



ART & ARCHITECTURE IN SICILY

A boutique art journey crafted for curious minds and lovers of authentic, intimate travel

Embark on a journey where art, architecture, and archaeology reveal the many faces of Sicily, from ancient Greek temples to 18-century charming Baroque Architecture. Over nine unforgettable days, you will explore the island's most exquisite treasures. Each day unfolds as a carefully curated experience, guided by expert scholars and enriched by authentic encounters, wonderful food, and breathtaking landscapes. With only seven guests, you will travel in the company of kindred spirits, curious, culturally engaged travellers who value beauty, learning, and authentic experiences.



ITINERARY & DATES



Over nine days, from the 3rd to the 12th of October 2026, we will journey across Sicily, immersing ourselves in three millennia of history.

We begin in Palermo, Sicily's vibrant capital, a cultural mosaic where Arab, Norman, and Baroque influences coexist in striking harmony.

From there, we travel to Polizzi Generosa, a small village within the Madonie National Park, which will serve as our base for exploring the Valley of the Temples and uncovering hidden treasures and authentic Sicilian traditions.

Our journey then continues southeast to Ragusa Ibla, a tranquil and picturesque Baroque town that will be our base for visiting Modica, renowned for its culinary heritage, majestic churches, and romantic views.

We conclude in Ortigia (Syracuse), a UNESCO World Heritage Site celebrated for its refined architecture, shimmering sea views, and timeless atmosphere.

Discover the full itinerary in the following pages...



3 OCTOBER - WELCOME TO SICILY

Overnight in Palermo

A private transfer will greet you at Palermo Airport and accompany you to Hotel Palazzo Sovrana. At 5:00 p.m., we will gather on the hotel's rooftop restaurant for welcome drinks and introductions, enjoying our first views of the city. Later, we will take a leisurely stroll through Palermo's vibrant streets before concluding the evening with a welcome dinner in a traditional trattoria.





4 OCTOBER - ART, ARCHITECTURE AND TRADITIONS IN PALERMO

Overnight in Palermo

We begin the day with a guided visit to Palazzo Abatellis, a 15th-century palace that houses one of Sicily's most refined art collections. From here, we stroll to the vintage market in Piazza Marina, a lively treasure trove where you may find antique prints, ceramics, handmade jewelry, and beautifully worn Sicilian curiosities. We then continue to the Oratorio di San Lorenzo, a jewel box adorned with Giacomo Serpotta's stunning stuccoes. In the afternoon, we visit the Convent of Santa Caterina



wandering through its peaceful cloister and tasting the convent's famed handmade biscuits. The rest of the day is at leisure, with an independent dinner.



5 OCTOBER - ARAB NORMAN ART AND ARCHITECTURE

Overnight in Palermo

In the morning, we visit the historic Ballarò market in Palermo, followed by a visit to Palermo's Cathedral. In the afternoon, we head to Monreale Cathedral, a UNESCO World Heritage Site renowned for its dazzling Arab-Norman mosaics, one of the greatest masterpieces of medieval art and architecture. The remainder of the day is at leisure in Palermo, with an independent dinner.





6 OCTOBER - EXPLORING SMALL VILLAGES AND COMMUNITIES

Overnight in Polizzi Generosa

Today we check out from our accommodation in Palermo and head toward the Madonie Mountains to settle into the historic Palazzo Notar Nicchi in Polizzi Generosa. After a home-style lunch featuring traditional products from the mountain region, we will explore the village, discovering its hidden treasures, welcoming community, and its world-famous citizens.





7 OCTOBER - THE VALLEY OF THE TEMPLES

Overnight in Polizzi Genrosa

Today we explore the Valley of the Temples, one of the world's most iconic archaeological sites. Led by an expert archaeologist, we explore the fascinating history of Greek Sicily. After a light lunch, we visit the Archaeological Museum, home to an exceptional collection of artifacts from ancient Akragas, including one of the colossal Telamons that once supported the Temple of Zeus. On our return to Polizzi, we will gather for a group dinner.





8 OCTOBER - MEETING THE COMMUNITY

Overnight in Polizzi Generosa



Today we visit Giovanni d'Angelo, a seventh-generation ceramist, to learn about the art of pottery making and the traditions of Sicilian maiolica. We will also have the opportunity to paint our own tile, creating a personalised piece of Sicilian craftsmanship, to take home.



