

Sicilian Treasures s.n.c

Baroque Wonders & Pantalica

ETNA-BAROQUE-GREEK-ROMAN SITES-PANTALICA

Post-Conference Tour: 5 days/4 nights

October 28 - November 1, 2018



*Novelist Gesualdo Bufalino described the southeast of Sicily as an 'island within an island', and certainly this pocket of Sicily has a more remote and refined air about it, undoubtedly the lingering legacy of its glorious Greek heritage. It is a legacy that it wears with certain amount of aristocratic pride. **Ragusa, Modica, Noto, Ispica, Scicli**, shattered by devastating earthquake in January 1693, were rebuilt in the ornate and much-lauded style known as Sicilian baroque, a style that lends the region a honey-coloured cohesion and collective beauty. Nowhere is this aesthetic unity more visible than in **Syracuse**, one of the Sicily's most visited cities, and by almost universal consent the most beautiful city on the island.*

Day 1 - October 28

Etna-Modica (B, L, D)

11:00am - Rendezvous in Montabiano with your guide and driver. Depart from Montalbano Elicona by deluxe motor coach and drive towards the town of Randazzo, located on the Northern slopes of Mount Etna. The presence of the volcano is a very vivid and keenly felt thing, not only because it bulks so large in the landscape, but also because its products are used in manufactured artefacts of all sorts.

Lunch in a local restaurant and then drive to Majestic Mount Etna. Enjoy a scenic drive to the upper slopes of Europe's largest active volcano (Mt Etna has been inscribed as a **UNESCO WHS**) rising to a height of 3,326m, is an impressive and famous landmark. This volcano dominates the entire Ionian coast of Sicily and its mass is so vast that it overshadows all other mountains.

As you ascend the winding road toward Silvestri Crater, the countryside gradually grows more forbidding as you drive through the remnants of the past and more recent eruptions, the last of which was October 2002 and October 2004, seeing streams of solidified lava and small volcanic cones which vivid reminders of the mountain's fiery origins are. On arrival at Silvestri Crater at an altitude of 1900m you will walk over lava flows of the past and see some extinct crater. Continue your drive to Southern Sicily. In the evening, arrive in Modica. Dinner and overnight in hotel.

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Day 2 - October 29

Modica-Ragusa Ibla-Punta Secca-Scicli (B,L,D)

After breakfast, visit the stunning town of **Modica, UNESCO WHS**, for its vernacular architecture and Baroque churches. The city is divided into "Modica Alta" (Upper Modica) and "Modica Bassa" (Lower Modica) and has maintained some of the most beautiful architecture in Sicily, in the Sicilian Baroque style. You can admire the large Baroque Cathedral dedicated to San Giorgio, town's patron, the San Pietro church, and the classic Sicilian Baroque bell tower. The town is not only famous for its beautiful baroque architecture, but also for the chocolate: made according to ancient Aztec tradition introduced by the Spaniards in the sixteenth century.

Next, board your coach and drive to Ragusa **Ibla**, another **UNESCO WHS**. Visit this unique town, entirely rebuilt in Baroque style after the devastating earthquake of 1693. Leaving the bus and proceeding on foot you can admire some of harmonious Baroque architectures as Zocco and Bertini buildings, passing by narrow lanes, arches and climbs where you can visit other beautiful Baroque buildings, the famous San Giorgio church, San Giuseppe and the Ibleo Gardens.

After lunch in a local restaurant, board again your coach and drive to **Punta Secca** which offers lovely landscapes and clear seas. There are beaches to both sides of the town and a marina that attracts cruising boats as well as the local fishing fleet. The setting is picture-perfect: so much so that the Italian network RAI uses Punta Secca as a film set for its popular Inspector Montalbano series. The town stands in for the fictional "Marinella" as Sicily's seaside setting for the detective books written by Andrea Camilleri that have been adapted into TV movies. You'll be able to easily locate the "casa di Montalbano" on the seafront.

Continue your drive towards the **UNESCO WHS of Scicli**. The city lies in a wide valley, surrounded by rocky hills. You can admire the beautiful churches and noble palaces such as St. Ignatius' church in Piazza Italia, the main square, the beautiful St. Bartholomew's church set in the scenic gorge with the same name, Beneventano Palace, Spadaro Palace and so on. At the end of the visit drive back to Modica

Dinner in hotel and overnight

Day 3 - October 30

Agrigento-Piazza Armerina (B, L, D)

Breakfast in hotel, then board your deluxe coach and drive towards **Agrigento** to visit the Valley of the Temples, **UNESCO WHS**, and the famed Valley of the Temples, built by the Greeks and conquered by the Romans. Founded as a Greek colony in the 6th century BC, Agrigento was one of the greatest cities in the Mediterranean world. Your tour includes four of the most important monuments: the Temple of Heracles - the oldest temple, probably dating from the end of the 6th century BC, where nine of the original 38 columns have been re-erected; the beautifully sited Temple of Concordia - the most complete of the temples and the one that was converted into a Christian church in the 6th century AD; the Temple of Hera - which lies half in ruins; and the Temple of Zeus - the largest Doric temple ever known, which was never completed.

