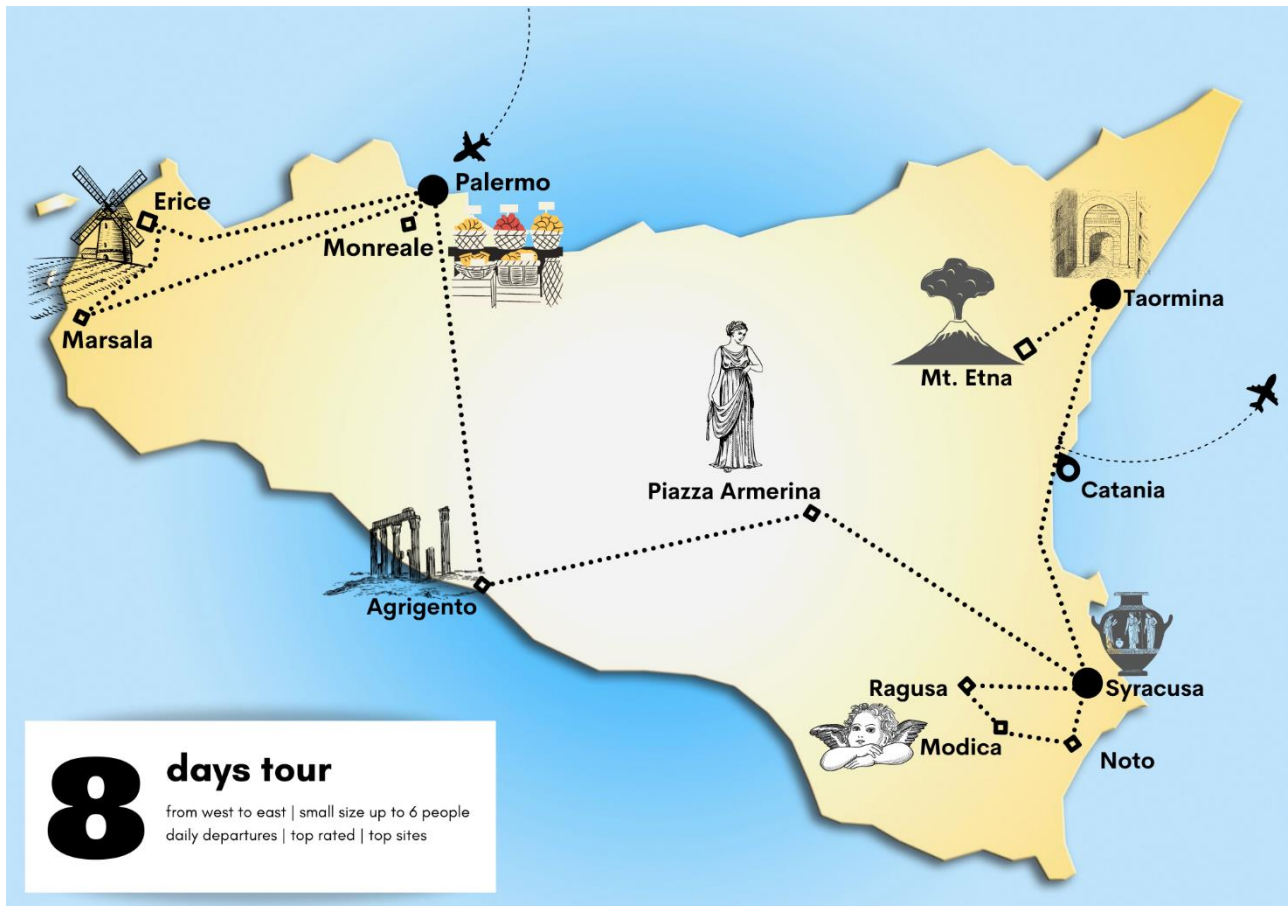




Small Group Tour of Sicily / 8 days

**Small Size Group Tour up to 6 people
Daily Departures**



Sicily is one of the Mediterranean's greatest pleasures. Lying off the coast of southwestern Italy, this captivating island offers stunning sea views, quaint medieval hill towns, rustic cuisine and fine wine.

There are lot of options for tours in Sicily, where you can relish great wines looking at breathtaking surroundings such as the Etna Volcano, endless wineries, street food meals, archaeological sites and lovely coastal towns.

We have assembled top activities, top sights and especially top rated services and we have designed this tour for total 8 days.



