



Hospitality Package

Machine Learning for Astrophysics, 3rd Edition

31 Aug – 4 Sep, 2026

University of Malta, Valletta Campus

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1 Welcome

Welcome to Machine Learning for Astrophysics, 3rd Edition. This hospitality package provides practical information to help invited guests, speakers, delegates, and organisers plan their visit.

Conference dates: 31 Aug – 4 Sep, 2026

Venue: University of Malta, Valletta Campus

Contact: ml4astro3@inaf.it

2 Conference Venue

The **Valletta Campus**, housed in the Old University Building, dates back to the founding of the Collegium Melitense in 1592.

The campus provides a prestigious setting for international conferences, seminars, short courses, and summer schools. The registration desk is typically set up in the main foyer.

The Valletta Campus has two entrances: one on St Paul Street and another on Merchants Street. A lift is available for access to different floors.

The campus is fully integrated into the worldwide eduroam Wi-Fi network. Visiting academics and students from participating institutions can usually log in using their home institution credentials. Temporary guest access can be requested through the University of Malta IT Services for non-eduroam guests.

3 The Maltese Islands

The Maltese Islands in the Mediterranean consist of three main islands: Malta, Gozo, and Comino. Malta, the largest island, is the cultural and economic centre, while Gozo offers a more rural and tranquil atmosphere. Comino, with its famous Blue Lagoon, is popular for its beaches.

Malta's history spans over 7,000 years, with its megalithic temples among the oldest freestanding structures in the world. Its strategic location attracted many civilisations, including the Phoenicians, Romans, and the British, all contributing to its rich heritage. A key moment in Malta's history was in 1530, when the Knights of St John were granted control of the islands. The Knights transformed Malta into a fortified stronghold and an important hub for Christian Europe's defence against the Ottoman Empire, culminating in the Great Siege of 1565. Centuries later, Malta played a crucial role in World War II as a strategic Allied base, and in recognition of the islanders' bravery, Malta was awarded the George Cross in 1942. In February 1945, leaders met in Malta ahead of the Yalta Conference. Decades later, Malta hosted the Malta Summit in 1989, which is often seen as symbolically marking the end of the Cold War.

After a period of British rule in the 19th and early 20th centuries, Malta gained independence in 1964, became a republic in 1974, and joined the European Union in 2004.

4 General Information

4.1 Language

Malta has two official languages: Maltese and English. English is widely spoken in Malta and will be the language of the conference.

4.2 Maltese Climate

The weather in Malta is usually hot at this time of year, but most places inside in Malta are fully air-conditioned. Make sure to have forms of sun protection when spending time outside and wear appropriate clothing for the heat. Also keep in mind to carry water with you during the day.

4.3 Electricity

Electricity supply is 220/240 volts, single phase, 50 cycle. The square fitting standard three pin plugs and sockets (UK standard plugs) are used.

4.4 Currency & Banks

The currency in Malta is the Euro. There are banks/ATMs in all towns and villages, with additional bureaux de change in Sliema, St Julian's, and Valletta. HSBC branches and ATMs can be found across the island.

4.5 Healthcare

Guests should ensure that they are covered by adequate medical insurance. Healthcare in Malta is of a high standard and conforms to European norms. **Mater Dei Hospital** is Malta's main state hospital. EU/EEA citizens with a valid European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) are entitled to medically necessary public healthcare in Malta on the same basis as Maltese citizens.

In addition to public healthcare, there are private hospitals and clinics.

4.6 Personal & Other Insurance

Participants are reminded to take out personal insurance for themselves and accompanying persons, including insurance of personal effects.

4.7 Telecommunications

Malta has reliable telecommunications, with 4G/5G mobile coverage and high-speed internet widely available. Local SIM cards are easy to obtain, and roaming is supported. Free Wi-Fi is common in public areas, and the conference venue connects via eduroam.

