



Tour of Sicily from Palermo special St. Agatha Feast - 8 Days (#20583)

Note: Price printed on this PDF is valid until **27-01-2025** and is subject to change without notice due to Partner changes and currency fluctuations

Overview

A magical journey to celebrate St. Agatha Feast.

GUARANTEED DEPARTURE ON 30 JANUARY 2025.

Trip Highlights

Palermo-Agrigento-Ragusa Ibla-Catania

Detailed Itinerary

Day 01

DAY 1 – THURSDAY 1/30: PALERMO



Individual arrival to the hotel in the charming city of Palermo (optional private transfer on request). Dinner on your own and overnight in hotel.

Day 02

DAY 2 – FRIDAY 1/31: MONREALE - PALERMO

After breakfast in hotel, the morning will be spent visiting Monreale, its huge Norman Cathedral, proclaimed the Eighth Wonder of the World, and its splendid Cloister in ArabNorman style: admirable masterpiece of art, sculpture, and semi-precious stones marquetry! Later you will discover the stunning Palermo, one of the richest towns in the island for its history and art. Palermo stands on a bay dominated by Mount Pellegrino. While the Baroque predominates, there is a profusion of different architectural styles reflecting the city's multicultural past. Visit of the wonderful eclectic Cathedral, the astonishing Martorana Church and the amazing Cappella Palatina, admirable example from an historical and an artistic point of view, and a prove of how different cultures and religions can coexist. During the day, you will have a stop to enjoy a typical lunch with local food. Along the path you will admire the famous Teatro Massimo and the debated fountain in Pretoria Square, adorned with 16th century sculptures. Dinner on your own and overnight in hotel.

Meal: Breakfast and Lunch

Day 03

DAY 3 – SATURDAY 2/01: SALT ROAD - MARSALA - AGRIGENTO

This morning the tour will continue visiting the popular Salt Road: here the salt marshes have given rise to one of the oldest salt-extracting industries in the world! Between Trapani and Marsala, the Salt Road is now protected for its interesting birdlife, and as an important site of industrial archaeology. Proceeding on, the visit of the charming and well-known town of Marsala, where Garibaldi went ashore in May 1860. You will walk through the streets of the centre where you overlook ancient noble palaces, monuments and impressive baroque churches. After that, exclusive guided tour inside the historic Florio Cellars. The visit starts in front of the majestic giant vats, built at the end of the 19th century and still used for the refinement of Marsala wine, and it continues inside the 3 fascinating barrel chambers. After a thirty-minute tour through the barrel vaults, you will reach the avant-garde tasting rooms named Donna Franca and Duca Enrico. You will enjoy a delicious light lunch and a memorable wine tasting experience! The day goes on to Agrigento visiting the famous Valley of the Temples stated World Heritage Site. As one of the most prosperous of the ancient Greek cities on the island, Agrigento presents a remarkable series of Doric Temples of the 5th century. Among hundreds of almond trees, you will admire the rests of the ancient Akragas. You will see the "Temple of Hera", the "Temple of Concordia" and the "Temple of Heracles". Accommodation in hotel, dinner and overnight.

