



The Maltese Islands, surrounded by the clear Mediterranean waters visible practically from all holiday centres, offer an appetising variety of fish dishes. Especially popular is the 'lampuki season' – usually from late August till November.

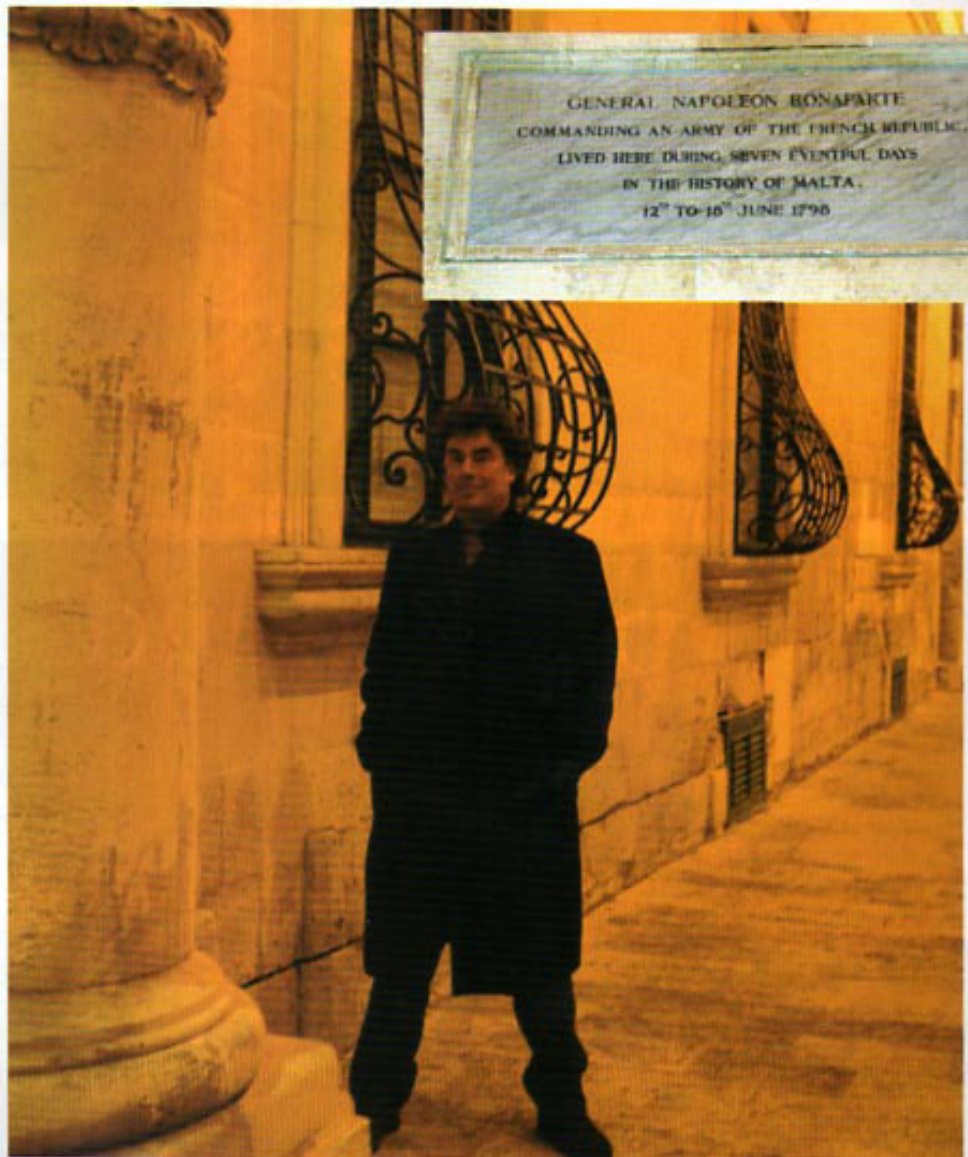
“Everybody is so friendly... in Malta”

A recommendation by a friend ‘who was always coming to Malta’ seems to have had an enchanting effect on BBC Radio Leeds’ Psychic Investigator Malcolm Hanson who, in the comparatively short time he’s known Malta, already has a flat in the traditional fishing village of St. Julians and is seriously considering taking up permanent residence on the Mediterranean Island.

