

# Spring Tree Facts and Arts

from

## Malta

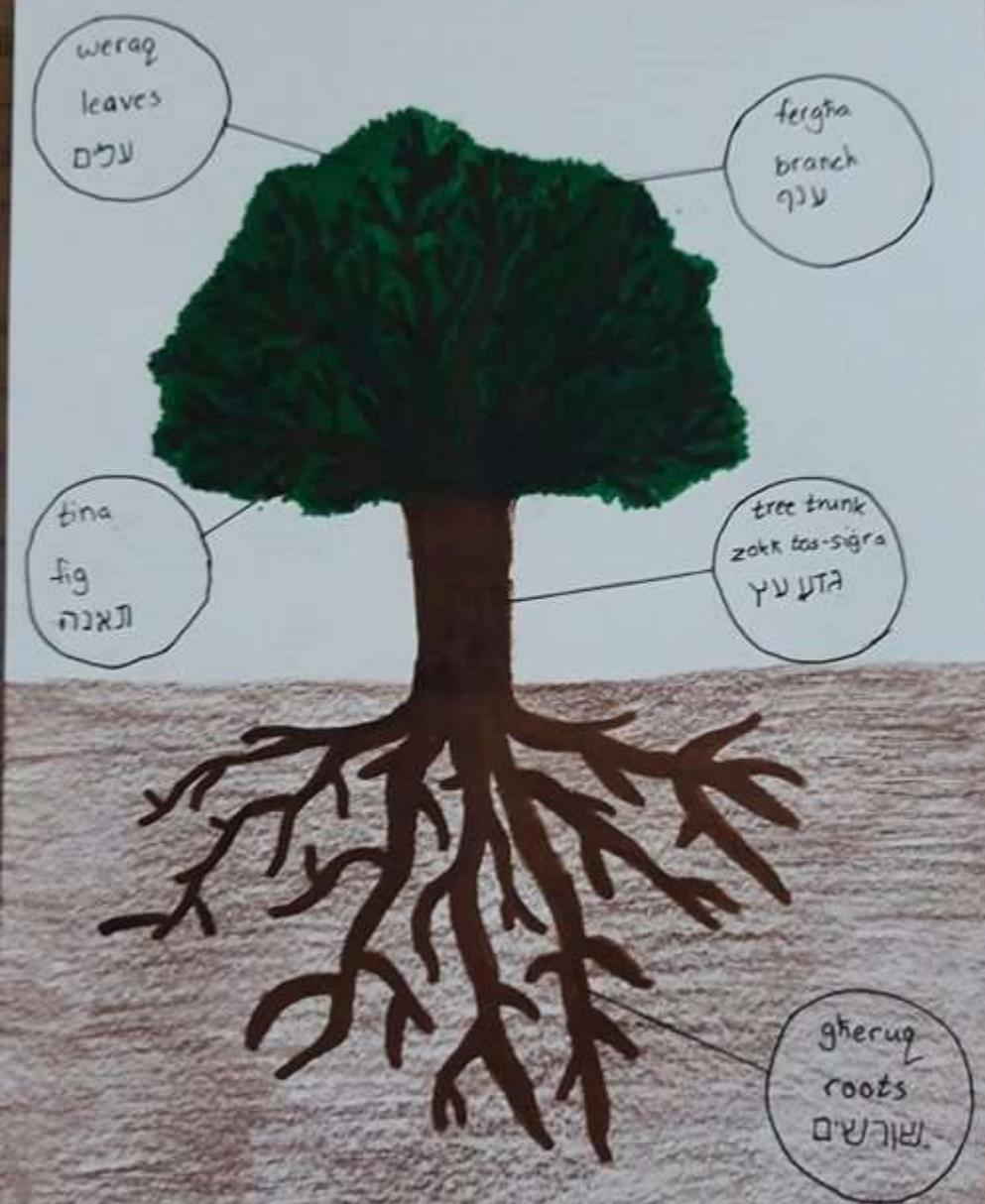


During the spring observation campaign in spring 2020, schools in Malta gathered many interesting facts about a fig tree.

In this presentation you can see some of them and learn about the history, meaning and use of the fruit of this ancient tree or enjoy sweets made from figs according to one of the student recipes.



Julian Saliba  
Gozo College Middle School  
GLOBE Program



# Julian Saliba, Gozo College Middle School

Julian prepared a Fig Tree poster with labels in different languages (Maltese, English and Hebrew).



## FIG AND APPLE PIE

### INGREDIENTS:

#### PASTRY:

- 4 Cups All-purpose Flour
- 2 Teaspoons Salt
- 1 Tablespoon Sugar
- 1 3/4 Cups Shortening
- 1/2 Cup Cold Water
- 1 Egg
- 1 Tablespoon White Vinegar



#### FOR BAKING:

- 4 Tablespoons Milk
- 4 Tablespoons Sugar

#### FILLING:

- 3 Cups Coarsely Chopped Figs (Cut Off Tough Tops And Bottoms First)
- 2 Large Granny Smith Apples, Peeled, Cored And Diced
- 1/2 Cup Chopped Walnuts
- 1/2 Cup Sugar
- 1 Teaspoon Cinnamon
- 1/4 Cup Marsala Wine (Sweet Version)

