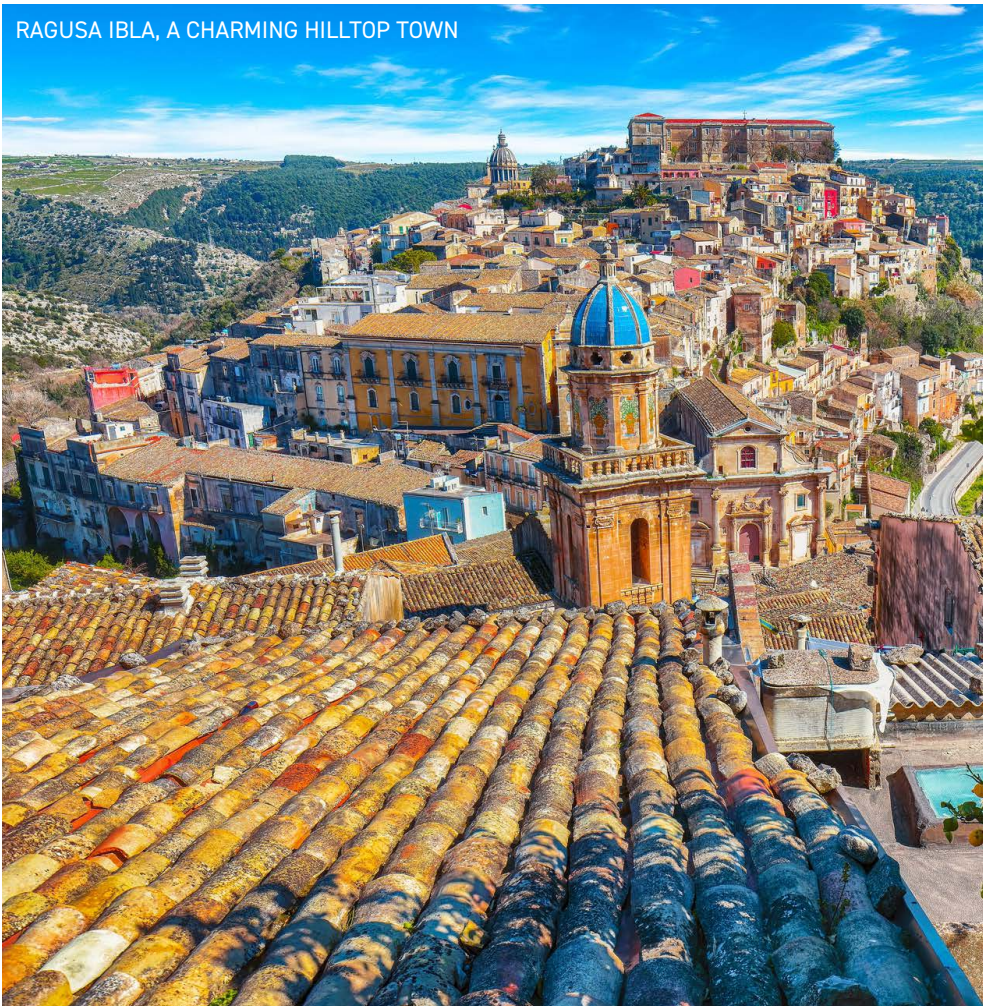


Tasting Sicily

A Culinary Adventure in Italy
Hosted by Onward Travel
October 21—29, 2024

ONWARD TRAVEL 
EST 2014

RAGUSA IBLA, A CHARMING HILLTOP TOWN



This fall we're headed to the largest and most diverse island in the Mediterranean.

It's a place where east meets west, where African and European influences mingle. Where the lemon trees are fragrant, the sun is shining, and the history of ancient culture is woven into daily life.

We're visiting in October when autumn is in full swing and Sicily's most iconic products like pistachios, citrus fruits, chestnuts, and olives are being harvested.

Join a small group of travelers to explore Sicily's fascinating cuisine, culture, and scenery. The first three nights will be spent at an agriturismo in the Etna Regional Park. A wonderful base for exploring Taormina and Mount Etna. The next five nights will be based in Syracuse's ancient quarter: Ortygia. Syracuse was the largest city in the ancient world, and these days Ortygia is full of atmosphere and timeless beauty.

Sicily has been a source of inspiration for millennia – from Homer, to the Greek legends, to The Godfather, and now it's your turn. Join Onward Travel to experience The Island in the Sun.



IMAGINE YOURSELF...

Cooking (and eating!)
Sicilian specialties.

Exploring picture-perfect
Baroque hilltop towns.

Peering over the edge of
a volcanic crater.

