



BAROQUE SICILY

FOR THE ARTS SOCIETY GRANTA

April 24 – 30, 2021

Our tour will take in the many layers of history and culture found in the South Eastern area of Sicily. We will enjoy visits to many of the UNESCO sites, including Catania, Modica, Ibla, Noto and Ragusa. We will also spend time exploring Siracusa, which was once the largest city in the ancient world, and the small island of Ortigia, the historical heart of Siracusa.

No tour to the East of Sicily is complete without a visit to the hilltop town of Taormina, which perches spectacularly on the side of the mountain; you can see Mount Etna in the distance, and this is where our tour will conclude. We will experience the dramatic landscapes and views of Mount Etna, one of the world's most active volcanoes.

The architectural style known as Sicilian Baroque is unique to this beautiful Italian island. It evolved in the 17th and 18th centuries and is dominated by the classical Baroque flourishes of sweeping curves and ornate decorations, cherubs and balconies that adorn these dramatic buildings.

After a series of earthquakes in South Eastern Sicily in the middle ages it was the Baroque style of architecture that was very much in fashion at the time when these devastated communities were being rebuilt. Hence the elaborate churches and palaces which make up most of the architecture in this corner of Sicily.

Our tour is based in both Siracusa and Catania in comfortable and well located 4 star hotels.

Tour Director

Christopher Wellington MA

Christopher graduated in history from Cambridge University, but has spent most of his career working in



Italy, where he lives with his family in Piacenza. He is a recognised guide in Emilia Romagna, and his professional interests include history, the Church, and art and architecture, especially of the Middle Ages.

ITINERARY

Saturday April 24, 2021

Morning Departure from Cambridge by coach for London Gatwick airport
1450 Depart London Gatwick Airport on British Airways Flight.
1900 Arrive Catania.
Transfer by coach to Hotel Villa Politi, Siracusa for three nights stay.
Welcome drink and late supper on arrival in hotel.

Sunday April 25, 2021

All day visit to Siracusa and Ortigia, to include a guided tour of Neapolis Archaeological Park including the Greek theatre, the latomie (famous quarries now turned into gardens) and Roman amphitheatre. Visit the Paolo Orsi archaeological museum.
Continue to Ortigia. Visits include the Cathedral, Chiesa di Santa Lucia alla Badia (site of Caravaggio's Burial of St Lucy), Fountain of Arethusa and Temple of Apollo.
Return to hotel – free evening.

Monday April 26, 2021

All day visit to Ragusa and Ibla and Modica to explore sites including the churches of San Giorgio and San Giuseppe, followed by Ragusa Archaeological Museum.
Return to Siracusa.
Dinner in hotel

Tuesday April 27, 2021

Depart Siracusa with luggage for Catania. Depart to visit the Castle of Euryalus before travelling on to Noto, UNESCO world heritage site with exuberant baroque architecture, to include a visit to an enclosed monastery and noble palace en route to Catania. Check in to Hotel Il Principe for three nights stay. Late afternoon/early evening orientation tour on foot of Catania city centre.
Dinner in hotel.



Wednesday April 28, 2021

Depart by coach for all day visit to Piazza Armenia for guided tour with Christopher Wellington of the Villa del Casale (famous for its remarkable mosaic floors depicting hunting scenes, mythological characters and sporting events) and Morgantina archaeological site.
Return to Catania.
Dinner in hotel

Thursday April 29, 2021

Depart by coach for Taormina. Visit the Greco-Roman theatre with superb coastal views
Continue to Messina to visit the art gallery (paintings by Caravaggio, Antonellotto)
Return to Catania.
Free evening

Friday April 30, 2021

0900 departure by coach to Mount Etna
(For those who don't wish to visit Mount Etna a free morning can be spent in Catania)
1000 arrival Rifugio Sapienza Crateri Silvestri approximately 1900 meters.

Meet an expert guide who will accompany you on the cable car to an altitude of 2500 meters. Transfer to a 4 x 4 vehicle and continue up the mountain to reach a height of 2900 meters near Torre del Filosofo. From here you can walk around the entire circumference of the large crater from the 2003 eruption.
1230 return by 4 x 4 vehicle and cable car back to the Rifugio Sapienza and transfer by bus to Randazzo.
1400 Farewell Lunch in Randazzo situated at the northern foot of Mount Etna.
1940 Depart Catania on British Airways Flight
2155 Arrive London Gatwick Airport.
Continue homeward to Cambridge by coach.

The cost of the tour is £1800 per person to include return coach travel to the airport, return flight, accommodation in a twin room, breakfasts, one lunch and four dinners with wine, all visits, gratuities and the services of your tour director Christopher Wellington who will accompany and guide you throughout the tour.

*Not included: Single room supplement £225pp, remaining lunches, travel insurance.
Please note these costs are subject to change. The flight cost cannot be confirmed until April 2020.*

To register your interest for this tour please complete a booking form and return along with a refundable deposit of £50 per person to Gillian Harvey, Ponders Travel, 25 High Street, Over, Cambridge, CB24 5NB
Email: gill@ponderstravel.co.uk Tel: 07989 893552
If you would like any further details please contact either Neil Rushton nr10000@cam.ac.uk or Nan Taplin taplin.nan@gmail.com

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