

CONFRÉRIE DE LA CHAÎNE DES RÔTISSEURS

Bailliage National de Malte

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday 15th April 2026 At Torri Ta Lanzun, Mensija, San Gwann

Present:

Bailli Délégué	Officier Commandeur	Dr. Joseph Xuereb
Chancelier	Maitre Hotelier Honoraire	Alain Rigodin
Argentier	Officier Commandeur	Charles Gatt
Conseiller Gastronomique	Officier Commandeur	Bernd Ritschel
Charge de Presse	Commandeur	Dr. Mark Bailey
Echanson	Officier	Dr. Ramiro Cali-Corleo
Argentier Designate	Chevalier	Ruben Galea

AGM started at 19:15

36 members of the Bailliage attending.

Apologies for absence were received from 34 members:

As per the attendance record.

Minutes of the previous AGM held on the 7th April 2025.

Were taken as read and approved.

Acceptance of Minutes: Proposer – Anna Ritschel ; Seconder – Maureen Gatt

Bailli Délégué's Address

Good evening Confreres, Consoeurs

Welcome to this year's annual general meeting, where we will take a look at our performance and happenings over 2025.

Thank you for being here, representing an absolute majority of the membership, which is very encouraging. It shows you have the Bailliage very much at heart. At the end of the year, we had what can be called a seismic shift in the composition of our board. Having served the Bailliage in the dual role of Chancelier and Argentier since our reorganisation in 2004, Charles decided it was time to step down. Over the last year and a half or so, he has slowly handed over the reins to Alain for the post of Chancelier and Ruben for the post of Argentier.

We also had the resignation of Marc Besancon as Conseillier Culinaire. Marc has, however, agreed to keep lending a hand until a replacement is found, not an easy task given that this post can only be held by a qualified chef.

This brings me to some comments on the flux in our membership. We had some inevitable resignations, due to members moving abroad, for personal reasons or, unfortunately, due to illness. This, however, has been balanced by an influx of several, at the risk of sounding ageist, younger members, whose enthusiasm from the very beginning is supremely encouraging.

Alain and Iro will be giving us exact figures regarding our membership including OMGD, however the imbalance between professionals and non-professionals remains striking - it is a far cry from the original membership in the 80s when the distribution was practically 50/50. I assure you our efforts to recruit professional members are ongoing and we strive to offer them

and their respective establishments good and valid reasons for wanting to join. With your help we may be able to recruit some more Maitre Restaurateurs and only then will we be able to make membership of the Bailliage a condition for annual events at their respective establishments.

This, however, will not stop us from seeking out new and special venues in which to hold different events for our collective benefit - and to introduce some novelty into our calendar. A few establishments have already been identified, and some have already been contacted with initial meetings held. Having said that, we are very grateful to our current professional members for the help and the spirit in which they conduct our events.

International presence: Even though it was held just before our AGM of last year, our international Chapitre 2025 was a big success. Might it be an idea to hold it biannually instead of every three years? I invite your comments on this. The Chapitre gives us the opportunity to host and meet members from abroad, forge contacts and perhaps spur us to join events overseas

In fact, our contacts with international members are not confined to our home turf. Last May a small group experienced a wonderful week's cruise on the Duoro river from Porto in Portugal to Salamanca in Spain. The cruise line is itself affiliated to the Chaîne des Rotisseurs but I'll extend it no free publicity here - other than to say it was organised by our own Louise - thank you Louise. I have to say it was most enjoyable.

In October, I was honoured to be appointed by the Conseil Magistral as inducting officer for the international Grand Chapitre in Italy, in Gubbio to be exact. The Italian Chapitre is always a large gathering and quite apart from the first-time jitters for me, it was a flawlessly organised and impeccable event.

This June Elsie and I will attend the Grand Chapitre in Aix en Provence in France. I will also be attending the AGM of the Conseil Magistral I'm sure many of you have been to occasions like this before, but I would encourage those who haven't to try it out. It's infectious! If and when you do, please write a short report and include some photos for our Charge de Presse, Mark, to publish on our website

Another opportunity for us to interact with the Intl scene is World Chaîne Day Last year we did not hold a specific event to celebrate WCD but we did take a photo at the AGM which was published on the international website. In 2025, "Tastes of the World" was introduced as the annual theme for World Chaîne Day (WCD). This broad and inclusive concept reflects the truly global nature of our organisation, offering Bailliages and members the freedom to interpret it in diverse and creative ways.

