



Sicilian Trilogy Tour

Sicilian Trilogy Tour, an amazing 10 days private tour of Sicily exploring the most important local highlights



Location

Palermo



Days

10



Duration

ND



Category



Season

Year Round



Tour Type

Private

TOUR OVERVIEW

TOUR ITINERARY



Day 1

Palermo airport > Town

Welcome to the warm, beautiful and pleasant island of Sicily!

Upon arrival at Palermo Falcone-Borsellino Airport, please proceed through Passport Control and collect your luggage inside the customs area.

Our Italian-speaking driver will be waiting for you at the arrival department.

Then transfer to your hotel.



Day 2

Palermo Highlights and Street Food, half day

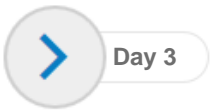
Today we start with a walk into a lively open-air market, a place with strong Arab influences, resembling a souk, with picturesque stands of fresh fish, cheese, fruit and vegetables. During the tour you will have the opportunity to observe local people in their daily activities and to savor foods that real Sicilian people love to eat! A small tasting of typical street food is included.

The walking tour through the ancient center of Palermo is approx. 2,5 hours and you will visit several monuments including Piazza Pretoria, and the exterior of Cathedral.

The tour will finish at the Four Corner to permit to have the afternoon at leisure to explore Palermo on your own.

This afternoon is at leisure or Optional Add-On:

-Palermo Cooking Class with dine with locals from 5PM



Cefalù and Monreale

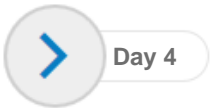
Today we drive to Cefalù, a gorgeous town located on the northern coast of Sicily and one of the major tourist attractions in the region.

Built on a promontory dominated by a sheer cliff, Cefalù, still keeping its ancient print, has grown around the Cathedral wanted by Ruggero II. The Cathedral, began in 1131, is one of the most interesting medieval monuments of the island and boasts outstanding mosaics and a wonderful cloister. A large part of the town is pedestrian. Stroll through the medieval narrow street and admire the picturesque houses on the sea and the long beach of finest sand.

Time at leisure for an independent visit to Cefalù.

This afternoon we then continue to Monreale to see where the Arab-Norman art and architecture reached the pinnacle of its glory with the Dome. Launched in 1174 by William II, it represents the scenes from the Old and New Testaments all in golden mosaics.

Later we return to Palermo.



Erice and Marsala

Today departure for Erice uptown, which was an important religious site associated with the goddess Venus.

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 -- and the lovely preserved Mediaeval town offering the most breathtaking views and a palpable sense of history. Then by walk we join the most visited sites: the Pepoli Castle and Venus Castle. The former was built by the Arabs while the latter was a Norman construction with imposing towers that derived its name from the fact that it was built on the site of the ancient Temple of Venus, allegedly founded by Aeneas.

Enjoy a lunch in a local Sicilian Olive Oil producer Farmhouse including tasting of mixed local products.

This afternoon, we drive along the scenic Salt Way Road to admire the beautiful Saltpans where the sea-salt is still produced following the old Phoenician tradition preserved during the century.

Marsala Salt Way Road, skirting the lagoon to see the snow-capped mountains but hills of salt, one of the Sicilian economy's historical resources that was already very precious in the days of the Phoenicians, who were the first to bring some form of technology to its production. The area offers a truly unique landscape. Windmills, first introduced during mediaeval times, dot the horizon, a testament to how things were once done, though one or two continue to function, pumping water through the sluice gates into or out of the various basins. Piles of harvested salt, neatly covered with terracotta tiles, lie between the road and the basins waiting to be dispatched.

We then continue onto Marsala, the Arab "Marsa Allah" --Harbor of God--, is known in the whole world for one thing: Wine!

The Marsala Wine comes from the western lands of Sicily and its name derives from the homonymous town. The Marsala is the oldest Italian DOC wine, with an average alcohol content of about 18 degrees.

Later we return to Palermo



Day 5

From Palermo to Siracusa with stop at the Valley of the Temples and Roman Villa

Today we drive through the interior of Sicily to reach Agrigento to see the Valley of the Temples: two hours guided walking tour on the Valley of the Temples an important Unesco World Heritage site covers the Temple of Hera, the Temple of Concordia, the Temple of Hercules and the Temple of Zeus.

Agrigento, according to legend, was founded by Daedalus and his son Icarus after they had fled from Crete "by air". Historically, however, its origins date back to 582 B.C. when it was founded by Rhodian-Cretan colonist from the neighboring Gela who named their city Akragas after the nearby river. It rapidly increased in size, importance and military strength under Phalarides, the first tyrant, and later under Theron, who extended his way over northern Sicily as far as Himera.

