

# THE BEAUTIES & FLAVORS OF SICILY



Catania, Etna, Syracuse, Ortygia, Noto...



## Program

**Day 1: Sicily:** Arrival in Catania, meeting with your local tour guide and private bus (that will stay with you for all the tour) and transfer to our hotel in the area of Taormina. On the way the tour leader will explain the weekly program and give useful information and hints what to do. After your hotel check-in, free time to relax. In the evening welcome Dinner in hotel and Overnight.

**Day 2: Catania, La Riviera dei Ciclopi:** Breakfast in hotel and departure for Catania: Visit of the city including, besides the cultural sites, the beautiful markets. A few local tastings during the excursion of typical Sicilian street food: arancini, cartocciata, ricotta cannolo and coffee. Free time for lunch and shopping. Our return to the hotel will be via “La Riviera dei Ciclopi” the coast has been literally designed by Etna, which with its lava flows has created over the century’s rocks with twisted shapes and steep cliffs guarding inlets with clear waters. Before going back to our hotel, we will have a stop in the beach town of Giardini Naxos to have a walk on the beautiful beach promenade and to have dinner (@ at your leisure).

**Day 3: Etna, wine experience, Taormina and Cooking school:** Breakfast in hotel and depart for Mount Etna. Breath-taking views accompanied by a unique and untouched natural landscape. View of the main aspects of the volcano’s evolution, like the main eruption sites, as well as wonderful and spectacular caves. At height 1.900m we will reach “Rifugio la Sapienza” and from here by cable car + jeep/bus and alpine guide we will reach the highest part of the Vulcan “Grande Cono” 3300m. On our way back from the Etna we will be visiting a local wine producer for a wonderful tasting experience of local products and wine of the area. Our experience will consist in the visit of bees live and the laboratory of honey extraction, tasting of honey, olives, oils (6 different types), Pestos and Paté tasting: on wood baked bread; Visit to the Vineyard with dedicated staff, Visit the cellar of aging, Tasting 5 wines by the glass, Gourmet lunch with tartine with pesto and paté, olives, dry, tomatoes, bruschetta, salami and cheeses with honey, slices of pizza focaccia, crunchy almonds, (at buffet) In the afternoon we will visit Taormina, perched at the top of Monte Tauro in the foothills of Mount Etna on Sicily’s Eastern coastline, between the cities of Catania and Messina, this ancient town offers visitors a view into the past with a number of elegantly preserved historic treasures, from the grand Greek-Roman Theatre to the equally impressive Palazzo Corvaja, which are just waiting to be discovered. Tonight, after the visit we will have our cooking course dinner in a local restaurant.

**Day 4: Syracuse, Ortygia & Noto:** Breakfast in hotel and departure for Syracuse, visit of the island of Ortygia, Syracuse’s historic center, which since 2005 has been declared a UNESCO world heritage site; visit the typical market, full of spice stalls, dried and fresh fruit, tomatoes cherry, vegetables, cheese and fish, almond sweets and chocolate of Modica. Here you will have also another street food tasting: Ricotta al forno, formaggi siciliani, tramezzini con crapuliatu, mozzarella impanata di tre tipi, olive locali, pomodoro secco funghetti, salumi locali with water, beer or wine. Following we will visit the ancient part of the town with the Neapolis Archaeological Park, natural area rich in archaeological remains belonging to several epochs in the history of Syracuse. After Syracuse we will visit the beautiful town of Noto, capital of baroque, with its amazing Basilica. Back to your hotel. Dinner at your leisure.

**Day 5: Caltagirone, Piazza Armerina & Enna:** Breakfast in hotel, baggage claim and departure for Caltagirone is a town in the Metropolitan City of Catania. It is the production centre of pottery, particularly maiolica and terracotta wares. Nowadays the production is more oriented to artistic production of ceramics and terra-cotta sculptures. After we will visit Piazza Armerina, beautiful medieval town, with a superb baroque and Normand historical center. Home to the Villa Romana del Casale, famous for its intricate mosaics, which depict scenes of Ancient Roman life and are described by UNESCO as the finest mosaics in site anywhere in the world. Free time for lunch. Onwards we will reach the bellybutton of Sicily, Enna, where, from the highs of the town spectacular panoramas can be seen. In the late afternoon check in our hotel in Palermo, dinner and overnight.

**Day 6: Segesta, Trapani salt pans & Erice:** Today the most interesting sites of western Sicily will be visited. You will explore Segesta, a Greek archaeological site one of the most important cities of the Elymians, an ancient people known for its culture and tradition descendant of the Trojans. Travel to Nubia and the Salt Pans in Trapani and admire the Sicilian coast and natural landscapes on the way. Free time for lunch in Trapani. Our tour will end with a final stop at Erice, a hilltop town, one of Italy's most fascinating medieval village. This itinerary is also known as the Elimians's Road, named for the Elimians who were among the first inhabitants of this part of Sicily. Enjoy spectacular views throughout the day. All of the sites are relatively near Palermo, meaning that you'll have plenty of time to explore each of them. Back to your hotel. Dinner at your leisure.

**Day 7: Agrigento "Valle dei Templi" & wine tasting:** Breakfast in Hotel and depart for the visit of Agrigento. Situated on a plateau overlooking the sea, with the Hypsasand the Akragas rivers nearby and a ridge to the north offering a degree of natural fortification, Agrigento was founded in the 6th century BC by Greek colonists from Gela. Enjoy a scenic 2-hour drive into the countryside before we reach the Valley of the Temples. Visit the Hera, Concordia and Apollo temples and Hardcastle villa. After the visit your journey will take you to a local wine producer for you tasting of wines and local products. Back to your hotel in the late afternoon. Dinner at your leisure.

**Day 8: Palermo City & Monreale:** Breakfast in Hotel and depart for the visit of Palermo; walking through the narrow winding streets you will see a lot of testimony of past cultures, due to varied invasions by Phoenicians, Greeks, Arabs and Normans – to name just a few of the most influential. Our tour will take us to the historic center with the lively market of La Vucciria, Teatro Massimo neoclassical opera house, popular claim to fame is the shooting at the end of The Godfather III film; The Cathedral of Palermo is a prime example of the Arab-Norman architectural style unique to Sicily, Corso Vittorio Emanuele where "Porta Nuova", the Royal Palace or " Palazzo dei Normanni " with its garden, and finally the Politeama Theater. In the afternoon we will reach the the hill-topping town of Monreale, renowned for its Arab-flavored cathedral, blending Byzantine, Arab, Jewish, Gothic, and Norman traditions, heritage, and art. We'll tour the cathedral's interior of glittering, golden mosaics as well as the story-telling columns of the cloister. Tonight, our farewell dinner will be held in a local restaurant accompanied by live local music.

**Day 9: Bye Bye Sicily**  
Transfer to the airport.