

Sicily

all year round



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One of the most poignant novels by Sicilian writer Ercole Patti was entitled *Un bellissimo novembre* (*That Splendid November*). Was it just a coincidence? A mere sonic or aesthetic allusion, perhaps? We don't think so. On the contrary, that title makes explicit the effects of Sicily's climate on the life and character of its people. That very climate has sculpted the island's exuberant, untamed, bountiful nature, which envelopes, penetrates, and sometimes overwhelms with its beauty, colours, and fragrances.

Apart from the hot summers and sporadic cold winter days, Sicily seems to enjoy a long spring that stirs the soul and makes you want to enjoy the outdoors, play sports, explore cities, and go on day trips.

But Sicily is also home to Europe's tallest active volcano and Italy's highest provincial capital. These and many other facts make it a land of incredible charm, beauty, and variety.

Sicily holds many other records. To begin with, it's the largest island in the Mediterranean; here, you can find the world's oldest parliament in a building of great prestige in Palermo, but also one of the world's largest archaeological sites (in Agrigento)

and Europe's largest (in Selinunte). Not to mention Italy's largest opera house—Palermo's Teatro Massimo Vittorio Emanuele. You can also find the 14th-century illuminated bible by Pietro Cavallini — one of the most beautiful in the world — at the Ursino-Recupero city library in Catania, and the most stunning Baroque towns you'll ever see. And then, of course, there's the delectable cuisine with an ancient tradition, so authentic, so good: it's a feast for the eyes and the palate! Sicilian cuisine owes much of its flavour and character to the precious minerals released in the soil when Mount Etna — or the "Muntagna", as the locals call it — erupts, resulting in produce with truly unique organoleptic properties.

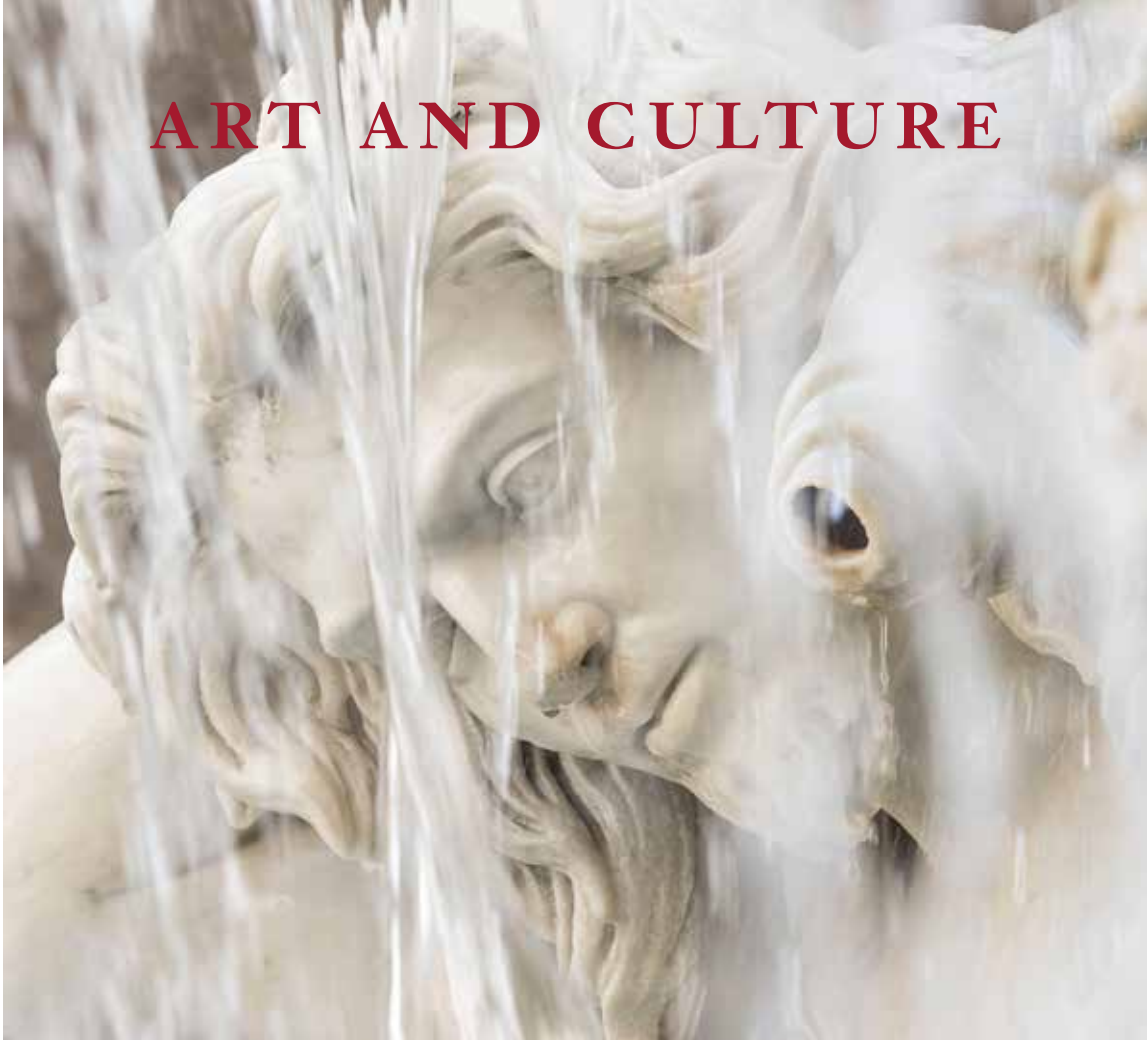
Those who visit Sicily (usually in the summer) often leave with the desire to return because Sicily and its people capture your heart.

