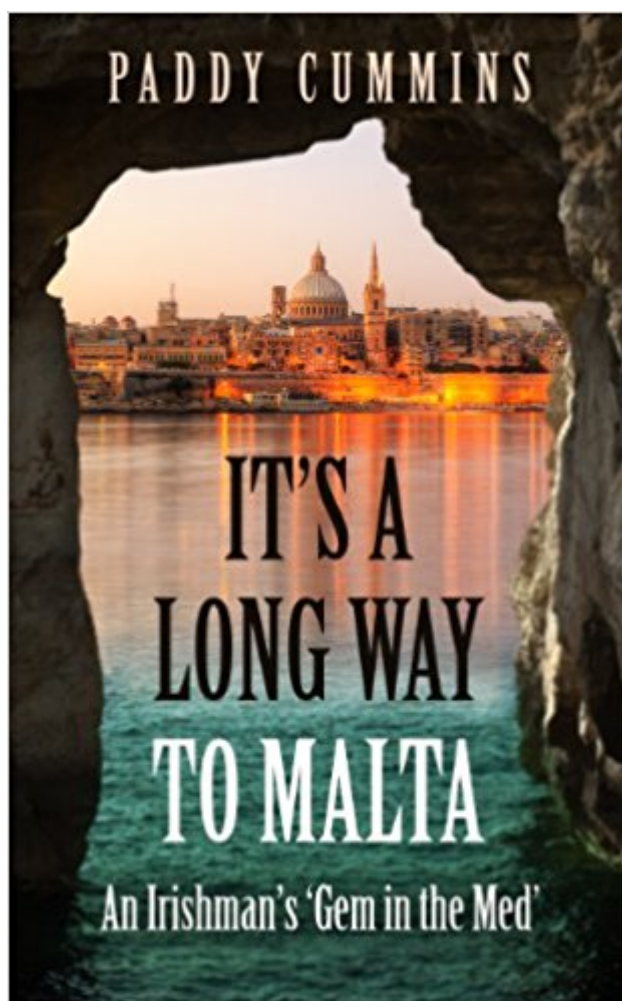


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It's A Long Way To Malta: An Irishman's 'Gem In The Med'



Synopsis

Malta is a feast to the eye and a tug on the heart. Pastel coloured rocks, dry stone walls, little farms of greenery, cute little inlets with multicoloured fishing boats, delightful baroque architecture, magnificent church domes, a perfect climate, a leisurely pace of life, charming people, all embraced by the warm blue Mediterranean. It has become my color postcard, but now I must share it with two million other visitors who come each year, lucky like me, to have discovered this little Heaven.

Reviews for *It's a Long Way to Malta* "Paddy Cummins has created a gripping and emotional book that captivates at every turn of the page. Endlessly fascinating, tensely absorbing, with humorous anecdotes. This is classic travel writing – a brilliant read" • Michael K Hayes.

Renowned Travel Writer. BBC Radio. The Sunday Times. "Malta through Irish eyes" • In his new book, *It's a Long Way to Malta*, Paddy Cummins reminds his readers that he is a proud Irishman, but he also instils pride in his Maltese readers by showing them why their little island captures the hearts of so many millions of people just like him. I found Cummins' written Irish brogue to be very pleasant; you can imagine him speaking the words off the page as he wanders contentedly around Malta, describing with almost child-like wonderment, his favourite places, peppering his prose with historical details along the way. His admiration for Malta and all things Maltese is evident in every chapter. Of course, he doesn't have the prowess of his literary heroes and fellow countrymen, W B Yeats and Oscar Wilde, but his stories are very sweet, engaging, and often humorous in their own amiable little way. Cummins is an enthusiastic people-watcher, happily observing the little idiosyncrasies of his fellow travellers and locals going about their business. As a result, the book features an assortment of colourful characters, many of whom will seem familiar, portrayed here in rich colour and humorous detail. All in all, I found this to be a truly enjoyable journey around Malta and Gozo, with a very agreeable companion. Patrick Cooke.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Paddy Cummins has written ten books. Three novels, an epic sea book, a memoir, a travel book, and four collections of short stories and poems. His travel book: 'It's a Long Way to Malta' (An Irishman's 'Gem in the Med') is internationally acclaimed as the first book that gets to the heart of the Maltese Islands. It has reached number one in the Top 100. (Travel - Europe - Malta.) Paddy lives in Ireland during the summer and spends the winter months in Malta.

