

Hiking in Sicily

COASTAL AND MOUNTAIN HIKES, GREEK AND ROMAN RUINS



Wilderness Travel



Hiking in Sicily

TRIP DATES

2024

April 6-16, 2024 *

April 27-May 7, 2024 Added
Departure

May 17-27, 2024 *

September 14-24, 2024 *

October 11-21, 2024

2025

April 5-15, 2025

April 18-28, 2025 *

May 3-13, 2025 Added Departure

May 21-31, 2025 *

September 13-23, 2025

September 27-October 7, 2025

Added Departure

October 11-21, 2025

With a 3,000-year-old mix of Mediterranean cultures revealed in epic Roman temples and cathedrals with Norman-Arab mosaics, Sicily is an inspiring island. Even the cuisine combines savory Greek, Spanish, and Arab influences! We hike cliff trails above the sea, into a wild canyon filled with Neolithic tombs, on a secret path to a medieval citadel, and on the slopes of fiery Mt. Etna, the highest volcano in Europe. Incredible World Heritage Sites are on this insider's journey, and Sicily's glorious food (think catch-of-the-day fish and indulgent desserts!) is a delight every day, as are our expert Trip Leaders who love to share their captivating island home.

*Please note: date change since catalog publication

Itinerary

DAY 1

PALERMO, SICILY / SELINUNTE / ERICE

After meeting our Trip Leader in Palermo, we drive along the coast to the ancient city of Selinunte, set in rolling green countryside with views of the sea. The archaeological site contains many great temples, and with the earliest dating from 550 BC, it is easy to imagine the Sicily of antiquity. We hike through the haunting ruins of this once rich and extensive ancient Greek city, then enjoy lunch at a nearby winery (with a wine tasting, of course!). Afterwards we can relax a little before our short and easy hike into Erice (pronounced erri-chay), a walled medieval citadel known to the ancients for its temple dedicated to Venus Erycina, a fertility goddess. Parts of the temple are embedded into the thick walls of an old Norman castle at the end of town. Tonight we gather for a Welcome Dinner to sample the culinary traditions of the island...LD

Hiking Details: 4.2 miles, 2.5 hours, 1,450 feet ascent, 750 feet descent (total)

Driving Time: 2 hours

DAY 2

MONTE COFANO NATURE RESERVE / ZINGARO NATURE RESERVE

Not far from Erice lies the lone peak of Monte Cofano, a picturesque mountain dividing the Gulf of Bonagia into two coastal bays that shelter some of Sicily's most remote beaches. Here we find the splendid Riserva Naturale di Monte Cofano, with natural caves that hosted human settlements in prehistoric times. We enjoy a morning hike in the reserve, skirting above the turquoise sea as we walk from cove to cove along narrow paths that contour miles of unspoiled coastline. Our hike ends at the house of Anna and Giuseppe Santoro, who host us for a picnic lunch of simple homemade Sicilian food, which we enjoy in their backyard overlooking the bay. Depending on weather conditions, we may opt to visit the splendid Riserva Naturale dello Zingaro, four miles of pristine coastal land backed by steep mountains. This was Sicily's first nature reserve and is a real oasis of Mediterranean maquis vegetation, rich in rare native plants. Like the Monte Cofano reserve, Zingaro boasts some of Sicily's most delightful beaches, and our hike brings us above the turquoise sea from cove to cove. As we hike, we enjoy the diverse beauty of a well-protected Mediterranean ecosystem and stop to visit old farmhouses now turned into small museums that show how traditional activities of the past were done, such as tuna fishing or agriculture. Later, we can stop in one of the coves for a swim or a snack. In the late afternoon, we return to Erice to explore the town's piazzas, cobbled alleyways, and old Norman gate. Dinner on your own. Your Trip Leader will be happy to make restaurant recommendations...BL

Hiking Details: 4.5 miles, 2.5 hours, 200 feet ascent, 1,000 feet descent

Driving Time: 1-1.5 hours

DAY 3

TRAPANI / MONREALE / CEFALÙ

On our way to the small town of Monreale, we detour inland in the province of Trapani, passing through the main wine district of Sicily. An easy walk through vineyards brings us to the picturesque agriturismo called Tarantola, where we



TRIP DETAILS AT-A-GLANCE

Length:	11 days
Arrive:	Palermo, Italy
Depart:	Catania, Italy
Lodging:	10 nights small inns and hotels
Meals:	All meals included except 2 lunches and 4 dinners (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
Activity:	Archaeology, Cultural Adventures, Hiking / Trekking
Trip Level:	1 2 ③ 4 5 6 A mix of moderate walks and hikes, some steep trails, 2-4 hours a day, 1 optional day-hike at 9,500 feet (Mt. Etna), van support

HIGHLIGHTS

- Hike spectacular seaside trails, explore medieval Erice, discover seaside Cefalù
- Visit Siracusa's Ortigia Island, with its Greek, Roman, and Baroque heritage
- Hike in the Pantàlica Gorge, view the stunning mosaics at Villa Romana del Casale
- Explore Taormina, hike on snow-capped Mount Etna
- Enjoy Sicily's fresh-caught seafood, tapestry of cuisines, and indulgent desserts



“Terrific throughout. Our guides were the absolute best.

