

# media release

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## Locations and Dates for the 2017 Malta International Fireworks Festival announced

The Ministry for Tourism and the Malta Tourism Authority are pleased to announce that the 16<sup>th</sup> edition of the Malta International Fireworks Festival will be taking place on three nights between Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> April and Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2017.

The Festival will be taking place in three different locations around the Maltese Islands, namely Xagħra (Gozo), Marsaxlokk and Valletta. The event kicks off in Gozo on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> April, followed by a performance in Marsaxlokk on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> April, and the Grand Finale taking place in the Grand Harbour, Valletta on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2017.

This year's closing event is going to be particularly special, as apart from marking the anniversary of Malta joining the European Union, it will also form part of the celebrations to mark the Maltese Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The music that will be used during the Grand Finale will be produced by the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra to accompany the fireworks display performed by Pyroemotions and St Mary Fireworks Factory of Ħal-Għaxaq, with the latter being the 2016 festival winners.

Another novelty introduced this year is that, for the first time, all Malta Pyrotechnic Association members and observers were permitted to apply for a spot in the Festival.

In order to encourage increased local participation, the Organising Committee has decided to reward the highest placed local competitor with an invitation to participate at an international fireworks festival, taking place overseas, in order to showcase our skills.

This year, MTA received a total of 12 applicants, with 10 being from overseas, namely Italy, France, Hungary, Romania, Poland, Croatia, Czech Republic and Ukraine, with the remaining 2 being local.

From these, 6 participants were shortlisted, and expectations are high for this year's festival as the chosen foreign participants have all won firework competitions overseas in the past.

All the foreign participants are free to purchase their fireworks from local licensed fireworks factories, while the local participants must let off their own manufactured fireworks.

MTA CEO, Mr Paul Bugeja, said that “this Festival is one of the main highlights in the Maltese calendar of events and it has grown in popularity both locally and abroad”. Mr Bugeja continued by thanking all those involved in this Festival, in particular the organising committee this year lead by Dr Godfrey Farrugia. It is relevant to note that this event is generating substantial trade to a wide spectrum of stakeholders wherever this is being organised. Gozo in particular has now become a permanent calendar event which helps to reduce seasonality even further in our sister Island.



Photo: DOI - Anthony Sultana