

Sicily

16th April – 18th May 2024



Mediterranean warmth and Twenty-Five centuries of mixed rule

Sicily is the largest island in the Mediterranean and much bigger than most people realise. The Mafia and Inspector Montalbano spring to mind and whilst you're unlikely to spot either of these, a visit to Sicily is rewarded with stunning architecture and traditions from 2,500 years of mixed Spanish, Roman, Greek, African and Italian occupation. If you're expecting something much the same as Italy you'll be disappointed, if you're looking for surprises Sicily will deliver.

Our tour covers the whole island and throughout the tour you're never far from the sea. We stay near the island's two major cities, capital Palermo and second city Catania; see the geographical phenomenon of Mount Etna, Europe's most active volcano; the nature of San Vito lo Capo peninsular, the ancient monuments at the Valley of Temples and Salinunte, the wonderful architecture in Syracuse and Cefalù, the UNESCO towns of Noto and Taormina and the amazing mosaics of Villa Romana.

Add to this, rich local cuisine, great wines, an opportunity to travel in your own motorhome with like minded people and this tour has all the content of a great holiday.

Sue & Derek Davies – Sicily 2018

'Fantastic tour of Sicily visiting many interesting sites and sampling plenty of Sicilian food and wine. Tour Directors looked after us very well, always on hand to help if needed'

Roy & Kath Tipping – Sicily 2018

'This tour was a real eye-opener to travellers who thought they knew Italy. Very different culture from the mainland with really good local food and wine. Many superb historical sites. Tour Directors were excellent leaders with a very good knowledge of the island. A thoroughly good tour from beginning to end.'

32 Nights

Day One – Tuesday 16th April 2024

We meet in a campsite towards the south of Italy near the ancient Greek site of Paestum. This evening we get together at the Tour Directors motorhome for welcome drinks, a tour briefing and an opportunity to meet your fellow travellers.

Day Two – Wednesday 17th April

Drive today to a campsite towards the toe of Italy, we are now within sight of Sicily. **235 miles**

Day Three – Thursday 18th April

With a short 30 minute ferry crossing, we arrive in Sicily and head to our campsite in Catania, complete with sea views. We celebrate with dinner and Sicilian wine this evening in the campsite's own restaurant.

70 miles

Day Four – Friday 19th April

A free day. Located in the shadow of Mount Etna Catania, the island's second largest city, has been reshaped many times. Over the years following violent eruptions from its near neighbour, the city has been rebuilt seven times and the locals' response has always been to build using material that comes in abundance following volcanic activity – lava. This makes for an unusual and interesting architectural style; from our campsite there are easy public transport links to the city centre.

Day Five – Saturday 20th April

We have a guided coach excursion to Taormina and Mount Etna today. The beautiful town of Taormina is one of Sicily's most famous resorts. Perched on a rocky promontory overlooking the sea with dramatic views of Mount Etna it certainly justifies its nickname 'the Pearl of the Mediterranean'. From Taormina we drive through Mount Etna's national park to reach the highest point for public vehicles where we take lunch in a mountain trattoria. Etna is one of the most active volcanos in the world and it was the legendary home of the Roman fire god, Vulcan, and the mythological one-eyed Cyclops. This afternoon there will be time to take a walk on the lava.



Taormina with Mount Etna in the background

Day Six – Sunday 21st April

Free day. You may choose to relax at the campsite, swim in the sea or take a walk along the coast.

Day Seven – Monday 22nd April

We travel south along the Sicilian East coast to Avola. **60 miles**

Day Eight – Tuesday 23rd April

A full-day guided excursion to Noto and Syracuse. Noto is an attractive little town full of gold-coloured stone buildings with fantastical facades and despite being small, achieves UNESCO world heritage status. Syracuse on the other hand is much bigger, has a magnificent archaeological zone and a beautiful centre built on the island of Ortigia. We have lunch included in a local restaurant.

Day Nine – Wednesday 24th April

A free day, our campsite is right by the beach.

Day Ten – Thursday 25th April

We travel further along the coast today to a campsite in the south of Sicily. **60 miles**

Day Eleven – Friday 26th April

A full-day guided excursion to Ragusa and Scicli, two beautiful towns featured in the Inspector Montalbano TV series and yet to be discovered by mass tourism. Free time for own lunch arrangements today.

Day Twelve – Saturday 27th April

A free day to enjoy the campsite surroundings and nearby coast.

Day Thirteen – Sunday 28th April

We leave the coast for a few days to explore some of the island's interior and stay at an Agriturismo (working farm) which has partly diversified into tourism. This evening we have dinner in the Agriturismo restaurant. **70 miles**

Day Fourteen – Monday 29th April

We start today with time in the town of Caltagirone, the home and centre of Sicily's ceramic industry. Following a light lunch in a local restaurant we visit Villa Romana del Casale, the site of Sicily's finest Roman remains. Built between 310 and 340 AD this UNESCO World Heritage site is famous for the richness & quality of the mosaics that decorate almost every room and are regarded as the finest *in situ* anywhere in the Roman world.

