

# Access Statement



## Lascaris War Rooms

### Introduction:

Located some 40m under the Upper Barracca gardens and the Saluting Battery in Valletta, the Lascaris War Rooms represent one of Malta's best kept secrets from World War 2. They consist of a network of underground chambers which formed part of the British War H.Q. on Malta.

This ultra-secret complex housed an operations room for each of the three fighting services including the vital Fighter Control and Radar Filter Rooms operated by the Royal Air Force from which the air defence of the island and all air activity in the region was coordinated. A large Naval Combined Operations Room served for the conduct of inter-service operations. These rooms were in turn supported by a large collection of offices, telephones and radio rooms and the all important crypto rooms where were out of bounds for the majority of the military.

In July 1943, the War Rooms served as the Supreme Allied Commander's Headquarters. From here the U.S. General Eisenhower supported by the British Generals Alexander and Montgomery launched Operation Husky – the invasion of Sicily, which opened the way to the liberation of Europe.

This military heritage monument has been restored and is managed by the non-governmental organisation Fondazzjoni Wirt Artna – the Malta Heritage Trust. The Lascaris War Rooms are open from Monday-Saturday from 10:00 till 16:30. Guided tours are frequently offered as well as the use of self-guided audio guides which are available in a number of different languages. Staff members are always on hand to assist when needed. The War Rooms also boast a gift shop selling a large variety of books and souvenirs, as well as a cafe selling light refreshments.

We look forward to welcoming you to the Lascaris War Rooms. If you have any queries or require any assistance please phone 21234717 or email us on [info@wirtartna.org](mailto:info@wirtartna.org).

Pre-arrival: Prices are: €13 Adult €11 Senior/Student €6 Children Under 15 €26 Family ticket (Up to two adults and three children).

A Heritage Pass for all five FWA attractions (valid for one week) can be purchased for €40 Adult, €85 Family (2 Adults plus 3 children under 15). Current Prices can be checked from the following sources: Via the website: <http://www.lascariswarrooms.com>, in the brochure (which can be downloaded from the website), or from the reception area situated at the entrance of the War Rooms. For further details on how to reach us please refer to the map in the visit information section of the website. This information is also contained in the site brochure. Should you require refrigeration of Medication please speak to a member of the staff who will try and assist wherever possible. The premises do not provide any wheelchairs or mobility scooters to rent and visitors are requested to make their own arrangements in respect to these facilities. Guide and assistance dogs will be allowed to accompany their owner and water can be provided on request. Otherwise, no pets are allowed inside the facility. Smoking is not

permitted anywhere inside the War Rooms. Smoking is permitted in the ditch outside the War Rooms. Visitors should be aware that areas of the War Rooms, including the reception and museum shop, are monitored by CCTV.

#### Transport:

**By car:** Drive towards Valletta and find parking in or around the city. There are large parking areas a short walk outside of Valletta. Once parked, follow directional signs placed at strategic positions around Valletta to the War Rooms. The War Rooms are best reached from Castille Place/Upper Barracca Gardens to the left of City Gate, taking the steps in Battery Street (directly beneath the Upper Barracca Gardens). Alternatively, one can access the Lascaris War Rooms from the bus station (St. James Ditch end into the Herbert Ganado Gardens).

**By bus:** All busses to Valletta. The War Rooms are best reached from Castille Place/Upper Barracca Gardens to the left of City Gate, taking the steps in Battery Street (directly beneath the Upper Barracca Gardens). Alternatively, one can access the Lascaris War Rooms from the bus station (St. James Ditch end into the Herbert Ganado Gardens).

**Taxi Service:** There are Taxi stands by Triton Fountain directly before entering Valletta through City Gate.

**Main Entrance and Ticketing Kiosk:** The main entrance can either be reached from the Bus Terminus, or else from the stairs leading down from Battery Street. The main entrance is located within the Lascaris Tunnel. For those requiring Wheelchair access, it is recommended to use the elevator by City Gate leading down to the Valletta ditch. Once in the ditch, head left and it is only a short, paved walk towards the War Rooms.

The main entrance consists of 4 steps leading directly to the ticketing kiosk. There is a hand rail for assistance. The main entrance is 210cm in height, and 123 cm in width. The stairs are 8cm in height. Due to the stairs, wheelchair access is not possible via the main entrance. A separate entrance for wheelchairs is available upon request, which is located just next door to the main entrance via a ramp.

**Wheelchair access:** Visitors requesting wheelchair access are advised to call the War Rooms in advance in order to ensure smooth access to the site. Please note that the War Rooms consist of two levels, with the top level being wheelchair accessible whereas the lower level is not, as it can only be reached by stairs. The majority of the lower level, however, can easily be viewed from the top.

**Ticket Desk:** The ticket desk is located in the museum cafe'-gift shop from where all entrance tickets can be purchased either by cash or by card. There is a concession for visitors over 60 years and students upon presentation of valid identification. The reception desk is 95cm high. Audio guides with commentary in Arabic, English, Dutch, German, Maltese, Spanish, Russian, French, Danish, Chinese, Japanese and Italian are provided free of charge to visitors from the reception but visitors should note that they will be asked to leave some form of identity document to serve as a deposit against the return of the audio guide equipment.

The site: The site consists of two levels. On the top level, there are a number of offices, viewing galleries, two display cases as well as an exhibition room containing 7 display cases as well as information boards. The lower level consists of the three main operation rooms, rest rooms, radio communication cubicles, a telephone exchange as well as a further two display cases. Whilst wheelchair access is restricted for the lower floor, it should be noted that the majority of the lower floor can be viewed from the top floor from a number of viewing platforms and galleries.

Toilets: Currently the public toilet is located just outside the Lascaris War Rooms, at the end of the Lascaris Tunnel by the NSO (National Statistics Office) and Commerce Department offices. A key from the reception will be given to any visitor requesting the use of the toilet. Visitors are reminded to return the key to the reception after use. There is currently only one shared toilet.

Catering: Basic refreshments will be available at the cafe' such as hot and cold beverages, cakes and ice creams.

Opening times: Lascaris War Rooms are open Monday-Saturday from 10:00 till 16:30.

Closed: New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Good Friday, Easter Sunday, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.