It is a theme that celebrates both our shared identity and our rich cultural variety. In the words of the Committee Chair, Ari-Pekka Parviainen: While the ways in which we celebrate and share our experiences continue to evolve, one thing remains clear: the popularity of World Chaîne Day is growing year by year "

In fact, more than 9,000 WCD pins have been requested - an impressive testament to the enthusiasm and commitment of our members worldwide. I have been informed by our Chancelier that these pins have not arrived for distribution tonight and might not even be delivered on time though - which would be a real pity. Once again, the "Social Media Wall" will be available throughout the weekend. A link to access this feature will be provided approximately one week in advance. The Wall remains an important tool, particularly for those who do not actively use social media. It provides an accessible and engaging way to follow celebrations and activities taking place around the world in real time. This year's official hashtags are #chainedayand #worldchaineday. World Chaîne Day also our opportunity to contribute to the international Chaîne charity, the ACCR.

All donations would be very welcome, and you can do so online. Meanwhile, we also went ahead our annual contribution of €600 to the commandery in appreciation of their sterling work and for allowing us to use this historic place Media exposure. We keep our website constantly updated for the benefit of both our members as well as international members who might be looking to coming to Malta. This is one way with which we can reciprocate, albeit modestly, our professional members' enthusiastic support.

Our contributions are featured in the International Chaine website as well as le Revue Internationale of the Chaine online.

Vive La Chaine!

Dr. Joseph Xuereb
Bailli Délégué de Malte

Chancelier's Report

Good evening Consoeurs and Confreres.

I will begin by saying that 2025 was a very active year for the bailliage here in Malta, and even though, I did provide some support and started to get much more involved including with the handover process, much credit should go to Charles Gatt for leading preparation for dinners, admitting new members and of course for the very successful planning of the Grand Chapitre held in March.

Since taking on the role of Chancelier, officially from this 1st of January, I can tell you that the Chaine's activities, with the regular day-to-day operation, are representing quite a bit of daily work.

Therefore, I am glad that the Chancelier and Argentier roles and duties, which have been combined until now, and which is exceptional in the Chaine, are now again divided, segregated, with the role and duties of Argentier taken over by the very capable Ruben Galea, effective from the end of the AGM.

Let me now talk about membership: by year-end 2025, we had a total of 63 members, including 8 "Professionals" and 18 OMGD members.

Last year, we lost 3 members, including 1 professional member.

The good news is that we had a strong first quarter in 2026 and already welcomed 10 new non-professional members into our bailliage, bringing the total to 70 members, year to date. Our Echanson will talk about OMGD.

New members, together with a few other members who missed the Grand Chapitre last year, will be inducted during the next Chapitre, which will probably be held sometime in 2027.

The Grand Chapitre held last year, from the 20th to 23rd March, was very successful, including the welcome dinner at the Excelsior Hotel (39 diners) and the induction ceremony and gala dinner at the Phoenicia Hotel (83 diners).

During the induction ceremony, there were a total of 26 promotions and awards, 11 new members inducted, and 5 new OMGD members.

Last year, beside OMGD events and the Grand Chapitre, we had 4 official luncheons and dinners patronising: Xara Lodge (35), Tmun (39), Ta Frenc (52) and the Patronal dinner at the Marriott Hotel (61) for an average attendance of 46 diners.

Comments and feedback received after each event, both positive and negative, are summarized and reviewed during our board meetings. The feedback is then communicated to the venue, which is welcomed and helps both parties to be better prepared when planning future events.

Our choice of venues is an ongoing process, and this year, we aim to take a bit more risks and work with new venues, less from hotels and more from free-standing restaurants, like we did earlier this year with Tartarun.

Developing the yearly Calendar of Events is challenging and can be frustrating as it usually requires a few visits to venues, defining acceptable dates, and meeting budget expectations. With, of course, a strong emphasize on the reputation for quality, available capacity, exclusivity, previous experience and feedback from members.

To finish, I would like to express my sincere appreciation and thank you.

Thank you to you all, members, for your great support, participation and belief in what we do. I look forward to working alongside you in the months and hopefully years ahead, helping to carry forward the spirit of the Chaîne and of the Bailliage de Malte, in particular.

A very big thank you to my fellow board members for keeping our bailliage running smoothly, investing quite a bit of time and effort, beside their personal daily life.

Thank You all for your time and Vive La Chaîne !

Alain Rigodin
Chancelier de Malte

Conseiller Culinaire's Report

Good Evening

Unfortunately, this year like last year I missed a few dinners due to travelling or other reasons, but my friends from the Board kept me updated with their comments of the dinners I could not attend.

As always, the Chefs are trying their best to be creative and showing us their culinary expertise for our dinners. It always starts with some very tasty and well presented canapés. The starters are always very interesting. It is one course when one wants to be very imaginative and artistic, with a combination of different tastes colours and textures.

Pasta dishes are always popular for our menus, and we had some good pasta dishes. Like the “Ravioli Cacio e Pepe” at the Xara Lodge. The “Langoustine Cappelletti” at Tmun. The “Rabbit Ravioli” at Ta French and the “Lobster Ravioli” at Tartarun.

