

Tour of Sicily Catania - Taormina 2024

10 days / 9 nights

Regular departures every Saturday



[Day 1 - Saturday: CATANIA \(hotel in Catania/Acitrezza\)](#)

Individual arrival to your hotel in **Catania** or in the picturesque and delightful seaside village of Acitrezza, known for its famous Faraglioni (optional private transfer on request). Dinner on your own and overnight in hotel.

[Day 2 - Sunday: SYRACUSE – NOTO \(hotel in Ragusa\)](#)

After breakfast in hotel departure to **Syracuse** to visit the most beautiful and greatest Greek colony in Sicily and World Heritage Site! The visit will start with the Archaeological Park of Neapolis, with its Greek Theatre, the Roman Amphitheatre, the Latomie of Paradise and the Ear of Dionysius. Proceeding on and visit of the splendid **Ortigia**, a small island which is the historical centre of Syracuse. In Ortigia you will admire the beautiful Cathedral which dominates the square with its authoritative presence. The façade is a powerful Sicilian-Baroque composition but it gives no hint that this building was once a Doric temple! From Piazza Duomo you will reach a wide terrace on the waterfront surrounding the famous Arethusa's Fountain, one of the most famous fresh-water sources of the Greek world. Free time for lunch. Departure to **Noto**, the capital of Sicilian Baroque, famous for its fine buildings of the early eighteenth century and declared Unesco World Heritage Site. Inspired by Baroque ideals of "open city", Noto is a rare masterpiece and the clearest example of theatrical tastes in 18th century architecture whose local limestone has been burnt gold by the sun. Noto's Baroque is a game of elegant curves, floral weaves, perspective views, palaces and gardens, capitals and ornaments that adorn the facades of churches and monasteries. Visit of Palazzo Nicolaci Villadorata, beautiful noble residence in Baroque style. Free time for a walk along the town. Transfer to Ragusa for dinner and overnight in hotel.

Day 3 – Monday: RAGUSA IBLA – MODICA – PIAZZA ARMERINA (Hotel in Agrigento)

Today visit of **Ragusa Ibla** and its historical centre cradle of Sicilian Baroque. Used as a location of the extremely popular Police Inspector Montalbano Tv series, it is today stated among the 44 Italian World Heritage Sites. This little precious ancient town hosts more than 50 churches and many Baroque architectural treasures! You will be fascinated by its Cathedral, situated in the beautiful Dome square and you will love the “Giardino Ibleo”, the oldest of the four main gardens in Ragusa... At 383 meters above sea level, from this beautiful garden you can admire a spectacular panorama! The tour proceeds towards **Modica** chest of innumerable Baroque architectural treasures and for this reason stated Unesco World Heritage Site. Walking along the tiny streets of this charming town, you will have a stop to visit *Sabadi*, one of the most renowned chocolate manufacturers whose chocolate has been awarded as the best Modica chocolate in the last 9 years! You will enjoy a multisensorial chocolate tasting discovering the authentic Sicilian perfumes... the local *nepitella* (wild mint), the orange blossom honey, the raw PGI - quality Sicilian lemon and the PGI – quality Sicilian red orange are just some of the many flavours you can taste! Then you will enjoy some local delicacies under the shadow of the amazing Orti di San Giorgio: 7 gardens suspended between light and beauty. A breath-taking panorama will be the setting of your relaxing lunch! The day goes on to the charming **Piazza Armerina** to visit the famous Villa Romana del Casale, Unesco World Heritage Site, to admire the splendid polychrome mosaics! This majestic villa, belonged to a member of the Roman Senatorial aristocracy, hosts prestigious mosaics representing mythological and historical episodes and scenes of hunting and entertainments: you will love it! Departure to Agrigento. Dinner and overnight in hotel.

Day 4 – Tuesday: AGRIGENTO - MARSALA- SALT ROAD - (hotel in Palermo)

This morning the tour continues in **Agrigento** visiting the famous Valley of the Temples stated World Heritage Site. It was defined by Pindar “the most beautiful city of mortals”. As one of the most prosperous of the ancient Greek cities on the island, Agrigento presents a remarkable series of Doric Temples of the 5th century. Among hundreds of almond trees you will admire the rests of the ancient Akragas. You will see the “Temple of Hera”, the “Temple of Concordia” and the “Temple of Heracles”.

Proceeding on, visit of the charming and well-known town of **Marsala**, where Garibaldi went ashore in May 1860. Marsala is a Mediterranean modern city, divided between sea and land, featuring unforgettable colors: bright yellow, intense blue, strong red, dazzling white and natural green. After a walk along the city centre, guided tour of the **Florio Cellars**. The visit starts in front of the majestic giant vats, built at the end of the 19th century and still used for the refinement of Marsala wine. It continues inside the 3 fascinating barrel chambers, 165 meters long and running beneath 104 arches, under which 1.400 small barrels and about 600 larger barrels and vats of different capacities are arrayed, as c. 5.500.000 liters of Marsala wines age in silence and stillness. After a thirty minute tour through the barrel vaults, where the ancient tuff stone floor has been restored, you will reach the avant-garde tasting rooms named Donna Franca and Duca Enrico. You will enjoy a delicious light lunch and a memorable wine tasting experience!

