

KIKI & NANCY ADVENTURES IN EUROPE

Trip Itinerary for Sicily



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Sicily is the jewel of the Mediterranean. The island's coastline varies from pristine sandy beaches to pebbly coves to jagged rock cliffs. Stamped upon Sicily's natural beauty is a mosaic of European culture. Greeks, Romans, Arabs, Normans, and others left behind a legacy of architectural marvels that trace 3000 years of history.

Your trip begins when you land at the Catania airport and travel to Taormina, a hilltop city overlooking the sea with views of Mt. Etna. We'll explore the nearby volcano Mt. Etna, visit a local vineyard, take a boat tour off the coast, and see the ancient Greek theater. Next up is Ortigia, a small Baroque island and historical center of Syracuse. Its impressive church buildings and elegant piazzas make it a perfect city for walking. The nearby Archeological Park site—home to both a Greek theater and Roman amphitheater—will leave you awestruck.

Traveling west, we'll tour the city of Ragusa before arriving in Agrigento for a sunset tour of the Valley of the Temples. These ruins are the most impressive testimony of the classical culture of Sicily. From Agrigento, we'll drive north to the Salt Flats along the coast and then to the stunning hilltop city of Erice.

We end our trip with three days in Palermo. You'll see the important royal and sacred sites, visit a private 18th-century palazzo, shop in the outdoor food markets, participate in a cooking class, and eat lots of fantastic Sicilian food.

Quick Summary

Day	Description	Accommodation
Day 0 (Oct. 15)	Flight leaves U.S.	Overnight Flight
Day 1 (Oct. 16)	Arrive Catania Airport	Hotel Villa Diodoro
Day 2 (Oct. 17)	Taormina	Hotel Villa Diodoro
Day 3 (Oct. 18)	Mt. Etna	Hotel Villa Diodoro
Day 4 (Oct. 19)	Syracuse	Ortigia Royal Suite
Day 5 (Oct. 20)	Syracuse	Ortigia Royal Suite
Day 6 (Oct. 21)	Ragusa and Agrigento	Colleverde Park Hotel
Day 7 (Oct. 22)	Erice and Trapani	Dimora Botteghelle
Day 8 (Oct. 23)	Palermo	Bellaroto Suite
Day 9 (Oct. 24)	Palermo	Bellaroto Suite
Day 10 (Oct. 25)	Palermo	Bellaroto Suite
Day 11 (Oct. 26)	Depart Palermo Airport	

Itinerary Detail

Day 1: *Welcome to Sicily* Monday, October 16



Arrive Catania, Taormina

You'll be met at the Catania airport and transported directly to the seafront hotel in Taormina. Perched upon a rocky headland above the sea, Taormina has been a tourist destination in Sicily for hundreds of years. Beautifully restored medieval buildings, breathtaking views around every corner, and winding streets lined with shops, bars, and restaurants make it a perfect spot to hang out for a few days.

Unpack your bags, stroll around the surrounding Romantic-style gardens or enjoy drinks on the pool terrace. We'll have dinner together at the hotel and appreciate the stunning views that surround us.

Daily Summary:

Accommodation: Hotel Villa Diodoro

Meals: Dinner

Day 2: *Picturesque Taormina* Tuesday, October 17



Boat Ride, Walking Tour, Teatro Greco

The coastline of Taormina is too perfect to simply view from a distance. After breakfast, we'll head to the harbor for a boat excursion on the gorgeous turquoise waters. Our local guide will lead us on a walking tour of Taormina in the afternoon. One of the many star attractions we'll see is the 3rd century BC Greek theater, later enlarged by Romans to accommodate their own brand of theatrical performances. The rest of the day is yours to relax or shop and enjoy night views of the sparkling Bay of Naxos.

Daily Summary:

Accommodation: Hotel Villa Diodoro

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 3: *Mt Etna Hike and Vineyards* Wednesday October 18



Mt. Etna Hike, Winery Tasting and Lunch

Mt. Etna dominates the landscape of eastern Sicily. At 11,000 feet, it's the highest mountain peak in Italy south of the Alps. Etna is one of the world's most active volcanoes and is in an almost constant state of activity. The fertile volcanic soils support extensive agriculture, with vineyards and orchards spread across the lower slopes of the mountain. We'll take a cable car and do a pleasant hike with an experienced guide on the lava-covered slopes and enjoy sweeping views of the coastline.

