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Malta wins two prestigious awards at the world famous ITB Berlin

The Malta Tourism Authority is extremely proud to announce that Malta has won two extremely prestigious awards at the largest tourism trade fair in the world. Malta won the best LGBT trend destination, while Valletta won the award of Best City Break-Destination Award.

This was the 53<sup>rd</sup> edition of ITB Berlin (*Internationale Tourismus-Börse*), and Malta was present at this fair with three different stands. The main stand was hosted by the MTA and Ministry for Tourism, with Air Malta and several hotels and incoming travel agents also present. There was a second stand in the culture lounge, whilst the final stand was present in the LGBT area.

In order to attract and educate visitors, Mr Liam Cauchi, from [tastehistory.org](http://tastehistory.org) provided samples of the food concept which is being offered at the Maritime Museum. This concept is the preparation of food in the style that the Knights of Malta would have cooked. This wowed all those present as it provided an insight into Maltese gastronomic history.

Valletta won the award of Best City Break-Destination at the seventh edition of the Connoisseur Circle Hospitality Awards. Connoisseur Circle is the number one publication for luxury tourism market in Germany and the gala awards are considered as one of the social highlights at the ITB. The winners of the various awards are determined by a jury of 16 independent travel connoisseurs.

The LGBT destination award which Malta won was awarded at the Spartacus Travel Awards. Spartacus Traveller Magazine is the largest LGBT travel magazine in the German speaking market. These awards honour those destinations and travel companies that are committed to the LGBTIQ market. Malta was awarded the award for trend destination in 2019 due to its increased popularity in the LGBTIQ community as a holiday destination, as well as its progressive legislation and targeted advertising.

The MTA's executive Chairman, Dr. Gavin Gulia, commented that since the ITB fair is the world's largest tourism trade fair, it is vital for the MTA and Malta to be present and provide the islands with greater exposure. This year this was definitely achieved as for the first time Malta had three stands set up around the halls. Dr Gulia continued by saying that this was an excellent opportunity to sit down and speak with various trade members that bring tourists over to the Maltese Islands. In 2018, the German market consolidated its position as the third largest incoming market to Malta, with an increase of 17.6% when compared to arrivals in 2017. Dr Gulia concluded by thanking all the stakeholders and MTA employees that make these record years possible.



Minister Konrad Mizzi welcomed these two awards which complement other awards which were won in the past two years and complement collective efforts which are being coordinated with the Malta Tourism Authority and tourism stakeholders. He added that most importantly, foreign tourism experts are recognising these efforts and look at Malta and our capital city as an all-year destination for all.