

italian tours and

Travel by Diana

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f Italian Tours by Diana

Authentic Puglia & Sicilia: 2021 Small Group tour

Day 1 Friday August 27, 2021 Depart USA

International flights to Bari, Italy (independently booked).

Day 2 Saturday August 28, 2021 Arrive Bari, Ostuni

Buongiorno! Welcome to La Bella Italia! Upon arrival in Bari, retrieve your luggage and proceed to the arrivals hall. Here meet your private driver and group manager for transfer to our hotel in Ostuni (1 h 15 min). Please note that check in time is typically between 2:00 PM-3:00 pm. We will spend the afternoon acclimating to the time change and slow pace of Southern Italy. Tonight, we will enjoy a welcome dinner together. Overnight in Ostuni. PT/D/H

Day 3 Sunday August 29, 2021 Ostuni, Alberobello

Alberobello



Breakfast at hotel. This morning, we will meet our private driver in the hotel lobby for transfer to Alberobello (45 min). Here meet our private bilingual certified guide for a two hour walking tour. With a population of 11,000, the unique and one-of-a-kind city of Alberobello is characterized by the most charming cone shaped dwellings you will ever see. Declared a world heritage site, Alberobello is a beautiful place to experience. The dwellings in Alberobello are called "Trulli" and they are constructed without mortar. Instead, an intricate placement of stone produces the final result. We will have the opportunity to visit another authentic trullo today. It has been discovered in parts of the Middle East that similar structures were made thousands of years ago and used as burial tombs. It is rumored that since these dwellings did not have mortar holding them together, they could easily be disassembled and relocated, thereby evading property taxes! Following our time in Alberobello, our driver will take us to our favorite local restaurant for a rustic and genuine lunch. Return to Ostuni in the late afternoon with our driver. Enjoy the evening at your own pace. Overnight in Ostuni.

B/PD/G/ET/L/H

Day 4 Monday August 30, 2021 Ostuni, Cutrofiano, Lecce

Lecce



Breakfast at hotel. Meet our private driver in the hotel lobby this morning for transfer to Lecce (1h). We will meet our private bilingual certified guide for a short walking tour. Lecce is a lively but relaxed university town with plenty to do. A great place for upscale shopping, great food and the best place in Italy to see the traditional art of Paper-Mache making. The architecture in Lecce is rich in Baroque style with many monuments to admire. Lecce is also known as the “Florence of the South” and also known for its agriculture, olive oil and wine production; also it is very well known for “Lecce stone” a limestone only found in this area. With our guide, we will see Piazza Duomo, considered one of the most beautiful closed squares in Italy. After the walking tour, enjoy some time at your own pace. In the late afternoon with our driver, we continue to the nearby town of Cutrofiano (30 min) for an olive oil and wine tasting. Here we will try the Negromaro and Malavasia wines, from Salento (the “heel” of the boot). Light snacks will also be served, such as locally produced charcuterie. Following the tasting, we will return to Ostuni (1h 30m) with our driver for the evening at leisure. Overnight in Ostuni.

B/PD/G/WT/Tstg/H

Day 5 Tuesday August 31, 2021 Ostuni, Polignano a Mare, Catania, Ragusa

Polignano a Mare



Breakfast at hotel and check out. Enjoy the morning at leisure. Meet our private driver in the hotel lobby in the late morning for transfer to Polignano a Mare (45 min). We will arrange a beautiful lunch at 1:00 pm to feast on locally caught seafood and specialties. The afternoon will be yours at leisure in Polignano a Mare. This area along the Adriatic has been settled since prehistoric times. You can view Roman ruins like the bridge on the Via Traiana. In the San Vito neighborhood, you can visit a massive 10th century Benedictine abbey. After lunch, transfer to the Bari Airport (1h 15m). Here we will board a quick flight (1h 10m) to Catania, Sicily. Upon arrival in Catania, we will meet our private driver in the arrivals hall for transfer to our hotel in Ragusa (1h 30m). We will check in to our charming historic hotel and settle. Overnight in Ragusa. **B/PD/L/H/Fly/PT**

Day 6 Wednesday September 1, 2021 Ragusa, Modica

Breakfast at hotel. Today we will tour Ragusa and Modica. First, in the hotel lobby, we will meet our private bilingual certified guide for a short walking tour of Ragusa. Listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, Ragusa is split in two parts: Superiore (upper town) and Ibla (lower town). You will see the beautiful San Giovanni Battista Cathedral in Superiore, and the stunning baroque palaces in Ibla. Its monuments are the late gothic style portal door of the original church of Saint George, the baroque style domo of Saint George, considered the most important example of baroque style in Sicily; the Giardino Ibleo, typical example of Italian garden; the church of San Giuseppe (18th century) and its monastery.