# Andrew Zerafa, Gozo College Middle School

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. **To make the pastry**, mix together the flour, salt and sugar.
2. Cut the shortening up into pieces and use a pastry cutter to work the shortening into the flour until the mixture is in pea sized pieces.
3. Mix together the water, egg, and vinegar in a cup, then add the egg mixture into the flour and mix until it is just combined.
4. Form one half the pastry dough into a ball and wrap in plastic wrap.
5. Place in the refrigerator for one hour, and store the other half for future use in the freezer.
6. **For the filling**, place all of the filling ingredients into a heavy saucepan and cook over medium heat until the sugar melts and the figs begin to break down, then remove from the heat and cool.
7. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F.
8. Divide the dough in half and roll one half on a lightly floured surface until it is about 1/8 of an inch thick and will cover the bottom and sides of a 10 inch pie pan.
9. Fold the dough over your rolling pin and center it over the pie pan.
10. Gently press in to fit along the bottom and up the sides allowing excess to extend over the sides.
11. Pour the filling into the pie and smooth evenly.
12. Roll out the other half of the dough and center over the pie pan.
13. Gently crimp the edges with your fingers along the edges to seal and then use a sharp knife to cut off any excess dough.
14. Cut four vents into the pie and brush the top lightly with the milk.
15. Sprinkle the sugar over the milk while still damp.
16. Bake the pie for 1 to 1 1/4 hours until the crust is lightly browned and the filling is bubbly and thick. (If the crust browns too much while baking, gently cover with aluminum foil)
17. Cool 15 minutes before serving

# Eliza Stellini, Gozo College Middle School



Step 1: Chop 4 dried figs into small pieced.



Step 2: Pour 75ml hot coffee over the figs. Leave to soak for 30 mins.



Step 3: Heat the oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4.



Step 4: Use a food processor to make a paste with 75g of finely chopped walnuts and the coffee fig mixture.



Step 9: Add 2 tsp mixed spice.



Step 10: Add 200g very soft butter.



Step 11: Add 4 large eggs to the mixture.



Step 5: Add 225g of sugar to the paste.



Step 6: Then add 200g plain flour.



Step 7: Add 2 tsp baking powder.



Step 8: Add 2 tsp vanilla extract.



Step 12: Add 50g natural yoghurt.



Step 13: Blend all ingredients until well combined.

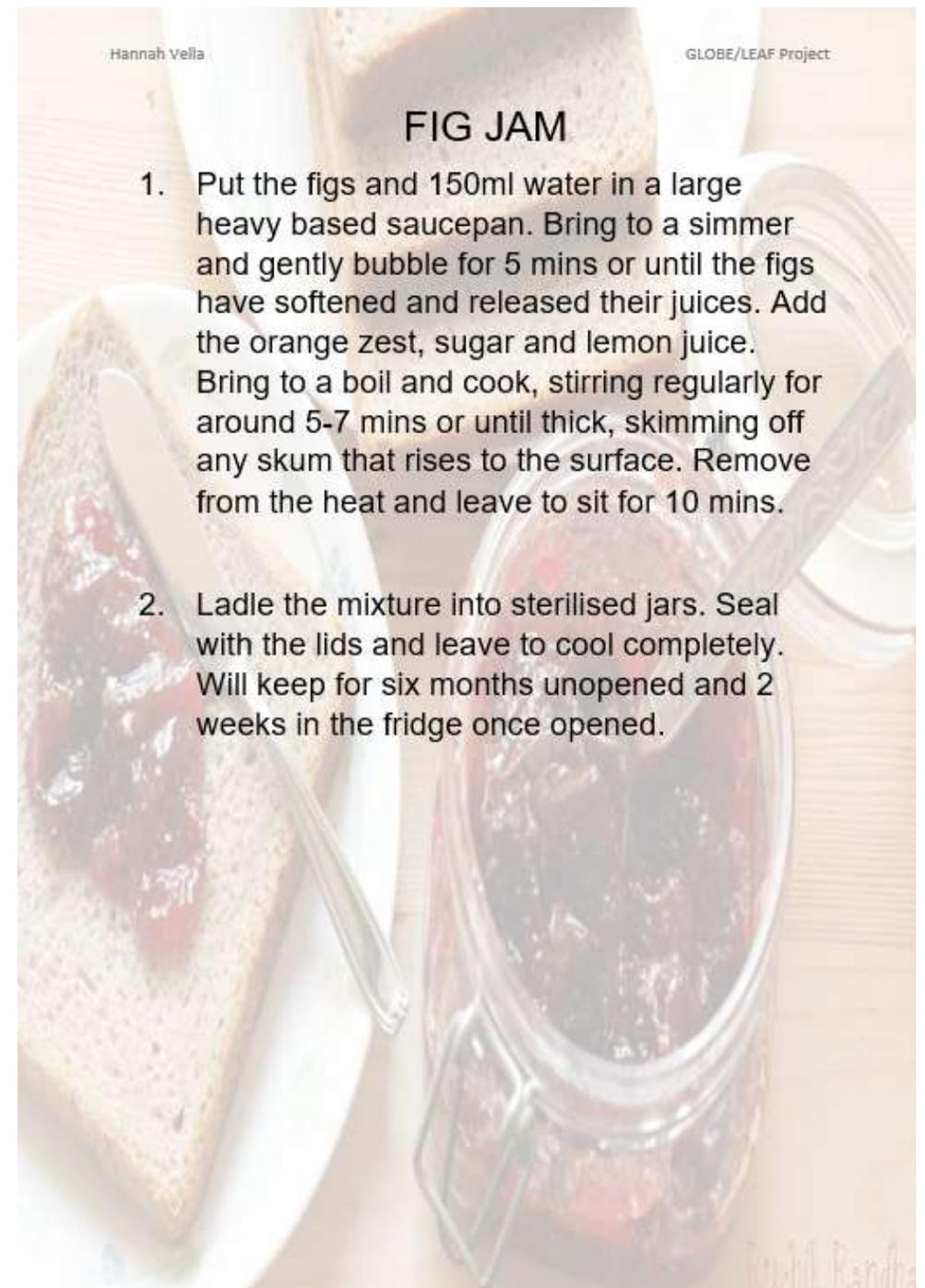


Step 14: Scrape the batter into a greased cake tin and bake for 20 mins.

