CHARMING SICILY TOUR
Designed for Laura Pater Travel Group of 25 people

DATE
April 23/ May 4, 2019

AIRPORT ARR.
Catania

AIRPORT DEP.
Palermo
Day 1 – 23 April 2019
Arrival Catania

Arrival at the airport. Pick up by your private Bus. Transfer to Taormina and accommodation at your hotel.

Day 2 - 24 April 2019
Catania & Taormina Walking Tour
10.00 pm/6.00 pm
6 Hours guided tour

Breakfast at your hotel and pick up by private bus. Transfer to Catania, a city situated between the Ionian Sea and the majestic Mount Etna. The city is often blanketed by a dark rain of ash and cinders. In 1669, there was a violent eruption of the volcano and it covered everything with lava. Less than thirty years later (1693), when the city was still nursing its wounds, an earthquake destroyed anything that was still left of it. Catania managed to react to these natural calamities and started a huge building project that foresaw a wide use of black lava and light coloured limestone.

The city was one huge, busy building site for decades and slowly the baroque aspect that still characterizes the city today began to form. Today, Catania is one of the greatest baroque cities of the Mediterranean. The city radiates a strange romantic beauty with its broad boulevards, spacious squares and great cathedrals, still striking in their black and white colours, lava and limestone, crumbling plaster, and cracked marble columns. First stop, the “Pescheria”, a daily fish and vegetable market, lunch at leisure.
Then return in Taormina and guided tour of the town, founded by the Greeks in 358 B.C. It was occupied by the Romans and then fell into Byzantine hands. The little town is located on the East coast of Sicily, overlooking the Ionian Sea. Taormina is called the “Pearl of the Mediterranean” for several reasons: nestled on Mount Tauro, it offers the beauty of Mediterranean architecture all the while surrounded by endless magnificent views of both sea and mountains. Thanks to its high position in altitude, Taormina offers visitors a breath-taking panorama.

From its Greek theatre, you can admire the bay of Giardini Naxos and Mount Etna, the highest active volcano in Europe, while on the other side you can gaze out over the coastline toward Messina and view the proximity of the Calabrian coast.

Day 3 – 25 April 2019
Etna Tour and lunch in an exclusive DOC Winery
10.00 pm / 4.00 pm
6 Hours Guided tour

Breakfast at the hotel. Pick up by your private Bus and local guide. Explore Mount Etna, the largest active volcano in Europe. Discovering Mount Etna is one of the greatest adventure tours in Sicily, not only for the volcanic phenomena but also for the different kinds of vegetation visible during the ascent. This volcano has more than 400 craters, split all over the Catania county. The first stop of the tour is Valle del Bove, a wide valley located on the eastern slope of the volcano. Valle del Bove is part of the protected area of the Etna Regional Park. Proceeding, you will go through old lava flows that date back to 1979 until you reach Mount Fontana, 1300 meters above the sea level. This is a great panoramic point, from which you can admire the majesty of the valley and of the Monti Sartorius. Afterwards, a short walk will lead you to the craters of the Sartorius Mountains, which date back to 1865 and are characterized by seven little eruptive cones. Halfway down from the top, you will reach another panoramic point which offers a breathtaking view of the Ionian Coast, from Riposto to Taormina and a glimpse of the Calabrian Coast, of the North-East crater and of the latest new lava flows and craters of 2002. Lunch will be served in an exclusive Etna DOC Winery. Return to Hotel.

Day 4 – 26 April 2019
Siracusa and Noto
10.00 am / 6.00 pm
8 Hours Guided tour

Breakfast at hotel and check out.

Pick up by your private Bus. Drive to Siracusa a window into the ancient history of the Mediterranean. Its vast archaeological site, on the edge of the modern city, is a rare treasure of temples and amphitheaters. Siracusa flourished in 480 B.C. and soon became the most important Greek city in Sicily, both economically and politically. You will visit remarkable Greek and Roman ruins, such as: the cave called “The Ear of Dionysius”, because of its unusual shape resembling a human ear, baroque buildings and classic churches such as the Duomo, built upon the old temple of Athena.
You will enjoy lunch in a local trattoria located in Ortigia.

