

Sliema, St Julian's & Paceville



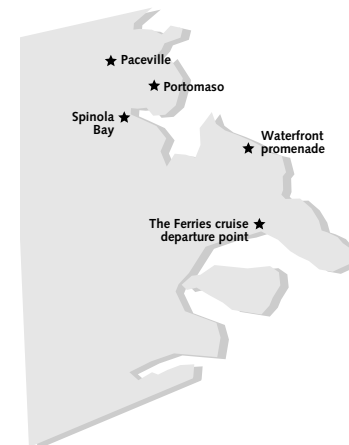
Malta's cool crowd flocks to this area to promenade, eat, drink, shop and party. As well as being a local playground for the cashed-up, it's where many tourists base themselves, among the growing number of high-rise hotels, apartment blocks, shops, restaurants, bars and nightclubs. There's little by way of old-school tourist attractions here (no museums, historic sites or churches of note), but there's plenty of opportunity for a harbour cruise, swim, long lunch or big night, plus good transport links to Valletta and other points of the island.

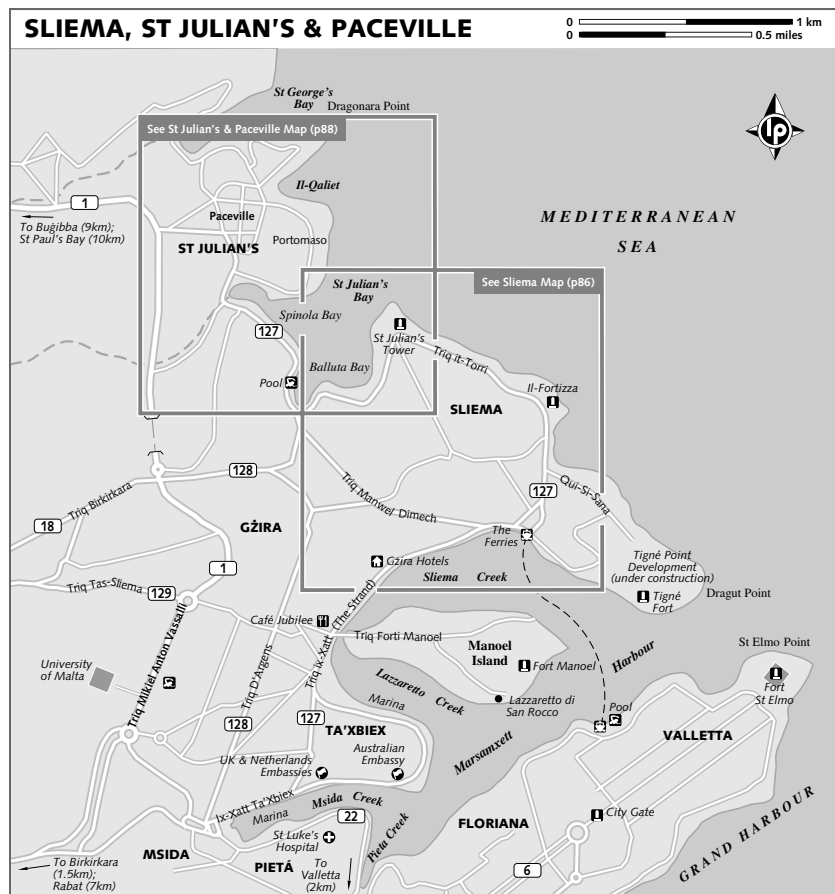
The seaside suburb of Sliema was once the preserve of the Maltese upper classes, a cool retreat from the heat and bustle of Valletta. The waterfront streets have lost their local charm as they sprout concrete monoliths in the shape of hotels and apartments blocks, but the back streets remain largely residential and a Sliema address is still something of a status symbol in Maltese society.

Cosmopolitan St Julian's, north of Sliema, has also been the focus of much recent tourist development, with five-star hotels and apartment complexes rising along the rocky shoreline (notably at Portomaso and St George's Bay). Paceville is the heart of St Julian's – it's pretty shabby and quiet by day but comes to life after dark, when it lives up to its title as the country's nightlife capital. This is where many of Malta's English-language schools are located, so you'll hear a variety of languages and accents, and see lots of groups of students hitting the bars instead of the books.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Enjoying the early-evening people parade along Sliema's **waterfront promenade** (p85)
- Alfresco wining and dining on **Spinola Bay** (p93), Malta's gastronomic epicentre
- Seeing how the other half lives at **Portomaso** (p92), while travelling your taste buds in one of the complex's restaurants
- Bar-hopping and letting yourself get messy on a big night out in **Paceville** (p95)
- Living high on the hog in one of the area's fab **five-star hotels** (p90), especially if you've managed to snare a bargain rate
- Taking to the waters on a **cruise** (p87) out of Sliema, to enjoy history, snorkelling, coastal panoramas or whatever takes your fancy





ORIENTATION

Sliema occupies the peninsula to the north of Valletta, from which it is separated by the thin stretch of water of Marsamxett Harbour. The main thoroughfare on the south side of the peninsula is the coast-hugging Triq ix-Xatt (commonly known as 'the Strand'), which continues south along the Gżira waterfront and around the Ta'Xbiex Peninsula to the marina at Msida.

The focal point of Sliema, known as the Ferries, is at the northeastern end of the Strand, where you'll find the bus terminus and the ferry to Valletta, along with plenty of operators offering harbour cruises. From here Triq it-Torri (Tower Rd) strikes north across the neck of the peninsula, then follows the

coastline west past St Julian's Tower to Balluta Bay and St Julian's.

St Julian's (San Ġiljan) lies between Balluta Bay and St George's Bay, facing out onto the Mediterranean Sea. The compact grid of streets packed with pubs and clubs to the north of Spinola Bay between Triq San Ġorġ and Triq id-Dragnara is known as Paceville (patchy-ville). North of St Julian's lies St George's Bay, home to a number of large upmarket hotels.

Maps

Most maps of the Maltese Islands include a handy inset street plan of this area. Pick up free street maps at the tourist information office.

INFORMATION

Emergency

Police Station (Map p86; ☎ 2133 0502; cnr Triq Manwel Dimech & Triq Rudolfo, Sliema)

Police Station (Map p88; ☎ 2133 2196; Triq San Ġorġ, St Julian's) Close to McDonald's, on Spinola Bay.

Internet Access

MelitaNet (Map p88; ☎ 2133 7557; Triq Ball, Paceville; per hr Lm1; ☎ 24hr) Large internet café inside the Tropicana Hotel. Also offers good-value rates for international calls.

CyberSurf (Map p86; ☎ 2134 2063; 38 Triq ix-Xatt, Sliema; per hr Lm1; ☎ 10am-late) Close to the corner of Triq Manwel Dimech.

Magic Kiosk (Map p86; ☎ 2133 5653; cnr Triq ix-Xatt & Triq it-Torri, Sliema; per hr Lm1; ☎ 10am-10pm) Also offers good rates for international calls.

