BANK ĊENTRALI TA' MALTA
EUROSISTEMA
CENTRAL BANK OF MALTA



Silver Coins

1970-1979

MALTA COIN CENTRE

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1st series - Manwel Dimech



1972

Type	Silver
Denomination	Lm1
Diameter	32mm
Gross Weight	10g
Finesse	0.987
Designer	Pietro Giampaoli
Mint	SMOM, Rome

Manwel Dimech was born in Valletta on 25 December 1860 to a poor family. He had a very troubled childhood and, at 13 years, he was sent to prison for the first time. He was in and out of prison various times, mostly for theft and burglary. In 1878, aged 17 years, he was implicated in a case of involuntary murder and was imprisoned for more than 12 years. In 1890, he was found guilty of circulating counterfeit money and was imprisoned for seven years. By the time he was 36, Dimech had spent some 20 years in prison. However, in prison he reformed himself and learned to read and write, studying languages and reading extensively. Once out of prison, he earned a living teaching languages. He also fought for social and political reform, which prompted him to clash with the Catholic Church and the colonial authorities. On the outbreak of the First World War he was deported from Malta. He died in exile in Egypt in 1921.

1st series - Fort St Angelo



1972

Type	Silver
Denomination	Lm2
Diameter	38mm
Gross Weight	20g
Finesse	0.987
Designer	Pietro Giampaoli
Mint	SMOM, Rome

The first documented mention of a Castrum Maris (castle by the sea) on the tip of the Vittoriosa peninsula goes back to the 1240s. In the 1270s, the castle had a garrison of 150 men and included two chapels, which are still in place.

The Order of St John took over Malta in 1530 and the knights settled in Vittoriosa, then a small maritime village. The castle became the residence of the Grand Master. Various modifications were made to strengthen the old medieval castle. A bastion was built by De Homedes to buttress the land front while the ditch was deepened and turned into a moat. A cavalier was built to dominate its surroundings and a sea-level battery was constructed. These modifications enabled the fort to successfully resist the Ottoman siege of 1565 during the course of which it also repulsed a sea-borne attack on Senglea. Fort St Angelo dates back to the late 17th Century, when the military engineer Carlo Grunenberg designed and financed the building of four tiered batteries, which overlook the entrance to the Grand Harbour.

When Malta became a British colony, the British Army took over Fort St Angelo. In 1912, the fort became the headquarters of the Royal Navy's Mediterranean Fleet. At the time it was known as HMS Egmont, but from 1933 it became known as HMS St Angelo. The fort was handed over to the Maltese Government in 1979.

2nd series - Temi Zammit



1973

Type	Silver
Denomination	Lm1
Diameter	32mm
Gross Weight	10g
Finesse	0.987
Designer	Pietro Giampaoli
Mint	Malta Mint

Temistokle Zammit was born in Valletta on 30 September 1864. After studying at the Lyceum and the University of Malta, he became a Doctor of Medicine in 1889. In 1905, he was appointed Professor of Chemistry at the same University, of which he was also appointed Rector in 1920. He occupied this position until 1926 when he decided to dedicate his time and energy to the organisation of the National Museum, particularly in the archaeological field.

Sir Temi, as he was popularly known, was a man of great versatility. His scholarly interests were multifarious and he was a very prolific writer, as evidenced by his numerous publications. As a scientist engaged in research work on the transmission of Mediterranean or Undulant Fever (in Malta known as *deni rqiq*), he first became known in international medical circles through his connection with Sir Ronald Ross. Sir Temi was also renowned for continuing the work of Sir David Bruce (whose name was adopted to denominate the germ of the said fever as Brucella melitensis) in the early years of the 20th century when he discovered the micro-organism in goat's milk. In 1920, he was awarded the "Mary Kingsley Medal" by the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine. He was also renowned for his archaeological excavations of prehistoric sites in the Maltese Islands and for his scholarly writings on the material found.

The range of Zammit's publications also extends to Maltese history, literature, culture and education. His accomplishments and merits were acknowledged in various international quarters. In 1911, Britain made him a Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George, and in 1930, Zammit was made a Knight Bachelor. In 1920, the University of Oxford conferred on him an honorary degree of Doctor of Literature and in 1932, he was made "Officier d'Académie" of the French Republic.

Zammit died on 2 November 1935.

