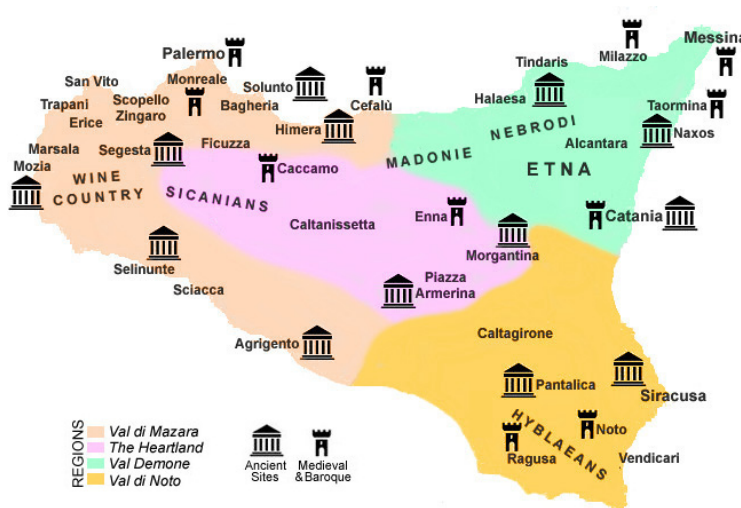




Bishop John Howard and Marie Howard
invite you to join them in
A Pilgrimage to Sicily with the Episcopal Diocese of Florida
Together with
Dr. Douglas Dupree, Rector of the Bishop's Institute
Dr. Charles Howard, PhD in Italian Art
October 1 – October 11, 2019



Please make sure your passport does not expire in less than 6 months after your return.

Tuesday, October 1
Day 1

Arrive into Palermo's Falcone and Borsellino Airport

Meet the driver outside of baggage claim and transfer to the hotel or arrive on your own.

Grand Hotel Villa Igea
Salita Belmonte, 43
Palermo
+39 091 6312111



The Florio family was one of the wealthiest in 19th century Italy. Originally from the southern Italian region of Calabria, the family moved to Sicily after the earthquake of 1783 to take advantage of the stability under the reign of the Bourbon King Ferdinand.

The Florio dynasty was a symbol of the 'Bel Epoque' of Sicilian history, a time when the island first enjoyed the benefits of entrepreneurial wealth, refined taste and lifestyle. The Florios are responsible for some of Palermo's beautiful Liberty Style and Art Nouveau buildings.

7:00 p.m. Welcome drinks, orientation, and dinner will be in the hotel's beautiful Donna Franca Florio restaurant.



Dinner

Wednesday, October 2 ***Day 2***

Following breakfast, Morning Prayer will take place at 9:00 a.m.

We will take the van to the other side of Palermo to meet our guide and visit the Palazzo Reale. Together we will visit the Cappella Palatina, the one-time private chapel of King Roger II, an astonishing masterpiece of Norman architecture, replete with gold mosaics.



Lunch will be at the nearby Al Fondaco del Conte Restaurant or similar.

Afterwards, we will visit Palermo's imposing Cathedral, an architectural example of the many layers of history in the city over the span of centuries.

We will continue down the Corso Vittorio Emanuele on foot, viewing some of the important structures given UNESCO recognition. These will include Arab/Norman architecture, Spanish palazzi, Baroque buildings, and structures damaged in World War II. Sicily is nothing if not the ultimate melting pot.

Dinner will be on your own.



Lunch

Thursday, October 3
Day 3

Following breakfast, Morning Prayer will take place at 9:00 a.m.

We will continue our exploration of Palermo and its environs by driving to the outskirts of the city to visit Monreale Cathedral. You will hear about the history, rivalries, and power struggles in the church while you are dazzled by unparalleled gold and mosaics. After seeing the interior, we shall stroll around the serenely beautiful cloister and see more of the magnificence of the cathedral close.

Lunch will be at one of the town's best restaurants, Pavone.

On our way back into the center, we will stop at Zisa, one of the few distinctively Arab remains, which includes a one-time castle and its park.

Back in Palermo, we will visit one or two of the Oratorios, masterpieces of the sculptor Giacomo Serpotta. The high relief stucco work is as impressive as it is beautiful.

Dinner will be on your own.



Lunch

Friday, October 4
Day 4

Morning service will be at the Chiesa Anglicana, Via Roma 467A.

After services, we will drive 45 minutes east of Palermo to the beautiful seaside town of Cefalù. The setting of this town with the sea before it, the Madonie Mountains rising behind it, and one dominant cathedral is breathtaking.



