



Magic Eastern Sicily Tour - 10 days

9 nights/10 days Private Tour of Sicily with vehicle and local English speaking driver escort, land package only, including experiences as cheese making, wine tastings, choco-bar making and lunch at home.



Location

Catania



Days

10



Duration

10 Days



Category

Multi Days



Season

All Year



Tour Type

Private

TOUR OVERVIEW

Route:

Land: Catania airport (CTA – Fontanarossa International Airport), East Side

Leave: Catania airport (CTA – Fontanarossa International Airport), East Side

Day 1 – LAND: Catania airport (CTA: Fontanarossa International Airport)/Syracuse

Day 2 – Syracuse AM (visit: Archaeological Park and Ortygia). PM at leisure

Day 3 – Syracuse/Buscemi, Palazzolo Acreide and Noto/Syracuse

Day 4 – Syracuse/Modica (visit: Chocolate Shop) and Ragusa (visit: Ibla)/Syracuse

Day 5 – Syracuse/Cheese and Wine Experience and Tuna Fishing Village/Syracuse

Day 6 – Syracuse/Catania (visit: City Center) and Cyclops Riviera/Taormina

Day 7 – Taormina/Collective Cooking Class OR Godfather Villages/Taormina. PM at leisure

Day 8 – Taormina/Etna Volcano Off Road Experience and Wineries/Taormina

Day 9 – Taormina

Day 10 – Taormina/LEAVE: Catania airport (CTA: Fontanarossa International Airport)

Recommended Licensed Local Guide:

Syracuse: already included (Half Day Walking Tour: 9AM-12PM)

Taormina: Half Day Walking Tour: 9AM-12PM or 2PM-5PM

TOUR CODE: MAGIC10

TOUR ITINERARY



Day 1

Catania airport/Syracuse

Approximately Travel Time and Unit: - 40 Miles (65 Kilometers)

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

Welcome to the warm, beautiful and pleasant island of Sicily! Upon arrival at Catania Fontanarossa International Airport (CTA | Your Arrival by TBA) please proceed through Passport Control and collect your luggage inside the customs area. Then transfer to Syracuse.



Day 2

Syracuse

Approximately Travel Time and Unit: -

Private Vehicle and English Speaking Driver Escort Disposal: NO

Taxi Service Disposal: round trip transfers to the Archaeological Park Syracuse, English Speaking Local Guide included for a Walking Tour, Half Day from h 9AM

Today we visit Syracuse, a town rich in history, legends and charm. The Archaeological Park (Admission fee: not included) includes some of the most extraordinary monuments that classical antiquity has left us and, given their degree of interest and importance, has few equals elsewhere in Italy. Inside the Park the best renowned sites are the Greek Theatre, that is one of the largest of the entire Greek world, the Roman Amphitheatre and the Paradise Quarry, that houses the mythical cave Ear of Dionysius. The tour continues discovering the earth of Syracuse, the small and picturesque Ortygia Island, connected to the mainland only by a bridge. Almost every street is related to historical sites, churches or legends and strolling around is the best way to enjoy this suggestive island. Do not miss the Dome and Aretusa Fountain.

This afternoon is at leisure.



Day 3

Syracuse/Buscemi, Palazzolo Acreide and Noto/Syracuse

Approximately Travel Time and Unit: Full Day - 70 Miles (100 Kilometers)

Private Vehicle and English Speaking Driver Escort Disposal: full day from h 9AM

Not available on Saturday, Sunday and Italian holidays

Today a sightseeing drive will lead you along the country side, the hills and the vineyards towards the Noto valley, for approximately forty minutes, toward Buscemi, named the "museum town". 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: the farmer home, the millstone, the blacksmith shop, the carpenter shop, the shoemaker shop and other typical works of the time. You will learn how people used to work and live in Sicily about a century ago, within an environment incredibly well preserved.

Then we will drive you to Palazzolo Acreide, an ancient Greek town founded in 650 BC, with a perfectly preserved Greek theater and a downtown built in Barocco style, with two of the churches that recently became UNESCO heritage. You will enjoy a nice walk in the old town, before joining a Sicilian family for a lunch at home! We all will eat together a traditional Sicilian lunch, enjoying authentic home made food and hanging out with the locals in a friendly and relaxing environment.

After lunch, we will drive you to the magnificent Noto, another gem built in Barocco style, for a walk in the downtown and a coffee and dessert in one of the ancient pastry shop.