Transfer to the Hotel and check in. In the afternoon drive to Noto, one of Sicily’s most beautiful baroque cities, whose heritage, both for importance and beauty, has been declared World Heritage by the UNESCO. Here, we suggest visit “Caffe Sicilia” and taste their unique pastry creations (gelato, jams, creams). Return to the Hotel for dinner and overnight stay in Siracusa.

**Grand Hotel Minareto 5*, Siracusa**

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<tr>
<th>Double classic rooms</th>
<th>2 nights</th>
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<td>The Grand Hotel Minareto is a luxury seaside resort located right in front of the island of Ortigia, on a promontory in the midst of the crystal-clear waters of the Plemmirio Nature Reserve. All the rooms are in reserved and exclusive cottages scattered around the luxuriant Mediterranean grounds: a splendid setting dominated by the sea and the sky. Guests in the Grand Hotel Minareto can decide to let themselves be pampered by the soft white sand of the reserved beach, relax beside the pool or delight in gastronomic experiences in the resort’s restaurants and bars.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Address:</strong> Via del Faro Massolivieri 26 96100 Siracusa Tel. +39 0931.721222</td>
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**Day 5 – 27 April 2019**

**Ragusa, Scicli and Modica**

10.00 am/6.00 pm

4 Hours Guided tour

Breakfast, Lunch, chocolate and herbs tasting, D

Breakfast at the hotel.

Pick up by your private Bus. The first stop will be at Scicli to visit the “Aromi Farm” with the owner Enrico. This farm cultivates autochthon plants and aromatic herbs. It also holds an important position of leadership in sales and marketing, focusing on local species of the Sicilian coast and in particular of the Iblean area. The farm produces more than 120 different varieties of plants and herbs using old traditional methods of manual cultivation. You will sample the different varieties of herbs and see how they are used alongside other local products for lunch.

Then discover two of Sicily’s most stunning Baroque towns: Modica and Ragusa Ibla where you can admire picturesque lanes, narrow streets, many old workshops, and St. George’s Church.

You will then visit the Antica Dolceria Bonajuto, the oldest pastry shop of Sicily, to taste the famous chocolate of Modica. The owner Pierpaolo Ruta or the pastry chef will offer you Modican chocolate, which is made with only two ingredients: cacao and sugar. Return to the Hotel for dinner and overnight stay.
Day 6 – 28 April 2019
Piazza Armerina
9.30 am / 6.00 pm
2 Hours Guided tour

Breakfast at the hotel and check out.

Pick up by your private Bus. Today you will be transferred to Piazza Armerina where you will visit the mosaics of the Roman Villa del Casale, named after an agricultural settlement known as “Casale”, or farmhouse, that flourished there in the 15th century. This beautiful Roman Villa consists of 3,500 square meters of mosaic pavement, still perfectly intact. It may have also been a hunting lodge and a location to entertain important guests. The mosaics include a 60-meter-long hunting scene, in which groups of men struggle and sweat as they capture ferocious animals in India and North Africa before transporting them to Rome for gladiator games.

After the tour, enjoy the lunch in a typical restaurant and reach Agrigento. Check in, dinner and overnight stay.

Day 7 – 29 April 2019
The True Sicily
9.00 am / 6.00 pm
8 Hours Guided tour

Breakfast at the hotel. Pick up by your private Bus. Today, you will visit one of the most typical village of the Agrigento Province, in the ancient heart of Sicily, at the gates of the Sican Mountains. Sant’Angelo Muxaro rises in the place that saw the epos of the Sican King Kokalos, in a secret and ancient land, far from the
touristic areas, on a hill over the Valley of the Platani river. Along the town’s lanes and courtyards, you can enjoy the sight of the wild and luxuriant countryside. The first kilometers will take you into a natural path leading to the characteristic hill of Sant’Angelo. You will continue this scenic route until the archaeological area, where you will visit tombs and recent diggings. Along the way, you will see almond, pistachio and olive trees. At about 270 meters, you will stop at the Tholos tomb, also known as The Tomb of the Prince.

This whole area is connected with the myth of Daedalus and Icarus as well as the Minotaur labyrinth. Our guide will then take you to a bakery to taste biscuits and homemade cookies. Then, you will visit a shepherd’s house to taste soft pecorino cheese and ricotta cheese, fresh and still warm. This walking itinerary really takes you far from the classic tourist routes.

