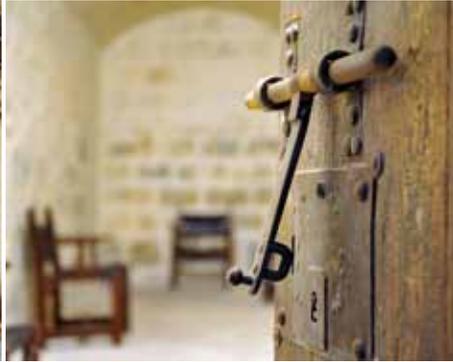




In 1905, the Palace served as a laboratory by Sir Temi Zammit. In this laboratory he discovered the micro organism known as Brucellosis, often referred to as Maltese Fever. In a ground breaking scientific discovery, Sir Zammit found out that the micro organism was present in fresh goat's milk. This discovery indicated the need to pasteurise milk before consumption.

The public may explore the laboratory and various medical apparatus used at the time, which are conserved in their original state. Visits can be set up upon request.





## THE ARCHITECTURE OF PALAZZO CASTELLANIA

Along Merchants Street, the majestic Baroque Castellania Palace presents an imposing façade which contrasts with the surrounding buildings.

The façade is characterized by Grand Master Pinto's coat of arms; the Crescent. Two detailed marble figures representing Justice and Truth dominate the centre piece of the façade.



## HISTORICAL OUTLINE

Castellania means the Civil and Criminal Tribunal of the Order.

The first Castellania was built in Birgu in 1530 by the Order. The Inquisitor's Palace now stands on the site where the Castellania was in Birgu. During Grandmaster La Cassiere's reign (1572-1581) a new Castellania was built in Valletta. However the present Castellania Palace on Merchants street in Valetta was erected during Grandmaster Pinto's reign (1741-1773). Construction works started in 1757 on plans of architect Francesco Zerafa. Unfortunately Zerafa died before it was completed. Works continued under architect Giuseppe Bonnici and were finished by 1760.

Throughout the British rule, in 1840 the Castellania Palace was used less as law courts, mainly due to restricted dimensions of the spaces within the building. The law courts were gradually transferred to Auberge d'Auvergene and by 1853 the Palace was abandoned. It lay empty until 1895. In 1895, the Public Health Department was set up and the Castellania became the head office of the department.

At present this historical palace on Merchants street accommodates the head office of the Ministry for Health, the Elderly and Community Care.

The interior of the Palace also exhibits an elegant Baroque style. A wide marbled flight of stairs leads to the first floor where the original audience hall of the tribunal stands, flanked by an series of rooms which must have hosted the activity arising around the main tribunal hall.

Below the ground floor there was once a chapel that was used during the times when the palace served as law courts. Prisoners spent the rest of their days before their execution, in prison cells by the chapel. Some of these cells were recently restored to their original condition and made accessible to the public upon request. The chapel remained in use until 1888.