# Hannah Vella, Gozo College Middle School

## Bresaola Wrapped Around Dried Figs

1. Marinate chopped figs in olive oil and lemon zest.
2. Put some of the marinated figs and some chopped parsley on the middle of a slice of bresaola and roll up and serve with some lettuce.



Mariah Borg, Gozo College Middle School



# Daniel Grech and Saviour Vella, Gozo College Middle School

The Fig Tree can grow to enormous sizes, up to 15 metres high, and can live to be a hundred years old. Its preferred climate is hot and quite dry. You won't be able to see the flowers, as common among other species. Pollination takes place in a very peculiar way, with some needing a specific wasp to pollinate.



The Fig is can be found in many types in the food industry. All the way through the year, you can find frozen and dried figs, and in some places in the world, jam and paste based on the fig is also available.

According to where you are in the world, figs are found in all shapes and sizes, and their colours vary from white, purple, and green.

Daniel Grech

## The Fig Tree

*Ficus carica*



### Did you know...?

The fig is known as the 'fruit of the gods'

The fig is a very weird fruit! Fig trees have onion like fruit hanging on them. They are a cluster of flowers turned outside in!

Fig pollination is fascinating! A female wasp has to enter an unripe, male fig (not the ones we eat!) and lays her eggs inside it! Without this wasp, we would not have the figs we eat!

They can be grown in pots

They can live up to 200 years

They love the direct sun

Fig trees take around 120 -150 days to grow

They survive in humid areas with low rainfall conditions

A fig ripens in July till August

Dried figs provide calcium and fibre

You can grow a fig tree from the same one

A fig tree can be up to 20ft-30ft tall

A fig tree can grow up to 10 ft wide

A fig tree is from the mulberry family

Fig trees were spread by people in the 1800s

Fossil records date figs back to between 9400BC to 9200BC



# Audrey Micallef, Gozo College Middle School

Audrey Micallef  
Year 7 Blue

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## The Fig



- Figs are harvested according to nature's clock, fully ripened and partially dried on the tree.
- Figs have more fibre than prunes and more potassium than bananas.
- Eating one half cup of figs has as much calcium as drinking one half cup of milk.
- Fig puree can be used to replace fat in baked goods, such as cakes.
- Figs naturally help hold moisture in baked goods, keeping them fresher.

Audrey Micallef  
Year 7 Blue

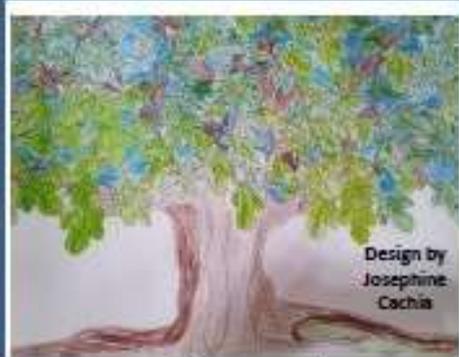
## The Fig Tree

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- The fig tree is a symbol of abundance, fertility and sweetness.
- The early Olympic athletes used figs as a training food. Figs were also presented as laurels to the winners, becoming the first Olympic 'medal'.
- In Roman times figs were considered to be restorative. They were believed to increase the strength of young people, to maintain the elderly in better health and to make them look younger with fewer wrinkles.
- Fig trees have no blossoms on their branches. The blossom is inside of the fruit. Many tiny flowers produce the crunchy little edible seeds that give figs their unique texture.
- Figs are self-fruitful so you only need one plant to produce fruit. Mature fig trees can be 4.5 to 9m tall.
- The fig tree's leaves are 12-25cm long and 10-18cm across and deeply lobed with three or five lobes.

# Gozo College, Rabat Primary School Bookmarks



## Is-Sigra tat-Tin Fig Tree Ficus Carica



### Maltese Fig Marmalade Jam

- 650g figs (about 9) roughly chopped and ends removed
- 450g honey
- 2 lemons, juiced and peels sliced thinly
- 100g blanched almonds chopped
- 2 tsp. fresh thyme leaves

### Method:

1. Place figs, honey, lemons (juice and peel) and thyme leaves in a large saucepan and bring to the boil. Reduce heat and let simmer for 1 hour. Stir every fifteen minutes.
2. One time has passed the jam should have thickened. Add in the chopped almonds and simmer for a further fifteen minutes.
3. Allow to cool and place in sterilized jars.



### Fun Facts about the Fig Tree

Over 2,000 years ago, an important tree had one of its branches removed on the order of Indian emperor Ashoka the Great. It was under this very tree that the Buddha is said to have attained enlightenment. Ashoka bestowed kingship on the branch, and planted it in a thick-rimmed solid gold vase.

