

SICILY – ITALY'S ISLAND GEM

Sicily has a personality all its own. Just when you think Italy can't get any better, you find yourself engrossed in an unexpected paradise. Sicily is one of Europe's most fascinating islands with an unparalleled heritage. The deep-rooted marks left by the Phoenicians, Greeks, Arabs, Normans, Spanish, and Roman and Italian civilizations have created a cultural paradise that is full of flavor to be found in Sicily's celebrated wines, renowned cuisine, diverse architecture, and masterpieces of art. Join Cooper's Hawk Master Sommelier, Emily Wines, as she hosts this tour custom built to serve up panoramic views from waterfront villages to mountaintop vineyards, from quaint villages to impressive archaeological sites. Enriched with wine and food experiences you'll find this Cooper's Hawk Wine Club tour a treasure trove of memorable immersion. We'll top it off with a night in Rome at the end of the tour!



SEPTEMBER 26 – OCTOBER 6, 2020



DAY 2 - PALERMO & CEFALÙ

This morning we visit the spectacular resort town of Cefalù. Your guided sightseeing includes a visit to Piazza del Duomo, home of the ancient Cefalù Cathedral with its Norman, Latin, Greek, and Arab influences. We'll tour the famed cathedral and also visit the Church of Purgatory, known for its unique entry staircase. There will be free time after our tour to explore the old town with its medieval lanes and seafront promenade on your own. Later, enjoy lunch at a local restaurant, followed by a traditional granita dessert. After lunch return to Palermo to visit the 12th-century Norman Cathedral of Monreale, famous for its 50,000 square feet of precious Byzantine mosaics. The remainder of the day is at your leisure; your Tour Director will be on hand for suggestions.

Meals Included – Breakfast, Lunch

Hotel – Hotel Principe di Villafranca or similar

HIGHLIGHTS

Excursion to Cefalù

Palermo Tour



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DAY 3 - ERICE

Join your Tour Director for an orientation to the hilltop commune of Erice, a charming village of beauty and tradition, ending at the well-known Pasticceria Maria Grammatico to taste traditional almond biscuits and Marsala wine. Our next stop is to visit a traditional Salt Mill. Later we visit Donnafugata Winery, one of Italy's finest wineries and praised by wine critics and wine lovers alike all over the globe. We will be treated to a tour of their historic cellar, continuing from the baroque cellar to Sala delle Botti (tasting salon), followed by a tasting of four wines paired with a quartet of Sicilian specialties.

Meal Included – Breakfast

Hotel – Overnight in Marsala at Giardino di Costanza Resort or similar

HIGHLIGHTS

Erice Visit

Pasticceria Maria Grammatico

Salt Mill

**Donnafugata Winery Tour
& Paired Tasting**



DAY 4 - MENFI & AGRIGENTO

Enjoy the morning at leisure before continuing to Menfi, an ancient village known for its wine, culture, rolling hills, and miles of beaches. Stop at the La Foresteria Estate for a delightful culinary lunch with wine pairing. In Sciacca, a port town with an interesting past where fishing is still its main industry today, we'll stop to take pictures from the panoramic viewpoint before continuing to Agrigento. Here, your Local Guide will take you for a spectacular walk through the magnificent Valley of the Temples. Even travelers who have visited Athens and Delphi are awed by the gigantic yet graceful Greek structures that miraculously survived 24 centuries of tormented history. This evening enjoy dinner at a local agriturismo.

Meals Included – Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

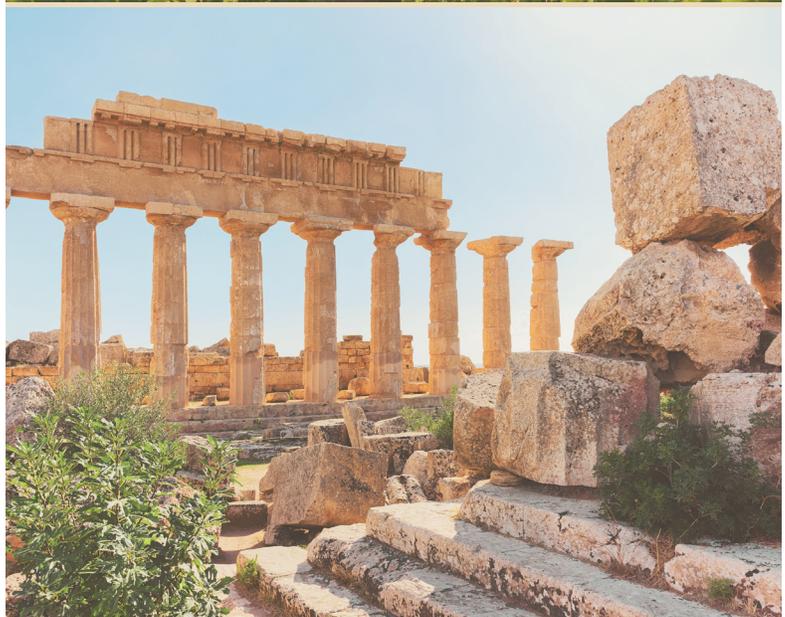
Hotel – Overnight in Agrigento at Hotel GH Mosè or similar