This afternoon we then return to Syracuse. (L)



Day 4

Syracuse/Modica and Ragusa/Syracuse

Approximately Travel Time and Unit: Full Day - 110 Miles (175 Kilometers)

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

Today departure for Modica. Like the other towns in the Val di Noto, was badly damaged in the 1693 earthquake and largely rebuilt in Sicilian Baroque style. It is divided into two parts, "higher" Modica and "lower" Modica, which are connected by numerous flights of steps. 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 custodian of a 400 year tradition of Sicilian chocolate-making. Being part of the Spanish kingdom for so many years meant that Sicily was often one of the first recipients of the new foodstuffs being brought back from South America. Cacao was one of these and today Modica is still specialized in making granulose chocolate, often flavoured with chilli pepper, cinnamon or vanilla, that is based on Aztec methods and recipes. Chocolate shops abound and it is possible to watch the "chocolatiers" at work. For the real chocoholic, it is included a sweet experience: make your own choco-bar and taste Modica granulose chocolate!

Later onto Ragusa to visit one of the most fascinating towns in Sicily, 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 when was razed to the ground by the terrible earthquake. 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, on a ridge at the bottom of a gorge, 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. Whether you approach it from Modica to the south or from Ragusa Superiore, the sight of the jumble of houses, churches and civic palazzi piled on top of each

other, clinging to the walls of the gorge, is really quite breathtaking. Although seemingly Mediaeval from a distance, once you enter the town's heart, the Baroque logic of its plan becomes more obvious. This afternoon we then return to Syracuse.



Day 5

Syracuse/Cheese and Wine Experience/Tuna Fishing Village/Syracuse

Approximately Travel Time and Unit: Full Day - 70 Miles (110 Kilometers)

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

Not available on Saturday, Sunday and Italian holidays

Today you will have the opportunity to live for one day with the farmers and the wine makers, discovering some of the most genuine food gem of our land and enjoying an authentic experience in the beauty countryside of south-east coast.

A sightseeing drive will lead you along the ocean side, the hills and the vineyards towards the Noto valley, for approximately one hour. Then, you'll be welcomed by the Farmer and his family in their ancient Sicilian farm, with a first tasting of some of their delicious products in a very relaxing and friendly atmosphere. A walk around the farm, surrounded by the scent of almond and lemon trees, will give you the opportunity to see the flock of sheep, where every day they get the milk, and to admire the elegance of the almond trees, where the authentic and prizes winner Mandorla di Noto comes from. During the walk you will also learn how to work the almonds to create the famous Sicilian almond milk. After the walk, The Farmer will offer you a real demonstration of how to work diligently with sheep's milk to create the delicious Ricotta cheese, fresh mozzarella and other typical Sicilian cheeses, with the warm breeze rolling in from the Mediterranean Sea into their rustic kitchen. You will definitely enjoy the best cheese-making demonstrations in Sicily. From the first drop of milk to the delicious final products. All these products will be the base for the typical Sicilian lunch, where the friendly feeling of a small and intimate group of food lovers will make the experience unique.

After lunch, Your Driver will lead you to the amazing Marzamemi, a fisherman village that has, recently, become an incredible spot for people who wants to enjoy a nice walk in the old town, surrounded by the ocean and the breeze. The village extend around the harbour and it is characterized by narrow streets and little stone houses with roof tiles, while a large square is the center of the town.

Approximately at 3pm, the driver will take you through the breathtaking countryside, to discover this wonderful area of Sicily, where you can find a landscape typical of Tuscany, with hills, olive groves and the Nero d'Avola vineyards, a unique experience to enjoy driving along scenic and silent country roads for approximately 45 minutes, and having fantastic photo opportunities.

The excursion continues with a two hours visit of one vineyard and their cellars and the wine tasting, followed by traditional food tasting - oil, cheese, sun dried tomatoes – where you will learn the different characteristics of our local wines, discovering the history and the taste of some Sicilian wines that are beginning to be sought after all over the world. You will also learn how to match wine perfectly with our impressive Sicilian cuisine.

This afternoon we then return to Syracuse. (L S)



Day 6

Syracuse/Catania/Cyclops Riviera/Taormina

Approximately Travel Time and Unit: Full Day - approx. 90 Miles (145 Kilometers)

Private Vehicle and English Speaking Driver Escort Disposal: full day from h 8:30AM

Catania, English Speaking Local Guide NOT included

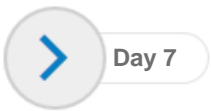
Today departure for Catania, the big and lively city on the eastern coast, influenced by the neighbor Etna

Volcano and his blows and always in contrast with Palermo, the Capital of Sicily, very different in spirit and colours. Time at leisure in the earth of the town. Stroll around and admire the best highlights around Sant'Agata Dome (Admission fees: not included) and linger your eyes on the Elephant made of lava stone, known locally as Liotru, symbol of Catania and of many legends. Do not miss the picturesque daily Fish Market, an open air market that captures the flavor of Arab Suk, a jumble of vendors' stalls which sells a fantastic array of just caught fish.

