



COLOURS OF SICILY

Departure:
22 April - 2 May 2024
(11 days/10 nights)

Colours of Sicily highlights the many natural wonders and cultural treasures that excite visitors to this spectacular and largest island of the Mediterranean. Surrounded by amazing pristine beaches and cliffside villages, Sicily is full of historic towns with an abundance of ancient architectural gems, churches and museums. Many of these sites are recognised for their historical significance by UNESCO such as Ragusa, Siracusa and Agrigento.

The iconic landmark of Mt Etna is also one of the highlights of this tour, sitting at over 3000mt, often erupting or spitting lava, ash and black cloud. With its white snow caps and numerous lava bumps, the panoramic views are unparalleled with many renowned wineries that have their grapes nestled along the sides of the mountain.

Sicily has maintained its authenticity. The cuisine is genuine and delicious with its fresh and seasonal products from each part of the island. You will experience seafood specialties, arancini, cannoli and great local wines.

This tour is guided by the directors of Vita Italian Tours and their team of local experts. Your tour leaders will escort you throughout your stay and will ensure you have a wonderful experience.

Detailed Itinerary

Day 1 Catania (D) Independent arrival at the hotel in the charming baroque city of Catania. Your tour leaders will meet you at 4:00 PM in the hotel foyer for an introductory talk, followed by a walking tour of the historical centre of Catania: UNESCO World Heritage Site. Catania has a unique appeal with its baroque buildings and its streets lined with black lava stone. Highlights include the historic Piazza Duomo with its magnificent Cathedral and the famous statue of the lava-stone elephant, the symbol of the City. We will walk along the magnificent Via dei Crociferi and admire St Benedict's Monastery. Aperitivo before dinner at a local restaurant.

Day 2 Catania/Aci Trezza/Etna (BL) This morning we visit the famous A' Piscaria Mercato del Pesce, fish market to try some local street food. We then journey to the nearby town of Aci Trezza, one of the many fishing villages along the coast just a short drive from Catania. Here you will experience the crystal-clear waters and admire the famous Faraglioni dei Ciclopi, the tiny islands formed from Mt Etna hundreds of thousands of years ago. Lunch in a traditional seaside restaurant. After lunch we drive to nearby Mt Etna to experience the spectacular scenery and views. Mount Etna towers above the landscape of Sicily and the Mediterranean. At 3,300 meters it is the tallest volcano in Europe and one of the most active in the world. The name Etna is derived from the Greek word Aitne which can be translated as 'I burn'. Back to Catania for a free evening at your leisure.

Day 3 Catania/Siracusa/Ortigia (BD) After breakfast we drive south to the picturesque island of Ortigia, the historical centre of Siracusa, which will be our base for the next two nights. After arriving at the hotel in the historical heart of the city there will be some time to freshen up and have a bite for lunch. In the afternoon, a local expert will guide the group through the maze of small streets and piazze of this beautiful island learning of the many civilizations who have left their indelible mark over the centuries. Dinner in a local restaurant.

Day 4 Siracusa/Noto/Ragusa (BL) This morning we visit another UNESCO World Heritage site, the city of Noto, famous for its baroque buildings and churches. The highlight will be a visit to the Palazzo Nicolaci Villadorati a beautiful noble residence in the baroque style. We then make our way to Ragusa for lunch at a traditional trattoria. There is a visit to the splendid Piazza Duomo in the heart of the city and the Giardino Ibleo, stunning public gardens with sweeping views. Then it is back to Siracusa to enjoy another night on Ortigia island.

Day 5 Siracusa/Piazza Armerina/Agrigento (BD) Today we say goodbye to Siracusa as we make our way across Sicily to Agrigento. On the way we make a stop at the historic town of Piazza Armerina for a visit to Villa Romana del Casale, a UNESCO World Heritage Site famous for its magnificent mosaics. Check-in at the hotel in Agrigento before dinner in a local restaurant.

Day 6 Agrigento (B) After a leisurely breakfast, a local guide will take the group through the Valley of the Temples which preserves some of the best exponents of the Greek influence on the island of Sicily. Following the morning tour we will make our way to Agrigento to explore the historical centre. Free afternoon and evening at your leisure.

Day 7 Agrigento/Palermo (BD) Today the capital of Sicily awaits us. Before exploring this vibrant capital city, the group will check-in at the hotel before some time for lunch. In the afternoon, a local guide will lead the group to explore the important sites of this beautiful city shaped by the different cultures, religions and rulers. Palermo has one of the largest historical centres in Europe, and the tour will culminate at the wonderful Arab-Norman Cathedral. Dinner in a local restaurant.

