

Valletta square trees to be relocated



Photo: Matthew Mirabelli.

Trees offering a patch of shade during hot summer days in St George's Square, Valletta will be removed as part of the embellishment project that will involve the complete repaving of the place.

The Ficus Benjamina, which line the side of the square opposite the Palace and date back to just after World War II, will be replanted at the Ta' Qali National Park, a Rural Affairs Ministry spokesman said. This condition was imposed by the Malta Environment and Planning Authority after it was decided to remove the trees because, according to the spokesman, their roots tend to spread, damaging both the paving and the tunnelling system under the square.

The trees will be replaced with a number of potted decorative trees.

Comments

Galea. L (2 weeks, 3 days ago)

How about replacing them with orange and lemon trees possibly enclosed with artistic iron works to compliment the environment and the fruit used for hospitals and/or old peoples homes? Adds a touch of greenery, very nice smell when flowering and cleaning the air at the same time.

james cauchi (2 weeks, 3 days ago)

the trees are damaging the tunnels .. thats the reason. and it was the cultural heritage that recommended that the trees be removed, and MEPA set it as a condition. its good to get the facts right. Also, trees will again be planted in big pots so there will still be fresh air for those who think they can plug themselves to the trees and breathe. Apart from the fact these trees will not be lost but re-planted at ta qali.

Dennis Borg (2 weeks, 3 days ago)

In all my 60+ years I have never glimpsed square trees in Valletta .. or anywhere else for that matter. Surely the title could have been improved.

Edward Camilleri (2 weeks, 3 days ago)

As time goes by we become more intolerant to something that is really needed for our survival, and instead tolerate the increasing rate of carbon dioxide in the air. See article <http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20090605/local/traffic-emissions-up-14-in-three-years> on today's issue of the paper.

Possibly there is no space for a few trees in such a large square?

There is no excuse for removing these trees, the damage being done by uprooting trees is far greater than the possible damage the trees can do. We are already doing damage by pruning these trees drastically, such as those in the Mosta square - reduced to mere stumps.

Steve Sant Fournier (2 weeks, 3 days ago)

And then we replace them with plastic tents or umbrellas and all so more horrible advert ridden ones. Trees mean oxygen, clean air and life. Such pity it seems that where major and important cities are finding that trees embellish a place with greenery, we in Malta confuse beauty with stone and a blistering sun with fun. Unbelievable !

Joseph E Briffa (2 weeks, 3 days ago)

This is a downright shame.....The authorities should hide their face in shame..Uproot 60 year-old ficus benjamina to safeguard the paving? Is this embellishment? The Minister concerned should direct that no such uprooting takes place. Some shrubs in pots? How would the shade from the fierce sun be obtained from these shrubs? Ficus benjamina is the answer in Malta, they afford the much-wanted shade and embellish the place. Who cares about the two-penny paving?

Anna Farrugia (2 weeks, 3 days ago)

Dear Ms Elizabeth Polizzi,

All Ficus trees quote 'tend to spread, damaging both the paving and the tunnelling system under the square.' This is a fact and you can research it - to your heart's content - if you like and check with agricultural or horticultural places overseas.

If these trees are being replaced by others which do not damage the buildings, paving etc, i think that the authorities, IN THIS CASE have made wise decisions. GOOD ON THEM AND WELL DONE!

As to you Ms Polizzi - Just in case you wish to write back to me, I too had a 3 storey ficus in my front garden and I had checked with my brother who is a horticulturalist and got a gentleman from the Dept of Agriculture - they both said the same thing - remove it and replace with something else.

elizabeth polizzi (2 weeks, 3 days ago)

We keep pulling down trees and planting blocks of cement instead all over malta. We give importance to afforestation in the north, well and good we need it. We also need trees in our city and towns to make them look beautifull . Trees can help make the air cleaner.