Bravissimi!”

Edy and Michael D., Portland, OR

are hosted for a delicious Sicilian lunch and enjoy a warm welcome from our host, a descendant of a former noble family. He has fascinating stories to tell about his family's property and its history. Afterwards, we head to Monreale to see its mighty 12th century cathedral, one of Europe's medieval treasures and a fantastic blend of Norman, Arab, Byzantine, and classic elements. The cathedral has a dazzling collection of gilded mosaics by Greek and Byzantine artists and is a magnificent example of Sicilian-Norman art. Continuing to the seaside resort town of Cefalù, you'll enjoy dinner on your own so you can choose from among the many local cafes in the Old Town area. Overnight in Cefalù...BL
Hiking Details: 5 miles, 2.5 hours, 380 feet ascent, 360 feet descent
Driving Time: 3 hours

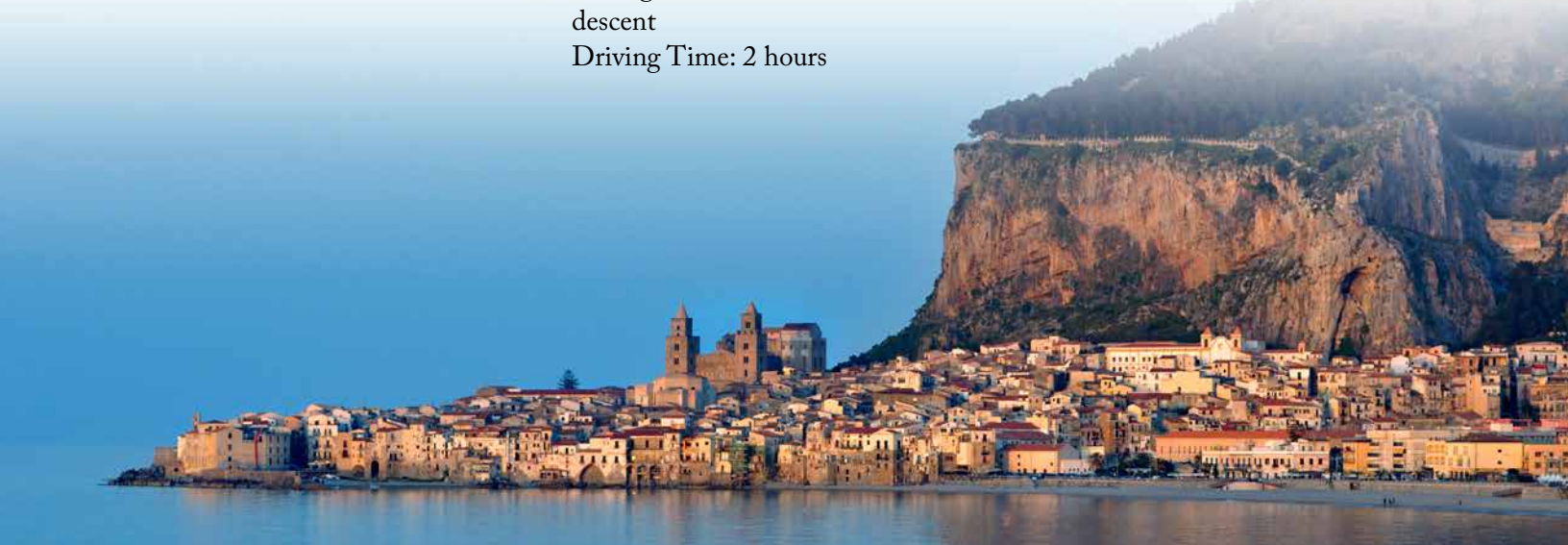
DAY 4

MADONIE MOUNTAINS / CEFALÙ

Our morning hike in the Madonie Mountains reveals Sicily's deeply rustic culture. En route, we stop at Castelbuono, a charming little mountain town, for a short visit of the ancient church and castle and later sample some decadent pastries at a local pasticceria. Interior Sicily is a completely different world, and to many Sicilians, it's the “true” Sicily of tiny mountain villages, farms, shepherds, and fresh-made cheeses. The Madonie Mountains are, after Mt. Etna, the highest mountain range in Sicily and a nature park has been created here to preserve the wildlife, vegetation, and human artifacts and culture. Our hike brings us through oak, maple, and holly woodlands—with panoramic views all around (if it's clear, we can see Mt. Etna and the Aeolian Islands). We enjoy a packed lunch on the trail. Heading back to Cefalù, the afternoon is free to explore on your own. You can visit the monumental Norman Cathedral that dominates the town and has fine Byzantine mosaics, the Mandralisca Museum, noted for its Greek ceramics and Arab pottery, or just wander around the narrow alleys to shop for handicrafts or have a gelato. We enjoy a before-dinner walking tour of Cefalù's main monuments. The town was a fishing village until not long ago and has a lovely Old Town quarter and maze of narrow cobbled streets with a small-town feeling. Overnight in Cefalù...BLD

Hiking Details: 3-6 miles, 2.5-4 hours, 800-1,400 feet ascent, 800-1,300 feet descent

Driving Time: 2 hours



DAY 5

VILLA ROMANA

A drive of about 1.5 hours brings us to the hills of central Sicily, blanketed in fields of wheat. Since Roman times, when it was considered the breadbasket of the empire, Sicily has been a major producer of wheat, with nearly 50 different species recognized today. This morning's hike is through the Russomanno nature reserve, along a section of Il Cammino di San Giacomo in Sicilia, a long-distance pilgrimage trek. We'll savor a lunch of homemade cheeses and pasta at a masseria (fortified farm) dating from the 17th century (except in October when we finish our hike at an olive oil farm). In the afternoon we head to the Villa Romana del Casale, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of Sicily's prime attractions. It was once a Roman hunting lodge, probably owned by Maximinianus