



WOMEN OF THE MIDWEST

Travel Solo Together

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SICILY

Eat - Live - Love

with Women of the Midwest

October 3-13, 2024

Dear Women of the Midwest,

Sicily, to me, is a land of enchantment and intrigue. It is made up of the largest island in the Mediterranean and many smaller, fascinating islands surrounding it. Sicily is a place to be relished. A place to sit back, relax, and soak in the ambiance, the culture, the people, and the beautiful landscape.

Sicily is a region of Italy yet is uniquely its own – it is an amazing place with its own “persona.” It is a land of contrasts - the ancient with the present day, the mountains and volcanos and the quiet seaside and beaches, the small quiet villages and the large bustling cities. It is the best of everything and a part of the world not to be overlooked.

Throughout the centuries, it has been colonized by Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Muslims, Normandes, 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 Sicilians’ flamboyance, the ancient ruins’ splendor, 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, and much, much more are included.

Come, join me, solo or two-by-two, and let’s travel to this unmatched paradise island off the coastal “toe” of Italy.

Barb Wallingford, Ambassador
Women of the Midwest



Call Executive Travel’s Group Department today at 888-549-1186. Space is limited.

Palermo Cathedral



October 3, 2024 - Thursday

Traveling to Palermo, Sicily
Our charming Sicilian culinary adventure begins as we take an overnight flight to Palermo. Enjoy in-flight entertainment and meal service as you embark on a trip of a lifetime.

October 4, 2024 - Friday

Palermo
Welcome to Palermo! Upon arrival, we will meet our private tour guide and take a short drive to the city center, to check into our hotel. Time to freshen up before we head out by foot to a nearby local restaurant to taste the typical dishes of Sicilian cuisine, said to be some of the best food in Italy. "Buon Appetito" and welcome to Sicily!
Inflight meals | D

October 5, 2024 - Saturday

Palermo Food Tour
Followed by a hearty breakfast, we will head out to enhance our Palermo experience. We will take a Palermo street-and-food walking tour to sample some of the best street foods 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 and taste 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 savoring local sweet wine and seasonal desserts, including the world-famous cannoli, gelato, and granita. In the afternoon, we will board our motorcoach, enjoy a guided tour, and visit the Palace of the Normans and its superb

Taormina



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

October 6, 2024 - Sunday

Madonie Park - Castelbuono
After breakfast, we will depart for a tour through the Madonie Mountains. Madonie Park Nature Reserve consists of six impressive mountains. The highest is Pizzo Carbonara, second only to the Etna volcano. It is also home to 15 beautiful rural towns. In contrast to the busy Palermo, you will enjoy the scenery, calm atmosphere, gorgeous views, and cows with bells on! We make a stop in two of the picturesque villages. The first stop is Castelbuono, famous for its castle and pastry shops. We will have a chance to sample and taste the homemade local goodies. A visit to one of the best panettone-making bakeries 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 farmhouse in the heart of Madonie Park. We are back in Palermo in the late afternoon for an evening at leisure.
B | T | L

October 7, 2024 - Monday

Cefalù - Taormina
After a rich breakfast, we say goodbye to Palermo and head to Cefalù. Our first stop

Local Market Flavors



today is in Cefalù, 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 will arrive in Taormina. Idyllically perched on a rocky promontory high above the sea, Taormina is considered 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 Taormina as a "Patch of Paradise!" Tonight's dinner is in the shadows of Mount Etna. B | D

October 8, 2024 - Tuesday

Taormina Food Tour & Historic Taormina
We will start our day with a sumptuous breakfast. Then, we will join 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 will 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 will 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 walking tour of historic Taormina. We will visit the Roman Greek Theater, where we will view the remains of the ancient Greco-Roman theater now used for entertainment events. The views

Delicious Panettone



from here are stunning! We return to our hotel for a relaxing evening. B | L

October 9, 2024 - Wednesday Mount Etna

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 the 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 | L (picnic-style)

October 10, 2024 - Thursday Ceramic Class

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 lecture us on traditions and mythologies employed in Sicilian ceramic art over the centuries. 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

Sicilian Ceramics



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 11, 2024 - Friday Catania - Palermo

After breakfast, you are invited to one of Sicily's most important sites and cathedrals. We will 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, considered open-minded at that time, and during her childhood, she received an excellent education. When she was 15, she decided to become a 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. 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 returned 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, the citizens of Catania heard about her story, and Agatha became a symbol of protest against the oppressor, fighting for the freedom of worship. During her trial, she was tortured, and pliers tore her breasts, but the very next day, her wounds were healed. The Governor ordered her to walk on burning hot coals. While she did, a sudden earthquake made Quintiliano flee away. The people of Catania carried her away from the fire,

Taormina Coastline & Mount Etna



but she was dying. One year later, in 252 AD, a violent eruption of the Etna threatened the city of Catania. The lava was almost at the gates of the town, 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. We will arrive in Palermo in the afternoon. B

October 12, 2024 - Saturday Palermo

Enjoy breakfast at your own pace and a morning at leisure. In the early afternoon, get ready for a unique cooking show of local Sicilian desserts. Enjoy seeing how Sicilian cassata, ricotta cannoli, and ricotta cassatelle are prepared. Dive into the unforgettable Sicilian aromas and flavors. Our farewell dinner at a local restaurant promises to be a fun evening. B | T | D

October 13, 2024 - Sunday Traveling Home

All too soon, our vacation has ended. Transfer to Palermo airport in plenty of time to check in for our flight and clear security. Arrivederci Sicily; see you soon again! B (boxed)

The itinerary is subject to change.

