



# Sicily's Ancient Landscapes & Timeless Traditions

March 2018

Travel with us to Sicily where you'll discover an Italian island with more than 3,000 years of history. Once home to a Greek colony, a Roman province, an Arab emirate, a Norman kingdom, and more, traces of ancient conquerors can still be found in Sicily's well-preserved ruins, elegant architecture, and gastronomic delights.

Experience the isle's full enchantment on a journey from the bustling streets of Palermo and striking Greek temples of Agrigento to the Baroque beauty of Ragusa and Catania. Hear the rumbling groans of Mt. Etna. Witness the splendor of palazzi and villas. Visit quaint fishing villages. Discover Sicily's rural authenticity with a night in a traditional farmhouse. Meet the friendly and fiercely proud Sicilian people. Immerse yourself in its landscapes, history, and culture. Just be sure to bring an open mind and a hearty appetite....all while traveling in style with your friends from Southern Exposure!

**REMINDER:** Space for this special journey is available on a first-come, first-serve basis and is truly limited. To reserve your place today, please call the Southern Exposure office at (269) 962-1255. If you haven't experienced a Southern Exposure travel adventure before, feel free to ask questions or stop by for a friendly chat.



## Snapshot Itinerary: Sicily's Ancient Landscapes 2018

This special group travel adventure in March 2018 offers you an in-depth and up-close look at Sicily's history, culture and natural beauty. Below is a quick look at our itinerary. Read on for additional details for each day.

**Day 1 – Depart U.S.**

**Day 2 – Arrive Palermo, Italy**

**Day 3 – Explore Palermo**

**Day 4 – Palermo / Optional Cefalù  
& Castelbuono Tour**

**Day 5 – Palermo / Erice / Segesta / Mazara del Vallo**

**Day 6 – Mazara Walking Tour / Tunisian Kasbah /  
Sicilian Cooking Lesson**

**Day 7 – Mazara / Boat Ride to Mothya Island /  
Marsala Wine Tasting**

**Day 8 – Valley of Temples / Agrigento / Piazza  
Armerina**

**Day 9 – Villa Romana del Casale / Ragusa**

**Day 10 – Old Town Ragusa / Modica**

**Day 11 – Castelluccio / A Day in the Life  
of a Sicilian Dairy Farm**

**Day 12 – Syracuse / Ortigia / Catania**

**Day 13 – Catania / Explore Taormina**

**Day 14 – Catania / Linguaglossa / 4-wheel-drive  
Experience at Mount Etna**

**Day 15 – Return to U.S.**

For more information, please read on or call the Southern Exposure office during business hours at **(269) 965-1255**. Or e-mail us at: [southernexposurefarm@comcast.net](mailto:southernexposurefarm@comcast.net).

Space for this special journey is available on a first-come, first-serve basis and is truly limited. Please don't wait to make your reservations for this very special overseas adventure with your friends from Southern Exposure and Grand Circle Travel. *Join us!*





## Detailed Itinerary: Sicily 2018

### Day 1 – Depart U.S. On to Flight to Sicily

We will travel via luxury coach from Southern Exposure Farm to Detroit Metro Airport, where we will board our evening flight to Sicily.

### Day 2 – Arrive Palermo, Italy

Today, arrive in Sicily. After you are met and transferred to your hotel, you'll enjoy an orientation walk and Welcome Drink, followed by a brief Italian lesson while meeting with your fellow travelers and Trip Leader. You'll also meet those who traveled on our optional Puglia: Italy's Undiscovered Heel extension. Enjoy a Welcome Dinner at a local wine bar tonight.

### Day 3 – Explore Palermo

This morning, we enjoy breakfast at the hotel before departing for our first excursion in the province of Palermo: Monreale, where we will enjoy a guided visit. We'll view the town's 12th-century Norman Cathedral, which sits in the hills overlooking Palermo. See Byzantine art come to life within the cathedral's nave, where nearly every surface is covered with intricately-detailed mosaics depicting biblical scenes in rich colors and gold filigree.