We will visit the Cefalù Cathedral (intended to mirror that of Monreale), built by Roger II in gratitude for being spared in a storm.

Afterwards we can visit the small but charming Mandralisca Museum, home to one of Sicily's most famous paintings by Antonello da Messina.

Lunch will be on your own at one of the many restaurants and small eateries. Some free time will be yours before departing at 4:00 p.m.

7:15 p.m.: We will depart the hotel to enjoy a very special private dinner in an historic noble palazzo, with a tour of the family treasures beforehand.



Saturday, October 5
Day 5



With our guide, we will depart for the ruins at Segesta. These ruins date from the Elymians, thought to be refugees from Troy. The ruins are majestic, rising out of the landscape. We will see the amphitheater and the temple and learn about the reasons they chose such a location.

We'll return to Palermo for a pizza lunch and you will have free time to explore on your own. An option could be to visit the Archaeological Museum or tour the Teatro Massimo.



Sunday, October 6
Day 6

Today we will check out of the hotel and be ready to leave by 8:30 a.m.

NB: each person is responsible to pay the city tax of E2 per person per night at check out.

Depart for Agrigento, roughly 2 hours by bus.

We will arrive in time for a late morning tour of the magnificent Valley of the Temples. Our guide will bring the history, mythology and local culture to life as you walk along the paths and approach the ruins. Comfortable shoes suggested. Note that there is limited shade at this site.



Lunch will follow at one of the area's best "Slow Food" restaurants with views to the distant temples.

After lunch, you will be able to rest on the bus as we drive to Siracusa.

Check into our newly and exquisitely restored hotel, previously a grand post office.

Ortea Palace Hotel

Via Riva Nazario Sauro

Ortigia

+39 0931 16681

<http://www.ortepalace.com/>

Dinner will be on your own.



Lunch

Monday, October 7

Day 7



After breakfast, we will visit Noto, Sicily's Baroque capital. Our guide will take us around the ornate streets and into a restored Baroque palazzo.

You will have some time to enjoy lunch and explore a little before we meet for a dessert treat at the pasticceria of Chef Corrado Assenza, featured on the Netflix Series, *Chef's Table*.

In the afternoon we will visit the Archaeological Park in Siracusa followed by the charming and beloved historical center, Ortigia.

Dinner will be at a wonderful local restaurant in Ortigia.



Dinner

Tuesday, October 8
Day 8

We'll check out of our hotel this morning in Ortigia and then drive to Taormina.



We will go first to the town of Linguaglossa, located along the Etna Wine Road. On this northern Etna road, we will enjoy a tour and tasting lunch at a winery run by a brother and sister, which produces both award-winning wines and olive oil.

Hotel San Pietro

Via Luigi Pirandello

Taormina

+39 0942 620 711

<https://www.sanpietrotaormina.com/>



Wine tasting lunch

Wednesday, October 9
Day 9

Today we will drive to visit the Villa Romana del Casale in Piazza Armerina. The Villa Romana del Casale is a 4th century Roman hunting villa, now under UNESCO protection and covered in miles of fantastically well-preserved Roman mosaics. It is astonishing to see what the builders included in the home of these wealthy Romans and how full it is of amazing conveniences for its age. Each room tells a story, and some of them are so progressive, they surprise. Our fabulous guide will explain their meaning, the life at that time in Sicily's history, and what we have learned from all of it.



We'll enjoy a beautiful lunch at a local restaurant.

In the afternoon we will visit the museum in Aidone. This museum is small and contains artifacts from the very important early Greek settlement, Morgantina. For a small museum in a small town, it has been quite newsworthy in recent years. Our guide will amaze you with the stories.

Back in Taormina, dinner will be on your own.



Lunch

Thursday, October 10
Day 10

We will shuttle up to the Corso Umberto and spend the day in Taormina beginning with a group visit to the Teatro Greco, among the most iconic of images representing Sicily. This theater sits in a stunning spot. A guide will point out its historical aspects and how the structure has evolved.

After our visit, you will have time to explore the area, enjoy lunch on your own, and return to the hotel at your leisure.

At 7:15 p.m., we will meet in the hotel lobby and transfer to La Capinera, a very fine restaurant for a delicious farewell dinner, where you can enjoy the creations of Chef Pietro d'Agostino.



Dinner

Friday, October 11
Day 11

Depart for Catania's Fontanarossa Airport and *Arrivederci Sicilia!*

We will schedule one or two van transports to the airport for morning flights.

