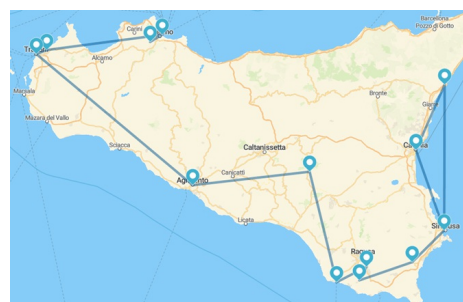




Italy (Sicily), 9 Days · Tailor-made by car

Route through the most breathtaking Sicily, from Palermo to Catania

Sicily hooks you in from the very moment you set foot on the island. Where do we start? Its Mediterranean soul, its heart of fire, its unique cultural fusion from the influences of East and West, its outstanding archaeological sites and famous Greek temples, its stunning natural and volcanic landscapes, magnificent beaches and charming towns and cities with sea views, its quaint traditions, and its delicious cuisine and fine wines. There are a host of reasons that will inspire you to explore this Italian gem, home to important civilisations that left beautiful traces of a glorious past. The "Breathtaking Sicily, from Palermo to Catania" tour is a packed itinerary that will take you through the highlights of this Mediterranean island. An invitation to discover one of the most stunning road trips in Europe. The amazing capital of Palermo is the ideal starting point to explore an island full of surprises. The road winds through breathtaking landscapes, famous landmarks and places full of authenticity which have not yet been affected by mass tourism. Discover the most authentic Sicily by car, at your own pace, enjoying every step of the way. On your tour, you'll discover such gems such as the Palace of the Normans (Palermo); magnificent cathedrals like those of Monreale; beautiful medieval villages with stunning views such as Erice; the old towns of Trapani and Ragusa, where you can enjoy a leisurely "passeggiata"; the incredible temples of Segesta, Selinunte and Agrigento; and unique places such as Piazza Armerina and the Villa Romana del Casale. The east cherishes one of the island's greatest hidden treasures: the incredible "late baroque cities of Val di Noto", a trail of World Heritage sites characterised by their important legacy and breathtaking beauty. The vibrant city of Catania, which lies at the foot of the giant Etna (the largest active volcano in Europe), will fascinate you with its nightlife. The beautiful nearby town of Taormina, with its monumental Teatro Greco, its romantic corners swathed in bougainvillea and charming little squares, will transport you back to the glamour of the fifties and sixties, when the beauty of this island dazzled writers such as Truman Capote, Thomas Mann or Goethe; royals and aristocrats such as William II; and film stars like Greta Garbo, Cary Grant, Orson Welles and Rita Hayworth. Don't miss out!



CULTURAL

FAMILIES

Departure date: Departures from July 2026 till June 2027

From: Cork, Shannon, Dublin

Travel details

DAY 1 · CITY OF ORIGIN - PALERMO

Flight departure from the city of origin to Palermo and rental car pick-up. Sicily entices travellers with fantastic cities such as Palermo. An important trading port since Phoenician times and located along a sweeping bay, this city is the ideal starting point to explore the fascinating island of Sicily. The cultures of East and West intermingled here for centuries, and Palermo is today a vibrant and modern city which houses a fascinating historical heritage and an important artistic and cultural legacy. Its history is still alive in the bustling streets and the old quarter maintains a seductive oriental feel. Feel the Mediterranean soul of the city and its multitude of leisure and entertainment opportunities; travel back to the Golden Age in Quattro Canti, where you can reflect on the transience of life at the impressive Catacombs of the Capuchins, a burial place for the upper classes; attend a concert at the Teatro Massimo, the third largest in Europe; hop from bar to bar around the bustling Piazza Olivella; admire the fabulous Oratorio del Rosario (Church of San Domenico) by the famous artist Anton van Dyck; marvel at the cultural mix of Sicilian architectural treasures such as the Cathedral and the Palatine Chapel, within the 12th-century Norman Palace; learn about Sicily's important past at the Regional Archaeological Museum, one of the most outstanding in its field in Europe; discover the miracles attributed to Santa Rosalia, the patron saint of the city; stroll around the colourful and bustling Ballaro street market; and savour delicious food and Sicilian wines at the famous trattorias in the old town...

Overnight stay in Palermo.