4.8 Useful Telephone Numbers

EU-wide emergency (police, fire, ambulance): 112

Malta Police general emergency: 196

Fire & Rescue: 199

University of Malta Valletta Campus: Conference & Events Unit +356 2340 7513/6/7

Marketing, Communications & Alumni Office, University of Malta +356 2340 3080

Malta International Airport: General Enquiries / Flight Information +356 2124 9600

5 Travelling around the Islands

Getting around Malta is straightforward, with various transport options to suit different needs. Whether you prefer the affordability of public buses, the flexibility of renting a car, or the ease of taxis and ferries, Malta offers convenient ways to explore its historic sites, scenic landscapes, and neighbouring islands. Here's an overview of the main transportation options.

5.1 Public Transport

Malta's public bus network is the main alternative to private transport, connecting major towns, cities, and tourist attractions. Buses are frequent along main routes, and the central hub is in Valletta. Gozo also has a smaller network, with its central hub in Victoria. Single tickets are available (including contactless payment on board), while multi-day passes can offer better value for frequent travel.

The [Tallinja app](#) is the easiest way to plan routes. You can also consult the [Malta Public Transport](#) website for service information. Most localities have routes to Valletta and to Mater Dei Hospital, and the Valletta bus terminus provides access to the rest of the island. Appendix [A](#) includes some major routes covering key points of interest.

5.2 Hop-On Hop-Off Buses

Malta's hop-on hop-off buses offer a convenient way to explore the islands, with routes covering key attractions in Malta and Gozo. These open-top buses provide audio guides in multiple languages, and passengers can get on and off at various stops to visit landmarks at their own pace. Tickets are typically valid for a full day, making it a flexible option for sightseeing. Check the [website](#) for current routes, timetables, and prices.

5.3 Taxi

Taxi services are available throughout the island, and a booth can be found in Valletta near the city's main entrance. However, these tend to be quite expensive, so we recommend using ride-hailing services such as Uber, Bolt, and eCabs.

5.4 Airport Transfers

There is a taxi stand at the airport. Taxi service from the airport is available 24 hours a day to any destination in Malta, including Valletta. Fixed rates apply, and pre-paid tickets can be purchased from the ticket booth in Arrivals. For current rates and details, check the [website](#).

Ride-hailing services, such as Uber, Bolt and eCabs are also widely available and tend to be cheaper alternatives than conventional taxi services.

5.5 Harbour Ferries

Ferries run regularly between Malta, Gozo, and Comino, and serve as a good option for crossing the two harbours on either side of Valletta.

To travel from Sliema to Valletta, an option that may be quicker than the bus is the regularly scheduled ferry connecting both locations.

Terminus Location in Sliema: [Sliema Ferry](#)
Terminus Location in Valletta: [Sliema Ferry](#)

The same option is available from the Three Cities (Birgu, Senglea, Cospicua) to Valletta by catching a ferry from Cospicua.

Terminus Location in Cospicua: [Valletta Ferry Service - Cospicua](#)
Terminus Location in Valletta: [3 cities Valletta ferry](#)

To get to the 3 cities ferry Valletta location from the centre of Valletta, the best option is to use the public lift ([Barrakka Lift](#)) in the Upper Barrakka to go to sea level. The terminus should be immediately on your left as you exit the entrance. You should be able to use the bus travel card to pay for the lift.

A new fast ferry service connecting Gozo, Sliema and Bugibba was launched and began operation in May 2026. This ferry operates between Sliema, Bugibba and Mgarr (Gozo) with the main objective to provide an alternative to road transport and reduce traffic congestion. The service is intended to integrate with existing land transport to reduce road congestion and connects with the bus system to create a truly multi-modal transport system.

The schedule for all mentioned ferries can be found [here](#).