Then we explore one of the city's historic quarters, with a walk through a traditional market to enjoy a lunch featuring the local street food / some of which originated from Sicily's Mediterranean coast.

After lunch, you'll have some time at leisure to make your own discoveries, which our Trip Leader may help you identify. Later, our group will gather for an enlightening discussion about the Sicilian Mafia (also known as Cosa Nostra), followed by dinner on your own tonight.

### Day 4 – Palermo / Opt. Cefalù & Castelbuono Tour

After breakfast, you may wish to join a half-day optional tour to Cefalù & Castelbuono on Sicily's northern coast. Cefalù, which takes its name from the Greek word meaning "cape," is a small town situated between a natural bay and towering granite cliff called La Rocca. Built for the Norman King, Roger II, the picturesque historic town features a "Sicilian Romanesque" cathedral that began construction in 1131. After exploring Cefalù, we'll visit Castelbuono, a medieval town in the Madonie Mountains. Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant in Castelbuono, and view the battlements and towers of the town's imposing 14th-century castle. Then, return to Palermo in early afternoon.

Travelers choosing not to join our optional tour will enjoy a day at leisure in Palermo. The city's strategic position in the middle of the Mediterranean has led to past filled with a regular succession of invaders, from Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Greeks, and Romans, to Normans, Swabians, French and Spanish Bourbons, and more. This helps to explain the city's eclectic mix of architectural



styles / although the 17th- and 18th-century Baroque period has left the most visible mark on Palermo’s civic and religious structures. Intense rebuilding after heavy bombing during World War II has also contributed to the city’s chaotic beauty. Depending on your interests, your Trip Leader can offer suggestions on where to find the most interesting museums, medieval churches, Byzantine mosaics, or bustling street markets for an authentic taste of local life. Or if you’re brave, you may even wish to visit the mummified cadavers at Palermo’s Catacombe dei Cappucini. Dinner is on your own this evening.

**Day 5 – Palermo / Erice / Segesta / Mazara del Vallo**

After breakfast, we’ll drive to Erice, a wonderfully preserved medieval town that towers over Sicily’s western coast. After a walking tour of the ancient mountain-top town, we’ll head to Segesta, a region that was home to the ancient Elymians, one of Sicily’s indigenous peoples. In a reminder of Segesta’s ancient Greek heritage, the columns of a beautifully preserved unfinished Doric temple still stand proudly in a majestic hilltop location.

We’ll walk in the countryside surrounding this idyllic setting to a nearby agriturismo set in the foothills of Monte Pisipisa, with views of the surrounding olive groves, vineyards, and temple ruins. After lunch, we continue to Mazara, where we’ll check into our hotel. We’ll gather together this evening for an included dinner at our hotel.

**Day 6 – Mazara Walking Tour / Tunisian Kasbah / Sicilian Cooking Lesson**

After breakfast, we’ll embark on a walking tour of Mazara. We’ll see its impressive Duomo and visit a museum built to house the famous “Dancing Satyr,” a mysterious Greek bronze statue brought up by local fishermen in 1998 after resting on the seabed for 2,000 years.

Then we’ll visit Mazara’s historic Kasbah quarter, where some 3,000 Tunisians and other Maghreb Arabs live and work. Here, we’ll learn about the intermingling of Sicilian and Arab culture and the co-existence of Muslim and Christian faiths during an enlightening discussion with some Tunisian locals. Afterward we’ll enjoy a traditional couscous lunch in the heart of the Kasbah.

This evening we’ll learn how to prepare authentic Sicilian fare during a cooking class at a local restaurant and enjoy the food we helped to prepare during an included dinner.

