

## Naples – 1 night

### DAY 1: Arrive in Naples

Upon arrival to Rome's Fiumicino Airport, collect your bag and proceed through customs to the arrivals hall where a local assistant will meet your group and escort it to a private bus. From there you will travel south to the bustling and ever-lively city of Naples. Naples, the capital city of Italy's Campania region, is a fascinating, dynamic city. Its origins are Greek. Its bay views are amazing and its pizza is out of this world. (You're in the home region of pizza, mozzarella di bufala and limoncello).

Upon arrival to the hotel in Naples (or "Napoli" as it is locally called), your group will store its baggage with the reception staff and immediately travel with a local guide to Naples' Old Town, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. After free time for lunch, the guide will lead a 2-hour tour of the area's best attractions before accompanying your group back to the hotel. After check-in and time to freshen up, you and your fellow travel companions will have a group dinner in the hotel's restaurant.

## Sorrento – 2 nights

### DAY 2: Arrive in Sorrento

This morning after breakfast, your group will travel south by private bus to Sorrento. En route you will visit the ruins of Pompeii, the ancient city destroyed by the eruption of Vesuvius in 79 AD. After the eruption, the city and its citizens were deeply covered by ash and volcanic pumice rock – and then left untouched for 1600 years until Pompeii was discovered. The result – after much excavation – was a remarkable view of what a city in ancient Rome probably looked like. So very much had been preserved in those packed layers of ash and pumice. Enjoy your guided tour through this amazing archeological site, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Walk through the Roman Forum, Market Place and the House of the Vettii to see narrow streets and luxurious villas frozen in time.

After the tour and a break for lunch, continue traveling to lovely Sorrento, which will be your seaside base for the next two nights.

### DAY 3:

Today after breakfast your group will head to Sorrento's port for a sightseeing excursion to the enchanting island of Capri. Weather permitting you will visit the Blue Grotto, a miracle of equilibrium among water, light and reflections of wonderful sea floors. Travel to Anacapri for lunch at a local restaurant and enjoy some free time for shopping. Your group will travel back to Sorrento in the afternoon, and the evening is at leisure.

## Ferry – 1 night

### DAY 4: Arrive at Ferry

After breakfast your group will check out and depart for an Amalfi Coast sightseeing tour. Enjoy the drive along one of Europe's most beautiful shorelines. Brightly colored houses hug the cliffs amidst lush gardens and olive-green slopes, which hover over the clear sea below. Explore the charming town of Amalfi, seeing historic buildings built between the 10th and 13th centuries. After free time for lunch and exploring, your group will travel to the port in Naples. Tonight you will take a comfortable, overnight ferry to Sicily.

#### Taormina – 2 nights

##### DAY 5: Arrive in Taormina

You will wake up this morning in the city of Palermo. A local guide will meet your group in the ferry terminal and accompany it to the hotel with sightseeing en route. Your private bus will travel along the coastal road to Taormina. En route your group will stop in the historic town of Cefalu, renowned for its narrow streets and elaborate house decorations. Continue to a town founded in 395 BC, the Roman-Greek town of Tindari.

Here you will visit the sanctuary of the Madonna of Tindari. The famous Black Madonna has been attributed for granting favors to those who pray. Continue on to the coastal city of Messina before arriving to tonight's hotel in the perched town of Taormina. The afternoon is at leisure to explore Taormina. Group dinner tonight in the hotel's restaurant.

##### DAY 6:

This morning after breakfast at the hotel, your group will embark on a guided adventure to Mount Etna, the highest (elevation of approx. 10,000 feet) and largest active volcano in Europe. Your bus ride will take you to the opening of the lava flow and you will hear about the eruptions that have occurred in the last years. Return to Taormina in the early afternoon where you will have time to browse the linens and pottery that is locally produced. Evening at leisure.

#### Syracuse – 2 nights

##### DAY 7: Arrive in Syracuse

After breakfast and check-out, today your journey takes you to Southern Sicily. En route to the southern city of Syracuse (Siracusa), your group will stop in the lovely city of Catania, which is a center of business and finance on the island. Here you will get a taste of normal life in a Sicilian city. A local guide will give your group a guided tour of the city's main highlights, and afterwards you will have free time for lunch before re-boarding your private bus and continuing south to Syracuse, a Sicilian city best known for its cultural and artistic heritage of the ancient Greeks.

A UNESCO World Heritage City, Syracuse is home to remarkably Greek, Roman and Baroque architecture. Upon arrival to Syracuse your group will check-in at the hotel and have time to relax and begin looking around Syracuse. Tonight the group will have dinner together in a local restaurant.

#### DAY 8:

After breakfast a local guide will take your group on a sightseeing tour of this 2700-year-old city. Syracuse was once one of the most important cities in the ancient world. In fact, because of its wealth, power and cultural scene it was considered a rival of Athens. During your tour you will see the ancient Greek theatre – which is said to be the burial site of Archimedes, the Paradise Quarry, the Ropemakers' Cave, the Altar of Heron and the Roman amphitheatre (all sites are inside of the Archeological Site of the Neapolis "new city.")

After free time for lunch, your guide will take your group inside the fascinating Archeological Museum which contains dating from the Bronze Age to the 5th century BC. After the museum visit the remainder of the day is free for you to explore, to shop or to swim.

#### Agrigento – 2 nights

##### DAY 9: Arrive in Agrigento

After breakfast your group will check out and travel westward towards the Valley of the Temples. Your route will bring you through the historic town of Caltanissetta, and while here your group will visit its Norman Abbey of the Holy Spirit, which was constructed in the late 11th century. Afterwards enjoy some free time to have lunch and see the workshops of great Sicilian potteries and ceramics before continuing east to the historic city of Agrigento, which will be your base city to explore Sicily's famed Valley of the Temples. Group dinner tonight in a local restaurant.

##### DAY 10:

After breakfast in the hotel your group will meet a local guide in the lobby and depart on what just might become your favorite sightseeing excursion on this trip. You'll begin traveling west by private bus to Selinunte, an ancient Greek, coastal city that today contains ruins of an acropolis and numerous temples. The city was founded in the seventh century BC and was effectively destroyed in 409 BC by the Carthaginians. Selinunte is set in a tranquil and scenic setting, with an ambience that offers a good impression of what an ancient Greek city was probably really like.

After a break for lunch, the tour will continue with a visit to the awe-inspiring Valley of the Temples. Inside this UNESCO World Heritage Site there are fantastic ruins of temples, cemeteries, houses, streets, auditoria, a small amphitheater and a fine archeological museum. In the late afternoon your tour will finish at the hotel, and the evening is at leisure.

#### Palermo – 2 nights

##### Day 11: Arrive in Palermo

After breakfast and check-out, travel north by private bus to Sicily's capital city of Palermo. Upon arrival your group will meet a local guide for a tour of Palermo's highlights including the Duomo, the Palace of the Normans and Church of St John of the Hermits. (There will be a break in the tour for lunch). Once

your sightseeing tour has finished, your group will transfer to the hotel for check-in. Enjoy a free evening to explore Palermo on your own.

**Day 12:**

This morning after breakfast your group will travel by private bus to the wine-producing, coastal town of Marsala for a tour of a local winery. Afterwards continue your journey up the coast to the scenic, fishing city of Trapani where you will have the chance to see windmills and salt marshes that are well known in this area. Afternoon return to Palermo. Tonight your group will have a farewell dinner in a local restaurant.

**Day 13:**

After breakfast and check-out your group will travel by private bus to Palermo Airport where it will board its return flight to the USA.