He then took the branch over mountains and down the Ganges River to the Bay of Bengal. There, his daughter carried it aboard a ship and sailed for Sri Lanka to present it to the king. Ashoka loved the plant so much that he shed tears as he watched it leave.

This story, from the epic poem *The Mahavamsa*, is about a kind of fig tree scientists call *Ficus religiosa*. True to its name, an unbroken line of devotion towards it stretches back to thousands of years before Ashoka's time.

But *F. religiosa* is not alone. It is just one of more than 750 fig species. No other plants have held such sway over human imagination. They feature in every major religion and have influenced kings and queens, scientists and soldiers. They played roles in human evolution and the dawn of civilization. These trees have not only witnessed history; they have shaped it. If we play it right, they could even enrich our future. By Mike Shanahan (Jan 17, 2017)



### Medicinal Benefits of the Figs

- Relieves inflammation, is laxative, purifies the blood
- Throat infection, clears bronchi of mucus.
- Boils, gum boils, ulcers of the mouth, and as an expectorant
- Bladder and kidney stones
- Diabetes, spleen and liver problems
- Removes spots on the face
- Dandruff and warts
- Sores and boils
- Toothache
- Arthritis swellings
- Uterine hemorrhage, diarrhea and dysentery

### How to Use:

- The consumption of ripe figs relieves inflammation, acts as a laxative and purifies the blood.
- The decoction of the ripe fig is a good gargle for irritations of the throat. For colds, the same decoction is used to clear and soothe the bronchi of mucus.
- The roasted figs have been used over boils, gumbolts and ulcers of the mouth. The dried figs are expectorant. Chew one or two tender leaves and leaf buds frequently and wash the mouth with warm water.
- Fresh figs are recommended for those who suffer from bladder or kidney stones. Boil six figs in one teacup of water. Drink daily for a month.
- The above is not recommended for diabetics and for those who have spleen and liver problems.
- Soak dry figs overnight and use the water as a wash for spots on the face.
- The above-mentioned water mixed with a little vinegar and salt is recommended for dandruff and as a cure for warts. The application of fresh latex is also a good remedy for warts.
- The juice of the leaves and stems is applied locally over boils and sores.
- The latex of the tree is efficiently used for toothache. It is introduced into the cavity by drops.
- For arthritic swellings, apply the fresh latex (milky substance) from the tree on the affected areas.
- The infusion of the leaves together with plantain leaves is given for uterine hemorrhage, diarrhea and dysentery.



### Torta tal-lewi u t-tin (Fig and almond tart)!

#### For Pastry

- Blitz in processor to a fine breadcrumb consistency
  - 500g plain flour
  - 100g sugar
  - 100g soft margarine (or healthy option 1/2 cup of olive oil)
  - 1 tbsp. lemon zest
- Bind with 2 beaten eggs and some water.
- Rest in fridge for 1 hour before using

#### Filling

- Beat together
  - 3 eggs
  - 250g pure ground almond essence
  - 1 tsp. bicarbonate of soda
  - 1 tbsp. lemon zest
  - 2 tsp. cinnamon
  - Some drops vanilla and almond essence
  - 1 tsp. bicarbonate of soda
- Line a greased fluted baking tin with the pastry, press the edges well
- Spread the bottom of the pastry with home-made fig jam and top with the almond filling
- Bake in a preheated oven (150-175) for 1 hour



# Gozo College, Rabat Primary School

Warren Cachia and Mariah Cachia created  
artistic work using leaf prints.



# Gozo College Rabat Primary School

## INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT THE FIG TREE

In the first story of the Bible, Adam and Eve covered themselves with Fig Tree leaves after they ate from the forbidden tree.

Around 9400B.C. a Fig Tree was planted in a Neolithic village that was discovered in Jordan and it still stands till this day.

The Fig Tree was home grown before barley, rye and wheat.

The sap of Fig Tree was used to reduce swelling and pain of wasp and bee stings.

Dried Fig leaves is rich in many nutrients like fibre, copper, manganese, magnesium, potassium, calcium, and vitamin K.



WARREN CAUCHI

YEAR 5

Ms Josephine Cachia

## The Fig Festival in Gozo

Xaghra is blessed with some of the most fertile soils anywhere on the island. It is unsurprising, therefore, that this town has the largest number of farmers cultivating figs. The town is a member of **Ficusnet** - a European network of towns and villages that produce figs - and its fig festival.

**So much so, that they celebrate this gorgeous fruit with an annual two-day festival.**

Xaghra's fig festival comes at the right time when the plump and tender early fruit, matures. And, one can imagine, these **Bajtar ta' San Ġwann** get star billing on the menu during this weekend; a Festival which brings culture, tradition, culinary art and music together, curated in a way for everyone to enjoy. **The Fig is one of the island's most delicious fruits.**



