

# SICILIAN EXPERIENCE

## NO. 1

5 days  
4 nights

– 1st day –  
TAORMINA

– 2nd day –  
MOUNT ETNA

– 3rd day –  
SIRACUSA

– 4th day –  
CATANIA

– 5th day –  
SHOPPING  
IN CATANIA



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Explore • Experience • Expand



# 1st Day

## TAORMINA

Meet-and-greet at Catania Airport.

Transfer to the 5\* Hotel in Taormina – about 55 km from the Catania’s airport.

As soon as you arrive in Taormina, you will feel the magical, mythical atmosphere spread all around which has enchanted visitors from all over the world, nowadays is one of the most famous tourism localities. This charming area is situated on hilltop of Monte Tauro.

Check in at the Hotel 5\* situated in front of the Roman-Greek Theatre with sea and Etna view; it dates back to 1873 and represents an elegant 19th century residence inherited from the grand Sicilian nobility.



Amazing view from the hotel

Welcome lunch in the hotel restaurant or a gourmet restaurant; after lunch, guided walking tour through Taormina.



TAORMINA - Corso Umberto

There are many noble residences, like the wonderful Palazzo Corvaja, Palazzo dei Duchi di Santo Stefano, and the churches, every one built with a peculiar architecture style, from Chiesa dei Cappuccini to Chiesa di San Pancrazio that was built on the rests of a Hellenistic temple.



TAORMINA - Scalinata

Walking along its main street, Corso Umberto, and the maze of narrow stair cased streets and small beautiful squares, you find also Theaters and Gymnasium from the Greek Age, Odeon and Baths from the Roman Age, beautiful buildings in which the Arab and the Norman cultures melt together in a memorable sense of beauty, traces of the Byzantine domination and beautiful villas which belonged to the European aristocracy in the XVIII and XIX centuries, all in the context of a small town on top of the hill, overlooking the coastline of the Ionian Sea.

Aperitif and dinner on the terrace of a gourmet restaurant with sea view



TAORMINA - Greek theater



TAORMINA - A restaurant with a view







2nd Day

MOUNT ETNA  
&  
ALCANTARA GORGES

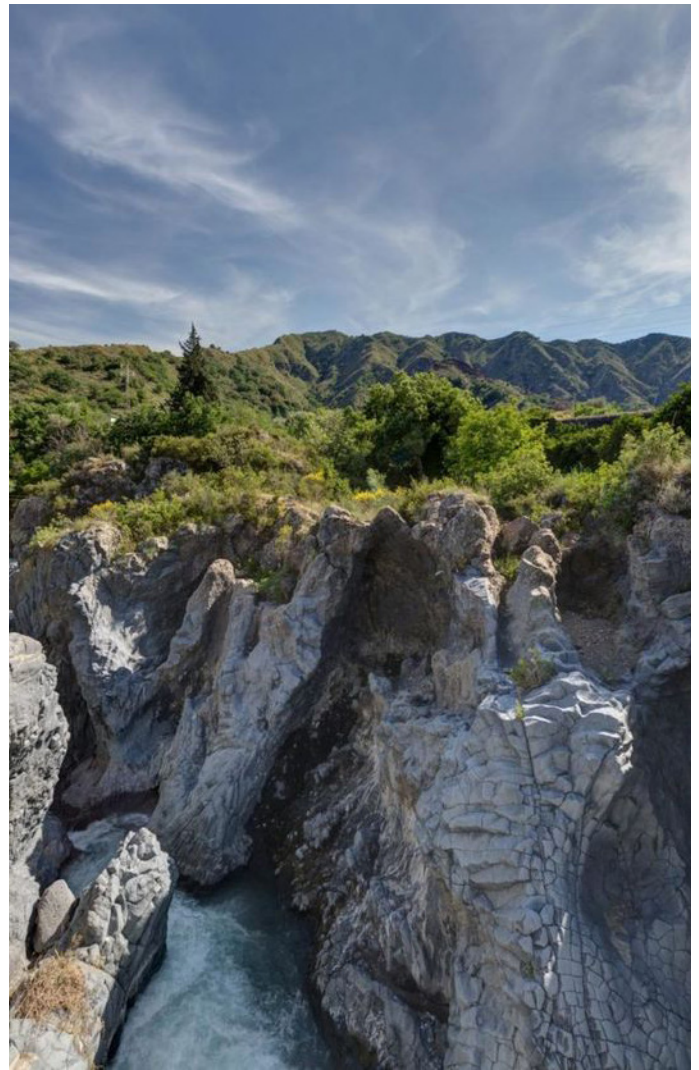
Full day trip combination off road 4x4 / bus  
– distance to Mount Etna about 30 km, 50 mins. –

We will discover Mount Etna and its surroundings, including Alcantara Gorges.

Mount Etna is the greatest active volcano in Europe and one of the biggest in the world. Etna is in fact 3.329-meter-high and forms the background to practically the whole of the Sicilian landscape, given to the fact that it can be seen at a distance of more than 250 Km.



After breakfast in hotel, we will go visiting the **volcano and Alcantara Gorges**—mysterious phenomena created by the eruption of Etna.



ALCANTARA GORGES

Starting with spectacular lookouts **Belvedere di Monte Fontane** over the “Valle del Bove” and recent lava flows.