Recommended are flights that depart from Catania (CTA) around 10:00 a.m. The drive is roughly an hour, which means leaving the hotel at 8:00 a.m.

***This itinerary is subject to minor changes based on circumstances at the time of our visit. Any substitutions would be of similar quality.*

Your Trip Includes

Private transportation as per itinerary in an air-conditioned vehicle
Accommodations in 3 wonderful 5-star hotels
Guided tours of Palermo, Monreale, Segesta, Cefalù, Agrigento, Noto, Siracusa, Villa Romana del Casale and Aidone, Taormina
Entrance fees where visiting with guides
All breakfasts, 6 lunches and 4 dinners
Dinner at an historic palazzo
Winery visit with tour and tasting lunch on Mount Etna
Tips to drivers, guides, and restaurants
Travel information, restaurant recommendations and my services for assistance.

Cost: \$6950 per person

**** Please note: you are responsible for your own flight arrangements to and from the United States***

NB: City tax will be collected at each hotel upon departure and is an individual charge, per local law. It is E3 pp per night in Palermo and Taormina and E2.50 pp per night in Siracusa.

***Billing: A \$1000 per person deposit is due upon registration. The balance will be due on August 1, 2019. Payment can be made by check or credit card
(To pay by credit card, contact La RosaWorks at [kjarosa@larosaworks.com](mailto:kjlarosa@larosaworks.com))***

Please Read This Important Information

Passports

U.S. citizens travelling to any destination outside of the United States will be required to present a valid U.S. passport. Passports must be valid for 6 months past your return date. The name on your passport must match the name on your photo I.D., and that exact name must match what appears on your airline tickets.

Travel Insurance

La RosaWorks strongly suggests purchasing travel insurance to cover unforeseen occurrences such as cancelled flights, lost luggage, and medical emergencies. Insurance is offered by many airlines when you book your flight. Credit card and other outside providers are available as well.

La RosaWorks is not responsible for unforeseen occurrences. I recommend:

<https://www.allianztravelinsurance.com/> www.insuremytrip.com , www.bhtp.com or www.travalexinsurance.com

What to Expect on Your Tour

Credit cards are generally accepted in the shops and restaurants, but never in a café or small food establishment. There are ATM machines in the main towns.

Charging your electronics only requires a three-prong adapter for Southern Europe. They are inexpensive online or at Staples. You do not need a converter.

Dress is pretty casual in Sicily, although the locals tend to look ‘smart.’ You are on vacation, so be comfortable. For our tour, we will have a couple of nice dinners, so a button-down shirt and slacks would be fine for the men, and for women, nice slacks or a comfortable skirt is fine.

Hair dryers are available in the hotels.

Meals in Sicily follow the old-world rules.

Breakfast in Sicilian hotels is generally substantial, Sicilian style: Fruit, sweets, breads, cheese and meats, yogurt and cereals. Coffee, tea and juices. In some places you can find American dishes such as bacon and eggs, but mostly you will not.

Lunch is generally at 1:00, and it is the bigger of the meals.

Dinner is usually served at 8:00 and for Sicilians is a lighter meal featuring protein but also pizzas. American-style salad is not so common in Sicily, although they eat plenty of vegetables.

Tap water is not a problem in Sicily, but the custom is to drink bottled since pipes can be quite old. The water is inexpensive. I generally buy a large bottle for my room.

Tipping is included in this tour (except for portage), but for the times you will be on your own, here is a guideline.



It is common to have a coperto (cover charges) of 1 or 2 euro included on your bill.



Tipping is becoming more common, but still not an obligation. A tip of 10% for good service and food is typical. Compliments to the chef are also much appreciated.








Travel between locations will be by air-conditioned private van with windows suitable for enjoying the landscape.

Walking is a part of most tours and in Sicily that is no exception. Strolling among the narrow winding streets is the best way to discover. Be aware that Sicily has many streets that are still *cobblestone or uneven*. We will be in some places where there will be pebbles and perhaps some rocks. Comfortable walking shoes are a must.