A native of Skipton, Yorkshire in the UK, Malcolm Hanson is a former rock musician and, besides his radio shows, is now an experienced organiser of ‘Ghost Walks’, including ‘The Skipton Ghostwalk’. Taken in by the vast, varied history of Valletta, Mr. Hanson came up with an extremely well presented ghost walk with subjects ranging from the more recent British era, to Napoleon’s stay in a Valletta Palazzo and back to battles and sieges in the times of the Knights of St. John.

Talking with Malcolm Hanson one gets an interesting view of Valletta. “The great thing about Valletta is the backdrop. It is so fantastic, it’s such an incredible city to do something like this.”

“To do a ghost walk here is great because you stand in front of cathedrals, in front of the Law Courts, you go to the Lower Barrakka Gardens and stand there, or you stand at the site overlooking the Grand Harbour to St. Angelo where I’m telling a story about the Knights of Malta; but we’re still in Valletta itself. Wherever you go



Malcolm Hanson outside the magnificent Palazzo Parisio in Valletta where Napoleon Bonaparte stayed in June 1798.

you’ve got this sense that you’re walking into history, the streets are seeped in history. You can feel it wherever you go.”

The friendly character of the Maltese people has had a major influence over Malcolm Hanson.

“Well the thing is I’ve always led a

very insular life in the sense that I don’t make friends easily. Anyway in England it’s that kind of thing. But the moment I arrived in Malta, everybody was so friendly that I could relax for, I think, the first time in my life with people and not feel that you have to be pushy.

“People naturally come to you ➤

and talk to you. You could be busy talking to someone, and someone else comes and joins in and I suddenly found myself with a circle of friends that I was getting to know.”

There’s no way of stopping Malcolm going on about his experiences with the Maltese. “And it’s very friendly in some of the pubs as well. The whole thing just seems to be that kind of welcoming and that nice personality that made me think that, well if I did come to live here I’d never be alone or I hope I would never be alone....”

“For the first time in my life I feel as if I have a circle of friends at long last, which I never ever had in England.”

Malcolm Hanson has now known Malta for some fifteen months. However, he got around the Island at the earliest of his visits, speaking with enthusiasm of his experiences.

“I came here and, basically like everybody else, you do fall in love with it. It’s a lovely place and Valletta is particularly outstanding. But I also had a chance to walk round the whole Island and see a lot of different places. Then in the second week of being here, because I was here for a month, I realised that in Valletta or even in Qormi, all around the Island a lot of people are interested in the supernatural, but there wasn’t a Ghost Walk.

“And for the amount of visiting people that come to Malta every year I was thinking there was a market here because back in England that’s what I do for a living.



Evening scene at Valletta’s Lower Barrakka Gardens, site of a sepulchral monument to Sir Alexander Ball, first British Governor in Malta.

I do Ghost Walks, I write books and do historical things. So I put up a few feelers and started walking around and buying books and reading up and going to the library, researching documents... I could create a Ghost Walk, a top class Ghost Walk and that’s what I’ve created now.”

Malcolm Hanson discovered yet more dimensions to the attractions offered by the Maltese Islands. “The good thing about Malta is that since it’s only 90 miles you can walk it. The best way to get to know a place is to walk around and walk from village to village, and sit in each village square and look at it and

then you walk again and so on. I intended to do a lot of that certainly and a lot of the villages and towns I’ll need to learn about for future books or haunted houses or whatever it will be.

“I like the idea that everything is encapsulated into this one area. That’s it. That’s what you’ve got to work with, there’s nothing else. Whereas in England there could be a 100 miles away one day and then having to get back and do 30 miles in the opposite direction the next...here, wherever I am, you are always going to be in one place and that’s manageable, we can handle that.” 🇬🇧