Herculeus, co-emperor with Diocletian between 286 and 305 AD, and the mosaics are virtually intact from that period. There are family apartments and public halls on a grand scale, but the most breathtaking feature is the lavish mosaic works of the Roman-African period. They depict hunting scenes with shield-carrying hunters and an array of African animals, from elephants to ostriches, a Roman circus with a chariot race—even a children's circus and children's hunting scene. We'll enjoy dinner and overnight at a lovely agriturismo property...BLD

Hiking Details: 4-5 miles, 2-3 hours, 500 feet ascent/descent

Driving Time: 2.5 hours

DAY 6

CALTAGIRONE

A leisurely hike brings us through pastoral fields around Agriturismo Il Drago and up a hill topped with pine and eucalyptus. The views are spectacular, stretching from the south coast to Mt. Etna and the northern mountains.

We gather for a picnic lunch and time to relax by the swimming pool at the agriturismo. In the afternoon, we head to Caltagirone, a city famous for its Baroque architecture and ceramic workshops. If you wish to skip the hike and the visit to Caltagirone, you can spend the day at the agriturismo, or the Trip Leaders may suggest another alternative. Overnight at the agriturismo...BLD

Hiking Details: 5 miles, 2.5 hours, 800 feet ascent/descent

Driving Time: 1.5 hours

DAY 7

PALAZZOLO / PANTALICA GORGE / SIRACUSA

On our way to Siracusa, we pass through the Iblei highlands, an isolated region whose diversity is reflected in its rural baroque towns, many of which have been included in the UNESCO World Heritage List. We'll explore the little town of Palazzolo Acreide, then head to the Pantalica Gorge, one of Sicily's most fascinating nature reserves and archaeological sites. Hundreds of rock-hewn Bronze Age tombs decorating the cliffs at Pantalica were probably created between the 13th and 8th centuries BC, and the sheer number of them is impressive. We get superb views as we hike through the gorge. Along the way we enjoy a delicious picnic lunch of local Sicilian treats. In the afternoon we drive to the welcoming coastal town of Siracusa, whose 2,700-year-old heart,



"We had a wonderful time. I felt I had been able to see and experience the 'real' Sicily."

Diane C., Manchester, MO



Itinerary (cont'd)

Ortigia, is set on an island. In the evening, head out for dinner on your own, walking the narrow streets amid Ortigia's Catalan-Gothic palazzi, Baroque public squares, and Doric temples. Overnight in Siracusa...BL

Hiking Distance: 3.5 miles, 2.5 hours, 550 feet ascent, 900 feet descent

Driving Time: 3 hours

DAY 8

SIRACUSA

We enjoy a guided tour of Ortigia's fabulous Greek, Roman, and Christian ruins, and have the afternoon free to explore. Full of narrow, medieval lanes and Baroque palaces, Ortigia is a wonderful place to wander. The early-Christian basilica and catacombs of San Giovanni, the Castello Maniace, strategically built at the entrance of Siracusa's natural harbor by Frederic II, and the Bellomo art museum are all worth a visit. Afterwards, we can enjoy one of the terrace cafes by the mythical Arethusa fountain and watch the wonderful sunset over the harbor. Overnight in Siracusa...BD