We will go in a **lava cave, equipped with helmets and torches**, besides crossing secular forests where it will be possible to find out about plants that have colonized the hard lava rock.

Guided tour of **Castiglione di Sicilia, Linguaglossa**, in the **wine itinerary district** – the lava Stream of 2002, inactive craters of Monti Sartorius (tunnel of lava flowing), Grotta dei Ladroni, villages made out of black rocks.

**Lunch in a typical farmhouse** with wine tasting of Etna DOC wines in a cellar.

After lunch transfer to valley of Alcantara (distant about 15 km) – its dominant is a river that rises on Etna in the high of 1250 m and flows into the Ionian Sea after 48 km course.

The valley is about 500 m long with a beautiful scenery of basaltic stone – the right and unique wonder of the landscape. We will have a soft hiking into the canyon to admire the magma lavastones.

Dinner in a fish restaurant on the seaside.



3rd Day

## SIRACUSA

**Full day trip**  
 – distance about 120 km from Taormina,  
 1 hour and 30 mins.–

After the breakfast departure from hotel in Taormina to Siracusa, situated on a flat leveled area on the eastern coast of Sicily, a town founded by the Greeks in 734 b.C.

Arrival and visit one of the most important archaeological sites of the world, with locale guide.

The Archaeological Area, which extends over the ancient quarter of Neapolis, on a site overlooking the Ionian Sea; this contains the 5th century Greek Theatre, the Paradise Quarry, the Ear of Dionysus (an artificial grotto in the form of an earlobe), the Cord-makers Grotto, the 2nd century A.D. Roman Amphitheatre, the Sacrificial Altar.

Lunch in a restaurant on the seaside.

After lunch walking guided tour round the historical centre, situated on the island of Ortigia – big only one square km and is connected to the mainland by Ponte Nuovo bridge from the rest of the city.



ORTIGIA

© Michele Ponzio

We will find the temple of Apollo and 7th century Cathedral, built on the foundations of the former temple of Minerva, the fountain of Arethusa, Piazza Archimede – with the Baroque Diana Fountain, the Duomo—the Cathedral that was built in the 7th century over the great Temple of Athens...



Return trip to Taormina for dinner.

ORTIGIA – Diana Fountain



ORTIGIA - Piazza Duomo



4th Day

CATANIA  
&  
THE CYCLOPS RIVIERA

Full day trip

– distance from Taormina about 50 km, 50 mins. –

The second largest city in Sicily by population, Catania spreads out over the Plain of Catania, between the Ionian Sea and the slopes of Etna. 2,700 years of history, are the scenery for a daily unique performance.



CATANIA – Villa Bellini



CATANIA – Piazza Duomo – ©Luca Aless (Own work) CC BY-SA 4

Catania, due to its splendid location on the seaside and to its temperate climate, was since VIII century B.C. subsequently conquered by several dominators: Greeks, Romans, Goths, Byzantines, Arabs, Normans, Swebians, French, Spanish, and Austrians who have all left their “footprints”, in the form of beautiful buildings. We will visit the morning fish market in the heart of the city. Norman Castello Ursino, wanted by Frederick II of Swabia in 1239.

A splendid circuit of Sicilian Baroque masterpieces characterizes the scene in the Piazza del Duomo at the heart of Catania.





ACI CASTELLO – The Norman Castle



ACI TREZZA

Lunch in Catania in a fish restaurant.

After lunch transfer to “**Cyclops Riviera**” seaside resort with spectacular lava stone coastline (at the half way form Catania to Taormina), free time and walking along the seaside.

**Aci Castello** –with the Norman Castle– and **Aci Trezza**, admiring their three tall, column-shaped islands imposing rocks rising from the sea, this Cyclopean Isles are of volcanic origin, and may at one time have been attached to Sicily. The lava forming the basaltic columns was consolidated under great pressure, probably at the bottom of the sea. According to local legend, these great stones are the ones thrown at Odysseus by Cyclops Polyphemus that lived on Etna - legend attributed at Homer in the famous Odyssey.

**Option: only in summer period: Boat trip to Isola Lachea with a light refreshment.**

In the late afternoon visit to **Acireale** (guided tour) – the city rises on the edge of a lava plateau on the southeast slopes of Mt. Etna, overlooking the Ionian Sea. A place enchanted by the blue of the sea, by the



ACIREALE

dark color of the lava stone and the green of citrus groves. The history of Acireale sinks its roots in the myth of the unlucky love of Aci and Galatea.

In 1624, it was baptized Royal city from Filippo IV and the name used nowadays “Acireale” derives from it. After the earthquake of 1693, lots of monuments and cultural centers were re-built such as the roman gothic “Duomo” of XIV century with the chapel of S. Venera “SS Peter and Paul church” of 1600 and S. Sebastian Church of XVII century. Among the urbanistic structure there is the “Palazzo Comunale” of 1659, with a rich portal and the Modò building with beautiful brackets. Another important building hosts the terms of S. Venera, a thermal center built in 1873 with a neoclassical façade.

Dinner in Taormina gourmet restaurant with gala dinner.

5th Day

SHOPPING IN CATANIA  
RETURN FLIGHT

– distance from Taormina about 50 km, 50 mins.–

After breakfast and check out from hotel, transfer to the airport or stop in Catania downtown for shopping,

Fontanarossa airport is only 6 km to the city center.





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