



Northwest Malta

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Best Places to Eat

- » Tarragon (p79)
- » Giuseppe's Restaurant & Wine Bar (p75)
- » Rebekah's (p75)
- » il-Barri (p73)

Best Places to Stay

- » San Antonio Hotel & Spa (p134)
- » Radisson Blu Resort & Spa (p134)
- » Splendid Guesthouse (p135)
- » Pergola Club Hotel (p135)

Why Go?

It's curious that Malta has such a reputation for bucket-and-spade holidays, when its beaches are few and far between. Certainly the island is surrounded by a tremendous azure sea, but most beaches, such as they are, are concentrated on the Northwest coast. Beach bums should make a beeline for Mellieħa Bay for its facilities and water sports, or either Ghajn Tuffieħa Bay or Ġnejna Bay for something more low-key and a chance to hang out with the locals. Scenic Golden Bay offers a choice midway between those two extremes, and is largely unspoilt, with only one five-star hotel. Just be aware that there's little chance of finding solitude on any rock or patch of sand during the high season.

And yet the northwest's list of drawcards extends far beyond holiday resorts. Here you can enjoy myriad water-sports and boat trips, birdwatching, horse riding, lovely walks along the coast and Malta's best family-fun attractions.

When to Go

Malta's major beach zone gets busy over July and August. Schools are out, prices are higher and the weather is at its hottest. If you're after a party scene, it's at its height during this time. If you're looking for sunshine and off-season bargains, travel in April, May, September and October (bear in mind that it'll only be hot enough to swim in May and September).

Northwest Malta Highlights

1 Squeezing yourself into a wetsuit to explore the local marine life while scuba-diving off the **Marfa Peninsula** (p76)

2 Feasting your eyes on the magnificent coastal views from the wild headland of **Ras il-Qammieh** (p77)

3 Making the long climb down to the near-empty **Ghajn Tuffieha Bay** (p72) on a quiet spring day

4 Letting the locals know that you prefer your bird life alive, not hunted down, by supporting the beautiful birds of **Ghadira Nature Reserve** (p75)