DAY 9

MOUNT ETNA / TAORMINA

We rise early for a 2-hour drive to Mt. Etna, the highest active volcano in Europe. This majestic volcano dominates much of Sicily's eastern half and has been protected as a national park since 1987. We ride up by cable car and 4WD bus to the Torre del Filosofo at 9,500 feet, where we view the scene of the most stunning recent eruptions. From here we hike to the summit along the slope of one of the craters (the summit has four craters). From the top, we see huge chasms from which fumaroles and smoke spew forth, coloring the rocks with volcanic hues, from greenish-yellow to red. We walk along the rim of the two oldest craters, then start a long descent to the lower cable car station (6,500'), passing by the rim of the spectacular Valle del Bove, a large caldera. This hike is highly recommended and not as difficult as it may sound, but easier hiking options are available. Please also note that trail conditions depend on current weather and geological conditions. We carry a pack lunch with us today. After the hike, we head to the town of Taormina, set high above two sweeping bays. Taormina is one of Sicily's most picturesque settings, with its main street lined with 15th to 19th century palazzi. Dinner is on your own; your Trip Leader will be happy to make recommendations. Overnight in Taormina...BL

Hiking Distance: 3-7 miles, 2-5 hours, 400-1,300 feet ascent, 1,700-4,500 feet descent

Driving Time: 3 hours

DAY 10

TAORMINA

With balconies overflowing with flowers and breathtaking panoramas of sea and sky, Taormina charms its visitors. From the town's spectacular Greek theater, Mt. Etna dominates a view little altered since the theater was built in the 3rd century BC. This morning, a local guide joins us for a tour of this town. The remainder of the afternoon is free for independent exploration. Your Trip



“This was a wonderful trip. The places visited were terrific, and the leaders, in particular, made everything worthwhile by their knowledge of the place, their flexibility, and their great sense of humor.”

Bettina R., Santa Clara, CA

Leaders will join anyone who wishes to take the “funivia” (aerial tramway) down to Taormina's beach for a seaside lunch followed by a swim in the sea, or a hike to the neighboring village of Castelmona. Lunch is on your own today. Your Trip Leader will be happy to make recommendations. We gather for a Farewell Dinner tonight...BD

Hiking Details (Optional Hike): 2.5-3 miles, 1.5-2 hours, 700-1,100 feet ascent/descent

DAY 11

DEPART

Morning transfer to the airport at Catania (1.5 hours) for flights departing to the US...B



“I had high hopes for Sicily, though unsure how it would compare to previous Italian trips. It exceeded all expectations by far. One of my most favorite trips.”

Larry E., Chicago, IL



Trip Cost, Payment & Insurance

TRIP COST

Prices are per person, valid through 2024

\$6695 (11-15 members)

\$7395 (5-10 members)

Single supplement: \$1125

2025 Trip Cost: Please call for details

To offer the lowest possible cost, our trips are priced according to the number of participants on the trip. All costs are per person, based on double occupancy. If you wish to have a single room, you must pay the single supplement fee. Please note that Wilderness Travel staff, or guests of Wilderness Travel such as travel writers, photographers, or leaders-in-training, are not included in the tier pricing count.

CURRENCY EXCHANGE RATE

Due to the volatility of currency markets, we can only offer the most competitive pricing on our trips in Europe by partially tying the trip cost directly to the value of the Euro. In the late spring of 2023, when we set the rates for our 2024 program, the US Dollar equaled 0.94 Euros. While in most years, no price changes are ever necessary, if there were to be a significant change in exchange rates, we may be forced to raise or able to lower our trip cost; if so, your final invoice, sent two weeks before your final payment is due, will reflect the difference. Please note that the calculation will not be a straight proration. While most of the trip cost is paid in Euros, the remainder of our expenses are paid in US Dollars. The overall effect is to moderate any change; thus, if the Euro were to rise in value, the land price would rise less than might be expected, and if the Euro were to fall, the drop in trip cost would also be less than might be expected.

TRIP COST INCLUDES

- Expert leadership of a Wilderness Travel Trip Leader and local guides
- Accommodations in hotels and small comfortable inns
- All meals included except 2 lunches and 4 dinners as indicated in the Detailed Itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
- A glass of wine or beer with dinner
- Ground transportation throughout the trip

TRIP COST DOES NOT INCLUDE

International airfare, independent hotel/airport transfers, any meals not specified after each itinerary day, airport departure taxes, optional tipping or gratuities to leaders or staff, additional hotel nights that may be necessary due to airline schedule changes or other factors; pre-trip expense of medical immunizations (if any), travel insurance or passports; and other expenses of a personal nature (alcoholic beverages, laundry, etc.).