DAY 2 · PALERMO - MONREALE - PALERMO

More time to explore the city of Palermo and its surroundings. About 30 minutes from the capital is the charming town of Monreale, with its impressive Arab-Norman cathedral overlooking Palermo from the famous Conca d'Oro (Golden Shell). The Cathedral, built by Norman king William II, is one of the wonders of the Middle Ages and among the finest examples of Norman architecture to be found in Sicily. With its 6,500 square metres of mosaics, from which a huge depiction of Christ emerges, it is an absolute gem. Take this opportunity to have an espresso or a gelato on the bustling Piazza Guglielmo, dotted with palm trees and cute bars and cafés. From the square, you can go over to Belvedere, which commands magnificent views over the Gulf of Palermo. (Note: The excursion to Monreale may take 3 to 4 hours. To avoid large crowds, it's best to visit early in the morning or the evening). If you want to enjoy some sun and sand, head to the beach of Mondello, near Palermo. Remember that in the warmer months the beach is usually very crowded. Back to Palermo, whose contrasts, splendour, decadence and the mix of architectural styles such as Norman, Florentine or Baroque will continue to amaze you. Now time to discover Palermo's nightlife and trendy restaurants!

Overnight stay in Palermo.

DAY 3 · PALERMO - SEGESTA - TRAPANI - ERICE - TRAPANI

We'll leave the island's capital behind to discover some of the most important ruins of the Elymians (an ancient people who inhabited the western part of Sicily during the Bronze Age and classical antiquity) and one of the most perfect Doric temples in the world (5th century BC). Crowning a secluded spot, there are still many legends surrounding its origin. The temple, well preserved and sheltered among green hills and rugged mountains, oozes a magical atmosphere. (Info: If you visit the Segesta archaeological site in summer, it's best to avoid the hottest hours of the day). Our onward journey takes us to Trapani. From there we'll turn onto the SP3 road to Erice. Despite being packed with tourists in high season, this charismatic town has retained its medieval charm and fairytale image. The views from Mount Eryx and the Balio gardens are magnificent. On a clear day, you can even see Etna and the coast of Tunisia. Next to the garden is the Castle of Venus and the Temple of Venus. This goddess is closely linked to the history of the town, which is famous for its ceramic works and excellent rugs. We'll end the day in Trapani, having zigzagged back on the SP3. (Note: The SP3 is a narrow, panoramic road with lots of curves. If you prefer not to take this fourteen-kilometre journey, you can go up to Erice from Trapani on a modern panoramic cable car. Faster than driving, the cable car is an excellent vantage point from which to view the city, the sea and the vast salt pans). Once in Trapani, enjoy a sunset "passeggiata" through its charming historic quarter. (Note: If you have time, we recommend touring the famous "Via del Sale" and discover the salt marshes that extend from Trapani to Marsala and the Stagnone lagoon, the largest in Sicily).

Overnight stay in Trapani.

● DAY 4 · TRAPANI - SELINUNTE - VALLE DEI TEMPLI - AGRIGENTO

After enjoying the city of Trapani, we'll head for the south coast to discover one of the largest Greek temples in Europe. The important archaeological site of Selinunte (7th century BC) is one of the most spectacular places we'll find en route. (Info: The Tourist Office of Castelvetro organises visits in electric carts). From the nearby Marinella beach, you can enjoy the sea while admiring the magnificent ruins. We get back on the road. After a drive of around 1 hour and 30 minutes, we'll arrive at our next stop: the famous Valle dei Templi (Valley of the Temples) in Agrigento. Declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO, the ancient Akragas was the heart of one of the most important and flourishing cities of Magna Graecia. The Acropolis, jutting out over a turquoise sea, was considered "the most beautiful city of mortals". Today it's one of the most visited sites in Sicily. Among its must-sees are the Temple of Olympian Zeus or the sanctuary of the Chthonic Deities. (Note: The Regional Archaeological Museum and the famous Valle dei Templi can be seen in roughly 2 to 3 hours. Before setting out, check the opening hours in order to plan your visit. The Valley is divided into three sections, all near to the car park, the information office and ticket office). We'll end the day wandering through the old town of Agrigento and savouring some delicious Sicilian cuisine.

Overnight stay in Agrigento.

● DAY 5 · AGRIGENTO - VILLA ROMANA DEL CASALE - PIAZZA ARMERINA - RAGUSA

After wandering through the medieval quarter of Agrigento and visiting the cathedral and other monuments, we'll head for the famous Villa Romana del Casale, a fascinating third-century hunting lodge, just 15 minutes' drive from the town of Piazza Armerina. The Villa has 50 rooms and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Having been buried under mud for centuries, it was rediscovered in the 1950s in a perfect state. The Roman floor mosaics are magnificent and one of the best-preserved examples in the world. (Note: To enjoy this fascinating site without huge crowds, it's best to visit the Villa early in the morning or around midday, as long as it isn't too hot. For convenience, leave your car at the Villa car park.

