



SENSATIONAL SICILY: ART AND ARCHAEOLOGY

With Dr. Claire Calcagno

Far Horizons Archaeological and Cultural Trips proudly presents a journey to the Classical World of Sicily. Here, monumental evidence of waves of conquering armies covers the landscape. Successive groups including the Greeks, Romans, Spaniards, Arabs, British, and finally the advancing U.S. forces in World War II used the strategic island as a launching place for aspirations of empires. This incredible 15-day journey through Sicily will include viewing both the celebrated and more remote remains of the many civilizations that have passed across this land. As we circle this lovely isle, we will view marvels from the past and the beauties of the present. We will spend three days in Syracuse, and explore Agrigento, one of the most impressive classical sites in Italy and a UNESCO World Heritage site. We will see the perfect temple at Segesta, the magnificent Norman Cathedral at Cefalù, and Taormina's superb Roman amphitheater.

There will be many highlights and special events during the trip. Cross the Messina Straits by ferry to travel to Reggio Calabria to view one of southern Italy's most impressive classical sites. Explore four of the eight Late Baroque towns of the Val di Noto (Caltagirone, Catania, Noto and Ragusa), a UNESCO World Heritage site. Wander through the ceramics town of Caltagirone taking time to explore the tiny artisan's shops. Dine on delicious Sicilian cuisine in the countryside at farms and in several elegant regional restaurants. Spend overnights in small characteristic and charming hotels, including two nights in the lovely medieval town of Erice.

Join only 14 others as our study leader exposes the countless layers of exciting Sicilian history!



**Far
Horizons** 
Archaeological
& Cultural Trips, Inc.

Visit our website at www.farhorizons.com

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October 4 - 18, 2009

LIMITED TO 15 PARTICIPANTS

STUDY LEADER: **Claire Calcagno** received her BA in Art History from Harvard University, her MA in Maritime Archaeology from Oxford University and her PhD in archaeology from the same institution. She has been an adjunct professor or visiting scholar at several prestigious institutions including Stanford University, Boston University, MIT and the American Academy in Rome. Dr. Calcagno was raised in Italy, is fluent in Italian, and has dual citizenship - Italy and the United States. She has worked on archaeological projects in Turkey, Tunisia, France and Italy.

TRIP COST: \$9,995.00 (per person, double occupancy) includes all hotels, meals as noted on the itinerary, entry fees, service of a local English speaking guide, and ground transportation in Sicily.

COST DOES NOT INCLUDE: International airfare; a donation as outlined below; passport or visa fees; airport taxes; beverages or food not included on regular menus; laundry; excess baggage charges; personal tips; alcoholic drinks; telephone, email, and fax charges; or other items of a personal nature.

Please note that the cost of this trip is based on the euro at 1.62. If a fluctuation raises the euro, the final price may go up.

SINGLE SUPPLEMENT: \$995.00. Should a roommate be requested and one not be available, the single supplement must be charged.

NOTE ON DONATION: As a tour company that benefits from the cultural and natural riches of our destinations, we have a policy of donating to the scientific and cultural projects and museums we visit. This has created a bond between Far Horizons and the academic and local communities that has helped us establish an extensive list of lecturers and contacts in each of our destinations. We ask that each participant write a check to the noteworthy project we designate. The donation amount is \$150.00 per person and is made by check directly to the donation project. Note that the donation is required as part of your registration for the trip and that it is non-refundable. We will be designating a donation project for this trip shortly.

REGISTRATION: A deposit of \$500.00 and a separate check made out to the donation project is required along with your registration form. Final payment is due 75 days before departure. Upon receipt of your deposit and completed and signed registration form, you will be sent a reading list and a clothing and equipment list. An information book designed for this trip, including maps of archaeological sites and articles of pertinent interest, will be sent upon receipt of final payment.

FUEL SURCHARGES: Far Horizons must pass on price increases for uncontrollable charges such as flights and other services due to additional fuel charges.

CANCELLATION AND REFUNDS: Cancellations received in writing at least 75 days before departure will result in an administrative fee of \$250.00. Cancellations received less than 75 days before departure will not receive a refund. *If for any reason you are unable to complete the trip, FAR HORIZONS will not reimburse any fees. It is strongly advised that you purchase travel protection insurance that includes trip cancellation upon registering for the trip.*

NOTE ABOUT ITINERARY CHANGES: Changes in our itinerary, accommodations, and transportation schedules may occur. A good book to read as well as a flexible attitude and a sense of humor are essential.