# Gozo College Rabat Primary School

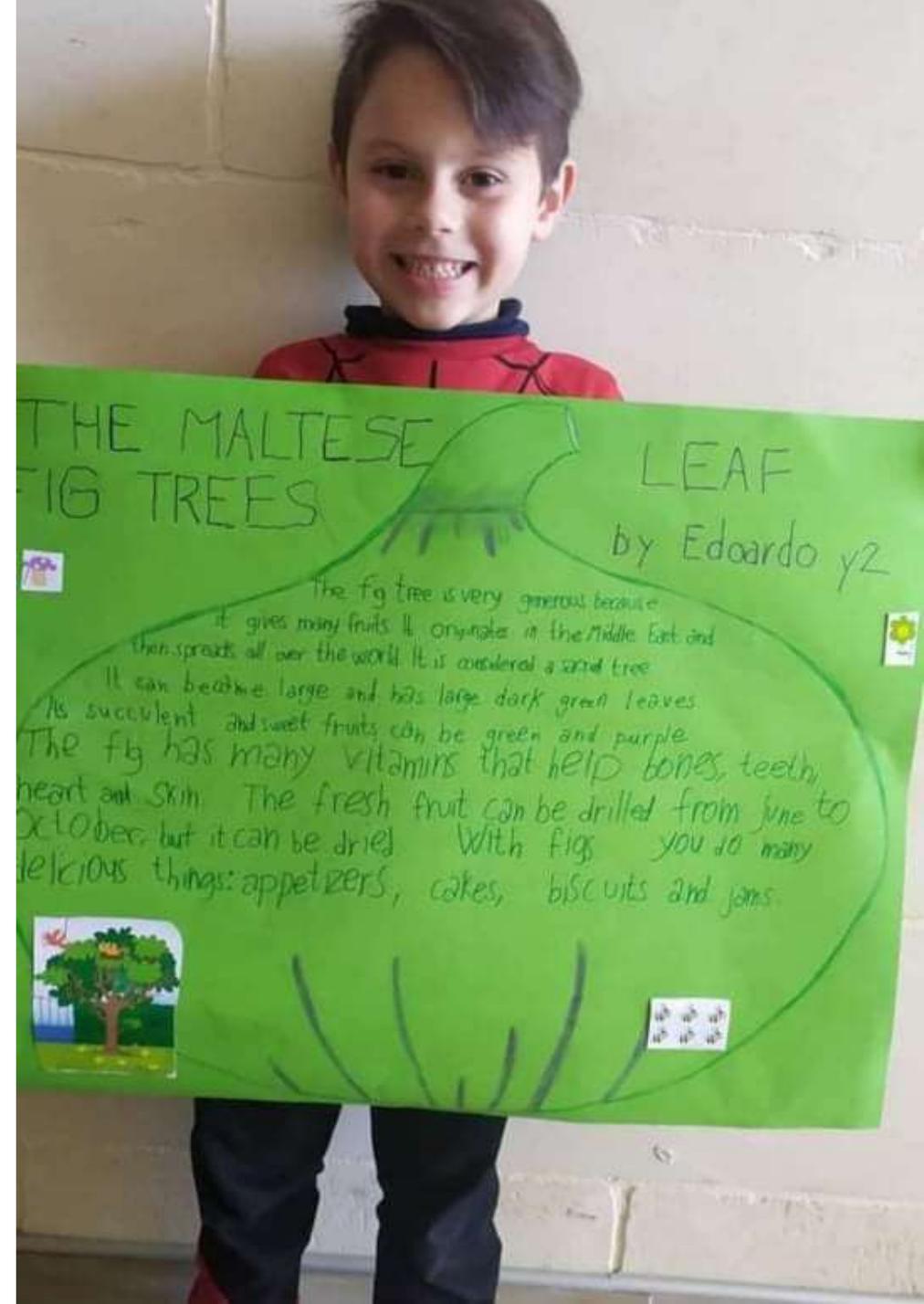


Rabat Primary School, Victoria, Gozo, Malta  
Gabriel Grech, Year 4



Ms Lorna Camilleri

# Edoardo Trombino, Xewkija Primary School



THE MALTESE  
FIG TREES

LEAF

by Edoardo yz

The fig tree is very generous because it gives many fruits. It originates in the Middle East and then spreads all over the world. It is considered a sacred tree. It can become large and has large dark green leaves. Its succulent and sweet fruits can be green and purple. The fig has many vitamins that help bones, teeth, heart and skin. The fresh fruit can be drilled from June to October, but it can be dried. With figs you do many delicious things: appetizers, cakes, biscuits and jams.



# Yoana Attard, Xewkija Primary School

Yoana's research focused on culture and tradition of Fig Trees in the village of Xewkija, Gozo.

### Fig Pie recipe

**Ingredients:**

- Sugar
- Flour
- Cornmeal
- Salt
- Lemon juice
- Butter
- Fresh figs



**Method:**

1. Wash the figs.
2. Cut the figs in halves and then in quarters.
3. Put the chopped figs in a large bowl.



Yoana Attard Year 4

Yoana Attard Year 4

Fiori D'Argenta event is held in Xewkija, on the 29th of August as part of the secondary feast, the beheading of St. John the Baptist.

This festival of culture, history, talent and traditions, is organised by the Xewkija Local Council and the spectacular entertainment takes place at St John the Baptist Square.

This event attracts a large number of people of all ages. The older generation love to listen attentively to the traditional 'Għana'. For the young ones, there is a talent show held in the same square. Local organisations are also involved in the event. For instance, the musical philharmonic society, 'Banda Prekursur' opens the event by playing different musical pieces and the five a side game is played by under 11 kids attending the Xewkija Tigers Nursery.

Finally the largest traditional 'Torta tal-Bajtar ta' San Gwann' is baked, and cut into pieces so that everyone will be able to have a free taste and enjoy the finished result of the largest ever baked Torta tal-Bajtar ta' San Gwann.

Yoana Attard Year 4



Xewkija.net

# Kayden Galea, Xewkija Primary School

Kayden Galea interviewed his grandfather to learn more about fig trees.

It-tina hija frotta tajba ħafna. Hawn Malta kien hawn madwar 30 varjetà ta' din is-sigra iżda illum dan in-numru naqas hafna.



