

Victoria Gate revealed after restoration



Scaffolding has been removed from Victoria Gate - Valletta's oldest gate - as a restoration and rehabilitation project which has been ongoing for months, enters its final phase.

The gate, built by the British in 1884-85, has been undergoing restoration and a much-needed clean-up by the Resources Ministry.

The gate was designed by Emanuel Galizia and named after Queen Victoria. It replaced the single arch Marina Gate built at the time of the knights complete with draw bridge.

The need for a bigger gate had been felt because the area of Marina Street down to the harbour was, at the time, the busiest part of Valletta. Ships used to berth close by, bringing produce from Italy and Gozo, and the shops which lined Marina Street used to be a hive of activity, with wholesalers supplying the other shops in Valletta. The area also used to boast many bars.

The rebuilding of the gate also saw the gradient of Marina Street being lowered - as can be seen from the lowered doors of the surviving shops.

The rehabilitation of Victoria Gate included the removal of old fixtures and repairs to the stonework.

The pavements along the street are currently being widened and repaved.

The Resources Ministry is planning to eventually give new life to this part of Valletta - now a shadow of the past - by introducing tourist amenities and facilities such as cafes, souvenir shops, restaurants and information offices, and restoring the old historical features - such as the old awnings which used to line the street. In that way the street may become an attractive walkway from the cruise liner terminal to the heart of Valletta.


The project will also include the rehabilitation of the tunnel under the bastion at the bottom of the hill.

VALLETTA COUNCIL WELCOMES PROJECT

Valletta Local Council in a statement welcomed the restoration of Victoria Gate, saying the project would help breathe life into the area. It said that residents had been scared of going out at night in the area but with the recent upgrade, the area "will not only shine in the morning but also in the evening."

"What was before a dull area is now being turned into a model for other parts of the city and the harbour area," Mayor Alexiei Dingli said.

Comments

adrian farrugia(2 weeks, 4 days ago) 

Another cherry in the pie for Claude Borg after the restoration of Palace Square. Well done Claude! His dedication and vision puts one's mind at rest when it is known he is involved in the restoration of our architectural treasures.

ray azzopardi(2 weeks, 4 days ago) 

projet veru interresanti hafna ta min jghid ukoll li ma dan il-progett hemm hafna affarijeit ohra xijsiru..per ezempju il grada li kien hemm qabel meta flokk il binja kien hemm il ground tal-belt ? proset lil kull min huwa ikkoncernat pero l-iktar li haqqu proset huwa il-perit claude borg li studja sew dak li hallewlna missirijietna. WELL DAONE CLAUDE

punt ta min jikunsidra huwa l-immanegjar ta traffiku kif inhu proposit . ma naqbel xejn ma kif gejj ghax ahna ir-residenti irridu induwru id dawra biex nidhlu gewwa djarna , u xi nghidu ghal dawk it trakkijiet li jridu jaghttu xi servizz gewwa dahliet gnien is-sultan ? tipo skamel tal gass eccc. eccc. ta min jiehu nota fuq dan il-punt

H. Camilleri(2 weeks, 5 days ago) 

AT LEAST... AT LAST!!!! a reply..... an official reply has come!!

Well done to the concerned parties for the project.... but just one remark please... Kindly consider the strong convenience to the residents at 'Gnien is-Sultan'...


HEY and by the way... my God, it was unbelievable and couldn't believe before i trying it out personally.... NO way you can pass, you cannot access this area during

almost all day of Sunday, Valletta Gran Prix.... very arrogant and uninformed personnel/police/wardens.

A. Calleja(2 weeks, 5 days ago) 

Almost two years ago, a maritime heritage trail was launched in this area (<http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20080624/local/maritime-heritage-trail-links-valletta-floriana-and-marsa>) however recently I have noticed that the information panels have been either vandalised or neglected.

I really hope that the authorities concerned, apart from restoring this area back to life (well done!), they take care of these details which would make such restorations complete for the benefit of both locals and tourists.


victor rodenas(2 weeks, 5 days ago) 

A new city does not need a gate, but Valletta is not a new city. If I restore a statue of Michelangelo can I add a pair of sunglasses to his face, or, put a wrist watch on his hand. No it would be an anachronism. Valletta without a gate of some sort is reversed anachronism. Well done to the restoration of Victoria Gate.

Edwin Mifsud(2 weeks, 5 days ago) 

Why don't we just dismantle the gate and replace it with..... NOTHING?

That is what world famous architects do after all.