Tour Recap

Season: all year round

7 nights/8 days

Palermo (3 night) Syracuse (2 nights) Taormina (2 night)

Accommodation: No included. Hotel package is available on request

Airline Tickets: not purchased by us

Land: Palermo airport – West Side

Leave: Catania airport – East Side

1° day – Palermo airport > **Independent** Transfer to Palermo City Centre

2° day – Palermo Street Food Walking Tour and Monreale

3° day – Palermo > Marsala, Lunch and Erice > Palermo

4° day – Palermo > Agrigento and Piazza Armerina > Syracuse

5° day – Syracuse Half Day Walking Tour

6° day – Syracuse > Ragusa Ibla, Modica and Noto > Taormina

7° day - Taormina > Etna Jeep Tour with lunch > Taormina

8° day – Taormina > **Independent** Transfer to Catania airport

Day by Day Itinerary

Day 1 – Palermo Airport

Welcome to the warm, beautiful and pleasant island of Sicily! Upon arrival at Palermo Airport (*PMO*) collect your luggage inside the customs area. Then independent transfer to Your Hotel

Day 2 – Palermo Street Food, Citysightseeing and Monreale



Palermo Street Food, Small size group tour up to 12 people
Street Food Meeting Point: h 10AM at the Palermo Opera House
Taxi fee included for R/T Transfer to Monreale

Today h 10AM meet our team at the Palermo Opera House to start our **Street Food Walking Tour!** We start the tour admiring the **Massimo Theatre-Palermo Opera House** (external view), then we explore a suggestive and lively **open-air market**, a place with strong Arab influences, resembling a souk, with picturesque stands of fresh fish, cheeses, fruits and vegetables. During the tour we will have the opportunity to observe local people in their daily activities and to savor foods that a real Sicilian people love to eat! **Tasting of typical street food is included.** The walking tour through the ancient center of Palermo is around 3-4 hours, and we will visit several monuments including **Piazza Pretoria**, the **Four Corners** and a short visit to the **Cathedral**.

At the Cathedral we meet the taxi to move to **Monreale** for an independent visit the Dome (*tips: NOT included*), a wonderful example of the Arab-Norman art and architecture. Founded in 1174 by William II, the Dome represents scenes from the Old and New Testaments all in golden mosaics.

Day 3 – Palermo > Marsala, Salt Way Road, Lunch and Erice > Palermo



*Small Size Group Tour up to 6 people, arranged with vehicle and English Speaking Driver
Independent walking tour of Erice*

Meet our Team at your hotel. We then travel to **Marsala** region along the **Salt Way Road**. While travelling we will be fascinated by this unusual landscape: panels of mirror-like water, held by thin strips of earth and white windmills. In Summer now as then in some areas between Trapani and Marsala it is possible to admire piles of salt just harvested.

Lunch in a local farmhouse to taste local delicious dishes.

This afternoon departure for **Erice**, a wonderfully preserved Mediaeval town offering the most breathtaking views and a palpable sense of history. 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. **Almond marzipan** probably came to Sicily from Spain, where the Arabs may have introduced it during the Middle Ages. Whether they also brought it to Sicily, which was home to several emirates before 1071, is a matter of debate. However, there is no doubt that it was the Arabs who introduced sugar cane in both Sicily and Spain, and without this key ingredient marzipan could not exist.

Then we drive back to Palermo.

Day 4 - Palermo > Valley of the Temples and Roman Villa > Syracuse



Small Size Group Tour up to 6 people, arranged with vehicle and English Speaking Driver
Agrigento: Independent visit at the Valley of the Temples (max 2 hours)
Piazza Armerina: Independent visit at Roman Villa (max 1,5 hours)

Today meet our team at hotel and departure for **Agrigento**. to visit the finest of all ancient Greek sites—the complete **Doric Temples** (*Admission fee: not included*), one of Sicily’s most famous historical attractions. This is one of the most outstanding examples of Greater Greece art and architecture, and is one of the main attractions of Sicily as well as a national monument of Italy. The area was included in the UNESCO Heritage Site list in 1997. Founded as a Greek colony in the 6th century B.C., Agrigento became one of the leading cities in the Mediterranean world. Its supremacy and pride are demonstrated by the remains of the magnificent Doric temples that dominate the ancient town, much of which still lies intact under today’s fields and orchards. This splendid archaeological park consists of eight temples (and various other remains) built between about 510 BC and 430 BC: the Temple of Hera, the Temple of Concordia, the Temple of Heracles, the Temple of Olympian Zeus, the Temple of Castor and Pollux, the Temple of Hephaestos, the Temple of Demeter, and the Temple of Asclepius (the God of Medicine). Apart from this latter, which is to be found on the banks of the Akragas river, all are situated in the same area on rocky crests south of modern day Agrigento (not really in a Valley at all!).