**Day 7 – Mazara / Boat Ride to Mothya Island / Marsala Wine Tasting**

Today begins with a hearty breakfast, followed by a boat ride (weather permitting) to the small island of Mothya. Some 2,700 years ago, the Phoenicians built a settlement here. We’ll visit the ancient island fortress and enjoy a light picnic lunch amid the peaceful and historic surroundings before returning to Mazara.



This afternoon, we first enjoy a brief visit to Museo del Sale, a semi-working salt museum where we'll learn about the age-old Trapani tradition of salt production and refining. Then, we visit a local winery to enjoy a tasting of the renowned wines of the Marsala vineyards.

This evening, we'll enjoy dinner together at a local restaurant.

#### **Day 8 – Valley of Temples / Agrigento / Piazza Armerina**

After breakfast, we depart for Piazza Armerina. Along the way, we stop at the Valley of Temples, situated just outside the city of Agrigento. Agrigento was once the Greek city of Akragas, one of the most culturally advanced cities of the ancient world. In the Valley of Temples, we'll view the stunning archaeological remains of eight Greek temples, built between 510 and 430 BC.

After lunch in Agrigento, we continue our journey deep into the Sicilian hinterlands to Piazza Armerina. Upon arrival at our agriturismo (a traditional farm house sanctioned for lodging by the Italian government), we'll enjoy dinner at the farm's restaurant featuring locally grown cuisine.

#### **Day 9 – Villa Romana del Casale / Ragusa**

Following breakfast, we depart for Villa Romana del Casale, home to the ruins of an extraordinary Roman villa. Constructed in the middle of the 4th century AD as a hunting lodge, the villa was covered by a landslide

in the 12th century. Twentieth-century excavations have revealed some of the finest examples of Roman mosaics in all of Europe, with scenes ranging from Homeric escapades to depictions of daily life. The villa is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

After lunch at a local restaurant, we journey to Ragusa. After Ragusa was leveled by an earthquake in 1693, wealthier members of the population decided to build their new town higher up a cliff, while the rest of the inhabitants rebuilt on the original site, at the bottom of a gorge. The two distinct towns remained separated until 1926, when the higher and lower sections became one, and now a jumble of homes and churches cling to the walls of the steep ravine that divides them. Upon arrival, we'll first explore Upper Town / Ragusa Superiore / noted for the extravagant Sicilian Baroque architecture of the Cathedral of San Giovanni Battista and breathtaking views of the surrounding countryside. This evening, we'll dine like the locals and enjoy apericena, a light dinner featuring a variety of traditional Sicilian foods eaten with the fingers.

#### **Day 10 – Old Town Ragusa / Modica**

This morning, our discoveries focus on the Baroque splendor of Ragusa Ibla, one of Sicily's best-preserved old towns, and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. We'll view numerous structures ornately decorated in the Baroque style with elaborate balconies. A highlight



is the 18th-century Duomo di San Giorgio, set in the center of Ibla, with a neo-classical dome added in 1820. After lunch on your own in Ibla, you have leisure time to explore its picturesque alleys and stairways. Perhaps you'll sample a treat from Gelati DiVini, a local shop specializing in delicious wine-flavored ice creams.

Later this afternoon, we'll make our journey to the neighboring town of Modica, part of the Val di Noto UNESCO World Heritage Site, like the Sicilian locals / aboard vintage Fiat 500s. These small, iconic Italian cars are also ideal for maneuvering through the narrow streets and lanes of Modica. Like Ragusa, Modica was largely rebuilt in the Sicilian Baroque style after the 1693 earthquake / and is also divided into upper and lower sections, connected by numerous flights of steps. We'll walk the cobblestone streets to admire its various buildings, considered to be among the most beautiful architecture in Sicily. Enjoy dinner at a local restaurant this evening.

