

MQABBA



History:

The village of Mqabba, or L-Imqabba, is situated in the southeast of Malta, bordering Malta International Airport as well as the villages of Qrendi, Kirkop, Siġġiewi, and Żurrieq. Known for its numerous quarries (Mqabba holds the majority of Maltese quarries), the globigerina limestone (ġebbla tal-franka) resources of the area provide the main building material for most houses on the island. It is in these quarries, namely the ones of Tax-Xantin and Ta' Kandja, that Neolithic fossils of extinct animals were found. The origin of the village's name remains unclear. Historians say that it may have originated from a dome-formed building which might refer to a tower popularly known as Wilġa Tower. Its remains are still to be seen in Ƨal Farruġ Road. A different interpretation is that of the semitic verb qubba which refers to hard work with a direct connection to the works in the quarries.

People settled in Mqabba as early as the Neolithic era. Evidence for this is the discovery of a cave at a site known as Bur Megħeż. Probably the most significant findings are the Mintna Catacombs found in 1860 at Diamond Jubilee Square (Pjazza Ġublew tad-Djamanti) which date back to the early Christian period.

The strong religious tradition of the 3,102 inhabitants of Mqabba (in 2010) is displayed in the numerous chapels and churches found in the village. The most important one is also the predominant landmark of Mqabba - the Parish Church. It is dedicated to the Assumption of Our Lady. Mqabba was established as an autonomous parish in 1598. From the outset it was trused to the patronage of the Assumption, but, since the church dedicated to Our Lady under this title was quite small, the largest church in the village, dedicated to St Basil of Caesarea, was used as the main church for some years. By 1607 The church of the Assumption was linked to a nearby chapel dedicated to the Annunciation of the Virgin and these connected churches became the first parish church. By 1699 the present church was built around it, and, upon completing the works, the older linked churches were demolished. The present church was severely damaged during World War II and restoration work was completed in 1947.

Different from most villages in Malta, Mqabba celebrates two village

feasts (that come along with two band clubs: St Mary and Our Lady of Lilies band clubs). The feast of the Assumption of Our Lady is the main feast in the vilage since it is the parish's patron; it is held annually on August 15th, being a holy day of obligation for Catholics and a national holiday for Malta. The feast of Our Lady of Lilies (il-Madonna tal-Ġilju) is held on the third Sunday of June. The statue of il-Madonna tal-Ġilju is taken out also for a procession on December 8th, marking the feast of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady.

Attractions:

1. ★ **Mqabba Cemetery** 

The cemetery is a recent project that was built to solely respect the ancestors of Mqabba's residents. It was erected on a former abandoned plague burial site.

Address: Triq Ғal Kirkop, L-Imqabba

Opening hours: Sundays and during funerals

2. ★ **Nazzarene Chapel** 

This chapel was built in 1910-1911 by Paul and his son Baskal Xuereb, who were good *mgħallmin*: builders were known as *Mgħallmin* masters. Paul built the chapel in the cemetery and Baskal was involved with the reconstruction of the Parish Church's dome after it was damaged in WW II.

Address: Triq Ғal Kirkop, next to the Mqabba Cemetery

Opening hours: occasionally during funerals

3. ★ **St. Catherine Chapel** 

This church was erected in the place of two other churches (St Peter and St Catherine) between 1764 and 1774.

Address: Triq Santa Katarina, L-Imqabba

Contact Person: Parish Priest, the same as the Parish Church

Opening Hours: by appointment

4.  **St. Basil Chapel** 

Perhaps the most important chapel in Mqabba, St Basil dates back to 1486 and was enlarged on three occasions, the last part of which was finished in 1515. Victims of the 1776 plague were buried both inside the chapel and in its front yard.

Address: Triq San Bazilju, L-Imqabba

Contact Person: Parish Priest, the same as the Parish Church

Opening Hours: Wednesday from 9:30 to 11am and by appointment

5.  **St. Michael Chapel** 

Originally built in 1550, the Chapel of St Michael was rebuilt in 1669. The square decorated stone on the front door is believed to be a remnant of the original chapel.

