

Sicily: Crossroads of the Mediterranean

September 27– October 8, 2022



Palazzina cinese



Frutta Martorana



Taormina



Il Gesu



Mount Etna, east coast of Sicily

Art and Architecture Tours LLC is delighted to present Sicily: Crossroads of the Mediterranean--an 11-day/11-night venture that will explore the largest island in the Mediterranean.

No mere “region” of Italy, Sicily has been inhabited by countless cultures, from Carthaginians to Greeks, Romans to Byzantines, Normans to Arabs, and Spanish to Italians. Little wonder that one source claims that the average “Italian” DNA among Sicilians is just 15%.

If these cultures left their biological heritage among modern Sicilians, so did they leave lots of evidence of their material cultures. **Join us for a broad and rich exposure to as many layers of Sicily’s culture as 11 days and tourists’ eyes (and feet) will permit.**

Escorted by world traveler and expert guide **Tommaso Pantè**, we will enjoy Tommaso’s intimate knowledge as a Sicilian, as well as expert regional guides for specialized visits. While we highlight much of the “built” culture of Sicily, Tommaso will make sure that we have lots of opportunity to enjoy the surrounding sea, the varied terrain, the spectacular Mount Etna, and other aspects of Sicily’s natural environment.

Selected Highlights of Sicily: Crossroads of the Mediterranean

- A series of carefully selected 4-star hotels will welcome us as we make our way around the island from Palermo counter-clockwise to Marsala, Agrigento, Siracusa, and Taormina, “the pearl of the Mediterranean.”

- Visits to Palermo’s famous **Oratorios of Santa Cita, San Lorenzo, and San Domenico**, a selection of royal or other noble houses representing Sicilian-inflected Baroque, Rococo, and Neoclassical elements: Palermo’s **Palazzo Cinese**, Sicily’s contribution to the European rage for “chinois” in the early 19th c.; in the Bagheria suburb of Palermo, the **Villa Palagonia**, once the fascination of Grand Tour visitors like Goethe, John Soane, and Alexandre Dumas; and the neoclassical **Villa Spedalotto**; the neoclassical **Botanic Garden**, and **many others**.
- **The Duomo of Monreale**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is considered the high point of Arab-Norman art in Sicily. With craftsmen from Persia, Africa, Asia, Greece, Venice, Pisa, and Provence, William II fashioned both a church and garden cloisters that are “the most sumptuous 12th-century cloisters in the world.” Other church buildings of note will provide a broad view of the intersection of religion and art in the post-medieval period, as with Il Gesu, in Palermo, the 1st Jesuit church in Sicily and **Siracusa Duomo**.
- Visits to three of Sicily’s most important ancient sites, the **Valley of the Temples**, established by the Greeks at the end of the 8th c. BCE, where among other Doric temples, the **Temple of Concord** is the best preserved Greek temple in the world; the **Villa Romana del Casale**, a noble estate that served both Roman occupants and later Arabs until the Norman conquest of Sicily in the 12th c. when the villa was destroyed and then covered by a landslide. The treasures here, discovered in 1950, are the mosaic floors

full of pre-Christian art. (A favorite is the Room of Ten Maidens where the floor depicts 10 bikini-clad maidens enjoying volleyball among other sports.); the **Teatro Greco** in Siracusa, the 474 BCE masterpiece of ancient Greece.

- We will discover gastronomic treats everywhere. The beautiful mountain town of Erice (Mount Erice, elev. 2460 ft.), overlooking the Mediterranean Sea, may be a good place to sample Sicily’s famous almond pastries at Pasticceria Grammatico. Later that day, at Marsala, (home to the dessert wine of the same name) our 5-star **Hotel Baglio Oneto** will await our arrival, with dinner and a winetasting. On another day, it may be an olive oil tasting with the local black bread. And Tommaso promises a fish market, too. A later excursion from Siracusa, to **Ragusa** and **Módica**, takes us to the center known for exceptional rustic cheeses and chocolates. You get the idea!
- A coach trip to the 6,000 ft, Silvestri Crater at **Mt. Etna**, where we can walk around the crater before settling into a wine tasting and a full lunch—appetizer to dessert—what Tommaso calls a “typical festive Sicilian family style lunch, informal and fun!”

Please feel free to contact jwbraymer@comcast.net or artandarchtours.com with any questions you have about Art and Architecture Tours.

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COST AND CONDITIONS

Per Person (double occupancy): \$5195
Single Supplement: \$800

The tour includes eleven (11) nights' accommodation (September 27-October 8) at a series of four-star hotels, all breakfasts, a Welcome Reception and Dinner, Farewell Cocktails and Dinner, several lunches, all entrance fees, private coach transport throughout, expert guiding by Sicilian Tommaso Pante' and his selected specialist guides.

