



NAPLES
& SICILY
ITALY
2022



ITINERARY

			City	Apartment
0	Sunday, 18-Sep	PM		Air
1	Monday, 19-Sep	AM Noon PM	Depart IAD: 5:25 PM Arrive Rome at 8:10 AM. Train to Naples. Arrive ~11:00 Rest. Free day in Naples Free night in Naples	Rome Naples Naples Via Pietro Colletta, 35 interno 5/1
2	Tuesday, 20-Sep	AM Noon PM	Free day in Naples 10 Tastings of Naples Tour (5:00 PM)	Naples Naples Naples Via Pietro Colletta, 35 interno 5/1
3	Wednesday, 21-Sep	AM Noon PM	Boat tour to Amalfi & Positano. Depart 8.30 at the Star Hotel Boat tour Return to Naples 7:30	Naples Amalfi Naples Via Pietro Colletta, 35 interno 5/1
4	Thursday, 22-Sep	AM Noon PM	Train to Pompeii, depart Naples around 9:00 AM. Tour begins Pompeii tour, Train to Herculaneum, Herculaneum tour Tour ends around 4:00 PM. Train back to Naples. Free night	Naples Pompeii Naples Via Pietro Colletta, 35 interno 5/1
5	Friday, 23-Sep	AM Noon PM	Free day in Naples (Ferry to Capri?)	Naples TBD Naples Via Pietro Colletta, 35 interno 5/1
6	Saturday, 24-Sep	AM Noon PM	Check Out. Taxi to Airport. Depart 11:00 AM EasyJet flight Arrive Palermo, noon. Transfer to Apartment. Rest Night Street Food Tour, 6:30 PM	Naples Palermo Palermo Casa Vigliena, Via dell' Università, 20
7	Sunday, 25-Sep	AM Noon PM	Free day in Palermo	Palermo Palermo Palermo Casa Vigliena, Via dell' Università, 20
8	Monday, 26-Sep	AM Noon PM	Driver pick up at 9:00 AM. Drive to Monreale Drive from Monreale to Erice. Tour Erice. Head back to Free evening in Palermo	Palermo Erice Palermo Casa Vigliena, Via dell' Università, 20
9	Tuesday, 27-Sep	AM Noon PM	Transfer to to Catania. Depart 8:30 AM Arrive Agrigento. Tour Valley of the Gods Arrive Catania apartment ~6:00 PM. Explore Catania	Palermo Agrigento Catania Casa Minè, Via Grimaldi, 64
10	Wednesday, 28-Sep	AM Noon PM	Depart Catania for Trecastagni. Etna Tour begins at 8:20. Tour mount Etna. Transfer back to Catania Free night in Catania	Catania Etna Catania Casa Minè, Via Grimaldi, 64
11	Thursday, 29-Sep	AM Noon PM	Pick up at 9:00 to Syracuse. See Ortigia. Ride to Neapolis. See Neapolis. Transfer back to Catania Free night in Catania	Catania Syracuse Catania Casa Minè, Via Grimaldi, 64
12	Friday, 30-Sep	AM Noon PM	Transfer to Airport, 6:50AM. Turkish Air flight 1394 (9:10 dep) Arrive Istanbul 12:35. Turkish Air flight 7 (3:05 dep) Arrive IAD: 7:05 PM.	HOME

DAY 0

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2022

Depart IAD at 5:25 PM.



EasyJet booking reference: **FJRNFL**
United Airlines **Flight 884**

5:40 PM		8:15 AM
IAD ----- 1h -----		FCO
Dulles, Washington DC		Rome, Italy

Sun, Sep 18, 2022

Mon, Sep 19, 2022

Operated by United Airlines

Flight details:

Gregory A Mella – 17L

Adrian Collazo – 18L

DAY 1

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2022

Arrive Rome 8:15 AM.

Train from Fiumicino Aeroporto to Napoli Centrale, departing at 9:38 AM, arriving in Napoli Centrale 11:33 AM. (See next page)

Walk to apartment, rest. See the Duomo for the Feast of San Gennaro. Explore Naples by night.

DAY 1

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2022

Railclick

Reference code: 115760

Order ID: 61E97014MM752522H

PNRs: GS9QG5



Page 1 of 1
CARRIER CIV 0083 - VAT: 05403151003
Single Ticket - Issuer 0083
Issue Date 14/07/2022 hours 01:25
Channel: OLTA_ITALIATREN_B2C (54519 - 1)
Entitlement Number: 1676809763

TRAVEL from Fiumicino Aeroporto To Napoli Centrale on 18/09/2022 at 09:38

PNR: **GS9QG5**

Departure station Fiumicino Aeroporto Hours 09:38 - 18/09/2022	Arrival station Napoli Centrale Hours 11:33 - 18/09/2022	Train: Frecciarossa 8335 Service: 2° Standard Coaches: 5 Seats: 12D
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Total amount*: **24.90 €**

* The amount paid is related to transactions subject to VAT
Not valid for fiscal use

PASSENGERS DETAILS

Passenger Name (Adult)	Offer - Service			CP Code	CartaFreccia	Points	
Gregory Mella	Promo Estate	5	12D	567802		--	
Contact data communicated	Promo Estate Freccie: Reservation change and refund not allowed. Limited seats						

Buyer: **GREGORY MELLA**

Payment: **Cash**

The train doors close 1 minute before departure

PASSENGERS DETAILS

Passenger Name (Adult)	Offer - Service			CP Code	CartaFreccia	Points	
Adrian Collazo	Promo Estate	5	13D	567801		--	
Contact details not disclosed	Promo Estate Freccie: Reservation change and refund not allowed. Limited seats						

Buyer: **GREGORY MELLA**

Payment: **Cash**

The train doors close 1 minute before departure

NAPLES



Naples is the regional capital of Campania and the third-largest city of Italy, after Rome and Milan, with a population of 967,069 within the city's administrative limits as of 2017. Its province-level municipality is the third-most populous metropolitan city in Italy with a population of 3,115,320 residents, and its metropolitan area stretches beyond the boundaries of the city wall for approximately 20 miles.

Founded by Greeks in the first millennium BC, Naples is one of the oldest continuously inhabited urban areas in the world. In the ninth century BC, a colony known as Parthenope was established on the Island of Megaride. In the 6th century BC, it was refounded as Neápolis. The city was an important part of Magna Graecia, played a major role in the merging of Greek and Roman society, and was a significant cultural center under the Romans.

It served as the capital of the Duchy of Naples (661–1139), then of the Kingdom of Naples (1282–1816), and finally of the Two Sicilies until the unification of Italy in 1861. Naples is also considered a capital of the Baroque, beginning with the artist Caravaggio's career in the 17th century, and the artistic revolution he inspired. It was also an important center of humanism and Enlightenment. The city has long been a global point of reference for classical music and opera through the Neapolitan School. Between 1925 and 1936, Naples was expanded and upgraded by Benito Mussolini's government. During the later years of World War II, it sustained severe damage from Allied bombing as they invaded the peninsula. The city received extensive post-1945 reconstruction work.

Since the late 20th century, Naples has had significant economic growth, helped by the construction of the Centro Direzionale business district and an advanced transportation network, which includes the Alta Velocità high-speed rail link to Rome and Salerno and an expanded subway network. Naples is the third-largest urban economy in Italy, after Milan and Rome. The Port of Naples is one of the most important in Europe. In addition to commercial activities, it is home to the Allied Joint Force Command Naples, the NATO body that oversees North Africa, the Sahel and Middle East.

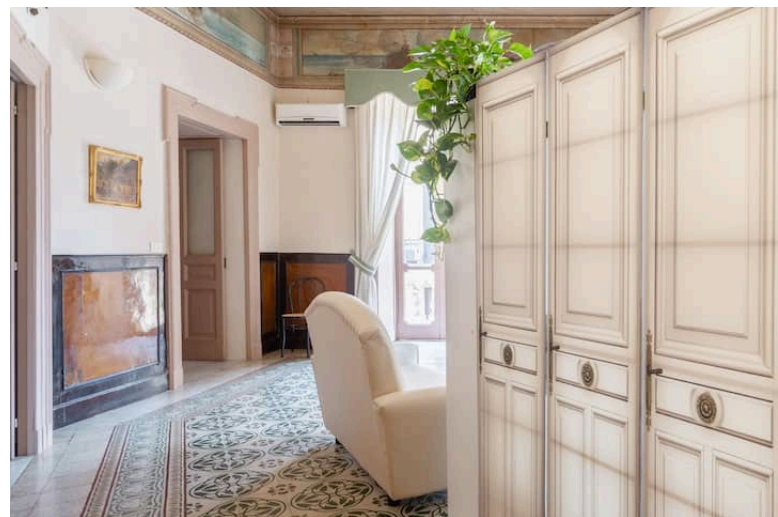
Naples' historic city center is the largest of its kind in Europe and has been designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. A wide range of culturally and historically significant sites are nearby, including the Palace of Caserta and the Roman ruins of Pompeii and Herculaneum. Naples is also known for its natural beauties, such as Posillipo, Phlegraean Fields, Nisida, and Vesuvius. Neapolitan cuisine is noted for its association with pizza, which originated in the city, as well as numerous other local dishes. Restaurants in the Naples' area have earned the most stars from the Michelin Guide of any Italian province.

VIA PIETRO COLLETTA, 35 INTERNO
51, NAPOLI, CAMPANIA 80139



VIA PIETRO COLLETTA, 35 INTERNO 5/A, NAPOLI, CAMPANIA 80139

IMMERSE YOURSELF IN AN ARTISTIC SETTING AND ADMIRE THE WONDERFUL ART NOUVEAU FRESCOES THAT DECORATE THE CEILING OF THE LIVING ROOM AND BEDROOM. TO THESE ARE ADDED THE ORIGINAL FLOORS AND SOME PERIOD FURNISHINGS, FOR AN EXPERIENCE OF SUPREME BEAUTY.





FEAST OF SAN GENNARO

Today, September 19, is also the Feast of San Gennaro, the Patron Saint of Naples, and an annual public holiday in Naples. St Januarius, or San Gennaro, was martyred during the persecutions of Diocletian around 305 CE. It is believed that Januarius was born in Benevento, northeast of Naples, in the 3rd century CE. He became the local priest of his parish at 15, and then was appointed as the Bishop of Naples at 20. St Januarius is believed to have died while visiting Christians imprisoned in Rome. The Cathedral of Naples hosts the longstanding Miracle of Saint Januarius. During the miracle, which thousands of Neapolitans flock to witness, the dried blood of Januarius is said to turn to liquid when brought close to holy relics said to be of his body.



DAY 2

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2022

Free day in Naples. Then at 5:00 PM, we'll do our tour, the 10 Tastings of Naples. Meeting point: In front of San Ferdinando Church – Naples

10 TASTINGS

This tour includes 10 food and drink tastings. Your local host has hand-picked each one of the tastings based on their love for food, and knowledge of the city. Enjoy only the most authentic bites the city has to offer!

THE CLASSICS

A food tour in Naples would not be complete without the most typical and beloved dishes in town. Enjoy a bite of the ultimate classics, *pizza a portafoglio* and limoncello, and taste them in their true local flavor!

LOCALS' FAVORITES

Discover more of the local cuisine by trying some of the ultimate locals' favorites food treats. Try unique food, typical of Naples picked by your local host and hear why they love it so much!

TYPICAL DRINKS

With drinks included as part of the tastings this real experience comes with a real local spirit! Your local host will quench your thirst with a selection of drinks like coffee, unique beverages, and alcoholic (or non-alcoholic) cocktails, wine and beer

CITY HIGHLIGHTS

This tour is more than just food, it's a cultural experience! In between food stops, discover city highlights for a well-rounded experience that will satisfy your appetite for Naples. University Federico II, the Pignaseca Market, and Piazza del Gesù. From food, drinks, must-sees and local hot spots; this tour has everything on the menu!



GENNARO

I live my life for discovering new places and meeting new people, that's why I lived in many countries around the world in the past! I'm back to my city, where I spent most of my years and I studied international cultures and literatures. After all this I would love to share with you, through "my eyes", the "hidden places" of my city!!

