



## Food and Wine Grand Tour of Sicily

Sicily Food and Wine Grand Tour, 10 days private tour to discovery of the most striking spots of Sicily with a focus on the excellent Sicilian cuisine and delicious wines.



Location

**Palermo**



Days

**10**



Duration

**ND**



Category

**Multi Days**



Season



Tour Type

**Private**

### TOUR OVERVIEW

# TOUR ITINERARY



Day 1

## (Sunday) Palermo Airport > Town

Private Vehicle and Italian Speaking Driver Disposal: transfer-in only

Welcome to the warm, beautiful and pleasant island of Sicily! Upon arrival at Palermo Airport please proceed through Passport Control and collect your luggage inside the customs area. Then, meet your Driver and transfer to your hotel.

The balance of the day is at leisure.



Day 2

## (Monday) Monreale and Palermo Street Food Walking Tour

English Speaking Guide Included for half day from h 9am

Taxi Fee to/from Monreale: included (round service)

Today meet the guide and reach Monreale by taxi in order to visit the Dome (admission fee included), a wonderful example of the Arab-Norman art and architecture. Founded in 1174 by William II, the Dome represents scenes from the Old and New Testaments all in golden mosaics.

We then back to Palermo by taxi to start our Street Food Walking Tour!

A recent ranking, compiled by the American network Virtual Tourist, placed Palermo in 5th place among the best producers of "street food" in the world. To survive your street food experience in Palermo you need: very-very light breakfasts, no-diet-no-calories restrictions today, comfy shoes, a couple of sentences or gestures in Sicilian language and a veteran belly.

We start the tour admiring the Massimo Theatre-Palermo Opera House (external view), then we explore a suggestive and lively open-air market, a place with strong Arab influences, resembling a souk, with picturesque stands of fresh fish, cheeses, fruits and vegetables. During the tour we will have the opportunity to observe local people in their daily activities and to savor foods that a real Sicilian people love to eat! Tasting of typical street food is included. The walking tour through the ancient center of Palermo is around 3-4 hours, and we will visit several monuments including Piazza Pretoria, the Four Corners and a short visit to the Cathedral.

The balance of the day is at leisure.



Day 3

## (Tuesday) Marsala Winery, Lunch and Erice

Private Vehicle and English Speaking Driver Disposal: full day from h 8.30am

Today meet the driver at hotel. Then we travel to Marsala region along the Salt Way Road. While travelling we will be fascinated by this unusual landscape: panels of mirror-like water, held by thin strips of earth and white windmills. In Summer now as then in some areas between Trapani and Marsala it is possible to admire piles of salt just harvested.

We then visit the Florio Winery

Cantine Florio is one of the oldest wine companies in Marsala and the history of wine in this city is interwoven with the history of this company. It was founded in 1833 by Vincenzo Florio, who after having bought land in the countryside, decided to establish his cellars for wine production in the area. We strictly recommend to read the Lions of Sicily, a novel by Stefania Auci based on the true history of the uncrowned kings of Sicily: the story of a family, restless and ambitious, shrewd and determined to be richer and more powerful than anybody else

Lunch in a very local and suggestive trattoria to taste local delicious dishes.

This afternoon departure for Erice, a wonderfully preserved Mediaeval town offering the most breathtaking views and a palpable sense of history. Wander through its ancient streets and visit some of the famous homemade pastry shops world-famous for marzipan candies and other delicacies like almond and pistachio pastries.

Almond marzipan probably came to Sicily from Spain, where the Arabs may have introduced it during the Middle Ages. Whether they also brought it to Sicily, which was home to several emirates before 1071, is a matter of debate. However, there is no doubt that it was the Arabs who introduced sugar cane in both Sicily and Spain, and without this key ingredient marzipan could not exist.

Then we drive back to Palermo.



Day 4

## **(Wednesday) Cooking Class and Meal Experience**

Private Vehicle and English Speaking Driver Disposal: full day from h 9.00am

Today departure for a small village off the beaten paths to have an amazing experience based on the interaction with local people and observation of artisans at work, a plunge in a rural and friendly atmosphere.