WiFi is available in the hotels. I travel with a global hotspot. It uses a satellite and not cell towers, so it's more reliable. It is also secure. If connecting is important for one reason or another, I suggest using one of these. The cost is about \$10/day through Roaming Man. Here is the link: <https://bit.ly/2p6di0W>

Weather in Sicily is generally lovely. In October, it should be lovely—warmish but not hot. Up to the minute weather can be found here: <https://www.larosaworks.com/sicily-travel-information.php>

A Helpful Guide to Eating Out in Sicily

-  Some restaurants are busier than others. It's always better to call in advance to make a reservation. Your hotel can do this for you.
-  It is common to have a coperto (cover charges) of 1 or 2 euro included on your bill.
-  Tipping is becoming more common, but still not an obligation. A tip of 10% for good service and food is typical. Compliments to the chef are also much appreciated.
-  Major credit cards are accepted at restaurants in Sicily, but cash is still the most appreciated.
-  Saturday night dinner (*cena*) and Sunday lunch (*pranzo*) are very busy times. You should make your reservation several days in advance for the more popular restaurants.
-  When you get offered specials, it will usually depend on the weight of the fish chosen or the other ingredients in the dish. You can count on having to pay higher prices for specials.
-  Do you have special dietary requirements? Unless clearly stated on their website and/or menu, it's advised to call and ask whether your restaurant of choice caters to your needs.

Emergency Numbers in Sicily

- Ambulance: call 118
- Police: Call 113
- In case of an accident or other car problems on the road in Sicily, call the Automobile Club of Italia, ACI, at phone number: 803-116.
- Italian Embassy in Palermo: +39 091 305 857 - US Consulate: +39 081 583 8111

Some Reading Suggestions to Prepare For Your Trip

These are books that will give you a sense of the island's particular history and culture. For a longer list of books and also films, please visit: http://larosaworks.com/sicily_tours_reading_list.php

Seeking Sicily: A Cultural Journey Through Myth and Reality

John Keahey

Like many before him, this travel writer fell in love with Sicily. Despite his non-Sicilian heritage, he repeatedly hits the nail on the head in this recent contribution to the library about Sicily. His observations and insights are terrific, and so much so, that he has been asked to write a second book about the smaller towns in Sicily. I am proud to have helped direct him to many of Sicily's smaller treasures.

The Leopard

Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa (1896-1957)

The quintessential story of a Sicilian prince and his family during the days of transition into unified Italy. A classic by all standards, this Sicilian author described Garibaldi's influence and the Risorgimento so eloquently and poignantly. The book is rich, but the movie is good, too!

The Peoples of Sicily

Louis Mendola and Jackie Alio

This book is packed with information about Sicily, its history, culture, traditions, and legacies. It is comprehensive, yet accessible and enjoyable. Well written by two authoritative voices.

On Persephone's Island

Mary Taylor Simeti

A detailed portrait of Sicily by an American writer who married a Sicilian and settled there in 1962. Wonderfully descriptive of rural life and local festivals all focused around the seasons. A very good introduction to the rhythms of Sicily and that which propels it ever forward, no matter the obstacle.

The Stone Boudoir: In search of the hidden villages of Sicily

Theresa Maggio

A captivating personal journey through towns and settlements. Maggio's portrait of Sicilians is insightful and full of intimacy and warmth. Her descriptions of festivities and traditions, scenery and beauty are evocative and compelling.

Midnight in Sicily

Peter Robb

This is an enthralling book about Sicily, with a vivid picture of Palermo. Robb discusses its undercurrents, beauty, culture and psychology while including food, politics and history.

Palmento

Robert Camuto

A fun romp through the vineyards of Sicily, this writer interviews many of the winemakers who have been instrumental in bringing Sicilian wine to the forefront of winemaking.

The Vine Whisperer

Filippo Testa

This winemaker owns his family estate but only because he fought for it when local "undesirables" wanted his land. A tale of courage and heartwarming passion, with local wine as a backdrop. B & N carries the book.



A Selection of Films About or Filmed on Sicily

These are films that will give you a sense of the island's beauty, history, and culture through a lens. For a longer list of films, please visit: There is a larger list here:

https://www.larosaworks.com/sicily_tours_film_list.php

Cinema Paradiso

Giuseppe Tornatore's 1989 Academy-Award-winning film is a romantic look at growing up in a remote village. The filmmaker returns to his Sicilian hometown, **Bagheria**, for the first time in 30 years and looks back on his life. A poignant classic.

Diario di Una Siciliana Ribelle

1997 *Marco Amenta*.

This is a documentary of Rita Atria, a 17 year-old daughter of a mafia don who gives her diaries to the authorities to avenge her father's death. Her evidence and work with Borsellino and Falcone proved extremely valuable in the exposure and convictions of many important gangsters. Bravely told, Amenta was so captivated by the story that he made a second film, *The Sicilian Girl* (2008) to explore Atria's psychological and emotional journey. The rest is history. Filmed around **Palermo**.