Medical Services

St Luke's Hospital (☎ 2124 1251, emergency 112; www.slh.gov.mt; Triq San Luqa, Gwardamanga) Malta's public general hospital is near Pietà (about 3km southwest of Valletta); to get there take bus 75. The long-delayed opening of Malta's large new hospital, Mater Dei, was scheduled and rescheduled for 2007. Mater Dei is in Tal-Qroqq, about 3km west of Valletta near the University of Malta.

Money

There are plenty of banks and ATMs throughout the area. Paceville in particular has plenty of money-exchange offices, catering to tourists and foreign students.

Travelex Sliema (Map p86; Il-Piazzetta, Triq it-Torri; ☎ 8.30am-1.30pm & 2-5.30pm Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm Sat); Paceville (Map p88; Bay Street Complex; ☎ 10am-10pm)

TIGNÉ POINT DEVELOPMENT

Tigné Point (Map p84), a promontory east of Sliema, was one of the sites where the Turkish commander Dragut Reis ranged his cannons to pound Fort St Elmo into submission during the Great Siege in 1565 (p21). The tip of the peninsula is still known as Dragut Point. This whole area is currently undergoing massive redevelopment, with construction of residential apartments set around large pedestrianised areas. It's anticipated that there will be new restaurants, shops and sporting grounds as part of the development – completion isn't likely until sometime in early 2008. The previously neglected Tigné Fort, built in 1792 by the Knights of St John, will be restored and possibly used as a gallery or museum. When the Tigné Point revitalisation is complete, the same developers will turn their attention to the neglected Manoel Island (p87) – so expect big things there too (although possibly not until 2012 or later). If you're interested in all the goings-on, or are in the market for Maltese real estate, check out www.tignepoint.com and www.midimalta.com.

Post

Post Office Sliema (Map p86; 118 Triq Manwel Dimech; ☎ 7.30am-12.45pm Mon-Sat) Paceville (Map p88; Triq Elija Zammit; ☎ 7.30am-12.45pm Mon-Sat)

Tourist Information

Tourist Information Office (Map p88; ☎ 2138 1392; Palazzo Spinola; ☎ generally 8am-12.30pm & 1.15-5pm Mon-Fri) Enter from Triq Ross. The complex opening hours involve closing for lunch, and sometimes closing at 2pm in the high season. Unhelpfully, it's closed Saturday, Sunday and public holidays.

DANGERS & ANNOYANCES

The tidal wave of alcohol and testosterone that swirls through the streets of Paceville on weekends occasionally overflows into outbreaks of violence. Some people also find that the noise levels in and around Paceville at night are high enough to be a nuisance. Unless you plan to party the night away, you may prefer to seek accommodation in a quieter part of town.

SIGHTS

Sliema

There's really not a lot to see in Sliema itself, but there are good views of Valletta from Triq ix-Xatt (the Strand), especially at dusk as the floodlights are switched on. Triq ix-Xatt and Triq it-Torri make for a pleasant waterfront stroll, with plenty of bars and cafés in which to quench a thirst. In the evenings these streets fill up with promenading families out for their daily *passaggiata* (evening stroll) and joggers and dog-walkers doing their thing.

There are two towers on Triq it-Torri. **St Julian's Tower** is one of the network of coastal watchtowers built by Grand Master de Redin in the 17th century. **Il-Fortizza** was built by



the British in the 19th century and has now been taken over by TGI Friday's, an American restaurant chain.

Sliema's **beaches** are mostly shelves of bare rock, making clambering in and out of the sea sometimes a little bit awkward. In places along Triq it-Torri and at Qui-si-Sana, square pools have been cut into the soft limestone – these

were made for the convenience of leisure-loving upper-class Maltese ladies, but have since fallen into some disrepair. For sun and water seekers, there are better facilities at the private **lidos** scattered along the coast, including swimming pools, sun lounges, bars and water sports; admission costs are around Lm2 to Lm3 per day.

Around Sliema

Sliema merges southward into the suburb of Gżira. A short bridge gives access to **Manoel Island**, most of which is taken up by boat-building yards and the dilapidated ruins of Fort Manoel. The island was used as a quarantine zone by the Knights of St John, and the shell of their 17th-century plague hospital, the **Lazzaretto di San Rocco**, can still be seen on the south side – it served as an isolation hospital during WWI and was last used during an epidemic in 1936. **Fort Manoel** was built in the early 18th century under Grand Master Manoel de Vilhena, and suffered extensive bomb damage during WWII, when nearby Lazzaretto Creek was used as a submarine base. The overgrown island is scheduled for long-overdue development, but not for a while yet (see the boxed text, p85).

Ta'Xbiex (pronounced tashb-*yesh*), to the south of Manoel Island, is an upmarket area of gracious villas, mansions and embassies, with yacht marinas on either side.

St Julian's

Amid the heaving bars and packed restaurants of central St Julian's lies the elegant **Palazzo Spinola**, built for the Italian knight Rafael Spinola in the late 17th century. Surrounded by a walled garden (the entrance is on Triq il-Knisja), it now houses an elegant and expensive restaurant and the tourist office. Another aristocratic residence that's found a new lease of life is **Villa Dragonara**, set on the southern headland of St George's Bay. Built in the late 19th century for the Marquis Scicluna, a wealthy banker, it's now occupied by the Dragonara Casino (p95).

Paceville is the place to get messy – it's the in-your-face cluster of pubs, clubs and restaurants that forms the focal point for the wilder side of Malta's nightlife. This is party-all-night and sleep-all-day territory, but there is new upmarket development going on all around – notably the ultraposh **Portomaso apartment and marina complex** on the site of the old Fort Spinola (featuring a five-star hotel, boutique marina and upmarket apartments) and the newish InterContinental hotel. The tourist authorities are trying to push Malta's image upmarket, but Paceville is likely to retain its raucous, rough-and-ready atmosphere for some time to come.

Most of the **beaches** around St Julian's are of the bare rock or private lido variety (the

five-star hotels offer beach clubs and water sports), but there is a genuine, if crowded, sandy beach at the head of St George's Bay.

ACTIVITIES

Water Sports

Traditional touristy stuff like banana rides, paragliding and paddle boats are available at most of the private lidos along the shore. Many also offer waterborne activities, including windsurfing, water-skiing, motorboating, snorkelling and scuba diving. **Yellow Fun Watersports** (Map p88; ☎ 2373 4366; www.yellowfunwatersports.com) operates from the Portomaso marina, behind the Hilton hotel, and offers a huge menu of activities, including jet-ski rental, yacht charter, self-drive boats, water taxis to Sliema, Valletta or Vittoriosa, and trips to Gozo and Comino.