This afternoon we then continue onto Piazza Armerina to enjoy an independent visit of the amazing Mosaics Floor at the Roman Villa of Casale, that belongs to the Unesco Heritage.

Built on the 4th century AD, the Villa was later forgotten and only in the 20th century excavations revealed the whole building. It is the supreme example of a luxury Roman villa (about 3500 square meters of floor mosaics) and was probably the residence of a member of the upper class of the Roman Empire. The mosaics discovered here are celebrated among scholars of antiquity. The visit inside the Roman Villa will be done independently. Every room has information boards.

Later onto Siracusa.



Day 6

Siracusa and Ortigia – Half Day Walking Tour

Meet your Guide at your hotel --or directly in city center -- and transfer by taxi to the Archaeological Park that highlights the Greek Theatre, the Roman Amphitheatre and the Paradise Quarry.

Mediterraneo's gem and cultural capital of Magna Grecia, the city offers a great variety of choices and attractions. It stands on the shores of south-eastern Sicily and shows different types of coasts: from jagged cliffs to beautiful beaches. The urban territory develops itself on the island of Ortigia and on the mainland; because of its geographic conformation, Siracusa presents a natural spectacle made of river valleys, coloured latomie and beaches that – together with archeological elements of undoubtable historical relevance – give birth to the unique beauty of the place.

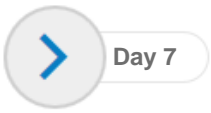
Later taxi back to the center to start your guided walking tour strolling through the streets of Ortigia Island, the heart of the city center connected to the mainland by Umbertino bridge.

Siracusa that belongs to the Unesco heritage, was founded by colonists from Cornith in 735 B.C. and once the most important competitor to Athens. Admire the Dome in Baroque style, the Arethusa Fountain, the Maniace Castle (external view), the Temple of Apollo and the beautiful palaces around Ortigia.

This afternoon is at leisure to explore Siracusa on your own.

Optional Tour Add-Ons - PM

#1 -Ortigia Sunset Boat Tour with aperitif

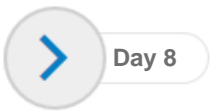


From Siracusa to Taormina with stops in Ragusa Ibla and Modica with lunch

Today departure from Siracusa in direction of Ragusa Ibla. Our Team will offer you time at disposal to keep the feeling with this section of the town giving you direction to explore independently the old part of the city and an undisputed reality of Baroque art. Here you can admire numerous eighteenth-century churches and buildings and the Gardens. Soon after, you will discover another jewel of the Sicilian Gastronomy: the local Chocolate in Modica. This particular chocolate is made with a very old recipe, the one coming from the Aztecs. If you are wondering what the Aztecs have to do with Sicily, think about the Spanish conquistadors in South America and you will see that the same Spanish have dominated this island for a couple of centuries.

We then continue to Noto. In the Arab period the town was the capital of one of the three districts of Sicily (the Val di Noto) and once defeated by the Christians, Noto became a rich Norman city. Unfortunately, it was totally destroyed by the 1693 Sicilian earthquake and rebuilt in a new position nearer to the Ionian Sea. But the new Noto is a masterpiece of Sicilian Baroque! Most of the buildings, including churches and noble palaces, follow one another along the main street and are characterized by the honey tonality of tufa stone.

Later we continue to Taormina.



Etna Experience with lunch in a winery

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. After this stop, we will visit the historic center of Castiglione di Sicilia, a medieval village perched on a hill overlooking the Alcantara valley. 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 a short walk to visit the ruins of the hotel Le Betulle destroyed by a molten lava flow.



Day 9

Taormina at leisure

Today is at Leisure to explore the town on your own.

Taormina has long since been Sicily's most favourite resort town, perched on a coastal bluff that looks out to the Tyrrhenian Sea between Messina and Catania in the north east of the island. Its ancient narrow streets are full of little specialist shops, cafes and restaurants, which are an invitation to step into the spell cast by this intriguing town. The town's history is vibrant and complicated and dates back to the Ancient Greek period. Taormina was settled in 395 BC by residents from the nearby city of Giardini- Naxos, Sicily's oldest Greek established city dating back to 735 BC. Giardini Naxos was where the Greeks established their colony during their domination of Sicily.