NAPLES SITES

SPACCANAPOLI



Straight, narrow and packed with charm, Spaccanapoli is one of Naples' main thoroughfares, defying the labyrinthine lanes of the rest of the historic center. Translated literally, Spaccanapoli means "Naples splitter", as the long, straight thoroughfare seems to divide the historic center of the city in two. In reality, it's a nickname given to a sequence of streets that cut straight through the winding streets of the old town: Via Benedetto Croce, Via San Biagio dei Librai and Via Vicaria Vecchia. At a glance, there doesn't seem to be anything particularly striking about the narrow street, but its importance lies in its history: being one of the three main roads (known as decumani) that traversed ancient Neapolis when it was founded in 580 BC. Starting at Piazza del Gesù Nuovo in the west, you'll find yourself squeezed into the heart of lively Naples. Wander past piazzas, palaces and churches, including the spectacularly decorated 14th century Santa Chiara religious complex, the Sansevero Chapel, the San Lorenzo Maggiore Basilica and the neoclassical Palazzo Venezia, amongst many others. You'll also find many souvenir and gift shops, as well as bakeries and restaurants.

VIA CARACCIOLO E LUNGOMARE DI NAPOLI



For a nice seaside promenade, look no further than the Via Caracciolo e Lungomare di Napoli. Flanked by cafes and restaurants on one side and the Gulf of Naples on the other, this walkway serves as a relaxing place to stretch your legs and breathe in the fresh sea air. The views of nearby Mount Vesuvius and the island of Capri add an almost magical element to this pedestrian walkway.



CERTOSA E MUSEO DI SAN MARTINO

Founded in the 14th century as a Carthusian monastery, the Certosa e Museo di San Martino sits high above the city on Vomero hill, leaving visitors in awe of its intricate exteriors, immaculately designed cloisters and sweeping skyline views. The interior has undergone many alterations over its centuries of existence, including contributions by famous Italian masters Giovanni Antonio Dosio and Cosimo Fanzago. Visitors will also find 17th-century works by such famed artists as Francesco Solimena, Massimo Stanzione, Jusepe de Ribera and Battista Caracciolo. Highlights include the church's elaborate frescoes and its unbeatable views of the bay, the city and Mount Vesuvius. Catch the Funicolare di Montesanto at the Piazza Montesanto ascending the cliff and walk the rest of the way.



CAPELLA SANSEVERO ★

Its origin dates to 1590 when John Francesco di Sangro, Duke of Torremaggiore, had a private chapel built in what were then the gardens of the nearby Sansevero family residence, the Palazzo Sansevero. Definitive form was given to the chapel by Raimondo di Sangro, Prince of Sansevero. The chapel houses almost thirty works of art, among which are three sculptures of note. These marble statues are emblematic of the love of decoration in the Rococo period and their depiction of translucent veils and a fisherman's net represent remarkable artistic achievement. The Veiled Truth (Antonio Corradini in 1752) dedicated Raimondo's mother; The Veiled Christ (Giuseppe Sanmartino, 1753), and The Release from Deception (Francesco Queirollo of Genoa, 1753–54) serves as a monument to Raimondo's father.



COMPLESSO MONUMENTALE DI SANTA CHIARA

This religious complex includes the Church of Santa Chiara, a monastery, tombs and an archeological museum. The Basilica church of Santa Chiara faces Via Benedetto Croce, which is the easternmost leg of Via Spaccanapoli. The church facade of Santa Chiara is diagonally across from the church of Gesù Nuovo. The monastic complex was built in 1313–1340 by Queen Sancha of Majorca and her husband King Robert of Naples, who is also buried in the complex. The original church was in Gotico Angioiano style but was decorated in the 17th century in Baroque style by Domenico Antonio Vaccaro. The adjacent cloister of the Clarisses is known for the unique addition of majolica tiles, added in 1742 by Domenico Antonio Vaccaro in Rococò style.

LA NEAPOLIS SOTTERRATA/

COMPLESSO MONUMENTALE DI S. LORENZO MAGGIORE ★



Visiting the Complex of San Lorenzo Maggiore is like taking a journey back in time from the 5th century BC until the end of the 18th century AD. The Complex is a stratified historical testimony, perfectly preserved, of how Naples evolved over time. The ancient Neapolis, founded in 470 B.C by Greek colonizers, sits at the historical center of the city. Within this ancient city, the monumental complex of San Lorenzo Maggiore is located where once the Ancient Greek Agora and then later the Roman Forum stood. On the northern side of the square outside the church (Piazza San Gaetano), where the Church of San Paolo Maggiore stands, there was the Dioscuri temple and, at its back, the great open-air theater, and the Odeon (indoor theatre). The southern side, which partly corresponds to the archeological area of San Lorenzo, represents the commercial area of the ancient city. Here once stood a two-story building called the macellum (market): its upper floor coincided with the present elevation of Via dei Tribunali. The building was mostly paved with mosaics and had shops all around, which in turn were sided by a portico. Its perimeter enclosed the area currently occupied by the church of San Lorenzo, together with the 18th-century Cloister of the adjoining Franciscan monastery and its Chapter Hall. In the macellum inner courtyard there was a round temple, the tholos, whose base, along with its three steps once lined with marble slabs, can be partly seen now in the Cloister. Remnants of the mosaic floor date the original construction of the macellum between the 1st and the 2nd century B.C. The upper floor also consisted of shops and other constructions, used for different purposes. Excavations reveal the superimposed layers upon which the entire contemporary area developed, thus enabling visitors to see how the various settlements have followed one another during the time, from the Greek to the Roman and from the Mediaeval to the Modern age.

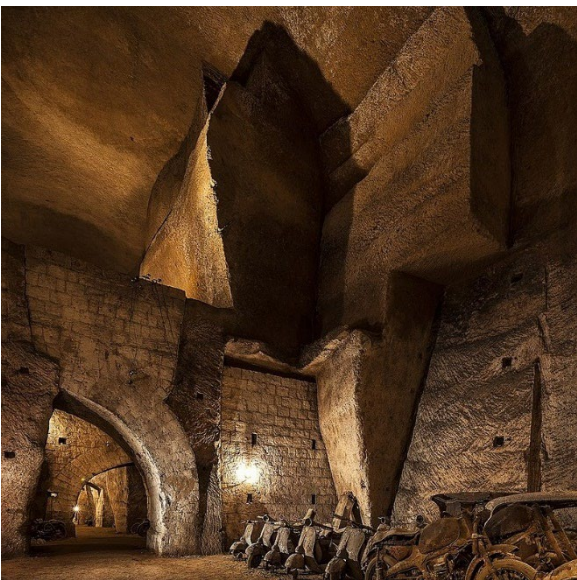


In the macellum area an early-Christian Basilica was erected and later overlaid by the 14th-century gothic church of San Lorenzo Maggiore, restructured in a baroque manner. The bell tower was built in 1487. Between the bell tower and the church, a 15th-century gateway provides the current access to the Cloister and to the monumental Complex of San Lorenzo Maggiore. In the middle of the east side of the cloister is the entrance to the Chapter Hall, decorated with a Gothic portal of the second quarter of the fourteenth century, flanked by beautiful windows with four lights and surmounted by a low arch bezel. Above these beautiful quadrifore it was found parts of a fresco (and recently restored), probably painted by a strict observance unknown artist disciple of Giotto around 1340, depicting St. Francis, who gives the rule to friaries and the Poor Clares of Assisi.



CATACOMBE DI SAN GENNARO

The Catacombs of San Gennaro are the largest Christian catacomb complex in southern Italy. The first structure was probably the result of the fusion of two ancient burial sites, one from the 2nd century CE that contained the remains of Saint Agrippinus of Naples, the first patron saint of Naples, and the site from the 4th century CE that contained the remains of St. Januarius, the patron saint of the city. The catacombs' lower level is the oldest, going back to the 3rd-4th century BC and may be the site of an earlier pre-Christian cemetery later ceded to the new sect. It became an important religious burial site only after the entombment of Bishop Agrippinus. The site was consecrated to Gennaro in the fifth century on the occasion of the entombment there of his remains, which were later removed to the Cathedral of Naples in the 9th century. As the burial areas grew around the remains of Gennaro so did underground places of worship for the growing Christian faith. An early example of religious use of the catacombs is the Basilica of Agrippinus dating to the fourth century. An altar and chair are carved from the porous stone creating a meeting place for worshipers. Other ritual spaces included a confessional, baptismal font, a carved table used as a seat for a *consignatorium* (area for confirmation), or "*oleorum*" table for holy oils, and possibly, monastic and hermit cells. Until the eleventh century the catacombs were the burial site of Neapolitan bishops. Between the 13th and 18th century, the catacombs were the victim of severe looting. Restoration of the catacombs was made possible only after the transfer of skeletal remains to another cemetery. During WWII the catacombs were used by the local population as a place of shelter. The Catacombs were reopened in 1969 and modern excavations started in 1971.



GALLERIA BORBONICA

The monarchy in the era of King Ferdinand II of Bourbon was fearful of the revolution-prone populace of Naples, so a military passage for troops was constructed connecting the Royal Palace of Naples to Via Morelli, boring underneath the hill of Pizzofalcone and reaching the quartiere San Ferdinando, but also connecting to other tunnels and aqueducts, including the old Carmignano aqueduct (1627–1629). The tunnel could also serve as an escape route for its royal inhabitants. Two years after it was begun, the fall of the Bourbon dynasty meant that construction came to a halt. During the Second World War, the tunnel was used as a shelter during bombardments. The tunnel contains decades of debris, including vintage cars and a discarded fascist monument.



DUOMO / CAPELLA DI SAN GENNARO ★

Built between 1299 -1314, the Cathedral of the Assumption of Mary, or the *Duomo*, is Naples' main church, home to important artistic, cultural and historic heritage. The Cathedral has an imposing Neo-Gothic façade with three entrances. Inside lies three naves of more than 320 feet in length and 150 feet in height. The fusion of different architectural styles - from Gothic to Baroque to Neo-Gothic, reflecting its lengthy history - do not detract from its captivating beauty. Beautifully detailed frescoes, intricate bronze railings and grand altars, as well as sculptures and canvases by important Italian artists... there's an enormous amount to see in the Cathedral, and entrance is free! Probably the most unusual item in the Duomo is the vial of the blood of San Gennaro, to whom the cathedral is also dedicated. The saint's blood is said to turn from solid to liquid during certain festivities (including the day we arrive, on September 19).



CHIESA DEL GESU NUOVO

The extraordinary Chiesa del Gesù Nuovo is an architectural Kinder Surprise. Its shell is the 15th-century, Giuseppe Valeriani–designed facade of Palazzo Sanseverino, converted to create the 16th-century church. Inside, piperno-stone sobriety gives way to a gob-smacking blast of baroque that could make the Vatican blush: a vainglorious showcase for the work of top-tier artists such as Francesco Solimena, Luca Giordano, and Cosimo Fanzago. The church itself received a miracle of sorts on 4 August 1943, when a bomb dropped on the site failed to explode. Its shell is aptly displayed beside the ex-voti. The church flanks the northern side of beautiful Piazza del Gesù Nuovo, a favorite late-night hang-out for students and lefties. At its center soars Giuseppe Genuino's lavish *Guglia dell' Immacolata*, an obelisk built between 1747 and 1750.



VIA SAN GREGORIO ARMENO

This picturesque alley in the heart of Naples, is known across Italy for its artisan shops selling handcrafted *pastori*, or nativity-scene figurines. The tradition behind this street lies a long way back in history: in classical times it was home to a temple of the Roman Goddess Ceres. Her faithful devotees brought offerings of small terracotta figurines handmade in nearby workshops. By the end of the 18th century with the growing popularity of Nativity scenes, (*presipio* in Italian), these statuettes were adapted for this festive use. Today, one finds figurines of the most typical religious figures for Christmas, but also more modern secular one, from everyday characters such as butchers and dancers to famous athletes, politicians, and celebrities. Even if you don't purchase souvenirs, the area's architecture and overall ambience are perfect for a coffee, a gelato and an interesting glimpse into Naples's culture.



MUSEO ARCHEOLOGICO NAZIONALE★

This important Italian archaeological museum is noted for its ancient Roman remains. Its collection includes works from Greek, Roman and Renaissance times, and especially Roman artifacts from the nearby Pompeii, Stabiae and Herculaneum sites. Much of the museum's classical sculpture collection comes from the Farnese Marbles, important since they include Roman copies of classical Greek sculpture, in many cases the only surviving indications of the lost works by ancient Greek sculptors. The museum's Mosaic Collection includes several important mosaics recovered from the ruins of Pompeii and the other Vesuvian cities. This includes the Alexander Mosaic, dating from circa 100 BC, originally from the House of the Faun in Pompeii. It depicts a battle between the armies of Alexander the Great and Darius III of Persia.



