

## Sicily | Italy | Guided Biketour - 21 Days

### The land where the lemons bloom

On this trip you will only change hotels once! Three nights you stay at the foot of Mount Etna near Catania and three nights in a Grand Hotel near Syracuse - the city of Archimedes and ancient mythology. You will experience incomparable cycling routes to destinations that capture the essence of Sicily's landscape and culture. Sicily is as diverse as its people, and in eastern Sicily you will experience this in the smallest of spaces. Here you can smell palm trees and sand, almonds and orange blossoms, and nowhere else in Europe can you feel this unique fusion of Africa, Orient and Occident!

"Italy without Sicily makes no picture in the soul: only here is the key to everything".

Johann Wolfgang Goethe

### UNIQUE ON THIS JOURNEY

- Baroque cities of Catania & Noto (World Heritage)
- Cycling route on the slopes of Mount Etna
- Visit to Taormina with cable car and ancient theatre
- Ancient metropolis Syracuse (World Heritage Site)
- Necropolis of Pantalica (World Heritage Site)
- Spectacular cultural and coastal landscape in eastern Sicily

### Itinerary

#### Day 1: Benvenuto! Arrival to Catania

Individual arrival in Catania. The drive from the airport to the hotel takes about 30 minutes (26 km). Your tour guide will be waiting for you at the hotel reception at 19:00 in the afternoon. After welcoming all guests and a brief introduction to the trip and the day ahead, your guide will walk with you to the first restaurant of the trip, which is just a stroll away from the hotel. Dinner today will be rustic and cosy as we take you to a typical Sicilian pizzeria. 1st night Grand Hotel Villa Itria\*\*\*\* north of Catania.

#### Day 2: Ätna - roof of sicily and the precious Catania

Etna and its slopes dominate the first day of cycling! It is the highest volcano in Europe and there is never perfect peace in its vent! Sicilians have a divided relationship with "their" volcano. They fear and appreciate it for its fertile lava slopes. They have always been the reason for the dense settlement of this area. Numerous eruptions, also in recent times, testify to the activity of the restless volcano. Our bus drives higher and higher on a winding road (18 km from the hotel). The view of the coast and Catania far below is fantastic!

At an altitude of almost 1,900 m, we hike a bit along younger craters before getting on the bikes. You walk

### services:

#### Tour Inclusions

- 6 nights in a double room with breakfast in good to excellent hotels with special quality features!
- 5 multi-course dinners and 1 lunch, 3x of which in selected restaurants outside the hotels.
- Rental bike with 8-speed coaster or 24-speed freewheel derailleur/hub gears
- Service station escort bus with luggage transport, transfer and technical support
- terranova tour guide on the bike on selected and tested cycle routes
- Guided tours and entrance fees in Catania (World Heritage Site), Taormina (World Heritage Site), Syrakus (World Heritage Site) etc.
- All transfers according to programme
- CO2 compensation in the travel region (excluding arrival and departure)

### added options / discounts:

flight to/from Catania	450 €
Pedelec	160 €
Additional night in Syrakus double room - Hotel Minareto ****	155 €
Additional night in Syrakus single room - Hotel Minareto ****	255 €
Transfer airport Catania	50 €

### dates & prices:

06.10.2024 - 26.10.2024 - Sicily Guided Biketour

Price per Person in a Double room	2795 €
Price per Person in a Single room	3190 €

06.10.2024 - 26.10.2024 - Unterkünfte - Ostsizilien

Price per Person in a Double room	2795 €
Price per Person in a Single room	3190 €

on volcanic ash and can also see the lava flows of the last eruptions. Today you don't need to pedal very much yet: From up there, you can comfortably roll down on your bike on a well-maintained road, again crossing several lava flows. High up, the landscape is barren and rough (so dress warmly for the bike start!). In spring, hats and gloves are often advisable!), but then chestnuts, flowers and vines grow on the slopes.

You will be amazed at how fertile the black volcanic soil is! After a tasty picnic in an old pine forest (weather permitting / cost extra) you can choose whether you would like to cycle another 10 km through the settlements starting at the foot of Mount Etna or let the bus take you directly back to the hotel.