1

In-nannu tiegħi għandu is-sigra tat-tin fl-għalqa tiegħu. Jien nieħu pjacir imur miegħu biex nitgħallem dwar is-sigra tat-tin.



2

Din is-sigra tagħmel il-frott f'Gunju u f'Awwissu. Din il-varjetà tissejjah il-bajtar ta' San Ġwann.



3

Din is-sigra tagħmel il-bajtar ta' San Ġwann Abjad. Din ukoll tagħmel il-frott f' Gunju u f'Awwissu.



4

Din hija id-dukkara. Fir-ritratt nidher jien qed insaqiha.



5

It-tin ind jiddakkar u kull tina skond id-dakkra tagħha ezempju id-dukkar idakkar il-bajtar. Dan isir għal nofs Gunju. Id-dukkar (madwar tnaqqas ma' sigra waħda) jiddendel mal-friegħi tas-sigra vicin il-frotta li tkun għadha zghira. Imbagħad johroq in-nemus minn fomm id-dukkar (il-parti ta' taft) u jmur fuq il-tina. Dawk li jiddakkar jikbru f'tin f'Awwissu u l-oħrajn imutu. Id-dukkar jibqa' imdendel sa ma jinkef.



6

# Luca Vella, St Michael School

Luca carried out a research about the Fig Tree. In his research he explains why many fig trees in the Maltese Islands are dying because of the fig tree borer.

## Is-Sigra Tat-tin

Is-sigra tat-tin *Ficus Carica* bdiet fil-Lvant Nofsani u ilha tiġi mkabbra mill-inqas f'dax-il elf sena jġifieri minn żmien Neolitiku. Din is-sigra addattat ruħha għall-klima Mediterranja u nsibuha hafna fil-gżejjer Maltin. Hija tikber fil-makkja, f'ambjenti mimsusa, irdumijiet u sisien anki ta' fuq il-baħar, fil-ħitan u fis-swar u tilhaq daqs medju li rari jaqbez l-għaxar metri. Il-weraq tagħha jkunu maqsumin f'numru ta' swaba u l-fjuri rqaq ikunu magħluqa fil-frotta (tina). Din għandha toqba żgħira fit tarf minn fejn jidhol speci ta' żunżan żgħir tal-generu Blastophaga li jdakkarha. Is-sigra twaqqa l-weraq kollha fix-xhur tax-xitwa.

Hawn Malta insibu varjeta' kbira ta' sigar tat-tin li jilhaq tnejn u tletin. Dawn jipproduċu tin differenti fosthom id-Dukkaru, il-Parsott, il-Farkizzan, il-Bzengul iswed, it-tin l-iswed, it-tin tad-Dikkiena u t-tin abjad. Dawn jiġi ikkunsmati b'modi differenti bħal friski, imqadda jew magħmulin f'gamm. Waħda minn dawn is-sigar tat-tin tagħmel żewġ tipi ta' frott. Wieħed bikri li jkun tajjeb għall-ikel f'nofs Gunju u nsibuh bħala l-Bajtar ta' San Gwann li jkun oħxon u artab. Umbgħad l-istess sigra tipproduċi ukoll tin lejn nofs Awwissu u dan ikun iżgħar u iktar skur meta taqsmu.

Sfortunatament fl-aħħar snin il-ħanfusa tal-qoxra tal-injam qerdet bosta sigar tat-tin. Dan l-insett jattakka lis-sigra minn nofs iz-zokk u jinfirx 'il fuq u 'l isfel u l-mard jibda jidher fil-weraq li jsir kannella minn aħdar. Is-sigar iridu jiġi spezzjonati b'mod fiziku biex tkun taf jekk hemmx infestazzjoni ta' din il-ħanfusa. It-trab li joħroġ mill-ħofor taz-zokk tas-sigra (Frass) u li jkun fil-baži tagħha ikun l-ewwel sinjal ta' attackk. Il-kontroll ta' din il-ħanfusa isir permezz ta' żabra, suppliment ta' tisqija u applikazzjoni preventiva ta' insetticida likwida li tingħata qabel dħul April.

Huwa importanti li wieħed jagħraf il-bżonnijiet tas-sigar u li tingħata kura meħtieġa biex dawn jikbru b'saħħithom. Sigar b'saħħithom għandhom inqas ċans li jiġu attackkati u jkunu jstgħu jagħtuna frott bnin meta jkun il-waqt.