This is a splendid little book. Paddy Cummins clearly took up writing in his golden years but is making up for time as this is his 10th book. And unlike so many self-published books there are very few errors. He obviously loves Malta and spends time there each winter. Travelling alone, he always books into the same hotel, which is one of those which cater for pensioners by offering cheap winter rates. Many of these people escaping winter will stay for a whole 3 months. Paddy is gregarious but not to a fault. He prefers to lurk in the dining rooms and bars, sitting quietly at the back and noting the eccentricities and foibles of his fellow customers. He also gets out and about, walking, riding on the bus, even driving a little. We end up with a lovely and affectionate picture of Malta as it is now, a little bit of its history in the time of the Turkish siege of the Knights of St John and during the battering it took during World War II, being bombed ceaselessly from Italy, which is so near. We learn quite a bit about Paddy's own history, his attitudes to life and other people, and quite a bit about the "fictional" characters who inhabit the hotel, Malta, and the pages of the book. The overall result is a delight. I have been to Malta before. I am more familiar with Rhodes and am aware that when the Turks drove the Knights from Rhodes they moved to Malta and more or less rebuilt Rhodes Old Town as Valetta. I have an ambition to do a holiday which involves spending a week in Rhodes, immediately followed by a week in Malta. But after reading Paddy's book, I want to go to Malta now.

Mr Cummins paints a clear picture of the wonderful island of Malta and its people. My grandparents immigrated from Malta back in 1930. I've been to Malta once before and loved that I was able to bring my wife and daughter to show it off. I enjoyed reading the book while visiting the island just this week. We even meet the cat lady during dinner this evening as she was making the rounds. Cheers

Whilst the author may be well known and lauded for his travel writing, this book should not be counted amongst his better efforts. Taking the reader along on a stroll through the streets, shops and attractions of Malta may be engaging, but for some reason the writing of it comes across as somewhat lackluster and simply does not make one wish to turn the page.....

This friendly and chatty travel tale is for senior persons or those with interest in historical sights, enjoyable food and quiet contemplation. Like many of the visitors to Malta, in fact. The author has travelled to Malta for several winters by the time of writing, and stays in the same hotel, preferably with a sea view rather than the drying laundry in the courtyard. He gives some practical tips just by relating his journey. We learn that there is only one real Irish pub - the rest are run by Maltese with fake Irish names. We find that the most obese nation in Europe is Britain, followed by Malta. This may have something to do with the number of large British persons he meets holidaying there, enjoying their food. By contrast he minds his weight and regularly walks, including a pre-breakfast scenic hike each day. The chapters are unbalanced in that the author spends a lengthy number of pages describing what seems to be a standard hotel breakfast, then speeds up as he recounts the recent improvements with 85% EU funding such as revamped harbour, castle walks and buses. We get a good look around Valetta, the castle, artwork, history. Then he crams in a great number of names of sites to the last chapter, perhaps realising that he was running out of time. The last chapter also visits Gozo the nearby island. While the author seems like a personable, non-intrusive man, we enjoy some of his family recollections and chuckle at his viewpoint of the tourists around him. He has the greatest respect for native Maltese and enjoys the island atmosphere. He mentions how he started writing by taking a creative writing class, and now has several books under his belt. The majority of readers will accept the casual, spoken style of prose, but I do wish the tutor had taught the author correct English and when to use it. "The woman that taught me creative writing" is not an object, so this should read "the woman who taught me". The presentation of the book is blog style - paragraphs have no indentation and there is a blank line between all paragraphs. This no doubt has come straight from the author's blog but it feels odd for book readers and book formatting would be appreciated. Certainly if the reader is planning a trip to Malta and wants to check out issues first, this book would be a help. While more activities are mentioned, like the availability of diving and sailing, you will need to bring your own guidebooks on those and on birdwatching.

A bit of memoir, a bit of travelogue, a bit of cheeky Irish humor. I really enjoyed reading about Paddy

Cummin's love affair with this little slice of paradise. I had no idea Malta had so much to offer, and as if my travel "bucket list" wasn't long enough already, now I have another destination to add!

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