For main course Beef seemed to be the favourite for the Chefs this year. Like Beef Fillet, Beef Short Rib, Sirloin and Tournedos Rossini. We also had a different slow cooked Pork Loin. All those main dishes came with different accompaniments to compliment the dish, like Croquettes, Vegetables and Potatoes cooked with different and original techniques. Of course the Sauce is very important for those main dishes.

And another very important part of the menu is the Dessert. The taste, the different textures and the originality in the artistic presentation are the best way to finish a nice dinner, thanks to the talent of the pastry chefs.

We also had some interesting cheese courses. On the whole, I think it has been another successful and interesting year for us.

As the Conseiller Culinaire I wish to thank all the Chefs, Pastry Chefs and their Brigade for trying their best to make us enjoy our gatherings.

Thank you. And just a reminder, you can always refresh your memory of all the dishes by visiting our website where you will find all the comments and the photos of all the plates.

Marc Besancon
Conseiller Culinaire de Malte

Note: the report was read by the Conseiller Gastronomique, Bernd Ritschel.

Echanson's OMGD Report

Ordre Mondial des Gourmets Dégustateurs – Malta report for 2025

Last year we organised two OMGD events.

The first was a Piemonte Wines and fine food experience with a tutored tasting of some of the best wines this Italian region offers and the second was a Craft Beer and Paired Food experience where each of the limited production beers tasted was paired with a particular dish.

The wine tasting was held at Kontrada Wines & Fine Foods in Balzan on the 3rd May 2025. This tasting was guided by William Rizzo, one of Malta's leading qualified wine experts and a Master of Wine candidate and was attended by 24 OMGD members and candidates.

The wines featured ranged from a Dolcetto ' Alba to a single vineyard Barolo. Feedback after the event was invariably positive and encouraging.

The beer event was held at The Chapels Gastropub at the Farsons Brewhouse in Mriehel on the 20th June 2025. The Executive chef of the gastropub was Jan Besancon, our Marc's son, who's dishes, made using as ingredients, the same beers served to the diners, were both interesting and tasty.

This event was attended by 22 OMGD and Bailliage members, the ideal number for such focused special events, and although there were some hiccups, namely that it was quite noisy, two of the beers served were changed on us without notice and were all served at once so got warm by the end of the meal, all the diners considered it an enjoyable experience.

My duties as Echanson also include selecting or vetting the wines for our Bailliage events and in 2025 we enjoyed less common wines such as Peter Lehmann's Riesling 2017, Louis Latour's Aloxe Corton 2022, Joubert Tradauw Syrah 2016, Chateau Carteau Cotes Dugay 2003 (complements of ta Frenc) Umani Ronchi Plenio 2002 and Prats & Symington's Post Scriptum 2022

On a final note, the Grand Chapitre and the Patronal dinners permitted the use and highlighting of Maltese wines this time from Marsovin, Camilleri and Meridiana.

Dr. Ramiro Cali-Corleo
Echanson de Malte

Charge de Presse's Report

Good evening Consœurs and Confrères,

Once again, we gather for our AGM—our annual reminder that another year has passed rather quickly, whether we like it or not.

As usual, when preparing this talk, I asked myself the usual question: what is new? And, much like last year, the honest answer is both “not very much”... and “quite a lot.” From my point of view, as CDP, not much, but from the point of view of the Chaîne in general, quite a lot. For example, we have a new Chancelier, a new Argentier and quite a number of new members.

From a practical point of view, my role remains largely unchanged. Our events continue to be recorded—in photographs and in words—and preserved on the website for those who wish to revisit them. Whether to relive an enjoyable evening, to settle a quiet debate about which wine was served with the duck three dinners ago, or—as in Louise’s case—to check what she wore to past events.

Whether the articles are widely read is something I have chosen not to investigate too closely, for the sake of my morale. But I like to think they are there when needed, quietly doing their job.

Looking at the website in a different light, I realised that we are also creating a kind of archive. Not just of menus and wines, but of moments—of gatherings, conversations, and our shared enthusiasm for gastronomy.

Over time, these articles have begun to tell a story—one that reflects not only the quality of what we eat and drink, but also the character of the society itself. In a world that often feels uncertain or fast-moving, it is a comfort to have occasions such as these, where the pleasures remain simple: good food, good wine, and good company, and the articles can help us relive these moments.

I would also like to warmly welcome our newer members. You bring fresh energy to the society, and fresh faces—and you will, of course, be photographed... repeatedly—and become part of our record, just like the rest of us. Hopefully, you will all be able to read the articles 10 years from now, look at the photos and be able to tell yourselves, “Those were good times” - along with “how young I was”, of course.