Welcome to Sicily!

DAY 1: MONDAY OCTOBER 21

- Arrive at the forested estate you'll call home for three nights
- Savor local flavors and great company at our welcome dinner

Benvenuto! Travelers will be collected from the Catania airport and transferred to the agriturismo depending on arrival time. Take some R&R this afternoon for a siesta or stroll around the property. For the next several days we'll be in the shadow of Mt. Etna, exploring the culinary delights and natural splendor of her slopes. We'll reside in the middle of a 30 acre chestnut tree forest at a restored stone agricultural estate from the 1800's, with 10 rooms exclusively for our group.

Tonight we'll dine at the agriturismo's small restaurant that features local products and creative cooking. Along with our dinner, we'll taste wines from the Etna DOC, Sicily's first DOC.

Meals Dinner

Majestic Mount Etna

DAY 2: TUESDAY OCTOBER 22

- Become a pistachio expert as you discover the local green gold
- Ascend Mount Etna to see a volcanic crater

Wake up to peace and quiet and volcano views... plus a nice breakfast spread. We're driving north around the base of the volcano to Bronte...famous for pistachio production. First we'll visit a pistachio farm, then we're off to the laboratory where they make pistachio products, then finally we'll enjoy a pistachio-themed lunch. Bronte pistachios are known for their richly concentrated flavor, sometimes referred to as "green gold."

This afternoon we're off to finally experience that volcano we've been staring at. Mount Etna is famous not just because it dominates the landscape of eastern Sicily, but also for the nectar of its lush slopes: wine and honey, so we'll make sure to collect these delicious products and taste them back at the agriturismo. We'll ascend Mount Etna, by bus, to get up close and personal with a crater. Folklore and legend surround the volcano and it is now a national park full of otherworldly vistas. Eventually we'll return to our homebase for a cozy dinner together and a tasting of local products.

Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Tantalizing Taormina

DAY 3: WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 23

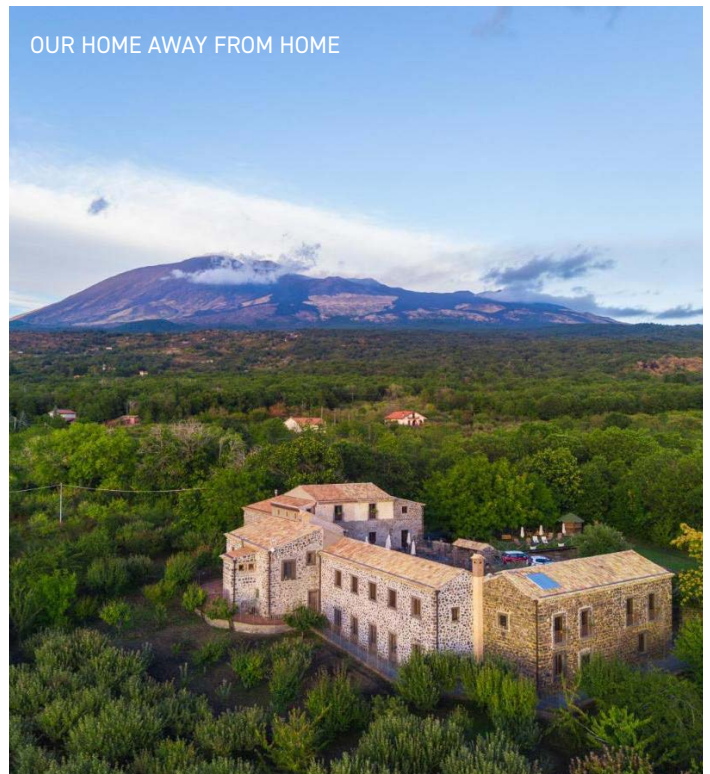
- Explore absolutely beautiful Taormina at your own pace
- Roll up your sleeves for a cooking class

This morning our destination is Taormina, a seaside resort town popular since the 19th century. The town is spectacularly perched on the side of a mountain, with beautiful views of Mount Etna and class and sophistication for days. Barbara will orient you to the town and then you have free time for wandering and lunch. Take time to explore the medieval streets, especially pedestrian friendly Corso Umberto, lined with shops. This afternoon, we will have a guided visit to the Greek theater to see this 3rd century BC amphitheater plus the excellent views from the site.

Tonight we'll convene at the agriturismo's restaurant to prepare a farewell dinner together. It's so fun to cook together, and we'll enjoy learning from the local chef as they lead a cooking class. We'll savor our dinner tonight, toasting the fun we've had together on this first leg of the tour.