So why not explore it in the off-season to get to know its shier, lesser-known side, less dazzling perhaps, but more vivid and vibrant and extremely generous and hospitable?

What can you do on a Mediterranean island outside the summer months? Keep reading to find out.

See you soon in Sicily!

ART AND CULTURE



Nestled in the middle of the Mediterranean and cradle of its civilisation, Sicily is an ancient, rich, fertile land that, throughout its history, has been a coveted prize to populations driven by the desire for power and glory and the allure of its beauty. Each civilisation that conquered Sicily has left a mark, making it a unique and unparalleled tapestry of architectural styles often layered one on top of the other in its ever-transforming monuments. This mutability over the centuries was also due to some natural disasters that have completely reshaped many places. Take the earthquake in

1693, for example, which prompted the flourishing of Baroque architecture in many towns in Eastern Sicily.

Visiting Sicily means embarking on a journey through time and history amid prestigious archaeological sites, extraordinary Arab-Norman buildings, Baroque architecture, and picturesque castles. This unique history and environment have forged the countless, multifaceted cultural and artistic expressions you can appreciate along the way in this land of Archimedes, Antonello da Messina, Vincenzo Bellini, Luigi Pirandello, and Leonardo Sciascia, only to name a few.



Above left: **Morgantina archaeological site** (Enna).

Above right: **Islet of Mozia** (Marsala, Trapani), the Mozia Charioteer marble statue (circa 450 B.C.).

Right: **Piazza Armerina** (Enna), **Villa Romana del Casale**, a detail of the mosaic flooring. This **UNESCO World Heritage Site** houses the world's largest Roman mosaic flooring (3500 m2).

Opposite: **Catania**, piazza del Duomo, a detail of the **Amenano Fountain** (1867).

Page 1: **Mount Etna** (Catania), a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**.



Hear the whispers of myths and legends

Story and myth have run deep in Sicilian culture since ancient times. Gods, demigods, nymphs, heroes and monsters have inhabited Sicily's homes, streets and theatres — not to mention Sicilians' imagination — leaving hundreds of traces, including in its toponyms. Pelorus, Bronte, Arethusa, Adranus, Megara, Aeolus, Liparus, Hybla, Eryx, Minos, and many other figures are inextricably linked to Sicily's places and culture.

ART AND CULTURE



Left: **Selinunte** (Trapani), the **archaeological site**, Temple E. Europe's largest archaeological site, it contains ruins and remains of many buildings and temples. Selinunte has an enthralling history. It was a prosperous and powerful Greek city.

Below left: **Calatafimi Segesta** (Trapani), **Segesta archaeological site**, the Temple, also known as the "Great Temple".

Below right: **Tindari** (Messina), **archaeological site**, the colonnade of House B, a Roman *domus* measuring about 900 m² with a peristyle.



ART AND CULTURE



Left: **Agrigento**, the archaeological and landscape park of the **Valley of the Temples**, Temple of Concordia. Built in 430 B.C., it's one of the best-preserved ancient Greek temples in the world. With its 1,300 hectares, This **UNESCO World Heritage Site** preserves an extraordinary monumental and landscape heritage and is **one of the world's largest archaeological parks**.