#### **Day 11 – Castelluccio / A Day in the Life of a Sicilian Dairy Farm**

After breakfast at our hotel, we'll journey to the village of Castelluccio, where we'll experience A Day in the Life of a Sicilian dairy farm. We'll visit a dairy farm owned by a local family, who will be happy to show us some of the culinary traditions that have made Sicily famous around the world. We'll begin by seeing how they make cheese, specifically ricotta, which is made from the milk

of Modican cows in this area. Cheese experts often say that the difference between fresh ricotta and store-bought ricotta is stark / and we'll be able to test this theory for ourselves as we sample the fruit of our labor. We'll also have a chance to bake bread before enjoying an authentic Sicilian lunch with our hosts.

After lunch, we'll return to our hotel in Ragusa and enjoy the rest of the afternoon at leisure. Dinner is on your own this evening.

#### **Day 12 – Syracuse / Ortigia / Catania**

After breakfast at our hotel, we depart for Syracuse, known as the birthplace of the famed mathematician Archimedes and as one of the most powerful ports of the ancient Mediterranean world. At 2,700 years old, Syracuse boasts a rich and storied history / evident today in the city's Greek, Roman, and Baroque architecture, which has helped earn Syracuse UNESCO World Heritage Site designation. When we arrive, we'll set off on a discovery tour of Ortigia, where an enticing blend of architectural styles awaits, including Greek and Roman ruins, Medieval Norman structures, and Baroque buildings. Highlights include the fountain of Arethusa, the Temple of Apollo, and the Piazza del Duomo, the lovely pedestrian square that serves as the heart of Ortigia. After lunch on your own, we'll take a boat ride along Ortigia Bay (not available November through March or in bad weather). Afterwards, we continue to Catania, where you'll dine on your own this evening.



### **Day 13 – Catania / Explore Taormina**

Breakfast this morning is followed by a guided tour of Catania, a vibrant city perched on the edge of the Ionian Sea. Founded in the 8th century BC, Catania was once among Italy’s most important cultural centers, particularly in the Renaissance period. Sicily’s first university opened here in 1434, and Catania’s tradition of education and industry continues to thrive today. We’ll visit the local WWII Museum, dedicated to the Allied landing on the southern coast of Sicily. Then, we’ll visit the local fish market, where an array of sights and sounds (and seafood!) delight. (Please note: If this day falls on a Sunday, we visit the fish market in Siracusa on Day 12 instead.)

After lunch on your own, we’ll journey to hillside Taormina, home to a Greco-Roman theater that is one of the most highly regarded ancient sites in Sicily. We’ll visit this impressive amphitheater and explore the charming town, admiring its sweeping views of Mt. Etna and the Ionian Sea. Dinner is on your own this evening.

### **Day 14 – Catania / Linguaglossa / 4-wheel-drive Experience at Mount Etna**

After breakfast at our hotel, we journey to the quaint alpine town of Linguaglossa, situated on the northern slope of Mount Etna. The tallest active volcano in Europe and the highest mountain in Italy south of the Alps, Mount Etna soars to a height of more than 10,000 feet. It’s also one of the most active volcanoes in the world,

and its rich volcanic soil brings abundant vineyards and orchards to Etna’s slopes. We’ll set off on 4-wheel-drive vehicles with a local nature guide to explore some of Etna’s lava caves and traces of lava flows. Please note: Today’s activity may be altered due to snow or inclement weather during the winter season.

Afterward, we’ll enjoy a barbecue lunch. Then we’ll transfer back to Catania for time at leisure before gathering again this evening. We’ll toast our adventure over a Farewell Drink at the hotel, followed by a Farewell Dinner at a local restaurant.

### **Day 15 – Return to U.S.**

We depart our hotel this morning and transfer to the airport for our flight home.





## Pricing Summary & Trip Dates

**Trip Name:** Sicily 2018  
**Trip Date:** March 2018  
**Exact Dates:** TBD  
**Cost Per Person:** TBD

**Please Note:** The per person price for our “Sicily” in March 2018 will be posted on this page as soon as that information becomes available.