Coming down off the mountain, we arrive at an outstanding winery that showcases Sicily's winemaking tradition and innovation. Mt. Etna has several unique qualities that lend delicious complexity to its wines. The slopes are stacked with stone-terraced vineyards that follow old lava flows. The volcanic soil within these terraces differs due to Etna's constant activity and grapes cultivated just yards apart may taste wildly different. The best Etna wine area is on the northern slope. It's here we find the traditional 18th-century palmento—a cellar with built-in black lava stone basins where grapes were crushed and processed to make wine and store it. We'll tour the Palmento Costanzo vineyard and taste several different wines as we enjoy a traditional lunch made with local ingredients.

Daily Summary:

Accommodation: Hotel Villa Diodoro

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 4: *Syracuse* Thursday, October 19



Norman Castle, Ortiga Walking Tour

Leaving Taormina behind this morning, we make our way to Syracuse. We'll stop at Aci Castello to explore a menacing-looking Norman castle situated on a rocky outcrop jutting out into the sea. Before leaving, we'll treat ourselves to an almond granita and brioche. In another hour we arrive in Ortigia, Siracusa's Old Town.

Roman statesman and orator, Cicero, declared Syracuse, "The greatest Greek city and the most beautiful of them all." Founded by ancient Greek Corinthians 2700 years ago on the island of Ortigia, it's a labyrinth of charming ancient and medieval streets packed with history and unique shops. After checking into our hotel, we have a walking tour of Ortigia with a local guide. You'll see the remains of Greek civilization—the temple of Apollo and the first Christian church which incorporates the temple of Athena. We end our Ortigia walking tour with an aperitivo and light dinner in a courtyard of an old palazzo.

Daily Summary:

Accommodation: Ortigia Royal Suite

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 5: Syracuse Friday, October 20

Parco Archeologico



We begin today at the UNESCO archaeological park of Syracuse. Our local guide will bring to life two of the most significant ancient sites from both Greek and Roman history. The ancient Greek theater dates from the 5th century BC while the adjacent Roman amphitheater was constructed in the 3rd century AD.

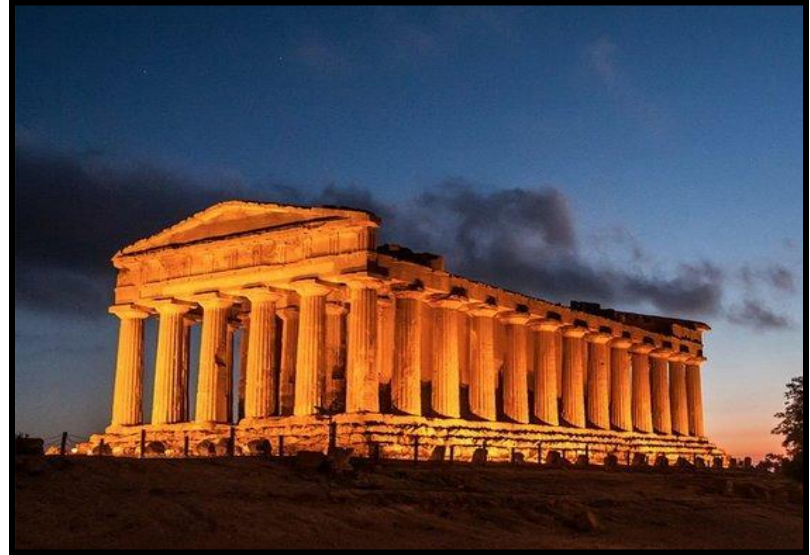
The afternoon and evening are free of scheduled activities. You may want to explore the shops in Ortigia or just enjoy the lively scene from an outdoor café.