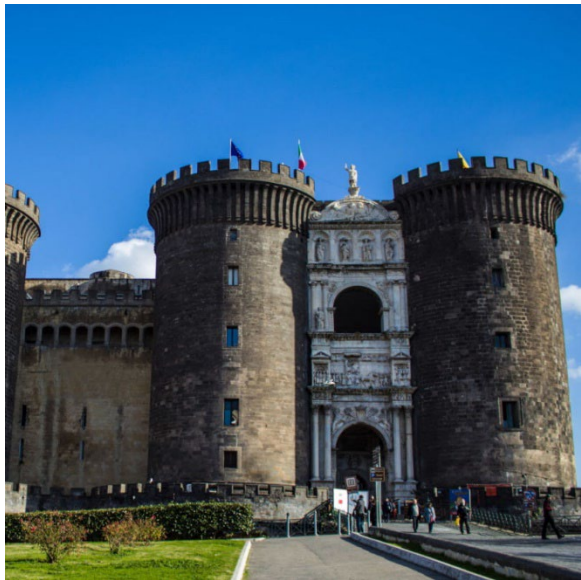
PIAZZA DEL PLEBISCITO

This enormous square in the center of Naples is home to many of the city's most emblematic buildings. The Piazza is one of the most elegant spots in Naples and plays host to many of the city's cultural events. Named after the 1860 plebiscite that brought Naples into the unified Kingdom of Italy, it was built in the early 19th century out of volcanic rock from Vesuvius. Overlooking the piazza are two impressive buildings: at one end stands the majestic San Francesco di Paola Basilica, an imposing Neoclassical structure fronted by a long semi-circular columned gallery. Across the square is the Royal Palace of Naples, fascinating given its excellently preserved state. Thankfully no longer used as car park as it was between the 1960s until 1994, the now-pedestrianised Piazza provides a peaceful escape from the chaotic traffic of Naples. It's an excellent place from which to visit nearby places of interest like Via Toledo, the Real Teatro di San Carlo, the Galleria Umberto I and the Castel dell'Ovo.



GLORIZIA, 1916

A cornerstone of the wealthy Vomero neighborhood, this historical pizzeria survived through both world wars. The restaurant has seen some of Naples' most prominent figures inside, wanting to try the tried-and-true flavors they've passed down from generation to generation. You'll want to try the 1916 pizza: ricotta, mozzarella, zucchini flowers, artichokes, salami, and provolone del monaco.



CASTEL NUOVO

Originally built between 1279 and 1282, Castel Nuovo - also called Maschio Angioino (Angevin Keep) - is an imposing Medieval Renaissance fortress located next to the port of Naples. Named Castel Nuovo (New Castle) to distinguish it from the city's other fortresses when it was built in the 13th century by King Charles I of Anjou, this imposing castle is more commonly known by locals as Maschio Angioino, or the Angevin Keep. After French rule ended and Naples was conquered by the Spanish Empire in the mid 15th century, Castel Nuovo was completely rebuilt by Alfonso V of Aragon, creating the Medieval Renaissance style fortress that stands majestically by the port today. Enormous and impressive even from a distance, Castel Nuovo has five round towers united by impenetrable stone walls. Its main entrance is an intricately carved white marble triumphal arch squeezed between two of the

watchtowers. Inside, visit the Cappella Palatina, or Palatine Chapel, to see beautiful historic frescoes - some of which were painted by Giotto; and head to the Sala dell'Armeria, or Armoury Hall, to catch a glimpse of the Roman ruins under the glass floor. Upstairs, visitors can peruse a collection of artwork by Neapolitan painters from the 17th to early 20th centuries (exhibition closed on Sundays), while the Hall of the Barons - historically the castle's Throne Room - nowadays plays host to city council meetings and cultural events. Castel Nuovo is one of Naples' most striking buildings, so no trip to the Italian city would be complete without a stroll around its towering walls. The castle also offers excellent views over the bay, so don't forget your camera! If you're interested in seeing the inside of a castle or learning more about Naples' history, the nearby Castel dell'Ovo or one of the city's museums make for a more interesting visit.



CASTEL DELL'OVO

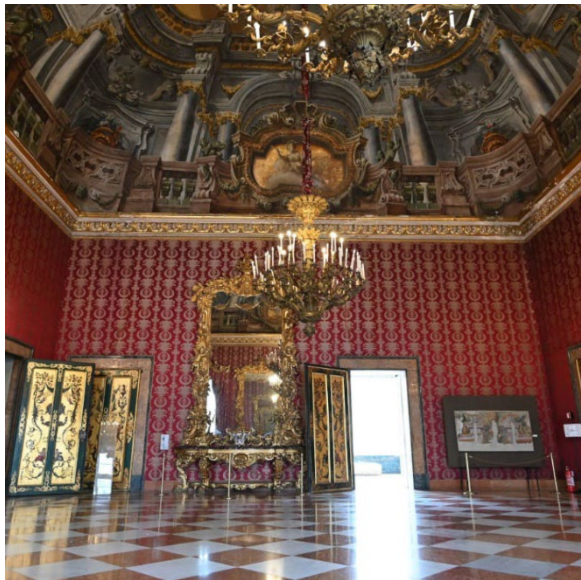
An imposing fortress located on the Gulf of Naples, Castel dell'Ovo (Egg Castle in English) has served to defend the city, as a prison and as a royal residence throughout its long history. Located on the Naples coastline is the imposing Castel dell'Ovo, the oldest standing fortification in the city. According to legend, the Roman poet Virgil hid a magical egg in the foundations of the fortress, promising that if the egg were broken, the city would suffer great catastrophes! Whether or not the myth is true, the name stuck: "Egg Castle". The castle that currently stands on the Borgo Marinaro, the former island where the Greeks first settled in the 7th century BC, was built by the Normans in the 12th century. These days, Castel dell'Ovo is used for events and temporary art exhibitions but strolling around its fortified stone walls gives visitors a great sense of the history it has seen: from a grand

Roman villa, to the royal residence of the Angevins before Castel Nuovo was built, to housing a prison. While the castle itself is practically empty, its location affords incomparable views over the Gulf of Naples, with Mount Vesuvius watching over in the background. Entry is free and it's a great place to get a feel for the city's lengthy history while admiring the surrounding area.



TEATRO DI SAN CARLO

Opened in 1737, the Teatro di San Carlo is a beautiful Neoclassical building housing the oldest continuously running public opera venue in the world. Commissioned as a new and bigger royal theatre by the Bourbon King Charles III of Naples, the Teatro di San Carlo was opened in 1737 with seating capacity for almost 1,400 people. It was admired for its exquisite blue and gold decoration and magnificent architecture, and for a while was the largest opera house in the world. After a fire caused a huge amount of damage in 1816, the Teatro di San Carlo had to be restored, and it was rebuilt into a traditional horseshoe-shaped auditorium, painted with dazzling frescoes, and updated to red and gold decor. Today, after massive investment in restoration following World War II bombing and general ageing, the theatre remains a sumptuous venue for opera and ballet. Guided tours are offered in English and Italian of the main auditorium, the royal box and the two foyers. Alternatively, theatre fans may be interested in seeing a performance for a fully immersive experience in the iconic venue, with tickets costing from €20 upwards depending on seats. A UNESCO World Heritage Site, the theatre is among the most striking and important in Europe and will certainly leave visitors in awe of its luxury. However, if you don't have much time to spend in Naples, and you're not a huge theatre fan, we recommend prioritizing a visit to the nearby Royal Palace of Naples instead.



ROYAL PALACE OF NAPLES

Built when Naples was under Spanish rule, the Palazzo Reale is home to lavishly decorated royal apartments as well as a magnificently preserved theatre and chapel. One of four royal residences around Naples used by the Bourbon Kings while they ruled the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, construction on the Palazzo Reale began in 1600, although it would see a number of restorations and additions over the following centuries. The current palace and its grounds are dedicated to the Teatro di San Carlo, the Teatrino di Corte, the National Library, and a museum showcasing 17th to 19th century history through the exquisitely decorated royal apartments. The Palazzo Reale offers visitors the opportunity to travel back in time through the history of Naples' monarchs, discovering the lavish lifestyle of the kings, queens, princes and princesses who called the palace home. Don't miss visiting the impressive throne room, imagining the plays and operas performed in the private theatre, and admiring the antique furniture and incredible artwork throughout. Naples' Royal Palace is a great place to learn all about the city's history over the past few centuries from the point of view of its royal rulers: you'll be immersed in the luxury in which they lived, almost exactly preserved as it was at the time.

DAY 3

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2022

Wake up early and walk to the Star Hotel by the train station to start our boat tour of Positano and Amalfi at 8:30 AM.

Small-Group Positano and Amalfi Boat Tour from Naples

Confirmation number: 1263768058

Viator Booking reference number: 871605584

- Pick-up at the meeting point Star Hotel Terminus in Piazza Giuseppe Garibaldi, 91, 80142 Napoli NA and transfer by minivan/minibus to **Piano di Sorrento's port**.
- Pass By **Antico Borgo Marinaro**. Sailing along the Sorrento Coast you will admire: the ancient fishermen village of **Marina Grande**.

1 Along the way, admire the ruins of a roman villa near **Bagni della Regina Giovanna**. (10 minutes)

2 Along the way, admire the natural waterfall that flows from the rock, **Cala di Mitigliano**. (10 minutes)

- You will see Ieranto bay and other interesting attractions along the coast.

3 Sailing along the Amalfi Coast you will admire the Island of **Li Galli, Nerano, Praiano, Fiordo di Furore**. (15 minutes)

4 Stop in Amalfi for 1 to 2 hours to visit the ancient Maritime Republic. (2 hours)

5 Stop in Positano for 1 to 2 hours to explore the “pearl” of the Amalfi Coast. (1 hour)

- Return to Naples, approximately 8:30 PM



Free night in Naples.



AMALFI

Serene, colorful and completely enchanting: nestled in a deep ravine on the Gulf of Salerno, Amalfi is one of the main towns in the region and the namesake of the Amalfi Coast. Amalfi was founded as a commercial port in the year 339 under the rule of the Roman Empire, and as the years passed it prospered due to its role in the trade of grains, salt and slaves. It was an independent republic from the 7th century until a duke was elected in the 10th century. By then, the Duchy of Amalfi was a thriving city rivalling Venice, Genoa and Pisa. After being attacked by the King of Sicily in the 12th century, Amalfi began to decline in importance. Aside from its eminent schools of law & mathematics and a rich architectural movement in the Medieval times, the town only really began to regain importance thanks to the budding tourism scene for which it is known today. Amalfi is a town of great beauty, and it is a true pleasure to explore the pretty streets and historic monuments. The city includes the following must-see places:

- **Piazza del Duomo:** the main town square in Amalfi is a favorite meeting point for locals and tourists alike. Take in the magnificent architecture of the buildings lining the square while enjoying an espresso or a gelato at one of the lively cafés.
- **Amalfi Cathedral:** overlooking the Piazza del Duomo, Amalfi's enormous Medieval cathedral is one of the town's most important places of interest. Dating back to the 9th century, it combines many different architectural styles: its striking striped marble and stone façade and the steps leading up to its historic bronze doors are well worth a look.
- **Basilica of the Crucifix:** the oldest church in Amalfi, first mentioned in the 6th century, this basilica is attached to the cathedral and part of the museum showcasing both religious buildings, their art and architecture.
- **Cloister of Paradise:** built between 1266 and 1268 as a cemetery for Amalfi nobility, the cloister is a dreamy hidden spot with elegant Arab-style marble columns and arches.



POSITANO

Positano is a romantic little town on the Amalfi Coast whose colorful houses cling precariously to the hillsides overlooking the Tyrrhenian Sea. Positano is one of Italy's most picturesque towns and one of the most beautiful on the Amalfi Coast. Despite its winding hill-climbing streets, it is very compact and can easily be explored at a leisurely pace in a couple of hours. While its labyrinthine lanes may not suggest it, Positano is very easy to visit! It has one long main road (Viale Pasitea) from which its narrow alleyways and staircases ascend the mountainside and descend to the beach. Unlike other destinations, rather than listing the main places of interest in Positano, we recommend that you dive right into the town's pretty streets and lose yourself in its captivating atmosphere, taking stops at every viewpoint to make the most of the incredible landscapes around you.

DAY 4

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2022

Board the 9:00 AM train from Naples to Pompei Scavi - Villa dei Misteri. Walk to meeting place: PORTA MARINA SUPERIORE, Via Villa dei Misteri, 2. Just in front of the bar-restaurant HORTUS. The guide will be holding a sign with our company's name "Askos Tours" on the top.