In the late afternoon, you will travel by bus to nearby Catania and our city guide will show you her city: Catania's centre is a baroque gem and the old town is even a World Heritage Site! In recent years it has been restored to its former glory. On the Piazza del Duomo stands the city's landmark, the famous Fontana dell'Elefante (Elephant Fountain). The lively hustle and bustle of Catania's squares is hard to describe. Sicilian life pulsates here as in the cliché: there is gesticulation and clandestine hawking, loud observation and proud flaunting. As soon as you stop and look, you will experience this theatre on the stage of everyday life. Perhaps you would like to enjoy the exquisite marzipan or a refreshing granita. After a short walk, stop for a bite to eat at a long-established restaurant in the old town of Catania. 2nd night at the Grand Hotel Villa Itria\*\*\*\*. (approx. 18 miles)

### Day 3: Incomparable Taormina

After breakfast, we drive you to the northern slope of the Etna massif (48 km). Here you start in the rural hinterland and cycle along the gorge of the Alcantara River through a green, lovely valley along lemon and olive groves. On small side roads, you will mostly cycle gently downhill towards the coast, but sometimes you will have to cope with small hills and counterclimbs. You will pass through remote villages and towns until you reach the coast again at the beach and seaside resort of Naxos, where we stop for lunch. From Naxos it is not far to the valley station of the cable car that will take you to Taormina.

On a city tour you will learn about the millennia-old history of the town. Of course, you will also see the world-famous theatre high above the sea. From here you can enjoy the most famous postcard view in Italy: In the foreground the Greek ruins, behind them the blue sea and in the distance the smoking Mount Etna with its snow-covered peak. Return to the hotel by bus in the late afternoon (45 km). Dinner and 3rd night at the Grand Hotel Villa Itria\*\*\*\* north of Catania. (approx. 21 miles)

### Day 4: The Secret Nekropole of Pantalica

Today is long, but unique. The necropolis of Pantalica is impressive! Only here does it become clear how ancient Sicily's history is. Long before the Greeks, the indigenous people of Sicily, the Sicilians, developed an advanced civilisation here. It has only been handed down to us through their graves. To get there, a bus takes you up into one of the most fascinating landscapes of Sicily (74 km). Through the limestone landscape of the Monti Iblei, the route is mostly downhill, with wide views of distant peaks and deeply carved valleys. Around midday you will arrive at a small restaurant where you can enjoy typical local dishes (extra charge). Here you will find the Pantalica necropolis in the valley of the Anapo River. Amidst the grandiose landscape of the steep valley, more than 5000 burial caves have been carved into the rock. The entire area is now a nature reserve and closed to vehicles. The best way to enjoy this impressive landscape is on foot. You hike through the deep gorge (approx. 2 hours) and enjoy fantastic views. Admire the crystal clear waters of the Anapo River at the bottom of the valley; it makes you want to take a refreshing dip. After this hike you deserve some time out: from here you will be transferred to the hotel by the sea by our bus (55 km). Dinner and 1st overnight stay Grand Hotel Minareto\*\*\*\* / Syracuse Bay. (approx. 15 miles)

### Day 5: Syracous - A day for a culture of years

Syracuse is unique! Older than Rome, it already had half a million inhabitants in 500 BC! The famous



mathematician Archimedes worked here. Here he was slain by a Roman soldier in 212 BC. We all know his last famous saying "Do not disturb my circles!". The city's ancient heritage is enormous. The Greek theatre is 138 m in diameter and has 61 rows of seats. The incredible crowd of 18,000 spectators was seated here. Aeschylus' "Persians" had its world premiere here! The former quarries, called "Latomie", are also famous. These are wide caves dug deep into the limestone. They became the grave for 7,000 captured Athenians. This morning we will first take you by bus to this archaeological area of Syracuse, before cycling to a more peaceful spot outside the busy city before lunch. Let us tell you about the ancient myth associated with the source of the river Kyane. Wild papyrus bushes grow here and give the spring sanctuary a special atmosphere. After lunch (today included instead of dinner) you can cycle directly back to our hotel. In the late afternoon we take you to the old town of Syracuse. Admire the cathedral, built in the remains of an ancient Greek temple. In recent years, the city has been generously funded and has developed into a young and lively city. Many restaurants and cafés invite you to linger. In Syracuse there are still many fishermen who go out to sea every night to catch fresh fish. Therefore, we leave it up to you this evening to go to dinner (not included) individually. The tour guides will be happy to recommend a restaurant. 2nd night at Grand Hotel Minareto\*\*\*\* / Syracuse Bay. (approx. 13 miles)