You can also rest your feet at the café located on the site).

Once in Piazza Armerina, take a leisurely stroll through its streets and enjoy some of the most authentic sights of inland Sicily that we'll see during the trip. (Note: If you're travelling in mid-August, don't miss the famous "Palio dei Normanni" festival). In the afternoon, we'll head to the beautiful city of Ragusa, located approximately 100 kilometres away.

There we'll discover two cities in one: Ragusa and Ragusa Superiore. Given its charm and atmosphere, it's well worth taking a stroll around and enjoying a delicious dinner in the heart of Ragusa.

Maze-like and majestic, the town is dotted with mansions of the local aristocracy, typical stone houses, elegant churches and cute piazzas.

Discover more of the fascinating Sicilian culture through its cuisine, influenced by Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Arabs, Normans, Spaniards...

Overnight stay in Ragusa.

● DAY 6 · RAGUSA - MODICA - SCICLI - NOTO - SYRACUSE

After our stay in fascinating Ragusa, today we'll visit the "Late Baroque Towns of the Val di Noto", recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage Site for their beauty and legacy. Off we go! There are around 15 kilometres of winding road through hills and beautiful landscapes dotted with lemon trees to get from Ragusa to Modica (World Heritage Site). Perched on the walls of a deep gorge, the hometown of Nobel Laureate in Literature, Salvador Quasimodo, seduces travellers with its magnificent medieval buildings, treasures such as the Chiesa di San Giorgio, bustling thoroughfares such as the Corso Umberto I, and mouth-watering dishes such as "mpanatigghi" (beef and chocolate pastries)... (Note: This town is famous for producing chocolate in the same primitive form as the Aztecs did. A technique inherited from the first Spaniards who brought the chocolate from the New World to Sicily). En route to Noto, and if you have time, you can take a detour to Scicli (World Heritage Site), a baroque jewel located about 10 kilometres south of Modica. And then we'll arrive in Noto (another World Heritage Site), one of the most beautiful baroque towns of Sicily. A stroll along the elegant Corso Vittorio Emanuele, dotted with palaces and Baroque churches, is a real treat. The most monumental sites of the city overlook this avenue. You can find out about the luxurious life of the ancient nobility with a visit to the ornate Palazzo di Villadorata Nicolaci. Our last stop today will be Syracuse (World Heritage Site), a fascinating city influenced by a host of civilisations and cultures. Founded between 734-733 BC, it extends along the sea near the island of Ortigia, linked to the mainland by a bridge. Considered one of the most beautiful cities of the ancient world, the likes of Plato, Archimedes and Aeschylus once walked its streets. A great deal of its allure lies in the amazing fusion of its Greco-Roman past with 18th-century architecture, giving rise to a truly unique destination. Today, monuments such as the Temple of Minerva (transformed into a Christian cathedral), the Fountain of Arethusa, the Temple of Apollo and the Roman amphitheatre are reminders of its glorious past. (Note: You can divide the visit into two parts: one around the Archaeological Park and the other on the island of Ortigia).

Overnight stay in Syracuse.

● DAY 7 · SYRACUSE - CATANIA

After thoroughly exploring the beautiful city of Syracuse, we'll head to the vibrant volcanic city of Catania (World Heritage Site), located some 66 kilometres to the north. Along the way, we'll pass through beautiful orchards and stunning landscapes. Located on the east coast, at the foot of Mount Etna, Catania is the second largest city in Sicily. This vibrant city boasts a surprising cultural heritage, as it has been controlled by Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Arabs, Normans, Bourbons, Swabians, Angevins, Aragonese, Spanish and Italians... With great transport connections and an outstanding nightlife, its elegant baroque centre was built with volcanic stone from the Etna eruption of 1669. (Note: The city centre is a World Heritage Site, together with the late Baroque towns of the Val di Noto). In the lively Piazza Duomo, you'll find some of the main sights such as the Cathedral dedicated to Saint Agatha, the Fontana dell'Elefante and La Pescheria market... If you fancy a bit of retail therapy, head over to Via Etnea, as it has a great mix of cafes, shops and boutiques. Try out the typical "pasta alla norma", with aubergine and ricotta, which owes its name to one of city's favourite sons: Vincenzo Bellini, composer of the opera "Norma".