Pompeii and Herculaneum Small Group tour with an Archaeologist

Confirmation number: 1262689266

Tripadvisor Booking reference: BR-870451068

Askos Tours



POMPEII



In the first century, Pompeii was a thriving colony of the Roman Empire that was home to a population of up to 20,000 people. That is, until the year 79 AD when nearby Mount Vesuvius violently erupted and destroyed the entire city. Alongside neighboring Herculaneum, Pompeii and its inhabitants were buried alive under more than 20 feet of volcanic ash. Forgotten under volcanic debris for over 1700 years, the ancient city was re-discovered in the mid-18th century by an architect building a canal. Since then, excavations have uncovered an incredibly well-preserved snapshot into Greco-Roman life. While archaeological work is still ongoing to discover more of the site, and not all the 100-odd acres already excavated are open to the public, there is more than enough to see. From ancient residents preserved in their last moments of fear to temples to erotic graffiti, you'd need days to take in everything.

Meet the guide at the main entrance of the archaeological site called "Porta Marina Superiore".

1. Basilica: an open portico that gave shelter to merchants and other activities.
2. Forum: Have a look of the ancient main square of Pompeii. Walk through the Via dell'Abbondanza, the main street of Pompeii.
3. Casa del Menandro: The house of Menander is one of the richest and most magnificent houses in ancient Pompeii in terms of architecture, decoration and contents.
4. Granai del Foro: In the granary you will see marble tables and baths for fountains that adorned the entrances of houses and some casts of victims of the eruption as well as that of a dog and a tree.
5. Stabian Baths (Terme Stabiane): These occupy a vast area between the Brothel lane, the Holconius crossroads and the Via Stabiana. They represent the oldest thermal complex in the city.
6. Lupanar: Visit the most famous brothel in the ruined Roman city of Pompeii.
7. Casa del Fauno: The house of Faun was one of the largest and most impressive private residences in Pompeii.
8. Odeon - Teatro Piccolo: Have a look of the so-called Teatro Piccolo of Pompeii.
9. Teatro Grande: Visit the most important Theater in Pompeii

Transfer by train to Herculaneum (30 minutes trip + 10 minutes walk) and quick lunch break if required. Meeting place is the Ticket Office of the Herculaneum ruins. Get there by train in Corso Resina 1.

HERCULANEUM



Herculaneum was an Ancient Roman city that suffered the same fate as Pompeii. In the year 79 AD, Mount Vesuvius erupted and buried everything around it under more than 20 feet of volcanic ash. As in Pompeii, many citizens of Herculaneum couldn't escape, and the entire city was frozen in time by the lava. Despite being smaller than Pompeii - which makes it much more manageable to explore - Herculaneum was much wealthier, and examples of lavishly decorated villas can be found around the archaeological site. Houses, public baths, taverns, temples, and statues are almost perfectly preserved, giving unbelievable insight into what life was like for well-to-do families in the Roman Empire. It is even possible to see the frescoes and mosaics that still decorate the walls of the ancient mansions almost 2000 years after they were buried. Unlike in Pompeii, the volcanic debris that covered Herculaneum carbonized, which means organic-based materials like wood, food and even people were much better preserved. While some

residents managed to flee the city, many didn't make it. A striking area of the ancient ruins is the boat houses, where skeletons can be seen, buried alive while waiting for rescue from the sea. While not be as famous as Pompeii, Herculaneum is as fascinating and more beautiful and is well worth a visit.

The guided tour continues:

1. Casa dei Cervi: The house receives its name from marble statues of stags/deer found in the peristyle.
2. La Terrazza di M. Nonio Balbo: M. Nonius Balbus was the city's major benefactor restoring and building many public buildings. On his death he was made patron and feted with many honors, detailed in the long inscription on his funeral altar.
3. College of the Augustales: It is thought that the building was a center of the cult of the Emperor Augustus and the headquarters of the Collegium Augustalium (or possibly even the local curia).
4. Casa del Rilievo di Telefo: The house possibly belonged to one of the town's leading benefactors, Marcus Nonius Balbus and is somewhat unusual in that it has its own private access to the adjoining Suburban Thermae to the south.
5. Partem Domus lignea: It is very important house for the elegant wooden partition remained.
6. House of the Skeleton: The House of the Skeleton probably the aggregation of three smaller buildings, derives its name from the discovery of human remains in a second-floor room in 1831.
7. Central Thermae: The Central Thermae were built around the beginning of the 1st century AD and were divided, as was then the common practice, into men's and women's baths, each with their own separate entrances.
8. Casa del Salone Nero: The House of the Black Hall is one of Herculaneum's more luxurious mansions. The house has a monumental entrance which still retains the carbonized remains of the doorposts and lintel.
9. Casa Sannitica: The house has an arrangement that was typical of the Samnites (an ancient people of the Sabine race who occupied this mountainous part of central Italy). The splendid atrium is skirted by a gallery with Ionic columns. The rooms are decorated with frescoes.
10. Casa del Bel Cortile: This is one of the most original houses in Herculaneum. It has a courtyard with a stairway and a stone balcony instead of an atrium.
11. House of the Grand Portal: Beautiful domus in the Centre of the archaeological area, with various environments, collonnati, frescos everywhere at Herculaneum-charred remains of wooden parts.

Tour concludes approximately 4:00 PM. Train back to Naples. Rest. Free night in Naples.

DAY 5

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2022

Free day in Naples. Depending on if there is more to see in Naples, we can either stay in Naples (recommend seeing the Museo Archeologico Nazionale following the Pompeii trip), or taking the hydrofoil to Capri.

CAPRI

Capri is beautiful – seriously beautiful. There's barely a grubby building or untended garden to blemish the splendor. Steep cliffs rise majestically from an impossibly blue sea; elegant villas drip with wisteria and bougainvillea; even the trees seem to be carefully manicured. Long a preserve of celebrities and the super-rich, this small, precipitous island off the west end of the Sorrento Peninsula has a tangible deluxe feel. Your credit card can get a lot of exercise in its expensive restaurants and museum-quality jewelry shops – a cappuccino alone can cost €7. But, regardless of this, Capri is worth visiting, whatever your budget. Glide silently up craggy Monte Solaro on a chairlift. Relive erstwhile poetic glories in Villa Lysis. Find a quiet space in the sinuous lanes of Anacapri. In the process, you'll enjoy some sublime moments.



DAY 6

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2022

Today we check out, take a taxi to the airport, and fly to Palermo, Sicily.

easyJet

EasyJet booking reference: **K3BM1T1**
EJU Flight 4863

11:00 AM

NAP ----- 1h ----- **PMO**
Naples, Italy Palermo, Italy

Sat, Sep 24, 2022

Sat, Sep 24, 2022

Operated by EasyJet

Flight details:

Gregory A Mella – 10F

Adrian Collazo – 11F

Transfer to Hotel:

12:30

Palermo Airport Falcone Borsellino (PMC) → Via dell'Università, 20, 90134 Palermo

Flight easyJet 4863 from Naples



Your driver will be waiting you outside the arrivals hall, holding a sign showing "Gregory Mella". The driver might monitor your flight and contact you after landing. Please make sure to turn your phone on.

Check in to apartment. Rest. Night Street Food tour of Palermo begins at 6:30 PM.

PALERMO



Palermo, capital of the island region of Sicily in Italy, lies on Sicily's northwestern coast at the head of the Bay of Palermo, facing east. Palermo was founded by Phoenician traders in the 8th century BC. It later became a Carthaginian settlement until its capture by the Romans in 254 BC. The city decayed under Roman rule but prospered after AD 535, when the Byzantine general Belisarius recovered it from the Ostrogoths. The Arabs conquered Palermo in 831, and it flourished as a center of rich trade with North Africa. Palermo was quite prosperous when it fell to the Norman adventurers Roger I and Robert Guiscard in 1072. The ensuing era of Norman rule (1072–1194) was Palermo's golden age, particularly after the founding of the Norman kingdom of Sicily in 1130 by Roger II. Palermo became the capital of this kingdom, in which Greeks, Arabs, Jews, and Normans worked together with singular harmony to create a cosmopolitan culture of remarkable vitality. Norman rule in Sicily was replaced in 1194 by that of the German Hohenstaufen dynasty. The Hohenstaufen Holy Roman emperor Frederick II shifted the center of imperial politics to southern Italy and Sicily, and the cultural brilliance of his court at Palermo was renowned throughout western Europe. Palermo then came under Aragon rule, and subsequently with Spain. Palermo declined during this long period of Spanish rule. In 1860 Giuseppe Garibaldi seized Palermo, which the following year joined the united kingdom of Italy.

Palermo shows the western, Islamic and byzantine cultures in its wonderful old town center and in its many UNESCO protected sites. Palermo is the economical, cultural and historical capital of Sicily and with its colorful city center, rich in tourist attractions, delicious food and nightlife, it has something to offer for everyone's taste. The western, Islamic and byzantine cultures can be admired in the many UNESCO protected sites around the city, offering an ancient and fascinating view of the city.

In the midst of all these historic sites, winding through the narrow streets, you will also find the marvelous food markets with its own set of historic importance. Still delivering tasty food to the locals, these markets – especially renown for the fresh fish- are the reason why eating in Palermo is always a safe bet. All over the city you will be able to taste delicious meals in restaurants, taverns, bars or even the streets... but don't forget to save room for the sweets, they are just as tasty and dangerously addictive!

Palermo becomes extremely lively especially in the summer when unexpected spaces turn into clubs, karaokes and pubs. If you're looking for a change of scene and need a break from all the history or nightlife, then satisfy your urges by spending the day relaxing at the beach.

CASA VIGLIENA - TERRACE ON THE ROOF
VIA DELL'UNIVERSITÀ, 20, 90134 PALERMO



CASA VIGLIENA - TERRACE ON THE ROOF VIA DELL'UNIVERSITÀ, 20, 90134 PALERMO

CENTRALLY LOCATED LOFT WITH TERRACE IN A 16TH CENTURY PALACE IN THE HISTORICAL CENTER. THE PRIVATE TERRACE, WITH AMAZING VIEW OF CASA PROFESSA CHURCH, IS EQUIPPED WITH LOUNGE CHAIRS, TABLE AND CHAIRS. THE BALCONY IS EQUIPPED WITH A LITTLE TABLE FOR YOUR BREAKFASTS OR SUNSET COCKTAILS. THERE IS NO ELEVATOR OR INTERNAL STAIRS, AND THIS ACCOMMODATION IS NOT RECOMMENDED FOR PEOPLE WITH REDUCED MOBILITY.




Walk to the nearby Massimo Theater (Piazza Verdi) to meet the group at 6:30 PM. Please stand at the main gate of the Teatro Massimo opera house (between the two bronze lions). Guide will be carrying a red bag with Streaty logo printed on.

PALERMO NIGHT STREET FOOD TOUR

This is the very first food tour ever launched in Palermo. Three-hours strolling around the backstreets of the city center guided by a young Palermitan who will share stories and legends only renowned among locals. We visit the same places where guides go to eat and drink with friends., learning the best tips to enjoy Palermo and Sicily like a local. We taste traditional street foods at vendors who have been carefully selected for the quality of food and the authenticity of the location. There are no tourist traps on this tour! Travelers will step into hidden corners and try foods they wouldn't dare to do alone. The amount of food on this tour replaces a full meal.



 **You'll start at**
Massimo Theater
[See address & details](#)

1
Teatro Massimo
Stop: 10 minutes
[See details & photo](#)


2
Chiesa di Sant'Ignazio All'Olivella
Stop: 5 minutes
[See details & photo](#)

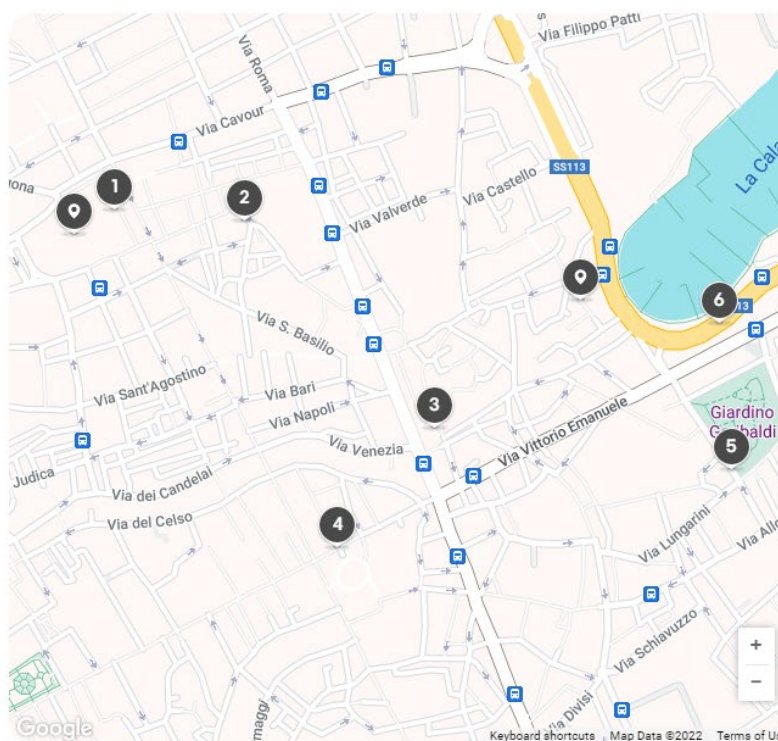
3
La Vucciria
Stop: 30 minutes
[See details & photo](#)

4
Via Vittorio Emanuele
Stop: 15 minutes
[See details & photo](#)

5
Piazza Marina
Stop: 20 minutes
[See details & photo](#)

6
La Cala
Stop: 15 minutes
[See details & photo](#)

 **You'll end at**
Piazza Fonderia
[See address & details](#)



Tour ends at 9:30. Walk back to the apartment.

