

Recent Malta Tax Paid Stamps

By André Dufresne



I recently visited Malta, the fifth-smallest country in Europe with 316 square kilometers or 122 square miles and 445 000 inhabitants. Whenever I visit a foreign country I am on the lookout for revenue stamps.

While in Malta I noticed two types of tax paid stamps on wine bottles. The first one is of the banderole type, a horizontal rectangle measuring 97 x 17 mm. It seems to be lithographed, it shows the ubiquitous eight-pointed Cross of Malta in red and a bird that looks like a kestrel. It also bears a QR code and a hologram. Scanning the QR code takes you to the Malta Customs web site. There is a blue colored line that crosses the stamp horizontally on which the word “Malta” is repeated continually in three lines of very small print. Each stamp is overprinted with an individual serial number. On the banderole-type stamp the number starts with the letters “LWO” followed by a nine-digit number followed by a second line of three letters that vary from stamp to stamp and the volume of the bottle, here 0.375L. I surmise that “LW” stands for “Local Wine” because I found it on a bottle of locally-produced white wine.

The second type is circular in shape and it was

found on a twist-cap bottle of imported wine. It has a diameter of 17 mm, it seems to be lithographed in the same color as the banderole stamp and it also shows the Maltese cross in red and a hologram but there is no QR code, no doubt due to the small size of the stamp. It also bears an individual serial number made up of the letters “WO” followed by nine digits plus three letters that change from stamp to stamp and the volume of the bottle, here 0.375L. It also bears a horizontal blue bar on which the word “Malta” appears continually over three lines of microscopic letters.

The last type was found on discarded cigarette packs (I don’t smoke!). It is a blue lithographed horizontal stamp and it measures 32 x 15.5 mm. It bears a QR code, a hologram, the red Maltese cross and a kestrel. An orange horizontal bar has the word “Malta” repeated in very small print over three lines of text. Again it bears an individual serial number starting with the letters “TB” followed by eight digits. “TB” no doubt stands for “tobacco.”

Malta being such a small country with such a small population, I am very happy to have found these tax-paid revenues that are going straight into my collection !