Sicily with Friends

Soul of Sicily

2020 Itinerary

Thursday – September 17, 2020

Departure from US

Friday – September 18, 2020 – WELCOME TO SICILY

Transfers to Palermo. (based on arrival times)

After arriving into your accommodations, you will have time to relax and unwind. Later that evening, we will have a Welcome Party with hors d’oeuvres, and specialty drinks. Then you can explore this fascinating town on your own.

*Included Meals*: Hour D’oeuvres at Welcome Party

Saturday – September 19, 2020

Mondello – Palermo by Night

We will depart late morning for Mondello which is a small town near the city of Palermo, originally it was a small fishing village, but at the end of 19th century the Nobles transformed it into what is still today the most elite seaside resort with white sand beach and crystal clear waters of the Tyrrhennian Sea. From the beach you can also enjoy beautiful views of the surrounding mountains and the wild vegetation. Mondello is a small paradise with tropical colors. Strolling into town you can simply get lost in its streets, town square, and its picturesque port. You can enjoy lunch in one of the many cafes and restaurants. In the afternoon we will return to our accommodations to relax before we will adventure in the evening for a fascinating walk through the streets of Palermo. The vibrant city which appears chaotic by day is perhaps best appreciated by night. As the sun sets over the Tyrrenian Sea, we will set off on a tour around the monuments and illuminated landmarks of Sicily’s calmer capital. We will enjoy dinner together at one of the most historical sites in Palermo.

*Included Meals*: Breakfast and Dinner

Sunday, September 20, 2020

Palermo – Monreale

This morning at 9 am you will meet our English-speaking local tour guide for a sightseeing tour of Palermo, the capital of Sicily. Your stops will include Palermo Cathedral, Casa Professa, Quattro Canti, Piazza Pretoria, Chiesa Martorana, Mercato del Capo, Teatro Politeama, and Teatro Massimo, (one of the largest stages in Europe and the famed opera houses.) Some entrance fee may apply. Lunch will be served outside
in the beautiful Piazza Bellini in the heart of Palermo, with its ancient Arab and Norman buildings. After lunch the bus will head to the unique cathedral of Monreale which is made with 2200 kg of pure gold Byzantine mosaic and named one of the UNESCO WORLD Heritage Sites. Back to Palermo, this evening is at your leisure to explore.

*Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch*

**Monday September 21, 2020**

*Corleone - Ficuzza*

This morning we will head to the heart of Sicily, to find a warm welcome in the small town of Corleone, located in the valleys and mountains in the province of Palermo. World-renowned for the origin of the “Godfather”, the true history begins centuries before. Here the villagers have fought the connection to the Mafia for decades, and we will learn the history behind their struggles as a local resident guides us through the IDMA (International Documentary Center of the Mafia and the No Mafia Movement). Corleone is also “The City of 100 Churches” with our local English-speaking tour guide we will visit some of the historical landmarks. We will have time to explore the center of town and enjoy an authentic Sicilian lunch. We will then travel to the outskirts of Corleone to the richest woodlands, considered the “lungs of Sicily wildlife”, “Bosco della Ficuzza”, known for its Cascina di Caccia, a royal palace, that King Ferdinand of Bourbon himself in the late 16th century made his personal hunting lodge. Our dinner will be here surrounded in this green oasis, in this beautiful restored old railroad station, where the food is excellent with a menu’ specialized in local dishes, ingredients, and culinary traditions, and accompanied by selection of local wines. Back to Palermo

*Included Meals: Breakfast, and Dinner*

**Tuesday, September 22, 2020**

*Piazza Armerina – Val Guarniera for Breadmaking Experience – Enna – Farm to Table*

This morning we will head to Piazza Armerina for your guided visit of the Villa Romana del Casale. Admire the largest and most complex collection of roman mosaics in the world. Going through the many rooms and long corridors of this Villa Romana del Casale will take you back to the ancient Rome. The villa, listed in the UNESCO World Heritage Sites, is a work of monumental importance, both for its size and its historical value. Its elegant mosaic 38,000 sq. feet structure attracts people from all over the world. It suggests what life was like at the end of 3rd century AD. Then we will head to Val Guarniera to this family owned bakery to visit “Il Maestro del pane”. He will demonstrate how the bread is made with organic ancient grains locally grown with the mother yeast the way our great-grandmothers used to make it. As soon as the bread is cooked, he will serve with extra virgin olive oil and we will enjoy homemade specialties. After lunch we will visit Enna located in the heart of Sicily on a high hill at 3054 feet above sea level. Enna is famous for being the highest province capitol in Europe and its fortified castle is considered the largest castle in Italy. Then we will head for this unique dinner experience at this charming farmhouse located off the beaten path, but while the location is somewhat remote, the surroundings are serene and beautiful with Enna perched on a hilltop in the background. This farm is owned by a local hard-working family that are kind and gracious. For dinner they will prepare for us a wonderful meal of great variety from farm fresh
Wednesday, September 23, 2020
Selinunte, Mazzara del Vallo, Marsala Wine Tour and Wine Tasting, and Farm to Table