DAY 7

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2022

Free day in Palermo. The following pages provide a list of the top sites to see in Palermo.

PALERMO SITES



PALERMO CATHEDRAL

Due to the various conquering nations and empires that have had a presence in Palermo, this cathedral has a myriad of different styles and is a truly fascinating building. Originally constructed in 1185 on the instruction of Pope Gregory I, the church has seen many uses including a mosque and a crypt. The Moorish influence is present on the exterior and it features a fine central basilica and a tall renaissance clock tower. Furthermore, the portico side entrance features several ornate columns and a triangular pediment with a detailed fresco. The Cathedral is part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site known as Arab-Norman Palermo. Inside, a prominent feature is the treasure chamber that holds various artefacts from different time periods of the church, and also the tomb of Emperor Frederick II. The roof is accessible for a fee, but it is closed on Sunday. You get a privileged view over Palermo's Old Town.



TEATRO MASSIMO

The Teattro Massimo is immense, and it towers over the relatively small buildings surrounding the Piazza Giuseppe Verdi. Opened in 1897, it is the largest Opera House in Italy and is famed for its acoustic qualities. With an exterior designed in the high neoclassical style incorporating elements of the Greek temples at Selinunte and Agrigento, this building is truly opulent, but the interior is just as lavish. Guided tours are available daily of the interior of this fantastic building including tours of the actual auditorium and its boxes. The final scenes of Francis Ford Coppola's film *The Godfather Part III* (1990) were filmed here, where Francis Ford Coppola's uncle, the composer and conductor Anton Coppola, is shown conducting the opera, *Cavalleria rusticana*.



PALAZZO DEI NORMANNI/ CAPPELLA PALATINA

The Palazzo dei Normanni or Royal Palace of Palermo, was the seat of the Kings of Sicily and served afterwards as the main seat of power for the subsequent rulers of Sicily. Since 1946 it has been the seat of the Sicilian Regional Assembly. The building is the oldest royal residence in Europe; and was the private residence of the rulers of the Kingdom of Sicily and the imperial seat of Frederick II and Conrad IV.

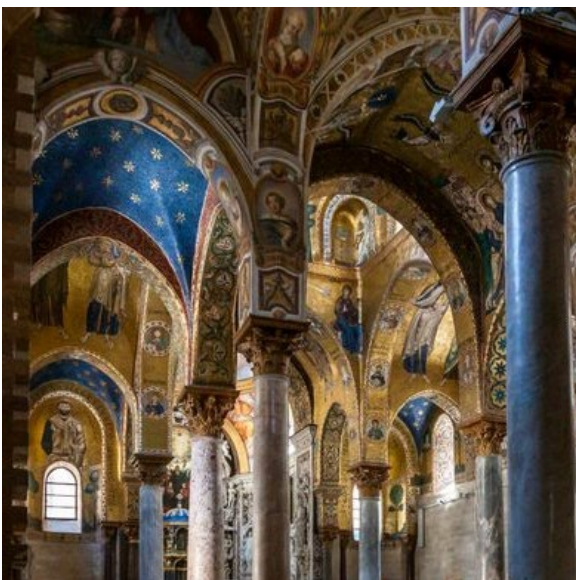
The palace sits in the highest point of the ancient city center, just above the first Punic settlements, whose remains can still be found in the basement. The first building, the al-Kasr (*castle* in Arabic) is believed to have been started in the 9th century by the Emir of Palermo. Parts of this early building are still visible in the foundations and in the basements, where typical Arabian vaults are present. After the Normans conquered Sicily in 1072 (just 6 years after they conquered England) and established Palermo as the capital of the new Country of Sicily, the palace was chosen as the main residence of the kings. The Norman kings transformed the former Arabian palace into a multifunctional complex with both administrative and residential aims. All the buildings were linked to each other via arcades and enclosed by gardens, designed by the best gardeners of the middle east. In 1132 King Roger II added the famous Cappella Palatina to the complex.

The Palatine Chapel is one of the best-preserved examples of Byzantine architecture and artwork in Europe. Dedicated to Saint Peter, the chapel has a central basilica and features a plethora of fantastic Byzantine artwork and architecture. Covered in stunning mosaics that exhibit a fantastic amount of detail and color, the walls and ceiling are covered in religious & historical iconography. Every angle reveals another piece of detail or interesting depiction – a true feat of ingenuity and artistic creation. Both the Norman Palace and the Palatine Chapel are UNESCO sites.



LA MARTORANA

Secluded in the Piazza Bellini behind an unseemly Spanish baroque façade, this 12th-century church is a majestic relic of the era when Palermo was the richest port in western Europe. Known colloquially as the Martorana, the official name is the Church of Santa Maria dell'Ammiraglio (admiral), an homage to its patron, the Syrian-Greek adventurer George of Antioch, appointed by King Roger II to command the ascendant Sicilian kingdom's navy, as the world's first admiral. Inside, the design and artwork are sublime – The main dome features a golden mosaic of Christ, and the ceilings and arches are full of frescos and colorful depictions. The church still holds mass in ancient Greek and is part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site “Arab-Norman Palermo”.





QUATTRO CANTI

A simple yet effective and beautiful attraction, the Quattro Canti is an open square located in the center of Palermo. Constructed in 1608 by orders of the Spanish Viceroys, the square provides a crossroads for Via Maqueda and Via Vittorio Emmanuel but it is the architecture that makes it famous. The piazza layout is octagonal, four sides comprise the streets, while the remaining four sides are nearly symmetric, concave Baroque facades, each with four stories with three full size statues in their centers. The street level up to second story feature four fountains, each dedicated to one the four seasons. The third stories have statues in niches of four Spanish rulers of Sicily; above them in roofline are their respective coat of arms. The fourth and top stories of the buildings have statues of four female patron saints of Palermo: Christina, Ninfa, Olivia and Agata.



FONTANA PRETORIA

A monumental fountain that lies in the center of the Piazza Pretoria, the Fontana Pretoria was built by a Florentine architect in 1554 and transferred to Palermo in 1574. Depicted on the fountain are marble statues of the twelve Olympians from ancient Greek Mythology including Zeus, Poseidon, Apollo and Ares. Each statue is highly decorated and sculpted and frames the centerpiece perfectly. Aside from the mighty Olympians, the other statues represent the animals and rivers of Palermo. There was a time when the square in front of Palermo's Praetor's Palace was known as "Square of Shame", due to the naked statues around the spectacular fountain at its center.



PALERMO FOOD MARKETS

Palermo has several wonderful food markets that operate daily – including Ballarò, Cap, and Vucciria all of which are in the center of the city, not far from the main attractions. Here you will find street vendors and shop fronts full of delicious fresh fruits, vegetables, cakes, pastries and more. Prepare to have your sense assaulted with the variety of smells and the noise from the vendors selling their wares. Ballarò is the "oldest food market in Palermo", according to a 10th-century Arab author's travel log. Hearing is incited by the '*abbanniate*', which is the Sicilian word for the stentorian yelling of the sellers. It is their way of getting passers-by's attention, showing them their goods so that taste and sight can also feast on the stands crowded with fresh fish, meat, vegetables, and traditional foods like flour and chickpea fritters. The eyes almost need to shield themselves from the light and colors, so bright they seem tangible.

DAY 8

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2022

Today, we travel to Monreale and Erice. We will be picked up from our apartment at 9:00 AM and we'll travel to Monreale to visit the impressive Cathedral (independent tour, no guide). Following Monreale, we have a 90-minute drive to Erice, where we will be dropped off to explore the city, have lunch, and then return back to Palermo (by 5:00 PM) where we can tour the Cathedral rooftop, or just rest and explore Palermo again by night.



MONREALE CATHEDRAL

Monreale Cathedral is the most important monument to the artistic tastes of the Normans in all of Sicily. The entire concept of the Norman kingdom as the highest secular and religious authority is represented here in incomparable fashion. With its cycle of mosaics on a gold ground and its extraordinary cloister, the cathedral can rightly claim a place in the highest ranks of Europe's art history. It was begun in 1174 by William II. The church was elevated to the Archdiocese of Monreale in 1183. Since 2015 it has been part of the Arab-Norman Palermo and the Cathedral Churches of Cefalù and Monreale UNESCO World Heritage site.

While the basilica floor plan moves away from Eastern Byzantine concepts of space, the spirit of Byzantine culture is present in the superb mosaics that cover every available surface. The artists from Constantinople and local mosaicists were able to cover all walls—6,340 square meters—in the short time between 1179 and 1182. That they achieved such artistic quality in the process is simply overwhelming. To follow both the Old and New Testaments, begin in the nave on the south wall of the central aisle, at the left (east) end, with the upper row of pictures, and move clockwise. You'll begin the story of the Creation here, with the creation of Eve, and on the north side, the Fall of Man, expulsion, and Cain and Noah's orders to build the ark. Continuing on the south side, you'll find Noah's ark and continue through Abraham and Jacob. The transept is devoted to the life and Passion of Jesus, the Resurrection, and the apostles Paul and Peter, ending on the north wall with the Passion, Crucifixion, and the risen Christ. The saints, archangels, and apostles fill the apse, reaching a climax in the half-dome of the central apse with the monumental picture of Christ.

Breathtaking as the mosaics are, the artistry in the cloister is every bit as spectacular. It is the most significant remnant of the former Benedictine abbey, which was also built on William's instruction. The 26 arches on each of the four sides open on to the luxuriant garden and are supported by 228 double columns with double capitals. Columns are either smooth or inlaid with colored stones, no two pairs alike. The detail in the stone carving of the capitals engaging—whimsical animals, human figures, mythical beasts, and other motifs are executed in infinite detail.



ERICE



Erice is among the most beautiful villages in Italy. Towering over the west of Sicily at 751m above sea level and often covered in its own personal cloud, Erice is a wonderfully preserved Medieval town offering most breathtaking views and a palpable sense of history. Originally an Elymian city (the Elymians were around before the Greeks ever set foot in Sicily) Erice, or Eryx as it was first called, was a town of importance and renown and is said to have attracted the likes Hercules and Aeneas. Like so many Sicilian towns, it passed from one invader to another as all the usual suspects came and went, leaving their architectural calling cards and their cultural footprints. The name changed from Eryx, to Erice to Gebel Hamed and Monte San Giuliano but its essential character remained, obstinately repelling any attempt to change its real identity.

Erice is a pretty town, in a sombre, grey kind of way, and it is very atmospheric. Unusual for Sicily, its historical center is largely intact, clean and well-kept. Its streets are handsomely paved with a characteristic pattern of differently-sized shiny stones. Only about 300 people now live in the historic center, though there are other settlements around the slopes below.

Amongst the most visited sites are the two castles, Pepoli Castle and Venus Castle. The former was built by the Arabs while the latter was a Norman construction with imposing towers that derived its name from the fact that it was built on the site of the ancient Temple of Venus, allegedly founded by Aeneas. Other attractions include the sixty churches including the Gothic Chiesa Madre (1314) and the Medieval Church of Saint John the Baptist. Otherwise, the maze of cobbled Medieval streets are a pleasure to wander around and the views are stunning. On a cloudless day, the Egadi Islands off the coast of Trapani are vividly visible, rising from the sea like giant, motionless whales while to the west the panorama takes in vast swathes of eastern Sicily, the Tyrrhenian Sea and the coastline towards San Vito Lo Capo, Monte Cofano and the Gulf of Castellammare.

