



WOMEN OF THE MIDWEST

Travel Solo Together

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SICILY Italy



A Breast Cancer Awareness Month Journey

with Women of the Midwest!

September 30 - October 9, 2021



Dear Women of the Midwest,

We are excited to introduce a tour including some very special highlights as we honor the Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Why Sicily? Well, did you know that the saint of Breast Cancer, Saint Agatha, is Sicilian?

We will start and end our tour in her birthplace hometown, Palermo, and also pay a visit to the place where she is buried, the beautiful Saint Agatha Cathedral of Catania. We will learn the story about a unique woman and together we will reflect on her strength back then (third century AD) and today. Join me on this journey to Sicily!

Sicily is an amazing place with its own "persona". Colonized by Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Muslims, Normands and a few others along the way (it even tried its hand at being Spanish for a while), before finally becoming Italian. You will be dazzled by the flamboyance of the Sicilians, the splendor of the ancient ruins, and terraced cliffs perfumed with lemon orchards plunging into a sparkling deep blue sea. It is the perfect destination for history and culture fans, art aficionados, romantic souls, and those just seeking pure, awe-inspiring natural beauty and life lived to its fullest!

We will frolic with the Gods of Fire over a picnic on Mount Etna, stroll some of the oldest cobblestone alleys of Europe, and have fun decorating our own ceramics at a traditional Sicilian art workshop. A food tour, a hands-on cooking class, wine- and panettone tastings are included, and much, much more.

Come, join me, solo or two-by-two, and let's travel to this unmatched place. By signing up for this tour, Executive Travel and Women of the Midwest will donate \$100 to any cancer organization of your choice.

Sincerely,

Sally Dunham

Women of the Midwest Ambassador



Call Executive Travel's Group Department today at 402-435-8888. Space is limited.



September 30, 2021
Thursday

Our Sicilian fairy tale adventure begins as we take an overnight flight to Palermo. Enjoy in-flight entertainment and meal service as you start your dream vacation.

October 1, 2021
Friday - Palermo

Welcome to Sicily! Upon arrival at Palermo airport, we will meet our wonderful tour guide, Valeria, and transfer by private motorcoach to our hotel. Time to relax and freshen up before we enjoy our welcome dinner at a very special restaurant. We will taste delicious local dishes of the Sicilian cuisine - said to be some of the best food in Italy - Buon Appetito! D

October 2, 2021
Saturday - Palermo

Followed by a hearty breakfast, we head out to enhance our Palermo experience. We will take a Palermo street and food walking tour to sample some of the best street food Sicily has to offer. During a 3-hour tour led by a local expert, we will explore the fascinating culinary world of Sicily's capital. We will visit the famous and bustling Vucciria and Mercato di Capo outdoor markets, taste five different Sicilian treats along our way, including "panelle" (chickpea fritters) and "arancine" (deep-fried balls of rice stuffed with meat, vegetables, and cheese). We end our tour with some local sweet wine and seasonal desserts, including the world-famous cannoli, gelato, and granita. In the afternoon we board our motorcoach and enjoy a guided tour and visit to the Palace of the Normans and its superb Palatine



Chapel, the Cathedral of Palermo and the Quattro Canti. We will also see the Teatro Massimo, the biggest opera house in Italy, which is also one of the largest in Europe. The evening is yours to enjoy at leisure. B | T

October 3, 2021
Sunday - Castelbuono - Madonie Park

After breakfast, we head out to the Madonie Park. This nature reserve includes six impressive mountains. The highest is Pizzo Carbonara, which is second only to the Etna volcano. It is also home to 15 beautiful rural towns. After a busy day in Palermo, you will enjoy the scenery and calm atmosphere, the gorgeous views, and cows with bells on! We make a stop in two of the picturesque villages. The first stop is in Castelbuono, famous for its castle and pastry shops. We will have a chance to sample and taste the homemade local goodies. And a visit to one of the best panettone-making shops in entire Italy is included. Panettone is the traditional Christmas cake originating in Milan, rethought and expressed in a Sicilian way, with special attention to the tastes of the area and the Sicilian Christmas traditions. Make sure to take one home with you. The cake can last for months. Our lunch is served at a unique, ancient farm-house in the heart of the Madonie Park. We are back in Palermo in the late afternoon for an evening at leisure. B | T | L

October 4, 2021
Monday - Cefalu - Taormina

After a rich breakfast, we say a fond farewell to Palermo. Our first stop today is in Cefalu, a true Mediterranean jewel of a



seaside town, sitting in the shadow of a steep mountain. Get your camera ready, this is yet another very picturesque place along our journey. In the afternoon we arrive in Taormina. Idyllically perched on a rocky promontory high above the sea, Taormina is considered to be the "pearl" of the Mediterranean. From Goethe to D. H. Lawrence, from John Steinbeck to Greta Garbo, from Cary Grant to Elizabeth Taylor and even Woody Allen, all have declared lovely Taormina as a "patch of paradise!" Tonight dinner is in the shadows of Mount Etna. B | D

October 5, 2021
Tuesday - Taormina

We start our day with a sumptuous breakfast. Then, we join our Chef Massimo as he leads us through a guided market tour, showcasing Sicily's colorful foods. Visit the fruit and vegetable vendors to find out what's in the season and the fishmonger to choose the best fresh catch of the day in Taormina's historic fish market. We pick up the ingredients for our hands-on cooking class while learning about the local in-season products and Massimo's family recipes and traditions. After the market tour, we return to the kitchen to start the cooking class, featuring Sicilian specialties. Lunch follows, enjoying the foods prepared in our class accompanied by local Sicilian wines. In the afternoon we take a guided tour of historic Taormina. We will visit the Roman Greek Theater where you will view remains of the ancient Greco-Roman theater now used for entertainment events. The views from here are stunning! We return to our hotel for a relaxing evening. B | L