HIGHLIGHTS

Excursion to Menfi

**La Foresteria Estate
Wine-Paired Lunch**

Valley of the Temples



DAY 5 - RAGUSA

Drive to Piazza Armerina for your guided visit of the Villa Romana del Casale, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Admire the largest and most complex collection of Roman mosaics in the world, including the famous “Bikini Girls,” discovered in 1960. Our next stop is a visit to Valle dell’Acate for a lunch pairing, including two of the winery’s customized varietals paired to a seasonal menu. We’ll continue to Ragusa, a spectacular hilltop-perched town, where our our guided sightseeing features a walk-through Ragusa’s oldest district, the IBLA, with its beautiful palaces and churches. We’ll stroll through the Giardini Iblei, the pleasant public gardens laid out in the 19th century, and then visit the iconic baroque St. George Cathedral. There will be some time on your own to further explore or maybe relax at an outdoor café. Your Tour Director will be on hand for dinner suggestions.

Meals Included – Breakfast, Lunch

Hotel – Overnight in Ragusa at Hotel Poggio del Sole or similar

HIGHLIGHTS

Villa Romana del Casale UNESCO site

Valle dell’Acate Winery Lunch Pairing

Ragusa Tour



DAY 6 - MODICA, SYRACUSE, & ORTIGIA ISLAND

After breakfast travel to Modica with its steeply stacked medieval town center and spectacular baroque churches. Wander along Corso Umberto I and stop at the famous Dolceria Bonajuto, Sicily's oldest chocolate factory, for a sweet tasting. We continue on to Syracuse, birthplace of the mathematician Archimedes. Enter the Archaeological Site for a guided visit of the 5th-century BC sparkling white Greek Theatre, the Garden of Paradise, the Ear of Dionysius, the Altar of Hieron II, and the Roman Amphitheatre. This evening we'll discover the historic and culinary heart of Syracuse on an enchanting excursion to Ortigia Island, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and ancient place of myths and legends. Your adventure begins with an hour-long narrated sightseeing cruise around Porto Grande. We'll pass the Umbertino and Saint Lucia Bridges that connect the island to the mainland, then head out to see the ancient promontories, shorelines, and estuaries whose fascinating histories are "explained" in Greek mythology. Along the way, we'll encounter a mussel-breeding farm, a protected natural marine area mentioned clear back in Virgil's "Aeneid" in 19 BC, ruins from the Bronze Age, and a 13th-century castle fortress that defended the city's bay from invaders. Next, disembark your cruise boat and get ready to eat like a Sicilian! Join your expert guide for an easy 1.5-hour Foodie walking tour around Ortigia that includes a tasting in a local café with two glasses of wine and a visit with tasting in a local bakery. Bask in the charming atmosphere as you interact with the friendly food vendors, discover the delectable local fare, and pass by major landmarks.

Meal Included – Breakfast

Hotel – Overnight in Syracuse at the Mercure Siracusa Prometeo Hotel or similar

HIGHLIGHTS

Modica Tour & Chocolate Tasting

Syracuse Archaeological Site

Ortigia Island Cruise & Foodie Tour



DAY 7 - MOUNT ETNA

This morning we enjoy a scenic drive with a Local Guide through orchards, vineyards, and forests up to Europe's highest active volcano, Mount Etna. From our vantage point at 6,500 feet, we'll observe the unusual landscape of extinct craters and rivers of solidified lava. We'll visit a Local Winery for a wine tasting and learn about wines produced on the lava terrain of Etna, followed by lunch. Continue to Giardini Naxos for your next two nights.