DAY 1: Depart New York en route to Sicily.

DAY 2: Arrive in Catania, Sicily's second largest city, and enjoy a short tour of the city. In the afternoon, travel south to Syracuse, the most important Greek city outside of Athens. First colonized by Corinthians in the 8th century BC, this is our base for the next three days. The oldest sector of the city is on the island of Ortygia, connected to modern Syracuse by a narrow bridge. The town's long history is still visible in many buildings, going back as far as the 6th century BC Temple of Apollo. Gather this evening for our festive welcome dinner party in a traditional restaurant in the old section of town. Overnight for two nights in the historic area of Syracuse. (D)

DAY 3: Our explorations of Syracuse begin with the ancient Greek precinct of Neapolis. Here we will see the theater of Syracuse, one of the largest in the Greek world and still in use today; the great Altar of Hieron located at the top of the stadium and built for the public celebration of animal sacrifices; and a stunning 2nd century Roman amphitheater. Walk through the *latomie*, great stone quarries that provided the building materials for the Greek city and later served as a prison for the defeated and enslaved Athenians. At one end lies the *Orecchio di Dionisio*, the Ear of Dionysius, a

cave with an ear-shaped entrance and unusual acoustics. Legend says that Dionysius listened at the top of the quarry to hear what the slaves were plotting below. Continue to the Paolo Orsi Archaeological Museum where Sicily's long history can be seen in the artifacts excavated from beneath the city, and the nearby 4th century Catacombs of San Giovanni Evangelista to view early frescoes decorating the cavern walls above the ancient crypts. Walk through the Castle of Euryalus, created in 402 BC by Dionysius with the help of Archimedes as protection against the Carthaginians. Today, it is the finest surviving example of Greek military architecture. Dinner is on our own this evening. (B/L)

DAY 4: Today's tour takes us into the heart of Sicily's baroque. Devastated by the 1693 earthquake, the towns of Val di Noto rose from the ashes and were rebuilt in the 18th century with splendid monuments, churches and distinguished palaces in the Baroque style; true works of art. This southeastern region of Sicily is now a UNESCO World Heritage site. Begin with a tour of the Palazzolo Acreide where Baroque palaces are built on top of 7th century BC Greek structures. In the Medieval sector of the town, visit the Museum-House of Antonio Uccello dedicated to peasant life, and continue to Noto, a town famous for its beautiful architecture. Called the "Garden of Stone" for its beautiful carving, the old center is a monument to the Sicilian Baroque style. Transfer to Ragusa and overnight for one night. (B/L/D)

DAY 5: The ancient city of Ragusa has two distinct sections, the lower and older town of Ragusa Ibla, and the higher and newer Ragusa Superior, and this morning we will have a walking tour of the city. Caltagirone has been renowned for the production of lively ceramics for more than 1,000 years. Prehistoric earthenware has been found in the surrounding hills, local potters were world famous during the Middle Ages, and today the tradition is still maintained. Here, walk up the dazzling Santa Maria del Monte Stairway, built in 1608, where each of the 142 steps is decorated with majolica tiles, and see the former Cathedral of Caltagirone at the top. Enjoy some free time to explore the many shops specializing in ceramics. Tonight will be spent at a traditional farm house just outside of Caltagirone where we will experience a tour of the winery before dinner. (B/L/D)

DAY 6: This morning, drive to Piazza Armerina and visit the baroque cathedral, crowning the terraced hills. Then it's on to the Roman Villa of Casale. After nearly 1,000 years of use, this country house was destroyed by flood in the 12th century. The mud preserved the magnificent mosaic floors throughout the villa, showing mythical figures, hunting scenes, and scantily clad maidens. Transfer to Agrigento, a UNESCO World Heritage site, and stroll between floodlit temples for a close-up view of the magnificent Valley of Temples. Overnight in the Villa Athena, a faded but still impressive former villa with stunning views across to the sanctuaries. (B/L/D)

DAY 7: Today we travel to two magnificent ancient Greek cities. According to the historian Thucydides, Selinunte was built by colonists from Megara Hyblaea in 628 BC. Named for the wild celery that still grows on the surrounding fertile



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plain, this was the wealthiest of Sicily's Greek colonies. The fortified site reflects the long history of conflict between the Greek cities of the era. The city was sacked by Carthaginians led by Hannibal in 409 BC in retaliation for an attack on neighboring Segesta. We will also visit the temple at Segesta, one of the finest and best preserved in the Greek world. Continue to Erice and overnight for two nights in a charming small hotel within the walls of the medieval city. Gather this evening in a local restaurant for a delightful dinner of regional specialties. (B/L/D)