#### Day 6: Over wide mountain landscape to baroque noto

Bikes await you at the highest point of this day's journey in Palazzolo Acreide, where you will be taken by bus (47 km). On a hill above the town lie the remains of a Greek city. Its 600-seat theatre was carved out of the rock! From here you have a view of the coast 30 km away. You can gently descend to Noto Antica. The more than 2,000-year-old town was abandoned after the devastating earthquake of 1693 and rebuilt on a completely different site! The remains of mighty walls bear witness to its former grandeur. With great views, the route continues through a stunning hilly landscape mainly downhill and you reach the resurrected Noto. This city is also a highlight of European Baroque and is a World Heritage Site. The city has been rebuilt for the third time after extensive restoration work in recent decades. We take a tour of baroque curved facades. Return to the hotel by coach/taxi (35 km). (approx. 25 miles)



Tonight we have our final dinner in a traditional fish restaurant in the old town of Syracuse. Weather permitting, we will cross the bay by boat from the hotel to Syracuse (return by bus/taxi). 3rd night at Grand Hotel Minareto\*\*\*\* / Syracuse Bay.

#### Day 7: Arrividerci Sicilia

Your cycling tour Sicily East ends after breakfast. To match your flight, we will gladly organise an airport transfer for EUR 50,- per person (price applies for a minimum of 2 people) to fly home or to pick up an ordered rental car. The journey takes about 50 min (65 km).



Programme subject to change!

## Sicily Guided Biketour

### Enjoyable accommodation:

On this trip you can really relax as there is only one hotel change and you spend 3 nights each in Catania and Syracuse!

**Catania:** [Grand Hotel Villa Itria Congress & Spa\\*\\*\\*\\*](#)





This modern lodge-style hotel is located a few kilometres outside Catania at the foot of Etna National Park. The hotel is surrounded by a park and offers a swimming pool both as an outdoor pool and as an indoor pool in the hotel's spa area (charges apply). The location is ideal for exploring Etna and its surroundings. It is only about 15 km to the centre of Catania. All rooms are equipped with minibar, telephone, satellite TV, air conditioning, shower/WC with hairdryer. 3 nights.

**Syracuse:** [Grand Hotel Minareto\\*\\*\\*\\*](#)

The hotel is fantastically situated on the headland in the harbour, opposite the old town of Syracuse. From the terrace and the path along the sea, you have a fantastic view of Syracuse and Mount Etna behind it. The rooms are spacious and tastefully furnished to a high standard. Beautiful garden with palm and olive trees. 3 nights.

## Unterkünfte - Ostsizilien

**Genussvoll wohnen:**

Auf dieser Reise können Sie richtig entspannen, da es nur einen einzigen Hotelwechsel gibt und Sie je 3 Nächte in Catania und Syrakus verbringen! Die Hotels gehören zu den besten Adressen in Ostsizilien!

**Catania:** [Hotel Villa Paradiso dell'Etna\\*\\*\\*\\*](#)

Dieses Haus befindet sich nur wenige Kilometer außerhalb

Catania direkt am Fuße des Ätnas. Die Lage ist ideal geeignet, um den Ätna und seine Umgebung zu erkunden. Das Haus besitzt nur 40 Zimmer. Sie sind alle mit antiken Möbeln elegant eingerichtet. Alle Zimmer verfügen über Minibar, Safe, Telefon, Sat-TV, Klimaanlage, DU/WC und Fön. 3 Übernachtungen.

**Syrakus:** [Grand Hotel Minareto\\*\\*\\*\\*\\*](#)

Das Hotel liegt traumhaft auf der Landzunge im Hafen, gegenüber der Altstadt von Syrakus. Von der Terrasse und dem Weg am Meer entlang hat man einen phantastischen Blick auf Syrakus und dem dahinter liegenden Ätna. Die neuen Zimmer sind geräumig und geschmackvoll hochwertig möbliert. Schöne Gartenanlage mit Palmen und Olivenbäumen. 3 Übernachtungen.