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

At time of reservation: \$600

90 days prior to departure: Balance

CANCELLATION AND TRANSFER FEE SCHEDULE

Up to 91 days prior to departure: No charge!

61-90 days prior to departure: 25% of trip cost

46-60 days prior to departure: 50% of trip cost

45 days or less: 100% of trip cost

TRAVEL INSURANCE

We highly recommend you purchase travel insurance. You can take advantage of a comprehensive Travel Protection Plan designed for Wilderness Travel by Travelex, or purchase other insurance on your own. See our website for details: www.wildernesstravel.com/insurance

Arrival & Departure

Upon confirming your trip reservation, we will send you a Welcome Packet that includes a list of documents (passport, visas, etc.) required for your trip. Please feel free to call if you would like this information before making your air arrangements.

If you have booked extra services before or after the trip, an Extra Services Confirmation will be sent with your Final Documents.

ARRIVAL & MEETING PLACE

Palermo, Sicily

Suggested Airport: Falcone Borsellino Airport (PMO)

Suggested Date & Time: Day 1, anytime prior to Day 1

Meeting Place: Your Trip Leaders will meet you in the lobby of the Grand Hotel Wagner in Palermo at 9:00 am on Day 1. It is recommended to arrive the day before, because of the early start. If you wish to stay at the Grand Hotel Wagner before the start of the tour, we recommend you book a room directly from the hotel website at www.grandhotelwagner.it. There are also dozens of other wonderful hotels in Palermo. On Day 1, the group will transfer to Erice together.

After arrival in Palermo, a taxi from the airport to downtown Palermo is about €40, and a train or bus is about €6 per person. You may wish to consider arriving in Sicily a day or two early to visit Palermo or the temples of Agrigento on your own before the trip begins.

DEPARTURE

Taormina, Sicily

Suggested Airport: Catania–Fontanarossa Airport (CTA)

Suggested Date & Time: Day 1, after 10:30 am

Transfers will be provided on Day 11 from our hotel in Taormina to Catania–Fontanarossa Airport, depending on the time of your flight departure. Your Trip Leaders will assist you with the logistics and try to group people with similar departure times. The ride from Taormina is about 1.5 hours.

INTERNATIONAL AIR TRAVEL

You are responsible for making your own arrangements for flights to and from Sicily.

There are many online consolidators for booking travel, but for more personal help arranging air transport, you can contact Exito Travel at 1-800-655-4053 in the US or 1-800-670-2605 in Canada. They are very adept at putting flight itineraries together, to even the most far-flung places. More information can be found on Exito's website at www.exitotravel.com.

Depending on your routing, it is necessary to depart from the US one or possibly two days prior to Day 1 of the trip itinerary. The name on your airline ticket must match the name on your passport exactly, and your passport must be valid for at least six months after your date of return to the US.

Please do not purchase your tickets until you are confirmed on the trip. Once your tickets have been purchased, please send us a copy of your airline schedule. It is your responsibility to ensure your flight times coordinate with the arrival and departure logistics for this trip.

Accommodations



HOTEL ELIMO

Erice, Italy

Days 1 to 2 (2 nights)

Located in the historic center of the picturesque mountain town of Erice, the small family-run Hotel Elimo is a perfectly restored, quiet hotel with clean and comfortable rooms and a courtyard garden, a great place to relax with a drink. A generous breakfast buffet is served in a dining room with floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking the spectacular landscape.



LA PLUMERIA HOTEL

Cefalù, Italy

Days 3 to 4 (2 nights)

This 10-room boutique hotel right in the heart of Cefalù's Old Town is a real gem, just yards from the main square and cathedral. The rooms are beautifully decorated in a simple, elegant style and the staff is very helpful. A plentiful breakfast buffet is offered in the courtyard, and from the hotel you can walk anywhere in town, whether to the beach, restaurants and shops, or up the ramparts of La Rocca.



AGRITURISMO IL DRAGO

Aidone, Italy

Days 5 to 6 (2 nights)

This 9-room property has a quiet rural location not far from the famous Roman Villa del Casale and is surrounded by a 100-acre farm. The food is authentically Sicilian, with an organic garden on site.



HOTELS IN SIRACUSA

Siracusa, Italy

Days 7 to 8 (2 nights)

In Siracusa we stay at one of the following properties:

GRAND HOTEL ORTIGIA

With a convenient location on the waterfront, the Grand Ortigia is a renovated turn-of-the-century hotel with comfortable rooms, a good breakfast, and a helpful staff. The restaurant/bar on the roof terrace has great views.

