

# Sicily ✨ The Undiscovered Italy

Join TRIPS and travel with to Sicily! Prepare to be completely overwhelmed by this island that is so far removed from 'traditional' Italy that some think of it as it's own island nation! From the bubbling capital of Palermo to the age-old Roman and Greek ruins, the island is overflowing with treasures! You'll find sun-drenched sand beaches and the ever-present, smoldering Mount Etna; tranquil farmland and lunar-like mountains; scented citrus orchards and a passion for food and drink! In Sicily, you'll find that nearly everything is better paired with a glass of almond wine, homemade pizza or a steaming espresso! Paired with the locals' irresistible zest and hospitality, you're sure to have a memorable time here! So join us for a spectacular time exploring and enjoying sunny Sicily!

## Itinerary

### Day 1 - Your Journey Begins!

You board your overnight flight for **Italy**. On arrival in Rome, you'll transfer to your connecting flight to **Sicily** where you will be met by your English speaking guide. You'll be transferred to your hotel in **Palermo** where you'll have time to freshen up and relax before enjoying a **welcome dinner** in one of Palermo's finest restaurants and enjoy your first taste of authentic Sicilian cuisine!

Overnight: Hotel in Palermo (D)

### Day 2 - Quattro Canti!

After enjoying breakfast in your hotel, your day starts with a stroll through the **historic center of Palermo - Quattro Canti**, or Four Corners. This is the heart of Palermo's old historic district and is a delightful start to your tour. With fountains and Baroque sculptures, you'll find the Piazza to be magnificent indeed! You'll pass by the immense **13th century** Dominican church of **Santa Caterina** and the massive **Cathedral of Palermo**. Next you'll see the stunning **Norman Palace** and the mosaic icons of the **Palatine Chapel**. Your walking tour concludes with a visit to the **Monreale's Cathedral** with its spectacular mosaics! The remainder of the afternoon and evening are at your leisure. You might choose to shop, further explore Palermo or perhaps visit the delightful Puppet Museum. This evening, you'll enjoy dinner at a restaurant in the heart of the city!

Overnight: Hotel in Palermo (B/D)

### Day 3 - A Windmill and Salt Cave!

After breakfast at your hotel, you'll depart on an excursion to the northwestern portion of the Island of Sicily. Your first stop will be at **Erice**, one of the island's most beautiful hill towns. Founded as a tribute to the goddess of love, **Venus Erycina**, the town has a reputation for beautiful women! As you stroll through the narrow alleyways and along the ancient cobblestone streets, you'll stop at the "**Pasticceria Maria Grammatico**" for a delicious sample of traditional **Sicilian pastries** and marzipans! You'll then make your way to **Trapani**, a thriving fishing villages which maintains its century old traditions. You'll visit the salt mines to see how this precious commodity is extracted from the sea and marvel at the magnificent **windmills**! This evening, you'll stop at a local '**salt windmill**' restaurant for a traditional Sicilian meal of seafood, couscous and spice! After dinner, you'll return to you hotel.

Overnight: Hotel in Palermo (B/D)

### Day 4 - Temples, Temples, Temples!

Following a leisurely breakfast at your hotel you'll check out and depart for the southern side of the island. You'll stop in the ancient Greek city of **Segesta** for a guided tour through the lovely Doric temple that dates back to antiquity! Your tour continues to **Agrigento**, founded by Greek Colonists in 581 BC! In addition to breathtaking views, this is the site of the island's most significant archaeological find! After your hotel check-in, your guide will lead you on a visit to the magnificent **Valley of the Temples**. Here you'll find eight temples built between 510 BC and 430 BC among them the **Temple of Hera** and the **Temple of Olympian Zeus**. Later this evening, enjoy a relaxing dinner at the hotel, followed by an awe-inspiring evening drive along the boulevard where you'll view the temples illuminated in all their majestic glory!

Overnight: Hotel in Agrigento (B/D)

### Day 5 - Mosaics Galore!

This morning, you'll travel through the interior of Sicily en route to **Piazza Armerina** for a specially arranged tour of the famous **Casale Roman Villa**. Throughout the villa, you'll find dazzling mosaics on the floors portraying mythical figures, hunting scenes and scantily clad maidens as well as portraits of the family that once lived there! After time for lunch on your own, continue on to the seaside resort of

Taormina which offers an array of fine restaurants, shops and boutiques. You'll check into your hotel and have ample time to relax and freshen up, perhaps enjoying a stroll around the village. This evening, you'll enjoy a wonderful dinner at one of **Taormina's alleyway restaurants** featuring the best in regional cuisine!

Overnight: Hotel in Taormina (B/D)

### **Day 6- The First Greek Theater!**

After breakfast in your hotel, you'll set out on a walking tour of Taormina, highlighted by a visit to the famous **"Greek Theater"** constructed in the 3rd Century BC. Offering marvelous vistas across the sea, the "cavea" or tiered seating was arranged in such a way as to capture the bay below, the rolling hills to the right and the daunting image of the volcano in the foreground! This afternoon, you'll embark on an excursion up **Mount Etna!** From the base, you'll take a **cable car** to a landing near the summit sitting above the clouds and the tree line! You'll have time for an espresso or gelato before setting out on an **incredible ride in a 4x4 vehicle across the lunar like surfaces in search of smoking craters and warm lava rocks!** After this exhilarating adventure, you'll return to your hotel and this evening enjoy a delightful dinner at a local restaurant. Then enjoy a relaxing stroll along **Corso Umberto** to the main square which offers breathtaking panoramic vistas on a Taormina starry night!

Overnight: Hotel in Taormina (B/D)

### **Day 7 - A Cave With an Ear!?**

This morning you'll venture to nearby **Syracuse**, where you'll visit the ancient **Greek site of Neapolis**. Your expert guide will share the history of the region which was a beacon of civilization for the Western world for over one thousand years! You'll find the great **Theater of Syracuse** and the enormous **Altar of Hieron** as well as the **Ear of Dionysius**, a cave with an ear-shaped entrance with unusual acoustics! After your visit, return to the hotel with time to freshen up and relax a bit. Then, enjoy a festive farewell dinner at **Zammara** where you'll enjoy local seafood delights or Pasta alla Norma! And as a special treat, you'll enjoy **traditional Sicilian folklore music** during your meal!

Overnight: Hotel in Taormina (B/D)

### **Day 8 - "Addiu" to Sicily!**

After an early breakfast this morning, you'll be assisted with your transfer to the airport for your flight to Rome and your connecting flight to the US. **Memories of your Sicilian Adventure are sure to last a lifetime!** (B)



## Inclusions

- Round-trip airport transfers
- Round-trip International Airfare to Sicily (checked baggage fees are not included)
- Private motor coach throughout the itinerary with an English speaking tour escort
- Seven nights accommodations based on double occupancy with private bath at 4 star hotel properties
- Seven buffet breakfasts
- Six dinners
- Farewell dinner with entertainment in Taormina
- English speaking escort during the entire tour (guide/driver gratuities are not included)
- Guided tours of Palermo including Normanni Palace; Segesta as well as admission to archeological park; Valley of Temples; Villa Romana del Casale; Syracuse and admission to the archeological park; Taormina with admission to the Greek Theatre.
- Sicilian Pastry tasting in Erice
- Cable car excursion to Mount Etna and 4x4 tour
- All admissions as indicated in the detailed itinerary
- Porterage of 1 full size suitcase, per person

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