Divorzio all'Italiana (Divorce, Italian Style)

Pieter Germi's 1961 comedy had Marcello Mastroianni as a Sicilian aristocrat seeking a divorce when divorce in Italy was not legal. Filmed in **Catania**. Pretty funny.

Il Gattopardo (The Leopard)

Luchino Visconti's 1968 film version of Giuseppe di Lampedusa's novel. Set in revolutionary Sicily in the mid-1800s, the film stars Burt Lancaster as a Sicilian prince who seeks to preserve his family's aristocratic way of life in the face of Italy's unification by Garibaldi. Filmed in **Palermo, Mondello and Ciminna**.

Il Postino

Michael Radford's ultra-lovely romance set in a small Italian town during the 1950s where exiled Chilean poet Pablo Nerudo has taken refuge. A shy mailman befriends the poet and uses his words, and, ultimately, the writer himself - to help him woo a woman with whom he has fallen in love. Filmed in Procida (Bay of Naples) and **the Aeolian Island of Salina**.

Johnny Stecchino

Wonderful 1991 comedy directed by and starring Roberto Benigni. Stecchino (toothpick) is a hapless bus driver who is believed to be a snitch for the mob. Filmed in **Bagheria** and **Capo Mulino**.

Kaos (Chaos)

Directed by Paolo and Vittorio Taviani and released in 1984, *Kaos* tells four stark and really powerful tales of Sicilian life based on stories by Luigi Pirandello. Filmed with haunting and mesmerizing music around Pirandello's hometown of **Agrigento**.

La Terra Trema (The Earth Trembles)

Luchino Visconti's 1948 adaptation of Verga's *I Malavoglia*, the devastating story of a fisherman's failed dream of independence. Originally a failure at the box office, the film has emerged as a classic of the neo-realist movement. Filmed in **Aci Trezza**.

Malena

2001 Directed by Giuseppe Tornatore

Set during WWII and filmed in **Messina**, this is a great story of the life of beautiful Malena, her husband's absence, a boy's obsession, and angry townspeople. There is at least one scene in Ortigia's Piazza Duomo.

An Abbreviated History of Sicily

More than 2,500 years at a strategic crossroads in the Mediterranean with a favorable climate, a richness of land and a singular beauty of landscape, Trinacria, the triangle shaped island, now called Sicily, sits with a unique historical legacy. Nowhere else have Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Arabs, Normans, French, Germans, Spanish, Italians and even British left such a deep impression. They have shaped this island's people, its agriculture and architecture, its cuisine and the arts. Whether you are more attracted to Greek temples, Roman villas and aqueducts, Norman cathedrals or Baroque Churches, Sicily offers a range of historical sites that is not easily matched.

THE FIRST POPULATIONS **(20,000 B.C. -1,100 B.C.)**

In the Paleolithic era, the west of Sicily became home to the Sicani (1,400 B.C.), a people coming from the Iberian Peninsula and the eastern part to the Siculi (1,100 B.C.), a population coming from the Italian peninsula. Cave drawings are still visible on the island of Levanzo. The myths tell stories of gods and goddesses, inhabitants of the island and of the Elymians (1,300 B.C.) a people coming from what is today Turkey. In the Bronze Age, the Elymians occupied the western part of Sicily, chased the Sicani in the mountains, founded Segesta and instituted the cult of Venus, the goddess of love. The Elymians also introduced in Sicily new edible plants, among them the chickpeas. The amazing Necropolis of Pantalica, near Siracusa, is a testimony to this fascinating history and the determination of these people.

THE PHOENICIANS from LEBANON **(1,100 B.C. - 800 B.C.)**

The Phoenicians occupied the western coastal area of Sicily, and founded Palermo, Solunto and Mozia. They established textile manufactures, increased ceramic productions to high levels of quality and quantity, grew and exported wheat, and used the island as a center for the expansion of their trade. They developed the alphabet that was adapted by the Greeks, modified by the Romans and used today in all western languages.

THE CARTHAGINIANS from NORTH AFRICA **(800 B.C. - 700 B.C.)**

The Carthaginians dominated part of the island for the strategic position, to back up their military aims to conquer the known world. They used the island's large supply of trees to build ships and used its wheat to feed their army. They built trading posts all over the island but spent all their energy defending it.