Then we drive along the charming Sicily's Cyclops Riviera, a legendary coast north of Catania, linked to Polyphemus, the giant. Cyclops Riviera (Riviera dei Ciclopi) is a 12-kilometer long stretch of the coast located north of the beautiful city of Catania that goes from Acireale to Aci Castello. This wonderful coastline was named after some legends about the huge rocks sprouting from the sea, (some of them even up to 70 meters high). In fact, there are different legends about these boulders all involving Polyphemus, the giant son of Poseidon and one of the Cyclopes. According to a legend, Polyphemus threw these boulders in the sea to express his rage against Ulysses, whose story has been told by Homer's Odyssey. Another legend talks about a shepherd called Aci and Polyphemus, both in love with Galatea, a nymph of the sea. Today, most of the towns that lie on this coast (Acireale, Aci Castello, Aci Trezza, and others) owe their names to Aci.

The coast and the nearby boulders are part of a protected area featuring great varieties of flora and fauna, beautiful sea floor and lush underwater vegetation.

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



Taormina/Collective Cooking Class OR Godfather Villages/Taormina

The tour includes one of the following activities (please advise your preference):

Cooking Class – Collective activity

Approximately Travel Time and Unit: -

English Speaking Chef Disposal, half day from h 9AM (approx. 5hours) – Meeting Point: TBA

Private Vehicle and English Speaking Driver Escort Disposal: NO

This morning meet the Chef in Taormina uptown (Meeting Point: TBA). A brief walk takes us to an open air market where we'll purchase fresh fruit, vegetables and all the ingredients necessary for the cooking course. Then onto a local restaurant to start our cooking class. At the end of the course, we will enjoy our scrumptious creations with the perfect complement, a beautifully paired Sicilian wine. Dessert follows accompanied by a typical local Dessert wine. Buon Pranzo!

This afternoon is at leisure (L)

OR

Taormina/Godfather Villages/Taormina

Approximately Travel Time and Unit: Half Day - 40 Miles (70 Kilometers)

Private Vehicle and English Speaking Driver Escort Disposal: half day from h 9AM (approx. 3hours)

Today you will be driven to enjoy the scenes of The Godfather movie. From the coastal road, rich of villas, flowering gardens, and picturesque villages, leads to the historical artist town of Savoca. In a private house in the village, Bar Vitelli houses a collection of local artisans' tools and photographs taken when Francis Ford Coppola shot scenes of The Godfather II. Stroll along the village's main street past Santa Lucia and San Michele churches for a short view over the valley and enjoy a Sicilian Almond Milk or a refreshing Lemon Ice Granita. Drive away, we'll find Forza d'Agrò, a charming little village over-looking the Arab-Norman castle of Capo Sant'Alessio. In 1990, Al Pacino and Sophia Coppola shot scenes here for The Godfather III. From the main square, a lane meets the circular steps that ascend to the Gothic-Catalan portal in front of the Church of San Agostino.

Later we return to Taormina. This afternoon is at leisure.



Day 8

Taormina/Etna Volcano Off Road Experience and Wineries/Taormina

Approximately Travel Time and Unit: Full Day - 70 Miles (110 Kilometers)

Season: this excursion is doable from June to October. From November to May we will provide a different route which does not involve the summit of the volcano and arrives only up to 1.500 mt.

Dress Code (June-October): use sturdy shoes, wind jacket and do not forget sun screen

Private Jeep (WD4X4, Land Rover) and English Speaking Driver Disposal: full day from h 8.30AM

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. After this stop, we will visit Castiglione di Sicilia, a medieval village perched on a hill overlooking the Alcantara valley. Walk to the Belvedere of Lauria Castle built on the highest cliff of the village and enjoy the wonderful view.

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 local cuisine and excellent wines. In fact the wines are complemented by uniquely local delicacies.

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.

Before coming back to Taormina, traveling through one of the wine roads of Sicily and crossing large expanses of vineyards (Etna D.O.C.), we will stop at another local winery, to enjoy again relaxing moments surrounded by nature while sampling local cuisine and excellent wines. In fact the wines are complemented by uniquely local delicacies.

This afternoon we then return to Taormina (S S)



Day 9

Taormina

Approximately Travel Time and Unit: -

Private Vehicle and English Speaking Driver Escort Disposal: NO

Taormina, English Speaking Local Guide NOT included

Today is at leisure: enjoy a drink at the tables of Caffè Wunderbar (or similar) in Piazza IX Aprile may set you back a few euros, but you'll be basking where Tennessee Williams and Elizabeth Taylor basked before you. As well as the famed Greek-Roman Theatre (Admission fee: not included), there are several minor sites to be discovered around Taormina. The attractive principal thoroughfare, Corso Umberto is pedestrian and ideal for strolling and window-shopping. Picturesque lanes above and below the Corso are interesting to explore, while if you want to stretch your legs further there are attractive walks up into the hills, or down to the sea. Given its compact size, Taormina has a huge range of bars, cafes and restaurants where you can while away pleasant hours while admiring the views.