HENRY'S HOUSE HOTEL

Featuring original antique furniture and beautiful flooring by Sicilian artisans, this hotel is more like a museum. Originally built in the 19th century, the building faces out onto the Gulf of Ortigia, with lovely patios and a large veranda to savor meals. Inside, guest rooms are individually decorated with stone and wood accents, and each has wonderful views over the bay or city. Breakfast features a wide selection of dishes including bread, juice, coffee, and tea. Vegetarian and vegan are also available, as well as gluten-free products. If the weather is nice, be sure to enjoy a meal outside beneath an arbor of grapevines—the vistas are spectacular!



HOTELS IN TAORMINA

Taormina, Italy

Days 9 to 10 (2 nights)

ASHBEE HOTEL

The 25-room Ashbee is a renovated private villa built in 1907 by Charles Robert Ashbee, a renowned Arts & Crafts architect. It has a sublime location—perched on a cliff above the sea. Guestrooms vary in size but all are elegant and comfortable, with private terraces opening onto tranquil gardens. The bar offers a jaw-dropping view of the Sicilian coast.

HOTEL MONTE TAURO

It's a steep ascent to this hotel, since it's perched right on a cliff face, but once you're here, the views are absolutely amazing. All guestrooms have views of the sea and their own terrace or private balcony. Be sure to take a dip in the pool—you'll feel as though you're suspended above the sea!

These are our signature accommodations for this trip. Although it is highly unlikely, we may make substitutions when necessary. To see more photos and descriptions, please visit our *Hiking in Sicily* webpage and click on the “Accommodations” tab.

Trip Leaders

Wilderness Travel Trip Leaders have a passion and a joy for creating an unforgettable journey. We are extremely proud of them and the incredible travel experiences they make possible. For more information, including client comments about them and which specific trips they will be leading, please visit our webpage and click on “Trip Leaders”: www.wildernesstravel.com/trip/sicily-hiking-walking-tour/



LISA HALDERMAN

Lisa Halderman experienced Italy in 1973 as a high school exchange student. She earned her degree in Italian literature, completing her final year at the University of Padua. Her studies have immersed her in the world of Italian art, architecture, politics, and history. An avid gardener, Lisa also has a strong interest in natural history. She lives with her family in the small hill town of San Gimignano, Italy, and she has a son. In Tuscany, Lisa loves to go through every outdoor market with a fine-tooth comb.



SEBASTIANO LEONE

Sebastiano Leone knows that traveling is always better when you're being led by your senses, whether it's on a cultural exploration in Sicily, where he knows all the local hotspots and best places to savor authentic local cuisine and wines, or in the alpine regions on a hike amid beautiful mountains. His love for people and nature make him an excellent Trip Leader and wonderful travel companion. When not guiding, Sebastiano works for the Sicilian government on environmental projects and lives in Siracusa with his family.



GABRIELE MASTRILLI

Gabriele Mastrilli was born and raised in Sicily, the southeast region of Italy, where he still lives when not traveling around the world. He has a master degree in ecology and biogeography and an immense interest in nature, hiking, and photography. In 25 years as a Trip Leader, he has traveled to all the continents and loves telling and hearing stories about different cultures around the world. When not leading trips, Gabriele travels on his own and exercises his passion for photography. Some of his photographic work has been published in Italian travel magazines.



TERESA BALDI

Teresa Baldi, daughter of veteran WT Trip Leader Stefano Baldi, grew up on a farm owned by her family on the hills surrounding Florence. She has a degree in art history at the University of Florence and when she is not helping on the farm, a working agriturismo, she is employed at a nearby first-class restaurant, where she developed a passion for good food and wines. “It was great for me to grow up on a farm with plenty of animals and fantastic trails to explore and, at the same time, have the opportunity to study the beauty of art right in the streets of my home town. A hop on the bus and you step from nature to the glories of the Renaissance.”



WILLIAM CHICARELLI

William Chicarelli is a native Brazilian, originally from Sao Paulo, where he studied Communication Sciences and worked as an adventure guide in the Rio Sao Paulo coastal area and Amazon. When not on a hiking trip, William works as a media professional and a director of documentary films. He currently divides his time between Berlin and Florence and has traveled extensively throughout the Tuscany region.



FRANCESCO CORBINO

Francesco was born and raised in Syracuse, and has been leading trips in Sicily since 2015. He has a degree from the University of Catania, specializing in the history and culture of Mediterranean countries. Francesco is a wonderful travel companion and adores introducing visitors to the fascinating island and its many delights. When not leading trips, he enjoys snorkeling and spending time with his family and son.



VICKY SOTRIFFER

As an adventure-seeking traveler and Trip Leader, Vicky Sotriffer thrives in new places. She has led trips on nearly every continent for more than 10 years, including sea kayaking trips. Originally from South Tyrol, Italy, Vicky now resides in Ibiza, Spain, and is fluent in a handful of languages. She spends parts of her year in Oman, where she follows her passion for hiking in the country's striking desert environment and diving in the warm waters off the coast (and trying to improve her Arabic along the way). In her free time, she enjoys tennis, rock climbing, horseback riding, and in the winter, she heads to the Dolomites to ski.