This morning we will depart for Selinunte located on the southwest coast of Sicily, is the largest archaeological site in Europe, ranks among the oldest and most important ruins in Sicily. Located in the Southwest coast of Sicily on a high plain and overlooking the sea, this archaeological park is huge and incorporates Greek temples along with ancient ruins. Our private tour guide will explain some of the 2,500 years of history of this magnificent site. This archaeological park is huge and incorporates Greek Temples, and ancient town walls. We will continue to Mazzara del Vallo, most famous for being one of the leading fishing port of the Mediterranean Sea. Mazzara del Vallo was the first city to be conquered by the Arab. Today the old Arab quarters "The Casbah" is home to many houses typical Arab style and it is crossed by an endless series of small tunnels. The town encompasses centuries of history, with good sample of Sicilian Baroque on par with anything found in Greece itself. Strolling through the town you will have the opportunity to shop for souvenirs, stop at a café, enjoy lunch, savor desserts and taste some authentic gelatos. We will continue toward the town of Marsala where we will tour this magnificent eighteen century Marsala Winery which will leave you speechless. The English guided tour will take us through this journey that will begin in front of this majestic giant wine barrels, build at the end of the nineteen century and still used for the refinement of Marsala. We will walk beneath 104 stone arches through the barrel vaults to see over 2000 small and large barrels of wine. After the tour we will reach the grandiose and elegant tasting room, where we will taste a range of their best wines paired with authentic gastronomic nibbles. After this experience we will head to another Farm to table to enjoy a 5-course meal with authentic Sicilian foods and local wines. Tonight, back to Palermo.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Thursday September 24, 2020
Campofiorito “The Soul of Sicily” and harvesting olives and grapes

This morning we will head to the inland of Sicily. Campofiorito is our hometown and part of our heart will always be there. Although this small town doesn’t have many historical attractions, the heart and spirit of the locals will leave you amazed. We will visit the local bakery and taste some homemade specialties. After that our aunt will be waiting for us with a tray of homemade cannoli and we will enjoy spending time with the locals. After our visit, we are off to experience the afternoon at Giardinello a local farm with a rustic old barn converted into an eatery with scenic surrounding valley of ancient olive trees and vineyards. We will have the pleasure of harvesting the olive trees and strolling through the vineyards, harvesting the grapes and seeing the process from grapes to must. Next, we will learn about the variety of products they produce on the farm and observe how they make Sicilian ricotta cheese. For dinner we will enjoy their ingredients using their olive oil, homemade bread and pasta, prosciutto, variety of meats, eggs, milk and their amazing homemade ricotta cheese.
local specialties for a true Sicilian farm to table experience. We will return to Palermo for a night cap at your leisure.

*Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, and Dinner*

**Friday September 25, 2020**  
*Cefalu’ - Castelbuono*

This morning we take a drive along the blue coastal highway to the quaint Medieval village of *Cefalu*. We will have the chance to stroll from the long golden beaches into the winding Arab streets with our local specialist. Cefalu’ known for its Norman cathedral and 12th-century fortress-like structure with elaborate Byzantine mosaic and soaring twin towers. We will enjoy an unforgettable lunch with impressive views. Than we will travel to *Castelbuono* a well-preserved old town that will captivate you from the very first moment, the town develops around the castle. Walking through its narrow streets, it is like entering another dimension. Castelbuono is known for its panettone, the typical Christmas cake, now exported throughout the world. Finally, we can relax under the sun and sit at a table of one of the inevitable cafés’ in the main square, in the midst of the relaxed atmosphere we will enjoy life “La vita Bella”. Return to Palermo dinner at your leisure.

*Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch*

**Saturday September 26, 2020**

Departure to the US

*Transfers to the airport (based on departure times on the specified tour dates)*

Ciao Ciao

*Included Meals: Breakfast*

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NB: Excursions and Itinerary are weather permitted and subject to change without prior notice. Minimum number is required.

NNB: We love to share our Sicily with you. In order to secure low rates, we prepay everything a year in advance.

**2020 Prices**

$3600 per person (double occupancy)  
Single occupancy $500 surcharge  
Land only, Air Fare not included in price  
Deposits are required within 10 days of making the registration  
Please see *Terms & Conditions*

Minimum number of participants required