A deposit of \$2000 will secure your place in this tour, with final payment in full due by March 31, 2022. Please return your registration form to 4308 Monument Park, Richmond, Virginia 23230, or scan and email to jwbraymer@comcast.net. Payment by check or credit card. Checks should be made payable to Art and Architecture Tours LLC. Payment by credit card carries a 4% service fee.

Pricing is based on foreign currency exchange rates as of August 1, 2019. While we do not expect a significant change in exchange rates, we reserve the right to adjust the fee to maintain the standard of the tour should a substantial change in the exchange rate occur. Participants will be notified by August 1, 2022, should an adjustment be necessary.

Art and Architecture Tours LLC acts as an agent in arranging a variety of tour services and is not responsible for damages due to acts or defaults on the part of any of these service providers.

Art and Architecture Tours LLC reserves the right at its sole discretion to alter the itinerary as circumstances beyond its control require.

All participants are **strongly encouraged** to enroll in a travel insurance program at the time of registration for the broadest coverage including trip interruption, medical conditions, etc.

Cancellations following initial registration will be honored with a refund, less \$500, until March 31, 2022. After final payment, cancellations will be honored with a refund only if the registrant secures a replacement for the reserved place.

TOUR REGISTRATION

Full legal name as it appears on passport _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Email _____ Passport # _____

First name to appear on name tag _____ Phone _____

Emergency contact _____ Phone _____

Food allergies or special requirements _____

Name of roommate _____

TOUR FEE (DOUBLE OCCUPANCY) IS \$5195 PER PERSON. (Because of room limitations, we encourage single travelers to seek compatible roommates. Single occupancy carries a supplemental fee of \$800. **Please inquire about availability.**)

- \$2000.00 deposit due upon registration
 \$3195 balance due March 31, 2022
 \$800.00 Supplemental fee for single lodging due March 31, 2022
 Total payment enclosed

METHOD OF PAYMENT:

- Checks payable to Art and Architecture Tours LLC. Mail to 4308 Monument Park, Richmond Virginia 23230.
 By credit card (Please note that a 4% credit card fee is passed on to you.) You may mail or return by email to jwbraymer@comcast.net.
 VISA MasterCard AmEx

Card Number _____ Exp. Date _____ Security Code _____ Zip Code of billing address _____

TOUR CONDITIONS: All tour members are encouraged in the strongest terms to obtain travel insurance to cover the entire cost of their travels. Art and Architecture Tours LLC (AAT LLC) acts only as agents for the tour members with respect to transportation, hotels and restaurants, and exercises every care possible. AAT LLC assumes no responsibility to any person or entity for liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, breakdown, disruption of advertised schedules, delay or irregularity in connection with the service of any ship, ferry, airplane, train, automobile, motor coach, carriage, or any other conveyance used in carrying out these tours, or for the acts or defaults of any company or person engaged in conveying the passenger or in carrying out the arrangements of the tour. We cannot accept responsibility for losses or additional expense due to delay, refusal of visa, or changes in air or other services, lost baggage, sickness, weather, strike, war, violent acts, quarantine, acts of God, or any other causes beyond our control. All such losses will be borne by the passenger, as tour rates provide for arrangements only for the time stated. We reserve the right to make such alterations to the itinerary or accommodations as may be deemed necessary for carrying out the tour. The right is reserved to cancel any tour prior to departure, in which case the entire payment will be refunded without further obligation on our part. The price of the program is based on tariffs and exchange rates in effect on August 1, 2019 and is subject to adjustment in the event of change in tariffs, taxes or exchange rates. Registration for this tour shall be deemed to be acceptance of these conditions.

About Art and Architecture Tours LLC, Founded by John Braymer in 2015, Art and Architecture Tours has become recognized for carefully curated travel ventures that exceed the expectations of discriminating tour members. Mr. Braymer, with more than 50 years of study and travel abroad, assembles itineraries that help participants integrate their travel curiosity with their interest in history, culture, architecture and the arts. With a Ph. D. in English (graduate work begun in 1970 under Oxford dons), Mr. Braymer has studied art and architectural history at the undergraduate and graduate levels with additional study in the United Kingdom and Italy. He is retired as chief executive of the American Institute of Architects/Virginia and he is Founding President of the Branch Museum of Architecture and Design in Richmond, Virginia. He also founded and published *Inform*, an architecture and design magazine, for 25 years.

Please feel free to contact him at jwbraymer@comcast.net or artandarchtours.com with any questions you have about Art and Architecture Tours.