

A vision for seductive Strait Street

Emmy Bezzina, Valletta



The time has come to devise a strategy on the seductive Strait Street in our capital city. It could easily be turned into a commercially alluring gem within its sensuous historical perspective. History could be recalled in modern garb. Vision, business acumen and initiative would turn this possibility into a reality in a much shorter time than one might conceive. (I wonder most of the time where the Valletta local council actually is; it seems to come to life only as council elections approach with the usual and typical block vote for the group where we get more of the same).

Fascination is one of the hallmarks of this narrow stretch of street, harboured on both sides by protective long buildings which provide an idyllic array of shades and shadows throughout the day.

Divided into eight sections, intersected by parallel roads, namely South Street, Melita Street, St John Street, St Lucija Street, Old Theatre Street, Archbishop Street, St Christopher Street, St Dominic Street, St Anne Street (actually an alley) and St Nicholas Street, this famous street is badly in need of maintenance and a thorough face lift.

The expense it would entail should not be that hefty considering the small area involved. The Valletta local council should wake up and undertake a truly worthwhile rehabilitation project for our capital city.

If they could get involved in such ephemerally wasteful activities as Notte Bianca, then there is no reason why the council should not get implanted in a permanent project beneficial to the city and our country.

From soundings I have made, it would appear that there are persons interested in such a project given the appropriate conditions and right incentives.

In this stretch of road as intersected, each of the eight sections could be worked upon separately, thus minimising the inconvenience and reaping the benefits in a much shorter time. Ideally, the first section to be pondered upon should be the stretch between Old Theatre Street and Archbishop Street, to be followed by that between Archbishop Street and St Christopher Street.

In these two particular stretches, many are the disused places, most of them former entertainment spots, that could be brought back to life with incentives given to the owners. No vehicles would be allowed except for service and at specified times during the day.

The road could be resurfaced with cobble stones. The whole area would get subdued lighting during the night: green, red, blue and amber. Only soft music would be allowed. Romanticism would intertwine with commercialism without causing havoc to the peaceful quietness which Valletta has now become accustomed to during the evenings and its nights.

A special sub-council would see to the proper administrative enforcement of such an area.

Let us give Strait Street a dedicated shot to energise it to its former glory in a modern set-up with all precautions taken that while its customers enjoy themselves, no inconvenience is caused to those who might not conceive that stretch of road as their favourite relaxation or entertainment spot.

Comments

alfred agius (2 days, 9 hours ago)

My vision for Strait Street.

Small, interesting and varied outlets - souvenir shops, craft shops, chocolatiers, jewellery shops and maltaglass shops cum demo areas, winebars, restaurants and coffee shops, pizzeria but no fast food, maltese bakery baking and selling maltese traditional bread, ftira, qaghaq ta' l-ghasel and other traditional maltese sweets, tal-qubbajt - all in the old tradition (lighting, windowdressing, furniture, fittings and furnishing) that take you back to the era othe `gut`. Ah! Reminds me of Corfu Old Town that draws so many tourists and locals off the main shopping areas. Yes, such an attraction if everything is small and fits the character of the place.

Fondazzjoni Wirt Artna should also be present with men dressed as soldiers and sailors, army pickets patrolling the area and `barmaids` running a revived vaudeville club that should bring back nostalgic thoughts of an era that has long gone down memory lane.

Yes, we`ll be missing something if we don`t breathe life back into Strada Street. It can be an attraction that should not be overlooked. Perhaps, Dr. Emmy may have set the idea rolling. Any more?

Charles DeMicoli (2 days, 13 hours ago)

Hey Emmy, do you mean what I think you meant when you wrote at the end of your letter, "Let us give Strait Street a dedicated shot to energise it to its former glory in a modern set-up with all precautions taken that while its customers enjoy themselves, no inconvenience is caused to those who might not conceive that stretch of road as their favourite relaxation or entertainment spot."? What was its "former glory"?