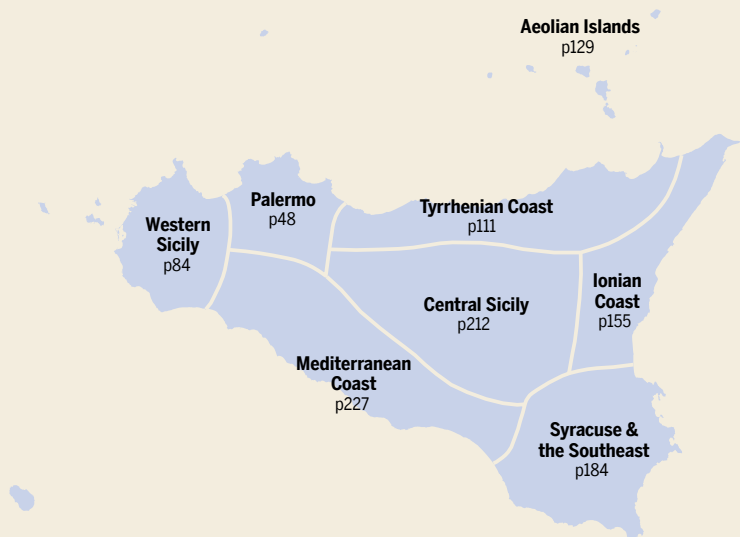




# Sicily



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# Itineraries



## 2 WEEKS Only the Best

This two-week circle tour offers an introduction to Sicily's varied wonders – ancient archaeological sites, baroque hill towns, Arab-Norman churches and castles, volcanoes and beaches.

Begin in **Palermo**, where you can pick up a hire car for your circumnavigation of the island. After spending some time exploring the capital's diversity of architectural treasures, head southwest to the temples at **Segesta**, **Selinunte** and **Agrigento**. Next, cut east across the island to the Unesco-listed Val di Noto, where the baroque beauties of **Ragusa**, **Modica** and **Noto** are all obligatory stops. From here it's on to **Syracuse**, a highlight of any trip to Sicily: split your time here between the pedestrian-friendly ancient island city of Ortygia and the vast classical ruins of the Parco Archeologico. Continue up the coast to bustling **Catania** and circle **Mt Etna** to reach **Taormina**, a town whose abundant attractions include its ancient Greek theatre and the gorgeous beaches just below. Finally, loop back to Palermo via **Cefalù** – where the beautiful beach and 12th-century cathedral will vie for your attention – and **Caccamo**, home to one of Sicily's most spectacularly sited Norman castles.



## 7 DAYS World Heritage Sites

Unesco has enshrined a multitude of Sicilian sites on its World Heritage list; this weeklong ramble offers a representative sampling, from the world-famous to the lesser-known. Begin in **Syracuse**, one of the ancient world's great cities, where traces of Magna Graecia are omnipresent – from papyrus-fringed Fontana Aretusa to the amphitheatres, altars and caves of the Parco Archeologico. Next head west to the **Necropoli di Pantalica** – an eerie assemblage of Bronze Age tombs built into limestone cliffs – before continuing to the captivating Val di Noto. The late-baroque towns of **Noto**, **Modica** and **Ragusa** are the superstars here, but it's also worth seeking out the small villages of **Scicli** and **Palazzolo Acreide** and the famed ceramics centre of **Caltagirone**, with its grand staircase of 142 distinctively tiled steps. Continue west to **Villa Romana del Casale**, whose dazzling Roman mosaic floors depict bikini-clad gymnasts and prancing wild African beasts. Finish at Sicily's most magnificent archaeological site: **Agrigento's** Valley of the Temples, with its Doric sanctuaries spectacularly perched on a ridgetop near the Mediterranean coast.



## 7 DAYS Wining & Dining from West to East

This culinary sampler will treat your taste buds to the full spectrum of Sicilian cuisine and some of the island's finest wines. Start off in elegant **Marsala**, taste-testing the town's sweet wine on a cellar tour at Cantine Florio, then lingering into the evening at the many *enoteche* (wine bars) and restaurants in the pedestrian-friendly centre. Next morning, stop in at the **Saline di Trapani**, which have supplied salt to Sicilian tables for centuries, before lunching on legendary fish couscous in **Trapani** and enjoying dessert with a breathtaking view in **Erice**, renowned for its marzipan fruit, nougat and other nut-based sweets. Next stop is **Palermo**, whose colourful markets, street food, irresistible bakeries and countless fine eateries are highlights of any Sicilian food trip. Head south for a cooking course at the 400-hectare **Tenuta Regaleali**, one of Sicily's leading wine producers, then skirt the southern edge of the Madonie and Nebrodi Mountains, sampling the local black pork, ricotta, pecorino, mushrooms and hazelnuts in pretty hill towns like **Petralia Sottana** and **Nicosia**. Last, stop in for tastings of local honey, pistachios and Etna DOC wine on the flanks of **Mt Etna** before enjoying a final evening in cosmopolitan **Catania**.