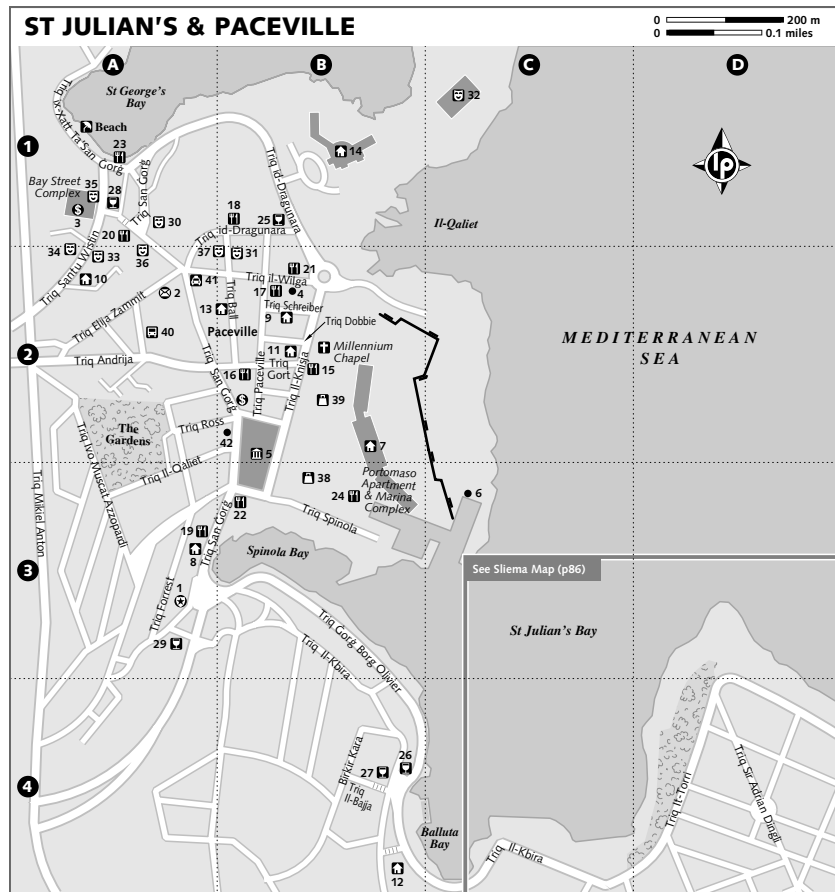
Boat Trips

The average price for a 1½ to two-hour cruise taking in Marsamxett and Grand Harbours costs Lm6.50, but you may find smaller operators with cheaper rates. Cruise touts line the waterfront at the Ferries in Sliema (from where most cruises depart), and on the other side of the road from them are tour agencies offering island-wide excursions. All these agents can book you on the tours offered by the major operators listed here; prices for half- and full-day cruises usually include hotel transfers.

Captain Morgan Cruises (☎ 2346 3333; www.captainmorgan.com.mt) has a boat trip for every traveller's taste and pocket, while **Alliance Cruises & Tours** (☎ 2133 2165; www.alliancecruises.com) offers a smaller programme of boat tours out of Sliema. **Hera Cruises** (☎ 2133 0583; www.herayacht.mt) organises sailing adventures, including the option of snorkelling and/or diving instruction. See p191 for price and itinerary details of these three operators.

Jeep Safaris & Bus Tours

As well as its extensive programme of boat trips, **Captain Morgan Cruises** (☎ 2346 3333; www.captainmorgan.com.mt) runs popular 4WD jeep safaris exploring the more remote parts of Malta and Gozo. **Alliance Cruises & Tours** (☎ 21 33 2165; www.alliancecruises.com) also offers land tours, including bus tours to major landmarks and a jeep safari to get off the beaten track. See p191 for details of the offerings of both companies.



Diving

There are several dive operators in the area that can help you explore Malta's excellent dive sites (see p46). These include the following:

Aquarigo Scuba Diving Centre (Map p86; ☎ 2133 0882; www.planetsea.net; Preluna Beach Club, Triq it-Torri, Sliema) At the lido of the Preluna Hotel & Towers.

Diveshock (Map p86; ☎ 2133 8558; www.divermalta.com; Ix-Xatt Ta'Qui-si-Sana, Qui-si-Sana, Sliema)

Divewise (Map p88; ☎ 2135 6441; www.divewise.com.mt; Westin Dragonara Resort, St Julian's)

SLEEPING

Most of the accommodation in the area is aimed squarely at the package holiday and luxury hotel market, but you'll find that there

are some bargains to be had during the low season. Very few hotels offer parking for guests (except for the more upmarket places on large grounds). You may find street parking hard to come by.

Budget SLIEMA

The following hotels are all located on the Sliema map (Map p86).

NSTS Hibernia Residence & Hostel (☎ 2133 3859; www.nsts.org; Triq Mons G Depiro; dm Lm3.70-5.10, tw studio Lm9-14; 📺) Malta's only true hostel, the Hibernia is perfect for those after quality budget accommodation and a ready-made crowd (it's popular with English-language students). As well as a comprehensive roll-call of

INFORMATION		EATING 🍴		Muddy Waters.....27 B4	
MelitaNet.....(see 13)	Arkadia Foodstore.....15 B2	O'Casey's Irish Pub.....28 A1	Portovino.....(see 24)	Portovino.....(see 24)	
Police Station.....1 A3	Avenue.....16 B2	Qube.....(see 20)	Qube.....(see 20)	Qube.....(see 20)	
Post Office.....2 A2	Bed.....(see 24)	Buffalo Bill's.....(see 24)	Caesar's.....(see 24)	Ryan's Irish Pub.....29 A3	
Tourist Information Office.....(see 5)	Caesar's.....(see 24)	Café Juliani.....(see 8)	ENTERTAINMENT 🎬		
Travelx.....3 A1	SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES		Axis.....30 A1	Axis.....30 A1	
SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES		Chao Praya Thai Massage & Spa.....4 B2	Ed's Easy Diner.....18 B1	BJS.....31 B2	
Chao Praya Thai Massage & Spa.....4 B2	Gigi's Concept Café.....19 A3	Hugo's Lounge.....20 A1	Dragonara Casino.....32 C1	Dragonara Casino.....32 C1	
Divewise.....(see 14)	Le Souk.....(see 24)	Villa Dragonara.....(see 32)	Eden Century Cinemas.....33 A2	Eden Century Cinemas.....33 A2	
Palazzo Spinola.....5 B2	Mezè.....(see 8)	Yellow Fun Watersports.....6 C3	Eden Super Bowl & Cinemas.....34 A2	Eden Super Bowl & Cinemas.....34 A2	
Villa Dragonara.....(see 32)	Mongolian Barbeque.....21 B2	SLEEPING 🛏		Fuego.....35 A1	
SLEEPING 🛏		Hilton Malta.....7 B2	Paparazzi.....22 B3	Havana.....36 A2	
Hilton Malta.....7 B2	Hotel Juliani.....8 A3	Hotel Juliani.....8 A3	Paranga.....23 A1	Places.....37 B2	
Hotel Juliani.....8 A3	Hotel Valentina.....9 B2	Hotel Valentina.....9 B2	Portomaso Eating & Drinking Options.....24 B3	SHOPPING 🛍	
Hotel Valentina.....9 B2	InterContinental Malta.....10 A2	InterContinental Malta.....10 A2	Trattoria Don Antonio.....(see 24)	Luxe Pavilion.....38 B3	Luxe Pavilion.....38 B3
InterContinental Malta.....10 A2	Zen.....(see 24)	Zen.....(see 24)	Zest.....(see 8)	Portomaso Shopping Complex.....39 B2	Portomaso Shopping Complex.....39 B2
Ir-Rokna Hotel.....11 B2	DRINKING 🍷		TRANSPORT		
Le Meridien St Julian's.....12 B4	7 Rooms Terrace Bar.....25 B1	7 Rooms Terrace Bar.....25 B1	Bus Terminus.....40 A2	Bus Terminus.....40 A2	
Le Meridien St Julian's.....12 B4	City of London.....26 B4	City of London.....26 B4	Taxi Rank.....41 A2	Taxi Rank.....41 A2	
Tropicana Hotel.....13 B2	DRINKING 🍷		Taxi Rank.....41 A2	Taxi Rank.....41 A2	
Tropicana Hotel.....13 B2	City of London.....26 B4	City of London.....26 B4	Wembleys.....42 B2	Wembleys.....42 B2	
Westin Dragonara.....14 B1	DRINKING 🍷		TRANSPORT		
Westin Dragonara.....14 B1	City of London.....26 B4	City of London.....26 B4	Bus Terminus.....40 A2	Bus Terminus.....40 A2	
Resort.....14 B1	DRINKING 🍷		Taxi Rank.....41 A2	Taxi Rank.....41 A2	
Resort.....14 B1	City of London.....26 B4	City of London.....26 B4	Wembleys.....42 B2	Wembleys.....42 B2	

