

media release

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MALTA TOURISM AUTHORITY HOSTS 24 TOP TRAVEL AGENTS FROM HOLLAND

The Malta Tourism Authority, in collaboration with Air Malta, has recently hosted 24 selected travel agencies from The Netherlands to discover the Maltese Islands for the so-called **Kanjerreis** over a two day period.

MTA and Air Malta are the proud sponsors of the 2017 edition of the annual voting for **Best Travel Agency of the Year** in the Netherlands. In total, 24 agencies (two per province) were selected for the finals, from over one hundred contesting travel agencies.

The managers/owners of these selected agencies got the chance to visit Malta, flying to Malta with an Air Malta flight from Amsterdam. After checking in, the guests were taken to Vittoriosa for some welcome drinks, which was followed by a dinner at a restaurant in Sliema, hosted by the MTA.

The next day the group took a fast ferry to Gozo, with an exciting detour to Comino's Blue Lagoon. While in Gozo, 7 teams went on a self-drive safari to get to know the island a bit better. Lunch was enjoyed on the sunny terrace of a restaurant in Marsalforn. Later that night, when back in Malta, the group decided to go and explore St. Julians' dazzling nightlife!

On their last day, Valletta was the main highlight of the programme, with a visit to St. Johns Co-Cathedral and a little free time for some shopping, followed by a harbour cruise in a local traditional Dgħajsa boat. The group then proceeded for a short stop at Dingli Cliffs and Marsaxlokk. A beautifully restored old Maltese bus brought the group to their farewell dinner in Mdina.

On Sunday morning the 24 enthusiastic Malta ambassadors left the island, ready to spread the word on this surprising destination.

MTA CEO, Mr. Paul Bugeja, said "Hosting such a large group of travel agents is sure to provide the Maltese Islands with greater exposure in the Netherlands. We have an excellent product which the Nordic countries would definitely find attractive, especially in the winter months combining our cultural events calendar and the warm and mild sunny days. These agency owners and managers got a firsthand experience of what our islands can offer -- information which they will be able to transmit to

their clients.” Mr. Bugeja continued by saying that in 2016, the Maltese Islands registered an increase of 17.7% in tourists from the Netherlands, and augured that this will continue this year. Mr. Bugeja concluded by thanking all those involved locally and overseas in making this initiative happen.