In the afternoon, we visit Verbumcaudo, a cooperative of young locals who cultivate land confiscated from the Mafia. Committed to sustainable agriculture and community development, they produce high-quality local goods while promoting social justice and revitalisation in the area. We will learn about their mission, taste their products, and discover how their work is transforming once-tainted land into a source of pride for the community. The remainder of the day is at leisure, with an independent dinner.





9 OCTOBER - ANCIENT ROMAN MOSAICS UNVEIL FASCINATING STORIES

Overnight in Ragusa Ibla



Today we journey northeast to discover more of Sicily's rich heritage. On our way to Messina, we stop at Villa Romana del Casale, a World Heritage Site renowned for its 3,500 square meters of remarkably preserved Roman mosaics. An expert archaeologist will reveal the captivating stories and symbolism woven into these extraordinary works. From there, we continue to Ragusa Ibla, where our next accommodation awaits.





10 OCTOBER - LOCAL FAVOURS AND ARCHITECTURE IN MODICA

Overnight in Ragusa Ibla

The morning is at leisure in Ragusa Ibla. Later, we set off for Modica, where a traditional lunch awaits, featuring freshly made ricotta ravioli. Afterward, we will explore the fascinating Byzantine grotto church of San Nicolò Inferiore and the majestic Baroque churches of San Pietro and San Giorgio. We will also taste Modica's famous chocolate at one of Sicily's oldest chocolate factories. We conclude our day in Modica with a visit to Eolo's studio, where we will explore pigments and traditional painting techniques.

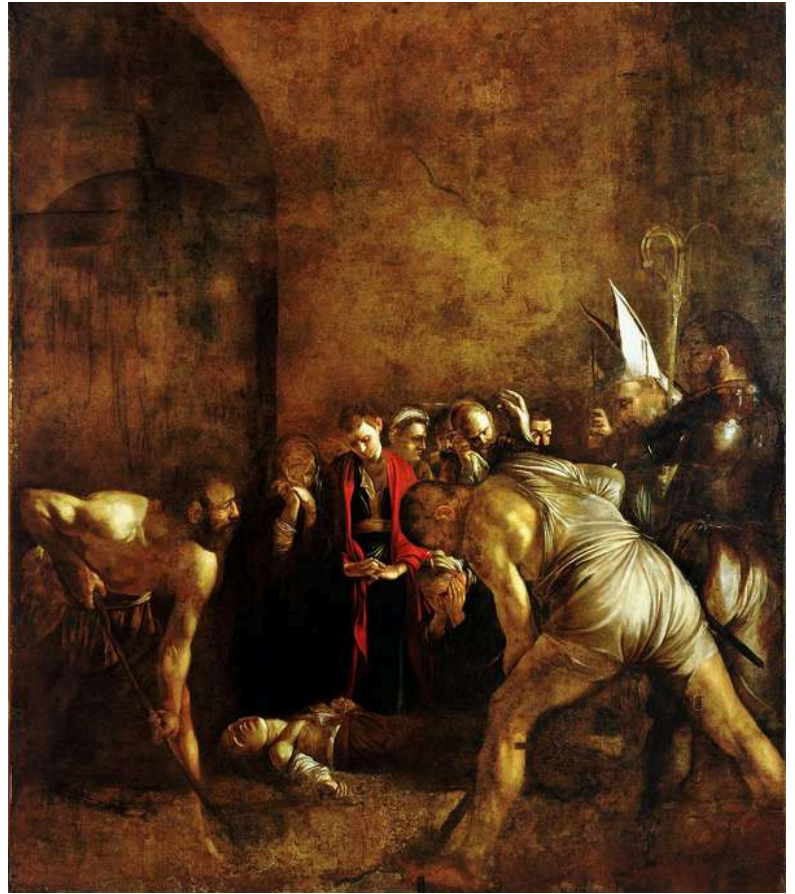




11 OCTOBER - EXPLORING SIRACUSA'S ART AND ARCHITECTURE

Overnight in Ortigia (Siracusa)

Today we head towards Ortigia, the beautiful island just off the coast of Siracusa. We will visit Caravaggio's painting *Burial of Saint Lucy*, the Temple of Apollo, the oldest Doric temple in Sicily, and the Cathedral, a magnificent Baroque masterpiece built over an ancient Greek temple. After some free time to wander through the winding streets and lively piazzas of Ortigia, we will gather in the evening for a farewell dinner.