facilities inside this modern, seven-storey building (laundry, internet café, breakfast room-café, TV lounge, rooftop sun terrace, good security), there's a choice of sleeping options. Shoestringers can camp out in the single-sex dorm sections, where three to four bedrooms (each with six to eight beds) share bathrooms and a generous kitchen-dining area. Long-stayers or travellers after more privacy can choose a studio or apartment in the 'residence'. These sleep up to four and have their own kitchenette and ensuite. From Valletta, take bus 62, 64, 66 or 67 to Balluta Bay and walk 300m up Triq Manwel Dimech; Triq Mons G Depiro is on the left.

Comfort Inn (☎ 2133 4221; www.comfortinnmalta.com; 29 Triq tal-Katidral; B&B per person Lm6-8.50; 📺) A budget gem in the heart of Sliema. Behind its eye-catching terracotta exterior, this homely, family-run guesthouse offers 12 spick-and-span rooms (connected each level by a lift), each with sunny yellow décor, simple furnishings and an en suite. Family-friendly rooms can sleep up to four; prices includes a buffet breakfast. On the ground level is a TV lounge where guests can socialise; on the roof is a sun terrace where you can take in the busy streetscapes below.

Pebbles Self Catering Apartments (☎ 2131 1889; www.maltaselfcatering.com; 89 Triq ix-Xatt; d Lm14-20; 📺 📺) Handy to the bus terminus and the ferry to Valletta is this complex of great-value studio apartments. They are not for the claustrophobic – don't expect a lot of living space, but do expect some bang for your buck:

all studios have a private bathroom, kitchenette, phone and cable TV (the most expensive studios enjoy a sea view). At ground level is a café-bar, and on the roof is a sun terrace. Air-con is via a user-pays system.

PACEVILLE

Tropicana Hotel (Map p88; ☎ 2133 7557; www.tropicana.com.mt; Triq Ball; B&B per person Lm6; 📺 📺) Dirt-cheap and in the heart of Paceville, this hotel has small, dark but clean rooms (with facilities including private bathroom, air-con and cable TV). It also has out-of-date décor, stained carpets and the aroma of stale tobacco, but it's a good place to meet other travellers, and if all you're after is a bed to crash in who can argue with the price?

Midrange SLIEMA

The following hotels are all located on the Sliema map (Map p86).

Sliema Hotel (☎ 2132 4886; www.sliemahotel.com; 59 Triq ix-Xatt, Sliema; s Lm10-20, d Lm16-35; 📺) It's nondescript and lacks the pulling power of a swimming pool or sun terrace, but this central hotel has friendly service and represents excellent value. The rooms are standard issue, but they are large, spotless and comfy; it's worth paying the extra for front rooms with a balcony and sea views towards Valletta.

Imperial Hotel (☎ 2134 4093; www.imperialhotel.malta.com; Triq Rudolfo; s Lm11.50-20, d Lm17-32; 📺 📺) Things move rather slowly at the Imperial, in

keeping with the old-world interior (it dates from 1865) and older patrons. It's tucked away in the heart of residential Sliema, and inside you'll be impressed by the lobby's chandelier and grand sweeping staircase. The rooms don't live up to the high standards set downstairs, but they're comfortable and well equipped (you'll pay more for a garden/pool view and a balcony). Facilities include a courtyard garden and restaurant. There's good disabled access.

Preluna Hotel & Towers (☎ 2133 4001; www.preluna-hotel.com; 124 Triq il-Torri; B&B per person Lm17-26; 🏠 🚶 🚿) Malta's tallest hotel commands views along the coast, attracting plenty of Euro holidaymakers. The attractive lobby and obliging staff create a good first impression; rooms are small but bright and fresh, and facilities are exhaustive (health spa, private beachfront lido, dive school and choice of bars and restaurants). Superior rooms aren't all that much better than standard rooms but are worth it for the sea view and balcony.

GŻIRA

Many of Sliema's waterfront hotels have seen better days. There are better-quality midrange options a few minutes' walk west of Sliema, on the waterfront in neighbouring Gżira. It's best to opt for sea-view rooms at the following hotels, which are located on the Sliema, St Julian's & Paceville map (Map p84).

Waterfront Hotel (☎ 2133 3434; www.waterfronthotelmalta.com; Triq ix-Xatt, Gżira; s Lm21-36, d Lm32-47; 🏠 🚶 🚿) Built in 2000, the Waterfront has a modern interior that makes it look newer than it is. The nautically themed lobby, blue-and-white rooms and rooftop pool and terrace with excellent views make this a great midrange choice. Wi-fi access throughout is a bonus.

Also recommended:

Hotel Bayview (☎ 2132 0216; www.bayviewmalta.com; 143 Triq ix-Xatt, Gżira; s/d from Lm12/18 low season, Lm20/30 high season, apt from Lm20/34 low/high season; 🏠 🚶 🚿) Offers rooms, studios with kitchenette, and one- and two-bedroom apartments.

Hotel Kennedy Nova (☎ 2134 5480; www.kennedynova.com; 116 Triq ix-Xatt, Gżira; s Lm15.50-33, d Lm21-48; 🏠 🚶 🚿)

PACEVILLE

The following two hotels are located on the St Julian's & Paceville map (Map p88).

our pick **Hotel Valentina** (☎ 2138 2232; www.hotelvalentina.com; Triq Schreiber; s/d Lm10/16 low season, Lm20/32 high season; 🏠 🚶 🚿) Prices at split-personality

Valentina are shockingly reasonable. There's a boutique-y feel about the place, but just what the 'design story' is depends on your room number: older rooms have a handsome, rustic feel; newer rooms have clean, contemporary lines and splashes of vivid colour. The dichotomy exists on the ground floor too – sign in at reception in the bright modern half and take breakfast in the older stone quarters. There's a mixed crowd of young and old, English and Italian, and a surprising number of solo travellers taking advantage of easily the best-value option in this neck of the woods (an area crawling with pricey five-stars and shabby student digs). Rooms aren't huge but then neither are the prices, and facilities include air-con, satellite TV and minibar.

