Tour Palermo/Catania

From March 24th to November 10th

departures every Tuesday

**2020 PROGRAM**

**Day 1 - Tuesday: PALERMO (hotel in Palermo)**

Arrive independently to the hotel in the charming city of Palermo (optional private transfer on request). In the evening you will meet our tour-leader and your travel companions and enjoy a welcome dinner. Overnight in hotel.

**Day 2 - Wednesday: MONREALE - PALERMO (hotel in Palermo)**

After breakfast in hotel, the morning will be spent visiting Monreale, its huge Norman Cathedral, proclaimed the Eighth Wonder of the World, and its splendid Cloister in Arab-Norman style: admirable masterpiece of art, sculpture, and semi-precious stones marquetry! Later we will discover the stunning Palermo, one of the richest towns in the Island for its history and art. Palermo stands on a bay at the foot of Mt Pellegrino, a headland described by Goethe as the loveliest he had ever seen. While the Baroque predominates, there is a profusion of different architectural styles reflecting the city’s multicultural past: Punic walls, Art Nouveau villas, noble residences, XVIIth century squares, including an elegant opera house. We will visit the wonderful Arab-Norman Cathedral, the astonishing Martorana Church and the amazing Cappella Palatina, mirable example from an historical and an artistic point of view, of how different cultures, religions and way of thinking apparently incompatible can coexist. Ruggero II in fact employed both Bizantyne, Muslim and Latin workers. Along the visiting day, we will have a stop for a **food surprise** in a local bakery. Free time for lunch. Continuing our walk we will admire the Teatro Massimo, the debated fountain in Pretoria Square, situated in the ancient Kalsa area and adorned with XVI century sculptures. Dinner and overnight in hotel.
Day 3 – Thursday: MARSALA - SALT ROAD - AGRIGENTO (hotel in Agrigento)

This morning the tour will continue along the charming and well-known town of Marsala, where Garibaldi went ashore in May 1860. Marsala is a Mediterranean modern city, divided between sea and land, featuring unforgettable colors: bright yellow, intense blue, strong red, dazzling white and natural green. It preserves several ruins of Phoenician, Arab and Norman dominations and a wide artistic heritage with sanctuaries and caves, hypogoeums, underground roads, necropolis and thermal baths. We will discover the lovely city center and its aristocratic buildings, monuments and imposing Baroque churches. The guided tour of the Florio Cellars is a journey that begins in front of the majestic giant vats, built at the end of the 19th century and still used for the refinement of marsala. It continues inside the 3 fascinating barrel chambers, 165 meters long and running beneath 104 arches, under which 1,400 small barrels and about 600 larger barrels and vats of different capacities are arrayed, as c. 5,500,000 litres of Marsala wines age in silence and stillness. After a thirty minute tour through the barrel vaults, where the ancient tuff stone floor has been restored, you reach the avant-garde tasting rooms where we stop for lunch and for a local wine tasting. We will proceed to visit the popular Salt Road. Between Trapani and Marsala, the Salt Road is now protected, in part because of the interesting birdlife, and also as important sites of industrial archaeology; here the salt marshes have given rise to one of the oldest salt-extracting industries in the world. Transfer to Agrigento and visit of the Valley of the Temples stated World Heritage Site, where among hundreds of almond trees, the rests of the ancient Akragas rise. It was defined by Pyndar “the most beautiful city of mortals”. Once one of the most prosperous of the ancient Greek cities on the island, Agrigento presents a remarkable series of Doric Temples of the 5th century. You will see the “Temple of Hera”, the “Temple of Concordia” and the “Temple of Heracles”. Accommodation in hotel, dinner and overnight.

Day 4 – Friday: PIAZZA ARMERINA - RAGUSA IBLA (hotel in Catania)

Today we will reach Piazza Armerina where we will admire the splendid polychrome mosaics of the famous Villa Romana del Casale, World Heritage Site. The complex includes some of the most extensive and most beautiful Roman mosaics known. This majestic villa, belonged to a member of the Roman Senatorial aristocracy, hosts prestigious mosaics representing mythological and historical episodes and scenes of hunting and entertainments! After free time for lunch, departure to Ragusa Ibla and visit of its historical centre cradle of Sicilian Baroque, with its Cathedral, situated in the beautiful square of the Dome and the “giardino Ibleo”. Used as a location of the extremely popular Police Inspector Montalbano TV series, it is today stated among the 44 Italian World Heritage Sites. This little precious ancient city hosts more than 50 churches and many baroque architectural treasures. We’ll conclude the visiting day with a tasting of local products. Proceed to Catania for dinner and overnight in hotel.

