



SICILY

A LAND OF BREATHTAKING DIVERGE

April 01- April 08, 2026
Led by Local Guides

Can be combined with Malta extension (April 08 - April 12, 2026) **OR** Southern Italy extension (April 08 - April 14, 2026) **OR** Cyprus tour (April 08 - April 15, 2026)

Situated at the toe of the boot of Italy, Sicily is an archaeological treasure. Sikanian to its most ancient peoples, Sicily was Sikelia, Plato's utopian society, to the ancient Greeks. This small island serves as a museum to the many ancient civilizations that colonized it throughout the centuries. It is a land where Archimedes taught, and Saint Paul preached. Asians, Africans and Europeans have ruled it, as it was once a Greek colony, a Roman province, an Arab emirate and a Norman kingdom. The Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Swabians, Angevins and Aragonese all left their mark on Sicily. Experience their legacy in Phoenician settlements, Punic cities, Greek temples, Roman amphitheaters, Norman Arab castles and Aragonese churches. Sunny Sicily is Punic Palermo, towering Taormina, ancient Agrigento, splendid Siracusa, and medieval Monreale and Cefalù.

Ihab Zaki
Managing Director

Wednesday, April 01

Arrive in Palermo (SICILY)



Upon arrival in **Palermo**, meet and transfer to *Mercurie Palermo Centro Hotel*, or similar for check-in and overnight.

Thursday, April 02

Palermo



After breakfast, begin the day with a visit to the magnificent **Teatro Massimo**, one of the largest and most renowned opera houses in Europe. This architectural masterpiece is celebrated not only for its sheer size, but for its elegant neoclassical design, opulent interiors, and rich cultural history. It stands as a proud symbol of Palermo's artistic legacy. Next, step into the **Church of Santa Caterina**, a stunning jewel of **Sicilian Baroque** architecture. Built in the 16th century, this sacred space dazzles with its intricate carvings, statues, and gilded ornamentation. The church's lavish interior, with its marble inlays and vibrant frescoes, offers a glimpse into the island's deep devotion and artistic brilliance. From spiritual splendor, head into the heart of local life at **Ballarò Market**, one of Palermo's oldest and liveliest outdoor markets. Here, centuries-old traditions meet daily life in a vibrant display of colors, aromas, and sounds. Wander among stalls piled high with fresh produce, street food, spices, and local specialties—a true feast for the senses.

After soaking up the city's energy, travel along the scenic northern coast to the charming fishing **village of Cefalù**. Loved by Italians and visitors alike, Cefalù is considered one of Sicily's most picturesque seaside gems. Stroll its cobbled lanes, admire the stunning Norman cathedral, or relax on the golden beach overlooking the Tyrrhenian Sea. Enjoy free time for lunch at your leisure, with options ranging from seaside cafés to traditional trattorias. Return to the *Hotel* in the afternoon, with the rest of the day free to relax, explore independently, or enjoy a sunset

walk through the streets of Palermo. Overnight at the *Hotel*. **(B)**

Friday, April 03

Palermo - Monreale - Palermo



After breakfast, set out for **Monreale**, a hilltop town just outside Palermo, renowned for its breathtaking cathedral, one of the greatest treasures of medieval Europe. The **Cathedral of Monreale**, adorned with over 6,000 square meters of radiant golden mosaics, ranks among the largest and most stunning mosaic displays in the world—second only to Hagia Sophia in Istanbul and San Marco in Venice. Every inch tells a biblical story in glittering gold and rich color. Adjacent to the cathedral, we will visit the serene **Benedictine Cloister**, a masterpiece of Romanesque architecture. With its graceful arcades and over 200 intricately carved columns, it offers a peaceful glimpse into the monastic life of centuries past. Return to **Palermo** for a guided walking tour through the city's historic heart. Accompanied by a knowledgeable local guide, explore some of Palermo's most iconic **monuments**, beginning with the extraordinary **Palatine Chapel**, hidden within the **Palazzo dei Normanni (Norman Palace)**, once the seat of Sicily's kings. Admire its dazzling mosaics, wooden ceiling, and blend of Byzantine, Islamic, and Latin influences.