Below: **Syracuse**, the famous Neapolis archaeological site, **The Greek theatre**. Since ancient times, this theatre has been a **coveted venue for Greek tragedies**. In 1914, it resumed staging classical plays, establishing a tradition that is still artistically and culturally relevant today.

Walk on ancient stones

Sicily has been inhabited since prehistoric times and has extraordinary ancient ruins contained in archaeological sites of great historical, environmental, and landscape significance.

Travel through time

Ancient Greek and Roman temples, Arab fortresses, Norman castles, medieval buildings, Baroque churches and palazzos, and Art Nouveau residences—Sicily's architecture takes you on a journey through time. As you wander its streets, you don't just see history everywhere. You feel it.



ART AND CULTURE



Above left: **Taormina** (Messina), the extraordinary **Greek theatre** with Mount Etna smoking in the background. The theatre hosts several national and international shows, plays, and events.

Above right: **Adrano** (Catania), the **Bridge of the Saracens** over the Simeto. The bridge was actually built by the Normans in the 12th century.

Left: **Erice** (Trapani), the **Castle of Venus**.

Opposite – above: **Mussomeli** (Caltanissetta), the **Castello Manfre-donico**, also known as Mussomeli Castle; below: **Catania**, the **Ursino Castle**. This Norman building was commissioned by Frederick II of Swabia, with construction works starting in 1239.

ART AND CULTURE



Visit castles

When you explore Sicily, you're likely to come across castles with crenellated towers, city walls, ancient arrow slits, and inaccessible moats.

These magical places guard secrets and mysteries while bearing witness to a legendary past featuring kings and queens, knights and ladies, lords and servants.

There are more than 200 of them dotting the island, with different shapes and sizes depending on the defence needs.

You may not be able to visit them all, but it's safe to say that wherever you are in Sicily, you'll be spoiled for choice.

ART AND CULTURE



Bask in the beauty of the Sacred

Sicily is one of the Italian regions with the highest number of religious buildings of different eras, styles and sizes. These buildings house exquisite artwork and have often been reworked, radically modified, and undergone superimpositions. These architectural wonders are a testimony of how beauty connects humans with the divine.

Enna, the stunning interior of the **Cathedral** dedicated to Maria Santissima della Visitazione (Our Lady of the Visitation). This national monument blends Gothic, Renaissance, and Baroque elements.

Opposite – above left: **Palermo**, the entrance of the **Cathedral**. A symbol of the city, it perfectly epitomises the historical and cultural changes over the centuries, blending and layering Arab, Norman, and Catalan Gothic elements. Visiting this cathedral is like

taking a walk through history; above right: **Monreale** (Palermo), the interior of the **Cathedral** with its incredible gold mosaics covering 6,340 m², **the second largest in the world**; below: **Cefalù** (Palermo), view of the **Cathedral** from the sea. All these religious buildings are part of the **UNESCO World Heritage Site**, which includes the Arab-Norman Palermo and the cathedrals of Cefalù and Monreale.

ART AND CULTURE



Explore UNESCO World Heritage Sites

Sicily has seven UNESCO World Heritage Sites (the archaeological area of Agrigento, Roman Villa del Casale, the Aeolian Islands, Baroque towns in Val di Noto, Syracuse and the rocky necropolis of Pantalica, Mount Etna, Arab-Norman Palermo and the Cathedrals of Cefalù and Monreale) and four assets of intangible cultural heritage (the art of dry-stone construction, Mediterranean diet, Sicilian puppet theatre, and the head-trained bush vines of Pantelleria).



ART AND CULTURE



Above left and right: **Bagheria** (Palermo), exteriors and interiors of the Baroque **Villa Palagonia**, also known as **Villa of Monsters**. Its construction, commissioned by the Prince of Palagonia, began in 1715.

Below left: **Leonforte** (Enna), the **Granfonte**, the monumental fountain, more than 24 m long, built in 1651.

Below right: **Modica** (Ragusa), the **Cathedral of San Giorgio**, a detail of the façade.

Opposite – above left: **Ragusa Ibla**, **Cathedral of San Giorgio**; above right: **Scicli** (Ragusa), **Palazzo Beneventano**; below left: **Syracuse**, Piazza Duomo with a glimpse of the Cathedral in the foreground; below right: **Noto** (Syracuse), **Cathedral of San Nicolò**.