THE GREEKS **(700 B.C. - 500 B.C.)**

The Greeks colonized Sicily for its lush land and mild climate. They promoted agriculture, introducing the olive tree, cultivating artichokes and cardoons and increasing the production of wheat. The Greeks also developed the production of wine and established farms for rearing cattle and sheep to increase the manufacture of cheese. They founded cities in the eastern and southern parts of Sicily, among them Naxos, the first Greek colony, Catania, Syracuse, Selinunte, Gela, Lentini and Agrigento. They also built roads, infrastructure, housing, and temples, some still existing. From 735 BC to 264 BC, it was one the most splendid periods of Sicily's history, often referred to as "The Golden Age." Schools of art and science were instituted. Poetry and comedy flourished with Theocritus, Stesicoro and Epicarmo. Feace, the architect that built many infrastructures and the gigantic temple of Zeus was the pride of Agrigento. There was excellence in all fields: in law, Diocle from Syracuse and Caronda from Catania; in philosophy, Empedocles from Agrigento, Gorgia from Lentini, and Evemero from Messina; in medicine, Acrone from Agrigento and Erodico from Lentini. In Archimedes of Syracuse, Sicily can also be proud of a giant in the field of science, mathematics and physics.

Archimedes determined the nature of "pi," the numerical value of the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter. He also perceived the laws of calculus and discovered laws of physics. He invented the lever, pulley, burning mirror, catapult, many war devices, and hydraulic screw (a type of pump to raise water, used at present in Trapani and in Egypt). Arcestratus from Gela wrote the first book about the art and pleasure of good eating and cooking. The Greeks called Sicily "Megale Hellas," meaning "Great Greece." Later the Romans called it "Magna Grecia."

THE ROMANS **(400 B.C. - 500 A.D.)**

Rome dominated Sicily until the fourth century A.D. The Romans made Sicily a province of the Empire following their defeat of Carthage and Syracuse in the Punic Wars. They built aqueducts, theaters, and many beautiful villas, but they also destroyed forests for shipbuilding and used the resulting fields to grow wheat. They monopolized the commercial exchange of wheat, which was intended to provide for Rome's people and soldiers. Sicily was known as the granary of Rome, as its "bread-basket." Roman aristocrats celebrated their feasts with provisions, fruits, vegetables, game, honey, and wines from Sicily and used expert Sicilian cooks to prepare their banquets. Indeed, Sicilian cooking influenced the Roman cooking style; and the Romans copied Sicilian dishes and cooking techniques, making them their own. Christianity had spread throughout the island. Rome fell to the Vandals from North Africa whose short-lived reign was followed by the short-lived rule of the Ostrogoths.

THE BYZANTINES from SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE **(525 A.D. - 827 A.D.)**

The Byzantines settled in Sicily from 525 A.D. - 827 A.D., and they were welcomed by the still present Greek culture, but not well accepted by the rest of the population. They imposed heavy taxes, needed to support the army fighting the Muslims who were creeping onto the borders. The Byzantines transformed many Greek temples to Christian churches, collected funds to build cathedrals and monasteries, imposed the Christian religion, and established the military draft. They introduced the art of Byzantine mosaics, and they founded schools to train in this art. Little is left of the artistic and beautiful mosaics, apart from the discipline that the Normans emulated and heightened to the magnificence of the "*Cristo Pantocratore*" in Monreale, Palermo and Cefalù, to name a few examples. They are not to be missed.

THE ARABS from NORTH AFRICA and WESTERN ASIA **(847 A.D. - 1060 A.D.)**

Thousands of Arabs, Berbers, and Muslims, collectively known as Saracens, landed in Mazara del Vallo in the early 800s. The Arabs inhabited Sicily for about 200 years and during their government, Sicily achieved a state of welfare, prosperity, and order. The island was divided into districts, with a "*kaid*" (master or leader) in charge of each territory. At the beginning, the Arabs tried to convert the Christians to Islam; but after some difficulties, they established a small tax that gave protection and freedom of religion. It was an era of religious tolerance. The Arabs introduced to the western world the number and the decimal system, a new account structure of debits and credits. Being traders, they established centers all over the island, and built new cities, fortifying and beautifying the existing towns. Palermo became their capital and during this time, it was one of the most populous and cosmopolitan centers of the world. They changed many Christian churches into mosques; they built gorgeous palaces, and flourishing gardens with luxuriant plants and fruit trees. In Sicily, they began the cultivation of lemons, dates, sugar cane, eggplants, peaches, apricots, melons, pistachios, bergamot, as well as many herbs and spices. Most importantly, they improved the utilization of the island's water resources, realizing a modern system of irrigation, beneficial to agriculture. The new irrigation system made possible the cultivation of rice, which was exported to Europe, where this staple food was previously unknown. By means of loans and tax concessions, the Arab rulers broke large estates into small farms, so peasants and farm workers could become landowners and take better care of the farms, thereby increasing agricultural production. They planted a great deal of mulberry trees for the cultivation of silk worms and for the bark needed in the paper production. Paper, which was traded extensively, was a new product replacing papyrus. There was growth in all areas of business; and it required the institution of trade schools to teach silk making, papermaking, and the jeweler's craft. Additionally, masons and artists were trained to build villas and mosques. Many new factories were founded to manufacture silk, to refine sugar cane, to make articles in gold and silver, and to produce paper. Expert Sicilian cooks devised different cooking techniques and, through the use of new products, new dishes with special tastes were created. During the Arabs' control, the first pasta factory was built in Trabia, near Palermo, and couscous became popular in Trapani.