Among its cobbled streets, you can discover one of the oldest recipes in Sicily's famous confectionery tradition. The walls of Erice's ancient convents, San Carlo and Santa Teresa, where the cloistered nuns would prepare their delicious recipes, have guarded it for centuries. Here, you can try *genovesi* and *dolci di badia*, served with sweet Marsala wine or the typical liquor Monte Erice, famous for its green color. *Genovesi* is the typical dessert of the city of Erice: its shortbread stuffed with custard, baked in the oven and then garnished with a sprinkling of powdered sugar. Head for Maria Grammatico's famous pastry shop in Via Vittorio Emanuele, 14. Opened in 1950, this shop has become legendary.

DAY 9

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2022



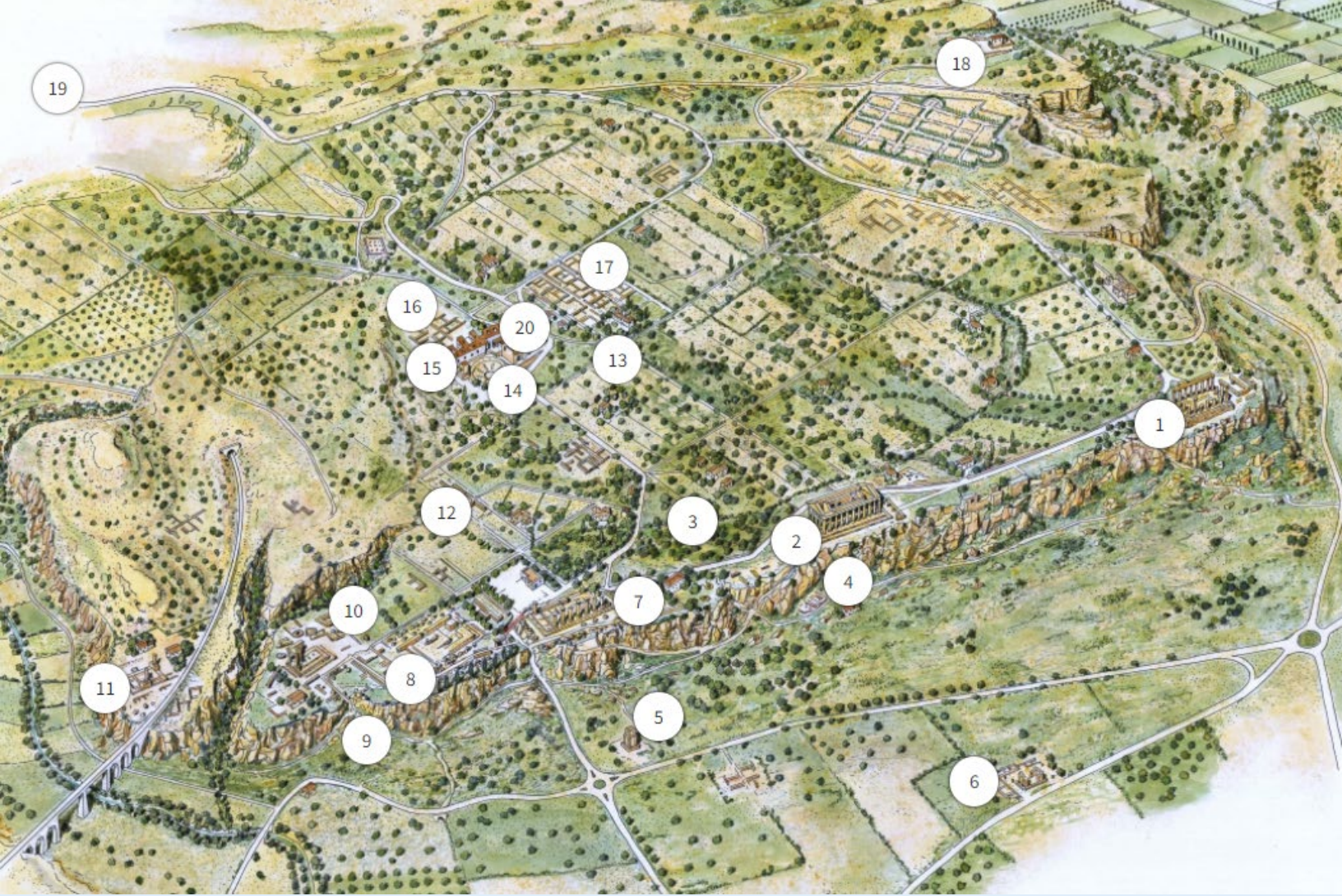
Today, we depart Palermo, meeting our driver to transfer to Catania, with two important stops along the way. (Each a UNESCO World Heritage site). We depart at 8:00 AM and drive to Agrigento, about 2 hours away. There we will see the famous Valley of the Temples, escorted by an archaeologist guide. After that, we head to Piazza Armerina (about a 90 minute drive), situated deep in the Sicilian hinterland, at 721 meters above sea level, to see the Villa Romana del Casale, again escorted by an archaeologist guide. After that, we head for Catania, about another 90 minute drive. We should arrive in our apartment in Catania around or 6:00 PM.

AGRIGENTO (AKRAGAS)/ VALLEY OF THE TEMPLES



The city of Akragas, defined as the “most beautiful city of those inhabited by man” by the Greek poet Pindar, was founded by colonists from Gela and Rhodes in 580 BC. The settlement sits atop a plateau not far from the coast, sheltered to the north by hills, to the south by the so-called Collina dei Templi - hill of the temples, and surrounded by the rivers Akragas and Hypsas. Its port (empóron) is located at the mouth of the two rivers where the fishing village of San Leone is found. Between the middle of the 6th century and the end of the 5th century BC, the city was the site of feverish construction; indeed, most of the remains visible today and

the imposing 12-km wall with its nine gateways date to this period. Akragas grew from a small settlement to a large city state with a population of over 200,000 inhabitants. Destroyed in 406 BC by the Carthaginians, prosperity did not return to the city until the rise of Timoleon in the late third century BC. During the Punic Wars, the Carthaginians defended the settlement against the Romans, who seized control of the city in 210 BC. During the Roman era, the city - renamed Agrigentum - underwent a period of monumental urban redevelopment as new public buildings - including at least two temples, the theatre and the bouleuterion - were built, with the new constructions centered around the hill of Saint Nicolas, where the town's Museum of Archaeology now stands. The most opulent villas in the nearby Hellenistic-Roman quarter also date to this period. The wealth of Agrigentum's residents most likely relied on the mining, refining and trade of sulphur. In late antiquity and the Early Middle Ages, the Valley of the Temples was occupied by a sprawling Christian burial ground that extended both underground and in the open air. During the Muslim conquests of the Arabs, Berbers, Spanish, Egyptians, Syrians and Persians between 829 and 840 AD, it is believed that the settlers withdrew to Colle di Girgenti, where the medieval and modern city was later developed. During this period, the Valley of the Temples was inhabited in a sporadic manner and became the site of agricultural production and craftsmanship, with various ceramic workshops documented by the presence of several kilns. Over the centuries, the old monuments of the ancient city were steadily deprived of their brickwork for use in the construction of the buildings around Girgenti and the ancient harbor of Porto Empedocle.



1. TEMPLE OF HERA LACINIA (JUNO)
2. TEMPLE OF CONCORDIA
3. PALEO-CHRISTIAN NECROPOLIS
4. NECROPOLI GIAMBERTONI
5. THERON'S TOMB
6. TEMPLE OF ASCLEPIUS
7. TEMPLE OF HERACLES
8. TEMPLE OF OLYMPIAN ZEUS
9. GATE V
10. TEMPLE OF CASTOR & POLLUX
11. TEMPLE OF VULCAN
12. GYMNASIUM
13. THEATRE
14. THE EKKLESIASTERION AND ORATORY OF PHALARIS
15. BOULEUTERION
16. HELLENISTIC-ROMAN SANCTUARY
17. ROMAN HELLENISTIC QUARTER
18. TEMPLE OF DEMETER (CHURCH OF SAINT BLAISE)
19. TEMPLE OF ATHENA (SANTA MARIA DEI GRECI)
20. "PIETRO GRIFFO" REGIONAL MUSEUM OF ARCHAEOLOGY



The temple of Castor and Pollux (Dioscuri), the legendary twin brothers, born from the union of Jupiter and the queen of Sparta, nowadays has only four columns left and has become the symbol of Agrigento.

The temple of Olympian Zeus (Jupiter) was built to thank Zeus on the occasion of the Agrigentines' victory over the Carthaginians, in 480 BC. Here are the famous atlases, some gigantic statues with human shape, once used as columns or pilasters.

The Temple of Concordia, also built around the 5th century, is located along the via Sacra and is one as well of the best preserved temples. In the sixth century it was transformed into a sacred building. The name Concordia comes from a Latin inscription found near the temple itself. In front of the Temple, you can admire the statue of Icarus, donated by the Polish sculptor Igor Mitoraj. The statue represents the Fall of Icarus, who disobeyed his father Daedalus, he flew too close to the sun, burned his wings of wax and fell into the Mediterranean.

The temple of Heracles (Hercules) is the oldest one. Inside it kept a bronze statue of Hercules himself, which the Agrigentines loved very much. The temple, destroyed by war and natural disasters, today has only eight columns left.

The temple of Aesculapius was built far outside the ancient walls of the city, a place of pilgrimage for the sick who asked to be healed. The walls of the temple were covered by the words of the sick who obtained healing.

The tomb of Theron, near the Golden Gate, is an imposing pyramidal monument made of tuff stone. It was built in memory of the fallen of the Second Punic War.

The temple of Vulcano whose ruins suggest it once was an imposing building, dates back to the fifth century. In its foundations, the remains of an archaic temple were found.

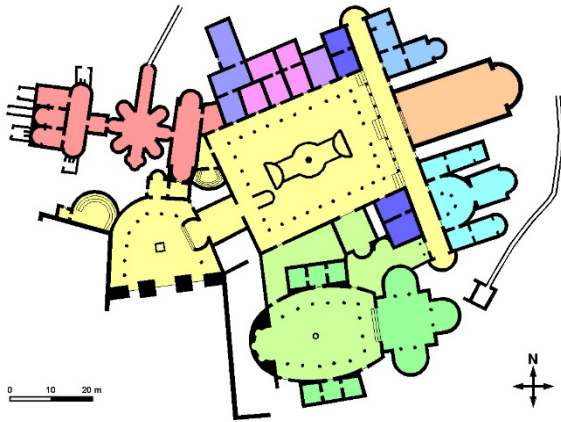
The temple of Juno (Hera Lakinia) – Its name, like that of the nearby Temple of Concordia, is conventional as a result of a wrong interpretation of a Latin inscription that aligns it with the temple of Hera, in Croton. Placed spectacularly in the easternmost part of this magical hillside, it housed the cult of the goddess of fertility. The traces of fire, amazingly still visible in the walls of the cell, remind us of 406 B.C. when this magnificent temple, almost identical to that of Concordia, was destroyed by the Carthaginians. Nearby, there is also a clearly visible big altar for sacrifices (in the East side) and a section of street deeply furrowed by carts coming from the city's "Gate III".





VILLA ROMANA DEL CASALE

The Villa Romana del Casale is a large and elaborate Roman villa or palace located near the town of Piazza Armerina. Excavations have revealed one of the richest, largest, and varied collections of Roman mosaics in the world. The villa and artwork contained within date to the early 4th century AD. The mosaic and opus sectile floors cover some 3,500 sq meters and are almost unique in their excellent state of preservation due to the landslide and floods that covered the remains. Although less well-known, an extraordinary collection of frescoes covered not only the interior rooms, but also the exterior walls. Scholars believe that the villa was the center of the great estate of a high-level senatorial aristocrat. The complex remained inhabited for at least 150 years and the village grew around it. The villa was damaged and perhaps destroyed during the short domination of the Vandals between 469–78. The outbuildings remained in use, at least in part, during the Byzantine and Arab periods. The settlement was destroyed in 1160 during the reign of William I. The site was abandoned in the 12th century AD after a landslide covered the villa. The villa was almost entirely forgotten, although some of the tallest parts of the remains were always visible above ground. The area was cultivated for crops.



Early in the 19th century, pieces of mosaics and some columns were found. Archaeological excavations began in 1929 and work has continued to the present day by the University of Rome. The villa is one of the most luxurious of its kind. It is especially noteworthy for the richness and quality of the mosaics which decorate almost every room; they are the finest mosaics in situ anywhere in the Roman world.