DANIEL WINDHAM

Daniel Windham, born in Georgia's foothills, discovered his passion for the mountains at an early age while backpacking on the Appalachian Trail. After moving to northern Italy, becoming a mountain guide, and running a mountain hut with his Italian wife, he returned (via a couple of years in Costa Rica) to his roots, enjoying the outdoor life with his family. Having climbed and guided on some of the highest peaks in the Himalayas and the Americas (notably Mt. Rainier), Dan continues to guide on Aconcagua (Argentina) and for Wilderness Travel in the Alps. He is also an Appalachian Trail Ambassador, which involves regularly running an 89-mile stretch of the trail, as well as community involvement. His goal is to "give back to the wilderness a little of what it has given me." Dan speaks English, Spanish, and Italian, and continues his interests in wilderness medicine and cooking.



MARIANGELA LOVICU

Mariangela Lovicu was born in a lovely mountain village in Sardinia and has lived on this beautiful island all her life. Since earning her degree in Languages and Communication from the University of Cagliari, she has worked as a guide, enjoying her "dream job" of introducing people to Sardinia and its traditions. When not guiding, she can be found enjoying outdoor pursuits, from hiking, climbing, and kayaking to caving and canyoning.

Trip Details

WHAT THE TRIP IS LIKE

This trip is rated a Level 3 (Moderate) according to our trip grading system. You will need to be comfortable hiking 7 miles a day, being on your feet for up to 5 hours a day, and making long descents that can be hard on the knees. Trail conditions, weather, and the group's level of fitness can affect hiking times and pacing. Please note that there are long drive times throughout this trip, often 2.5-3 hours in a day.

Average Hiking Day

- 4 miles
- 2-3 hours
- 800-1,000 feet gain/loss

Challenge Day

- Day 9: 7 miles, 5 hours, 1,300 feet gain, and 4,500 feet loss

TERRAIN

Our hikes are varied, from light, countryside walking to mountainous and rugged terrain. The hikes in the Madonie Mountains and on Mount Etna can be very challenging, and Mount Etna can have sharp rocks, loose scree, and soft ash. For Mount Etna, we will take a cable car to 9,500 feet and hike to the summit, depending on weather and volcanic activity, which is at 11,000 feet. Please note that the hiking can feel more demanding at times because the weather can occasionally be very hot, even in the Spring and Fall.

GETTING IN SHAPE

We strongly urge you to train for your trip, as your enjoyment will be highly dependent on your level of fitness. The best training for a hike is to hike, especially over hills or rough terrain. Next best are running, swimming, bicycling, or other cardiovascular exercise. Stair climbing machines are excellent preparation for hiking uphill. Your feet should also be well prepared—make sure your hiking boots are sturdy, comfortable, and thoroughly broken-in. Altitude sickness is generally not a problem on this trip, as it is only one day (Day 9) that we reach high elevation for a day hike before returning to sea level.

WEATHER

The weather in Sicily in late spring and early fall is usually very pleasant, with temperatures in the 70s°F and 80s°F during the day and in the 60s°F at night. Cool breezes and showers can occur at any time, especially on October departures. It can get very cold on Mt. Etna—there's even a possibility of encountering snow on the trails in April.

ACCOMMODATIONS

We spend our nights in small, picturesque inns, full of Italian charm and ambiance. All hotels are chosen for their history and central location. Since they are often in historic buildings, the rooms are not always of uniform or international size. Our leaders do their best to assign rooms in a fair way so that all participants experience an equal advantage throughout the trip as a whole. Single rooms can be requested but are not always available, due to the limited space in the hotels. If you prefer a single room, please make your request as early as possible.

HIKING DETAILS BY DAY				DRIVING DETAILS
DAY	HOURS	MILES	ELEV. GAIN/LOSS	HOURS
1	2.5 hours	4.2 miles	+1,450' / -750'	2 hours
2	2.5 hours	4.5 miles	+200' / -1,000'	1-1.5 hours
3	2.5 hours	5 miles	+380' / -360'	3 hours
4	2.5-4 hours	3-6 miles	+800' to 1,400' / -800' to 1300'	2 hours
5	2-3 hours	4-5 miles	+500' / -500'	2.5 hours
6	2.5 hours	5 miles	+800' / -800'	1.5 hours
7	2.5 hours	3.5 miles	+550' / -900'	3 hours
8				
9	2-5 hours	3-7 miles	+400' to 1,300' / -1,700' to 4,500'	3 hours
10	1.5-2 hours	2.5-3 miles	+700' to 1,100' / -700' to 1,100'	
11				1.5 hours