THE NORMANS from FRANCE **(1060 A.D. - 1198 A.D.)**

The Norman crusades against the Arabs achieved success in 1091 with Roger I making Christianity the official religion of the land. In 1130 Roger II took the throne and included Naples and Capua in the jurisdiction. A new form of government was instituted around a monarchy, and new laws enacted to give equality and freedom of religion to the different ethnic groups living in Sicily. It resulted in a form of government many centuries ahead of its time. The Normans tolerated the way of life of their subjects, who

came from diverse ethnic backgrounds. Better still, they merged the ideas, science, art and architecture of Greek, Roman, Byzantine and Saracen scholars. They created progress and some masterpieces like the Palatine Chapel in Palermo, the Cathedral of Palermo, Cefalù, Messina, Catania, Monreale and the many decorations in churches and buildings everywhere in Sicily. The Normans brought from the north the “stockfish” that became popular for its taste and easy preservation. Williams I and II followed the Rogers, and they left their throne to their aunt of Altavilla, who married Hohenstaufen Henry, a Swabian.

THE SWABIANS from GERMANY **(1198 A.D. - 1250 A.D.)**

In 1194, Henry the VI, Emperor of Germany, became King of Sicily through marriage, and his son, Frederick II ruled from 1198 to 1250. He was called “stupor mundi”- wonder of the world - for his talent as a statesman, governor, and legislator, as well as for his knowledge of science, philosophy, art, and languages. He patronized Islamic, Jewish, and Christian scientists, poets and artists; and in the court of Frederick II, the Italian language was born. Poems and essays were written in the new language. Frederick II organized the VI crusade and conquered Jerusalem in 1228. He built castles and fortifications in strategic locations along the Sicilian coastline. He founded the university in Naples, the first state funded University. Upon Frederick’s death, the Pope sold Sicily to the King of England who then gave it to his 8-year-old son, Edmund of Lancaster. The Pope then deposed Edmund and gave Sicily to Charles of Anjou (brother of Louis IX).

THE ANGEVINS from FRANCE **(1266-1282)**

The Angevins oppressed Sicily more than any previous power. They were generally detested for their high taxes and for transferring all power to French aristocrats. In 1282 a rebellion against Charles of Anjou and the French Angevins broke out in Palermo. Peter III of Aragon was asked to intervene, and a twenty-year war named “The Sicilian Vespers” ensued. It resulted in the coronation of Frederick of Aragon, Peter’s son.

THE ARAGONESE from SPAIN **(1282 – 1516)**

The arrival of Peter of Aragon was the beginning of Spanish domination that continued for five centuries. During that time, Sicily was isolated from Italy and the rest of Europe. The government in the 14th century was largely ineffective, and the 15th century saw the plague decimate the population. With the discovery of America, the focus moved from the Mediterranean. Corruption continued, and religious freedom vanished.

THE HAPSBURGS from SPAIN **(1516 – 1713)**

Corruption continued, and fiefdoms were re-established. Peasants paid rent to large landowners, who were a source of funding for Spanish expansion. Discontent was widespread and led to brigandry, which was supported by the oppressed. They defended themselves with a code of silence (“Omertà”), thus providing the foundations of the Mafia.

Disease and misrule continued, and insurrections were quashed, leading to great misery among the masses. In the mid 1670s, Mt. Etna erupted violently destroying much around Catania. It was followed by the great earthquake of 1693 that killed 5% of the population and destroyed much on the east coast. A massive rebuilding campaign began and left us with an enormous collection of spectacular Baroque architecture. It can best be seen in Noto and Ragusa, but in Catania as well.

