



The International Venues Committee

ORDO SUPREMUS MILITARIS TEMPLI HIEROSOLYMITANI (OSMTH)

Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem

Fall 2019 GMC Tomar Venues Host Chair Report

The event Fall 2019 GMC Tomar had three distinctive programs which culminated with the final celebration of the 900 years of the Order. The events were: Pre-GMC Excursions, GMC meetings, and Friends & Family (F&F) Tours.

Due to the unexpected interest in the Tomar events, the Host Chair Nascimento Costa had to renegotiate contracts with hotels, restaurants, transports as well as regarding the Town Hall collaboration. Nascimento took part in several meetings with the Tomar Mayor regarding transportation, security issues and the festive event conclusion (Celebrations), in which both the local police and the emergency forces participated in.

The event was developed during a year and a half and 30 members of the GP Portugal took part in it. Some comments mentioned in this report will only show how we prepared an event to about 150 attendees, based on previous experience.

Registration

International Registrants: 149.

Registration. The Treasurer and Venues Committee member responsible for the website registration and communicating with registrants worked together, and followed the Venues Committee Guide privacy policies.

Contacts. Each participant was given a card, when registering, with the following contacts: (i) a Venues Committee member (Host); (ii) a security and emergency member representative; (iii) as well as the transport team leader.

Food restrictions: Taking into consideration the large number of participants, a colour code system was adopted, in which each participant's responsibility was required. The colour-coded cards that were given to each participant when registering, were to be shown by each one, at every meal in each restaurant or hotel.

Reduced mobility: No member declared that they had reduced mobility when registering. However, the vast majority had some difficulties. Alternative solutions were put at their disposal (e.g. a staff member accompanied the person in question to the places of interest, or a means of transport to the Templar Pantheon, the Celebration final venue, was made available). Nevertheless, the information which was presented and approved by the Venues and therefore available on the website registration, informed of the location of the castles and indicated that they referred to an itinerary with a reasonable level of difficulty.

Permission for image usage: Different coloured badge cords were used: red for the participants that did not give permission, and white for those who did.



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Venue Hotels

Hotel Açores Lisboa 4*: The first night of the Pre-GMC was included in the package. The hotel has its own security. The police member/emergency contact was present 24h.

Hotel dos Templários 4*: Bookings for the three programs were the participants responsibility. The hotel has its own security and agreed to the external security agents, provided they did not present themselves in uniform. Thus, the security agents were dressed as Templar Knights. Creativity worked properly.

Security

Registration: Each participant was given a card with the emergency telephone contacts: Venues – Host GP, Emergency and Transportation.

The emergency number given was that of a Brother's, a member of the Tomar PSP (Public Security Police), who worked alongside the Host Chair and the Town Hall/security forces.

The Security Liaison António Cardoso was appointed by the then Grand Prior of Portugal too close to the event, in the summer. He started his work in September, when he also contacted the Host Chair. This work had already been ongoing a year and a half before (from the time when the preparation of the GMC Tomar programs for approval started taking place, in the Fall 2018 GMC Belgrade).

The Security Liaison worked tangentially, having contacted the security and emergency forces, which had previously been contacted by the Host Chair, in collaboration with the Town Hall. A security measures plan, which was outlined by the Security Liaison, and later submitted to the Security Committee was then presented. After the negotiations that had been taking place for several months, a document on the town security (during the Celebrations) was created, but which also included the OSMTH Dinner (Thursday, at the Convent of Christ). The Host Chair contacted the Security Liaison in order to work on the security measures and to proceed with the necessary arrangements.

In short, the Security Liaison must be named at the beginning of GMC preparation and work with the Host Chair, the responsible for the event.

The request for the Hotel dos Templários to provide a list with the names of the employees or the rooming list was denied due to hotel privacy policies.

There was security present at the airport, hotels, both excursions' programs, night events, GMC rooms, C&I, Gala Dinner and town celebrations.

Transportation

As in the information provided on the website registration, the transport was guaranteed at no charge, on the days of arrival and departures:



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- (i) Saturday Pre-GMC Excursions – Lisbon airport/ hotel;
- (ii) Wednesday for the GMC and F&F Tours – Lisbon airport / Tomar;
- (iii) Sunday – Tomar / Lisbon airport.

The Town Hall bus driver (the bus was identifiable from the exterior) had orders to only travel to the airport.

Transport alternatives required to operate on different days or at different times by the participants were displayed on the website, and frequently used by them.

Arrivals: During and after the registration period many emails were sent to the participants, asking for their transport details, such as flight arrivals and departures. The transport team, remained at the airport throughout the whole day on the arrival date (Pre-GMC Saturday excursions and Wednesday for the GMC and F&F Tours), but we verified that many members had sent incorrect details. The team checked the arrival timetables at the airport, through the number flights given at the Registration. For example, some arrivals that were sent corresponded to departures.