After lunch in a local restaurant, you will be driven along the mountainous interior of the island to the **UNESCO WHS** of Villa del Casale located in **Piazza Armerina**, where you marvel at its exquisite floor mosaics, buried underground until the late 19th century, and learn about the recently completed restoration works to preserve them.

Set in the green environment of the area, this monument represents the most important surviving documentation of Roman civilization in Sicily. This patrician villa comprises more than 40 rooms, almost all

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them artistically paved with mosaic floors that reproduce the Roman life. It was estimated to have been built between the end of the 3rd century and mid-4th century A.C. and its former owner was an army officer close to the Imperial Court. The visit completed, drive back to Modica. Dinner and overnight in hotel

Day 4 - October 31

Noto-Pantalica-Syracuse (B, L, D)

After breakfast, depart from Modica to another **UNESCO WHS**: Noto, the so called "garden of stone" for the richness of its baroque palaces and churches. The beautiful antique town of Noto was built in 1703 and welcomes you through its Porta Reale from where you follow Corso Vittorio Emanuele, lined with spectacular 18th century palaces of incredible architectural value. It is not only the Corso Vittorio Emanuele that is packed with beautiful buildings, the streets leading off this main inroad also display the many gems of this town: the Duomo, the Museo Civico, the Convento dei Francescani and the beautiful Palazzo Nicolaci di Villadorata.

Next stop: the **UNESCO WHS of Pantalica**. This archaeological site is located on a cliff that overlooks the gorges of the River Anapo. Pantalica is an important archaeological site and natural reserve. It is one of the most interesting and impressive archaeological site for the 4000 cave-tombs excavated into the bedrock (XI - VIII century B.C.). For this reason the high cliff of the mountain appears like a huge beehive. You will walk throughout history and wild nature seeing spectacular landscape of the valley Anapo and Calcinara.

The visit completed, continue your drive to Syracuse. Arrive and enjoy a wonderful introduction to the highlights of Siracusa. Siracusa is built on an ancient Greek settlement founded by Corinthians in 734 BC. More than any other modern city in Sicily, Siracusa manifests a visible continuity from its ancient Greek past, both historical and mythological. Visit on foot the Island of 'Ortigia', the heart of the city, you will stroll along the ancient narrow streets which still ooze Medieval influence before reaching the Duomo square, one of the city's highlights which was built above a Greek Temple and holds more than 2.500 years of history. Another must on your itinerary is the "Arethusa Fountain" with its Papyrus plants, overlooking the Ionic sea. The archaeological park and the islet of Ortigia have been listed as **UNESCO WHS**.

Dinner and overnight in hotel in Syracuse.

Day 5 - November 1

Syracuse-Catania (B)

Breakfast in hotel. Check out and board your coach to the archaeological area of Neapolis with its Greek theatre, the Roman amphitheatre and Latomia del Paradiso (with its Dionysius Hear) and the "Ara of Hyeron." The visit completed board your coach and transfer to Catania Airport.

***** End of Itinerary *****

Cost based on minimum 10 paying participants:

Sharing double/twin room	€ 999,00 per person, vat included
Single supplement	€ 100,00 vat included

English is the official language for this tour.

Tour Package includes:

- All Transportation as per program in Deluxe Air-Conditioned transportation, fuel, parking;

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- Extensive sightseeing as outlined in itinerary with English speaking guide;
- 4 Nights accommodation in 4*Star hotels, based on sharing twin/double rooms with private facilities;
- Dinners in hotel, 3 course menu - drinks not included;
- Lunches at local restaurants, 3 course menu with drinks included (1/2 bottle mineral water, 1/4 bottle local wine and coffee);
- Daily Breakfast in hotel;
- Admission fees included in the itinerary;
- All city and local taxes, service charges and VAT;
- Airport transfer on day of departure to Catania Airport

Not included in Tour Package price:

- Extras
- Personal expenses
- Tips for drivers and guides
- Trip Insurance

Payment and Cancellation Policy:

Reservation and Full Payment Due by: 31st May 2018

20% fee for cancellation upon payment

30% fee for cancellation within 01st to 30th September 2018

50% fee for cancellation within 01st to 15th October 2018

75% fee for cancellation within 16th to 20th October 2018

100% fee after 21st October 2018