

Highlights Of Sicily & Southern Italy

Day 1 ARRIVE IN ROME, ITALY. Welcome to Rome! At 5 pm, meet your Tour Director and traveling companions, and enjoy a welcome dinner at one of Rome's lively restaurants. (D)

Day 2 ROME–CASTEL GANDOLFO–SORRENTO COAST. Look forward to a unique experience: [LF] enjoy a guided visit of the impressive PAPAL PALACE in Castel Gandolfo, former summer residence of the popes and, since 2016, a museum that is open to the public. Also visit the magnificent BARBERINI GARDENS, where ruins of the residence of Roman Emperor Domitian are still visible, followed by lunch at Villa Barberini. Then, continue south on the Highway of the Sun to the Sorrento Coast. Today's Distance: 193 mi / 310 km (B,L)

Day 3 SORRENTO COAST. EXCURSION TO CAPRI. Speed across the bay by JETFOIL to the Isle of Capri and ride the FUNICULAR to Capri village for a guided visit. Walk through the splendid AUGUSTUS GARDENS, terraces overlooking the sea, offering a spectacular panoramic view. Time to explore the little shops on the piazzetta before returning to your hotel. (B)

Day 4 SORRENTO COAST. EXCURSION TO POMPEII AND NAPLES. Explore fascinating POMPEII, the Roman city both destroyed and preserved by an eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 AD. Follow your Local Guide for a walk past patrician homes, public baths, and commercial districts strikingly recalling day-to-day life when Rome was at the apex of her power. Next is Naples, a city steeped in volcanic history, rich archaeological treasures, and castles and churches to rival Rome! A Local Guide will show you the many sights during your city tour. Stop in the famous PIAZZA PLEBISCITO and [LF] savor a slice of Neapolitan pizza. Today's Distance: 68 mi / 110 km (B,D)

Day 5 SORRENTO COAST–BARI. A morning at leisure allows you to join an optional excursion to the Amalfi coast and Positano. Later, drive to Bari, capital of Apulia, the heel of Italy's "boot," for your overnight stay. Today's Distance: 186 mi / 300 km (B)

Day 6 BARI–LECCE–ALBEROBELLO AREA. Discover BARI VECCHIA, the city's oldest district, during a pleasant stroll with a Local Guide and visit stunning SAN NICOLA'S CHURCH. In Lecce, your guided walking tour reveals why Lecce is called the "Florence of the South." Visit the DUOMO, a masterpiece of baroque art, SANTA CROCE BASILICA, and [LF] taste the local pasticciotto with almond-flavored iced coffee. Today's Distance: 186 mi / 300 km (B,D)

Day 7 ALBEROBELLO AREA. Enjoy a guided walking tour of Alberobello and visit one of its unique trulli—whitewashed, stone, circular houses with pinnacled, conical roofs. The balance of the day is at leisure. You may wish to join an optional dinner at a traditional Apulian masseria. (B)

Day 8 ALBEROBELLO AREA–MATERA–PIZZO CALABRO–REGGIO CALABRIA. In Matera, enjoy a panoramic view of the picturesque sassi houses, followed by a spectacular drive south along the Gulf of Taranto to Pizzo Calabro, where you can taste [LF] the traditional tartufo ice cream. Arrive in Reggio Calabria for a guided visit of the MUSEUM that houses the world-famous bronze warrior sculptures, Bronzi di Riace. Today's Distance: 280 mi / 450 km (B,D)

Day 9 REGGIO CALABRIA–TAORMINA RIVIERA. Cross the Strait of Messina by FERRY and start your discovery of the beautiful island of Sicily, the great melting pot of the Mediterranean world. Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Saracens, Normans, French, and Spanish have left their marks and contributed to its rich heritage. Arrive in Taormina, a charming hilltop town overlooking the

Ionian Sea, and visit the ancient GREEK THEATER dating back to the 3rd century BC. Time to stroll and shop along Corso Umberto I at your own pace. Don't miss the opportunity to taste local specialties, like the Sicilian granita (a treat similar to sorbet). Today's Distance: 81 mi / 130 km (B)

Day 10 AT LEISURE IN TAORMINA RIVIERA. Enjoy two days to just relax in this beautiful resort or choose from our optional excursions to Mount Etna, the largest active volcano in Europe; or to the fascinating archaeological site of Syracuse, birthplace of the mathematician Archimedes and once a powerful Greek port with a fleet feared throughout the Mediterranean. On day 10, dinner has been prepared at a local restaurant with breathtaking sea views. On Day 11, enjoy dinner at your hotel. (B,D daily)

Day 11 AT LEISURE IN TAORMINA RIVIERA. Enjoy two days to just relax in this beautiful resort or choose from our optional excursions to Mount Etna, the largest active volcano in Europe; or to the fascinating archaeological site of Syracuse, birthplace of the mathematician Archimedes and once a powerful Greek port with a fleet feared throughout the Mediterranean. On day 10, dinner has been prepared at a local restaurant with breathtaking sea views. On Day 11, enjoy dinner at your hotel. (B,D daily)

Day 12 TAORMINA RIVIERA–AGRIGENTO–PALERMO. Head south to Agrigento and enjoy a walk with your Local Guide through the breathtaking VALLEY OF TEMPLES. Even travelers who have visited Athens and Delphi are awed by the gigantic yet graceful Greek structures that miraculously survived 24 centuries of tormented history. Arrive at your hotel in Palermo. Today's Distance: 280 mi / 450 km (B)

Day 13 PALERMO. Guided sightseeing features the ornate Piazza Bellini, Capo Market, the baroque Church of Immacolata, and a visit to the magnificent CATHEDRAL. Drive up to Monreale for a panoramic view of the Conca d'Oro and a visit to the 12th-century NORMAN CATHEDRAL, famous for its 50,000 square feet of precious Byzantine mosaics. Later, a farewell dinner at a local restaurant is the perfect way to celebrate your Italian journey. (B,D)

Day 14 PALERMO. Your vacation ends with breakfast this morning. (B)