Day 5 - Saturday: CATANIA

Breakfast in hotel and end of our services.

RATE PER PERSON in double room € 649,00
Single room supplement: € 130,00 - 3rd bed reduction: € 30,00
THE RATE INCLUDES:
- Multilingual Tour leader and professional travel guide* (English, Italian or Spanish) for the whole tour, from the evening of the 1st day to the evening of the 4th day, local guides or audio-guides where necessary.
- Deluxe bus form day 2 to day 4
- Whisper kit
- Accommodation in charming 4 stars hotels mostly located in the city centre, international breakfast included:
  Palermo: Mercure Palermo Centro 4*/ Ibis Styles Palermo Cristal 4* or similar
  Agrigento: Baia di Ulisse Wellness & SPA 4* or similar
  Catania: Il Principe Hotel 4*/ Romano House Hotel 4* or similar
- 4 dinners in hotels or local restaurants (dinner – 3 main courses fixed menu, beverages not included) to have a taste of Sicilian and Italian cuisine.
- 1 lunch: day 3 in Marsala in the well-known Florio Cellars.
- Visit of the main suggestive Unesco World Heritage Sites: Monreale, Palermo, Agrigento, Piazza Armerina, Ragusa.
- Tasting of Sicilian typical products: Palermo (day 2) tasting of local street food; Marsala (day 3): visit of a wine cellar and wine tasting; Ragusa (day 4): tasting of local cheese.
THE RATE DOES NOT INCLUDE:
Transfers in/out - All lunches except for the one on day 3 in Marsala - beverages - entrance fees at monuments/museums - city taxes (where compulsory) - tips and extras in general - anything not specified under “The rate includes”

SUPPLEMENTS:
- Pre-night in hotel in Palermo (BB treatment): € 70,00 p.p. in Standard double room per night.
- € 128,00 in standard single room per night.
- Post-night in hotel in Catania (BB treatment): € 69,00 p.p. in Standard double room per night.
- € 110,00 in standard single room per night.
- Transfers from Palermo airport to hotel in Palermo: € 43,00 each way (1/3 pax per car).
- Transfers from Catania airport to hotel in Catania: € 29,00 each way (1/3 pax per car).

Assistance – Medical Expense Reimbursement – Luggage insurance – Travel Cancellation Expenses Insurance: on request.

PRIVILEGE PACKAGE
€ 195,00 p.p. in double/twin room - €290,00 p.p. in single/Double single use
Includes: Superior/Deluxe Room – Private transfer in/out – City taxes - All entrance fees as per program

*Monolingual departures during high season

Extra fees entrances to be confirmed
- Monreale Cathedral € 4,00 p.p.
- Monreale Cloister € 6,00 p.p.
- Palermo Cappella Palatina € 12,00 p.p.
- Palermo Martorana Church € 2,00 p.p.
- Agrigento Valle dei Templi € 12,00 p.p.
- Piazza Armerina Villa Romana € 10,00 p.p.

DEPARTURE DATES:
Tuesday/Saturday

March
24…31

April
07…14…21…28

May
05…12…19…26

June
02…09…16…23…30

July
07…14…21…28

August
04…11…18…25

September
01…08…15…22…29

October
06…13…20…27

November
03…10

FOR ORGANIZATIONAL REASONS OR DUE TO FORCE MAJEURE THE ITINERARY MAY BE MODIFIED

Arrival Day: on request, it is possible to arrange optional HD private excursions to Palermo – Bagheria - Cefalù - S. Vito Lo Capo – Erice – Segesta – Trapani - Selinunte

Departure Day: on request, it is possible to arrange optional HD private excursions to Acireale or Caltagirone

Special GIFT to participants:
a splendid illustrated book about Sicilian culinary tradition with recipes in English

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