5.6 Travelling around Valletta

The capital city, and the locality in which the conference will take place, is a small fortified city full of great restaurants, bars and historical & cultural sites. Travelling around Valletta is best done on foot, as the city is compact and mostly pedestrian-friendly. Valletta's narrow streets and rich historical architecture make walking the most convenient way to explore its attractions, such as St. John's Co-Cathedral, the Upper Barrakka Gardens, and the Grandmaster's Palace. There are, however, some bus routes that function within the city, which make travelling to specific locations easier.

The majority of the city is on elevated ground within the fortification walls. All these attractions can be easily accessed on foot. There are, however, certain areas, such as the Valletta Waterfront, which are found at sea level and best accessed either by bus or by using the Barrakka Lift found in the Upper Barrakka. Payment for the lift can be made using your bus travel cards.

5.7 Travelling outside Valletta

Beyond Valletta, there are several localities that are worth visiting. The Three Cities; Birgu, Senglea, and Cospicua are known for their historic fortifications and waterfront views. The old hilltop medieval city of Mdina (The Silent City) offers great views and hosts a number of museums detailing different eras of Malta's history. The neighbouring town Rabat is also worth a visit. In the south of the island, you can visit Marsaxlokk, a fishing village known for colourful boats and a lively Sunday market. Refer to the History & Culture section for more options regarding historical sites outside of Valletta.

If the weather is nice, you may consider visiting one of Malta's many beaches. The choice

depends on your preferences, whether you would rather visit a popular sandy beach ([Ghadira Bay](#), [Golden Bay](#), [Għajn Tuffieħa](#), [Ramla Beach](#), [Blue Lagoon](#)) or smaller rocky beaches that might be a bit less crowded but less accessible ([Għar Lapsi](#), [Wied Iż-Żurrieq](#), [St. Peter's Pool](#), [Wied il-Ghasri](#), [Xwejni Bay](#)).

All locations are accessible from Valletta through the use of public transport and are all featured in the hop-on hop-off bus routes.

5.8 Gozo

If you want to go to Gozo, there are two options. If you are not travelling to Gozo by car, the best option is to take the [Gozo Fast Ferry](#) from Valletta. The ferry takes about 45 minutes to arrive at the Mgarr terminal in Gozo, and the trip offers a great way to see Malta's eastern coastline, Comino, and Gozo's southern coast. Similarly to the 3 Cities Valletta ferry, the best way to get to the terminal in Valletta is to take the Barrakka Lift.

Another (longer) option is to take the [Gozo Channel Ferry](#) from Ċirkewwa, which is the only option should you wish to travel to Gozo with a car. The major bus routes to get there are listed above.

The third island, Comino, is less accessible, and ferry routes to the island are more seasonal. Should you wish to go to Comino & Blue Lagoon, contact your nearest LOC member to provide you with more information.

6 Restaurants & Bars

Malta and Gozo offer a vibrant food scene with a mix of Mediterranean and international cuisine, making them a great place to explore local flavours. The following are only a few of the recommendations we provide in the accompanying [map](#). Still, they give a good idea of the range of options at different price points, from traditional Maltese fare to fine dining.

6.1 Lunch

As lunch will not be provided at the conference venue, we encourage attendees to explore several lunch options around the city. Valletta offers a variety of options to suit different tastes, dietary needs, and time constraints. Whether you are looking for a quick bite or a more leisurely meal, there is something for everyone.

A great central option is [Is-Suq Tal-Belt](#), Valletta's historic indoor market. Located just a short walk from the conference venue, Is-Suq Tal-Belt features a variety of food stalls offering both local and international dishes. Alternatively, amongst other options located slightly further away are [Grano](#), [The Bagel Hole](#), [No. 43](#), [eetwell](#) and [Café Jubilee](#). Finally, you can also try some of the Maltese street food. Pastizzerias are a type of shop in Malta that specializes in selling pastizzi, which are traditional Maltese savory pastries, amongst other items. You may find these pastizzerias scattered all over Valletta.

A more in depth list can be found in [Appendix B](#).