ART AND CULTURE



Behold the beauty of Baroque

In 1693, a catastrophic earthquake affected the area of the Val di Noto, destroying a large number of buildings and thus prompting massive reconstruction efforts that allowed both local and non-local architects and city planners to make a distinctive Baroque style flourish. Today, these Baroque towns are a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**. Sicilian Baroque is particularly flamboyant and ornate, blending architecture and craftsmanship. Buildings feature putti, animals, floral elements, monsters, apotropaic masks, anthropomorphic or zoomorphic figures, sacred images, and intricate wrought iron balustrades that please the eye and stir emotions.

ART AND CULTURE



ART AND CULTURE



Left: **Palermo**, Piazza Castelnuovo, aka Piazza Politeama, the late 19th-century **Palchetto della Musica**, with the **Teatro Politeama** in the background.

Below: **Catania**, inside **Teatro Massimo Bellini**.

Opposite – above left: **Catania**, the Old Town with the dome of the **Abbey of S. Agata** on the left and the dome and bell tower of the **Cathedral** on the right; below left: **Catania**, the richly decorated ceiling of **Palazzo Biscari**; below right: **Ragusa Ibla**, the console brackets of **Palazzo La Rocca**.

Go to the opera

Italian opera singing, which was granted **UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage** status, is deeply rooted in Sicily.

The island is the birthplace of many composers, the most famous of whom is **Vincenzo Bellini** — the “Swan of Catania” — considered the leading composer of the Bel Canto era with Gioacchino Rossini and Gaetano Donizetti. Moreover, Sicily has inspired many musicians and librettists, who have set their works in the island, capturing its essence and transforming it into a universal narrative and an emotional and cultural setting. This deep-rooted passion for opera is also supported by the many prestigious theatres across the island. Palermo’s Teatro Massimo Vittorio Emanuele, to name one, can seat 1387 people, which makes it **Italy’s most capacious and Europe’s third most capacious opera theatre**.



ART AND CULTURE



Surround yourself with street art

Lately, Sicily's vibrant colour palette has been enriched with murals decorating many walls, shutters, and façades of various towns and cities. Created by talented local and international artists, these murals break through the chromatic monotony of metal, brick, and concrete, filling the streets with colour, meaning, and a sense of wonder. When you visit Sicilian cities such as Palermo, Bagheria, Catania, Caltagirone, Messina, and many other spots across the island, you're bound to come across murals depicting local celebrities, mythological figures, symbolic scenes, and much more.

ART AND CULTURE



Above left: **Porto Empedocle** (Agrigento), a mural depicting **Andrea Camilleri** by street artist Ligama.

Above right: **Agrigento**, the house of **Luigi Pirandello**.

Left: **Racalmuto** (Agrigento), Leonardo Sciascia's House-Museum, **Leonardo Sciascia** by Andrea Vizzini.

Opposite – above left: **Gibellina Nuova** (Trapani), **Baglio Di Stefano**, which houses the Fondazione Orestiadi and the Museo delle Trame Mediterranee (Museum of Mediterranean Patterns); above right: **Favara** (Agrigento), Cortile Barba. This town is home to the **Farm Cultural Park**; below: **Castel di Lucio** (Messina), **Ariadne's Maze** created by Italo Lanfredini for the **Fiumara d'Arte** open-air museum in the **Nebrodi mountains**.

Visit literary places...

Over the years, various **literary parks** dedicated to some of the most famous local writers, including Giovanni Verga, Luigi Pirandello, Salvatore Quasimodo, Leonardo Sciascia, and Andrea Camilleri, have cropped up across Sicily.

... and film locations

Sicily's climate, extraordinary landscapes, liveliness, and distinctiveness make it the perfect movie set. Directors who have shot their films in Sicily include Rossellini, Visconti, Antonioni, the Taviani brothers, Pasolini, and Coppola, only to name a few. The island is also famous for several TV series, among which Inspector Montalbano is the most popular.

ART AND CULTURE



Left: **Santa Margherita Belice** (Agrigento), **Statue of Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa** by Davide Mauro with Palazzo Filangeri di Cutò in the background, which houses the **Museo del Gattopardo** dedicated to the writer and his most famous novel.

Below: **Palermo, Antonio Salinas Archaeological Museum**, the New Agora.