**Trip Cancellation Coverage** – Information on trip cancellation insurance for this adventure will be made available as soon as it becomes available.

**Reservation Deposit:** The deposit to reserve your space on this trip is \$500 per person, fully refundable until 65 days prior to departure.

**Need Help?** For personal assistance or more information about this trip in the meantime, please call the Southern Exposure office during normal business hours at (269) 962-1255, Monday - Friday.

### TOUR RESERVATION POLICY:

Reservations can be made by calling Southern Exposure Farm at (269) 962-1255. A \$500 deposit is required to guarantee your place (check, cash or credit card accepted). Remaining balance due 90 days before departure.

**Note:** The information, dates and prices provided in this document are estimates only based on currently available information. Pricing and itinerary are subject to change.

**Pricing Disclaimer:** *Every effort will be made to provide accurate pricing information. Operator reserves the right to correct promotional or pricing errors at any time, or to increase the trip price in the event of cost increases due to changes in airfares, cruise fares, currency fluctuations, venue fee increases, taxes, or fuel surcharges, or other reasons, unless you pre-paid according to the terms of the Good Buy Plan prior to the cost increase going into effect. For more information, please contact Southern Exposure at (269) 962-1255.*



## What to Expect: Sicily 2018

We will make every effort to accommodate your travel needs and make sure you have a pleasant, memorable experience. At the same time, it is important to note the following advisories:

■ **Pacing:** 5 locations in 14 days with one 1-night stay. International flights to Sicily depart around midnight. Airport transfers in Palermo and Catania can take more than 30 minutes.

■ **Physical Requirements:** Not appropriate for travelers using wheelchairs, walkers, or other mobility aids. You must be able to walk 3-5 miles unassisted and participate in 6 hours of physical activities each day. Agility and balance are required for embarking a small boat and for a donkey ride.

■ **Climate:** Daytime temperatures range from 60-95°F. Sicily has a typical Mediterranean climate, with hot, dry summers and warm, rainy winters. Sicily can sometimes reach temperatures of 100°F with high humidity in the summer.

■ **Terrain:** Travel on some rugged paths and many cobblestoned streets on foot, as well as over bumpy, narrow rural roads by bus. Ability to climb steep stairs and walk up and downhill is required in several locations.

■ **Transportation:** Travel by 20-53-passenger motor coach, 16-40-passenger boat, Fiat 500 car, local bus, and donkey. Some 4-hour drives.

■ **Accommodations & Facilities:** Hotel rooms are smaller than those in the U.S. and offer basic amenities. Some hotels do not have an elevator. All accommodations feature private baths.

## Vaccinations Information

For a detailed and up-to-date list of vaccinations that are recommended for this trip, please visit the CDC's "Traveler's Health" website at [www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel). In addition, we recommend that you have both a health checkup, dental checkup before leaving.

For additional information, please contact Southern Exposure at (269) 962-1255. Our staff will be happy to help you.

## What's Included in the Package:

- International round-trip airfare from Detroit
- Accommodations for 13 nights
- 29 meals, including daily breakfast, 8 lunches, and 8 dinners
- 23 small group activities
- Services of a resident, English-speaking Trip Leader
- Unlimited filtered water at camps
- Gratuities for local guides, drivers and luggage porters
- All land transportation

## Passport & Visa Information

Your passport should meet these requirements for this itinerary: It should be valid for at least 6 months after your scheduled return to the U.S. It should have the recommended number of blank pages. The blank pages must be labeled "Visas" at the top. Pages labeled "Amendments and Endorsements" are not acceptable. U.S. citizens do not need a visa for this trip. For more information, please contact Southern Exposure at **(269) 962-1255**.

If you are not a U.S. citizen, do not travel with a U.S. passport, or will be traveling independently before/after this trip, then you may need a visa. Please check with the appropriate embassy or a visa servicing company. To contact our recommended visa servicing company, PVS International, call toll-free at 1-800-556-9990.

