



SICILY DREAMS



Day 1: Destination Sicily

Arrival of group in the area of Palermo, the capital of Sicily, with thousands of years of history that have left a rich artistic and historical heritage, ranging from the remains of the Punic walls through to Art Nouveau villas, and including buildings in Arabic-Norman style, Baroque churches and Neoclassical theatres. Check-in at local hotel for dinner and overnight stay.

Day 2: Palermo and Monreale

Guided visit in the morning to the old city centre and its numerous attractions, like the Cathedral, the Palazzo dei Normanni and the splendid Palatine Chapel, and the city's famous squares. Lunch in a city centre restaurant. Continues in the afternoon with a guided visit to Monreale, where next to the magnificent Cathedral built in 1174 stands the cloister of the old Benedictine monastery, erected in the late 12th century and a fine example of Byzantine architecture. Return to hotel for dinner and overnight stay.

Day 3: Segesta and Selinunte

Departure for Segesta with its imposing Doric temple and its theatre, partially excavated into a rocky hillside, and then continuing towards Selinunte, an ancient city founded by the Greeks. Lunch in a local restaurant followed by a guided visit to one of Sicily's largest and most fascinating archaeological sites, with the Acropolis and the Eastern Temples. Departure for Agrigento, with check-in at a local hotel for dinner and overnight stay.

Day 4: Agrigento and Piazza Armerina

Guided visit in the morning to Agrigento's renowned Valley of the Temples, an archaeological site dating back to the Greek period with the ruins of as many as ten Doric temples, three sanctuaries and numerous necropolises, then continuing to Piazza Armerina for lunch in a local restaurant. Visit to the Villa del Casale, built in late Roman times and famous for its splendid mosaics, perfectly conserved and recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Departure after the visit for the east coast of Sicily, with check-in at a hotel in the Taormina/Giardini Naxos area for dinner and overnight stay.

Day 5: Etna and Taormina

Morning dedicated to an excursion to Mount Etna, Europe's largest active volcano and over 3000 metres high. Arrival at the La Sapienza Refuge, and conditions permitting, continuation to the craters of the volcano in off-road vehicles that can be hired onsite. Lunch in a traditional restaurant on the slopes of Mount Etna and departure for Taormina, a famous destination for international tourism situated in a splendid panoramic position. Stroll along the Corso Umberto and visit to the Greek Theatre. Return to hotel for dinner and overnight stay.

Day 6: Siracusa

Departure for Siracusa, one of the largest and most powerful cities of the world of the Ancient Greeks, with guided visits to the magnificent Greek Theatre, the Roman Amphitheatre and the Ear of Dionysius Cave. Lunch in a restaurant. Stroll in the afternoon through the old quarter of Siracusa on the Ortigia Island, linked to the rest of the city by three bridges, to see the Cathedral and the Aretusa Fountain. Return to hotel for dinner and overnight stay.

Day 7: Tindari, Cefalù and return to Palermo

Departure in the morning for the northern coast of Sicily and visit to Tindari, an ancient Greek city founded as "Tyndaris" in 396 BC. The ruins of the old walls lead to the Greek Theatre, overlooking the sea. Visits to the Basilica and the Sanctuary of the Black Madonna. Stop at Santo Stefano di Camastra, famous for its ceramics, then continuing to Cefalù, nestled at the foot of a rocky promontory and one of the leading seaside resorts of the entire province. Lunch in a local restaurant and afternoon visit to the picturesque town, with its superb Norman cathedral and splendid Byzantine mosaics adorning the central apse. Continues to the Palermo area for check-in at hotel and dinner and overnight stay.

Alternative programme:

Day 7:

Riviera of the Cyclops, Cefalù and return to Palermo. Panoramic tour in the morning of the Riviera of the Cyclops and the picturesque fishing villages, made famous by Homer's Odyssey and later by Giovanni Verga in his novel "I Malavoglia". Short stop at Acireale, famous even in Roman times for its thermal baths. Stroll through the old town centre with its distinctive baroque architecture, including the Cathedral and the square onto which it faces. Lunch in a restaurant, then continuing to Cefalù, nestled at the foot of a rocky promontory and one of the leading seaside resorts of the entire province. Visit to the picturesque town, with its superb Norman cathedral and splendid Byzantine mosaics adorning the central apse. Continues to the Palermo area for check-in at hotel and dinner and overnight stay.

Day 8:

Departure from Palermo after breakfast for the homeward journey, hoping to return soon to the "Island of Sunshine" to admire once again Sicily's magnificent landscapes and to discover many more of its remarkable treasures.