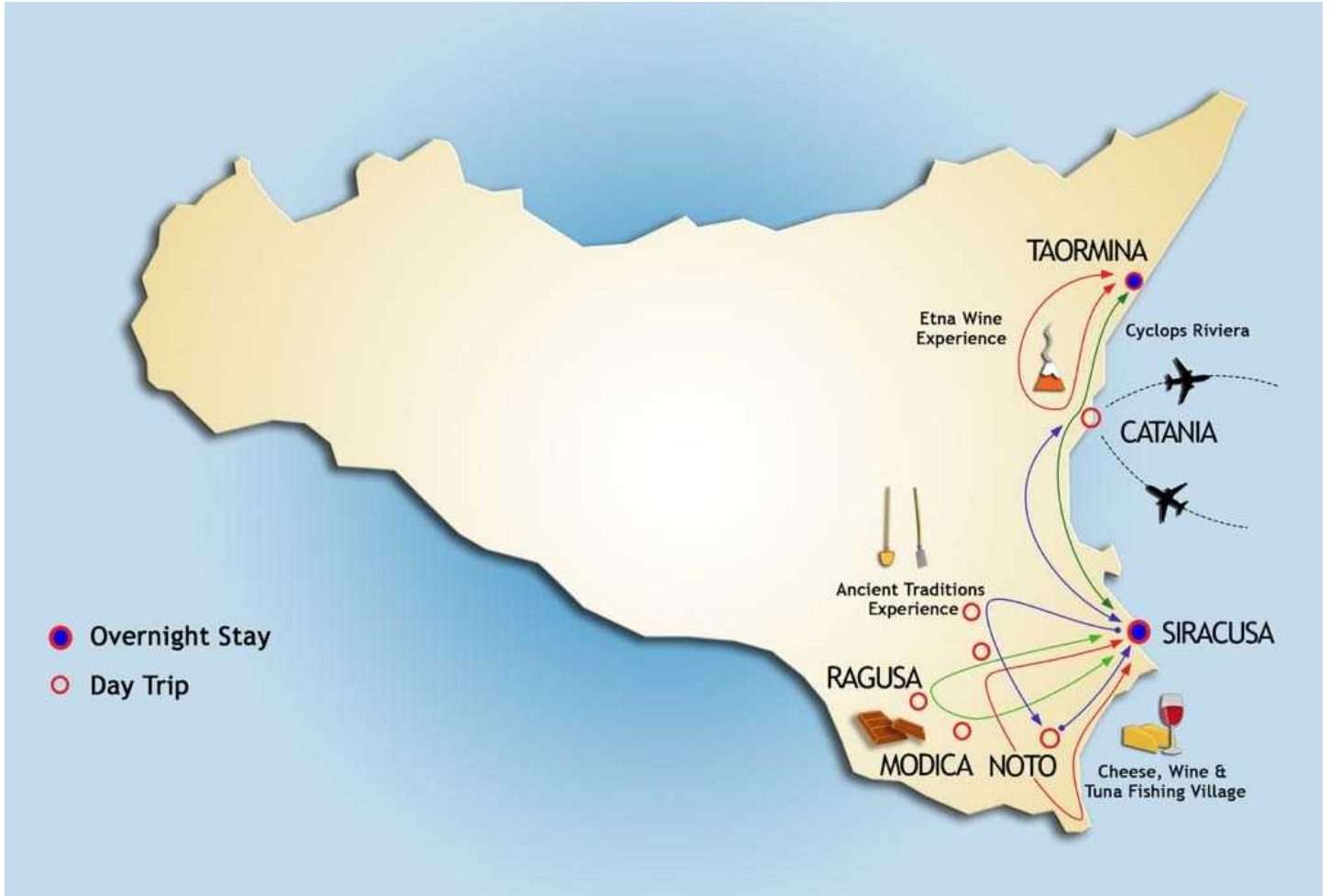
Taormina/Catania airport

Approximately Travel Time and Unit: 50 Minutes - 45 Miles (70 Kilometers)

Private Vehicle and Italian Speaking Driver Disposal: transfer out only

Today departure for Fontanarossa Catania airport (CTA | Your Departure by TBA)

TOUR MAP



WHAT IS INCLUDED?

- ✓ Airport transfers
- ✓ All sightseeing, tasting and excursions as specified in the itinerary
- ✓ English speaking Driver
- ✓ Italian speaking Driver
- ✓ VAT
- ✓ Vehicle with air conditioning

NOT INCLUDED

- ✗ Admission fees
- ✗ Beverage and meal not specified
- ✗ City taxes
- ✗ Gratuities and tips
- ✗ Hotel accommodation
- ✗ Intercontinental/Local Flights
- ✗ Licensed Tourist Guide if not specified
- ✗ Travel Insurance