Modica



Next we will reach Modica (30 min), a wonderful destination that charms visitors with its architecture, food, culture and sense of authenticity. Our private bilingual certified guide will meet us once again for a short walking tour. Modica is divided into Modica Alta (Upper Modica) and Modica Bassa (Lower Modica): a maze of narrow streets and steps joins the two parts. In 1693, the city was devastated by the earthquake which destroyed the whole area and then rebuilt in the same location in Baroque architecture. Baroque is the predominant style with the interesting church of St. Peter, the splendid church of St. George and the several Palazzi that can be found both in Modica Alta e Modica Bassa. The sweetest moment of today will be the “Chocolate experience,” in which we will taste some of the town’s best. Modica is famous for its chocolate, whose routes can be traced back to Mexican traditions brought to Sicily via the Spaniards. In the late afternoon, we will return to Ragusa for the evening at leisure. Dinner will be together tonight at a local restaurant. Overnight in Ragusa.

B/PD/G/G/Tstg/D/H

Day 7 Thursday September 2, 2021 Ragusa

Ragusa



Breakfast at hotel. Today is a free day in Ragusa. The ancient city, which was founded in the pre-Greek

ages, is located high on a hill almost 1000 feet high. In 1693 the city was devastated by a huge earthquake, which killed almost 5,000 inhabitants. The rebuilding of the city afterwards resulted in many of the Baroque buildings you can see today. The rivalries between the aristocratic families of old and new lineage, striving to display their superiority in wealth and style, led to the creation of the beautiful palaces and churches that still constitute the main architectural profile of the city. Interestingly, Ragusa is part of the southernmost province of Italy- it is even south of Tunisia, in Africa. This evening, we will enjoy a dinner together in Ragusa. Overnight in Ragusa. B/D/H

Day 8 Friday September 3, 2021 Ragusa, Ortigia/Siracusa, Noto

Siracusa



Breakfast at hotel. This morning our private driver will meet us in the hotel lobby for transfer to Ortigia (1h 45m). Upon arrival, we will meet our private bilingual certified guide for a walking tour of the Island of Ortigia and Siracusa. A small island off of the Sicilian coast, Ortigia is sometimes known as Citta' Vecchia (Old City). Part of Siracusa, Ortigia is marked by its stunning cathedral and altars to St. Lucia. Dive into the Ionian Sea and discover the history and mythology of Ortigia- said to be the birthplace of Artemis. We will explore the 5 neighborhoods of Ortigia with our guide. Located on Sicily's southeastern coast, Siracusa was an important city in Ancient Greece but is now a lively and historically rich destination. Discover the remnants of its past through Greek, Roman and Vandal Ruins with your guide, some of the oldest and most significant archeological ruins in the world. Dating back to the time of ancient Greece, Siracusa was founded in 733 BC by Greek settlers from Corinth and Tenea. Located in the Southeastern corner of Sicily and near the Ionian Sea, Siracusa is listed by Unesco as a World Heritage Site. Following our tour, we will have lunch together in Ortigia. In the late afternoon, we will return to Ragusa with our driver. Along the way, we will stop in the Baroque town of Noto (55 min) for a brief independent visit. Dating back to Roman times and subject to Arab invasion in the year 866, Noto has survived the centuries. In 1693, the town was moved almost 9km due to an earthquake! Today it offers its visitors exquisite charm and many artful treasures.