Daily Summary:

Accommodation: Ortigia Royal Suite

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 6: Ragusa and Agrigento Saturday, October 21



Ragusa, Valley of Temples Tour

Traveling from Syracuse, we drive for an hour or so to the historic center of Ragusa. It's characterized by its narrow, winding streets and numerous Baroque buildings. We'll walk around the charming town and relax over a delicious lunch. Local specialties include arancini (stuffed rice balls), cassata (a dessert made with ricotta cheese and candied fruit), and cannoli (a pastry filled with sweetened ricotta cheese).

After checking into our Agrigento hotel, we'll head out for an early evening tour of the Valley of the Temples. Set upon a high ridge just outside of Agrigento on Sicily's southern coast, the site consists of eight temples initially constructed in the 5th century BC. The Valley of the Temples is one of the island's star attractions and second only to Athens's Acropolis in its significance as an archaeological site associated with the ancient Greeks.

Daily Summary:

Accommodation: Colleverde Park Hotel

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 7: Erice and Trapani Sunday, October 22



Salt Flats, Erice, Trapani

The coastline from Marsala to Trapani, known as the Salt Road, is characterized by a picturesque landscape of shallow ponds, windmills, and white pyramids of salt. The salt pans have been in use since ancient times and still produce high quality sea salt. We'll take a boat ride through the lagoons and stop at the Museum of Salt.

On the way to our hotel in Trapani, we'll spend a few hours in Erice. It's a medieval walled village perched on a rocky cliff more than 750 meters above sea level, offering a magnificent view of Trapani, the Aegadian Islands, and San Vito Lo Capo. Erice's ancient Castle is magnificent! It's one of the most beautiful viewpoints in Sicily. From here, it's just 30 minutes by car to Trapani.

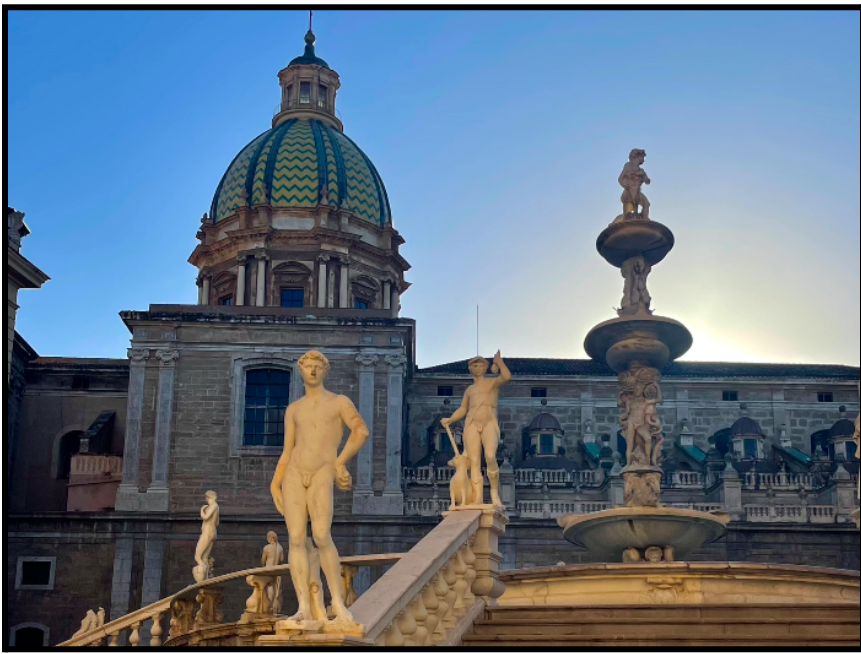
Trapani is located on the western coast of Sicily and situated on a peninsula that extends into the Mediterranean Sea, facing the Egadi Islands. It's known for its beautiful beaches, historic architecture, and cultural heritage.

Daily Summary:

Accommodation: Dimora Botteghelle Hotel
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 8: Palermo Monday, October 23

Arrive Palermo



Sleep in this morning and relax around Trapani before we make the 1-½ hour drive to Palermo.

