



SICILY

**A LAND WHERE
ART AND TOURISM
LIVE IN HARMONY**

Introduction

Villages of art, museum houses, medieval castles, towers, tuna traps, historic buildings restored and turned into museums and great opera houses. The cultural tour in Sicily is intertwined with history and cultural events in the wake of the Grand Tour of the 800's and find new impulse thanks to large and small treasures which reopen doors to the public. Routes ranging from the historic city centers up to the small innermost villages, rediscovering an ancient agricultural landscape, always transformed by skilled workers. Wherever you gaze, the wonder is ensured by the amazing diversity of artistic expressions related to the industrious hands of skilled craftsmen, the island survived to witness the many civilizations that often fused together to create a large mosaic: periods of Arabic-Norman, Frederick, Chiaramonte, Baroque, Art Nouveau ...



The dominations of Arabians, Normans and Swabians made Palermo the most flourishing city of the Mediterranean: palaces, mosques and lush gardens made it the artistic hub of the island. During the first half of the thirteenth century, under the reign of Frederick II, Palermo had the lead position in the cultural field with the founding of the Sicilian school of poetry.





Skilled workers of the Arabians and Normans were fused together in a unique style, the Arab-Norman, whose architecture is best expressed in the Palatine Chapel, in the Norman Palace, built by Roger II in 1140 and the Church St. Maria dell'Amiraglio, better known in Palermo as the Martorana.



The Palace of Zisa in the heart of old Palermo, was part of the royal park Genoardo and was conceived as a summer residence for the Norman kings, surrounded by pavilions, ponds and fountains for their amusement. Today, after an extensive structural renovation, the Palace houses the Museum of Islamic Art.

The Gallery of Modern Art, presents collections of Sicilian artists from the 800's to the present day, and has been housed in a fifteenth-century architectural complex in the heart of Palermo, located next to the baroque church of St. Anna alla Misericordia.

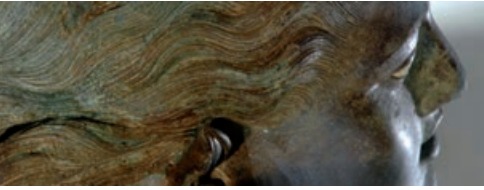


The undisputed jewel of baroque art, also known as the Church of Jesus, a few steps from the “Quattro Canti” (the original four districts) of the City, “Casa Professa” with the Jesuits convent preserving sculptures of “gaginiana school” and precious paintings of the late 500’s, as well as a rich display of plaster of paris, marble inlays, statues and paintings of the Sicilian 700’s.





Piana degli Albanesi, with many churches very rich in history, a town on the outskirts of Palermo heir to the artistic and cultural tradition arbëreschë in Sicily (a community from Albania and still today speak their own language).



Among the villages within the area of the park of the Madonie, Castelbuono, the city of Count Ventimiglia, preserves the manor house, now a museum of sacred art of the Madonie, a convention center, many churches and palaces of great artistic value.





Sicily is full of large and small theatres: the sanctuaries of opera and classical music, which house the protagonists of the international limelight, the little gems of the province which reopen the door to new companies of Sicilian artists.

In Alcamo, as well as in Salemi and Calatafimi, reopened to the public the mighty medieval castles that were the residence of the lords of the feudal age.





Along the coast of Trapani, the town of Mazara del Vallo with its great cathedral and the harbour channel, is a land of peaceful immigration an example of cultural integration among the people of the Mediterranean.



Culture as a sign of reconstruction: is the message that comes from the new Gibellina, village of Trapani shocked by the earthquake in '68.

The Orestiadi Foundation has welcomed for many years a festival of theatre, music and dance while the territory is home to works of art by famous contemporary artists such as Burri and Paladino.





Eastern Sicily with the Val di Noto is the undisputed birthplace of the Baroque. Recognized heritage protected by UNESCO for its artistic expression and the beauty of the natural landscape, offering the traveler a continuous succession of artistic works dating from the seventeenth century.





Touched by dozens of artists that have left their marks, in residential areas, places of worship, from the details of the sculptures that seem to have their own life, up to the magnificence of the cathedrals.

Even small villages can give unexpected treasures: Baroque art and the coastal seascape. Ispica, a small village of Ragusa, attracts tourists to its historic center, that is still as it was built, the slow paced life and the beauty of the sandy shoreline.





At the extreme tip of Ortigia, the bulwark of stone erected by Frederick II on the pre-existing fort with the four mighty towers to defend the city that rises out of the blue sea of Syracuse. Open for events and tours, the castle Maniace houses a rich program of shows and performances, on summer evenings.



In the heart of old Catania rises the impressive Ursino Castle, home of the prestigious municipal museum. The old city does not sleep until the early hours with its pubs, clubs and live music for entertainment.

Dominated by black lava rock, the historic town revolves around the Cathedral that bears the name of the patron saint St. Agata, rebuilt after the eruptions and earthquakes in the seventeenth century. The busy lives of people in Catania runs between Piazza Duomo, via Etnea and the seafront.





From the sea and the Timpa natural reserve of Catania to the historic towns of Acireale, and Acicastello you walk through the alleys, squares and terraces with breathtaking views, over which looms the imposing bulk of the volcano Etna, a landscape unique in Europe. Between the Nebrodi park and the Alcántara park lies the village of Randazzo with its unexpected treasures, sacred architecture and civil engineering.





In the many villages of the Nebrodis they have treasures of art to be discovered, where ancient traditions are still preserved such as the weaving loom and gastronomy linked to old traditions.





Back on the sea front, an expression of contemporary art that has no equal in Italy, it is the "Fiumara d'Arte" designed by the patron Antonio Presti, evidence of land art and of great value. Between the sky and sea near the river Tusa, the works of the greatest living contemporary artists, to remember that only art can uplift the spirit and unite people against barbarism.





The many castles that have been restored and opened to the public, some of them dating back to Norman rule, tell the story perhaps better than a museum. As the castle of Mussomeli near Caltanissetta, erected as a sentinel of inland Sicily, perfectly restored and faithful in the original furniture that takes the visitor back to the medieval atmosphere.



Among the sunny countryside cultivated with wheat and pasture are villages that have been forgotten by time. As the small town of Sperlinga in the province of Enna, with its castle carved into the sandstone rock, where the Sicani already lived (one of the first populations of Sicily).



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