

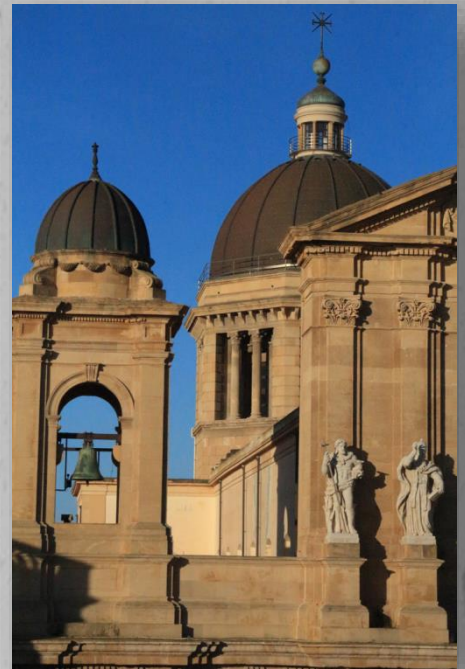
Sicily – The Classical Isle

Tour Code SC

23 – 30 March 2021

An in-depth exploration of the historic island of Sicily, whose strategic location has attracted great civilisations since the ancient times. Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Normans, Arabs and Spaniards have all left their legacy on this magical land at the crossroads of the Mediterranean. The Sicilian landscape is quite breathtaking, particularly at this time of year when its diverse range of flowers are in bloom and its stunning topography includes the still snow capped Mount Etna. We will also be able to sample some of the locally produced food and wine that has made Sicily so gastronomically famous!

Palermo Cathedral
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ITINERARY

Day 1 Fly to Catania. Drive to Syracuse

Afternoon departure for our direct British Airways flight from London Gatwick to Catania. On arrival we drive to Syracuse and transfer to the Antico Roma hotel for two nights. A welcome dinner has been arranged at a local restaurant (D)

Day 2 In Syracuse

Once the rival of Athens as the most important city in the western world, Syracuse has architectural and archaeological treasures that date back some 2,700 years. This morning our visits include the excellent Archaeological Museum and impressive 3rd century BC Greek theatre. In the afternoon we have a walking tour through Ortigia, the historic centre of the city, with its fine baroque palaces, churches and magnificent cathedral. There will also be free time to explore the town on your own (B)

Day 3 Visit Piazza Armerina. Drive Agrigento

We visit Caltagirone, the centre for Sicilian pottery and ceramics. After a walk through the city we head to Piazza Armerina to visit the Roman Villa del Casale, a former hunting lodge of an important Roman official, that features more than 40 beautiful mosaic floors, making it one of the most cherished open-air museums in the region. We continue to Agrigento, taking dinner at a local trattoria followed by a panoramic tour to admire the illuminated temples. Overnight at the Foresteria Baglio DellaLuna hotel (B,D)

Day 4 Visit Agrigento. Drive to Marsala

This morning we have a guided tour through the Valley of the Temples, a magnificent cluster of Doric columned temples superbly situated overlooking the Mediterranean and the excellent Agrigento museum. Later we drive to the charming town of Marsala; visiting the archaeological museum, the historic centre, the salt pans and an enoteca to taste the region's famous dessert wines. Overnight at the Hotel Stella d'Italia (B)

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Day 5 Visit Erice and Segesta

After breakfast we reach Erice, a dramatic medieval hill town with narrow streets. Then we visit the ruins of Segesta, famed for its 5th century BC Doric temple built on a hilltop with commanding views across the ancient city and surrounding area. In the afternoon we continue to Palermo. Two nights at the Plaza Opera in central Palermo (B)

Day 6 In Palermo

We start the day with an excursion to the magnificent 12th century Cathedral of Monreale, a Norman masterpiece with an unrivalled interior of gilded mosaics. In the afternoon we explore the old city of Palermo, including the superb Palatine Chapel of the Royal palace, decorated with Byzantine mosaics, and the church of San Giovanni, a fine example of Norman-Arab architecture. Dinner at a typical Palermo restaurant (B,D)

Day 7 Visit Cefalu. Drive to Taormina. Tour of old town

We pause at Cefalu with its stunning Norman cathedral and ruined ancient acropolis overlooking the town. The old town is still medieval in character and we have a walking tour through its narrow cobbled streets continuing to Taormina renowned for its magnificent location overlooking the sea and a commanding view of Etna, Taormina provides the perfect climax to our tour with its atmospheric medieval old town and captivating charm. This afternoon we visit the spectacular setting of the Greco-Roman theatre with its commanding views across to Etna. Two nights stay at the Villa Diodoro, wonderfully located in the centre of the old town (B)

Day 8 Etna Volcano excursion with winery lunch and tasting

Today we travel through the Etna area to witness the geological phenomena that has shaped this wonderful island and the features that it has formed. We are able to enjoy a fabulous lunch to taste typical Sicilian dishes at a boutique Etna winery before returning to Taormina for a leisurely afternoon. Tonight we gather for a farewell dinner has been arranged at a typical local restaurant (B,L,D)

Day 9 Fly London

After a leisurely breakfast we have a transfer to Catania airport for our direct flight with British Airways to London Gatwick arriving in the early afternoon (B)

Cost £1795.00 per person in a twin room (excluding international flights)

Single supplement charge £300.00



Greek Temple at Segesta
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Price includes -

- ▶ Tour accompanied from London by Patrick Syder
- ▶ A specialist Sicilian guide throughout the tour
- ▶ All transportation in private a/c minibus
- ▶ Full sightseeing programme including entrance fees
- ▶ Quality four star hotels with specified lunches and dinners
- ▶ Etna excursion with winery tasting
- ▶ All departure taxes
- ▶ All airport transfers
- ▶ Porter, hotel and restaurant staff gratuities

Not included – travel insurance, non-specified lunches and dinners, drinks, guide and driver gratuities and the international flights