Day Fifteen – Tuesday 30th April

We have a simple Italian breakfast prepared for us this morning on the terrace overlooking the vines of the Agriturismo. The remainder of the day is free to relax and do very little in beautiful rural surroundings.

Day Sixteen – Wednesday 1st May

Return to the coast and our next campsite is situated in the 'Valley of Temples'. **90 miles**

Day Seventeen – Thursday 2nd May

A guided excursion in the extraordinary Valley of the Temples. This UNESCO World Heritage site is one of Europe's most significant legacies of Ancient Greece. You will see the ruins of the many temples, necropolis, houses and streets. There is also a fine archaeological museum.

Day Eighteen – Friday 3rd May

A free morning. At lunch time we wander to the coast for a long leisurely group lunch.

Day Nineteen – Saturday 4th May

We continue round the coast to arrive at Selinunte, a small pocket of Greece at the time Sicily was under North African control. **90 miles**

Day Twenty – Sunday 5th May

A free day and opportunity to visit the ancient site of Selinunte.



'Selinunte'

Day Twenty-one – Monday 6th May

Continuing around the island we drive along the 'North African' coast, gaining its name by being geographically closer to Africa than mainland Italy. We stay overnight in a restaurant carpark (no camper facilities so an opportunity to use your motorhome's own) and have dinner in the restaurant enjoying great views across the salt pans and 'North African' Coast. **80 miles**



'North African Coast'

Day Twenty-two – Tuesday 7th May

We continue our journey along the coast to our next campsite located on the picturesque peninsula of San Vito lo Capo. **50 miles**

Day Twenty-three – Wednesday 8th May

A free day. San Vito town with its picturesque harbour and beach is just a 15 minute walk away.

Day Twenty-four – Thursday 9th May

An excursion today to 'Riserva Naturale Dello Zingaro' nature reserve with lunch in a local restaurant included.

Day Twenty-five – Friday 10th May

A free day giving further time to spend in San Vito.

Day Twenty-six – Saturday 11th May

Move on today to arrive near Sicily's capital. **90 miles**

Day Twenty-seven – Sunday 12th May

A free day. Maybe make a visit to a local restaurant for lunch, just like many Sicilians do on a Sunday.

Day Twenty-eight – Monday 13th May

A guided excursion of Palermo with street food light lunch included. With its central location in the Mediterranean, the city has a long and colourful history. Its various rulers, the Phoenicians, the Carthaginians, the Greeks, the Romans, and the Saracen Arabs have all left an influence making this bustling city what it is today.

Day Twenty-nine – Tuesday 14th May

Drive to our final Sicilian campsite. **50 miles**

Day Thirty – Wednesday 15th May

A trip to the popular seaside resort of Cefalù situated on a rocky headland projecting into the Tyrrhenian Sea. It has a lovely beach and a picturesque harbour as well as a Cathedral in the Sicilian Romanesque style dating from 1131. Other sites you can see are a Saracen wash-house and the medieval Osterio Magno, traditionally thought to be the palace of Roger II, Sicily's 12th Century Norman King.

Day Thirty-one – Thursday 16th May

According to legend Bacchus was the god who brought wine to Sicily. Legend aside, there is evidence that wine has been made here for millennia. In the more recent past most of Sicily's grape harvest was exported to wine producers in other parts of Italy, but in the last twenty years there have been major changes to the island's wine culture and a new generation of local producers are now consistently winning international acclaim. Today we visit one of Sicily's wineries for a tour and tasting of some of the excellent wines the country now produces with lunch included.

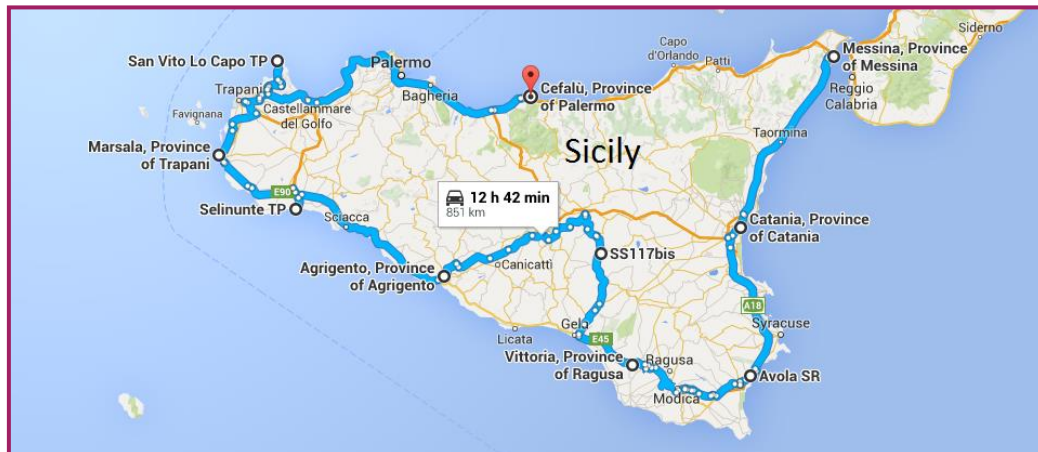
Day Thirty-two – Friday 17th May

A free day before we have our 'Farewell Dinner' this evening and a chance to recall the many places and experiences we have encountered throughout the tour.