7 Accommodation

Whilst accommodation can be found throughout the island, we strongly suggest looking for accommodation either in Valletta or in the neighbouring towns. Outside the city, there is the town of Floriana, from which you can either walk to the venue on foot or catch one of the buses on their way into Valletta. Beyond that, the most ideal options are the towns on either side of the two harbours. The Three Cities (Birgu, Senglea and Cospicua) are all close options that may offer cheaper accommodation, and you can either catch a bus to Valletta or travel by ferry across the harbour. On the opposite side, one can find accommodation in Sliema, Gżira, Ta' Xbiex, Msida, San Ġwann and St. Julians. Sliema and St. Julians are commercial hubs, so hotels are easily found here at varying price ranges. Travelling to Valletta can be done either by direct bus routes or by catching the ferry from Sliema.

8 Contact Details

For any other questions about travel, accommodation, accessibility, or hospitality arrangements, please contact:

Contact: Local Organising Committee
Email: ml4astro3@inaf.it

A Travel Information

Airport Routes	
Route	Destination
TD1	Airport ↔ Rabat, Buġibba, Mellicha and Ċirkewwa
TD2	Airport ↔ St Julian's and Pembroke
TD3	Airport ↔ Sliema and St Julian's
TD4	Airport ↔ Valletta
TD5	Airport ↔ Buġibba
201	Airport ↔ Rabat
214	Airport ↔ Buġibba
119	Airport ↔ Birżebbuġa, Marsaxlokk and Marsaskala

Night Routes (starting from 23:00)	
Route	Destination
N11	St Julian's ↔ Buġibba and Ċirkewwa
N13	Valletta ↔ Sliema and St Julian's
N212	Sliema ↔ St Julian's and Buġibba

Three Cities Routes	
Route	Destination
1	Valletta ↔ Isla/Senglea
2	Valletta ↔ Birgu
3	Valletta ↔ Kalkara
4	Valletta ↔ Bormla/Cospicua

Sliema & St Julian's Routes	
Route	Destination
13	Valletta ↔ Baħar iċ-Ċagħaq via Sliema and St Julian's
13A	Valletta ↔ St Julian's via Sliema
14	Valletta ↔ Pembroke Park & Ride via Sliema and St Julian's
15	Valletta ↔ Sliema
16	Valletta ↔ Swieqi via Sliema and St Julian's
21	Valletta ↔ Sliema
TD13	Valletta ↔ Buġibba via Sliema and St Julian's
N13	Night service: Valletta ↔ Sliema and St Julian's

Rabat & Mdina Routes	
Route	Destination
50	Valletta ↔ Rabat
51	Valletta ↔ Mtarfa via Rabat and Mdina
52	Valletta ↔ Dingli via Rabat and Mdina
53	Valletta ↔ Rabat
56	Valletta ↔ Dingli via Rabat and Mdina

Marsaxlokk Routes	
Route	Destination
81	Valletta ↔ Marsaxlokk
85	Valletta ↔ Marsaxlokk
TD10	Valletta ↔ Marsaxlokk, Sundays only

Valletta Waterfront Routes	
Route	Destination
130	Valletta circular service via Valletta Waterfront

Ċirkewwa & Buġibba Routes	
Route	Destination
41	Valletta ↔ Ċirkewwa
42	Valletta ↔ Ċirkewwa
31	Valletta ↔ Buġibba
45	Valletta ↔ Buġibba
48	Valletta ↔ Buġibba
TD1	Airport ↔ Ċirkewwa via Rabat, Buġibba and Mellieħa
214	Airport ↔ Buġibba
222	Sliema ↔ Ċirkewwa

Bus routes and timetables are subject to seasonal changes and temporary diversions. Guests should consult the Tallinja app or the Malta Public Transport journey planner before travelling.