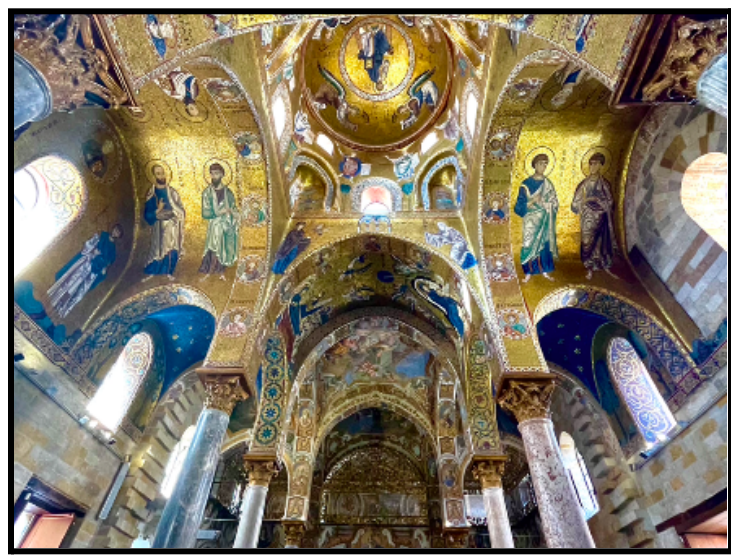
Palermo is a royal city where one can trace the arc of Western Civilization in a few days. Founded by Phoenicians from Carthage in 700 BC, the Greeks conquered the city in the 5th century BC. Under Muslim rule for 120 years beginning in 904, Palermo rivaled Cordoba and Cairo in importance and splendor. The Normans arrived next and returned the city to Christianity. Palermo has experienced a revival in the last decade. It's been revitalized with new museums, gentrified neighborhoods, walking streets, and upscale shops and hotels. Don't worry, Palermo still retains its colorful edge and the grittiness known as "bella chaos" by locals.

Later in the afternoon, we'll take a 2-hour orientation walking tour with a local guide, followed by dinner.

Daily Summary:

Accommodation: Hotel Belloroto Suite
Meals: Dinner

Day 9: Palermo Tuesday, October 24



Sicilian Cooking Class, Arab-Norman Palermo

This morning, we meet chef Michael at Mercato del Capo, one of Palermo's oldest markets. We'll shop for items we'll use in class to prepare a full Sicilian menu made up of a starter, pasta dish, main course, and a dessert. After the lesson we sit down and enjoy the fruits of our labors along with a selection of Sicilian wines topped off with homemade liqueurs and coffee.

After lunch, we meet a local guide to see several splendid examples of the Arab-Byzantine and Norman architectural sites of the 12th century. The Palazzo Reale was constructed by Roger II, founder of the Kingdom of Sicily. It served as the luxurious palace of the Norman sovereigns and was enriched with terraces, exterior galleries, gardens, and ponds with an Arab flair. Following the death of Frederick II in 1250, the building was completely abandoned for approximately three centuries, until the Spanish viceroys chose it as their residence, greatly modifying its original look. The building contains the incredible Palatine Chapel. You will be dazzled by Byzantine mosaics with scenes from the Old and New Testament covering the walls of this small treasure chest.

A short distance from the Palazzo Reale stands the imposing Palermo Cathedral, consecrated in 1185. Over the centuries, the building underwent restoration and mixed elements were added, giving life to an unusually harmonious combination. One key element of the Cathedral is the elegant portico in Gothic-Catalan style. On one of the columns is the engraving of a passage from the Koran in Arabic letters.

Daily Summary:

Accommodation: Hotel Belloroto Suite

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 10: Palermo Wednesday, October 25**Teatro Massimo, Palazzo Francavilla, Market Tour, St. Catherine's Church**

We'll meet our guide in the morning and begin the day at the opera house. Nowhere (except maybe Sydney) does an opera house symbolize a city like the Teatro Massimo symbolizes Palermo. Massimo is the biggest in Italy and it dominates the capital's antique skyline. We'll take a guided tour and explore the stunning auditorium and halls. We'll learn about the renovation that closed the theater for 23 years in 1974 when Mafia corruption dominated Palermo. Its completion and re-opening became a symbol of the city's rebirth.