Next, visit **Palermo Cathedral**, an architectural marvel reflecting centuries of cultural fusion from Arab to Norman, Gothic to Baroque. Continue the tour with a scenic drive to **Mondello**, a picturesque seaside district known for its white-sand beach, turquoise waters, and Art Nouveau villas. It's a favorite escape for locals and a perfect spot for a seaside stroll or quick refreshment. In the afternoon, explore into a more mysterious chapter of Sicilian history with a visit to the **Capuchin Catacombs**, a haunting yet fascinating underground burial site. Home to hundreds of preserved mummified remains, the

catacombs offer a rare and thought-provoking glimpse into centuries-old burial practices. Return to the *Hotel* for overnight. **(B)**

Saturday, April 04

Palermo - Agrigento



After breakfast, embark on a full-day guided excursion to explore some of western Sicily's most enchanting destinations. Visit **Erice**, a beautifully preserved medieval hilltop village perched nearly 2460 feet above sea level. With its cobblestone lanes, stone houses, ancient churches, and panoramic views of the Tyrrhenian Sea, Erice feels suspended. Stroll through its atmospheric streets, visit artisan pastry shops famed for almond sweets, and take in the sweeping vistas from the ancient fortifications, where the sky seems to meet the sea.

Next, enjoy a panoramic tour of **Trapani**, a coastal city steeped in history and tradition. Once a Phoenician trading port, Trapani's elegant **Baroque churches**, **charming pizzas**, and **narrow winding streets** reflect its diverse cultural past. The city's waterfront, lined with fishing boats and old salt warehouses, offers a picturesque glimpse into Sicily's maritime heritage. The journey continues with a visit to **Trapani's famous Salt Pans**, a striking and surreal landscape of glimmering evaporation basins, windmills, and mounds of hand-harvested sea salt. Learn about traditional salt production methods from centuries and see how the sea and sun work together to create one of the island's most valued resources. This area is also a haven for migratory birds, making it a peaceful and scenic stop. Then, transfer to *Grand Hotel Mose*, or similar for check in & overnight. **(B)**

Sunday, April 05

Agrigento - Catania



Enjoy a leisurely breakfast, then set out on a scenic drive through the Sicilian countryside to **Piazza Armerina**, home to one of the island's most extraordinary archaeological treasures: the **Villa Romana del Casale**. Accompanied by a knowledgeable local guide, explore this **lavish Roman villa**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site renowned for its remarkably well-preserved mosaics. Tucked in the heart of Sicily, the villa once belonged to a wealthy Roman aristocrat and stands today as a testament to the elegance and sophistication of imperial life. Marvel at the intricate mosaic floors, considered among the finest of the Roman world, which vividly depict mythological scenes, hunting expeditions and daily life—a timeless glimpse into the customs and culture of the 4th century.

After the visit, continue the journey toward **Agrigento** for a guided tour of the legendary **Valley of the Temples**, one of the most significant and awe-inspiring archaeological sites in the Mediterranean. This vast open-air museum showcases the remains of **seven majestic Doric temples**, dramatically set against a backdrop of olive groves and the sea. Carved from golden tuff stone and illuminated by the Sicilian sun, these ancient ruins, including the **Temple of Concordia**, **Temple of Juno**, and **Temple of Hercules**, stand as enduring symbols of **classical Greek civilization** in Sicily. Recognized as a **UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1997**, the Valley of the Temples invites you to walk in the footsteps of philosophers, poets, and kings. Then, transfer to *Romano House* or similar for check-in and overnight. **(B)**

Monday, April 06

Catania



After breakfast, explore the charming **Val di Noto**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site renowned for its breathtaking late Baroque architecture. This region was tragically devastated by a massive earthquake in 1693 but was meticulously rebuilt according to the elegant principles of Sicilian Baroque style. The visit begins in **Noto**, often regarded as the crown jewel of Sicilian Baroque towns. Here, you will admire the recently restored **Noto Cathedral**, a masterpiece of architecture that has emerged radiant after years of careful conservation. Enjoy **Noto's charming streets**, lined with exquisite palazzi, ornate balconies, and sun-drenched piazzas alive with local life.

Next, journey to **Siracusa**, once known as **Syraka**, the most fantastic city of the ancient Mediterranean world, founded in 734 or 733 BC. Begin the visit to **Ortigia**, Siracusa's historic island heart and a true Baroque art and architecture treasure trove. Explore the **Temple of Athena**, magnificently transformed into the city's cathedral, a testament to centuries of history layered in stone. Then, explore Siracusa's ancient past with a visit to the remarkable **archaeological park**. Wander through the **Latomia del Paradiso (Quarry of Paradise)**, where we will encounter the famous **Ear of Dionysius**, a cavern renowned for its extraordinary acoustics and legend. Discover the ruins of the **Greek-Roman Theatre** and the **Roman amphitheater**, both majestic relics of the city's glorious past. This extraordinary blend of classical antiquity and Baroque splendor has earned Siracusa its place on the UNESCO World Heritage list. It offers a captivating journey through time. Return to your hotel for overnight. **(B)**

Tuesday, April 07
Catania (Etna & Taormina)