Day 8 Palermo/Monreale/Cefalu/Taormina (BL) In the morning we will visit Monreale, located only a short drive from Palermo. There the group will admire the famous Norman Cathedral and its magnificent cloister considered the greatest example of Norman architecture in the world. We will be able clearly see the influence of some of the most beautiful examples of Byzantine and Islamic art. We then make our way to the medieval fishing village of Cefalu', one of the most beautiful in all of Italy. We will explore the small streets of the historical centre of the city and stop for lunch in a local trattoria. In the afternoon, we drive to our last stop on the tour, breathtaking Taormina. Aperitivo with stunning views of Mt Etna.

Day 9 Taormina (BL) After breakfast, a local guide will take the group through this most picturesque and stunning city of Taormina. The highlight of the morning will be a visit to the Greek-Roman Theatre, situated on the edge of town and perched on a cliff face with the most spectacular views of Mt Etna and the Mediterranean Sea. Lunch at a local restaurant overlooking the sea. Free evening in Taormina.

Day 10 Taormina (BD) Today is a free day to explore the many sites that Taormina has to offer. You may wish to take the cable car ride down to the beach area of Mazzarò and enjoy the beach and views of the picturesque Isola Bella. There is also the option to walk or take the local bus up to the nearby town of Castelmola which sits over 500m above sea level and rewards visitors with sweeping views of the entire coastline. Alternatively, you may wish to stay closer and explore the many boutiques and specialty shops that Taormina has to offer. Farewell dinner in Taormina.

Day 11 Taormina (B) The tour ends after breakfast.

Optional Additions:

Aeolian Islands: You may wish to extend your trip for an extra all-day excursion to the famed Aeolian Islands. The port of Milazzo will be the first stop to catch a private ferry to the island of Lipari, the largest island and gateway to the Aeolian Archipelago. You will explore the narrow streets and shops of Lipari town. The ferry will then allow you to reach the island of Vulcano, the second most active volcano of the Archipelago. You may wish to have a swim in the naturally warm spiaggia dell'aqua calda thanks to the underwater geysers fuelled by volcanic activity. The tour returns to Taormina in the late afternoon.



Malta: Many choose to extend their Mediterranean experience from Sicily to the fascinating island of Malta. We can organise an all-inclusive package including ferry/airfares, accommodation and private guided tours to all the sites such as Medina, Gozo & The Three Cities. There are 2, 3 & 4-day packages available.



Items included

- All land travel in air-conditioned mini buses.
- Accommodation for 10-Nights' in 4 & 5-star centrally located boutique hotels in Catania, Ortigia – Siracusa, Agrigento, Palermo & Taormina.
- 10 Breakfasts.
- 5 Dinners.
- 4 Lunches (Meals include special lunches & dinners, gastronomical tastings in traditional local restaurants & osterie as detailed in the itinerary).
- Regional wines & mineral water served with meals.
- Admission to all galleries, museums, wineries and historical sites included in the itinerary.
- Personally guided walking tours to all towns, cities mentioned in the itinerary.
- Services of the tour leaders throughout the tour.

Items not included

- Airfares.
- Travel Insurance (It is compulsory for every traveller to have taken out a travel insurance policy in order to partake on a Vita Italian Tour).
- Admission fees to places other than those specifically itemised in the itinerary.
- Meals on tour except when specifically mentioned in the itinerary.
- Drinks outside normal mealtimes or additional wine & other drinks in restaurants including tea & coffee.
- Personal transport costs, phone calls & other personal needs.
- Tourist Accommodation Tax.

Cost

The cost of the tour, land content only, is **AUD \$6,964 per person** in twin share accommodation. **A deposit** of **AUD \$500** is required to reserve a place on the tour which is non-refundable unless the tour is cancelled. The full balance is due 90 days before departure. **Single supplements** are available at an additional cost of **AUD \$1,296.00**. The tour is costed on a minimum of 6 people travelling on the tour with a maximum number of 14 people.

We recommend that you carefully read the Terms & Conditions applying to a Vita Italian Tour. Please refer to the Booking Page of our website vitaitaliantours.com.au/terms-conditions

Additional information

The weather: it is nearing the end of spring. It can get warm during the day however the evenings are cool. We recommend light, comfortable clothing, a light jacket with your favourite walking shoes. We do not place age limitations on the tour and welcome anyone with a moderate level of physical fitness. It is important to note that the countryside is undulating and hilly. Many hill-towns have their historical centres closed to traffic and therefore lots of walking is required. Be expected to spend a few hours a day at a time on your feet with breaks for sightseeing, coffee and a taste of the local produce.

The program appears to be full; however, it is mixed with long restful lunches and leisure time for your enjoyment and comfort.

If you need to, you can always take time off from the organised program.

For further information

Visit the web site **vitaitaliantours.com.au**

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