Itinerary

Southern Italy & Sicily featuring Taormina, Matera, Alberobello and the Amalfi Coast
Jul 8, 2020 - Jul 18, 2020

Pre Night: Hotel Garibaldi
Would you like to begin your vacation with an additional Hotel in Palermo?

Day 1: Palermo, Sicily - Tour Begins
The hidden treasures of Southern Italy and Sicily are yours to explore, for it is here that you’ll find breathtaking scenery, historic cities, centuries-old hilltop villages and wonderful cuisine. Your tour opens in Palermo, the capital of Sicily. Tonight, join your fellow travellers for a welcome dinner featuring authentic Sicilian cuisine.

Day 2: Palermo - Monreale - Palermo
Acquaint yourself with Palermo on a panoramic tour and discover an exotic mix of Moorish, Norman and Spanish Baroque and Neo Classical architecture. Along the way, view the Politeama Concert Hall, the Massimo Opera House, and the medieval ruins of Castello a Mare – Palermo’s seaside fortification once protecting La Cala port. Drive by the Spanish Walls and City Gates and the University’s Botanical Gardens. Visit Palermo’s Cathedral and admire the imposing exterior of the Palace of the Normans. In the nearby town of Monreale, visit a 12th-century cathedral with its dazzling interior of multicoloured marbles, paintings, mosaics and cloisters. Enjoy the remainder of your day at leisure to peruse the city’s shops and museums, or simply take some time to relax.

Day 3: Palermo - Monreale - Palermo
Arrive in the hilltop town of Monreale, a medieval outpost that offers breathtaking views of Palermo. Immerse yourself in the charm of the medieval city streets and visit the stunning 12th-century Monreale Cathedral. Enjoy an Introduction to Sicilian Cooking Class to learn about the rich culinary traditions of the region.

Day 4: Palermo - Catania - Giardini Naxos
Journey to vibrant Catania where it’s your choice! Join a local guide to visit the cathedral and view other iconic sights such as the Roman Amphitheater and the famous Catania Fish Market. Continue to Giardini Naxos and get ready for a unique culinary experience at an Agriturismo.

Day 5: Giardini Naxos - Taormina - Giardini Naxos
Set out for beautiful Taormina with its charming atmosphere, historic monuments and flowering gardens. Alongside the mountaintop village, visit the Greek Theatre designed by the famous architect Philoctetes and admire the stunning backdrop of Mount Etna volcano. Enjoy an Introduction to Sicilian Cooking Class.

Day 6: Giardini Naxos - Catania - Mt. Etna - Giardini Naxos
Today, visit the volcanic Etna National Park and explore its fascinating landscapes. Discover the ancient volcano’s secrets with a local guide and learn about the unique flora and fauna that thrive in this unique environment.

Day 7: Matera - Alberobello - Matera
Venture to Messina for a short ferry ride to Villa San Giovanni on Italy’s mainland. Pass through the unspoiled, beautiful region of Calabria into the Basilicata region. Make a stop at one of the area’s local wineries where you’ll join a wine tasting.

Day 8: Matera - Vietri Sul Mare - Sorrento Peninsula
Explore the “Sassi di Matera,” an ancient settlement of carved cave dwellings. A local guide shares the history of the site and reasons why it has recently caught the eye of many film producers. Continue to a local shop for a chance to see local artisans at work and purchase a souvenir to take home.

Day 9: Sorrento - Amalfi Coast Drive - Amalfi - Minori - Sorrento Peninsula
Drive along the Bay of Naples to the excavated ruins of Pompeii, nestled at the foothills of Mount Vesuvius. A local guide gives you an in-depth view of this remarkable archaeological site, where you’ll become immersed in history as you explore the preserved buildings of this 2,000 year-old Roman town.

Day 10: Sorrento Peninsula - Pompeii - Rome
Later, sit down for a traditional Italian afternoon break at a local café and pastry shop. Enjoy an evening at leisure.

