Release the Knight within you...

Have you ever dreamt of fighting your way through a battle upon your trusty steed? Dream no longer, Heritage Malta is now providing you with the tools to make your very own gear in order to become a knight in shining armour just like the Knights of the Order of St John.

Knights were obliged to provide their own suit of armour when they joined the Order of St John

Why did knights have to wear armour?
Armour protected the knight against the weapons he faced when fighting. Swords and pole arms (such as lances and halberds) could not penetrate armour. It could also withstand the bullets fired by the firearms of the time. The armour stopped being used when firearms became more powerful and bullets fired from the new weaponry could penetrate through the armour.

An impressive Armoury
Considered to be one of the biggest collections of early modern weaponry and armour in the world, the Palace Armoury contained enough weaponry for thousands of soldiers. The long list of swords, pikes, bows, firearms, bayonets, armour and cannons includes several unique pieces. At the Palace Armoury one can find ceremonial and intricately decorated suits of armour and shields commissioned by the leaders of the Order.

The designs for the armour which you will be making are based on pieces found at the Palace Armoury from armour which was worn by Knights of the Order of St John!

Winning entries will feature in a temporary exhibition, at MUŻA once the museum re-opens!
Create a Cuirass!

What is a **cuirass**, you might ask? A cuirass is a suit of armour made of a breast plate and a back plate attached together. It might also include additional components (parts).

Apart from using firearms, such as muskets and cannon to attack the enemy, the Knights of the Order of St John were also equipped with **swords**. In the Palace Armoury you can see various types of swords such as rapiers, schiavona and even Turkish scimitars.

Heritage Malta is giving you the opportunity to make your very own sword. The type of sword you will make can be described as an **estoc**, like rapier.

When fighting against the enemy you need to defend yourself against their swords and for this you need a **shield**. You can make your very own shield or **targe**. This is what the Knights of St John would have used during the Great Siege when fighting face to face with the enemy.

Simply select and download from the images provided. The breast plate and back plate will make your **cuirass**. Print the images and attach or glue them onto cardboard so as to make them more durable. Cut out the shapes and attach the breast plate to the back plate from the shoulders and sides with a string threaded through holes punched on both pieces. The **pauldrons** need to be attached to the top part of your newly formed cuirass as they are meant to protect your shoulders. Arm yourself with the **sword** and choose a **shield**. Decorate your armour. You are now ready to face your opponent.
Breast Plate

Back Plate

Shield 1

Shield 2

Shield 3

Pauldron 1

Pauldron 2

Sword

Ready to print pdf files are being provided separately