4  
DAYS

## Mountain Retreats

Discover Sicily's more traditional side along the beautiful back roads of the Madonie and Nebrodi Mountains, a world apart from the coastal resorts just below. Relax into your journey in picture-perfect **Cefalù**, where you can lounge on the beach and enjoy panoramic coastal views from the ruined Norman citadel. Follow the coast east to **Castel di Tusa**, famous for its avant-garde collection of open-air sculptures, then turn inland and climb towards the lost-in-time mountain town of **Mistretta**. After detouring to explore the medieval village of **Nicosia**, continue south to **Enna**, a handsome hill town that marks Sicily's geographic centre – a fact best appreciated from atop the fortified walls of the Castello di Lombardia. Snake back north through Gangi into the heart of the **Parco Naturale Regionale delle Madonie**, a magnificent natural landscape dotted with hazelnut orchards, ash forests and photogenic hilltop towns. Linger a couple of days along the mountains' western edge to explore the old stone churches of **Petralia Soprana** and **Petralia Sottana**, the Targa Florio automobile race museum at **Collesano** and the castle at **Castelbuono** before rejoining the coast at Cefalù.

7  
DAYS

## Smoke & Fire: Volcanic Sicily

Sicily's trio of active volcanoes – Mt Etna, Vulcano and Stromboli – form the dramatic backdrop for this tour of northeastern Sicily. Start in **Catania**, a city built of lava from the devastating volcanic eruption of 1669. Your first logical step is to climb the volcano that did all the damage, **Mt Etna**. As legend would have it, it was from Etna's lofty heights that the Cyclops hurled his stones at the fleeing Odysseus – you can still see their jagged forms along the **Riviera Dei Ciclopi** coastline, where traditional fishing villages have been reinvented as summer resorts. From here, circumnavigate Etna's western flank via Paternò, Biancavilla, Bronte and Randazzo and continue north to **Milazzo**, where you can catch a ferry to **Lipari**, the largest of the Aeolian Islands. Read up on the archipelago's fiery past at Lipari's Museo Archeologico, then island-hop across to the verdant island of **Salina**, whose twin extinct cones are one of Sicily's most harmonious sights. Those looking for something a little more 'active' can climb smoking **Fossa di Vulcano**, with its sulphur-belching crater and gloopy mudbaths, or scale the 'lighthouse of the Mediterranean', **Stromboli**, an eternal lava-lamp whose eruptions continually light up the night sky.

10  
DAYS

## Beach-Hopping

Starting in Palermo and ending just west of Agrigento, this tour takes in the prettiest beaches of western Sicily, from family-friendly coastal resorts to wild stretches of shoreline protected in two of the island's loveliest nature preserves. Unpack your beach towel for the first time at **Mondello**, a summer playground just west of Palermo, whose deep roots as a coastal resort are reflected in its showy Liberty-era pier and summer villas. From here, it's an easy trip west to the Golfo di Castellammare, where the idyllic beach of **San Vito Lo Capo** offers an urban counterpoint to the scenic walking trails and sparkling coves of **Riserva Naturale dello Zingaro**. Next, hop the 30-minute ferry from Trapani to the Egadi Islands, and relax for a day or two beside the aquamarine waters of **Favignana's** eastern beaches before resuming your journey along Sicily's Mediterranean coast. The last leg east towards Agrigento includes stopovers to ogle ancient Greek temples from the beach at **Marinella di Selinunte**, to stroll the vast, untrammeled sands of **Riserva Naturale Torre Salsa** and to sunbathe or dive off the blindingly chalk-white cliffs of **Scala dei Turchi**.