B = Breakfast C = Cooking Class
L = Lunch T = Tasting D = Dinner



To register contact:



1212 O Street • Lincoln, NE 68508

Phone: 888-549-1186

GroupDepartment@executivetravel.com

www.executivetravel.com

ONLINE REGISTRATION LINK:

Via our website www.WomenoftheMidwest.com/journeys

Package Price:

Per person in a shared double room: \$4,395

Per person in a single room: \$5,395

Triple rooms are not available on this trip.

We offer "Pair & Share"-service. Ask us to assist in finding your roommate!

A non-refundable deposit of \$500 per person is required upon signing up. Deposit can be paid by cash, check, or credit card. The balance is due on June 5, 2024, and is non-refundable. The balance can be paid by cash or check. Credit card payment(s) (any payment applied to the tour after the deposit) will access a 3.5% fee.

EARLY BIRD BONUS - ZERO CREDIT CARD FEES:

Pay for your tour in full upon registration and minimum six months prior to departure using your credit card!

SAVE 3.5%!

This tour will be materialized with a min. of 15 and a max. of 21 travelers. Should the number fall below 15, all funds paid to Executive Travel will be refunded 90 days prior to departure.

Tour Activity Level: LEVEL 1 2 3+ 4

This tour involves a considerable amount of walking, some stairs, longer periods of standing, outdoor activities, and steep areas within the places visited. We walk between 4-5 miles over the course of a day. Add to this the walking you do outside the group activities. This trip is not recommended for guests with walking difficulties.

Group airfare:

See separate insert/page.

Travel Insurance:

We recommend travel insurance to help protect you and your trip investment against the unexpected. For your convenience, we offer a plan provided by Travelex Insurance Services. For rates and plan highlights, please ask us.

Travelex Insurance Services, Inc CA Agency License #0D10209. Travel Insurance is underwritten by Berkshire Hathaway Specialty Insurance Company, NAIC #22276.

Hotel Accommodations (announced 30 days prior to dep.):

Palermo - Principe di VillaFranca or similar
 Taormina - Villa Diodora or similar
 Standard rooms

Included:

- 9 nights during the tour in Sicily at local 4-star hotels
- 9 x breakfast
- 2 x lunch including a glass of wine and water
- 3 x dinner including a glass of wine and water
- Tastings of local products as per itinerary
- Cooking class and food tours as per itinerary
- All transfers and motor coach services as per itinerary
- Porterage at hotels (one bag per person)
- Admissions to sites mentioned in the itinerary
- English-speaking professional tour director in Sicily
- Step-on guides where required
- Women of the Midwest Ambassador, October 3-13, 2024
- Detailed travel documents, handed out three weeks prior to departure (hard-copy and electronic)
- All local taxes and fees as of December 19, 2023

Not Included:

- Airfare
- Airline baggage fees for your second checked bag (the first checked piece up to 50 lbs is free)
- Travel insurance
- Personal expenses
- Meals & beverages other than those mentioned in the tour program
- Entrances to monuments and/or museums other than those mentioned in the tour program
- Gratuities (estimate \$12-\$15 per day in total)
- Professional fee, \$75 per person, due at the time of registration
- Anything not mentioned in the inclusions



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A wholly-owned division of Executive Travel Inc.

Forwarding registration and deposit signifies that you agree to the terms and conditions of this tour found at executivetravel.com/eti-home/vacation/escorted-tours

Call Executive Travel's Group Department today at 888-549-1186. Space is limited.

12/19/2023

JOIN OUR GROUP AIRFARE!

We offer group airfare with American Airlines:

October 3, 2024	Omaha* - Chicago	6:01 AM - 7:40 AM
October 3, 2024	Chicago - Rome	3:40 PM - 7:45 AM (October 4, 2024)
October 4, 2024	Rome - Palermo	1:20 PM - 2:30 PM
October 13, 2024	Palermo - Rome	6:10 AM - 7:20 AM
October 13, 2024	Rome - Charlotte	12:50 PM - 5:20 PM
October 13, 2024	Charlotte - Omaha*	10:20 PM - 11:55 PM

\$1,795 per person including taxes and fees, economy class.

*We are happy to assist with airfare from a different airport than Omaha. Reach out to get your quote. If you travel from a different airport, we aim to have you meet your our group in Chicago on October 3. We also aim to have you return from Palermo around the same time as the rest of the group on October 13.

Important notes about group air:

- Group airfare comes with seat assignments 30 days prior to departure. Executive Travel/Women of the Midwest 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).
- Premium seating upgrades are usually not available when traveling on a group air contract. If you have frequent flyer miles (AAdvantage® program), please note those cannot be used to upgrade to a different class of service. Contact us if you have any questions and kindly note that certain exceptions may exist.

**SECURE YOUR GROUP AIR TICKET WHEN SIGNING UP!
THE ITINERARY IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE!**