Upon arrival we meet the country-chef, wash our hands and, we will dip them in the soft flour to prepare the dough for the homemade pasta. At the end of this fun experience Tutti-a-Tavola (everyone seat at table) to taste what we have cooked. Buon Appetito!

During the afternoon we then continue our tour to Agrigento.



Day 5

## **(Thursday) Agrigento, Winery, Olive Oil and Lunch**

Private Vehicle and English Speaking Driver Disposal: full day from h 9.00am

Local Guide to visit the Valley of the Temples: included for max 2 hours

Today guided visit of the finest of all ancient Greek sites (Admission fee: included), the whole Doric Temples, one of Sicily's most famous historical attractions. This is one of the most outstanding examples of Greater Greece art and architecture, and is one of the main attractions of Sicily as well as a national monument of Italy. The area was included in the UNESCO Heritage Site list in 1997. This splendid Archaeological Park consists of eight temples (and various other remains) built between about 510 BC and 430 BC: the Temple of Hera, the Temple of Concordia, the Temple of Heracles, the Temple of Olympian Zeus, the Temple of Castor and Pollux, the Temple of Hephaestus, the Temple of Demeter, and the Temple of Asclepius (the God of Medicine).

Then we drive to a Winery and Olive Oil Farm where we stop for a visit, wine, olive oil tastings and a delicious light lunch.

This afternoon we then continue onto Syracuse.



Day 6

## **(Friday) Syracuse Half Day Walking Tour**

English Speaking Guide Included for: Half day from h 09.00am

Taxi Fee to/from Archaeological Park: included (round service)

Today we start the visit of Syracuse with a transfer by Taxi to the Archaeological Park (Admission fee: included), whose main highlights of which are the Greek Theatre, the Roman Amphitheatre and the Paradise Quarry. The resulting park is one of the most extraordinary heritage left us by classical antiquity and, given its degree of interest and importance, it has few equals elsewhere in Italy. Then stroll through the streets of Ortygia Island, the heart of the city center, to visit the Dome (admission fee included). This delightful pedestrian square is home to the wonderful Cathedral built on the site of an ancient Temple of Athena, as can clearly be seen from the original Doric columns that were incorporated into the building's main structure. Later to the colorful daily Street Market, which sells a fantastic array of fruit, vegetables, fish and meat.

This afternoon is at leisure or Optional Experience:

> Syracuse Sailing Experience

Sail in the waters of the bay of Syracuse, enjoy the beauty of Ortygia and listen to the ancient stories of this Greek harbor. Savor a delicious tasting of food and wines made by local farmers and producers.



Day 7

## **(Saturday) Relax in Syracuse**

Today is at leisure or let us recommend a few Optional Day Tours:

#1: Truffle Hunting with lunch and Time Machine

Enjoy the experience of walking in the forest with a local experienced truffle hunter and his trained dog. Follow the dog hurriedly through the forest as he sniffs about and experience the surge of excitement as he starts digging for these edible treasures. Once some truffles have been found, you will be treated with a delightful meal that incorporates the fresh truffle you just discovered along with a wine tasting of local area wines. On the way to the restaurant, we will visit the ethno-anthropological itinerary "the farmer work places", that includes a visit of the museum dedicated to the artisanal works, and a tour of the places of the past. Great opportunity to travel back in time!

#2: Cheese, Wine and Tuna Fishing Village

A full day experience with the visit of an authentic Sicilian farm, cheese tasting, traditional food tasting – olive oil, cheese, sun dried tomatoes – and a typical Sicilian lunch, followed by the visit of a local winery and wine tasting, ended by a sunset walk in an amazing fishermen village.