J.Tonna(2 weeks, 5 days ago) 

Nixtieq nara ritratt ta' Victoria Gate kif giet issa, minghajr ingenji ecc. quddiemha. B'hekk wiehed ikun jista' japprezzaha aktar.


paul mizzi(2 weeks, 4 days ago)

hahaha tajba din!

minghajr ingenji!!! ejja passiggata s'hawn... nissuggerilek tilbes l-iswed halli tara kif tohrog!

Joe Mangion(2 weeks, 5 days ago) 

Well done to Claude Borg. Hekk ukoll ghandu jkun il Bieb principali tal Belt Valletta. mela sewwa fin naha t'isfel tal Belt hemm Bieib il gmiel tieghu u bhala Bieb principali ha naghmlu gerha fis sur.

Rehabilitation Projects Office(2 weeks, 5 days ago) 

please note that the trees were planted inside the ditches. The revealing of the ditches is considered of fundamental importance and there was no choice but to remove these trees and replant them elsewhere. One tree was actually planted at Ta Qali and the other tree was planted at Marsascula By Pass. These decisions must be taken in a holistic manner and understand the values achieved in the historically primary entrance to Valletta. (Claude Borg)

paul mizzi(2 weeks, 5 days ago)

thanks for this information Mr.Borg. It's nice when we can get such constructive replies from authorised people. well done!

maquilina(2 weeks, 5 days ago)

Good work. The best part is that of deciding where is wrong and correcting it. I make particular reference to the removal of the trees. I am in favour of trees and object to the removal of trees however one must admit that many trees are planted in the wrong places such as: In front of St. John's Co-Cathedral (thankfully trimmed down), In front of Castille (thankfully removed), at the republic street side of St. John's (yet to be trimmed), Pjazza regina (trimmed but not enough) and St. James ditch (fejn jarma l-Monti tal-Hadd)- trees are almost higher then the bastions! Good luck with your endeavours Mr. Borg!

K Tabone(2 weeks, 5 days ago)

Well Done, trees should be planted where most needed and at their appropriate locations.

Trees were planted during the British period to cover the baroque influence on the Maltese islands.

Planting trees in the proximity of such majestic architecture, it portray a threat to the foundations and the damage caused are irreparable.


Next please remove the trees near St. John's Co Cathedral.

Steve Borg(2 weeks, 5 days ago)


Well done to Perit Claude Borg. A gentleman and a credit to the Civil Service. I presume that the re-planted tree was a Ficus nitida since I was not aware of any indigenous trees in the vicinity. Small heat-resistant interpretation panels would indeed be welcome for those passing through the area.

Tony Gatt(2 weeks, 5 days ago) 

Well done Minister for Resources!! Keep up the good work and keep up the good rythm!!

Jesmond Micallef(2 weeks, 5 days ago) 

Prosit tassew. Dan il bieb issa jidher nadif u sabih, hekk kif jisthoq. iL gebla Maltija, Tal Franka, hija wahda mill isbah gebliet li jien qatt rajt. Gebla robusta hafna wkoll. Prosit tassew.

mario pandolfino(2 weeks, 5 days ago) 

Tlestija ta restawrar ta progett iehor fil kullana ta xogholijiet ohra li jsiru mil Ministeru ta Risorsi u affarijiet Rurali .Prosit lil Ministru George Pullicino u lil nies fil ministeru tieghu.

P.Cassar(2 weeks, 5 days ago) 

REJOICING AT RESTORING VICTORIA GATE AND DESTROYING CITY GATE!!!!!!

MUDDLED THINKING AND ACTING.


POOR MALTA

Tony Gatt(2 weeks, 5 days ago)

City Gate is a blot on the landscape. You are compaing chalk and cheese

vincent scerri(2 weeks, 5 days ago) 


Slowly but surely , as time goes by, Valletta shall be the envy of many European capitals.

Lawrence Fenech(2 weeks, 5 days ago) 

The resources Minsitry should have taken in hand the rebuilding of Theatre and mybe you would have got a round of applause from the majority of the maltese and not a profit making Renzo Piano.


P. Refalo(2 weeks, 5 days ago)

rebuilding the theatre (as it once was) would be the worst decision ever in architecture. As an architect Piano and his Firm worked and tackled the issues in an architectural way. if we wanted to rebuild the same building in 2010! why did we assign an Architect, you could have easily copied it!!!!

Anthony Borg(2 weeks, 5 days ago) 

Every time I hear of restorations being done in Valletta (City of my birthplace), my heart misses a beat! Needless to say, restoration must be implemented, otherwise we risk losing the many beautiful facets of Valletta. I just want to say to those involved in planning the restorations, to be very careful and very sensitive. Every corner of this beloved City teems with history and, I must admit, much nostalgia! As a young boy, my grandfather, the tinsmith behind "Is-Suq", used to take us frequently to Barriera wharf to watch ships entering the harbour, and invariably we had to go through Victoria Gate.