Sigra tat-tin

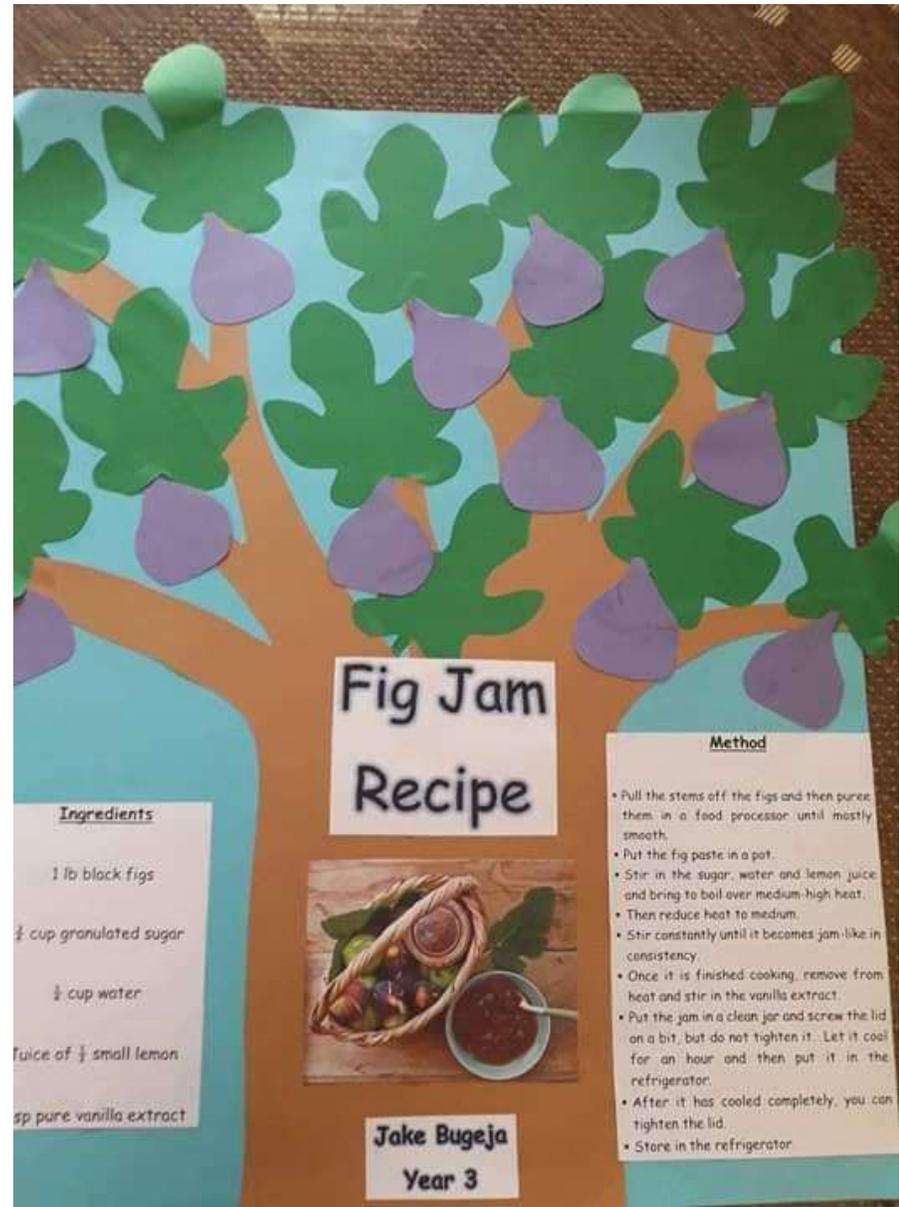


Hanfusa tal injam

# Xewkija Primary School



# Jake Bugeja



# Xewkija Primary School

...ERN ASIA. ITS' CULTIVATION MARKED THE START OF HORTICULTURE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN. NOWADAYS, THE FIG TREE IS CULTIVATED FOR ITS FRUITS AND AS AN ORNAMENTAL TREE FAR BEYOND THE MEDITERRANEAN.

FIGS HOLD AN IMPORTANT PLACE IN THE DIET OF THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION AND CAN GET CONSUMED BOTH IN FRESH AND DRIED FORMS.



**NUTRITIONAL HIGHLIGHTS ON FIGS:**

- HIGH IN NATURAL SUGARS, MINERALS AND SOLUBLE FIBRE;
- RICH IN MINERALS INCLUDING POTASSIUM, IRON AND MAGNESIUM, CALCIUM AND COPPER;
- A GOOD SOURCE OF ANTIOXIDANT VITAMINS A & K, FATTY ACID;
- LOW CALORIE FRUITS; AIDS IN DIGESTION.

**DID YOU KNOW...**

THE PERCENT DAILY VALUE OF MINERALS IN 5 DRIED FIGS IS 7% POTASSIUM, 6% CALCIUM, 6% IRON AND 6% MAGNESIUM.



SUN-RIPENED FIG CONSERVE  
IDEALLY TO USE IT AS A SPREAD ON BREAD, THE FIG CONSERVE CONTAINS 62% WHOLESOME FIGS AND ZESTY LEMON PEEL

... THIS CHUTN...  
PERFECT ADDITION TO AND COLD MEATS.



EVERY YEAR, THE XEWKIJIA LOCAL COUNCIL ORGANISES FIOR D'ARGENTA COMMEMORATING THE BEHEADING OF ST. JOHN TO WHOM THE ROTUNDA CHURCH IS DEDICATED. THE 2 DAY EVENT IS CLOSED BY THE CUTTING AND SERVING OF THE "TORTA TAL-BAJTAR TA' SAN ĠWANN". IN 2017, THE VILLAGE OF XEWKIJIA ENTERED IN THE MALTA RECORDS WITH THE BIGGEST "TORTA TAL-BAJTAR TA' SAN ĠWANN".

# Xewkija Primary School

## FIGS

### Health Benefits Of Figs

...

- 1 lb Black Figs
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1/4 cup water
- juice of 1/2 small lemon (about 1 tsp)
- 1 tsp pure vanilla extract

### Fig Trees: Ficus carica

...

### Pruning

...

### Keeping Fig Trees Healthy

...

### Planting and Caring for Fig Trees

...