Day 8

## **(Sunday) Modica Chocolate factory visit & tasting, Ragusa Ibla and Lunch**

Private Vehicle and English Speaking Driver Disposal: full day from h 9.00am

Today departure for Modica. Like the other towns in the Val di Noto, it was badly damaged by the 1693 earthquake and largely rebuilt in Sicilian Baroque style. Palazzi and houses rise from the bottom of the gorge seemingly stacked one on top of the other. Magnificent churches, with their inspiring domes, bell towers and intricate facades, punctuate the red-tiled roofs and one is struck by the uniform beauty of the whole. Modica is also famous because it is the custodian of a 400-year tradition of Sicilian chocolate-making. Today Modica is still specialized in making grainy chocolate, often flavored with chilli-pepper, cinnamon or vanilla, based on Aztec methods and recipes. Chocolate shops abound, and for the real chocoholic, it is sometimes possible to watch the “chocolatiers” at work. A Chocolate Tastings of Modica chocolate is a must.

Later onto Ragusa Ibla to visit one of the most fascinating towns in Sicily.

Today lunch in a local trattoria to taste the local dishes.

This afternoon we then visit Ragusa Ibla: Ragusa has caused many a visitor’s jaw to drop as they first set eyes on the lower part of the town. Essentially Baroque, the Ragusa you will see today dates almost entirely from 1693. Indeed, it was in this year that Ragusa was razed to the ground by a terrible earthquake that hit most of the eastern side of Sicily. Public opinion on where to rebuild the town was divided, and so a compromise was made. The wealthier, more aristocratic citizens built a new town in a different site, now Ragusa “Superiore”, while the other half of the population decided to rebuild on the original site, now Ragusa Ibla. While the upper part has its fair share of architectural delights, it is the smaller Ragusa Ibla down below that really draws visitors.

Later we then continue onto Taormina, the world famous resort town of Sicily.



Day 9

## **(Monday) Etna Volcano by WD4X4 Land Rover with lunch in a Winery**

Private Jeep WD4X4 Land Rover with English Speaking Driver Disposal: full day from h 9.00am

Dress Code: Dress in layers and use sneakers

Etna Visit: no ascent to the top and no hike

Today meet the off-road’s driver and transfer to Etna Volcano.

During our first stop we will discover a unique canyon comprised of basaltic lava (the “Alcantara Gorges”) and shaped by the waters of the Alcantara river.

The Alcantara’s vertical cliffs reach 30 meters in height and its structures have been forged by high intensity geological and geothermal events. In prehistoric times, a river flowed here over clay sediments until a massive volcanic eruption channeled magma into the river bed forming the current canyons.

Traveling through one of the wine roads of Sicily and crossing large expanses of vineyards (Etna D.O.C.), we will arrive at a local winery. This is the ideal place to enjoy relaxing moments surrounded by nature while sampling a lunch and excellent wines.

We will then make a brief stop at the 2002 lava flow reachable by jeep through a winding dirt road surrounded by chestnut and oak forests.



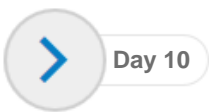
The 2002 eruption lasted from October 27th to January 29th 2003 and it is considered one of the most explosive eruptions of the past one hundred years.

Continuing our excursion we will reach the Ragabo pine forest where hidden among pines and brooms, we will discover the cave of Corruccio (1350 meters above sea level) a cave formed by flowing lava.

Later, driving up along the Mareneve road we will reach Piano Provenzana (1800 meters above sea level), a ski resort, theater of the great eruption of 2002. After enjoying an excellent espresso, we will take a short walk to visit the ruins of the hotel Le Betulle destroyed by a molten lava flow.

Before coming back to Taormina, traveling through one of the wine roads of Sicily and crossing large expanses of vineyards (Etna D.O.C.).

Later we return to Taormina



## (Tuesday) Taormina > Catania Airport

Private Vehicle and Italian Speaking Driver Disposal: transfer-out only

Today time to say goodbye to Sicily.

Today private transfer to Catania Airport.

Arriverci!

## TOUR MAP



## WHAT IS INCLUDED?

- ✓ airport transfers
- ✓ All sightseeing, tasting and excursions as specified in the itinerary
- ✓ Booking Fee
- ✓ English speaking Driver

## NOT INCLUDED

- ✗ Admission fees
- ✗ City taxes
- ✗ Gratuities and tips
- ✗ Hotel accommodation
- ✗ Optional Excursions
- ✗ Travel Insurance