

MALTESE CITIES 1797-1997 ISSUE
Città Hompesch, Città Ferdinand, Città Beland
By J. Farrugia

Date of Issue	20.02.97
Values	6c, 16c, 26c
Stamp Size	31mmx44mm
Designer	Richard J. Caruana
Printers	Printex Limited
Process	Lithography
Perforation	14x13.9
Watermark	Maltese Crosses Upright
Paper	Chalk Surfaced
Gum	P.V.A.

Colours

This issue was printed in the four-colour process using the standard CMYK (Cyan-Magenta-Yellow-Black) process colours. The progressive sheets were printed in the following order: Black-Cyan-Magenta-Yellow.

Colour Checks in the form of coloured discs 3mm in diameter were printed in four different places on the margins of each Pane, of each value. These are seen next to the first and last stamps, of the top and bottom rows. The colours from top to bottom correspond to the colours used for Pane numbers, from left to right, in all positions.

Cumulative totals of progressive columns of stamps are seen in bottom margin only, printed in black, in all Panes, of all values.

The Printed Sheet of each value consisted of two Panes, A and B. Each Pane has fifty stamps made up of five rows of ten stamps. All values are of the vertical format.

Perforation of Margins

The left hand margins of Panes A and B are imperforate. The other three margins of these same panes are all perforated, in all values. Other printing marks were seen at the top right hand corner of Panes A and at the bottom right hand corner of Panes B, of all values. Another printing mark can be seen in the left and right hand margins, of each Pane A and B, of all values. This consists of a circle, 1cm in diameter, next to the first and last stamps of the middle row. Printed in this circle are the "postal horn" and the words "Posta Ltd. Malta".

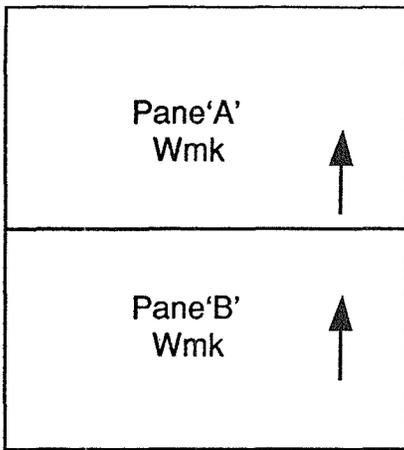
Plate/Pane Numbes

These like the colour checks were printed in four different positions on the margins of each Pane, of each value. They are seen above the first and last stamps of the top row and also below the first and last stamps of the bottom row.

6c = 1Ax4, 1Bx4

16c = 1Ax4, 1Bx4

26c = 1Ax4, 1Bx4



From a study of details given, the Printed sheet of each value, before cutting into Panes, would look as shown in the figure. Looking at the Printed Sheet as shown, stamps of all values would be seen the right way up, hence why the watermark is upright in all values. Perforator ran from left to right.

Imprint Blocks

The Imprint "Printex Limited Malta" is seen under the 5th and 6th stamps of the bottom row, in each Pane, of all values, printed in black. An Imprint Block of four will contain only the Imprint.

A special hand-postmark was used for cancellation on the first day of issue. It might be of interest to note here, that besides the GPO in Valletta, each BPO used similar special hand-postmarks on the first day of issue, with the name of each place included in the postmark.

The three cities being commemorated in this issue are Zabbar (6c), Siggiewi (16c) and Zejtun (26c). Many philatelists took the trouble to go to Zabbar to have the 6c cancelled at the Zabbar BPO. They did the same with the 26c stamp at the Zejtun BPO, but were very disappointed when they tried to cancel the 16c stamp commemorating Siggiewi.

In Siggiewi there is only a Sub-Post Office and at the moment, Sub-Post Offices are not supplied with a first day of issue cancellor. So all those who went to Siggiewi could only have their stamps cancelled by a truly worn-out normal hand date-stamp. This set will remain on sale up to 18th february, 1998, unless stocks are previously exhausted.

Sales amounted to Lm28,151 on the first day of issue.

Souvenir Sheet

A Souvenir Sheet was also issued on the 20th February 1997. The three values of this set are printed in this Souvenir Sheet, having the same perforation but the watermark being Maltese Crosses sideways, instead of Maltese Crosses upright, as in the normal Panes. Thus individual stamps of any value can be distinguished whether they formed part of a Souvenir Sheet or a normal Pane, by means of the direction of the watermark.

The printing of the progressive sheets of the Souvenir Sheets are in the same order as those of the normal Panes. The Printed Sheet of the Souvenir Sheets, consisted of twelve Souvenir Sheets, made up of four rows of three Souvenir Sheets.