Ir-Rokna Hotel (☎ 2138 4060; www.roknahotel.com; Triq il-Knisja; s/d Lm13/18 low season, Lm17/26 high season; 🏠 🚶 🚿) Stay within spitting distance of the treats of Portomaso, but a long way from the Hilton price-tag. You're also close to the nightlife, but far enough away to not suffer with noise. Ir-Rokna is decent value, and while the rooms are timeworn and bland, the service is friendly, and the hotel is home to Malta's oldest (and, many claim, its finest) pizzeria.

Top End

There are lots of four- and five-star properties here (primarily around Paceville). Competition to fill rooms can be tough, so there are often special offers and internet deals to bring down the rates quoted here (especially outside July and August). It pays to shop around and ask what special rates are available.

THAI MASSAGE?

Chao Praya Thai Massage & Spa (Map p88; ☎ 2137 8666; 52 Triq il-Wilga, Paceville; 🕒 9am-10pm Mon-Sat, 9am-7pm Sun) is a small, surprising piece of Thailand in downtown Malta – from the smell of Tiger Balm as you enter the shopfront to the Thai chatter of the staff. Prices are not direct from Thailand, however – a half-hour massage is Lm8, a full hour costs Lm12, but the benefits to legs sore from sightseeing or clubbing are invaluable. You can also submit to foot massages, reflexology, manicures and pedicures. It's a real contrast to the swish day spas of the area's megahotels.

SLIEMA

These two hotels are located on the Sliema map (Map p86).

Victoria Hotel (☎ 2133 4711; www.victoriahotel.com; Triq Gorrġ Borg Olivier; r Lm33-44, ste Lm53-74; 🏠 🚶 🚿) In a quiet location away from the seafront, this refined hotel has the feel of a gentlemen's club, with its lobby and bar full of dark wood and leather club sofas. The masculine feel carries through to the mahogany furniture of the well-equipped guest rooms (if that sounds too heavy, opt for a room with softer furnishings in blue tones). If you're looking to live it up, next door to the hotel, and under its management, is Palazzo Capua, a spectacularly restored palazzo that's home to five luxurious duplex suites – the rich décor and facilities here will have you plotting to move in permanently.

Hotel Fortina Spa Resort (☎ 2346 0000; www.hotelfortina.com; Triq ix-Xatt Ta'Tigné; full board per person from Lm40/60 low/high season; 🏠 🚶 🚿) The Fortina subscribes to the 'bigger is better' philosophy, with 700 beds, seven restaurants, seven swimming pools (yes, seven) and oodles of distractions for guests. The brand-spanking new five-star tower is pitching squarely for the spa traveller, with 'world-first therapeutic spa bedrooms' (from Lm100 per person per night – ouch!). These are oversized guest rooms with therapeutic baths and detox capsules for your own private spa experience – possibly not as gimmicky as it sounds if all you want from your holiday is to de-stress, but we think there are better places in Malta to blow that kind of money. There's a mind-boggling array of rates, depending on room type, and a hundred different supplements; prices listed here include all meals and drinks.

ST JULIAN'S

These and the following Paceville hotels are located on the St Julian's & Paceville map (Map p88).

Hotel Juliani (☎ 2138 0000; www.hoteljuliani.com; 12 Triq San Gorrġ, Spinola Bay; r from Lm55; 🏠 🚶 🚿) In an industry dominated by megahotels, the 44-room Juliani scores points for introducing Malta to the boutique hotel concept. That it's superbly located (inside a restored seafront townhouse), houses top-notch eateries and is heavily design-driven means its overall satisfaction score sheet is high. The reception is in the ground-level Café Juliani

(p94), whose soft, calming colour scheme sets the tone. In the guest rooms you can enjoy more chic surrounds, with chocolate brown shades and pale blue accents. It's worth paying extra for a room with a sea view (these come with a Jacuzzi), but there's no beating the views from the rooftop pool and terrace, all gleaming white tiles and glass. The hotel overlooks Spinola Bay, bustling away as one of the country's culinary epicentres. The hotel itself is home to two innovative restaurants, Zest (p93) and Meze (p93).

Le Meridien St Julian's (☎ 2133 0000; www.stjulians.lemeridien.com; 39 Triq il-Kbira, Balluta Bay; r from Lm80; 🏠 🚶 🚿) The paint was barely dry when we visited Malta's newest five-star hotel, high above Balluta Bay. If you're driving, take Trejjet il-Bajja off the waterfront; for visitors on foot, the entry from Balluta Bay takes you past a few boutiques, and you can catch the lift to reception on the 3rd floor. Le Meridien is a shiny new temple to upmarket travellers; the décor follows clean contemporary lines and makes strong use of rich, warm colours (in the guest rooms too). There's great attention to detail and all the pretty accoutrements you'd expect. The rooftop pool and terrace, blissful beauty spa and great onsite dining options make this a winner.

PACEVILLE

Hilton Malta (☎ 2138 3383; www.malta.hilton.com; Portomaso; r from Lm118/138 low/high season; 🏠 🚶 🚿) This seriously swish hotel allows you an insight into the privileged world of Malta's moneyed classes: yes, that's a chichi private marina down below, filled with shiny motorboats. And yes, the ever-expanding, 12.5-hectare Portomaso complex is home to some outstanding boutiques, bars and restaurants alongside the designer apartments. The hotel itself certainly won't have you going without – it's home to a half-dozen restaurants too, plus private beach club, water sports, three outdoor swimming pools, gymnasium and beauty spa. You probably won't spend too much time in your room, but rest assured that it will be extremely comfortable when you do, and from the balcony you'll be able to take in either a Mediterranean or a marina view. Although the hotel seems a playground for cashed-up grown-ups, families are looked after too, with both kids' activities and baby-sitters available.

Also recommended, with all the five-star bells and whistles:

Westin Dragonara Resort (☎ 2138 1000; www.westinmalta.com; Triq id-Dragnunara; r from Lm90;

🚗 🚗) A vast, 300-room complex on Dragonara Point, complete with casino.

InterContinental Malta (☎ 2137 7600; www.malta.intercontinental.com; Triq Santu Wistin; r from Lm110/130 low/high season; 🚗 🚗) If it's good enough for the Emirates flight crew, it's good enough for us. Right in the heart of the action.

EATING Restaurants

SLIEMA

The following restaurants are located on the Sliema map (Map p86).

Lanča at Village Gossip (☎ 2133 8743; cnr Triq ix-Xatt & Triq Bisazza; mains Lm1-7; 🍷 lunch daily, plus dinner in summer) One of Sliema's loveliest options, this corner eatery has a character-filled rustic interior covered with old signs and bric-a-brac, or you can opt for alfresco dining under a vine-covered terrace. Service is attentive, the setting is lovely and the menu pleasing, but given what other places charge, we think Lm5 is too much to pay for a simple bowl of pasta at lunchtime.