Day 11: Rome - Tour Ends
Rome
Donna Laura Palace Hotel

Would you like to end your vacation with an additional Hotel in Rome?
Day 3: Palermo - Agrigento - Giardini Naxos
Travel over the countryside’s rolling hills, past peaceful farmland towards the town of Agrigento. Explore one of the most important archaeological sites in the world, the stunning Valley of the Temples (UNESCO), where you’ll get an up-close view of the temples of Juno, Concordia, Hercules and Jupiter. Continue on to Giardini Naxos – the “garden of Sicily” – for your 3-night stay.

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Day 4: Giardini Naxos - Catania - Mt. Etna - Giardini Naxos
Journey to vibrant Catania where it’s your choice! Join a local guide to visit the cathedral and view other iconic sights of this historic Baroque city (UNESCO); then witness the daily spectacle of bartering for fresh fish and produce at the local market. OR - Explore the Museo dello Storco (Allied Landing Museum), an emotionally moving museum dedicated to the Allied troops who landed on the southern coast in 1943. Later, gather to discover the impressive Mt. Etna Volcano National Park where a local expert introduces you to the park’s spectacular landscapes sculpted by nature. Return to Giardini Naxos for the evening.

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Day 5: Giardini Naxos - Taormina - Giardini Naxos
Set out for beautiful Taormina with its charming atmosphere, historic monuments and flowering gardens. Alongside an expert local guide, see Corso Umberto, view the bountiful public gardens and marvel at the city’s well-preserved Greek Theatre. Enjoy free time to relax or independently explore.

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Day 6: Giardini Naxos - Matera
Venture to Messina for a short ferry ride to Villa San Giovanni on Italy’s mainland. Pass through the unspoiled, beautiful region of Calabria into the Basilicata region. Make a stop at one of the area’s local wineries where you’ll join an expert on a walk through the cellars and vineyards before sampling wines during a special tasting. Linger over regional cuisine at dinner in the winery’s own agriturismo restaurant.

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Day 7: Matera - Alberobello - Matera
Explore the “Sassi di Matera,” an ancient settlement of carved cave dwellings. A local guide shares the history of the site and reasons why it has recently caught the eye of many film producers. Continue to a local shop for a chance to sample some regional produce. Enjoy free time in Matera to browse the boutiques or taste the local cuisine before heading to the mystical town of Alberobello. Marvel at some of the town’s most uniquely built homes (UNESCO) known as trulli, and their distinct, cone-shaped roofs.

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Day 8: Matera - Vietri Sul Mare - Sorrento Peninsula
Stop in Vietri Sul Mare, the “gateway to the Amalfi Coast,” for time to explore independently. Here, generations of inhabitants have been producing precious majolicas, representing stories of their daily life. Remember to take a moment to admire the 17th century Church of St. John the Baptist with its beautiful ceramic dome.

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Day 9: Sorrento - Amalfi Coast Drive - Amalfi - Minori - Sorrento Peninsula
Savour time this morning in the lovely seaside resort town of Sorrento. Then begin your adventure traversing the breathtaking Amalfi Coast. Stop in the charming town of Amalfi and spend time exploring its striking provincial beauty before heading to Minori. Use this opportunity to sample regional specialities at a family-owned limoncello factory. Later, sit down for a traditional Italian afternoon break at a local café and pastry shop. Enjoy an evening at leisure.

Day 10: Sorrento Peninsular - Pompeii - Rome

Drive along the Bay of Naples to the excavated ruins of Pompeii, nestled at the foothills of Mount Vesuvius. A local guide gives you an in-depth view of this remarkable archaeologic site, where you’ll become immersed in history as you explore the preserved buildings of this 2,000 year-old Roman town. Later, travel to Rome to celebrate the end of your journey with a delightful farewell dinner.

Day 11: Rome - Tour Ends

Your tour comes to a close today.

Post Night: Donna Laura Palace Hotel

Would you like to end your vacation with an additional Hotel in Rome?