October 6, 2021
Wednesday - Mount Etna

After breakfast and in the freshness of the morning, we drive to the slopes of Europe's tallest and most active volcano, Mount Etna. The ancient Greeks believed it to be the home of Vulcan, the God of Fire, and even today, with its frequent eruptions, it still lives up to its name. Everything always tastes better under open sky and today's picnic lunch, includes the authentic flavors of Sicily; fresh village bread, local cheeses, meats and fruits. We return to Taormina for an afternoon at leisure. The downtown center represents a variety of historical periods, churches and palaces. Not to miss is a stroll down the main street "Corso Umberto" with its designers' shops and beautiful coffee houses. B | (picnic)

October 7, 2021
Thursday - Taormina

After breakfast, it is time to learn about Sicilian art and ceramics. Feel like a true Sicilian artist, be inspired by a glass of Prosecco, and create your unique souvenir to take back home with you. During our small-group masterclass, carefully guided by a professional local artist, you will paint your own ceramic souvenir. Our art teacher will give us a lecture in traditions and mythologies employed over the centuries in Sicilian ceramic art. Become a real artist in a family-friendly atmosphere, be inspired, and have fun with your fellow travelers. This is the perfect cultural experience to travel inside the Sicilian traditions and history; simply a wonderful way to enjoy the morning hours. The remainder of the day is yours to relax in Taormina. B



October 8, 2021
Friday - Catania - Palermo

On our last day in Sicily, you are invited to one of the most important sites and cathedrals in Sicily. We take a short drive to Catania to enjoy a guided walking tour of the city and visit the cathedral named after Saint Agatha. The story says: Agatha was born around 230 AD in Catania from a noble family which was considered open-minded at that time and during her childhood, she received an excellent education. When she was 15, she decided to become Christian, following the teachings of Jesus. It was a difficult time for Christians. Quintiliano, the Roman Governor of Catania, sent his men to capture her as it was very unusual to hear about a beautiful and well-educated girl deciding to become a Christian. Agatha first sheltered in Malta, then in Palermo but after a while, she came back to Catania to meet with Quintiliano. When the Governor met her, he fell in love with her but Agatha rejected him. She was thrown in jail. In the meantime, all the citizens of Catania had heard about her story and Agatha became a symbol of protest against the oppressor, fighting for the freedom of worship. During the trial against her, she was tortured, her breasts were torn by pliers but the very next day her wounds were healed. The Governor ordered to make her walk on burning hot coals. While she did, a sudden earthquake made Quintiliano fleeing away. The people of Catania carried her away from the fire, but she was dying. One year later, on 252 AD a violent eruption of the Etna threatened the city of Catania, the lava was almost at the gates of the city and the inhabitants laid down a red veil of



Agatha's on the ground and the lava stopped. It was February 5th, one year after her death. In the afternoon we drive Palermo to have the best time during our farewell dinner. B | D

The "Minne of Saint Agatha"
Minne is a Sicilian dialect word for breasts. The cassatelle of Saint Agatha are small sponge cakes filled with ricotta cream cheese, covered by a sweet almond paste (marzipan) and royal icing. They have the shape of a small breast with a cherry on the top, symbolizing the patroness of Catania, the one who stopped the lava, the one who never bent to the insane passion, the one who fought for freedom. The oppressor tore her breast, a symbol of her femininity but she didn't give up. Through the sweet Minne of Saint Agatha, Sicilians celebrate this woman, a scandalous tribute that has been even accepted by the Church. Saint Agatha, patroness of breast health against the invader.

October 9, 2021
Saturday - Return Home

All too soon, our journey has come to an end. Early morning transfer to Palermo airport in plenty of time to check-in for our flight and clear security. You may do some last-minute shopping at the duty-free stores before boarding and flying west across the Atlantic Ocean back to the United States. B (boxed).

Itinerary subject to change.

B = Breakfast T = Tasting
L = Lunch D = Dinner



JOIN OUR GROUP AIRFARE

Group airfare, economy class, is offered with United Airlines and Alitalia at \$1,450 per person including taxes and fees (rate is subject to change until ticketed, 30 days prior to departure):

9/30/2021 Omaha* 12:00 PM - Newark 3:49 PM	United Airlines
9/30/2021 Newark PM - Rome 5:15 PM - 7:45 AM (10/1/2021)	United Airlines
10/1/2021 Rome 12:00 PM - Palermo 7:31 PM	Alitalia
10/9/2021 Palermo 6:00 AM - Rome 7:10 AM	Alitalia
10/9/2021 Rome 11:00 AM - Newark 2:45 PM	United Airlines
10/9/2021 Newark 4:59 PM - Chicago 6:46 PM	United Airlines
10/9/2021 Chicago 7:52 PM - Omaha* 9:29 PM	United Airlines

*Ask us for airfare from a different hometown/state (a small difference in pricing may occur).

Group airfare comes with seat assignments 30 days prior to departure. Executive Travel cannot confirm precise seat numbers earlier than 30 days prior to your departure, and therefore cannot guarantee the availability of specific seating on the aircraft. We do our best to honor your preferences (window, aisle seat).

Economy Plus seating upgrades may not be available when traveling on a group air contract.

If you have frequent flyer miles (MileagePlus), please note those may not be used to upgrade your seat when traveling on a group air contract. Contact us if you have any questions about this and kindly note that certain exceptions may exist.

THE ABOVE ITINERARIES ARE SUBJECT TO SCHEDULE CHANGES!