Near the theater is the fabulous Francavilla Palace, constructed in 1783 in what was then the countryside of Palermo. Noble aristocrats who subsequently bought the home collaborated with the finest artists of the time to make it a historic showplace. It is currently a private residence, and we have a unique opportunity to tour the main salons, library, and garden. Afterward, we'll walk around Palermo's oldest market with vegetables, fruits, fish, and lots of odds and ends for sale. Our next stop at Le Angeliche for lunch, an airy, romantic locale that serves up a modern version of Sicilian flavors with an Arabic twist.

In the afternoon, we tour St. Catherine's Church. It was built at the end of the 16th century and incorporates Renaissance, Baroque and Rococo elements. Almost every surface is covered with paintings, cherubs, decorative marble, and color. From the roof, we have magnificent views of Palermo and of the Pretoria fountain in the Quattro Canti square below. Tonight, we celebrate our last night together at a special farewell dinner.

Daily Summary:

Accommodation: QuintoCanto Hotel & Spa

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 11: Trip Concludes Thursday, October 26**Palermo Airport Departure**

A car service will take you today from the hotel to the Palermo airport, an approx.40-minute drive.

Accommodations



HOTEL VILLA DIODORO - TAORMINA

The elegant, exclusive Hotel Villa Diodoro is located just a few steps from the idyllic town of Taormina. It boasts a pool area that looks out over Mount Etna and the bay of Naxos. The Diodoro, with one-hundred years of history, has been dedicated to the greek historian Diodoro Siculo, a renowned figure who lived in the old town, telling the story of how distinguished travelers from all over the world discovered Taormina in their search of beauty and sun, art and culture.



HOTEL ORTIGIA ROYAL SUITE - SYRACUSE

Located on the eastern side of the island in the Giudecca (Jewish) quarter, the hotel's neighborhood is a labyrinth of narrow, stone-paved alleys crowned by tiny balconies with wrought-iron railings. The Ortigia Royal Suite overlooks the sea and consists of eight suites decorated with a mixture of authentic 1800s and modern furnishings. It's walking distance from all the major sites.



COLLEVERDE PARK HOTEL - AGRIGENTO

An oasis of peace and tranquility in a lush park setting with tropical plants and almond and olive trees. The Colleverde Park is situated between the historic center of Agrigento and the Valley of the Temples. You'll want to order an aperitif from the covered garden restaurant and enjoy the amazing views.



DIMORA BOTTEGHELLE HOTEL - TRAPANI

The hotel takes its name from the nearby Porta delle Botteghele, a gate that's part of the city walls. The elegant boutique hotel is in a late 19th-century palazzo located in a picturesque neighborhood in the Old Town of Trapani. The Dimora is on a quiet street, just a short stroll from the pedestrian area and the Tramontana beach. The nearby alleys and lanes offer craft shops, little eateries, and pastry shops.



BELLOROTO SUITE & SPA - PALERMO

In the heart of Palermo's historic district, Bellaroto Suite is in a noble palace built between the 17th and 18th centuries. The suites are furnished with design furniture and the comfort of a boutique hotel. It's close to many points of interest, including: the Cathedral, the Quattro Canti, Piazza Bellini, and the Vucciria market.

Price

Price per person (Shared Room): \$7,450

Single Room Supplement: add \$900

Airfare is not included in the trip price. All tours, entrance fees, and most meals (as indicated on the daily itinerary) are included. Alcohol is not included unless specifically noted.

Group size is 6 - 12 participants. A deposit of 20% is required to reserve your place.

Why Travel with KIKI & NANCY

Our Commitment

Planning a trip can be daunting. We want you to relax and know that we are committed to ensuring you're well prepared to enjoy your journey. We work hard to put together itineraries that match your interests and fit your budget. We aim to create trips that have the feel of casual travel with friends rather than formal tours.

Responsible Travel

Global travel can only succeed if communities benefit from tourism. We hire local operators who value sustainable travel and support their communities.

Inspiring Through Travel

We specialize in journeys of discovery and inspiration. Our adventures are all about local culture—the people, history, art, and food. Our trips showcase a rich source of inspirational people, landscapes, and cityscapes. Traveling is the time for discovery, exploration and adventure.

Trusted Support

In case of an emergency, all our guides are licensed and trained to handle situations that may arise. We are always with you to assist in any way we can to make your trip safe and memorable.