CASA MINÈ

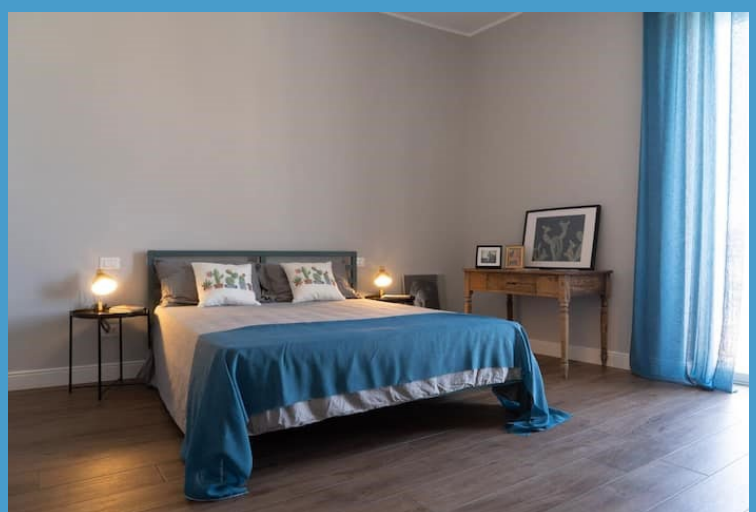
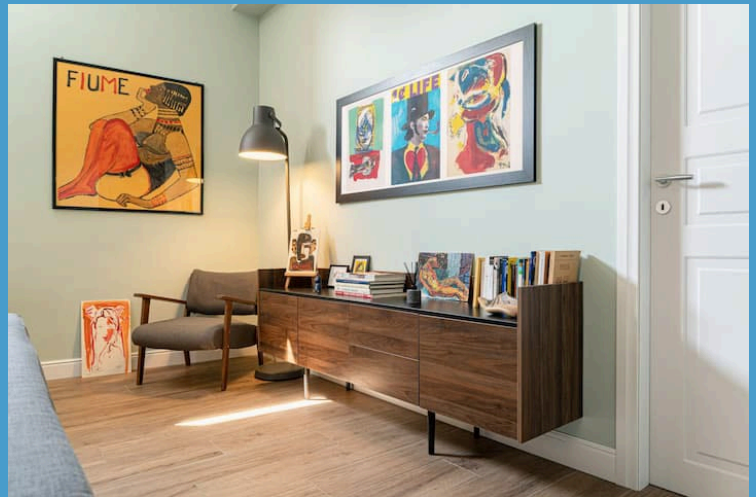
VIA GRIMALDI, 64 95121, CATANIA



CASA MINÈ - VIA GRIMALDI, 64, 95121 CATANIA

A BEAUTIFUL AND FRESHLY RENEWED APARTMENT IN THE OLD TOWN OF CATANIA, AT A FEW STEPS FROM THE MEDIEVAL CASTLE AND CITY MUSEUM CASTELLO URSINO, WITH A PRIVATE TERRACE AND A BREATHTAKING VIEW ON THE SEA, MT ETNA AND CATANIA CITY CENTER. EVEN THOUGH IT'S NOT THE FANCIEST PART OF TOWN, IT IS VERY LIVELY AND HAS A FEEL OF AUTHENTICITY AND EVERYDAY LIFE. ALL THE MAIN CITY ATTRACTIONS ARE AT A WALKING DISTANCE FROM THE APARTMENT.

THE APARTMENT IS AT THE SECOND FLOOR OF AN ANCIENT BUILDING AND THERE'S NO ELEVATOR AVAILABLE.





CATANIA

Catania is the second largest city in Sicily, after Palermo, and among the ten largest cities in Italy. It is located on Sicily's east coast, at the base of the active volcano, Mount Etna, and it faces the Ionian Sea. The city was almost completely destroyed by a catastrophic earthquake in 1169. A major eruption and lava flow from nearby Mount Etna nearly swamped the city in 1669 and it suffered severe devastation from the 1693 Sicily earthquake. This city was originally founded in the 8th century BC as a Greek colony and since then has been part of numerous Empires and cultures including the Carthaginians, the Roman Republic, the Ostrogoths and eventually became part of the Kingdom of Italy. During the Renaissance period, Catania was one of the most influential cities in the country and was known for its rich culture, arts and history. The central "old town" of Catania features exuberant late-baroque architecture, prompted after the 1693 earthquake, and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Today, Catania maintains a huge amount of its heritage and culture and offers a plethora of interesting structures and museums such as the Basilica Sant'Agata and the Museo Civici. Furthermore, this charming Sicilian city lies in close proximity to the legendary Mount Etna and offers a great amount of different day trips and outdoor sight-seeing excursions.

After setting in and enjoying the view, we'll go out in the evening and see Catania. We are seldom in Catania during the day, so many of these attractions we can see in the evening, and see the ones open during the day when we have a chance.

CATANIA SITES



BASILICA CATTEDRALE SANT'AGATA

The Cathedral of Catania is a simply beautiful structure and is a masterpiece of Norman and Baroque architecture. Located in the center of the old town, the cathedral can be found in the self-styled Piazza Del Duomo and is in close proximity to many of the other sights. Originally constructed in 1078 over the ruins of a Roman Baths, the cathedral has been restored many times due to earthquakes in the region. The front façade features a grey stone design with a series of ornate statues depicting religious figures and a large domed basilica sits at the back of the main aisle. Inside, there is a large amount of beautiful details such as the frescos at the main altar, the decorative artwork and paintings, and the tomb of the notable composer Bellini.



PIAZZA DEL DUOMO

As the main square in Catania, the Piazza Del Duomo has a great deal to offer in terms of attractions. Located in the heart of the city close to the port area, this central square is a regular gathering place for the locals and a great tourist spot. In the center of the square is the impressive Fontana Dell'Elefante, the Fontana Dell'Amenano, Catania Cathedral and the Palazzo degli Elefanti – All fine pieces of architecture. Furthermore, there is a series of cafes and restaurants with ideally situated outside seating so you can have a drink, a bite to eat, and enjoy the fine Sicilian weather. The Piazza Del Duomo is a great place to start a walking tour of Catania, and from here you are in close proximity to many of the main sights.



URSINO CASTLE

Sicily has several fine castles that serve as remnants from the period of conquest that saw the island change hands from various different ruling factions. Ursino Castle is a relic from the 13th century and was built as part of the Kingdom of Sicily by Emperor Frederick II. Today the castle stands in remarkable condition and all four of its original towers and walls still stand without damage; furthermore, remnants of the surrounding walls can also be seen in the castle grounds. Walk around the castle for some photographic opportunities, but also visit inside to see the fantastic Museo Civico which is housed within the castle walls.



CATANIA MUSEO CIVICO

The Civic Museum of Catania is actually housed within the walls of Castle Ursino and stands as an important source of relics, artefacts and history of the city and surrounding region. Inside the museum is a vast collection that was originally housed in the Biscari Museum and was one of the most important in Europe at the time. The collection features a myriad of different exhibitions including Hellenistic and Roman sculptures, porcelain, pottery, mosaics, ancient weaponry and other finds from Sicily. Furthermore, the second floor of the museum contains a selection of paintings from the 15th to 18th century.



PORTA GARIBALDI

Possibly one of the most impressive structures in Catania, this monumental gate was created in 1768 and dedicated to King Ferdinand IV and his wife Maria Carolina. Designed and built by Francesco Battaglia and Stefano Ittar, the arch is now named after Giuseppe Garibaldi who was instrumental in the unification of Italy during the 1800's. Aside from the various stone and marble statues that top the arch, the white and black striped walls and frame create a fantastic contrast and make the arch stand out. At the pinnacle of the gateway is an inscription and also a working clock that is crowned with an eagle.



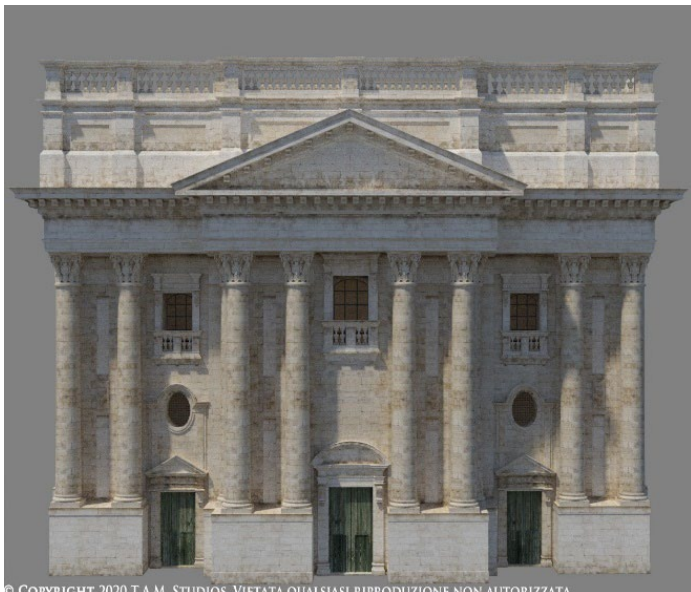
MONASTERO DEI BENEDETTINO

This Benedictine Monastery complex is located in the center of Catania and is one of the most important and largest examples of its kind in Europe. Listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, this monastery is a stunning piece of architecture and was originally founded in 1558. As an amalgamation of many styles, the complex is an interesting site and notable structures include the Marble Cloister, the Red Hall, and the Basilica of Saint Nicolò. Consider climbing to the top of the basilica dome for panoramic views of the city; admire the front façade that features sculptured window decorations, and walking through the cloisters to see the fantastic arches and fountains.



SAN NICOLÓ L'ARENA

Connected to the Monastero dei Benedettini, the Chiesa di San Nicolò l'Arena is built over the site of a Greek Acropolis and several of the original columns still stand on the front façade. This is actually the largest church in Sicily and is one of the most bizarre – Its front façade has never been complete therefore looks quite strange and sinister. Furthermore, the ancient Greek columns do not really compliment the design therefore the church looks quite mismatched. Inside, the church is more pleasing and features a myriad of columns, arches and religious decoration.





TEATRO ROMANO

Sicily has several Roman Theatres all of which are in fantastic condition, and the Teatro Romano in Catania is no exception. Located in-between the Benedictine Monastery and Catania Cathedral the theatre is easily accessible and is a great site to visit whilst exploring the historic center of the city. Created in the 2nd century BC, the theatre features a main seating area and also a smaller Odeon theatre to the left-hand side. The seats of the theatre and several other sections are actually created from lava taken from Mount Etna and the structure remains in fantastic condition.



VIA DEI CROCIFERI

This historic street is one of the main arteries of the city and features a plethora of historical buildings. Located in-between the Roman Theatre and the Giardini Bellini, the Via dei Crociferi features four spectacular churches – The Church of St. Francesco Borgia, The Church of San Benedetto, The Church of St. Francis Assisi and the Church of San Giuliana. Each building has its own unique design and offers something different. Furthermore, there is also the San Benedetto Arch and the cloisters of the Jesuit College. Consider visiting this street in conjunction with a trip to the Roman Theatre.

DAY 10

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2022

We begin the day with a small group Jeep tour of Mount Etna. Our driver will pick us up at 8:20 at our apartment. We'll explore Mount Etna with a nature guide and head up to about 2,000 meters (6,500 feet) to discover lava flows and extinct craters, plus take in the views over the Caldera del Valle del Bove. Then don a helmet and headlamp and venture into a lava tube to better to learn how lava flows are formed and cool. We will return back to Catania around 2:00 PM, using the remainder of the day to explore the sites of Catania.





MOUNT ETNA

Mount Etna is the highest active volcano in Europe and one of the world's most active volcanoes and is in an almost constant state of activity. The volcano shaped the Sicilian history and landscape and still affects the island today. It is a UNESCO World Heritage site since 2013. Volcanic activity first took place at Etna about 500,000 years ago, with eruptions occurring beneath the sea off the ancient coastline of Sicily. About 300,000 years ago, volcanism began occurring to the southwest of the summit, then activity moved towards the present center 170,000 years ago. These eruptions built up the first major volcanic edifice, forming a stratovolcano in alternating explosive and effusive eruptions. The growth of the mountain was occasionally interrupted by major eruptions, leading to the collapse of the summit to form calderas. Eruptions follow multiple patterns - most occur at the summit, where there are five distinct craters: the Northeast Crater, the Voragine, the Bocca Nuova, and two at the Southeast Crater Complex. Other eruptions occur on the flanks, which have more than 300 vents ranging in size from small holes in the ground to large craters hundreds of meters across. Summit eruptions can be highly explosive and spectacular but rarely threaten the inhabited areas around the volcano. In contrast, flank eruptions can occur down to a few hundred meters altitude, close to or even well within the inhabited areas. Over a six-month period in 2021, Etna erupted so much volcanic material that its height increased by approximately 100 feet, and the southeastern crater is now the tallest part of the volcano.

