable feast for the eyes: marble, gold, shimmering crystal chandeliers and beautiful paintings.

Address: Triq Is-Santwarju

Contact Person: Rev. Fr. Parish Priest

Telephone: +356 21824383

Opening hours: 6.00am – 11.30am, 4.30pm – 7.00pm

2. Zabbar Sanctuary Museum

This museum was inaugurated on the 5th September 1954, is the only building in Malta that was built specifically as a museum. The Museum has a unique Ex-Voto collection of about 85 paintings. This collection boasts of the most Ex-Voto paintings donated by those serving in the Order of St. John navy.

Address: Mediatrix Square

Contact Person: Rev. Fr. Parish Priest

Telephone: +356 21824383/ +356 21806150

Opening hours: 9.00am – 12.00pm

A special appointment can be made to visit the museum when it is closed, contact the Musuem Curator.

Entrance fees: €2 is paid as an entrance donation, while children under 12 years enter free

Website: www.zabbarsanctuarymuseum.org

3. Hompesch Arch

The eventful and unsettled years that followed in quick sequence in Malta between the years 1797 and 1798 prevented the citizens of Città Hompesch from erecting an adequate monument to Grand Master Hompesch. So, when the damages sustained by the Sanctuary during the two-year conflict against France (1798-1800) were being repaired, Parish priest Caruana decided to build a triumphal arch in stone in honour of Hompesch.

Address: Triq Hompesch

Opening hours: Public Place, can be seen at any time

4. The Church of the Holy Cross

In last years the parish of Zabbar has grown steadily. It was imperative that various parochial zone be set up for the pastoral and spiritual needs of the parishioners. On 20th of May 1989, Archbishop Mercieca laid and blessed the foundation stone and dedicated the church to the Holy Cross. It was consecrated by the same Mons. Mercieca on 22nd of May 1999, under the majestic crucifix of sculptor Anton Agius. The church accommodates about 700; it is modern, well lit, ample and very centrally situated, with an imposing though simple facade. The Church of the Holy Cross is the latest in the series of churches and small chapels built all over Zabbar throughout the years.

Address: Triq Alessio Erardi, Triq Ic-Cimiterju
Contact Person: Parish Priest Dun Sebastian Caruana
Telephone: +356 21824383, +356 21806150, +356 21673249
Email: parrocca.zabbar@maltesediocese.org
Opening hours: Mon, Wed, Fri: 8.30am
 Tue, Thu: 6.00pm (winter), 6.30am (summer)
 Saturday evening: 5.30am (winter), 6.00am (summer)
 Sunday and holidays: 8.00am

5. Santa Marija Chapel (St. Mary)

This church is also known by the title “tal-indirizz” (a guide towards eternal salvation) and is the only one in Malta to have this title. It was built during the 17th century replacing a much older chapel. During the French blockade it served as a parish church since the Sanctuary of our Lady of Divine Grace suffered extensive damage.

Address: Triq Santa Marija
Contact Person: Parish Priest Dun Sebastian Caruana
Telephone: +356 21824383, +356 21806150
Email: parrocca.zabbar@maltadiocese.org
Opening hours: Sunday, Feast days and during the week: 7.00am (Except Monday)

6. Knisja Tal-Lunzjata (The Annunciation)

The present church was built in 1861 on the site of an older church built in 1610. Today it is used by the Catechumenate Movement.

Address: Triq Il-Kbira
Contact Person: Parish Priest Dun Sebastian Caruana
Telephone: +356 21824383, +356 21806150
Email: parrocca.zabbar@maltadiocese.org
Opening hours: Mon – Fri: 8.00am – 7.00pm for adoration of Holy Eucharist

7. Our lady of Mercy Chapel

This Chapel is part of the parish cemetery which is in use since 1676. It is used for funeral services and other masses during the year.

Address: Triq Ic-Cimiterju
Contact Person: Parish Priest Dun Sebastian Caruana
Telephone: +356 21824383, +356 21806150
Email: parrocca.zabbar@maltadiocese.org
Opening hours: Monday: 4.30pm

8. Chapel of St. Joseph's Institute

The chapel is the Convent Chapel of the Dominicans sisters and caters for the pastoral needs of the people living in the Housing Estate.

Address: Triq Mina ta' Hompesch
Contact Person: Dominicans Sisters
Telephone: +356 21824740
Opening hours: Mon – Fri: 7.00am
Sunday and holidays: 7.00am

9. Marija Bambina Centre

The centre is used for catechical instruction and Masses are celebrated there on certain days.

Address: Triq Il-Fustan
Contact Person: Parish Priest Dun Sebastian Caruana
Telephone: +356 21824383, +356 21806150
Email: parrocca.zabbar@maltadiocese.org
Opening hours: Thursday: 6.00pm (winter), 6.30am (summer)
Sunday and holidays: 9.00am

Places of Refreshment

Banda San Mikiel

The club is a hub of activities, concentrated in the Misrah area, but spread all over the village. It organizes many social activities for an ever wider number of locals who, in their Club feel happy and at home, all set to give their best to the club, the band and the village itself.

Contact Person: Mr. Brian Spiteri

Address: Misrah is-Sliem

Opening hours: Mon – Fri: 4.00pm – 11.00pm

Sat – Sun: 8.00am – 11.00pm

The Maria Mater Gratiae Band Club

The band club today is the venue not only for music lovers, but also for the staunch adherents of the club itself, who see in it a hive of activities, both social and religious, but particularly social and competitive ones, for the greater honour of the club itself and the people of Zabbar.

Contact Person: Mr. Angelo Scicluna

Address: 52, Triq is-Santwarju

Opening hours: Mon – Fri: 5.00pm – 11.00pm

Sat – Sun: 8.00am – 10.30pm

Oseris Café

Address: 22 St. James Square

Local Information

Zabbar Local Council

Civic Centre, Triq ic-Cawsli, Zabbar

Telephone: +356 21664466, +356 21826003

Email: zabbar.lc@gov.mt

Opening hours: Winter: Mon – Fri: 7.45am – 4.30 pm

Summer: Mon – Fri: 7.30am – 1.30 pm

Sat: 8.00am – 11.30am

Zabbar Public Library

Address: Civic Centre, Triq ic-Cawsli

Telephone: +356 21806397

Email: zabbar.library@gov.mt

Opening hours: Summer: Mon: 9.00am – 1.00pm

Wed: 5.00pm – 7.00pm

Sat: 9.00am – 12.00pm

Winter: Mon: 2.00pm – 6.00pm

Wed: 5.00pm – 7.00pm

Sat: 9.00am – 12.00pm

Accessibility

Arriva bus

From Valletta to: Bus 91

Bus Stop: Medjatrici

Customer care: +356 2122 2000

Email: enquiries@arriva.com.mt

Website: www.arriva.com.mt

Legend



Bus Stop



Church/Chapel



Places of Refreshment

LC

Local Council

WC

Public Convenience

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2. Zabbar Sanctuary Museum
3. Hompesch Arch
4. The Church of the Holy Cross
5. Santa Marija Chapel (St. Mary)
6. Knisja Tall-Lunzjata (The Annunciation)
7. Our lady of Mercy Chapel
8. Chapel of St. Joseph's Institute
9. Marija Bambina Centre

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- The Maria Mater Gratiae Band Club
- Oseris Café