Meals Included – Breakfast, Lunch

Hotel – Overnight in Giardini Naxos at the RG Naxos Hotel or similar

HIGHLIGHTS

Mount Etna

Etna Winery



DAY 8 - TAORMINA

After breakfast we head to the hilltop city of Taormina to visit the ancient Greek Theatre, dating back to the 3rd century BC. Enjoy free time for lunch, with time to explore Corso Umberto, the main street of Taormina, then visit Villa Comunale Di Taormina, a sublime public garden designed by Lady Florence Trevelyan. Next, we head to a medieval village located on a hill above Taormina. Castelmola, with its stunning views, is considered one of the most beautiful villages in Italy. We'll stop at the historic Antico Caffè San Giorgio, established in 1907, and enjoy a tasting of their famous almond wine flavored with oranges and herbs and sample traditional Sicilian products like almond and pistachio sweets, jams, citrus honey, and pesto. Afterwards enjoy free time to explore this quaint village on your own before returning to our hotel. Tonight we'll participate in a Pizza Cooking Class, with Sicilian cheese and wine tasting, followed by dinner that includes your handmade pizza in addition to homemade pasta.

Meals Included – Breakfast, Dinner

Hotel – Overnight in Giardini Naxos at the RG Naxos Hotel or similar

HIGHLIGHTS

**Excursion to Taormina
Countryside & City**

**Visit Castelmola & Antico Caffè
San Giorgio**

Pizza Cooking Class



DAY 9 - ROME

After breakfast we board our flight to Rome. Join a Local Guide for a walking tour past bustling piazzas; the incredible Pantheon, the best-preserved Roman temple; lively Navona Square, the heart and soul of Rome's social life; and the beautiful Trevi Fountain, where legend says tossing a coin will promise your return to Rome! An included headset will ensure you don't miss a single word of your guide's fascinating commentary. Then, enjoy views of other major sites as you drive to the Roman Forum to visit the ancient Colosseum, where gladiators once fought to entertain the crowds. Tonight, we'll enjoy a farewell dinner with wine at a local restaurant.

Meals Included – Breakfast, Dinner

HIGHLIGHTS

**Rome Tour Including Pantheon,
Trevi Fountain & Colosseum**

Farewell Dinner



DAY 10 - DEPART ROME

After breakfast a group transfer will be provided to the airport for your homebound flight. Or, choose to extend your time in Rome/Italy.

Meal Included – Breakfast

inclusions

INCLUDED

9 nights' accommodations at superior first-class hotels

Sightseeing, tours, activities & attractions as shown

Breakfast daily, four lunches, four dinners

Internal air from Taormina to Rome

Tour Director, local guides

Private coach throughout

Taxes

Gratuities for tour director and driver (local guide gratuities not included)

NOT INCLUDED

International air

Meals when not mentioned as included

Room service & personal room charges

Excess baggage and portorage

Local guide gratuities

Private transfers if you do not arrive/depart with group

Additional pre/post nights

Trip cancellation and travel insurance



rates

\$3,997

Double occupancy (per person)

\$4,657

Single occupancy

*Space is limited on this tour and will be sold on a first-come basis upon receipt of deposit.
To make reservations, please call or email Carol, Karen, or Kelly (contact information below).*

You must have a valid passport for travel to Italy. At this time, no visa is necessary for US citizens to travel to Italy.

*This tour requires a minimum of 20 participants to operate.
Wineries, hotels, dinners, activities, and attractions are subject to change.*

deposit & final payment

\$800 DEPOSIT (NON-REFUNDABLE)

per person, due upon making reservations

FINAL PAYMENT

due by July 14, 2020

Forms of payment include cash, check, Mastercard, Visa, or American Express.

airfare

Airfare is not included but we are happy to assist you secure your air tickets. Arrive into Palermo Airport on September 27 (depart USA on September 26) by 11:15 a.m. to catch the group transfer. Depart from Rome Fiumicino on October 6 at 11:00 a.m. or later. Transfers outside of the group times will be available for an additional cost.

land cancellation policy

This tour is non-refundable. Trip cancellation and travel insurance is highly recommended. Travel Guard trip cancellation and travel insurance will be quoted at the time of booking. If we have a waitlist, we may be able to assist with a name change instead of a cancellation on land only. Name changes have a \$100 per person administrative fee.

There is no guarantee we will have someone to take your spot, in which case full cancellation fees will apply.

Air tickets are non-refundable from the time of ticketing. No name changes are allowed on air tickets.

reservations



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