Overnight stay in Catania.

● DAY 8 · CATANIA - VOLCANO ETNA - TAORMINA - CATANIA

From Catania, the excursion to Mount Etna is a must (Weather permitting. If you need information, you can contact the Catania Tourist Office or visit the website of funiviaetna.com). Visiting the largest active volcano in Europe will give you an insight into the intense volcanic activity on the island and also the chance to enjoy unique views of the region and the unusual moon-like landscape dotted with the distinctive vegetation of the region. With a majestic profile dominating the east of the island, it's a place where nature, culture and history come together to form a unique environment. (Note: The tour, which will take about 3 or 4 hours, is not included. Always follow the safety guidelines. Because of the unpredictable nature of the volcano, visiting with a guide is recommended). Etna has two main entrances, one to the south and one to the north. The south side is the one most tourists use and provides easier access to the smouldering craters. If you arrive by road, follow the signs for "Etna Sud" to the "Rifugio Sapienza", about 18 kilometres from Nicolosi. At this point, you'll have to park the car and plan your uphill ascent, which is divided into two stretches. On the first stretch, you can trek your way up or take the "Funivia dell'Etna" cable car. The second part of the climb must be done on a 4x4 bus. Tip: make sure you're well equipped with comfortable shoes, warm clothes and sunglasses. After one of the most intense trips of the entire tour, we'll head for the beautiful Taormina, one of the towns that best reflects the historic soul of this fascinating island with Greek, Roman, Byzantine and medieval monuments... Sicily's first tourist resort, it's a perfectly preserved medieval jewel swathed in bougainvillea. Peppered with romantic corners and charming little squares, its beauty dazzled writers such as Truman Capote, Thomas Mann or Goethe; royals and aristocrats such as William II; and film stars like Greta Garbo, Cary Grant, Orson Welles and Rita Hayworth... Today, a steady trickle of tourists come here every day. Its monumental Teatro Greco (3rd century BC) overlooking the peaks of Etna, Bay of Naxos and the Ionian Sea is spectacular. Enjoy a pleasant "passeggiata" and soak up the glamour that accompanies the cobble-stoned streets, quirky shops and seafront terraces.

Overnight stay in Catania.

● DAY 9 · CATANIA - CITY OF ORIGIN

Arrival at the airport with enough time to drop off your rental car and flight back to the city of origin.

Arrival. End of the trip and our services.

Your trip includes

Your trip includes

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ✓ Return flight. | ✓ Stay in selected hotel in Palermo. | ✓ Selected meal plan in Palermo. |
| ✓ Stay in selected hotel in Trapani. | ✓ Selected meal plan in Trapani. | |
| ✓ Stay in selected hotel in Agrigento. | ✓ Selected meal plan in Agrigento. | |
| ✓ Stay in selected hotel in Ragusa. | ✓ Selected meal plan in Ragusa. | ✓ Stay in selected hotel in Syracuse. |
| ✓ Selected meal plan in Syracuse. | ✓ Stay in selected hotel in Catania. | ✓ Selected meal plan in Catania. |
| ✓ Rent-a-car. | | |

Your trip doesn't include

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| ✗ Accommodation taxes in Sicily direct payment in facility. | ✗ Possible toll charges. | ✗ Insolvency protection. |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|

Destinations Visited

Palermo



Monreale



Erice



Trapani



Agrigento



Piazza Armerina



Ragusa



Modica



Scicli



Noto



Syracuse



Catania



Taormina



Important remarks

- Triple rooms in Europe are generally rooms with twin beds or a double, in which a folding bed is installed to accommodate the third person. Due to the inconvenience this causes, we advise against using this option as far as possible.
- Check-in time at the hotel on the day of arrival depends on each establishment, but in no case will it be before 3:00 p.m., unless otherwise indicated.

- The proposed excursions and tours for each day are purely suggestions, as you can tailor the trip to suit your times, tastes and needs.
- A credit card is considered a guarantee, so sometimes you will need one for check-in at hotels.
- Hotels usually have cots available. Otherwise, babies will have to share a bed with an adult.
- To pick up your rental car, you'll need a credit (not debit) card in the name of the person who made the booking, who must also be the named driver of the vehicle.
- Consult the necessary documentation to enter the destinations visited and for transit in the countries where air stopovers are made.