The tour will continue visiting the popular **Salt Road**: here the salt marshes have given rise to one of the oldest salt-extracting industries in the world! Between Trapani and Marsala, the Salt Road is now protected for its interesting birdlife, and also as an important site of industrial archaeology. Transfer to Palermo, accommodation in hotel, free dinner and overnight.

Day 5 - Wednesday: MONREALE - PALERMO (hotel in Palermo)

After breakfast in hotel, the morning will be spent visiting **Monreale**, its huge Norman Cathedral, proclaimed the Eighth Wonder of the World, and its splendid Cloister in Arab-Norman style: admirable masterpiece of art, sculpture, and semi-precious stones marquetry! Later you will discover the stunning **Palermo**, one of the richest towns in the island for its history and art. Palermo stands on a bay dominated by Mount Pellegrino, a headland described by Goethe as the loveliest he had ever seen. While the Baroque predominates, there is a profusion of different architectural styles reflecting the city’s multicultural past: Punic walls, Art Nouveau villas, noble residences, 17th century squares, including an elegant opera house. Visit of the wonderful eclectic Cathedral, the astonishing **Martorana Church** and the amazing **Cappella Palatina**, admirable example from an historical and an artistic point of view, and a prove of how different cultures, religions and way of thinking apparently incompatible can coexist. Ruggero II employed Bizantyne, Muslim and Latin workers. During the day, you will have a stop to enjoy a typical lunch with local food. Along the path you will admire the famous Teatro Massimo and the debated fountain in Pretoria Square, situated in the ancient Kalsa area and adorned with 16th century sculptures. Dinner on your own and overnight in hotel.

Day 6 - Thursday: CEFALÙ- CATANIA (hotel in Catania/Acitrezza)

After breakfast transfer to **Cefalù**, charming Medieval town situated at the northern coast of Sicily. Visit of its stunning Norman Dome, free time to stroll through the town or to visit the famous and well-known Mandralisca Museum. You will have a stop to have lunch in a famous restaurant. Arrival in Catania to visit **Catania's** historical centre stated Unesco World Heritage Site, with its original Baroque style and its unique streets built with black lava stone. The colour scheme of the city-centre buildings is black and dark grey, relieved with white limestone details around doors and windows. The effect is extremely elegant! The walking tour will start from the scenic Duomo square with its magnificent Cathedral and the famous "Liotru" statue, antique lava-stone elephant, symbol of the city. Not far from here we will reach University Square and we will have a walk along the splendid baroque Via dei Crociferi, the most representative 18th century street in Catania, where we will admire the famous S. Benedict Monastery, Unesco World Heritage Site. Continuing the visit enjoy a break in a historical bar of the city centre to taste the typical "granita & brioche". Dinner on your own and overnight in hotel.

Day 7 – Friday: ETNA – TAORMINA (hotel in Taormina)

This morning after a short visit of the famous "pescheria" (the ancient fish market) in Catania, the tour will continue with an excursion to the Mount **Etna**, the highest (c. 3350m) volcano in Europe and one of the largest and most active in the world, nowadays Unesco World Heritage Site. Its regional park protects 59.000 hectares of unique geology, flora and fauna, villages and farms, and traditional methods of forestry, bee-keeping, wine manufacture, stonework and carpentry. Views of stunning landscapes will amaze you heading to Rifugio Sapienza. You will reach the "Crateri Silvestri", small volcanic cones now inactive, surrounded by ancient lava flows. The view beyond the mountain's hundreds of subsidiary cones and craters, can extend across the whole of Sicily, the Aeolian islands and Calabria. The spectacle is unique! You will have the chance to enjoy the local homemade honey and some typical products of the area. Then you will have lunch in a lovely restaurant. The tour continues towards **Taormina**, charming town renowned for its magnificent position above the sea commanding a celebrated view of Etna. Visit of Taormina's fascinating Greek theatre which will leave you breathless for its commanding view on Giardini Naxos bay and the Etna mountain! Free time for a nice walk among the picturesque Medieval typical narrow streets, to go shopping and looking around the local handicrafts (coral jewels, precious laces, ceramics, pastries and much more). Back to the hotel for dinner and overnight.

Day 8 - Saturday: CASTELMOLA-SAVOCA (Hotel in Taormina)

After breakfast, departure for **Castelmola**, near Taormina, with a wonderful landscape over the Ionian Sea. It is a small village characterized by narrow medieval alleys, little squares and ancient churches, officially recognized as one of the most beautiful villages in Italy. You will visit the highest point, having a nice walk from the main square, Piazza Sant'Antonino, decorated with an extraordinary mosaic in local white stone and lava stone, up to the ruins of the Castello di Mola, of Greek-Byzantine origin. Proceeding on, the excursion will continue to **Savoca**, also one of the most beautiful villages in Italy and located over a rocky hill. Savoca treasures vestiges of Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque origins in its territory. You will visit the famous open-air set of the famous movie "The Godfather" by Francis Ford Coppola, walking through the delightful alleys and lingering in front of the famous "Vitelli" bar. You could imagine yourself as being in one of the most famous scenes of the film, when the character played by Al Pacino meets the father of the future bride and asks Apollonia's hand. Continuing on you will reach the church of Santa Lucia, chosen to shoot the wedding scene. Return to Taormina and free afternoon. Dinner and overnight at the hotel.