2nd series - Mdina Gate



1973

Type	Silver
Denomination	Lm2
Diameter	38mm
Gross Weight	20g
Finesse	0.987
Designer	Pietro Giampaoli
Mint	Malta Mint

Mdina is the ancient capital of Malta. In 1693, an earthquake hit Malta and damaged many of the old medieval buildings of the city. The Cathedral was one of the buildings that had to be rebuilt. The rebuilding introduced a new Baroque architectural element to the old city. In the 1720s, the entrance to Mdina was thoroughly altered to feature a small piazza flanked by the imposing and sumptuous Vilhena Palace. The main gate was walled up and a new ornate gate was built a few metres away. The gate was designed by the French military engineer Charles Francois de Mondion, who at the time was in the pay of the Order of St John. The gate prominently features the coat of arms of Grand Master Anton Manoel de Vilhena surrounded by a trophy of arms.

3rd series - Giovanni Francesco Abela



1974

Type	Gold
Denomination	Lm2
Diameter	32mm
Gross Weight	10g
Finesse	0.987
Designer	Pietro Giampaoli
Mint	Malta Mint

Giovanni Francesco Abela was born in Valletta in 1582. He was appointed Auditor by Grand Master Antoine de Paule, later becoming Chaplain and Vice Chancellor of the Order of St John. Abela is credited with creating the first historical museum in Malta, which was located at his house in Marsa. Many of Abela's artefacts still exist in the collections held by the National Museum of Archaeology. In 1647, Abela wrote the famous "Della Descrittione di Malta isola nel Mare Siciliano: con le sue antichità, ed altre notizie", which is still considered an important source of historical information on Malta. Abela died in 1655, and is buried in St John's Co-Cathedral in Valletta.

3rd series - Notre Dame Gate



1974

Type	Silver
Denomination	Lm4
Diameter	38mm
Gross Weight	20g
Finesse	0.987
Designer	Pietro Giampaoli
Mint	Malta Mint

The Cottonera Lines were built in 1670 by Grand Master Nicola Cotoner. This line of fortifications girdled the cities of Senglea, Vittoriosa and Cospicua. Notre Dame Gate was the principal access point into the fortifications for inhabitants of the south-eastern villages, notably Zejtun and Zabbar.

Notre Dame Gate is the highest building in Cottonera and is built on five levels. Above its central main arch, the gate has a bronze effigy of Grand Master Cotoner, surrounded by a heavily ornamented trophy of arms. The gate was named after Our Lady of Graces, the patron saint of Zabbar. It is also known as Cotoner Gate, Zabbar Gate and Bieb is-Sultan.

4th series - Old Arms - Alfons Maria Galea



1975

Type	Silver
Denomination	Lm2
Diameter	32mm
Gross Weight	10g
Finesse	0.987
Designer	Pietro Giampaoli
Mint	Malta Mint
Mintage	2,000

Alfons Maria Galea was born in Valletta in 1861. He was a successful businessman. Galea was a noted philanthropist and contributed to the financing of the Good Shepherd Convent in Balzan. He also funded a girl's oratory and founded the Salesian Boy's Institute in Sliema. He contributed to the development of Maltese literature and, during the period 1899-1915, edited a series of 150 books entitled "Il-Mogħdija taż-Żmien". Galea died in 1941.

4th series - Old Arms - St Agatha's Tower



1975

Type	Silver
Denomination	Lm4
Diameter	38mm
Gross Weight	20-g
Finesse	0.987
Designer	Pietro Giampaoli
Mint	Malta Mint
Mintage	2,000

St Agatha's Tower was built in 1649, during the time of Grand Master Jean Paul Lascaris. The tower is situated on the crest of Marfa Ridge and in its heyday constituted one of the most important defence works in the North-West of Malta. It was equipped with a number of small guns. In emergencies its garrison was increased to 30 men and supplied with enough food and ammunition to last 40 days. During the 18th century a battery was built around the tower's perimeter. The tower also had a small chapel dedicated to St Agatha.

5th series - Ġużè Ellul Mercer



1976

Type	Silver
Denomination	Lm2
Diameter	32mm
Gross Weight	10g
Finesse	0.987
Designer	Pietro Giampaoli
Mint	Malta Mint

Ġużè Ellul Mercer was born in Msida on 22 March 1897. In his early youth, he joined the Civil Service and, in 1924, he entered politics and joined the Labour Party. In 1928, he served as assistant editor of the Labour Party newspaper "Il Cotra". He was elected a member of parliament in 1951, and in 1955, he became deputy leader of the Labour Party. Ellul Mercer was a prolific writer and wrote many satirical novels, as well as short stories and newspaper articles. He is best remembered for his novel "Leli ta' Ħaz-Żgħir" (1938), which is deeply reflective of Maltese society at the time, and for his wartime diary "Taħt in-Nar" (1949). Ellul Mercer died in 1961.