Meal: Breakfast, lunch and Dinner



Day 04

DAY 4 – SUNDAY 2/02: PIAZZA ARMERINA - MODICA – RAGUSA IBLA

After breakfast in hotel departure towards the charming Piazza Armerina to visit the famous Villa Romana del Casale, UNESCO World Heritage Site, to admire the splendid polychrome mosaics! This majestic villa, belonged to a member of the Roman Senatorial aristocracy, hosts prestigious mosaics representing mythological and historical episodes and scenes of hunting and entertainments: you will love it! The tour proceeds towards Modica, chest of innumerable Baroque architectural treasures and for this reason stated UNESCO World Heritage Site. Walking along the tiny streets of this charming town, you will have a stop to visit Sabadì, one of the most renowned chocolate manufacturers whose chocolate has been awarded as the best Modica chocolate in the last 12 years! You will enjoy a multisensorial chocolate tasting discovering the authentic Sicilian perfumes... the local nepitella (wild mint), the orange blossom honey, the raw PGI - quality Sicilian lemon and the PGI – quality Sicilian red orange is just some of the many flavours you can taste! Proceeding on you will visit the beautiful and perfectly preserved noble seventeenth-century Palazzo Castro Polara Grimaldi. You will be astonished by its amazing balcony which dominates the town with a spectacular view, and you will feel to be brought back to the past at the beginning of the XX century where time seems to have stopped. The style of the interior has the typical flavour of Sicilian noble palaces: frescoes of landscapes, wallpapers in splendid satins, vases and furnishings of the most precious manufacture, together with the private collections of Donna Grazietta Grimaldi are all signs which give you the impression that nothing has changed and that the ancient traditions of the house are still alive. You will then be brought back to present time savouring some local dishes in a typical restaurant. The day goes on to Ragusa Ibla and its historical centre cradle of Sicilian Baroque. Used as a location of the extremely popular Police Inspector Montalbano Tv series, it is today stated among the 44 Italian World Heritage Sites. This little precious ancient town hosts more than 50 churches and many Baroque architectural treasures! You will be fascinated by its Cathedral, situated in the beautiful Dome square and you will love the “Giardino Ibleo”, the oldest of the four main gardens in Ragusa... At 383 meters above sea level, from this beautiful garden you can admire a spectacular panorama! Departure to Ragusa. Dinner and overnight in hotel.

Meal: Breakfast and Dinner

Day 05

DAY 5 – MONDAY 2/03: NOTO – SIRACUSA - CATANIA

Today the tour continues to Noto, the capital of Sicilian Baroque, famous for its fine buildings of the early eighteenth century and declared UNESCO World Heritage Site. Inspired by Baroque ideals of “open city”, Noto is a rare masterpiece and the clearest example of theatrical tastes in 18th century architecture whose local limestone has been burnt gold by the sun. Noto’s Baroque is a game of elegant curves, floral weaves, perspective views, palaces and gardens, capitals and ornaments that adorn the facades of churches and monasteries. Free time for a walk along the town. Departure to Syracuse to visit the most beautiful and greatest Greek colony in Sicily and World Heritage Site! The visit will start with the



Archaeological Park of Neapolis, with its Greek Theatre, the Roman Amphitheatre, the Latomie of Paradise and the Ear of Dionysius. Proceeding on and visit of the splendid Ortigia, a small island which is the historical centre of Syracuse. In Ortigia you will admire the beautiful Cathedral which dominates the square with its authoritative presence. The façade is a powerful Sicilian-Baroque composition, but it gives no hint that this building was once a Doric temple! From Piazza Duomo you will reach a wide terrace on the waterfront surrounding the famous Arethusa's Fountain, one of the most famous fresh-water sources of the Greek world. Then you will have lunch in a lovely restaurant. Transfer to Catania where it starts the celebration in honour of its Saint Patron in a ritual that has been handed down for thousands of years. You will experience the third most famous festival in the world, a blend of traditions and spirituality! This is the night thousands of devotees wearing the traditional white "Sacco" (a votive white canvas gown up to the ankle and tightened at the waist by a cord) gather in the Cathedral square to honor St. Agatha with orchestral music, songs and amazing fireworks! For those who would like to, we offer our guests as a supplementary service, the possibility to enjoy this special night living a unique experience from the terrace of a nearby hotel sipping a glass of champagne! Dinner on your own and overnight in hotel.