AVERAGE DAILY MAX/MIN °F												
	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Cefalù	46/39	48/39	50/41	55/45	66/52	73/59	79/64	81/64	73/61	64/54	57/46	50/41
Siracusa	59/45	61/45	63/46	66/50	73/55	82/63	88/68	88/70	82/66	75/61	68/54	63/48
Taormina	52/41	54/41	55/43	61/46	70/54	77/61	82/66	82/66	77/63	68/55	61/50	55/45
RAINFALL - INCHES												
Cefalù	2.6	2.0	1.9	1.5	1.1	0.5	0.4	0.8	1.5	2.8	2.6	3.0
Siracusa	2.9	2.0	1.7	1.2	0.7	0.2	0.2	0.4	1.4	4.1	2.4	3.0
Taormina	3.7	2.9	2.6	1.9	1.3	0.6	0.6	0.9	2.0	4.0	3.3	3.9

CUISINE

Sicily's glorious food (think catch-of-the-day fish, couscous, pasta, vegetables, and indulgent desserts) is among the delights of this trip. Our lunches will be at agriturismos or picnic-style during one of our hikes. Dinners are at local restaurants. Please note that in Europe, the dinner hour is considerably later than what it is in the US. We do our best to secure early reservations for our groups, but many restaurants in Sicily don't open until 7:30pm, so the evening meal will be at 7:30pm at the earliest.

TRANSPORTATION

Please note that there are long drive times on this trip, often 2.5-3 hours per day. Our van will transport the group's luggage, so you only need to carry a daypack for items you need during the day (rain gear, sweater, camera, water bottle, etc.). Trip members are always free to skip a day's hike and travel to the next destination in the support vehicle (or remain at the hotel if we are not transferring that day). Most hikes end at lunchtime, but if we are continuing on, you can opt to skip the afternoon hike and travel in the support vehicle.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT TRIP

Adventure travel often involves exotic destinations, unusual levels of physical exertion, or activities you may not have participated in previously. We work hard to help you choose the right trip for you, paying attention to your individual interests, abilities, and needs. If you have questions about the level of comfort or any of the activities described in this itinerary, please call Wilderness Travel at 1-800-368-2794 and ask for the Europe Manager or email us at europe@wildernesstravel.com.

REFERENCES

We'd be happy to put you in touch with a past client that has traveled with us on this or a similar trip.

TOUCAN CLUB

We're proud to have one of the highest rates of repeat travelers in the business! The Wilderness Travel Toucan Club was established to reward our travelers for their loyalty. For details, please visit the Toucan Club page of our website at www.wildernesstravel.com/resources/toucan-club.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

At www.wildernesstravel.com, you can book your trip online or find out about added departures, last-minute deals, and one-time Limited Edition adventures that aren't listed in our catalog. You can also access our complete library of detailed itineraries filled with enticing photos and videos, read bios of our Trip Leaders, find descriptions of trip accommodations, and check real-time availability of any trips that interest you.



WILDERNESS TRAVEL HAS BEEN AWARDED:

World's Best Tour Operators: *Travel + Leisure*, 2022, 11-time winner

Best Travel Specialists in the World: *Condé Nast Traveller*, 2022, 3 years in a row

Best Wildlife, Hiking & Walking Trips: *AFAR Magazine*, 3 years in a row

Best Adventure Travel Companies: *USA Today*

Trip of the Year: *Outside Magazine*, 9-time winner

50 Tours of a Lifetime: *National Geographic Traveler*, 9 years in a row

Best Adventure Travel Companies: *National Geographic Adventure*, 3-time winner

Please be advised that California has established a Travel Consumer Restitution Fund under the California Seller of Travel Law that took effect January 1, 1996. This fund is designed to protect consumers from unscrupulous practices by discount airfare ticket sellers or air charter operators. Unfortunately, this law does not cover non-California residents and, even in the case of California residents, it does not cover any foreign travel where the foreign "providers of transportation or travel services" are not in compliance with the Sellers of Travel Law (compliance being defined as registered as a Seller of Travel in California and a participant in the Travel Consumer Restitution Fund). Thus none of Wilderness Travel's tours qualify and we are required by law to advise each client that they are not covered by the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires sellers of travel to maintain a trust account or bond. This business has a trust account. California Seller of Travel #100769640

While as accurate as possible at the time of printing, this itinerary should be considered an approximate indication of the schedule and scope of activities and trip routing, rather than an inflexible schedule of events; it is subject to change due to circumstances beyond our control. This trip is subject to the Limitation of Liability and all the terms and conditions as detailed in the General Information section of the Wilderness Travel Catalog.

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