Piccolo Padre (☎ 2134 4875; Triq il-Kbira; mains Lm2-5; 🍷 dinner) Beneath the Barracuda (right), this casual, family-friendly pizzeria is almost always crowded – try to snare a coveted table on an enclosed balcony overlooking the sea. Pizzas are crunchy and tasty – the house

speciality is decorated with tomato, mozzarella, Maltese sausage and Gozo cheese. Also available are good pasta options, salads and burgers, plus a kids' menu for little pizza fans.

Vino Veritas (☎ 2132 4273; 59 Triq Sir Adrian Dingli; mains Lm3-6) Justifiably popular with both locals and tourists, convivial Vino Veritas has well-priced salad, pasta and pizza options, and also has decent veg selections. Try the house specialities: home-made ravioli, with fillings such as artichoke hearts, swordfish, salmon, porcini mushrooms or veal. There's a kids' menu too.

Kitchen (☎ 2131 1112; 210 Triq it-Torri; mains Lm3-9; 🍷 lunch Wed-Sun, dinner nightly) On a none-too-interesting stretch of the promenade, the Kitchen's owner-chef (named national chef of the year for 2006) whips up some exemplary Med-fusion dishes in a smart, simple setting. Mouthwatering mains include fresh salmon fillet topped with a sundried tomato crumble, followed by desserts such as Belgian chocolate truffle cake.

Barracuda (☎ 2133 1817; 195 Triq il-Kbira; mains Lm4-8; 🍷 dinner) It's a pretty harsh name for what is in fact an oh-so-elegant restaurant, set in the drawing room of an early-18th-century seaside villa on the western fringes of Sliema. Enjoy the tasteful décor, water views, professional service and a menu of carefully prepared Italian and Mediterranean dishes, with the fish and seafood reliably first-rate.

You're bound to find a restaurant to take your fancy at the **Hotel Fortina Spa Resort** (see

p91), with seven to choose from. Hibiki offers Japanese cuisine, Can Thai prepares Chinese and Thai specialities, and Sa Re Ga Ma serves up Indian dishes. There are also a couple of options for closer-to-home Mediterranean concoctions.

ST JULIAN'S

These and the following Paceville restaurants are located on the St Julian's & Paceville map (Map p88).

The St Julian's and Paceville area is Malta's gastronomic heartland, and while there are plenty of places cranking out so-so meals, you shouldn't need to look hard to find some gems. Fertile hunting grounds include Spinola Bay and the sleek Portomaso complex (opposite). At the former you should angle for an outdoor table and bay view; at the latter you can travel your taste buds – from Italian to Japanese, Moroccan and even Korean.

Paparazzi (☎ 2137 4966; 159 Triq San Ġorġ, Spinola Bay; mains Lm2.50-7; 🍷 lunch & dinner) The sunny terrace here is a prime people-watching spot, with a fine view of Spinola Bay. Fight your way through the huge portions on the big, cheeky, crowd-pleasing menu. It's child- and veg-friendly too.

Mezè (☎ 2138 8000; 12 Triq San Ġorġ; set menus per person Lm6-7; 🍷 dinner) Part of the stylish trio of eateries at Hotel Juliani, basement-level Mezè has low lighting, mosaics, an inviting bar area and a menu of 30 share-worthy treats. Come with a group and partake of small plates of Mediterranean and Middle Eastern-inspired delectables; the themed 'chef's selections' take the hard work out of ordering. In summer (mid-June to mid-September) Mezè relocates to Hotel Juliani's lovely rooftop, with a smaller menu of fresh local seafood.

Zest (☎ 2138 8000; 12 Triq San Ġorġ; mains Lm6-8; 🍷 dinner Mon-Sat) More culinary magic awaits upstairs from Mezè (accessible via the external staircase from ground level). Zest features a monochrome décor with vibrant splashes of colour and one of Malta's most interesting menus. The theme is 'East meets West', so you can choose from the West (continental) section of the menu (seared salmon, lamb loin), or the East (Asian) section – perhaps Peking duck, beef teppanyaki or spicy Vietnamese chicken salad. There's also a decent selection of sushi, and great desserts (try the orange-blossom *crème brûlée*). Bookings are advised; leave small kids at home.

PACEVILLE

Avenue (☎ 2131 1753; Triq Gort; mains Lm1.25-6; 🍷 lunch Mon-Sat, dinner nightly) Thanks to its enduring popularity, the ever-expanding Avenue now takes up half the block and can seat around 300 diners. Even with this capacity it's always bustling – that's no doubt because of its cheery décor, crowd-pleasing menu and great-value prices. It's perfect for families, groups, students and travellers; simple meals of meat and fish, plus huge portions of pizza and pasta, keep the fans happy.

Paranga (☎ 2137 7600; St George's Bay; snacks & meals Lm2.50-8; 🍷 lunch & dinner Tue-Sun) On a wooden deck built over the water's edge, right on the only sandy beach in the neighbourhood, this new and stylish outfit (run by the InterContinental hotel) offers plenty of cocktail options and a full menu of pizza, pasta, seafood etc. A winning option for a sunny afternoon or sundowners.

Mongolian Barbeque (☎ 2137 0831; Triq il-Wilga; lunch/dinner Lm4/5.25; 🍷 lunch & dinner) You really shouldn't leave here hungry either, thanks to the budget traveller-friendly 'all-you-can-eat' deals. Inside this streamlined restaurant, you choose your raw produce from a buffet (meat/seafood/tofu, plus vegies and a sauce to accompany), and then have these cooked to order in front of you (rice, noodles or cous-cous included). You can revisit the buffet as often as you like.

Hugo's Lounge (☎ 2138 2264; Triq San Ġorġ; meals Lm4-6; 🍷 lunch & dinner) If you're hungry, Hugo lets you choose from a menu of well-executed Asian food – sushi, Thai soups and curries, noodles and stir-fries – in his fashionable lounge, full of brown leather. Merely thirsty? Pull up a pew for cocktails and snacks at the bar, or recline on the sofas in the alfresco area on Paceville's party street.

Cafés

Cara's Café (Map p86; ☎ 2134 3432; 249 Triq it-Torri, Sliema; snacks & sweets Lm0.20-1.30; 🍷 9am-1am) The savoury section of the menu at Cara's won't take up much of your time – it's tiny, comprising quiche, *pastizzi* (ricotta- or pea-filled flaky pastries) and various toasted sandwiches. It's all about the sweets here, and there are dozens of ways to get your sugar rush, from profiteroles to apple strudel and tiramisu to ice-cream sundaes. There's a large outdoor area where you can have a late-night drink among the fairy lights.

PARTAKING OF PORTOMASO

There are loads of stellar eating and drinking options at the Portomaso complex. If you enter from street level (Triq il-Knisja), go down the steps towards the marina and you'll pass half a dozen eateries – all have outdoor terraces, with heaters making alfresco dining more appealing in the cooler months. First up are **Zen**, offering quality Japanese cuisine, and **Trattoria Don Antonio**, serving seafood and pasta. Next level down is **Buffalo Bill's**, a steakhouse with Wild West décor (check out the saddle-topped bar stools) and huge pulling power for dedicated carnivores. Opposite is **Caesar's**, working hard to be all things to all people, from 9am breakfasters to 2am late-night snackers. Next to Caesar's is the clubby and sophisticated **Portovino** wine bar, with more than 500 tipples to choose from, accompanied by cigars or a platter of cheese.