Meals Breakfast, Dinner

OUR HOME AWAY FROM HOME



Moving to the Coast

DAY 4: THURSDAY OCTOBER 24

- Visit Catania's exhilarating and iconic fish market
- Settle-in to Siracusa... look out at the Mediterranean and relax

Mid-morning we'll head to Catania, a shabby-chic city that is home to the thriving and legendary La Pescheria fish market. We'll visit the street markets and admire the fishmongers' haul. Take a little time to enjoy the beautiful baroque mainstreet, Via Crociferi. Lunch today will be Sicilian street food such as *arancini* (filled rice balls) and *pane con panelle e crocche* (chickpea fritters and potato croquettes in a bread roll). After sensory and culinary overload... we're off to Siracusa.

Siracusa has a picturesque location on the Ionian coast. And just off mainland Siracusa is the small island Ortygia, that was colonized by Corinthians in 734 BC. The setting is magical! We'll be based at the charming, 27-room waterfront Hotel Gutowski. It's calming in its simplicity and well located.

This evening, we'll gather at Hotel Gutowski to share some wine and soak in the views together. Then Barbara will walk the group through Ortigia, orienting you to this quaint area, culminating with a cozy and delicious dinner at a local restaurant.

Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

A Day in Ancient Siracusa

DAY 5: FRIDAY OCTOBER 25

- Experience ancient history through Greek and Roman ruins
- Take some free time to explore Siracusa at your own pace

Spend the morning as you please. After lunch, we'll visit nearby Parco Archeologico della Neapolis. Considered one of the most compelling archeological sites in Sicily, Parco Archeologico has a 5th-century Greek theater carved out of rock and a Roman amphitheater originally used for gladiatorial combats and horse races. A knowledgeable guide will interpret the site for us.

We want to give you plenty of free time for exploring Siracusa. Tonight is free for dinner on your own, perhaps we'll all convene for a nightcap!

Meals Breakfast

Baroque Hill Town Beauty

DAY 6: SATURDAY OCTOBER 26

- Explore two gorgeous, atmospheric hill towns
- Taste some of Italy's best chocolate and cheese

In 1693 a devastating earthquake all but ruined many of the hill towns in Southeast Sicily. In a few days you'll experience rebuilt Noto and today we'll experience two stunning towns: Modica and Ragusa. When these towns were rebuilt, they were rebuilt in meticulous Baroque style, so the piazzas are picturesque and the town centers are full of detail, drama, and grandeur.

We'll start in Ragusa Ibla. We'll get a view of the rooftops and the beautiful blue dome of Santa-Maria dell'Otrìa. Stroll the public gardens at Giardini Iblei and enjoy the stunning piazzas in this beautiful rebuilt old town. Then, we'll have a beautiful three-course lunch at Ristorante Duomo - two Michelin stars. After a lovely lunch, relax on the short transfer to Modica.

Modica was once a very powerful town in Sicily. It remains a beautiful and interesting destination. We'll visit Dolceria Bonajuto, Sicily's oldest chocolate factory, for a tour of their kitchen and a chocolate tasting. The chocolate is a legacy of Spanish rule, but it remains some of the best in Italy. Then, take some time to shop and stroll... maybe stop by Casa del Formaggio to taste local cheeses such as Ragusano, a cow's milk cheese and fresh ricotta. As the sun gets lower, it's time to head back to Hotel Gutowski. We'll have dinner at the hotel's creative restaurant tonight, Gutkowskino.

Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



A PASTA DISH AT GUTKOWSKINO

Exploring Culture & Cuisine

DAY 7: SUNDAY OCTOBER 27

- Learn culinary tricks and local specialties at a hands-on cooking class
- Admire Ortygia from the water

Enjoy a leisurely morning and a delicious breakfast. Mid morning we'll meet an executive chef to tour the daily market, then return to his restaurant to prepare lunch. Get an introduction to the products of Sicily at the sensory-pleasing market, then roll up your sleeves as we prepare a delicious multi-course meal. Wine and a fabulous lunch will follow.

This afternoon, we'll see stunning Ortygia from the water on an hour-long boat tour. Entertaining and scenic... it is so fun to see the island from a boat.

Meals Breakfast, Lunch



Wine, Nature & Charm

DAY 8: MONDAY OCTOBER 28

- Stroll picture-perfect Noto, gelato in hand
- Visit a winery and enjoy lunch with perfect wine pairings

Today we're in pursuit of the best of Southeast Sicily. Our first stop: Noto. Noto is a picture-perfect Baroque town with an elegantly manicured main street, Corso Vittorio Emanuele. Did you know ice cream is rumored to have been invented in Sicily? And it was absolutely perfected in Noto. So we'll (almost) ruin our appetites with a morning ice cream – pistachio, mulberry, amaro, or almond, perhaps? – and then head south to drink in the landscape.