In 1700, Charles II died, and Spain gave Sicily to the House of Savoy who, in 1720, gave it to the Austrians in exchange for Sardinia.

THE BOURBONS from SPAIN **(1734 – 1806)**

King Charles I reclaimed Sicily for the Spanish and became King Charles III. In 1740, Britain’s John “Woodhouse” began production of fortified wines at Marsala – now owned by Florio. King Charles left Sicily to be governed by his half-brother Ferdinand VI of Naples. In 1799, Napoleon invaded Naples, and Ferdinand fled to Palermo with Admiral Nelson in 1806. For eleven years, the British Administration took over, and introduced a parliamentary system similar to its own. They abolished the feudal system and increased wine production for the soldiers. They then abandoned Sicily to the Bourbons and restored Sicily to Ferdinand.

(1815-1860)

Ferdinand returned to Naples and declared himself King of the Two Sicilies, but the ruthless governing became untenable by 1860.

THE SAVOIAS from NORTHERN ITALY

(1860-1946)

Victor Emmanuel II of Savoy favored Garibaldi's expedition to the Kingdom of The Two Sicilies in 1860. After overthrowing King Francis II, Sicily was annexed to the newly unified Italy with Victor Emmanuel as King. Further decline, both economic and social, plagued Sicily. It was a transitional time for the old aristocracy, who retained many privileges but saw their way of life vanishing. Between 1890 and 1930, more than one million Sicilians migrated from Sicily to American shores. During this time, a massive earthquake hit Messina and 80,000 people were killed. Sicily was not included in the modernization occurring in the north, and they consequently succumbed to a growing Mafia. In 1922, Mussolini became prime minister with a goal of colonizing North Africa. The Fascists tried to stop the Mafia but had only marginal success. Later, after heavy war damage in the fight to liberate Europe from Hitler, the Mafia was even more powerful. In 1946, Sicily voted for the republic.

THE ITALIAN REPUBLIC

(1946-TODAY)

After 1946 many dreamed of separating Sicily from the motherland and even annexing it to the United States. Salvatore Giuliano led a small group of bandits with ties to the Mafia to accomplish this goal. He was killed in 1950. The Mafia became increasingly entwined with politics and power; and it is only thanks to the dedication of some public servants, including Paolo Borsellino and Giovanni Falcone, that the state is tackling the problem more effectively and gaining control. Today there still exists a number of people who desire separation.

The Kingdom of Sicily lasted for over 800 hundred years. In addition to the island nation of Sicily and the Sicilian archipelago, the Kingdom of Sicily included the following regions of Italy: Calabria, Basilicata, Puglia, Campania, Molise, Abruzzo, and parts of Lazio and Marche. It also included Malta, parts of Tunisia, Greece, and Jerusalem. The Sicilian Emperor Frederick II ruled his Kingdom from his capital city of Palermo. He was King of Sicily, King of Italy, King of Germany, King of Jerusalem, King of Cyprus and Holy Roman Emperor.

Of those who invaded Sicily, apparently, some were good rulers, some bad; but all imposed taxes, exploited the people and imposed their will and way of life. With ingenuity, Sicilians worked to adapt and transform those experiences to their advantage, enriching the customs, the cultural patrimony of Sicily and the art of cooking and good eating. The family, being the one constant institution in the history of Sicily, plays an important and integral role in life. Many of the invaders fell in love with the land, the climate, the island's people and became Sicilian forever! In modern history Sicily is part of Italy, with an independent, self-ruling, regional government. How successful this has been and how long it lasts remains to be seen.

The Sicilian Flag

The Sicilian flag dates back to 1282, from the time of the Sicilian Vespers of Palermo, when on Easter eve the Sicilians revolted against the rule of Charles I. The flag is bisected diagonally into sections of red and yellow. The red represents the municipality of Palermo, while the yellow represents Corleone, which was a renowned agricultural center in the medieval era.

The flag is also characterized by the presence of the *triskelion*—“triskèles” meaning “three promontories” or “trinacria”. (“La Trinacria” is also the ancient name of Sicily.) In the middle, one sees the head of the Gorgon (i.e., Medusa), whose hair consists of writhing snakes and behind whose ears are sheaves of wheat. The wheat is a reference to Sicily’s important role as the fertile “granary of Rome.” Medusa, who, according to legend, could petrify any man who cast a glance at her, is the protector of Sicily. The three bent legs represent the three points of the island Sicily itself—Messina, Siracusa, and Marsala—but was also popular with Spartan warriors as a representation of power or force.

