



West Short Break - 4 days

3 nights/4 days private tour of Sicily, land only, with English speaking driver escort looking for art, history, olive oil and wine concentrated in the west-side



Location

Palermo



Days

4



Duration

4 Days



Category

Multi Days



Season

All Year



Tour Type

Private

TOUR OVERVIEW

Route:

Land: Palermo airport (PMO – Falcone Borsellino International Airport), West Side

Leave: Palermo airport (PMO – Falcone Borsellino International Airport), West Side

West Short Break - Private

4 days/3 nights | Palermo (3 night)

Day 1 – LAND: Palermo airport (PMO: Falcone Borsellino International Airport)/Town

Day 2 – Palermo and Monreale

Day 3 – Palermo/Erice, Olive Oil, Segesta and Winery/Palermo

Day 4 – LEAVE: Palermo airport (PMO: Falcone Borsellino International Airport)

Recommended Licensed Local Guide:

-Palermo and Monreale: already included

-Segesta: to visit the Temple

TOUR CODE: WEST4

TOUR ITINERARY



Day 1

Palermo airport (PMO)/town

Approximately Travel Time and Unit: 39 Minutes - 20 Miles (31 Kilometers)

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

Welcome to the warm, beautiful and pleasant island of Sicily! Upon arrival at Palermo Falcone-Borsellino Airport (PMO | Your Arrival by TBA) please proceed through Passport Control and collect your luggage inside the customs area. Then transfer in town



Day 2

Palermo and Monreale

Approximately Travel Time and Unit: Half Day - 40 Miles (60 Kilometers)

English Speaking Driver Escort Disposal: NO

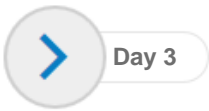
Private Vehicle and Italian Speaking Driver Disposal: half day from h 8.30AM

Palermo and Monreale, English Speaking Local Guide included, half day from h 8.30AM

Our tour starts with a short drive to Monreale, to see where Arab-Norman art and architecture reached its pinnacle in the Duomo (Admission fee: not included), launched in 1174 by William II. It represents scenes from the Old and New Testaments all in golden mosaics. The splendid mosaics in the interior of Monreale Cathedral are its principal artistic attraction. Their subtle beauty creates an atmosphere of solemn tranquility and perhaps even awe. The mosaics cover practically all the surfaces of the cathedral's walls, except for the ground level, up to a height of two meters, where the walls are finished in white marble bordered with polychrome inlay decoration. All of the cathedral's mosaic figures (many are icons) are placed upon a background of gold mosaic "tesserae" (tiles). The interior of the church is about 100 meters long by 40 meters wide. There are a total of 130 individual mosaic scenes depicting biblical and other religious events. The Old Testament is depicted on the walls of the central nave, starting from the Creation and ending with Jacob's Fight with the Angel. Later we return to Palermo and we then continue onto the Four Corners which is the junction in Palermo. Effectively, it is the centre point of the four areas of the old town centre. You will almost inevitably pass through it and it is worth stopping for five minutes to have a look at its sculptures which were commissioned by the Spanish Viceroy in 1611. The sculptures on each of the four corners depict a variety of themes, including the four seasons, four Spanish kings and the four patron saints of the old town areas. Going south-east down Via Maqueda you will come across Piazza Pretoria which is home not only to a splendid fountain but several other impressive buildings including, on the right, the City Hall. The fountain, known for generations as the "Fountain of Shame", has an interesting history. It was originally built in 1555 by the Florentine sculpture Francesco Camiliani for a Tuscan villa owned by the Viceroy Pedro de Toledo. His son, on inheriting the villa in 1574, thought it a little too risqu? for his tastes and sold it to the City of Palermo who erected it

where it now stands. The large central fountain is the focal point for sixteen nude statues of nymphs, humans, mermaids and satyrs. If you imagine this being erected during the Inquisition, it is quite easy to imagine why it received its epithet, the "Fountain of Shame". Behind the City Hall, there is another square, Piazza Bellini where you can see two of Palermo's most interesting churches: the Church of Santa Maria dell'Amiraglio (Admission fee: not included) --more commonly known as La Martorana -- and the Church of San Cataldo, instantly recognizable thanks to its trio of red domes. La Martorana was commissioned in 1143 by George of Antioch, a famous Admiral (a word of Arabic origin) of the fleet of King Roger II. Initially the church was dedicated to the celebration of Greek Orthodox rites but this changed in the 13th century when it became part of the Catholic Church. Several parts of the structure were unfortunately changed during the 17th century and many of the original mosaics were discarded to make way for Baroque frescoes. However, the surviving mosaics are amongst the most impressive ever to have been created in Sicily. Indeed, the craftsmen who were brought from Byzantium by King Roger II to work on the Normal Palace and the Duomo at Cefalu', also contributed their art to this church. The wonderful bell tower outside is the apogee of Norman-Arab architecture.

This afternoon is at leisure.



Palermo/Erice, Olive Oil, Segesta and Winery/Palermo

Approximately Travel Time and Unit: Full Day - 150 Miles (240 Kilometers)

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

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. Towering over the west of Sicily at 751m above sea level and often covered in its own personal cloud, Erice is a wonderfully preserved Mediaeval town offering the most breathtaking views and a palpable sense of history. Originally an Elymian city (the Elymians were around before the Greeks ever set foot in Sicily) Erice, or Eryx as it was first called, was a town of no little importance and renown and is said to have attracted the likes Hercules and Aeneas. Like so many Sicilian towns, it passed from one invader to another as all the usual suspects came and went, leaving their architectural calling cards and their cultural footprints. The name changed from Eryx, to Erice to Gebel Hamed and Monte San Giuliano but its essential character remained, obstinately repelling any attempt to change its real identity. Amongst the most visited sites are the two castles, 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.

Lunch in an olive oil farmhouse to taste genuine dishes and enjoy the olive oil tastings

This afternoon onto Segesta one of the major cities of the Elymian people, one of the three indigenous peoples of Sicily. Segesta's ancient Greek temple can make a valid claim to being the best preserved in the world, and its amphitheatre boasts a hilltop position on Mount Barbaro second to none. The archeological site, about seventy kilometers southwest of Palermo, reflects the presence of several ancient civilizations, beginning with the elusive Elymians. While the magnificent Doric temple, though (strictly speaking) never completed - as the roof was never added and the pillars never fluted - is impressive, it is just the highlight of a large archeological park. Today we visit the Temple (Admission fee: not included)

Later we travel in the country side and we soon arrive in a local Winery for our snack and Wine tastings.

Later return to Palermo. (L)

Palermo/airport

Approximately Travel Time and Unit: 39 Minutes - 20 Miles (31 Kilometers)

Private Vehicle and Italian Speaking Driver Disposal: transfer out only

Today departure for Falcone-Borsellino International Airport (PMO | Your Departure by TBA)

TOUR MAP



WHAT IS INCLUDED?

- ✓ Airport transfers
- ✓ All sightseeing, tasting and excursions as specified in the itinerary
- ✓ English speaking Tour Director/Driver (as per program)
- ✓ Licensed Local Guide as per program
- ✓ One visit to a winery
- ✓ VAT
- ✓ Vehicle with air conditioning

NOT INCLUDED

- ✗ Admission fees
- ✗ Beverage and meal not specified
- ✗ City taxes
- ✗ Fee for luggage handling fee at hotel
- ✗ Gratuities and tips
- ✗ Hotel accommodation
- ✗ Intercontinental/Local Flights
- ✗ Licensed Tourist Guide if not specified
- ✗ Porterage at airport
- ✗ Travel Insurance