Then, you will visit San Biagio Platani for a lunch in a typical Agriturismo with folk music. Finally, you will return at your hotel and overnight stay.

Day 8 – 30 April 2019
Day at leisure

Breakfast at the hotel. Time at leisure with bus at disposal.

Day 9 – 1 May 2019
The Valley of the Temples and Regaleali wine estate
9.00 am / 5.00 pm
2 Hours Guided tour

Breakfast in hotel and check out.

Pick up by your private Bus. Enjoy a visit of the Archaeological Park of Agrigento at the Valley of the Temples, a place where time seems to have stopped. A private guided tour is organized, visiting all the iconic temples such as Juno, Concord and Castor and Pollux.

Next stop will be the Regaleali Estate. The estate belongs to the Tasca d’Almerita family and is located in the center of the island. Eight generations of the Tasca family have been involved in the creation of some of Italy’s best wines from 500 hectares of land in the heart of Sicily. The Tasca family will host you for lunch sharing their history and giving you a taste of authentic Sicilian cuisine paired with delicious wines. You will enjoy a wine tasting and a visit of the Estate and of the Winery. Afterwards, you will reach your Hotel located in Palermo. Overnight stay.

Grand Hotel Piazza Borsa 4*, Palermo
Double or twin deluxe rooms

The Grand Hotel Piazza Borsa, once a convent and church, is located in the heart of Palermo. The middle of the hotel features the Old Cloister with a sitting area, where guests can enjoy the lovely atmosphere. All guestrooms offer maximum comfort. Bar and a restaurant provide guests with traditional food.

Address: Via Cartari, 18, 90133 Palermo PA. Tel.: +39 091 320075

3 nights
Day 10 – 2 May 2019
Palermo and Monreale Tour with street food tasting
9.00 am/6.00 pm
6 Hours Guided tour
Breakfast, street food tasting and Lunch

Breakfast in hotel. Pick up by your private Bus. This morning, follow your guide in a fascinating exploration of Sicilian culture and cuisine. The itinerary begins with a morning visit of the Capo market, the oldest in Palermo, where you will see and taste famous Palermo Street Food such as “panelle”, “arancine”, “crocchette” and “PaniCaMeusa”. Admire colorful stalls featuring an abundance of fruit, vegetables, seafood and meats as the sellers’ cry for our attention. Then, visit Palermo that stretches along a beautiful bay on the Tyrrhenian Sea. Lunch will be included in a local trattoria with street food tasting.

Founded by the Phoenicians in the VIIth and VIIIth centuries B.C., the city was conquered by Arabs in 831, and a period of immense prosperity commenced. You will be enchanted by the city’s wide boulevards, traditional Sicilian Old Quarter, and baroque palaces. You will then visit the city’s main sights, including the Norman section, Quattro Cant (the Four Corners of the City), Palermo’s extravagant baroque square and the twelfth-century Duomo (Cathedral).

Afterwards you will be driven to Monreale to discover the Arab-Norman splendour of the Cathedral and Cloister. This nearby treasure dates from the 12th century and shows the diverse architectural influences of both the Normans and the Arab population. Return at your hotel.

Day 11 – 3 May 2019
Segesta, Erice and Salt Pans
9.00 am/6.00 pm
8 Hours Guided tour
Breakfast, pastry tasting

Breakfast in hotel. Pick up by your private Bus and transfer to Segesta, for a tour of the temple and the theatre. Next stop Erice, a wonderfully preserved mediaeval hill town at the extreme north-west corner of Sicily, on the top of Monte San Giuliano. The town overlooks the city of Trapani and the lower western coast towards the Egadi Islands, where sea salt is made, offering a most breathtaking view. On a clear day, you can see the African coast.

You will visit the Norman Castle and the Duomo as you walk through the cobblestoned streets of the town, taking in the fresh air and a variety of aromas emanating from the numerous pastry shops for which Erice is known. In fact, you will stop to visit Maria Grammatico’s famous pastry shop to see the variety of sweets she lovingly creates.

Visit to the salt pans along the salt road between Trapani and Marsala and return to Palermo. Overnight stay.

Day 12 – 4 May 2019
Arrivederci Sicilia!

Breakfast in hotel and check out. Pick up by your private Bus and Tour Escort. Private transfer to Palermo airport.