5th series - Fort Manoel Gate



Type	Silver
Denomination	Lm4
Diameter	38mm
Gross Weight	20g
Finesse	0.987
Designer	Pietro Giampaoli
Mint	Malta Mint

Fort Manoel was commissioned by the Portuguese Grand Master Manoel de Vilhena and was built between 1723 and 1755. A design was originally prepared by the French engineer Rene Jacob de Tigne, but this was modified by Charles Francois de Mondion, who also supervised the construction of the work. Mondion was the Order of St John's resident military engineer. The fort was hit and heavily damaged during the Second World War.

6th series - Maltese dog



1977

Type	Silver Proof	Silver BU
Denomination	Lm1	Lm1
Diameter	23.6mm	23.6mm
Gross Weight	5.66g	5.66g
Finesse	0.925	0.925
Designer	Pietro Giampaoli	Pietro Giampaoli
Mint	Malta Mint	Malta Mint
Mintage	2,437	-

In 1647, Giovanni Francesco Abela wrote "... we have the dogs called Cernechi, much valued for rabbit hunting, which are often in demand as far away as in France, mainly for [use in] steep and stony mountain terrain". This dog, which is native to Malta, is locally known as "il-Kelb tal-Fenek" and was traditionally used by Maltese countrymen to hunt wild rabbits. The dog is powerful and athletic, with long legs, eyes usually amber-coloured with large, pointed ears. These dogs are normally tan or chestnut-coloured. The Kelb tal-Fenek is considered as the Maltese national dog.

6th series - Sir Luigi Preziosi



1977

Type	Silver Proof	Silver BU
Denomination	Lm2	Lm2
Diameter	28.5mm	28.5mm
Gross Weight	11.31g	11.31g
Finesse	0.925	0.925
Designer	Pietro Giampaoli	Pietro Giampaoli
Mint	Malta Mint	Malta Mint
Mintage	2,437	-

Luigi Preziosi was born in Sliema in 1888. He graduated in medicine in 1910, and later studied in Rome. In 1920, he obtained a diploma in opthalmology from Oxford. He lectured at the University of Malta and in 1924, was appointed surgeon at the Central Hospital in Floriana. Preziosi created an original method for the treatment of glaucoma, which gained him international acclaim. Preziosi was also involved in politics. He died in 1965.

6th series - Xarolla windmill



1977

Type	Silver Proof	Gold BU
Denomination	Lm5	Lm5
Diameter	38.61mm	38.61mm
Gross Weight	28.28g	28.28g
Finesse	0.925	0.925
Designer	Pietro Giampaoli	Pietro Giampaoli
Mint	Malta Mint	Malta Mint
Mintage	2,437	-

Xarolla windmill is a landmark in the village of Zurrieq. It was built in 1724, and is one of eight mills of the Fondazione Manoel that were built on land owned by the Order of St John by Grand Master Manoel de Vilhena. The Xarolla windmill derives its name from the location on which it was built.

In 1946, the mill's mechanism was still considered to be in a good state. However, it was abandoned in 1979, after the antennae were destroyed during a violent storm. Later the windmill was fully restored.

End of military facilities



1979

Type	Silver Proof	Silver BU
Denomination	Lm1	Lm1
Diameter	23.6mm	23.6mm
Gross Weight	5.66g	5.66g
Finesse	0.92	0.92
Designer	Luciano Micallef/ Noel Galea Bason	Luciano Micallef/ Noel Galea Bason
Mint	Franklin Mint, USA	Malta Mint
Mintage	1,294	50,000

In 1971, the Malta Labour Party, led by Dominic Mintoff, was elected to government and immediately indicated that it wanted to re-negotiate the lease of military facilities with the United Kingdom. After protracted talks, the lease was extended until the end of March 1979. The British forces in Malta began a gradual, winding-down process until the destroyer, HMS London, the last representative of the British forces in Malta, sailed out of the Grand Harbour on 1 April 1979. From then on, Malta no longer offered military facilities to any foreign power.