Then departure for **Piazza Armerina** situated deep in the Sicilian hinterland, at 721 metres above sea level, one of Sicily’s most frequented tourist spots. However, it is not the town that most people come to see, but the famous **Villa Romana del Casale** (*Admission fee: not included*). Built in the middle of the 4th Century AD as a hunting lodge by a Roman patrician (it is not known for sure who the owner was) the Villa is home to some of the best preserved and extensive examples of Roman mosaics spread over around 3500mt. The villa is one of the most luxurious of its kind. It is especially noteworthy for the richness and quality of the mosaics which decorate almost every room; they are the finest mosaics *in situ* anywhere in the Roman world. These extraordinarily vivid mosaics, probably produced by North African artisans, deal with numerous subjects, ranging from Homeric escapades and mythological scenes to portrayals of daily life, including the famous tableau of girls exercising in their “bikinis”.

Later onto Syracuse and transfer at your hotel.

Day 5 – Syracuse Half Day Walking Tour



Taxi service for transfer to/from Archaeological Park

English speaking Guide Service: Half Day (small size group tour: max 6).

Meeting Point: at hotel between h 8.45AM and h 9AM

Meet the guide and a short drive by taxi to join the **Archaeological Park** (*Admission fee NOT included*) highlights of which are the Greek Theatre, the Roman Amphitheatre and the Paradise Quarry. The resulting park contains 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. Even a quick stay in Syracuse must include a visit to this archaeological site.

Then stroll through the streets of **Ortygia Island**, the heart of the city center, to visit the **Dome** (*Admission fee NOT included*). This delightful pedestrian square is home to the wonderful Cathedral built on the site of an ancient Temple of Athena as can clearly be seen from the original Doric columns that were incorporated into the building's main structure. Also on this square is the beautifully symmetrical Baroque Palazzo Beneventano and the church of Santa Lucia, the town's patron saint. Later to the colorful daily **Street Market**, which sells a fantastic array of fruit, vegetables, fish and meat.

This afternoon is at leisure.

Day 6 – Syracuse > Ragusa Ibla, Modica and Noto > Taormina



Small Size Group Tour up to 6 people, arranged with vehicle and English Speaking Driver

Today departure to **Ragusa Ibla**, 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.

We drive then to **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 and today Modica still specialises in making granulous chocolate, often flavoured with chilli pepper, cinnamon or vanilla, that is based on Aztec methods and recipes. Chocolate shops abound and, for the real chocoholic, it is sometimes possible to watch the "chocolatiers" at work. Tasting of Modica chocolate is a must.

This afternoon we continue onto **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. Facades and balconies are all skillfully decorated by grinning masks, lion heads, putti and other embellishments. Unmissable is Noto Cathedral, dedicated to Saint Nicholas and built in perfect Sicilian Baroque style.

Later departure for **Taormina**.

Day 7 - Taormina > Etna Volcano Off Road Experience with lunch > Taormina



*Small Size Tour up to 6 people, arranged with WD4X4 Land Rover and English Speaking Driver
Pick-up at hotel between 8:30AM and 9:00AM (please be ready from 8:15AM in the hotel lobby)*

A lovely drive along the Northern slopes of the Volcano (regular road) will give you the opportunity to visit different **lava flows** and to observe geological and botanical treasures. Lava flow of 1923 reached the town of Linguaglossa, while the near village of Catena was partially destroyed. Driving through pines, oaks and brooms we will continue the Etna ascent and after an off-road itinerary you will visit the lava front of 2002 and a natural cave created from the lava flow.

We will then proceed to an area called **Piano Provenzana** located at 1800 meters above sea level, where we will see the effect of the great eruption of 2002. This eruption lasted almost three months and it is considered one of the most explosive eruptions from the twentieth century. At Piano Provenzana you will find a ski resort.