Finally come our top picks, favourites for their great décor, out-of-the-ordinary menus and waterside tables; it's especially atmospheric down here by night. The kooky name of **the Bed** (☎ 2138 3227; dishes Lm2.50-5; 🍷 lunch & dinner) stands for Beverages, Entertainment & Dining, but nowhere is there a hint of the Korean cuisine served up. It must be a bugger to keep clean, but the all-white décor and soft colourful lights create quite an impact. Opposite is **Le Souk** (☎ 2138 3200; mains Lm3-5; 🍷 lunch & dinner), candlelit by night with a menu of Moroccan food – with plenty of *tajines* (Moroccan meat and vegetable stews). There's great attention to detail, right down to the low outdoor tables with cushions and hookah pipes.

Café Jubilee (Map p84; ☎ 2133 7141; 209 Triq ix-Xatt, Gżira; snacks & meals Lm1-3.50; ☎ 8am-1am, weekends to 3am) If you're on a good thing, stick to it. A third branch of this café (which is also in Valletta and Victoria on Gozo) has opened in Gżira, a few minutes' walk from Sliema, opposite Manoel Island. There's the same great French-bistro feel, with cosy booths, quirky décor, wines by the glass and a comprehensive menu of easy edibles.

Gigi's Concept Café (Map p88; ☎ 2135 9865; 23 Triq San Ġorġ, Spinola Bay; snacks & meals Lm1-5; ☎ lunch & dinner) Gigi's concept is not that revolutionary, but it is mighty appealing: café by day, wine bar by night, then throw in some funky artwork (familiar if you've visited Il-Forn in Vittoriosa, p79), interesting décor and windows opening onto the street. It's open until 1am and has a good-looking wine list; there's also a side room with internet connections.

Café Juliani (Map p88; ☎ 2138 8000; 12 Triq San Ġorġ, Spinola Bay; snacks & meals Lm2.50-4; ☎ 7am-11pm) From the chic décor (blues, greens and neutrals) to the comfy couches, water feature and smooth tunes being played, this place oozes understated style. There's a modern menu of platters, wraps, baguettes, salads and sushi, plus decadent sweets, and it's a wi-fi hot spot too.

Quick Eats

You'll have no trouble finding the big multinational chains in St Julian's and Paceville. There are numerous fast-food eateries in the streets of Paceville, open late and serving snacks to quell the hunger and soak up the alcohol. Look out for places serving up hot *pastizzi* or pizza slices. A decent option for late-night munchies is **Ed's Easy Diner** (Map p88; Triq id-Dragnara), where you can get burgers, hot dogs and kebabs for around the Lm1 mark.

Self-Catering

For self-caterers **Tower Foods Supermarket** (Map p86; 46 Triq il-Kbira, Sliema; ☎ 8am-7.30pm Mon-Sat) sells a wide range of groceries, frozen foods and fresh fruit and veg. Other well-stocked options include **Dolphin Supermarket** (Map p88; Triq il-Wilga, Paceville; ☎ 8am-7pm Mon-Sat) and **Arkadia Foodstore** (Map p88; Triq il-Knisja, Paceville; ☎ 8am-8pm Mon-Sat).

DRINKING

This area has a bar for everyone, from the teenage clubber to the old-age pensioner. Paceville is the place for full-on partying, with

wall-to-wall bars and clubs in the area around the northern end of Triq San Ġorġ (where it turns into the steps of Triq Santa Rita), while the St Julian's and Sliema waterfronts have everything from slick wine bars to traditional British pubs. Check out the nightclub venues listed on opposite, as these are also popular drinking dens. Many of the restaurants and cafés listed under Eating in this chapter would also be ideal for a cold beer, cocktail or glass of wine – consider Mezzè and neighbouring Gigi's Concept Café on Spinola Bay in St Julian's, Hugo's Lounge in the heart of Paceville, Paranga on St George's Bay, Café Jubilee in Sliema, and Portovino, Bed and Le Souk at Portomaso.

Plough & Anchor (Map p86; ☎ 21 334 725; 263 Triq it-Torri, Sliema) The Plough offers cheap pub grub and a cosy bar downstairs crammed with maritime paraphernalia. This is a decent option for a drink earlier in the night if you're en route from Sliema to Paceville, but if you're simply after a nightcap (or ice-cream sundae) as you head back to your hotel, consider Cara's Café (p93).

Bar (Map p88; ☎ 21 337 349; www.thebarmalta.com; 32 Balluta Bldgs, Triq il-Kbira, St Julian's) Housed in a beautifully ornate building not far up from the church on Balluta Bay, the Bar has a low-key profile on the bar scene and is frequented by in-the-know locals. It's a good choice for wining and reclining, serves great snacks, and has DJs spinning tunes after 11pm.

7 Rooms Terrace Bar (Map p88; ☎ 2137 5331; Triq id-Dragnara, Paceville) Sophisticates (or those who came to Malta but were secretly hoping to holiday somewhere like Bali) will get a kick out of 7 Rooms, with wooden gazebos curtained and set about white sofas and cushions in an open-air setting. It's all lit by candles and fairy lights – very romantic and very Far East.

Muddy Waters (Map p88; ☎ 2137 4155; www.muddywatersbar.net; 56 Triq il-Kbira, St Julian's) On Balluta Bay, Muddies has a great jukebox, rock DJs on Friday and Saturday, and live rock bands on Sunday nights – when things can get pretty rowdy and the tables may act as dance floors. It's a favourite of the student crowd.

City of London (Map p88; ☎ 2133 1706; 193 Triq il-Kbira, St Julian's) Right by Muddies, this tiny pub is packed on weekends and there's a great party atmosphere. It's popular on the gay scene, but everyone is welcome, and there's a nicely mixed crowd of expats, locals and students.

More pub action can be found at **Ryan's Irish Pub** (Map p88; ☎ 2135 0680; Spinola Bay), high up overlooking the action on Spinola Bay, or **O'Casey's Irish Pub** (Map p88; ☎ 2137 3900; Triq Santu Wistin, Paceville), beneath Hotel Bernard in the heart of Paceville's clubland. Both Ryan's and O'Casey's are pretty much what you'd expect of an Irish theme bar anywhere in the world – crowded, lively, friendly and well stocked with cold Guinness. They also screen live football games. Want something harder than Guinness? **Qube** (Map p88; ☎ 2137 1944; www.qubemalta.com; Triq Santa Rita, Paceville) bar and nightclub has 30 types of flavoured vodkas, plus vodka jellies and shooters – pass the bucket....

ENTERTAINMENT Nightclubs

There are loads of clubs concentrated at the northern end of Triq San Ġorġ in Paceville (where it turns into Triq Santa Rita), but their names come and go with the seasons. Speaking of seasons, this area is pumping and jam-packed most nights of the week in the high season (June to September), but you won't experience the same level of action in the low season (although weekends year-round are definitely classified as party-time). The places listed here are all on the St Julian's & Paceville map (Map p88).

