

Rose's handcrafted, flavoured chocolates, sold in the factories tourist-gift shop. You can find and buy them anywhere around Gozo! My favourite: the sea-salted milk chocolate!



I went to Savina with plans for meeting Rose ("the chocolate lady") for an hour-long interview. I ended up spending a whole day with her as she walked me through the entire process of tempering and molding chocolate.



"You close your eyes. You take a deep breath as you swallow a bite. You feel an explosion of sweetness on your tongue...It starts to melt. And there's not a single nerve in your body that doesn't know the feeling or the taste. You are so used to it, that its magic instantly takes you back to your childhood when you begged your mother to buy you some more... The happy hormone is released in your body. There is no other place you'd rather be right now. You start to feel at peace with your inner self! You may even wonder how many incredible treasures this planet can hold... Other than this, other than the close-to-your-heart chocolate."

Growing up, this was my belief about "sweets and chocolate". During my first fieldwork research, I discovered the essence of culture and social diversity. I spent three incredible weeks in the melting midsummer heat of Gozo, hunting down stories and putting my anthropological knowledge into practice. I've encountered life-changing experiences and dealt with subtle mind-bugging frustrations. I thought about my childhood, subconsciously figuring out why I enjoy my independent research topic so much. I found myself gravitating between recurring themes such as "secrets of the island", carob pods, stories about the Knights of Malta, well-kept family traditions, rigorous routines, gossip within small cliques, and the unshaken reputation that the chocolatiers need to preserve. One thing I noticed is that in Gozo everybody knows everybody. Therefore, individual businessmen like the chocolatiers need to be perfectionists when it comes to their products. After looking into people's relationship with chocolate, my next research will be regarding historical, political and economic factors that had an impact on Gozo's culture.

I designed this poster in scope of bringing together certain chocolate-related symbols from around the island: Carob pods, Savina's logo, Rose's tempering process, pre-cleaned molds, Portelli's family tradition and various chocolate cakes.



The squad and I working a full day at Victor's "Dream of Horses Farm", while learning about human-animal interactions. Overcoming our fears and approaching horses in a calming and confident way.



Throughout this research, the methodologies I used include taking formal and informal interviews, along with non-participant and participant observation (Portelli's confectionery; Savina's Chocolate Factory). This allowed me to create strong connections with my informants. I kept my notes, mind-maps and drawings in two notebooks, and collected receipts, business cards and postcards from the confectionaries I visited. At the end of each day, I would reflect on the newly gathered information using comparative methods and intersubjectivity to draw my conclusions. The amount of chocolate I ate in Malta still amazes me! I think dearly of Gozo, often wondering how many people come in and out of apartment 42 with new stories and ambitious plans for the future!

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Gozo, Xlendi



Gozo's Chocolatiers