There will be a possibility to do a medium **hiking** and see some of the side craters characterized by seven small, aligned eruptive cones (or “buttonholes”). Along the way we will stop to enjoy a breathtaking view of the North-East Crater, the eruptive mouths and 2002 lava flow, and down to the sea you will admire part of the Ionian and Calabrian coast.

Then, proceed to have **lunch in a typical rustic restaurant** where you will be served a 3 courses menu which includes a rich selection of starter (salami, cheese, vegetables of the season), a taste of pasta and dessert. Lunch will also include local wine and mineral water.

After lunch the tour will get back to your hotel in Taormina.

Day 8 – Taormina > Catania Airport

Time to say goodbye to Sicily!

Today **independent** transfer to Catania Airport



THE RATE IS GROUND SERVICES ONLY: euro 1.160

(based on a group of 2 people travelling together)

SPECIAL DEAL: Family and Friends travelling together

- euro 990 based on a group of 3 people
- euro 790 based on a group of 4 people
- euro 690 based on a group of 5 people
- euro 590 based on a group of 6 people

FEATURED ENGLISH SPEAKING GUIDE RECOMMENDED

Monreale, to visit the Dome	Eur 185
Agrigento, to visit the Valley of the Temples	Euro 185
Piazza Armerina, to visit the Roman Villa	Euro 185

The above service is available on request. In case of interest we will book the guide and you will meet them on the spot at each mentioned site.

WHAT THE RATE DOES INCLUDE

- Palermo Street Food Walking Tour, small size up to 12 people, English speaking team, snacks and beverages included
- Taxi to join Monreale, independent visit to the Dome and return to Palermo
- Vehicle and English speaking driver for Day 3 (full day), Day 4 (full day) and Day 6 (full day). These services are small size up to 6 people
- Jeep WD4X4 Land Rover and English speaking driver for Day 7 (full day), small size up to 6 people.
- Erice, one lunch in a local farmhouse with set menù
- Etna, one lunch in a rustic restaurant with set menù, water and house wine included
- Syracusa, half day English speaking guide
- Syracusa, round trip taxi service to the Archaeological Park
- Credit card fees
- VAT

WHAT THE RATE DOES NOT INCLUDE

- Hotels accommodation
- Airline tickets
- Tips for luggage handling fee at hotel and airport
- City taxes
- Admission fee –this amount is payable on the spot at each ticket office. The approx. rate based on this tour is euro 12 per person times 4 tickets--
- Beverages and meals not mentioned in the program
- Travel Insurance
- Gratuities and Tips
- Airport transfers –available on request—
- English speaking guide to visit Monreale, Agrigento and Piazza Armerina



TO SAVE THE SPACE

NOT REFUNDABLE DEPOSIT eur 100 per person is due to save the space
BALANCE is required 2 months before tour begins

PAYMENT

We do accept Visa, Master Card and American Express.
Multiple credit card payments can be arranged with no-extra fee for you

WE STRICTLY RECOMMEND

To purchase a Travel insurance which covers cancellation fee due for any reason.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

From time of reservation until 60 days before your arrival our Not Refundable Planning & Administrative Fees as follow: Euro 100 per person

from 59 to 45 days before your arrival **25%** of total amount of the reservation will not be refunded
from 44 to 30 days before your arrival **50%** of total amount of the reservation will not be refunded
from 29 to 15 days before your arrival **75%** of total amount of the reservation will not be refunded
No refund will be provided for No Show or cancellation made **from 14 to 0** days before your arrival

USEFUL INFORMATION

English Speaking Driver: an English Speaking Driver is a person specialized to escort you around our amazing island. He/She is able to provide basic historical information and show you the main highlights. The Driver is not a Licensed Local Guide.

Licensed Local Guide: in Italy, and Sicily as well, a Local Guide is a trained, university-educated, trilingual, licensed professional authorized by the Sicilian Tourist Board to lecture at any historical (or archeological) site, museum or Catholic church. They do have an ID-Card with license number, their name and photo to show to the police tourist department if required.

Italian Speaking Driver: is a chauffeur able to drive from and to the airport or he is hired, in combo with a Licensed Local Guide to move you around the town. The Chauffer has the NCC license, which is an authorization (ID-Card with name and license number) to drive people around. The Chauffeur has no competence to provide tours.

Half Day and Full Day: Half day excursion is approximately 3 to 4 hours. Full day excursion is approximately 7 hours. Excursions are always in accordance with the itinerary and route.