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## Hotel Review: The Phoenicia Malta hotel, Malta

The Phoenicia Malta is a luxury landmark hotel with a perfect location on the doorstep of Valletta.

by Susie Boulton | Apr 10, 2023 | 0 comment



Reading Time 4 mins

Opened in 1947, the Phoenicia Malta was the first luxury hotel in Malta, heralding tourism on the island. Following a total restoration it now combines grandeur and old-world charm with a fresh modern feel and contemporary facilities.

The heart of the hotel is the chic Art Deco Palm Court lounge with its fresh blue and white decor, palm plants and stunning floral arrangements.

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### *Palm Court Lounge c. Philippe Schaff*

Just outside the magnificent fortified city of Valletta, with fine views all around and a seven-acre garden, the hotel was initiated by Lord Gerald Strickland, Prime Minister of Malta from 1927-1932, and his second wife, Lady Margaret Strickland.

During World War II the hotel, on the verge of completion, was requisitioned by the British for RAF personnel and suffered irreparable damage when an estimated 100 bombs were dropped on the building and its grounds on 27 April 1942. No time was lost, however, in the complete reconstruction of the building.



### *Overview of The Phoenicia Hotel*

## Who for?

The Phoenicia is ideal for couples, looking for comfort, elegance and top-notch cuisine, in the best location for sightseeing. The five-star hotel boasts a remarkable roll-call of guests, from royalty and presidents to sports and movie stars (Alec Guinness, Oliver Reed, Charlton Heston, Gerard Depardieu and Helen Mirren, just to name a few).

The Phoenicia was a favourite hotel of the late Queen Elizabeth II who, as the wife of a naval officer (Prince Phillip) stationed in Malta in 1949-1951, enjoyed dances in the ballroom organised by the British Forces.

Today's hotel is relaxed, welcoming and open to all, even cats and small dogs – although there is not much for young children. The hotel is still very popular with the British, who make up 40 per cent of the guests. There are many who return year after year.

## Accommodation

There are 132 guest rooms (including 12 suites) the majority of which have fine views of Valletta and its harbours. Although standard rooms are not particularly spacious they have a fresh, summery feel, with the blue and white colour scheme carried through from the ground floor public rooms. Most rooms have baths with showers and all have balconies except those on the third floor.

Facilities include a complimentary non-alcoholic mini bar, safe, tea/coffee making facilities, USB socket and free WiFi. Cat and dog beds can be requested (all cats are accepted but only dogs under 12kg ).

## Food and Drink

The elegant Phoenix Restaurant has a huge terrace and panoramic views over the gardens, bastions and Marsamxett Harbour. The menu changes frequently and offers fish of the day, meat dishes such as beef wellington or lamb Provençal, along with vegetarian options (the hotel has its own kitchen garden).

There will always be a Maltese dish such as rabbit stew or snail risotto – washed down of course with Maltese wines. (Malta exports only a tiny amount of wine so probably your only chance of sampling it is on the island).

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*Phoenix Terrace c. Philippe Schaff*

The contemporary Bastion Pool Bar & Restaurant, at the end of the garden and by the fabulous infinity pool, opens from April to mid-November. Another eating option is Beefbar, part of a sophisticated but informal chain, offering far more than a beef steak. There is also the dark and club-like cocktail bar with leather seats and photos of the likes of Noel Coward and Winston Churchill.

The Palm Court Lounge makes a lovely, welcoming setting for all-day drinks and refreshments. Choose from coffee and freshly-made pastries, cocktails or a classic English cream tea – with 14 different types of loose-leaf JING tea and yes, Devonshire clotted cream! Non-staying guests are very welcome here – the hotel is much loved by the Maltese.

## Facilities

### Bastion pool

A long, lush garden, with a picnic area, stretches from the hotel to the infinity pool where guests can while away the hours on sun-loungers.

The Deep Nature Spa offers five treatment rooms, a gym, a sauna, a steam room, a salt room and an indoor swimming pool which preserves a 16th-century Knights-era wall which was discovered during construction.

## How Much

Double rooms at The Phoenicia Malta start at €250 per night in low season, from €400 per night in high season. Prices exclude breakfast.

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## What's Nearby



You couldn't be better placed for seeing Malta's capital, the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Valletta, built by the Knights of St John's in the 16th century.

This is one of the smallest capitals in the world covering less than one square kilometre so all the sites can easily be covered on foot. The city has gorgeous Baroque streets with beautiful overhanging balconies, a wealth of historic monuments and beautiful colonnaded gardens.

Easily accessible are ferries to The Three Cities (10 mins) and to Sliema (5 mins). Don't miss a tour of the Grand Harbour either by cruiser or preferably on a traditional *dghajsa* (small harbour boat). Valletta underwent a major revamp in 2015-2017 and now has a lively centre with bars and restaurants.

The hotel is next to the central bus station with buses to almost every place on the island.



A Maltese icon, The Phoenicia Malta has an ideal location, Art Deco elegance, exceptional service and an inviting spa, garden and swimming pools.