Day Thirty-three – Saturday 18th May

Our tour ends this morning.

From Sicily you may choose to cross back to southern Italy and make your route home through Italy, or it is possible to take a longer over-night ferry crossing direct from Sicily to a more northern Italian port.



PRICE

TOUR DEPOSIT £600

Motorhome with 2 people = £2,749 per person

Motorhome with 1 person = £3,999

INCLUDED IN PRICE

- Italy to Sicily ferry outward crossing
- 31 campsite nights with hook-up
- 1 overnight at restaurant car-park (no facilities)
- All transfers required for included excursions
- Entrance fees on included excursions
- Services of two experienced Tour Directors in their own motorhome
- Tour Information Pack with suggested routes & GPS co-ordinates
- Michelin National Map
- DK Guidebook

EXCURSIONS & EVENTS INCLUDED

- Welcome to Sicily dinner with wine
- Visit to Taormina
- Tour of Mount Etna with lunch
- Excursion to Noto and Syracuse with lunch
- Excursion to Ragusa and Scicli
- Agriturismo dinner with wine
- Visit to Caltagirone & Villa Romana del Casale with light lunch
- Group breakfast
- Visit to Valley of Temples
- Leisurely group lunch
- Salt Pans group dinner with wine
- Excursion to 'Riserva naturale dello Zingaro' with lunch
- Excursion in Palermo with light lunch

- Visit to Cefalù
- Tour of Sicilian winery with tastings and lunch
- Farewell Dinner with wine

MEALS INCLUDED

- 1 Drinks Reception
- 1 Breakfast
- 5 Lunches with wine
- 2 Light Lunch
- 4 Dinners with wine

This tour starts near Paestum in Italy, but if you would like to travel there at the same time as the Tour Directors and extend your holiday by 12 nights, whilst enjoying stays at a number of 'places of interest' in Italy, please book the optional tour package so that everything can be arranged on your behalf.

OPTIONAL EXTRA PACKAGE

- Return Dover/Calais Ferry with Flexible Ticket + Club Class Lounge entry both ways
- 12 additional campsite nights with electric hook-ups starting in Kent on Thursday 4th April 2024 then in Belgium, Germany, Switzerland & 8 in Italy
- There will be free days in Milan, Pisa, Pompei and Paestum where the Tour Directors will assist you with visits to these places of interest
- Group dinners at the campsites in Germany and Pisa
- Tour information pack with suggested routes
- Services of Tour Directors travelling in their own motorhome

OPTIONAL PACKAGE PRICE

Motorhome with 2 people @ £699 per person

Motorhome with 1 person @ £1129

OPTIONAL PACKAGE ITINERARY

Day One – Thursday 4th April 2024

Meet at a campsite in the attractive town of Sandwich in Kent.

Day Two – Friday 5th April

Take a mid-morning ferry Dover to Calais. Relax in style on board with entry to the club lounge with food and drinks included. Drive to our first continental campsite in Belgium. **80 miles**

Day Three – Saturday 6th April

Pass through Luxemburg as we make our way to the Black Forrest region of Germany. Group dinner in the campsite restaurant this evening. **280 miles**

Day Four – Sunday 7th April

Continuing south we arrive in Switzerland and stay on lake Luzern. **210 miles**

Day Five – Monday 8th April

Passing through the Gotthard Tunnel we are now south of the Alps arriving at Milan in Italy. **145 miles**

Day Six – Tuesday 9th April

A free day an opportunity to make use of the local transport network to visit what many consider to be Italy's most upmarket city. The Tour Directors will be on hand to assist with this.

Day Seven – Wednesday 10th April

Continue to travel south today to Pisa. Group dinner in the campsite restaurant this evening. **175 miles**

Day Eight – Thursday 11th April

A free day for visiting the famous leaning tower of Pisa, which is walkable from our campsite.

Day Nine – Friday 12th April

A motorway drive to an overnight campsite. **195 miles**

Day Ten – Saturday 13th April

Our journey today brings us to Pompeii. **165 miles**

Day Eleven – Sunday 14th April

A free day. With the entrance to Pompeii very close to our campsite this is likely to be most people's destination for today.

Day Twelve – Monday 15th April

A short drive which allows time for a visit to the ancient Greek site of Paestum, which will be an insight to some of the great Greek temples awaiting you in Sicily. We are this evening at the campsite ready for the start of the main tour tomorrow, which will be a free day for you as you have already arrived. **50 miles**