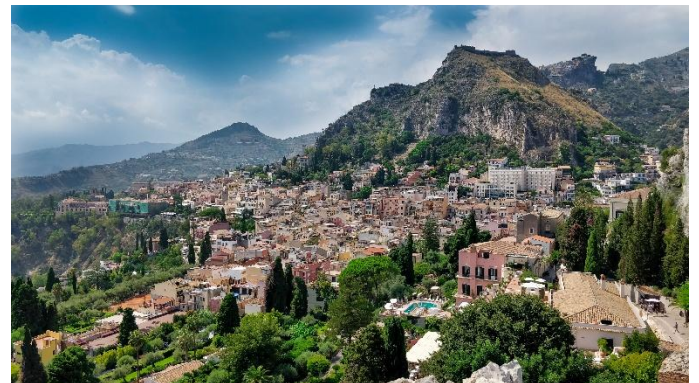


After breakfast, depart for an unforgettable journey to **Mount Etna**, Europe's highest and most active volcano, towering at 11000 feet and recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Your coach will carry you up to **Rifugio Sapienza**, situated at approximately 6000 feet, where we will embark on a self-guided exploration of the famous **Silvestri Craters**, ancient volcanic vents that have long been dormant but offer a dramatic landscape shaped by millennia of eruptions.

As we travel along the winding roads, take in the ever-changing panoramas of **lava fields, forests, and rugged slopes**, where nature's raw power meets a rich tapestry of culture and history. Over the centuries, Mount Etna has crafted a unique environment where fertile soils nurture vineyards and orchards, and legends intertwine with scientific discovery. From the volcanic heights, continue to **Taormina**, often called the "enchanted pearl of Sicily." Perched on a rocky promontory of **Mount Taurus**, 670 feet above sea level, Taormina offers breathtaking views that stretch from the sparkling Ionian Sea to the smoking summit of Etna itself.

Enjoy free time to stroll through Taormina's charming cobblestone streets, dotted with elegant shops, cafés, and historic buildings. We may also visit the magnificent **Greek Theatre**, an ancient open-air amphitheater renowned for its spectacular backdrop, where the volcano and sea create a truly unforgettable panorama. Return to the *Hotel* for overnight. **(B)**

PS: For those seeking a more adventurous ascent, it is also possible to climb higher via cable car and/or a 4x4 jeep, reaching elevations of up to 9,200 feet. This thrilling experience is available for an additional €85pp, offering spectacular close-up views of Mount Etna's lunar landscapes and volcanic activity.



Wednesday, April 08

Catania - USA

OR continue to **MALTA OR S. ITALY OR CYPRUS**



After breakfast transfer to the airport to take your flight to your next adventure.

OR **MALTA OR SOUTHERN ITALY OR CYPRUS.**

"We reserve the right to change the order of activities/visits or sites due to unexpected events beyond our control. We will do our best to ensure that any necessary changes are made when/if needed to meet the needs of our clients".



Tour Cost (Land Only): \$4,995.00

Per person sharing in double occupancy

Single Supplement: \$595.00

*Price based on minimum of 4 participants
and maximum of 8 participants*

Trip Grade: I Lodge Level: ****



Tour Includes:

- Airport/Hotel/Airport transfers with assistance.
- Accommodation at hotels as per the itinerary (based on 3-4-star categories or best available).
- Meals as per the itinerary (B: Breakfast, L: Lunch and D: Dinner).
- Sightseeing in each city as per the itinerary.
- Bottled water on the bus during touring days.
- Luxury air-conditioned vehicle on tour.
- Qualified and licensed English-speaking guide.
- Entrance fees to all mentioned sites and museums.

Trip Grade:

I Easy – Reasonably paced sightseeing, easy walking, and leisurely days. No physical challenges.

Lodging Level:

★★★★Luxury: Regular style - usually large hotels, typical western standard with ample venues and full amenities (4 or 5 stars).

Tour does not include:

- International air USA - Sicily / Sicily - USA.
- **Sicilian Visa** (currently gratis for US citizens).
- Beverages, with or without meals and meals not mentioned.
- Items of a personal nature (camera fees, laundry, excess luggage, etc.).
- Transfers if not arriving/departing on scheduled tour dates.
- Dayroom/overnights necessitated by changes in airline schedules or misconnections.
- City taxes payable by guests to the hotels at check-in time €1.50 to €4.00 pp/night (subject to change).
- Any fluctuations in the exchange rate to the Euro.
- Trip surcharge to operate below required minimum participants.
- Gratuities to drivers, guides, restaurant staff, etc.
- Travel protection insurance. (Recommended)