Optional Tour Add-Ons

- #1 - Cooking Class with lunch, half day AM
- #2 - Boat Tour Experience, half day
- #3 - Godfather village (independent visit: Savoca and Forza d'Agrò), half day
- #4 - Godfather tour (visit: Castello degli Schiavi), half day
- #5 - Taormina Walking Tour (guided visit: Greek Roman Theatre), half day



Day 10

Departure from Catania Airport

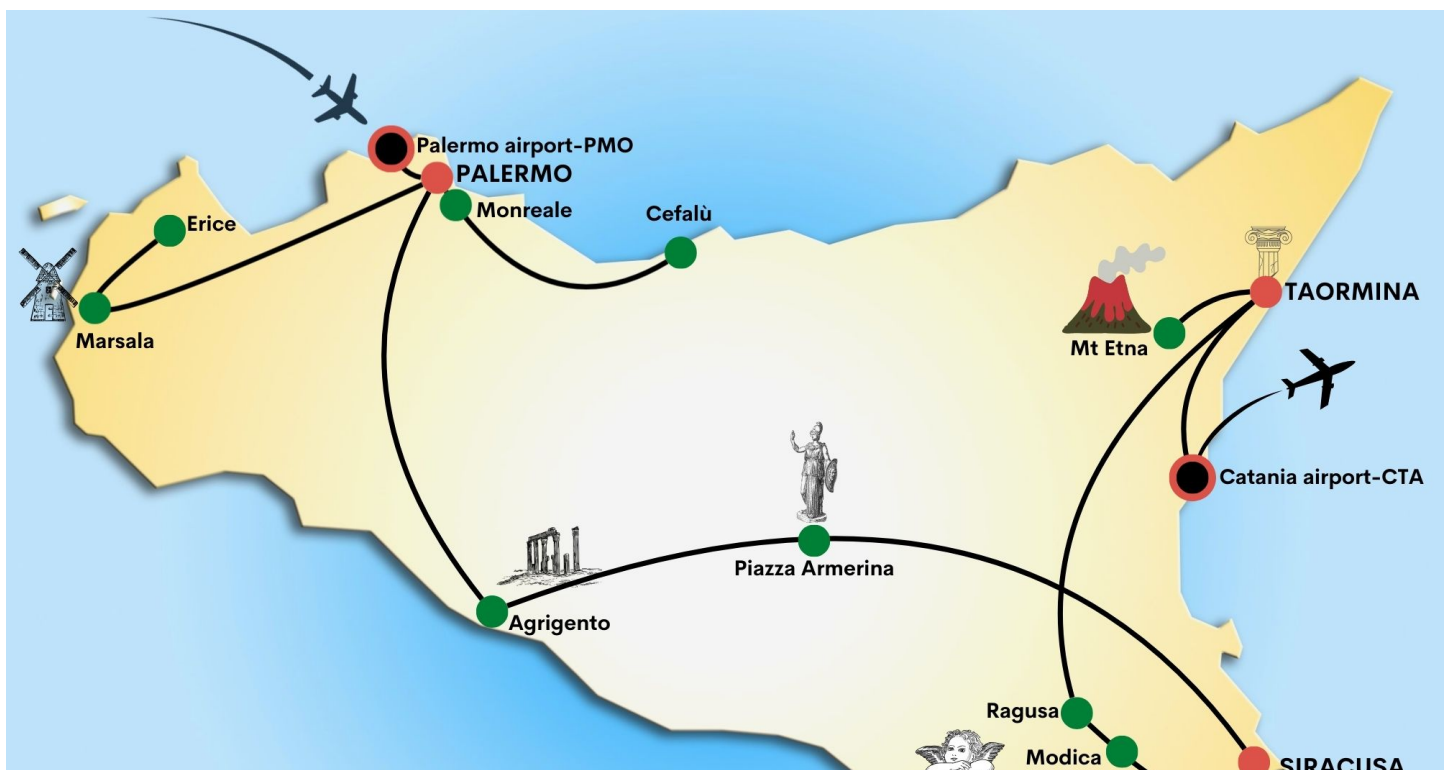
Time to say goodbye to Sicily!

Transfer to Catania Airport and departure to your next destination

Inclusions Today:

>Departure Transfer with private vehicle and Italian speaking chauffeur

TOUR MAP



WHAT IS INCLUDED?



All sightseeing, tasting and excursions as specified in the itinerary



Booking Fee



English speaking Driver

NOT INCLUDED



Admission fees



Beverage and meal not specified



Gratuities and tips



Hotel accommodation



Intercontinental/Local Flights



Optional Excursions



Travel Insurance