Thank You

Dr Mark Bailey
Charge de Presse de Malte

Argentier`s Report for the Bailliage Accounts to the end of December 2025

Good Evening Confreres and Consœurs,

Having retired from being the Argentier de Malte, a role I held for over 20 years, it was agreed by the Board that I present at this meeting the audited accounts for year ending December 2025 as I have dealt with the bailliage financial affairs for that year. It will be my last presentation as our newly assigned Argentier is now Chevalier Ruben Galea. I have no doubt that Ruben, being a professional accountant and a financial wizard, will do things somewhat differently from me.

The details of accounts and associated bookkeeping and the full auditor`s report are available for members to peruse if they so wish. The salient figures of the accounts are contained in the handout given to all members present.

Accountant Donald Sant has audited the accounts for the second year and we are very pleased and grateful that he has donated his fee to the bailliage. The auditor`s report has been unanimously approved by the Board of Administration.

Membership fees

There has been a significant difference between in and out fees for the year and that was due to gaining new members and a local subscription increase.

Dinners

During the year we held four dinners amicaux, two Grand Chapitre dinners and two OMGD dinners.

The income from the dinners, excluding the Chapitre dinners, exceeded the cost by approximately 9% percent. This means that in 2025 we had a better dinner attendance and we either broke even or made some gain on each dinner, whereas in the previous year we subsidized most of the dinners.

Grand Chapitre Dinners

The income from the Chapitre Welcome and Gala dinners was 8% less than the expenditure. That was mainly due to the Phoenicia Hotel charging a considerable fee for the use of the Grand Ballroom, a charge that we have not previously experienced for our events. However, if we include the payments made in advance for these dinners in 2024 then there will be an overall gain of 6%.

Grand Chapitre Other Events

The events were mainly the four tours which were organised for overseas visitors as part of the Grand Chapitre programme. A gain of 3.6% of income over expenditure was made on these tours. The expenses included the hotel accommodation for the Inducting Officer (which the bailliage is responsible for), tour director fees, entrance tickets, lunches, transport, photographer, and special commemorative items for members and guests.

OMGD Dinners

Two self-supporting dinners were held during the year with respectively 24 and 22 in attendance.

Donations

A donation is shown in the Income section which is then taken away in the Expenditure. This means that our auditor Chevalier Donald Sant, as in the previous year, did not charge for his work and donated the fees he normally charges to the bailliage. We are very grateful for the kind gesture. Other donations given by the bailliage were €500 to the Order of Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem for their Philanthropic Fund and €500 to Puttinu Cares. Our aim is to donate to charity about €1,000 a year. Members are encouraged to nominate charities worthy of a donation.

Other Expenditure

These expenses comprise working sessions, entertaining the visiting officiating officer for the Chapitre and the Annual General meeting and ban charges, and general expenses, printing, postage, stationery expenses.

Finance Income

For a number of years, we invested in a Company Bond which gives us a yearly income.

Taxation

In view that the income is derived for more than 50% from its members, the bailliage is exempt from taxation.

Accumulated Fund

The Accumulated Fund for the year ending December 2024 gave us a healthy increase of 14% over the previous year.

The report and accounts were unanimously approved by the members with a show of hands.

Reappointment for 2026 of Auditor Mr. Donald Sant.

Approval was unanimously given by a show of hands from the members.

Charles Gatt

Argentier de Malte

Bailli Délégué's Closing Words

Before I close this meeting, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to the members of your Board who are tireless in their efforts and extremely generous with their time to make all of this happen and I thank you for supporting your Bailliage in the very enthusiastic way that you do.

Alain, our Chancelier has taken to his new role like a fish to water - his background and experience in both the hospitality industry as well as the Chaine des Rotisseurs in particular have undoubtedly contributed to the smooth transition of this important post.

Iro, our Echanson, for his wine expertise and management of the OMGD, and securing the best price /quality ratios for our wines, Bernd, our Conseiller Gastronomique for his insightful contribution and for taking care of our new merchandise and souvenirs, Mark, our Charge de Presse for keeping our website up to date. Do visit the site regularly to keep abreast of our events and to view the uploaded photos. You can also contribute reports of anything you deem interesting including overseas visits for uploading to the site, Ruben, for accepting to join the Board and for shadowing Charles until tonight, when he officially takes over as Argentier, Marc, our outgoing Conseil Culinaire for all the years of service

Finally, i'd like to express my infinite gratitude to Charles. His contribution as both Chancelier and Argentier to the Board and the Bailliage needs no re- affirmation. Thank you also to our dear Maureen who, with Charles hosted our Board meetings for all this time.

I would like to ask you to please stand and raise a toast Marc and Charles Thank you for your attention.

I hope 2026 will see us build on the success of the previous years.

Vive La Chaine!

Dr. Joseph Xuereb

Bailli Délégué de Malte

AGM ended at 19:55