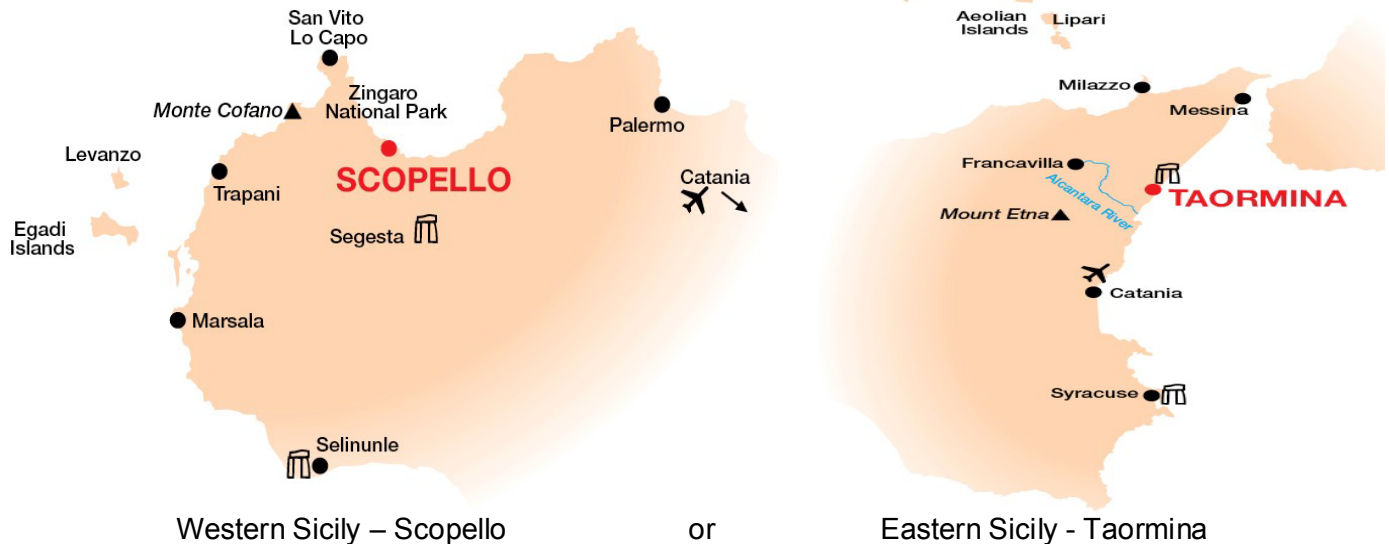


ITALY – SICILY (WESTERN OR EASTERN)

8-day / 7-night centre-based – one-hotel - group guided walking and sightseeing tours



With a fascinating ancient history, lush green mountains and picturesque hilltop villages, the beautiful island of Sicily has it all. Choose which region you want to be in for your 1 week one hotel-based holiday, or combine the 2 centres for a Sicily Grand Tour, 2-week guided walking holiday.

Guided walks will include dramatic gorges, lush national parks, stunning coastal scenery, ancient monuments and rising above it all, Mount Etna itself.

Eastern Sicily guided walking & sightseeing tour is based at Taormina and highlights include:

- Visit the Ancient city of Syracuse
- Excellent 4-star Hotel Caesar Palace, just outside the bijou resort of Taormina
- Sail to the Aeolian Isle of Lipari for island walks
- Remarkable walks on the slopes of Mount Etna

Western Sicily guided walking tour is based at Scopello and highlights include:

- Stay in a tiny Sicilian village on the beautiful Tyrrhenian Sea
- Delightful, Sicilian-styled 3-star Hotel Bagli di Scopello, near the lush Zingaro National Park
- Sail to the Levanzo, in the little known Egadi Islands
- Explore the outstanding Greek Temple of Segesta on Mont Barbaro

Our centre-based or one-hotel one-week walking holidays offer a choice of two guided walks each day – usually an easier walk or a more challenging option. There is usually a free day midweek.

Cost per person: AU\$1255 per person per week (twin share) - Single room supplement \$225

Departs: **Western Sicily,** 1 week tour: 6, 13, 20, 27 May, 16, 23, 30 Sep, 7 Oct, 2012
Eastern Sicily, 1 week tour: 15, 22, 29 Apr, 6, 13 May, 9, 16, 23, 30 Sep, 7 Oct, 2012
Sicily Grand Tour, 2 week tour: 29 April, 6, 13 May, 9, 16, 23 Sep, 2012

Tour includes: Weekly tours include 7-nights in comfortable hotel accommodation room with ensuite bathrooms, 7-breakfasts, 7-evening meals, experienced walks leader, 5-guided walks and a free-day midweek. Two-week tour has the weekly inclusions plus the transfer between the two centres.

Not Included: Airport transfers from Catania Airport (these can be pre-booked at extra cost – ask for details when booking), meals & drinks not mentioned & personal expenses.

Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations

Western Sicily - suggested itinerary:

Day 1: Arrival day

The journey to the hotel in Scopello is usually by coach (at extra cost). You should arrive at the hotel with time to settle into your room. On the first evening your leaders will explain more about the walks and there will be plenty of time to meet with your fellow guests.