Opposite – above left: **Catania**, the **Biblioteche Riunite Civica e Ursino Recupero**. Its five rooms are home to 270,000 books; above right: **Palermo, Palazzo Abatellis**, The Triumph of Death, a fresco dating back to 1446; below left: **Messina, Regional Interdisciplinary Museum**, statues of Scylla and Neptune; below right: another room of the museum.

Lose track of time in museums

When in Sicily, you cannot not visit its museums. There are so many where you can dive deep into the island's immense art heritage and history from prehistory to today.

The most famous ones include Agrigento's Regional Archaeological Museum, Messina's Regional Museum, Palermo's Antonio Salinas Regional Archaeological Museum and Abatellis Museum, Syracuse's Paolo Orsi Museum, Trapani's Agostino Pepoli Museum, Catania's Giovanni Verga House-Museum, and the Archaeological Museums of Caltanissetta, Ragusa, and Gela.



ART AND CULTURE



ART AND CULTURE

Dive into a sea of events

Sicily has a vast array of art and culture events all year round. Here are some of the most significant ones curated by the Regional Department of Tourism, Sports, and Entertainment.

The **Monreale Sacred Music Festival**, now at its 67th edition, takes place in the Cathedral of Monreale, a masterpiece of Arab-Norman architecture and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. This unmissable event for music and culture enthusiasts combines art, faith, and history against a stunning backdrop.

The **Bellini Festival** celebrates the beauty and modernity of Bel Canto with a rich programme of concerts, conferences, and events in theatres, prestigious churches and palazzos in Catania, Messina, and Palermo.

The **Sicilia Jazz Festival** was born in 2021 out of the collaboration of the Regional Department of Tourism, Sports, and Entertainment, Municipal Council of Palermo, Fondazione Orchestra Jazz Siciliana – The Brass Group, and the region's music conservatories. It features the world's greatest artists and original productions every year, and it's the world's only festival entirely dedicated to orchestra productions.



ART AND CULTURE



Left: **Monreale** (Palermo), a concert during the **Sacred Music Festival**.

Below left and right: **Sicilia Jazz Festival**.

Opposite: **Bellini Festival** events in **Messina** (above) and **Catania** (below).



HISTORY AND TRADITIONS



As with most islands, Sicily is a world within itself. Its rich history has shaped its strong identity and unique character, setting it apart. This rich and beautiful island has been inhabited for thousands of years and has been coveted and conquered by various civilisations, each of which has left its indelible mark. It has absorbed everything it could from each of its conquerors — their languages, art, skills, beliefs, and traditions — accumulating an immense cultural heritage.

The sense of identity and local traditions are deeply rooted here. Hopefully, this wealth of knowledge will continue to be handed down to the generations to come, also thanks to policies safeguarding and promoting the local cultural heritage.

There are places in Sicily where time really seems to stand still, and where traces of the past continue to tell a story that has unfolded for millennia, and that mirrors much of humanity's journey.



Above: **Petralia Sottana** (Palermo), the Old Town dominated by the Mother Church with the snow-capped **Mado-nie mountains** in the background.



Left: **San Fratello** (Messina), the **Festa dei Giudei** during the Holy Week. For two days, these Giudei disrupt Easter celebrations, screaming, shouting, running around the streets, climbing up the walls, and walking on the edge of balconies.

Opposite: **Bagheria** (Palermo), Guttuso Museum, the area dedicated to the Sicilian cart, **detail of a cart**.

Feel the island's beating heart

The streets, squares, churches, and places where people traditionally gather and move represent the beating heart of any community. Perceiving the character of these places and engaging with local communities is a treasured part of any travel experience that can be enjoyed even more during the off-season when the absence of crowds and the original atmosphere of these places make these encounters even more authentic and meaningful.

STORIA E TRADIZIONI



Embrace the joy of slowing down

Of the “Most beautiful villages in Italy” selected by the eponymous association, twenty-four are in Sicily. Small towns reveal one of Sicily’s most ancient and authentic sides, where you can soak up the local history, culture, traditions, and atmosphere.

These places allow you to go back in time and enjoy a slower pace of life and savour the experience to its fullest, capturing a feeling of its deeper significance. After all, isn’t this the true essence of travel—to embrace unfamiliar places as yours own, attentively listening to the stories they have to tell?

STORIA E TRADIZIONI



Above: **Caltabellotta** (Agrigento),
The **Hermitage of S. Pellegrino**.



Left: **Caltanissetta**, **Easter** celebra-
tions.