The best advice is to wander this area, check out the offerings and see what takes your fancy (the right crowd, the right music, free entry or no need to queue, drinks promotions etc). Families might prefer Paceville's cinema and 10-pin bowling alley.

You should pick your times to party. Locals tell us that Paceville nightlife is the reverse of the expected order of things (ie that the younger crowd has the stamina to stay out late and the oldies head home early). Here, the under-21s are out and partying before midnight, then head home early to mum; that's when it's the older crowd's turn (after 1am they have the clubs to themselves).

Axis (☎ 2138 2767; www.axis.com.mt; Triq San Ġorġ, Paceville) Malta's biggest and best nightclub (and one that's managed to stand the test of time) houses three separate clubs (commercial house is usually served up) and seven bars providing party space for over 3000 punters. There's normally an entrance fee of around Lm3.

BJ's (☎ 2137 7642; Triq Ball, Paceville) An offbeat club featuring live music nightly (primarily

CHECKING OUT THE SCENE

Good websites for hooking into the local dance/music/party scene include www.clubbinmalta.com and www.basement.com. Both sites give the lowdown on local and visiting DJs and artists, forthcoming events and hot venues. See also the boxed text, p129, for details of hugely popular open-air clubs in central Malta.

jazz, but also soul, blues and rock), BJ's draws a more mature crowd than most of its neighbours.

Fuego (☎ 2138 6746; www.fuego.com.mt; Triq Santu Wistin, Paceville) Get hot and sweaty dancing up a storm at this very popular indoor-outdoor salsa bar – head first to its free salsa-dancing classes (Monday to Wednesday from 8.30pm) then show off your new moves to the Latin grooves. The open terraces (covered and heated in winter) are full of people checking each other out – there's something of a meat-market atmosphere, but it's friendly, fun and not too sleazy.

Havana (☎ 2137 4500; www.havanamalta.com; 82 Triq San Ġorġ, Paceville) Free entry, six bars and a mixed menu of R&B, soul and commercial favourites keep the crowds happy here. There are lots of students and tourists chatting each other up, but plenty of locals too.

Places (☎ 2137 8055; www.places.com.mt; Triq Ball, Paceville) Places claims to be the 'home of Maltese club culture', and it's a good place to get your bearings if you take the subject seriously. It's strictly house here – room one is smaller and offers funky and vocal house; room two is kept pumping with house and hard house.

Casinos

Dragonara Casino (Map p88; ☎ 2138 2362; www.dragonara.com; entry from Triq Dragnara; ☎ 10am-6am Mon-Thu, 24hr Fri-Sun) Out on the point beyond the Westin Dragonara Resort, this casino is housed in a 19th-century mansion that, appropriately enough, once belonged to a wealthy banker. The minimum age for tourists is 18 (25 for Maltese citizens) and you'll need your passport or ID card to get in. The dress code is 'smart casual' (no shorts or jeans after 8pm). There's also a courtesy bus that offers free transport to the casino from all areas – call to arrange pick-up.

Cinemas

Eden Century Cinemas (Map p88; ☎ 2371 0400; www.edencinemas.com.mt; Triq Santu Wistin) This large complex has 16 screens (on both sides of the road) showing first-run films. Adult tickets cost Lm2 in the afternoon, Lm2.85 after 5pm. See the website or local newspapers for movie details and screening times. All films are in English (foreign films are in their original language, with English subtitles).

Ten-Pin Bowling

Eden Super Bowl (Map p88; ☎ 2138 7398; www.edenleisure.com/superbowl; Triq Santu Wistin; adult/child per game Lm1.50/1.20, shoe hire Lm0.50; ⌚ 10am-11pm) Great for a rainy day or to amuse the kids, this complex (across the road from the cinema ticket office) offers a 20-lane tenpin bowling alley to pass the time.

SHOPPING

Sliema's Triq ix-Xatt and Triq it-Torri together comprise Malta's prime shopping area. In among the tourist tat are some decent shoe stores and clothing labels, although there's little that's original – you won't need to look too hard to find the big British and European highstreet labels: the likes of Zara, Marks & Spencer, Dorothy Perkins, Next, Diesel, Topshop, Bhs, Oasis, Accessorize and Monsoon. Other decent hunting grounds include the **Bay Street Complex** (Map p88; Triq Santu Wistin, Paceville) and the **Luxe Pavilion** and **Portomaso Shopping Complex** (Map p88; Triq il-Knisja), at either end of the Portomaso complex. As the name suggests, the Luxe Pavilion houses some high-end boutiques trading in luxury items, including perfume, jewellery, leather goods, designer clothing and accessories. The latter complex hosts the Glass House, which sells locally produced glass pieces, and Space, a contemporary art gallery that shows and sells interesting works by local artists.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Bus

Buses 62, 64, 66 and 67 run regularly between Valletta and Sliema, St Julian's and Paceville (bus 66 continues on to the hotels of St George's Bay). The Sliema terminus is at

the Ferries on the waterfront, the St Julian's/Paceville terminal is off Triq Elija Zammit. Buses 60 and 63 go from Valletta to the Savoy terminus off Triq Rudolfu in Sliema (near the post office). All journeys cost Lm0.20. There is a late-night service (bus 62) that operates from Paceville to Valletta via St Julian's, Sliema and Gżira on Friday and Saturday nights year-round (last bus departs Paceville at 1.30am) and nightly from mid-June to mid-September (last bus at 3am) – all fares are the one price of Lm0.50.

Direct bus services to and from the area – avoiding Valletta – include the following (all fares one way Lm0.50; all routes stop at the Ferries in Sliema, St Julian's and Paceville):

65 – to Mosta, Ta'Qali Crafts Village and Rabat

70 – along the coast to the Buġibba terminus

627 – runs between Buġ's and Sliema

645 – to St Paul's Bay, Mellieħa town, Mellieħa Bay, and the Gozo Ferry at Ċirkewwa

652 – to Buġibba then to Ghajn Tuffieħa and Golden Bay

Car

If you decide to rent a car, bear in mind that finding a place to park in this area is a real nightmare.

Ferry

The **Marsamxetto ferry service** (Map p86; ☎ 2346 3862) crosses frequently between Sliema and Valletta. The crossing costs Lm0.40 each way and takes only about five minutes, with frequent departures (see p72).

GETTING AROUND

Wembleys (Map p88; ☎ 2137 4141 or for taxi 2137 4242; www.wembleys.net; 50 Triq San Ġġ's) provides a reliable 24-hour radio taxi service (similar to the UK's minicabs). Rates are generally cheaper than official taxi rates (to Valletta is Lm5, to the airport Lm7, to the Gozo ferry Lm11). Wembleys can also arrange car hire – the smallest costs Lm17 for one day in the high season (Lm10.50 per day for rentals of six to 10 days), Lm13.50 for one day in the low season (reduced to Lm8 for six- to 10-day hire).

There's a busy taxi rank catering to the late-night crowd close to the intersection of Triq San Ġġ and Triq il-Wilga in Paceville.

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