Day 2: Scopello

An introductory walk into and around the village of Scopello will show you the location of all the amenities and facilities you may need during your stay. It will help you get a feel of the area.

Day 3: Segesta and Selinunte sightseeing day

An archaeologist's dream day, we visit Segesta's ancient Greek temple and its amphitheatres set on Mount Barbaro. Selinunte is the largest archaeological park in Europe and has a stunning position near the beach.

Day 4: Circumnavigation of Monte Cofano

Based in the Nature Reserve of Orientata is the impressive Monte Cofano. It is a massif of marine limestone projected from the sea to a height of 659m. Not only is the scenery magnificent but it also offers interesting flora, fauna and a marble quarry.

Day 5: Free day

Today no walks are organised, allowing you to explore Sicily's capital, the fascinating city of Palermo, or simply relax on one of Scopello's beautiful beaches.

Day 6: Levanzo Grotta del Genovese

Explore the island of Levanzo just off the northwest coast of Trapani. Levanzo is the smallest of the three main Egadi Islands. Heading inland we visit the Grotta del Genovese, famous for its Neolithic cave paintings.

Day 7: Zingaro Nature Reserve

These walks highlight the beautiful landscape of the Zingaro Nature Reserve. The path along the rugged coastline paves the way past many museums steeped in local culture and tradition, and then winds its way to hidden coves - ideal for a quick dip.

Day 8: Departure day



Eastern Sicily - suggested itinerary:

Day 1: Arrival day

The journey to the hotel in Taormina is usually by coach (at extra cost). You should arrive at the hotel with time to settle into your room. On the first evening your leaders will explain more about the walks and there will be plenty of time to meet with your fellow guests.

Day 2: Taormina

Our first day's walking offers a choice to ascend from sea level to Taormina or alight in the town where Castelmola and Castelo Saraceno await our visit. The sites offer fabulous views of Taormina and the surrounding coastline. Later we pass through the gates of Taormina to discover its history, and the delights of its narrow streets, gardens, piazzas and hidden places.

Day 3: Castles and the Alcantara Valley

A coach transfer to our start of walks at Castiglione di Sicilia, a medieval hilltop town. Here the choice will be to ascend higher for unrivalled views of the town and countryside or be guided through the town for panoramic views of Etna and Francavilla before descending into the fertile Alcantara Valley, passing through citrus groves and crossing the Alcantara river to reach the Nature Trail at Francavilla with its ruined castle.

Day 4: Syracuse

The ancient city of Syracuse, once the most powerful settlement in the western world, will be visited today. A newly constructed Autostrada and tunnel sections ensure our journey is kept to a minimum. The Archaeological Park and its museum, along with the Papyrus museum and the modern church of Madonna delle Lacrime could be visited today before the island of Ortygia in Syracuse. Or, if the Archaeological Park is not for you, step back in time and visit the island Ortygia with its palaces, Temple of Apollo, fountains, churches, and the elegant Piazza del Duomo. If time permits, it may be possible to take a boat trip around the island.

Day 5: Free day

Today no walks are organised allowing you to explore on your own or just relax around the hotel. You can visit the resort town of Giardini Naxos, explore and shop in Taormina, or take a day trip to Etna – the Ferrovia Circumetnea is a single track railway circumnavigating Etna. It is 114km in length, and the journey from Catania to Riposto takes approximately 3½hrs. Catania and Riposto can be reached from the Giardini/Taormina Railway Station. It is also possible to arrange a coach tour to Etna / Palermo / Catania / Syracuse with a local agent (all at additional cost)

Day 6: The Aeolian Isle of Lipari

We travel by coach to Milazzo from where we depart by hydrofoil to Lipari, the largest of the Aeolian Islands. As we approach Lipari, the town's Castle, with its huge walls constructed by the Spanish enclosing the Cathedral and the 17th century Bishop's Palace, dominate the scene. The crossing takes approximately 1-hour. Our walks on the island afford us a chance to see Lipari with its Pumice and Obsidian deposits from past volcanic eruptions. We have excellent views of the other islands including Vulcano with its smoking crater.

Day 7:

The mighty Monte Venere (also known as Monte Veneretta) awaits some today, finishing the week with panoramic views to all directions, and a sense of satisfaction as you descend to Taormina for that well deserved refreshment. For others Castelmola is the objective with no lesser sense of satisfaction as you descend to Taormina to enjoy its special ambience and style.

Day 8: Departure day

Local transport to and from walks is not included in the cost of your holiday. Please allow €95 (approximately \$150) per week for transport during the week, excluding your free day - payable locally. For Eastern Sicily please also allow an additional €20 (approximately \$30) for sightseeing.

Footpath information



Easier Walks: 9-13km on good, but sometimes-rough paths with up to 350m of ascent in a day.



Harder Walks: 13-18km on good, but sometimes-rough paths with up to 650m of ascent in a day.

The final selection of walks each day and during each week will be made by your walking leaders.

Contact Outdoor Travel for more details, travel brochures and reservations:

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