Opposite – above: the renowned village of **Marzamemi** (Syracuse). Usually very crowded during the summer, this village allows you to take in every precious little detail during the off-season; below: **Taormina** (Messina), a **Sicilian puppet** on display in a shop. An interesting elaboration of the medieval chivalric romance, instances of which are *The Song of Roland* and *The Furious Orlando*, Sicilian puppet theatre is a **UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity**. These puppet shows are particularly popular among children and are not to be missed.

STORIA E TRADIZIONI



STORIA E TRADIZIONI



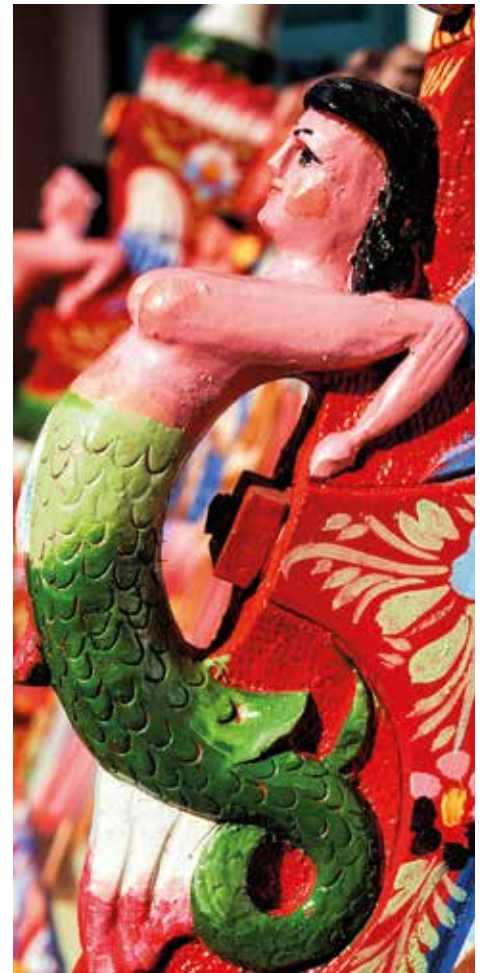
Above: **Erice** (Trapani), the **Church of S. Giovanni** overlooking **Monte Cofano**. This area offers a magical atmosphere and some of Sicily's most fascinating views.



Left: **Montalbano Elicona** (Messina) with the **Nebrodi** in the background. Dubbed "Sicily's Tibet", Montalbano Elicona was named "Italy's most beautiful village" 2015.

Opposite – above left: **Leonforte** (Enna), **Good Friday** traditions; below left: **Catania, Festival of Sant'Agata** (3-5 February). The faithful in the traditional white attire light up enormous votive candles that they carry in procession; right: **Gangi** (Palermo), **Palm Sunday celebrations**.

STORIA E TRADIZIONI



Celebrate Carnival

Carnival celebrations with shows, events, and brightly coloured typical “allegorical” or “flowered” floats are held in many towns and villages across Sicily. This is a precious and fun opportunity to see fascinating places, rich in history and traditions, in a new light.

The Acireale Carnival is considered one of Sicily’s best and attracts throngs of visitors every year.

STORIA E TRADIZIONI



Above: a night-time photograph of **S. Mauro Castelverde** (Palermo).



Left: **Misterbianco** (Catania), colourful **Carnival costumes**. This event is said to have the best costumes in Sicily. Each one of these masterpieces takes months of work to complete.

Opposite – above left: **Acireale** (Catania) **Carnival** celebrations, a detail of a so-called papier-mâché “allegorical” float. The thousands of lights, spectacular movements, and ever-evolving themes turn the floats of the Acireale Carnival into masterpieces, some of which are adorned with flowers; above right and below: details of **Sicilian carts**.

STORIA E TRADIZIONI



STORIA E TRADIZIONI



Experience local festivals

Sicily hosts many traditional religious and non-religious festivals throughout the year, also thanks to its favorable climate, which encourages people to venture out.

Sacred events are always intertwined with pagan elements. The atmosphere is sometimes solemn and always cheerful and very engaging.

Above: **Catania**, Piazza Duomo, The **Festival of S. Agata** (3-5 February) is the **world's third-largest religious celebration**.

Left: **Enna**, **Easter celebrations** involve the entire community, even the little ones.

Opposite – above: **Mussomeli** (Caltanissetta); below: Custonaci (Trapani), the **live Nativity Scene**, now at its 40th edition.