12 OCTOBER - OPTIONAL EXTENSION OR DEPARTURE

On this day, you may choose to extend your stay in Sicily, perhaps with a few extra days in Ortigia, or visiting Catania Mount Etna and Taormina. Also, consider a few days in Malta, which is easily accessible from Sicily. Alternatively, private transport can be arranged for your departure from Catania or Comiso Airport. If you would like to organise an extended itinerary, we would be delighted to assist you.





ACCOMMODATION

Hotel Palazzo Sovrana - Palermo (3 Nights)

Palazzo Sovrana is a beautifully restored historic residence offering elegant suites and refined hospitality in the heart of Palermo. With views of the grand Teatro Massimo and walking access to the city's most important landmarks, it seamlessly blends historic charm with contemporary design.



The Sicilian House - Polizzi Generosa (3 Nights)

The Sicilian House blends historic heritage with modern design, offering comfort and tranquillity. Its communal spaces, enriched with a curated book collection and contemporary artworks, create a warm, inspiring atmosphere. Centrally located in the village, it provides an inviting and authentic base to explore Polizzi and the Madonie Mountains.





ACCOMMODATION

Antico Convento dei Cappuccini - Ragusa Ibla *(2 Nights)*

Antico Convento dei Cappuccini in Ragusa Ibla is a peaceful 16th-century monastery overlooking the valley. Its simple monastic architecture and the adjoining church preserve an atmosphere of quiet authenticity. Today, it offers hospitality in the original monks' rooms, just steps from the baroque heart of Ibla.



Grand Hotel Ortigia - Siracusa *(1 Night)*

The Grand Hotel Ortigia is a historic, refined waterfront hotel located at the entrance of Ortigia. Its elegant early-20th-century architecture, panoramic rooftop restaurant and views over the marina create an atmosphere of timeless charm.



TOUR LEADERS



Eolo Paul Bottaro

Artist & Curator at Sicily Art Tours

An Australian artist of Sicilian heritage, Eolo is internationally recognised for his evocative works inspired by the classical traditions of Italian art. Although born and raised in Australia, Sicily has always been central to his artistic identity, a place of ancestral memory and continual inspiration. Over the past decade, he has divided his time between Australia and Sicily, where he has established both a studio and a home. Today, alongside his artistic practice, Eolo curates and leads small-group journeys devoted to art, architecture and archaeology, offering discerning travellers an insider's perspective on the island's most captivating treasures.



Serena Firera

Founder at Sicily Art Tours

Born in Sicily, Serena combines a background in psychology and publishing with a lifelong passion for art and culture. Guided by a refined sense of beauty and human connection, she founded Sicily Art Tours to offer travellers a deeper way to experience her island, through its artistic heritage, its living traditions, and its people. Serena curates each journey with an eye for authenticity and a taste for elegance, collaborating with scholars, artists, and local experts to create truly distinctive cultural experiences. Her vision is to reveal Sicily not only as a destination, but as an encounter with history, creativity, and the warmth of its people.



REVIEWS

Jan Bollington-Dixon

Guide at The Queensland Art Gallery and Gallery of Modern Art.
Brisbane, Australia

I found the passion and knowledge of Serena, Eolo and the art gallery curators proved to be a highlight of the trip. They gave both social and art historical context which afforded me a deeper understanding of the many exquisite paintings and sculptures. The absolute highlight was to see so many Caravaggios in situ. I knew he had worked in Sicily but didn't realise how many beautiful masterpieces he produced there. The whole of the art tour was a wonderful experience with stunning scenery, picturesque villages and authentically delicious Sicilian dining experiences. Our stay at the Sicilian House in the village of Polizzi Generosa was my favorite part of the trip. What a gem that turned out to be. Prepared to be wowed by local knowledge, celebrity neighbours and art treasures! Selena and Eolo are the perfect tour leaders. Great knowledge and wonderful people.

Elisa Nudelman

HR Specialist
Melbourne, Australia

We cannot speak highly enough of our recent experience with Sicily Art Tours. Serena and Eolo are exceptional tour operators who looked after every detail for our group. The itinerary was amazing, versatile and kept the group engaged and organised so we didn't miss out on any of the planned activities. The accommodation was perfect and we loved every where we visited on the tour. The tours offered by Serena and Eolo are art/archeological/historically based, a taste of what Sicily has to offer. If you are after a bespoke tour, get in touch with them, you will not be disappointed.