Noto



Noto represents the apotheosis of late baroque architecture. It has a fishbone urban center with three

parallel roads. You will also notice Spanish influences here and could visit the Palazzo Nicolacci, a historical residence. After time in Noto, we will return to Ragusa (1h) for the night. Overnight in Ragusa. **B/PD/G/ET/L/H**

Day 9 Saturday September 4, 2021 Ragusa, Mt. Etna, Taormina

Mt. Etna



Breakfast at hotel and check out. Meet our private driver this morning in our hotel lobby for a journey up to Mt. Etna (2h 20m). Kindly note that this stop could easily be cancelled due to the spontaneous activity of this feisty volcano. Etna erupts often and visitation is based on safety and accessibility conditions day to day. We will first arrive at the Silvestri Craters and explore Mt. Etna, Europe's highest active volcano which stands at 3350 meters. As we descend, our journey to the volcano will be supplemented with a delicious Sicilian lunch, wine tasting and honey tasting. The rich volcanic soil in the area has allowed the growth of vegetation, including plump grapes and juicy tomatoes. Then, following lunch, we will proceed to Taormina (1h 30m). Check in, settle and enjoy the evening at leisure. Overnight in Taormina. **B/PD/WT/Tstg/L/H**

Day 10 Sunday September 5, 2021 Taormina

Breakfast at our hotel. We will meet our private bilingual certified guide in the hotel lobby for a two-hour walking tour of this upscale Sicilian town this morning. The guided tour will include the Teatro Greco, built in 300 BC by the Ancient Greeks; it was then expanded and further detailed by the Romans upon their arrival centuries later. Always a very lively and attractive spot in town, the Teatro offers its modern-day visitors a simultaneously spectacular view of the sea, coastline and smoking volcano. Entrance tickets will be purchased. From here, we will stroll through Corso Umberto, the main street which snakes through the elegant city center.

Taormina



There is also Palazzo Corvaja, one of the best kept examples of a noble Sicilian palazzo. We will be able visit The Church of San Nicola di Bari, Taormina's most important church overlooking the main piazza.

Together we will stop for some delicious arancini, traditional Sicilian cheese-and-rice balls. After the tour, enjoy time at leisure sipping an espresso or eating a gelato while you simply people watch. Of course, the sunny beach is also near if you wish to soak up some authentic Sicilian Sun! Tonight, we will have dinner together at an authentic Sicilian restaurant. Overnight in Taormina. **B/G/ET/D/H**

Day 11 Monday September 6, 2021 Taormina, Agrigento

Agrigento



This morning after breakfast, meet our private driver in the hotel lobby for leisurely ride to the majestic Valley of Temples in Agrigento (2h 30m). Upon arrival, we will join our private bilingual certified guide for an unforgettable two-hour walking tour of the Valley. We will enjoy an informative look at the Valley which is home to some of the oldest and most significant archaeological ruins in the world. Agrigento is a city on the southern coast of Sicily and is the capital of the province of Agrigento. It is the site of the ancient Greek city of Akragas, which was one of the predominant cities of Magna Graecia during the golden age of Ancient Greece. We will be guided back to the glory of this modern day ruin as you stroll through the famous Valley of the Temples. After our tour, we will enjoy an excellent lunch together made with local ingredients. In the late afternoon, we will return to Taormina for the evening at your own pace. Prepare for overseas flights. Overnight in Taormina.

B/PD/G/ET/L/H

Day 12 Tuesday September 7, 2021 Depart Catania

After breakfast, meet our private driver for transfer to the Catania airport to begin your journey back to the USA. Arrivederci Bella Italia and Sicilia! **B/PT**

CODES: B=Breakfast L=Lunch D=Dinner H=Hotel G=Guide ET=Entrance Ticket
PD=Private Driver PT=Private Transfer TRTK=Train Ticket BR= Boat Ride WT=Wine Tasting
PWT=Private Water Taxi CL=Cooking Lesson

Your custom itinerary includes:

24/7 concierge service from Diana & staff

10 nights in hotels

10 breakfasts

All ground transportation throughout Italy (includes private drivers, private transfers)

7 private bilingual certified guides

3 entrance tickets per person, skip the line

1 inter-Italy flight from Bari to Catania

5 lunches per person, with wine

4 dinners per person, with wine

2 wine tastings

1 honey tasting

1 chocolate tasting

1 olive oil tasting

Kindly note that your final quote for the land portion of this journey does not include international airfare, tipping, meals where not indicated. This itinerary is subject to minor changes.

With 14-16 participants, price per person based on double occupancy is \$4996.00 per person + international airfare

Single room supplement: \$462.00

With 8-13 participants, price per person based on double occupancy is \$5862.00 per person + international airfare

Single room supplement: \$462.00