10  
DAYS

## Island-Hopping

Leave the car behind and settle into a slower rhythm on this island-hopping adventure through the Aeolian Islands – seven volcanic beauties with seven distinct personalities, all connected by ferry and hydrofoil to Sicily's north coast. Begin by cruising across the Tyrrhenian from **Milazzo** to **Lipari**, home to the Aeolians' only sizeable town. Here you can split your time between urban attractions and excursions to the beaches and walking trails that lie just beyond town. From Lipari, frequent hydrofoils fan out to all the remaining islands. Your next destination should be **Vulcano**, a mere 10 minutes from Lipari, where you can explore black-sand beaches, soak in mud baths and climb the island's smoking crater on an easy day trip. Next, set your compass north for lush green **Salina**, home to Malvasia vineyards, Sicily's most famous capers and some enjoyable, slow-paced window-shopping in the low-key villages of Malfa and Santa Marina Salina. Eventually you'll feel called to explore the outer islands: chic, whitewashed **Panarea**; remote **Filicudi** with its hilltop ruin of a Bronze Age village; *way* off-the-beaten-track **Alicudi**; and the most spectacular of all, actively erupting **Stromboli**.

# Map Legend

## Sights

- Beach
- Bird Sanctuary
- Buddhist
- Castle/Palace
- Christian
- Confucian
- Hindu
- Islamic
- Jain
- Jewish
- Monument
- Museum/Gallery/Historic Building
- Ruin
- Shinto
- Sikh
- Taoist
- Winery/Vineyard
- Zoo/Wildlife Sanctuary
- Other Sight

## Activities, Courses & Tours

- Bodysurfing
- Diving
- Canoeing/Kayaking
- Course/Tour
- Sento Hot Baths/Onsen
- Skiing
- Snorkelling
- Surfing
- Swimming/Pool
- Walking
- Windsurfing
- Other Activity

## Sleeping

- Sleeping
- Camping

## Eating

- Eating

## Drinking & Nightlife

- Drinking & Nightlife
- Cafe

## Entertainment

- Entertainment

## Shopping

- Shopping

## Information

- Bank
- Embassy/Consulate
- Hospital/Medical
- Internet
- Police
- Post Office
- Telephone
- Toilet
- Tourist Information
- Other Information

## Geographic

- Beach
- Gate
- Hut/Shelter
- Lighthouse
- Lookout
- Mountain/Volcano
- Oasis
- Park
- Pass
- Picnic Area
- Waterfall

## Population

- Capital (National)
- Capital (State/Province)
- City/Large Town
- Town/Village

## Transport

- Airport
- Border crossing
- Bus
- Cable car/Funicular
- Cycling
- Ferry
- Metro station
- Monorail
- Parking
- Petrol station
- S-Bahn/Subway station
- Taxi
- T-bane/Tunnelbana station
- Train station/Railway
- Tram
- Tube station
- U-Bahn/Underground station
- Other Transport

## Routes

- Tollway
- Freeway
- Primary
- Secondary
- Tertiary
- Lane
- Unsealed road
- Road under construction
- Plaza/Mall
- Steps
- Tunnel
- Pedestrian overpass
- Walking Tour
- Walking Tour detour
- Path/Walking Trail

## Boundaries

- International
- State/Province
- Disputed
- Regional/Suburb
- Marine Park
- Cliff
- Wall

## Hydrography

- River, Creek
- Intermittent River
- Canal
- Water
- Dry/Salt/Intermittent Lake
- Reef

## Areas

- Airport/Runway
- Beach/Desert
- Cemetery (Christian)
- Cemetery (Other)
- Glacier
- Mudflat
- Park/Forest
- Sight (Building)
- Sportsground
- Swamp/Mangrove

Note: Not all symbols displayed above appear on the maps in this book





## OUR STORY

A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In 1972 that's all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime – across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end – broke but inspired – they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, *Across Asia on the Cheap*. Within a week they'd sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born.

Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Franklin, London, Melbourne, Oakland, Dublin, Beijing and Delhi, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony's belief that 'a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse'.

## OUR WRITERS



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**Aeolian Islands, Mediterranean Coast, Tyrrhenian Coast, Western Sicily** Gregor caught the Sicily bug at age 14 when his professor dad took him to discover the mosaics of Cefalù, Monreale and Palermo's Cappella Palatina. Since then he's explored every corner of Sicily and its offshore islands, from Syracuse to Stromboli and Erice to Agrigento, falling head over heels for Sicily's cultural treasures, landscapes and cuisine. A lifelong polyglot with a Romance Languages degree,

Gregor has written for Lonely Planet since 2000, with an emphasis on Mediterranean Europe and Latin America. Gregor also wrote the Planning section of this book.

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**Palermo, Ionian Coast, Syracuse & the Southeast, Central Sicily** Sicily first hooked Cristian in his backpacking days. The lust has never faded. The Italo-Australian is especially drawn to the island's complexities, history and coasts. He's also a self-confessed slave to fresh cannoli and a glass or three of Occhipinti SP68. Cristian has been writing about Italy for Lonely Planet for over a decade, his titles to date including *Italy, Naples & the Amalfi Coast* and

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