Meal: Breakfast and Lunch

Day 06**DAY 6 – TUESDAY 2/04: ETNA – TAORMINA – CATANIA**

This morning after a short visit of the famous "pescheria" (the ancient fish market) in Catania, the tour will continue with an excursion to the Mount Etna, the highest (c. 3350m) volcano in Europe and one of the largest and most active in the world, nowadays UNESCO World Heritage Site. Its regional park protects 59.000 hectares of unique geology, flora and fauna, villages and farms, and traditional methods of forestry, beekeeping, wine manufacture, stonework and carpentry. Views of stunning landscapes will amaze you heading to Rifugio Sapienza. You will reach the "Crateri Silvestri", small volcanic cones now inactive, surrounded by ancient lava flows. The view beyond the mountain's hundreds of subsidiary cones and craters, can extend across the whole of Sicily, the Aeolian islands and Calabria. The spectacle is unique! You will have the chance to enjoy the local homemade honey and some typical products of the area. The tour continues towards Taormina where you will have lunch in a lovely restaurant in the historic centre of the city. Taormina is a charming town renowned for its magnificent position above the sea commanding a celebrated view of Etna. Visit of Taormina's fascinating Greek theatre which will leave you breathless for its commanding view on Giardini Naxos bay and the Etna mountain! Free time for a nice walk among the picturesque Medieval typical narrow streets, to go shopping and looking around the local handicrafts. The day will end with an overview of the beautiful Riviera die Ciclopi. Back in Catania to experience the exciting atmosphere of the procession of St. Agatha. The coffin – adorned with red carnations symbolizing martyrdom - in this day walks along the places connected to her life and martyr. There are four-thousand or five-thousand devotees that pull the heavy "fercolo". All of them wearing the traditional "Sacco", the black velvet hat and the white gloves drag in the crowd the fercolo which, empty, weighs 17 tons but, weighed down by the casket, the bust and loaded with huge candles, can weigh up to 30 quintals. At a rhythmic pace they cry out: "citizens, viva Sant'Agata"! The "tour" ends late at night when the fercolo returns to the



Cathedral. Dinner on your own and overnight in hotel.

Meal: Breakfast and Lunch

Day 07

DAY 7 – WEDNESDAY 2/05: CATANIA

This day is dedicated to the visit of Catania and to the feast of St. Agatha. Catania's historical centre with its original Baroque style and its unique streets built with black lava stone is stated UNESCO World Heritage Site. The colour scheme of the city-centre buildings is black and dark grey, relieved with white limestone details around doors and windows. The effect is extremely elegant! The guided walking tour will start from the scenic Duomo square with its magnificent Cathedral and the famous "Liotru" statue, antique lava-stone elephant, symbol of the city. Not far from here we will reach University Square, and we will have a walk along the splendid baroque Via dei Crociferi, the most representative 18th century street in Catania, where we will admire the famous S. Benedict Monastery, UNESCO World Heritage Site. Continuing the visit enjoy a light lunch in a historical bar of the city centre to taste the local street food and the typical "minnuzze". Free afternoon to enjoy the feast. On this day the city centre is a riot of colours and lights dedicated to the procession of the rich and sumptuous fercolo of St Agatha – saint patron of Catania - that is carried around the main streets of the city by the devotees. You will experience the exciting trails of devotees who follow the fercolo in procession, wearing the traditional white "Sacco" and carrying on their shoulders heavy candles lit in sign of devotion. You'll admire the extraordinary beauty of the silver reliquary and bust made for the virgin martyr and decorated with fresh white carnations; the royal crown belonged to King Richard the Lionheart and offered by the king to the Saint in 1191 in occasion of his stay in Sicily. It is of rare beauty the amazing bust in embossed silver (inside which is the chest of the Saint) embellished with enamels and precious stones created in the 14th century. It is a masterpiece of high jewellery and of considerable artistic value to which they have been added over the millennia the votive gifts of precious goldsmith and the ex-votos offered to the martyr by the devotees. You will treasure the magic atmosphere that you breathe in the streets of the city centre pervaded by the scents of freshly crystallized nougat and cotton candy... We suggest you not to miss the traditional parade of the 12 "candelore" in Duomo square - majestic wooden buildings richly carved and gilded on the surface which symbolize "the light of the world" against the darkness of night. Just think they weigh from 400 up to 900 kilos, and they are carried on the shoulder of 4 or 12 men, depending on their weight. Dinner on your own and overnight in hotel.