Day 9 - Sunday: TAORMINA (Hotel in Taormina)

After breakfast, free day in **Taormina**, defined by Goethe as the "paradise on earth". You can enjoy the Medieval village visiting its historical monuments, or doing shopping buying some of the local handicraft products. As an alternative you can relax by the sea and enjoy the colors and scents of its Mediterranean vegetation... We suggest to visit Isola Bella, one of the most enchanting beaches in Sicily, also called the "Pearl of the Mediterranean" thanks to its particular location and vegetation: a perfect mix of tropical plants and local flora! Dinner and overnight in hotel.

Day 10 – Monday: TAORMINA

Breakfast in hotel and end of services.

RATE PER PERSON

€ 1.725,00 in double room

Double room for single use supplement: € 390,00 - 3rd bed reduction: € 110,00

PRIVILEGE PACKAGE

Includes: Superior/Deluxe Room – Private transfer in/out
City taxes- All entrance fees as per program

€ 480,00 p.p. in double/twin room

€590,00 p.p. in single/Double single use

REGULAR DEPARTURES DATES - SATURDAY 2024

March	9	16	23	30	
April	6	13	20	27	
May	4	11	18	25	
June	1	8	15	22	29
July	6	13	20	27	
August	3	10	17	24	31
September	7	14	21	28	
October	5	12	19	26	
November	2	9	16		



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THE RATE INCLUDES:

- Multilingual Tour leader and professional travel guide* (English, Italian or Spanish) for the whole tour (from the 2nd day to the evening of the 9th day), local guides or audio-guides where necessary.
 - Deluxe bus from day 2 to day 9
 - Whisper kit
- Accommodation in charming 4 stars hotels mostly located in the city centre, international breakfast included:
Catania city centre: **Il Principe Hotel 4*** / **Romano House Hotel 4*** or similar — Acitrezza: **I Malavoglia Hotel 4*** / **I Faraglioni Hotel 4*** or similar
Ragusa city centre : **Mediterraneo Palace Hotel 4*** or similar
Agrigento: **Baia di Ulisse Wellness & SPA 4*** or similar
Palermo city centre: **Mercure Palermo Centro 4*** / **Ibis Styles Palermo Cristal 4*** or similar
Taormina: **Hotel Villa Diodoro 4*** / **Hotel Caparena Wellness & SPA** or similar
- 9 international breakfast, 5 lunches in exclusive restaurants and 5 dinners in hotels to have a taste of Sicilian traditional cuisine
- Visit of the main suggestive Unesco World Heritage Sites: Syracuse, Noto, Ragusa, Modica, Piazza Armerina, Agrigento, Monreale, Palermo, Cefalù, Catania city centre, Etna.
 - Tasting of Sicilian typical products:
Modica (day 3): visit of the well-known chocolate manufacturers Sabadi with tasting;
Marsala (day 4): visit of the famous Florio wine cellar and wine tasting;
Catania (day 6): tasting of Sicilian “*granita & brioche*”;
Etna (day 7) visit of a beekeeping honey company and honey tasting.

THE RATE DOES NOT INCLUDE:

- Transfers in/out
- Meals not included by the program
 - Beverages
- Entrance fees at monuments/museums
 - City taxes (where compulsory)
- Anything not specified under “The rate includes”

SUPPLEMENTS:

- Pre-night in hotel in Catania (BB treatment):
€ 84,00 p.p. in Classic double room per night - € 130,00 in Classic single room per night
 - Pre-night in hotel in Acitrezza (BB treatment):
€ 103,00 p.p. in Classic double room per night - € 109,00 in Classic double room for single use per night
 - Post night Taormina on request
 - Transfers Catania airport/hotel in Catania: € 42,00 per car (1/2 pax).
 - Transfers Catania airport/hotel in Acitrezza : € 58,00 per car (1/2 pax).
 - Transfer Hotel in Taormina / Catania airport: € 115,00 per car (1/2 pax)
 - Assistance – Medical Expense Reimbursement – Luggage insurance
 - Travel Cancellation Expenses Insurance: on request.
- *Monolingual departures during high season.

Extra fees entrances to be confirmed

- ◆ Syracuse Archeological Park € 14,00 p.p. ◆ Syracuse Cathedral € 2,00 p.p
- ◆ Noto Palazzo Nicolaci € 4,00 p.p. ◆ Piazza Armerina Villa Romana € 10,00 p.p.
- ◆ Agrigento Valley of the Temples € 14,00 p.p. ◆ Monreale Cathedral € 6,00 p.p.

Arrival day: on request, it is possible to arrange optional HD private excursions to Acireale or Caltagirone



Special GIFT to Participants:
a splendid illustrated book about Sicilian culinary tradition with recipes in English



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