REVIEWS

Patrick Dixon

Consulting Property Advisor
Brisbane, Australia

As I had dragged my wife along on golfing trips in Ireland, Scotland, and America, I felt obligated to accompany her when she suggested we join Serena and Eolo's Sicilian Art, Culture, and Food Tour. Given my elementary knowledge of ancient history—and even less of art—my expectations for enjoying the tour were low, although I was looking forward to the "food" portion of the trip! That assumption was quickly shattered. I soon became engrossed in the fascinating history of Sicily and how it was expressed through the art we viewed and the places we visited. Thanks to Serena and her gallery curator's deep knowledge, what could have been, for me, a string of boring churches, statues, and ruins instead came vividly to life. Byzantine, Greek, and Arab history were woven into the storytelling, turbocharging the experience. My eyes were opened to a whole new world. Add to this the authentic Sicilian accommodations, a group of diverse and interesting fellow travelers, a variety of splendid meals (I especially loved the street food), and the patience and charm of Serena and Eolo—and this tour became a truly life-enhancing experience.

Anthia Galanis

Public sector employee
Melbourne, Australia

Thank you Serena and Eolo for such an extraordinary experience - words simply can't do justice to your sense of artistry, dedication and love of your island home, your commitment to sharing your culture, history, landscape, and food (I am still digesting mentally and physically the Sicilian riches you presented to us). Thank you from the bottom of heart - I will always cherish our time together forever. This is not goodbye, it's arrivaderci until we meet again.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What time do daily activities start?

Daily activities generally begin around 10:00 a.m., allowing for a relaxed morning and an unhurried breakfast.

What level of fitness is required?

This tour requires a moderate level of fitness. Some days include approximately three to four hours of relaxed walking or standing, often during guided visits in museums, archaeological sites, and historic centres. However, the pace is unhurried, with frequent breaks and ample time to rest.

Can I skip some of the scheduled activities for more free time?

Yes, the tour is designed to offer flexibility, so you can opt in and out of certain activities.

Which flights should I book to and from Sicily for this tour?

We recommend arriving in Palermo between 12:00 and 2:00 p.m. on October 3rd, as check-in at the accommodation is available after 2:30 p.m. Unless you plan to extend your stay, we suggest scheduling your departure from Catania Airport on October 12th. Please keep in mind that the transfer from Siracusa to Catania Airport takes approximately one hour, so we advise avoiding very early morning flights. These guidelines are intended to ensure smooth and comfortable transitions in line with hotel check-in and check-out times; however, guests are welcome to select alternative arrival or departure times if they prefer.

Can I do this tour on dates other than the scheduled ones?

Yes, please contact us to inquire about bespoke tour options.

What will the weather be like in October in Sicily?

September in Sicily is generally mild and pleasant, with daytime temperatures ranging from 20°C to 25°C and many bright, sunny days. Occasional light showers are possible, and temperatures can vary between coastal and inland areas. In the mountain regions, such as the Madonie, it can be noticeably cooler, especially in the mornings and evenings. We recommend packing layers and versatile clothing suitable for both warm and cooler moments.



PRICING, TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Pricing

EUR 4.500 per person, based on twin/double-share, non-smoking room

Single supplement: EUR 700

What's Included

The tour includes nine nights of accommodation in historic Sicilian palazzi and one monastery, with the option to upgrade room category upon request and subject to availability. The journey is fully escorted and includes daily breakfast, two lunches, two dinners, welcome drinks and aperitivo on arrival, a tasting of local products. All admissions to sites and museums mentioned in the itinerary are included, along with professionally guided visits led by expert scholars, private transportation throughout. The program also provides a private airport pickup upon arrival in Palermo and a group transfer to Catania Airport on October 12th, departing at 10:00 a.m. and arriving at approximately 11:00 a.m.

City taxes, as well as full assistance before, during, and after the tour, are also included.

What's Not Included

The tour price does not include international or domestic flights, travel insurance, personal expenses, additional meals or beverages not specified in the itinerary.

Payments

A 30% deposit is required to confirm your booking. Final payment is due no later than 90 days before the tour commences.

Cancellation Policy

We strongly recommend purchasing a "Cancel for Any Reason" insurance to protect against unforeseen changes to your plans. Otherwise, please refer to our cancellation terms below:

- More than 90 days before the tour commences: Your deposit will be credited toward another tour departing within 12 months of the original tour date.
- Between 90 and 30 days before the tour commences: 40% of the full amount will be reimbursed, 40% of the full amount credited toward another tour departing within 12 months.
- Less than 30 days before the tour commences: Full charges will apply.