Well done to all concerned for this endeavour.

paul mizzi(2 weeks, 5 days ago) 

<http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20100501/letters/unknown-fate-of-victoria-gate-trees>


still not a mention!

and once again - residents are never given any importance. Is it just cafes, souvenir shops, restaurants and information offices that can give life to the area? what about restoring the old buildings and renting them out to young couples/families.


Also, what about considering that the victoria gate residents are still missing the basic amenities like a grocery/pharmacy or grocery? Old people living in the area have to go up hundreds of steps to reach the closest shops at merchants street! This when a massive residential area is present right at the side.

k Formosa(2 weeks, 5 days ago) 

Malta is undergoing several restoration projects thanks to the Ministry for Resources... i can say that these jobs are highly commended ...

Paul Gauci(2 weeks, 5 days ago) 

Good news indeed. Our heritage needs to be preserved for the future generations.

GVella(2 weeks, 5 days ago) 


"restoring the old historical features - such as the old awnings which used to line the street"? Wouldn't some eminent architects argue that this would be trying to reproduce a fake?

Kleaven Maniscalco(2 weeks, 5 days ago)

A senseless comment indeed. Why would it be trying to reproduce a fake. It is a conservation project not rebuilding a new gate with a design from 1885.

Karl Micallef(2 weeks, 5 days ago) 

Very well done!

John Micallef(2 weeks, 5 days ago) 

Setaw stennew jumejn ohra qabel il Press Release, forsi kienet tkun xi haga kompluta u nadifa, mhux qiesa sit ta kostruzjoni!!

Madanakollu a big WELL DONE eh!!

Valletta residents' emerge as the least satisfied with cultural facilities in their city, a Europe-wide survey of 75 different European cities revealed.

This startling revelation of the capital's lack of cultural facilities comes in the wake of the government's decision to build a roofless theatre in the space occupied by the opera house ruins, and to make the building of a new parliament the main focus of the Valletta regeneration project.

Together with Naples, the Maltese capital emerges from the survey as the only European cities where the number of unsatisfied respondents outnumber satisfied ones. While in Valletta, 42% were unsatisfied and 35% satisfied, in Naples the corresponding split was 46% to 41%.

The survey was conducted by Gallup on behalf of Eurobarometer, and consisted in interviews with 500 randomly selected citizens in each of the 75 selected cities. In total, more than 37,500 interviews were conducted between 30 October and 10 November 2009.

The results show that the proportion of respondents satisfied with Valletta's cultural facilities has fallen drastically, from 62% in 2006 to 35% in 2009.

The lack of satisfaction with cultural facilities in Valletta contrasts with satisfaction in most other European cities. Only 2% of respondents in Cardiff and 3% in Berlin were not satisfied with the cultural facilities offered by their city.

The survey also shows that 52% of Valletta residents think that their city is not clean. This stands in marked contrast with cities like Oviedo, Piatra Neamt and Luxembourg, where almost all respondents agreed that they lived in a clean city (96%-97%).

However, in a third of the surveyed cities, less than half of respondents agreed that their city was clean. The lowest proportions were seen in Palermo, Budapest, Sofia and Athens, where less than a sixth of interviewees in those cities think that they live in a clean city.

Just over half (52%) of Valletta residents were also dissatisfied with the state of their streets and buildings.

Respondents living in Sofia were the least happy with the beauty of their streets and buildings: (73%).

Respondents in Athens were the least likely to be satisfied with the opportunities for cycling, walking and other outdoor recreation: just 23% of interviewees in Athens were satisfied, while 48% were not at all satisfied. Naples, Palermo and Valletta joined Athens at the lower end of the ranking.

The survey also shows that 38% use public transport in Valletta, compared to just 2% in Paris and 5% in London.

The proportion of respondents who answered that they always felt safe in their city was highest in Oviedo (84%) compared to 55% in Valletta.

Perhaps surprisingly, Valletta was deemed to be less than major cosmopolitan cities like Amsterdam (65%). Other cities where respondents were more likely to say they always felt safe in their city were Groningen (79%), Aalborg (78%), Oulu (77%), Munich (76%), Piatra Neamt and Luxembourg (both 73%).

Significantly only 59% of Valletta residents think that most people living in their city can be trusted. Significantly people living in bigger cities like Barcelona, Madrid, Berlin and Hamburg were more likely to trust people living in their city.