Address: Triq San Bazilju, L-Imqabba

Contact Person: Parish Priest, the same as the Parish Church

Opening Hours: Wednesday from 9:30 to 11am and by appointment

6.  **Parish Church- The Assumption of Our Lady** 

Built in 1699 and restored after severe World War II damage in 1947, the church is dedicated to the Assumption of Our Lady, with its feast held annually on August 15th.

Address: Pjazza tal-Knisja, L-Imqabba

Contact Person: Parish Priest, the same as the Parish Church

Telephone No.: +356 2164 9306

Email: parrocca.mqabba@maltadiocese.org

Opening Hours: at mass time

7.  **Vincenti Tower** 

During the time of the Order of St John, Prior Orfeo de Vincenzo ordered the erection of this tower in 1726. Today it is part of private property.

Address: Triq it Torri Vincenti, L-Imqabba

8.  **Our Lady of Sorrows Chapel** 

Originally dedicated to the Assumption of Our Lady when it was built in 1550, this chapel is very well kept. It was rebuilt in 1680 and in 1812 changed the dedication to Our Lady of Sorrows.

Address: Triq il-Parroċċa, L-Imqabba

Contact person: Parish Priest, the same as the Parish Church

Opening Hours: every day from 8 am till 6 pm for private prayer and adoration

9.  **Old Hospital** 

The hospital was erected by the Knights of St John in the 18th Century to cure the victims of the pestilence and other diseases. The building, refurbished by the Local Council, is now used as a community centre.

Address: Triq San Innoċenzju, L-Imqabba

Contact person: Local Council

Opening hours: by appointment

10.  **Mintna Catacombs** 

Found in 1860, the Paleo Christian catacombs are the most significant archaeological findings in Mqabba. The agape ritual table dominates the whole structure of this complex of underground tombs.

Address: Pjazza Ġublew tad-Djamanti, L-Imqabba

Contact person: Ms Suzannah Depasquale, Heritage Malta

Telephone: +356 2123 3871 /+356 2295 4000

Opening hours: by appointment

Places of refreshment: 

- St Mary Band Club
Address: Pjazza tal-Knisja, L-Imqabba
- Our Lady of Lilies Band Club
Address: Pjazza tal-Knisja, L-Imqabba

Please note that both of the band clubs are open from 5pm to 11pm. When there is an activity therein, remains open till late. During the morning they are open only as normal cafés but it is not possible to visit the buildings.

Local Information: 

Mqabba Local Council

Address: 29, Triq il Parroċċa, L-Imqabba

Telephone No.: +356 2168 0622 /+356 2701 3040

Fax No.: +356 2168 0606

Email: mqabba.lc@gov.mt

Website: www.mqabba.gov.mt

Opening Hours: Winter: Monday – Friday: 7:30 am – 4:30 pm

Saturday: 9 am – 12 pm

Summer: Monday – Friday: 7:30 am – 12 pm

Saturday: 9 am-12 pm

Accessibility: 

Arriva Bus

From Valletta to Mqabba: Bus Route 72

Bus Stop: Bazilju

Customer Care: +356 2122 2000 Email: enquires@arriva.com.mt

Website: www.arriva.com.mt

Google Maps

Bus routes according to the bus stops

Timing:

- Timing for the transportation (check the bus timetable on <http://www.arriva.com.mt>):
35 minutes to get there from Valletta
35 minutes to come back to Valletta
- ★ Timing for the itinerary of the must-see sites-corresponding to the full itinerary: 1h

MQABBA MAP

- ★ 1 Mqabba Cemetery
- ★ 2 Nazarene Chapel
- ★ 3 St. Catherine Chapel
- ★ 4 St. Basil Chapel
- ★ 5 St. Michael Chapel
- ★ 6 Parish Church
- ★ 7 Vincenti Tower
- ★ 8 Our Lady of Sorrows Chapel
- ★ 9 Old Hospital
- ★ 10 Mitna Catacombs
- 🏠 Mqabba LC
- 🎵 St. Mary Band club
- 🎵 Our Lady of Lilies Band Club
- 🚽 WC
- 🏧 ATM