Our next stop is Buonivini Planeta winery. The past couple decades have seen a new generation of Sicilian wine producers, with more than 20 DOC and DOCG territories and many vintages that are considered some of Italy's finest wines. Planeta has seven wineries in Sicily, with Buonivini being their eco-friendly winery. Iconic Sicilian grape Nero d'Avola is grown here, as are Moscato Bianco grapes, so we'll have an opportunity to try some classic Sicilian wines along with a tasty lunch.

We'll arrive back at Hotel Gutowski late afternoon, in time to regroup before a memorable farewell dinner. What an amazing week we've had exploring Sicily!

Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Arrivederci!

DAY 9: TUESDAY OCTOBER 29

Thank you for sharing this special week in Sicily! Transfers are available this morning for flights out of Catania.

Meals Breakfast

Trip Essentials

BEGINS	Mt. Etna Agriturismo on Monday, October 21, 2024 Airport transfer provided from Catania Airport to Agriturismo
ENDS	Catania, Italy on Tuesday, October 29, 2024 (no activities scheduled 10/29) Transfer provided from Siracusa to Catania Airport
SUITABILITY & MOBILITY	<u>This tour includes walking for 15-30 minutes at a time, plus stairs and cobblestones.</u> Travelers may always opt out of activities they deem too physically challenging but refunds will not be provided. The modern towns of the Amalfi Coast have grown from ancient settlements built into the cliffs, so please be prepared for uneven terrain.
TOUR DATES & PRICE	October 21–29, 2024 Double Occupancy \$3,800 per traveler Single Supplement \$450 additional Contact Onward if you are interested in a room upgrade. <i>Note that air travel is not included and a current passport is required for travel to Italy. You are welcome to pay by credit card, please add a 3% surcharge.</i>
LODGING	Mt. Etna Agriturismo Villa 3 Nights Carefully restored 19th-century villa, former agricultural estate, in the middle of a chestnut forest with a pool and a restaurant. Hotel Gutowski 5 Nights A fresh and stylish hotel on the Ortigia waterfront with tile floors, lots of light, and a calming aesthetic. Enjoy the terrace with sea views.

Air Travel

The tour begins & ends in Catania, the airport code is CTA.
Contact Onward Travel if you’d like assistance booking flights.

Trip price includes the following:

- Airport transfers and ground transportation to/from all scheduled activities.
- Five nights accommodations at Hotel Gutowski and three nights accommodations at Agriturismo.
- Most meals: daily breakfasts, five lunches, and six dinners. We have fantastic gourmet experiences, wine included, of course!
- Local guide services throughout the tour to truly understand Sicily.
- Activities, tastings, cooking classes, and tours as detailed in the itinerary.

Register Now!

Visit onwardtravel.co to complete the registration form.

\$1,500 deposit due upon booking, balance due by July 15, 2024.



The Onward
Travel Tour
Director
for this
trip is
Barbara

Barbara Bandinelli is a tour guide in her home city of Florence and Onward has been working with her there for so many years we’ve lost count! Her fun and interesting Florence walking tours are always a highlight of our travelers’ Tuscan experience.

Barbara considers herself a true Italian who loves “to talk, to chat, to eat, to drink” and she can’t wait to enjoy life together in Italy with you!

Please take note of the following useful information, and view more at www.onwardtravel.co/letsgo



Once Onward Travel receives your registration form, we will send you an **invoice** with instructions to pay the **deposit**.



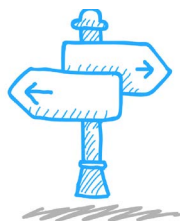
If you'd like to purchase **trip insurance**, we suggest Travelex. For more info, call them at 800-228-9792 or visit www.travelex.com and refer to location number 32-0704.



Four to six weeks before the tour **we will mail you a packet** with a packing list, traveler directory and other useful info.



Make sure you know where your **passport** is now! For travel to Italy it should be valid for six months beyond your return date.



Onward Travel's cancellation policy in a nutshell:

- \$250 of your initial deposit is nonrefundable
- Cancel within 90 days and the full deposit is nonrefundable
- Cancel within 60 days and 50% of total trip fee is nonrefundable
- Cancel within 30 days and the full trip fee is nonrefundable

See the full Terms & Conditions at www.onwardtravel.co/terms



Get in Touch!

Contact Onward Travel with questions or special requests:
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845-293-2729