Meal: Breakfast and Lunch

Day 08

DAY 8 – THURSDAY 2/06: CATANIA



Breakfast in hotel and end of services. We strongly recommend for those who were willing, to experience the thrilling singing of the cloistered nuns greeting St. Agatha in front of San Benedetto Monastery (behind the back of your hotel) before she goes back to the Cathedral to be placed in the room from which she will come out next year. This will be your personal greeting to the Saint and your “arrivederci” to Catania!

Meal: Breakfast

Inclusions

Multilingual Tour leader and professional travel guide (English, Italian or Spanish) for the whole tour, from the 2nd day to the afternoon of the 7th day, local guides or audio-guides where necessary.

Deluxe bus form day 2 to day 6.

Whisper kit Crystal Sound for the whole trip: the latest generation, fast and light. It transmits the driving voice up to 150 meters away.

Accommodation in charming 4 stars hotels mostly located in the city centre, international breakfast included:

Palermo city centre: Mercure Palermo Centro 4* or similar

Agrigento: Baia di Ulisse Wellness & SPA 4* or similar

Ragusa city centre: Mediterraneo Palace Hotel 4* or similar

Catania city centre: Il Principe Hotel 4* or similar

7 international breakfasts, 6 lunches in famous restaurants and 2 dinners in hotels to have a taste of Sicilian traditional cuisine

Visit of the main suggestive Unesco World Heritage Sites: Monreale, Palermo, Agrigento, Piazza Armerina, Ragusa, Modica, Noto, Syracuse, Etna, Catania city centre.

Tasting of Sicilian typical products:

Marsala (day 3): visit of the famous Florio wine cellar and wine tasting

Modica (day 4): visit of the well-known chocolate manufacturers Sabadì with tasting

Etna (day 6) visit of a beekeeping honey company and honey tasting

Catania (day 7) tasting of Sicilian “minnuzze”

Exclusions

Transfers in/out

Meals not included by the program

Beverages



Entrance fees at monuments/museums
City taxes (where compulsory)
Anything not specified under “The rate includes”

Note

Accommodation in charming 4 stars hotels mostly located in the city centre, international breakfast included:

Palermo city centre: Mercure Palermo Centro 4* or similar

Agrigento: Baia di Ulisse Wellness & SPA 4* or similar

Ragusa city centre: Mediterraneo Palace Hotel 4* or similar

Catania city centre: Il Principe Hotel 4* or similar

Supplement for Pre-night in hotel in Palermo available on request.

Supplement for Post-night in hotel in Catania available on request.

Transfer Palermo airport/Hotel in Palermo rates available on request.

Transfer Hotel in Catania / Catania airport rates available on request.

Assistance – Medical Expense Reimbursement – Luggage insurance – Travel Cancellation Expenses Insurance: on request.

For organizational reasons or due to force majeure the itinerary may be modified.

EXTRA FEES ENTRANCES TO BE CONFIRMED:

Monreale Cathedral AUD 15 p.p.

Monreale Cloister AUD 18 p.p.

Palermo Cappella Palatina AUD 39 p.p.

Palermo Martorana Church AUD 5 p.p.

Agrigento Valley of the Temples AUD 38 p.p.

Piazza Armerina Villa Romana AUD 30 p.p.

Noto Palazzo Nicolaci AUD 13 p.p.

Syracuse Archeological Park AUD 42 p.p.

Syracuse Cathedral AUD 5 p.p.

Taormina Greek theatre AUD 30 p.p.

Program Touring / Guide

Escorted Experience



Fixed Departure

30 Jan, 2025

4 Star

AUD 2,131 P P twin share

AUD 2,693 P P single

AVAILABLE