### Fig Trees

Pateño Fig

Violette de Bordeaux Fig

Chateau Fendille Fig

Comanche Fig

White Georgia Fig

Black Mission Fig

Black Jack Fig

Brown Turkey Fig

# St Francis Primary School Victoria Gozo

## Learning about Fig Trees ...



## ...through observation and research



## Jacques

- ▶ The fig tree is an indigenous tree native to the Mediterranean region.
- ▶ It was cultivated in the Maltese island for centuries and we often see it growing wild in our country site.
- ▶ We even mention the figs in the popular rhyme:

'Gewż, lewż, qastan, tin,  
Kemm inhobbu lil San Martin'!



## Clyde

- ▶ Fig trees can take from 3 to 5 years before bearing fruit after planting. Once a fig tree reaches maturity, it can be expected to produce fruit once to twice per year and can continue to fruit for decades.



## Owen

- ▶ The fig tree grows up to 7 to 10 meters. The fig tree is adapted for the Mediterranean climate.
- ▶ Figs need a sunny spot that is protected from winter winds.



## Mireille

- ▶ The fig tree has broad rough deciduous leaves. When the leaves and stems are broken, white latex comes out. The fig tree grows figs which have a unique sweet taste, soft and chewy texture and are littered with crunchy edible seeds.
- ▶ Fresh figs are delicate and perishable so are often dried to preserve them.



# St Francis Primary School Victoria Gozo

## Isaac

- ▶ The fig is among one of the oldest fruit in the whole entire world.
- ▶ A fig is a soft sweet fruit.
- ▶ There are more than 800 species of fig trees around the world.
- ▶ A fig is also known as a very popular snack.



## Andreas

- ▶ Fig trees have no blossoms on their branches. The blossom is inside the fruit! Many tiny flowers produce the crunchy little edible seeds that give figs their unique texture.



## Keran

- ▶ Figs are perfect fruit to grow in pots. You can grow an indoor fig tree or grow a fig tree in a container outdoors. Figs make beautiful patio plants. While European figs require pollination by a tiny wasp, the female figs in north America do not require pollination to produce fruit. This makes them easy to grow anywhere with sufficient light.



## Jacob

- ▶ Fig trees can take from 3 to 5 years before bearing fruits after planting.
- ▶ Their rooting process takes a full growing season, while fruit production can be 4 to 6 years out. Fig trees start by producing slowly with just a few fruits during the first years.
- ▶ The fig can be cooked and tastes good. I had the pleasure of trying out a vanilla pistachio fig tart and it was very tasty.



## Miguel

- ▶ Figs are a delicious treat that thrive in warm climates, but can also be grown in more temperate regions.
- ▶ Fig trees grow to nearly 20 feet (6 meters) in height and with large leaves, the fig tree provides pleasant shade.
- ▶ Some fig trees, the common ones (ficus carica) do not need pollination to produce fruit. On the other hand, there are other species of fig tree that rely on wasps for pollination.



## Faith

- ▶ Fig trees grow best in places where there are long and hot summers, like Malta.
- ▶ The fruiting cycle is 120 - 150 days. Some varieties produce 1 crop per year, others 2.
- ▶ Fig trees can grow 20 feet tall and wide.



## Carl

- ▶ Figs are amongst the oldest fruit. Figs can be dried. Figs are not really fruits, but flowers turned inside out.



# St Francis Primary School Victoria Gozo

## Rianne

- ▶ The fig tree, known in Maltese as 'Sġira tat-tin' was one of the first plants to be cultivated. It remains in leaf and produces figs during the hottest months. It manages to do this by having an aggressive root system that can dig deep in the earth .



## Luca

- ▶ Growing period: The fruiting cycle is 120-150 days. Some varieties produce one crop per year, other two. Trees have been known to live as long as 200 years.
- ▶ Growing conditions: Figs thrive best in a areas of moderate relative humidity and can be grown at higher elevations in areas of low rainfall.



## Martina V.

- ▶ The fig tree is synonymous with the Mediterranean area even though it is originally from the Middle East and western Asia. Along with the grape vine and olive tree, the fig tree was one of the first trees to be domesticated.
- ▶ Its cultivation marked the start of horticulture on the Mediterranean. Nowadays the fig is cultivated for its fruit as an ornamental tree far beyond the Mediterranean.



## Kate

- ▶ Another word for fig tree is Ficus Carica. It originated in the middle East. Over 30 types of fig trees used to grow in Malta but now this number has gone down quite a bit. The fig tree sometimes makes early fruit which grows in June. In Maltese these figs are called 'Bajtar ta' San Gwann' because they are picked towards the end of June when we celebrate the feast of St John the Baptist.



## Maya

- ▶ Figs trees originated from the Middle east and Northwestern Asia. These trees are fast growing and can grow to 20 or 30 ft tall. The leaves can be 4 to 8 inches wide. The fruit is good both for eating fresh and for preserving. When they are ready you can cut them in July.



## Elena

- ▶ The fig tree is the most common type of tree mentioned in the Bible. It gives us figs which are very nutritious and can be eaten raw or dried. Some old Mediterranean practices use the milky sap from the leaves to soften hard skin and to keep away pests.



## Chiara

- ▶ Fig trees have no blossoms on their branches. The blossom is inside the fruit. Many tiny flowers produce the crunchy little edible seeds that give figs their unique texture. Figs are harvested according to nature's clock, fully ripened and partially dried on the tree.



## Giovanni

- ▶ Figs naturally help hold in moisture in baked goods, keep them fresher. Fig puree can be used to replace fat in goods.