Departures: According to the website registration, the transport to the airport was assured. The participants departure timetables were displayed at the hotel lobby on the previous night to their departure, following the C&I.

After the town Celebrations, and because of the incorrect information regarding the arrivals, a help desk was available at the hotel lobby for the participants. Many of which asked for some transport changes that were duly made.

However, the participants did not respect the schedules. Several were supposed to have left in the 6.00 a.m. shuttle, but instead by their own initiative decided to only leave later in the 10.30 bus, which was also transporting the audio-visual equipment. Thus, it was not possible to take the GP Finnish delegation or the AV equipment on their scheduled return trip, and an additional two-way trip was necessary. The transport team leader contacted the Town Hall to get permission and which was indeed granted, and so it was possible to go ahead with the transport service. The delay in the service was not the transport team's responsibility, but because of the participants who chose to not respect the transport listings that had been previously posted, even though a help service had been available the day before to support in this matter.

The return-trip to the country of origin would take place the following day.

Pre-GMC Excursions

Attendees: 51

The program had the participation of interpreters and the Commanders of the Commanderies that were taking part in the program. Security agents were always present; they also assisted in the transport and helped the participants that had mobility difficulties.

GMC meeting

Average number of attendees: 99



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Meeting room: It was possible to have an adjoining coffee break room. The room was also used for the C&I and the Gala Dinner events.

The whole -1 floor was for OSMTH exclusive use: the GMC room / coffee break room, the registration room, and the hall which featured an art exhibition. This allowed registration and security to be more efficient.

F&F Tours

Average number of attendees: 63

Other events

Pre-GMC Excursions: (i) Fado Dinner; (ii) Dinner at the Convent of Christ Cafeteria; (iii) Medieval Dinner, Idanha-a-Velha Cathedral.

GMC / F&F Tours: (i) OSMTH Dinner, Convent of Christ.

In all the events a Brother police officer or his team members, as well as an emergency service official were present. The Security Liaison and his team were absent on the date of the arrival of members of the Pre-GMC Excursions, therefore neither present at the Fado Dinner.

C&I

Attendees: 218

A somewhat awkward situation arose with the setting up of the room, with the inclusion of the Host C&I section, just before the programmed C&I. With the ready help of the work team, together with the hotel staff and the strong support of the Marshal General, this incident was dealt with. The International C&I section took place in a very serene manner.

The Host Grand Priory section did not take place at the C&I due to electoral issues and because the Grand Prior António Andrade had already terminated his mandate.

The money that was collected will be forwarded to social charity institution.

Gala Dinner

Attendees: 262

Room: The room used was the same as the C&I room. With great commitment, the team managed to have everything ready within the established schedule.



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Several entities were present, such as the Tomar Mayor and emergency forces dignities. Partners must be invited to the events.

Final Celebrations of the OSMTH 900 years

The event was open to all national and international participants.

Reduced Mobility: There was direct transport from the hotel to the Pantheon and back again by the end of the event.

Security: Police supervision throughout all of the route, from the hotel to the Pantheon and back to the hotel. Police supervision and security perimeters secured by motorized vehicles.

The firefighters, the Civil Protection Services and Scouts also enforced the perimeter limits.

Some Brothers/Dames unduly took some torches from a supply centre. Therefore, a dangerous situation took place as well as the risk of burns.

Fireworks: 50% of the cost was covered by the Town Hall and about 25% by GP Portugal. Approximately 25% of the total cost was covered by a donation from a Silent Dame.

Overview

The valuable collaborations that were accomplished made it possible to have good-value/quality event, which was what we intended.

Thanks were duly paid to the event and celebrations partners, which were:

- Town Hall, Mayor Anabela Freitas
- Tomar Parish, Father Mário
- 'Caminhos da História' company (tour guiding, transportation)
- Thomar Honoris (cultural animation)
- Juntas de Freguesia do concelho (Parishes of Tomar)
- Convent of Christ/DGPC/MC
- Municipality of Idanha-a-Nova, Mayor Armindo Jacinto
- Municipality of Soure, Mayor Mário Jorge Nunes
- Fireworks: partial donation by a Silent Dame
- Hotel dos Templários 4*
- Hotel Açores Lisboa 4*
- Commanders of the Commanderies of Castelo Branco, Castelo Novo, Idanhas and Soure
- Work Teams of the Commandery of Tomar

Partnerships are relevant to lower registration costs.

Tomar, 20th November 2019

Nascimento Costa GOTJ

OSMTH Venues Host Chair – Fall 2019 GMC Tomar