DAY 11

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2022

Today we visit Syracuse. Our driver will pick us up at 8:30 at our apartment. Arriving in Syracuse around 9:30, we'll stroll through the streets of Ortygia Island, the heart of the city center, connected to the mainland by Umberto bridge. Admire the Dome in Baroque style, the Arethusa Fountain, the Maniace Castle, the Temple of Apollo and the beautiful palaces around Ortygia. In the afternoon, we'll visit the Archaeological Park that highlights the Greek Theatre, the Roman Amphitheatre, and the Paradise Quarry. We'll arrive back to our apartment around 4:00 PM. This is our last day in Italy, so we'll have our last dinner and then pack, so we're ready for our early morning departure the next day.

SYRACUSE



Syracuse (Siracusa) was the chief Greek city of ancient Sicily. Founded in 734 BC, when Corinthian colonists landed on the island of Ortygia, the Greeks sett up the mainland city four year later. Described by Cicero as "the greatest Greek city and the most beautiful of them all", it equaled Athens in size during the 5th century BC. It later became part of the Roman Republic and the Byzantine Empire. Under Emperor Constans II, it served as the capital of the Byzantine Empire (663–669). It was captured by the Arabs in 878, and during the two centuries of Muslim rule, the capital of the Emirate of Sicily was moved from Syracuse to Palermo. Syracuse was shattered by an earthquake in 1693 and owes some of its finest architecture to the ensuing reconstruction efforts. Syracuse's nucleus is formed by the southward-projecting island of Ortygia, which half-encloses the bay known as the Great Harbor. Since 2005, the entire city of Syracuse, is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The easiest way to think about Siracusa, from the point of view of the visitors, is to consider the city as divided into two parts. One part is the historical center, called Ortigia: here you have Syracuse' duomo, the famous Aretusa's Fountain and the Fountain of Diana as well as Siracusa's underground tunnels. The second part is the Parco Archeologico, the archaeological park. This is located outside of the center and has stunning Greek and Roman ruins plus the incredible Latomie, the infamous stone quarries that made Syracuse a fearsome rival in ancient times. We don't have a guide in Syracuse, so we'll be on our own to see the highlights on the next pages.



SYRACUSE CATHEDRAL / PIAZZA DEL DUOMO

One moment, you are walking along a narrow streets shaded by Ortigia's ancient houses, and the next moment Piazza del Duomo opens in front of you. Outside, the duomo is a wonderful example of Sicilian Baroque Architecture: its facade has large columns and the carvings that are so typical of Baroque as it developed on the island. Inside, the duomo hides an even bigger surprise. On this very same location, in ancient time there used to be a temple to the Goddess Athena and parts of it are still standing, now part of the more recent church! The temple dates to 480 BC. For this reason, it is included in a UNESCO World Heritage Site designated in 2005. The present cathedral was constructed in the 7th century. The battered Doric columns of the original temple were incorporated in the walls of the current church. The building was converted into a mosque in 878, then converted back when Norman Roger I of Sicily retook the city in 1085. As part of the building activity after the 1693 Sicily earthquake, the cathedral was rebuilt, and the façade redesigned by architect Andrea Palma in 1725–1753.



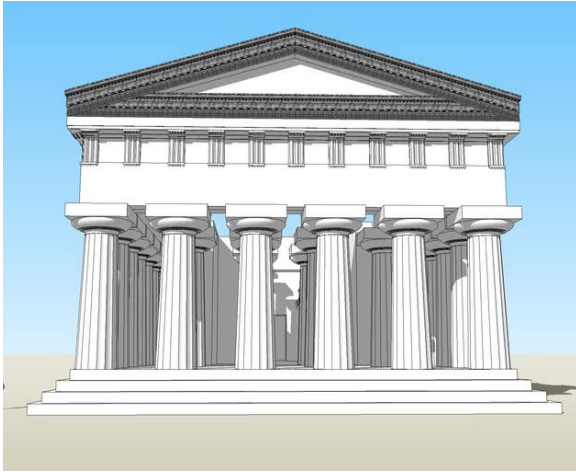
ARETHUSA'S SPRING

The Arethusa Fountain is a freshwater fountain dating back to ancient times and named after Arethusa, a Greek mythology nymph. Her story says that Alpheus, son of the Ocean, fell in love with Arethusa and insistently pursued her. Desperate to escape, Arethusa turned to the Goddess Artemis asking for help: her plea was to be able to escape Alpheus and to be as far away as possible from him and therefore Greece. The Goddess granted her this wish and transformed her into a fountain we can still see today. The story of Arethusa is one of the many we find in Greek mythology and is remembered by a sculpture just beside the fountain that recalls the chase and transformation.



FOUNTAIN OF DIANA / PIAZZA ARCHIMEDE

A very different fountain in Syracuse is that of Diana, which you find at the other end of Ortigia. This fountain was built in 1907 by Giulio Marchetti and also recalls the story of Arethusa. It decorates a square that takes the name from one of Syracuse's most famous citizens: mathematician Archimedes (Piazza Archimede). Piazza Archimede was built in 1878 to honor Archimede, who was killed by the Romans in 212 B.C., during the siege of Siracusa.



THE TEMPLE OF APOLLO

Ortigia is also home to the ruins of a temple of Apollo dating from the 6th century BC. The temple is visible but in large part a ruin however, it is a significant landmark worth seeking out: it is said to be the oldest Doric temple in Sicily. Throughout the centuries the temple underwent several transformations: from a Byzantine church, an Islamic mosque, a Norman church and, finally, a Spanish barracks. These successive renovations severely damaged the building, which were rediscovered around 1890 inside the barracks



CASTELLO MANIACE

Constructed by Emperor Frederick II between 1232 and 1240, Maniace Castle is an austere and imposing fort located on a promontory of the Ortigia Island and overlooking the Gulf of Siracusa. The citadel bears the name of George Maniakes, the Byzantine general who besieged and took the city in 1038. He was also the first to fortify the island to prevent it from falling into the hands of the Arabs.



ORTIGIA MARKET

Get to know the Ortigian locals and set your senses on fire by visiting the Ortigia daily market which takes place every morning (except Sunday) on Via Emmanuele De Benedectis. It is everything you hope for in a traditional Italian market and more! A dazzling array of seafood, mounds of vibrant, seasonal fruit and veggies, and pots of fragrant herbs. Stalls are laden with wheels of cheese and cured meats hang from their make-shift stalls. And, as with any authentic Italian place, there is plenty of enthusiastic shouting and gesticulating to keep you entertained. There is also plenty to keep you fuelled and hydrated here too. I can whole heartedly recommend a sandwich from Caseificio Borderi, or a sweet, ricotta-filled-croissant and espresso from the unmissable delicatessen 'I Saporì dei Gusti Smarriti'. Both these places are at the end of the market road - closest to the sea.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL PARK OF SIRACUSA

As faith, luck, and history would have it, two of the most significant ancient archaeological sites from both Greek and Roman history are situated adjacent to one another in the northwest corner of Siracusa. The Neapolis Archaeological Park of Siracusa contains the stunning Greek Theatre as well as the Roman Amphitheater that combine to make this one of the greatest archaeological sites in all of Italy.

The Roman Amphitheater here is one of the largest amphitheaters ever constructed and dates back to the 3rd century AD. The star attraction of the park, however, is the very well-preserved Greek Theatre, which dates back to at least the 5th century BC. The Archaeological Park, along with the entire city of Siracusa, was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2005, a distinction that is well deserved.

Plan on at least 2 to 3 hours to visit both theaters and the quarry. Hang onto your ticket when going from one theater to the other.



Upon entering the Archaeological Park, you will first encounter the Roman Amphitheater. The Roman's use of their amphitheaters was much different than that of the Greeks. Like the famous arena in Verona and the Colosseum in Rome, the amphitheater here in Siracusa was used primarily for violent Gladiator contests and wild animal hunts.

The theatre is large and measures about 140 meters by 119 meters (external dimensions) with the lower level having been dug out of the rock. All the upper sections of the theater that were constructed of stone were dismantled in the 16th century by the Spanish for use on the island of Ortygia.

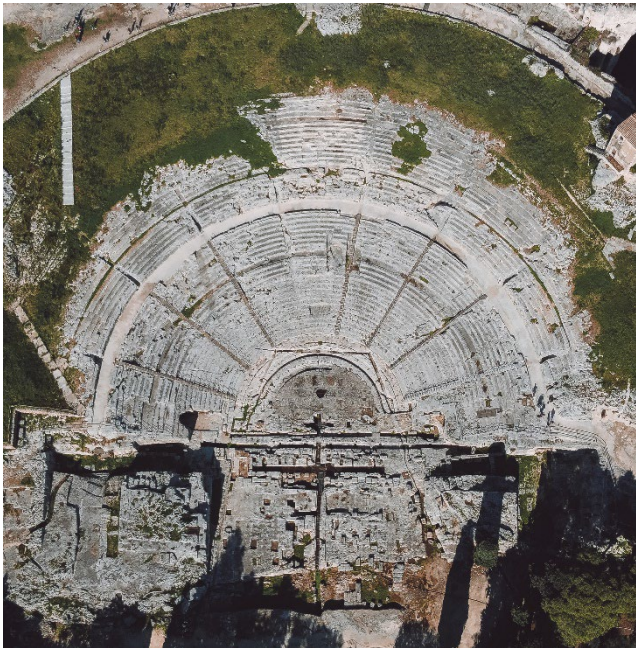


In the center of the elliptical arena is a rectangular room that is supplied by two canals. This area was possibly used to store equipment for the contests that took place above in the arena. Another possible use was to collect the blood and gore from the gruesome contests that took place. Although the Roman Amphitheater is not as well preserved as its Greek neighbor it is still a sight to behold and should not be overlooked.



A short walk from the Roman Amphitheater is the Greek Theater. Constructed in the 5th century BC, this wonderfully preserved theater has remained in remarkable condition and appears today much as it did centuries ago.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL PARK OF SIRACUSA



Unlike the Romans, the Greeks used their theater for a more civilized form of entertainment. Plays, tragedies, circus performances and alike were performed here to entertain the masses. It was also used for public meetings and gatherings. The theater was cut directly out of the limestone rock with the seats facing the sea providing a wonderful view, especially from the top tiers of the theater.

After roaming around the seating and upper areas of the Greek Theater be sure to go around the back to get a view from the backstage area.

As one of the most impressive and largest theaters ever constructed in the Greek world, its fifty-nine rows of seating could hold as many as 15,000 spectators. Today, in addition to being one of Sicily's most popular attractions, the theater is also host to an annual Greek Theatre festival held from mid-May until the end of June. If you happen to have a chance to attend a performance here, take advantage of this once in a lifetime opportunity.

Just outside of the Greek Theater is an area that is often overlooked by tourists. Called the Latomia del Paradiso, or Paradise Quarry, this former limestone quarry is now a very green and peaceful area that is filled with lemon and orange trees.

It is worth the time and effort to walk the path through this beautiful area which will take you to a huge cave called the Ear of Dionysius. Legend has it that Dionysius, the ruler of ancient Siracusa would eavesdrop on the prisoners who were incarcerated here. The cave, which was carved out of the limestone hill, is shaped like a human ear and because of its shape, it has excellent acoustics, which allowed Dionysius the ability to eavesdrop. The cave measures 23 meters high, 65 meters deep and makes for an interesting visit. Go all the way to the end of the Ear of Dionysius. It gets pretty dark in there so bringing a small flashlight will help.

There are other quarries here in the park along with an interesting necropolis that has burial chambers cut directly into the rock. The most famous of these is said to be the Tomb of Archimedes, the great mathematician, although there is historical evidence to dispute this.



DAY 12

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2022

Today we return home. Our driver will pick us up at 6:50 AM.



Turkish Airlines Confirmation: **WC4IZU**

Turkish Airlines Flight 1394

9:10 AM

12:35 PM

CTA ----- 2h 25m ----- IST

Catania, Italy

Istanbul, Turkey

Fri, Sep 30, 2022

Fri, Sep 30, 2022

Flight details:

Gregory A Mella – 11F

Adrian Collazo – 12F

Layover: 2h 30m



Turkish Airlines Flight 7

3:05 PM

7:05 PM

IST ----- 1h ----- IAD

Istanbul, Turkey

Washington, Dulles

Fri, Sep 30, 2022

Fri, Sep 30, 2022

Operated by EasyJet

Flight details:

Gregory A Mella – 24K

Adrian Collazo – 24A

Gregory A Mella Ticket # 2357726027253

Adrian Collazo Ticket # 2357726027252