DAY 8: The origins of the beautiful town of Erice are steeped in myth. Perched on an enormous rock that rises steeply from the sea, it is one of the last vestiges of medieval Sicily. Surrounded by a pine forest, protected from the world by imposing ramparts and city walls, and shadowed by an impressive castle, it is surely the island's most picturesque town. We will walk the narrow, cobbled streets to view the Museo di Erice, the 15th century Chiesa Matrice with its outstanding rose window, and the Church of San Giovanni Battista with its 12th century portal. In the afternoon, there

will be leisure time for exploration or shopping with lunch and dinner on our own. (B)

DAY 9: A short drive this morning takes us to Monreale to see the cathedral built in 1172 by order of King William II. The church's interior is spectacularly decorated floor to ceiling with shimmering Byzantine mosaics depicting scenes from the old and new testaments. Continue to Palermo, the island's capital, to visit the city's archaeological museum. Popular in Sicily since the Middle Ages, marionettes are still an important part of Sicilian culture, and this evening, you will enjoy a delightful puppet show at the International Museum of the Marionettes. Dinner will be at a local restaurant. Overnight for two nights at the Centrale Palace Hotel in Palermo. (B/L/D)



DAY 10: Palermo was once the Norman capital of Sicily. This morning's walk takes us into the historic center to view the ornate Palazzo dei Normanni, the royal palace built in the 11th century for the Norman King Roger II, and the royal chapel, Capella Palatina. Adorned with extraordinary Byzantine mosaics, the chapel is the finest example of Arab-Norman art in Palermo. We will see the Chiesa di San Giovanni degli Eremiti, also built for King Roger II, and the cathedral where the rebuilding over the centuries depicts a carved history of the city. After lunch, the afternoon and dinner are free to explore the town. (B/L)

DAY 11: Begin today at Cefalù, captured in the Oscar-winning film *Cinema Paradiso*. This beautiful town is blessed with a Romanesque Cathedral begun in 1131 and dedicated to the Redeemer reflected in the giant mosaic of Christ Pantocrator in the great cupola. The city also contains a museum that houses Antonello da Messina's masterpiece *Portrait of an Unknown Man*. As we drive east and time permitting we will stop in Santo Stéfano di Camastra, one of Sicily's pottery production centers. In the evening, we will cross the Straits of Messina and overnight in Reggio Calabria for one night. (B/L/D)



DAY 12: Today's all day tour to Reggio Calabria includes a visit to the Museo Nazionale della Magna Grecia, home of the larger than life-size 5th century BC Greek bronzes found by divers off



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the Riace Marina in 1972. One of these extraordinary statues is thought to be a rare survivor of the Athenian sculptor, Phidias, chief exponent of the idealizing, classical style who was praised in the highest terms by ancient writers. The statues possibly originated from the Temple of Delphi, the Athenians' monument to the victory of Marthon. Return to Messina for a tour of the cathedral before continuing on to Taormina, our home for the next three nights. Dinner is on our own. (B/L)

DAY 13: Magnificent Etna, the still smoking volcano, towers over the surrounding landscape, its snowcapped peak visible for many miles. On Etna's slope, Homer placed the cave of Polyphemus, the Cyclops who captured Ulysses and his comrades. The erupting cone of the volcano is the cyclopan eye. This morning, we will wind through the fantastic landscapes to see the rugged lava rivers marking the flanks of the volcano. Our lunch today will be in a farmhouse and winery located in the village of Santa Venerina. In the afternoon, return to Taormina where we will have time to wander the streets from the Piazza del Duomo, the heart of the town, to Palazzo Corvaja, a Norman structure with castellated façade built over an Arab tower and the seat of the first Sicilian parliament. We will climb to the Roman amphitheater, the second largest ancient theater in Sicily with its magnificent view of the sea and Mt. Etna. Taormina's medieval center is filled with magnificent buildings that are architectural delights draped in luxuriant subtropical vegetation. Tonight's farewell dinner will be at one of Taormina's elegant restaurants. (B/L/D)

DAY 14: A short drive takes us to Castelmola, high up the mountain from Taormina. The views from this mountain-top village are truly spectacular. On a clear day Catania and Syracuse are visible. Return to Taormina with free time to explore the winding streets of Sicily's most charming town for last-minute gifts to take home. Lunch and dinner are on our own. (B)

DAY 15: Transfer to Catania's airport for our return flight to the United States. (B)



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