

# Sicilian Treasures s.n.c

## Normans & Greeks of Sicily

CEFALU'-PALERMO-MARSALA-AGRIGENTO-PIAZZA ARMERINA

Post-Conference Tour: 4 days/3 nights

**OCTOBER 28 - 31, 2018**



*Sicily is the largest island of the Mediterranean and it is a place blessed with a richness of history and tradition. Each town has a strong local identity, with traditions, cuisine and even the local dialect changing between towns, even if they are only 10 minutes apart. There is always something new to discover and enjoy! Defining Sicily, as any place in the world, is difficult since it's the result of the mixture between Greeks, Romans, Arabs, Normans, Spaniards. What is easy to say is that the result is a richness and variety of architecture, food, traditions and personalities that is hard to resist. Probably the single best attribute of Sicily is that it manages to be a fascinating place while hardly trying to do so. It all simply seems to exist and it is up to you to join in and enjoy it.*

***As Goethe said in 'A Journey to Italy': "Without seeing Sicily it is impossible to understand Italy - Sicily is the key to everything".***

### **Day 1 - October 28**

### **Montalbano Elcona-Cefalu'-Palermo (B, L, D)**

11:00am - Meet your English speaking guide, board your private motor coach then head to the east of Sicily. After about a 2 hour drive, you will reach **Cefalù**, charming small town in the northern coast of Sicily. Rome,

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the Arabs, the Normans, all of these have left an imprint in this town, renowned for the famous **Norman Cathedral, UNESCO WHS**, which was built by Roger II in 1131.

Lunch in a local restaurant. After lunch, enjoy the two-hour walking tour of this attractive place with its narrow streets, colorful shops, antiques, ceramics. You shall see the ancient wash house where in the old days women were washing their laundry. The visit completed, you will continue your drive on the freeway to Palermo, arriving approximately 18:00.

Dinner in hotel and overnight.

## **Day 2 - October 29**

### **Palermo-Monreale (B, L, D)**

After breakfast in your hotel, travel towards Monreale to see where the Arab-Norman art and architecture reached the pinnacle of its glory with the Dome, launched in 1174 by William II and represent the scene from the Old and New Testaments all in golden mosaics. Enjoy a morning walking tour of this uniquely situated town which is located on the slope of Monte Caputo, overlooking the very fertile valley called "la Conca d'oro" (the Golden Shell).

Later you will drive back to Palermo to explore the lively Capo Market, a large open air street market that captures the flavor of Palermo's Saracen Arab past. Capo is a blend of general confusion and a jumble of vendors' stalls, winding toward the old gate (Porta Carini) of what used to be the city wall. Then continue by seeing Piazza Pretoria and Via Maqueda, whose "four corners" converge Palermo at a quartet of baroque palaces left over from the heyday of Spanish rule dating from 1560.

After lunch in a local restaurant, continue to the **Royal Palace, UNESCO WHS**, where you can visit the Palatine Chapel on the first floor. Dedicated to the Saints Peter and Paul is the finest and most harmonious example of Norman art. Built in 1132/1140 represents a splendid combination of architecture and mosaics decoration. Afterwards you will reach **the Cathedral, UNESCO WHS**, a huge edifice dedicated to the Virgin Mary, built in the second half of the 12th century, it has been restructured several times. The interior is rich in works of art, statues and the famous royal and imperial tombs. Dinner in hotel and overnight in Palermo.

**The order of visits may change.**

## **Day 3 - October 30**

### **Palermo-Marsala-Agrigento (B, L, D)**

Breakfast in hotel. This morning you leave Palermo and drive towards the outskirts of Trapani and then motor along the scenic coast, on the famous Salt road that runs from Trapani to Marsala. See numerous dazzlingly white mountains shimmering in the sun, not snow-capped mountains but hills of salt, the scenic salt flats surrounded by windmills an unforgettable panorama and one of the Sicilian economy's historical resources.

Arriving in Marsala, situated on Cape Boeo (the ancient Ilybaeum), the Westernmost point of Sicily, whose name derives from Arab language "Mars Allah", port of God, you will visit the Anselmi Museum, housed in the Baglio, a building made at the end of the last century as a wine factory for the Marsala production. The exhibition is in the two large spaces, where barrels were stored once. The museum exhibits the wreck of a Punic vessel, sunk by the Romans during the Punic Wars and found in the Stagnone Lagoon in the 1970s. It is a unique specimen of a ship of this type.

After the visit to the museum, you will enjoy a pleasant walking tour of the center: the Garibaldi Gate, the fish market and admire the Cathedral from the exterior, built on a pre-existing Norman Castle. The visit completed with lunch in a local restaurant.

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In the afternoon continue your drive to Agrigento to explore the famed **Valley of the Temples, UNESCO WHS**, 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.

Dinner and overnight in a hotel in Agrigento.

## **Day 4 - October 31**

## **Agrigento-Piazza Armerina-Catania (B, L, D)**

Breakfast in hotel. Depart from Agrigento to Piazza Armerina. Visit the **UNESCO WHS** of Villa del Casale, 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 them artistically paved with mosaic floors that reproducing the Roman life. It was perhaps built approximately 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. Lunch in a local restaurant and transfer to Catania Airport.

**\*\*\* End of Services \*\*\***

## **Cost based on minimum 10 paying participants:**

|                          |                                   |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Sharing double/twin room | € 949,00 per person, vat included |
| Single supplement        | €165,00 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;
- Extensive sightseeing as outlined in itinerary with local English speaking guide;
- 3 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 to: Monreale Cathedral, Palatine Chapel, Baglio Anselmi Museum, Valley of the Temples, Villa Romana del Casale;
- 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

# **Sicilian Treasures s.n.c**

- Personal expenses
- Gratuities
- 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**