

## More Information



The name 'Mellieħa' is said to have originated from the Greek word 'Melea' 'honey' since Mellieħa was, and still is, an important producer of one of the best honeys of Malta. Another theory holds that 'Mellieħa' is a derivative of the word 'Melħ' – Maltese for 'salt' since there were many salt pans on its rocky coast. The old motto for Mellieħa was "ex mele et sale nomen meum" – from honey and salt I take my name.

- Mellieħa Bay was the place where the Viceroy of Sicily landed in Malta with 8000 troops to stop the advance of the Turkish army at the end of the Great Siege of 1565.
- Mellieħa Bay was also the place chosen by Napoleon to start the invasion of Malta in 1798.
- The surroundings of Mellieħa, around the coast, were the place, where the British soldiers were stationed in military tents before they embarked for the invasion of Sicily and Southern Italy in World War II.
- Along the coastline of Mellieħa there are various towers, some of which are partly demolished. These were built by the Knights of Malta to form part of the fortifications of Malta and to serve as signal stations.
- Bonfire signals were exchanged from one tower to the other, alerting enemy approach. These signals were also exchanged even with the towers of Comino and Gozo. The Red Tower fortress above Mellieħa Bay, served this purpose as well. This same tower was also used as a Signal Station during World War II.
- Beside the old mill in Mellieħa, lies an old pillar which used to bear a cross upon it, better known as the pilgrim's cross. This used to signal the vicinity of the Sanctuary to pilgrims who used to walk from all over Malta to pay homage and pray to the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mellieħa.

*Top Left: One of the signal towers built by the Knights.  
Top Right: The pilgrim's cross, (Photos by Michael Cauchi)  
Bottom Photo: A beachpost built in world war II  
(Photo by Malcolm Grima)*