B Dining Options

The following price indicators provide an approximate guide to the cost of a meal per person, excluding drinks:

€	Budget-friendly
€€	Moderate
€€€	Expensive
€€€€	Fine-dining or tasting-menu pricing

Traditional Maltese Food	
Restaurant	Price
Ġużé — Valletta	€€
Rubino — Valletta	€€
Legligin — Valletta	€€
Ta' Detta — Valletta Waterfront	€€
Nenu the Artisan Baker — Valletta	€€
Il-Forn ta' l-Għawdxi — Marsaskala and Gżira	€
St. Elmo's Kitchen — Valletta	€
Tal-Petut — Birgu	€€€
Bacchus — Mdina	€€€
Il-Bitha — Rabat	€€
Gululu — Spinola, St Julian's	€€
Ta' Kris — Sliema	€€
Briju — Gżira	€€
United Restaurant Behind the Church — Mġarr, Malta	€€
Ta' Frenċ — Xagħra, Gozo	€€
Mekren's Bakery — Nadur, Gozo	€
Maxokk Bakery — Nadur, Gozo	€

Fish Restaurants	
Restaurant	Price
Tartarun — Marsaxlokk	€€€
The Seafood Market Grill — Gżira	€€€
Tmun — Mġarr, Gozo	€€
Capo Crudo — Valletta	€€€
Barracuda — St Julian's	€€€
Roots — Marsaxlokk	€€€

Fine-Dining	
Restaurant	Price
Noni — Valletta (1 Michelin Star)	€€€€
ION Harbour by Simon Rogan — Valletta (2 Michelin Stars)	€€€€
Under Grain — Valletta (1 Michelin Star)	€€€€
Palazzo Preca — Valletta	€€€
The Golden Fork — Rabat	€€€
De Mondion — Mdina (1 Michelin Star)	€€€€
Marea — Kalkara	€€€
Rosamì — St Julian's (1 Michelin Star)	€€€€
Tartarun — Marsaxlokk	€€€
Bahia — Ħal Balzan	€€€
Rebekah's Restaurant — Mellieha	€€€
Tmun — Mgarr, Gozo	€€€
Level Nine at The Grand — Ghajnsielem, Gozo	€€€

Bars, Wine Bars & Pubs	
Restaurant	Price
The Pub — Valletta	€
Café Society — Valletta	€
Kamy Cocktail Bar — Valletta	€€
Wild Honey Beer House — Valletta	€
The Little RED Door — Valletta	€€
Gugar Hangout & Bar — Valletta	€
Kingsway — Valletta	€€
The Bridge Bar — Valletta	€
Hole in the Wall Bar & Café — Sliema	€
Trabuxu Wine Bar — Valletta	€€
Yard 32 Gin & Tapas Bar — Valletta	€€
The Thirsty Barber — St Julian's	€€

Mediterranean Cuisine	
Restaurant	Price
Rampila — Valletta	€€€
The Harbour Club — Valletta	€€€
Rubino — Valletta	€€€
Leglign — Valletta	€€€
Galea's Kitchen — Valletta	€€
one80 — Mellieha	€€€

Vegetarian/Vegan-Friendly Options	
Restaurant	Price
Balance Bowl — Gżira	€€
Soul Food — Valletta	€€
Gugar Hangout & Bar — Valletta	€
Anurakti — St Paul's Bay	€€
Coogi's Restaurant — Mdina	€€
The Grassy Hopper — Gżira	€€

Gluten-Free Options	
Restaurant	Price
TRiBE — Valletta	€€
Sapori Café — Birkirkara and Qawra	€€
Aaron's Kitchen — Valletta	€€
Bistro 516 — Valletta Waterfront	€€
Anurakti — St Paul's Bay	€€
Giuseppi's Bar & Bistro — Naxxar	€€€

Restaurant opening hours, menus and prices may change. Advance reservations are recommended, particularly for fine-dining restaurants and larger groups.

Guests with food allergies, coeliac disease or other dietary requirements should contact the restaurant directly before visiting. A restaurant offering gluten-free dishes may not necessarily provide a fully gluten-free environment or protection against cross-contamination.