



### Tour of Malta and Eastern Sicily — 2008

Malta (Valletta, Mdina, Hagar Qim and Gozo), plus eastern Sicily (Siracusa, Catania, Taormina and Mount Etna). Discover the central Mediterranean with 4 star lodging (2 nights in Malta and 4 nights in Taormina). All ground transportation during this escorted tour is included. Tour price includes all breakfasts and two lunches. Small group size of 2-25 participants.

#### Itinerary:

Friday: Upon arrival in Malta you'll meet your guide and be transferred to your hotel. Time at leisure. Overnight at your hotel in coastal Saint Julian's near Sliema and the Paceville shopping district.

Saturday: See Valletta, Mdina and Marsaxlokk. Following breakfast, city tour of Valletta, Maltese capital constructed in the 16th century by the Knights of Saint John (Hospitallers and later "Knights of Malta"). We'll visit the Upper Barakka Gardens overlooking the Grand Harbour, and the magnificent St. John's Cathedral, then the Grand Masters Palace --now the parliament building. Then we'll stop at the fishing village of Marsaxlokk in the south of the island, where you'll have time at leisure for lunch. In the afternoon we'll visit the neolithic Hagar Qim Temple archeological site, dating to circa 3300 BC. Here are some of the world's largest megaliths, some weighing as much as 20 tons. Today's outing ends at the medieval city of Mdina, Malta's "Silent City." This was the island's initial capital, built in the 9th century by the Arabs. This medieval city is a maze of narrow alleys and magnificent architecture with Arab and some Norman influences. We'll see the highlights and visit Saint Paul's Cathedral. Return to hotel and overnight at Saint Julian's.

Sunday: Day at leisure or optional excursion to Gozo (see following).

—[Excursion begins after breakfast with a ferry crossing to the smaller island of Gozo to see the oldest free-standing temples in the world, known as Ggantija Temples, dated to around 4000 BC. Natural beauties include Calypso Cave, Ramla Bay and other features. We'll stop at the bay of Xlendi in the south of the island, where you'll have free time for lunch. In the afternoon we continue with visits to Ta'Pinu Basilica, Victoria and the Citadel. The story of this fortified city dates back to the Roman and Arab periods. Return by ferry to Malta.]—

Evening departure for Sicily, where you'll be met at Catania airport and transferred to your hotel at Taormina. (Please note that airfare is not included in the price of this tour but we can arrange it for you.) Overnight at Taormina.

Monday: Day at leisure to explore Taormina. Overnight in Taormina.

Tuesday: After breakfast, excursion to Catania and Siracusa. Catania is a charming Baroque city, where we'll visit the Cathedral and other sights of the old historic centre. Then on to Siracusa, beginning with a walking tour of the charming, ancient island of Ortygia. Following lunch in a local restaurant, we'll spend the afternoon exploring the archeological site. Syracuse was ancient Sicily's capital, and one of the most important cities of the Greek world. Return to Taormina. Overnight in Taormina.

Wednesday: Following breakfast we'll trek off by jeep to Mount Etna, Europe's highest active volcano and greatest

natural wonder. Weather and volcanic conditions permitting, we'll explore the highest regions of the summit. Later, we'll enjoy a wine tasting and light lunch on a farm nearby and, en route to Taormina visit the Alcantara Gorge carved by the action of Etna's streams. Evening at leisure and overnight in Taormina.

Thursday: Breakfast and check-out. Transfer to Catania airport.

### **Summary:**

Prices: €1080.00 per person double occupancy (i.e. two persons per room), €1275.00 single occupancy, payable by bank wire transfer or major credit card. See our general tours page for purchase conditions and cancellation policies.

Includes: Six (6) nights double occupancy (2 nights 4-star accommodation in St Julian's, Malta, 4 nights 4-star accommodation in Taormina, Italy, near sea), ferry tickets to reach Gozo (if excursion is selected), admission fees to archeological sites, airport transfers, buffet breakfast daily, air-conditioned mini-coach, English-speaking assistance, 2 lunches, 1 full-day jeep excursion to Mount Etna

Does not include: Airfare to Malta or from Catania airport (Sicily) or between Malta and Sicily (but we can arrange this for you upon request), portage or luggage handling at hotel/airport, gratuities to drivers or guides, meals or beverages not indicated above, travel insurance, anything not mentioned under "Includes" above. (We recommend Air Malta for flights to Malta.)

Accommodation: Double room with private bathroom. Single room with supplement. In Malta, the Hotel Corinthia Marina (in Saint Julian's). In Sicily, the Hotel Lido Caparena (on the coast below Taormina). Both are rated 4-stars. In the event that substitutions are necessary, these will be of comparable or superior quality.

Guide/Escort Language: English.

Dates offered: Tour begins at Valletta as indicated.

Tours begin on: Friday April 4th, Friday April 11th, Friday April 18th, Friday May 2nd, Friday May 9th, Friday May 16th, Friday May 23rd, Friday May 30th, Friday June 6th, Friday June 13th, Friday June 20th, Friday June 27th, Friday October 3rd, Friday Oct 10th, Friday Oct 17th.

### **Reservations:**

To reserve contact us at [historic-tour@bestofsicily.com](mailto:historic-tour@bestofsicily.com) indicating "Sicily-Malta" in the subject line, or by phone at 39 (for Italy) 091 626 9685, or fax 39 091 380 9900.

This tour is organized by Chat & Tour (Tradizione Turismo), Via Autonomia Siciliana 23, 90143 Palermo, Italy. Visit our general tours page for frequently asked questions regarding this and our other tours at

[www.bestofsicily.com/sicityours2008.htm](http://www.bestofsicily.com/sicityours2008.htm)

### **Conditions and Terms**

Payment may be effected by bank wire transfer or major credit card. Prices are indicated in euros and valid through 31 December 2008. In the event of currency conversion to euros, the conversion rate shall be that of the day of payment; in the event of several payments for a single service the conversion rate may vary slightly based on the day's current exchange rate. All services are prepaid at least one month prior to the beginning of the tour, with earlier payment or deposit (of at least 50% of the total cost) required to reserve a place in the tour. In the event of cancellation, the following portion of the total tour price will be claimed by the agency: 10% 20-29 days before departure, 25% 10-19 days before departure, 50% 4-9 days before departure, 90% within 3 days of departure. At its discretion, the agency may waive such claims. If purchased directly from the Italian tour operator, service shall be governed by the laws of the Italian Republic and the European Union. Local laws apply for any tour purchased through a travel agent outside Italy. It is the responsibility of each participant to be in possession of the necessary travel document, such as a valid passport. Basic services are insured in compliance with Italian law. Certain fees indicated, particularly admission fees at archeological sites, are subject to change without notice. Hotel ratings are those established by the Italian travel commission and may differ from those indicated in privately-published travel guides. Tours depart from Palermo on dates specified. Unless the tour is purchased by a travel agent representing us, billing is processed through the agency indicated, based here in Palermo, Italy (i.e. Chat & Tour's Tradizione Turismo).