



# Western Sicily

## Includes →

Golfo di Castellammare	85
Segesta	90
Trapani	91
Erice	96
Saline di Trapani	98
Egadi Islands	99
Marsala	103
Mazara del Vallo	106
Selinunte	108

## Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Il Veliero (p102)
- ➔ Osteria La Bettolaccia (p93)
- ➔ Syráh (p88)
- ➔ Da Vittorio (p110)
- ➔ San Lorenzo Osteria (p105)

## Best Places to Sleep

- ➔ Pensione Tranchina (p247)
- ➔ Il Profumo del Sale (p248)
- ➔ Melia Resort Dimore Storiche (p249)
- ➔ Marettimo Residence (p248)
- ➔ Hotel Elimo (p248)

## Why Go?

Sicily's windswept western coast has beckoned invaders for millennia. Its richly stocked fishing grounds, hilltop vineyards and coastal salt pans were coveted by the Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans and Normans, all of whom influenced the region's landscape and culture. Even the English left their mark, with 18th-century entrepreneurs lured here and made rich by one of the world's most famous sweet wines, marsala.

Today, this part of the island is coming into its own as an off-the-beaten-track destination, perfect for those who savour slow travel. There's an amazingly diverse range of experiences to be had here. Standout attractions include the ancient ruins of Segesta and Selinunte, the hilltop village of Erice and the Golfo di Castellammare, with its stunning juxtaposition of sea and mountain scenery. Adding to western Sicily's appeal are its unique local cuisine and proximity to Palermo and Trapani international airports.

## Road Distances (km)

Scopello	75			
Segesta	50	30		
Selinunte	45	70	60	
Trapani	30	35	30	95
	Marsala	Scopello	Segesta	Selinunte

## GOLFO DI CASTELLAMMARE

The stunning promontory between Castellammare del Golfo and Monte Cofano (659m) is perhaps the most beautiful in all of Sicily. The small coastal city of Castellammare is the most accessible destination on this stretch of coast, but those prepared to be a bit more adventurous will discover the unspoiled Riserva Naturale dello Zingaro a short distance to the northwest; here, the wild coastal landscape is dotted with tempting swimming coves and quaint settlements built around historic *baglios* (manor houses) and *tonnare* (tuna-processing plants). Added to all this are the ancient ruins of Segesta, only a short drive inland, and the popular beach town of San Vito Lo Capo at the promontory's northwestern tip.

### Scopello

📍 0924 / POP 385

The hamlet of Scopello couldn't be any more charming if it tried. Built around an 18th-century *baglio* (manor house) fortified with a high wall and huge gates, its white houses and smooth-stone streets look like they belong in a 1950s Italian movie. In fact, the historic *tonnara* on the shore below is a popular film location – the 2004 Hollywood blockbuster *Ocean's Twelve* was filmed here, as was an episode of the *Inspector Montalbano* TV series.

Favourite pastimes in Scopello include sipping a coffee on the main piazza, hiking in the nearby Riserva Naturale dello Zingaro and swimming in one of Sicily's most idyllic coves, Spiaggia dei Faraglioni, which is next to the *tonnara*.

Try to avoid Scopello in August, when it becomes unpleasantly crowded.

### 👁 Sights & Activities

#### Spiaggia dei Faraglioni

BEACH

(www.tonnaradiscopeello.com; €3; ☀ 9am-7pm) Overlooking incredibly blue waters, this pebbly but stupendously picturesque beach sits next to an old tuna factory at the foot of dramatic rock formations (one of which is crowned by a medieval tower), just below the town of Scopello. The beach is private property, so you'll have to pay admission, plus a parking fee, and abide by other restrictions – no beach umbrellas or photos of the *tonnara*, which is for the private use of the owners and their guests.

#### Cetaria Diving Centre

DIVING

(📍 368 3864808, 0924 54 11 77; www.cetaria.it; Via Ciro Menotti 4, Scopello; ☀ Apr-Oct) With more than 15 years of experience, this diving centre in Scopello organises dives and underwater tours of the Zingaro nature reserve between April and October, visiting underwater caves and two shipwrecks; they also offer boat excursions and snorkelling.

### 🍴 Eating

You'll find a good mix of eateries within 200m of the grand cobbled courtyard at the centre of town – including bakeries, pizzerias and a terrace restaurant serving pricier Sicilian fare with spectacular views.

If you're staying at Pensione Tranchina (p247), be sure to take advantage of its fabulous home-cooked meals. Unfortunately, the *pensione* doesn't cater for outsiders unless one of its own guests opts to skip dinner; interested non-guests are welcome to check around 5pm to see if a table has opened up.

#### Bar Nettuno

SICILIAN €€

(📍 0924 54 13 62; Baglio Isonzo 13; meals €30-40; ☀ 9am-late) Tucked into the cobbled courtyard at the heart of Scopello, this bar has an outdoor terrace that's perfect for late-afternoon drinks, but it also serves excellent food – from *arancine* (stuffed rice balls) and *pane cunzatu* (open-faced Sicilian sandwiches) to full seafood meals featuring grilled octopus, tuna with pistachios or pasta with clam sauce. Service sometimes suffers during busy periods.

### 📍 Getting There & Away

Scopello is 10km northwest of Castellammare del Golfo via the SS187 and the SP63.

**Autoservizi Russo** (📍 0924 3 13 64; www.russoautoservizi.it) runs buses between Castellammare del Golfo and Scopello (€2.70, 20 minutes, four daily except Sunday).

## San Vito Lo Capo

📍 0923 / POP 4635

Occupying the tip of Capo San Vito is the seaside town of San Vito Lo Capo, full of beachcombers and sun worshippers in summer. San Vito is renowned for its crescent-shaped sandy beach, one of the prettiest in Sicily, where limpid turquoise and ultramarine waters are juxtaposed against the dramatic mountain backdrop of Monte Monaco.