NATURE SPORT ADVENTURE



Masters of aesthetics and true geniuses in choosing the places where to settle, the ancient Greeks must have been awe-struck by Sicily's beauty considering they colonised almost the entire island, contributing to its unique artistic and cultural heritage.

A crystal-clear sea, beautiful coastlines, green hills, lakes, and rivers to supply water for drinking and growing crops, and a mild climate convinced this extraordinary civilisation that settling in this land would pay off. And they were right. And so was Wolfgang von Goethe when he wrote that Sicily is "The key to all.

[...] The purity of the contours, the softness of everything, the exchange of soft colours, the harmonious unity of the sky with the sea and the sea to the land [...] He who saw them once shall possess them for a lifetime."

What a beautiful love letter!

Today, Sicily continues to amaze and charm with its breathtaking beauty, liveliness, incredibly diverse and magnificent landscape, and the close encounter of ice, fire, air, and earth when witnessing an eruption of Mount Etna against the backdrop of the nearby sea.

By the way, here you can ski while admiring the sea view.



Above: **Vendicari Nature Reserve** (Syracuse).

Right: San Mauro Castelverde (Palermo), **Madonie Nature Park**, the **Gorges of Tiberius**. This is one of the two **UNESCO Global Geoparks** in Sicily and one of the twelve in Italy. Here, you can enjoy water trekking, rafting, horse riding, hiking, skiing, and snowboarding.

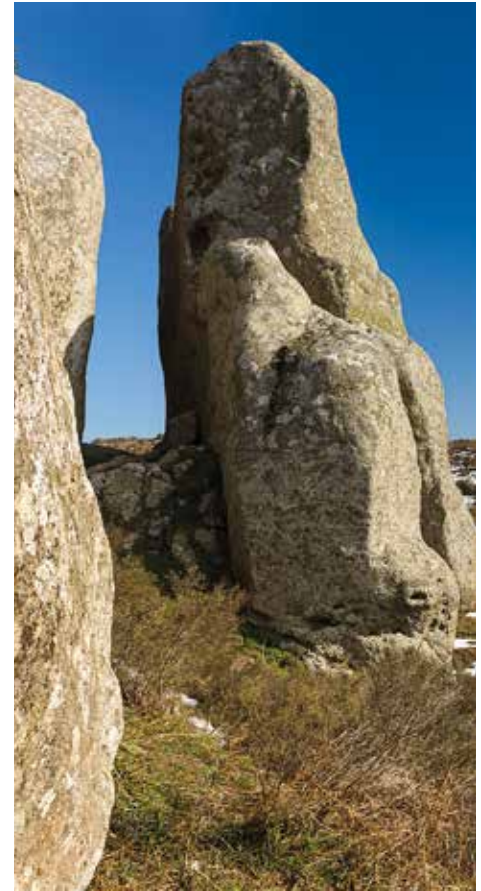
Far right: **Island of Pantelleria** (Trapani), **Venus's Mirror**.



NATURE SPORT ADVENTURE



NATURE SPORT ADVENTURE



Above: **Montalbano Elicona** (Messina), the **Argimusco plateau**, where you can admire megaliths of different shapes and sizes.

Left: **Nebrodi Nature Park** (Messina), **Lake Biviere** overlooking Mount Etna. This nature park has several lakes and offers many excursions and activities. The area is also home to three golden eagle couples.

Opposite: **Mount Etna's woods** (Catania). In the last picture is the ***Illice di Carrinu***, a 700-year-old holm oak known as the tree with **the world's longest branches**.

NATURE SPORT ADVENTURE



NATURE SPORT ADVENTURE



Below right: **The Aeolian Islands** (Messina), a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**. In the background, Filicudi seen from Salina. Sicily is blessed with beautiful surrounding archipelagos and islands — the Aeolian Islands, Aegadian Islands, Pelagie Islands, Favignana, Pantelleria, and Ustica — which are true corners of paradise, where time stands still and the everyday hustle and bustle is a distant memory.



Above left: dawn on the snowy top of **Mount Etna** (Catania); middle: **Gorges of Alcantara** (Messina and Catania); below left: **Madonie Nature Park** (San Mauro Castelverde, Palermo).

Opposite – above: **Zingaro Nature Reserve** (Castellammare del Golfo and San Vito Lo Capo, Trapani), Cala Tonnarella dell'Uzzo; below: **Avola Antica** (Syracuse), **Cavagrande del Cassibile**, Carrubella.

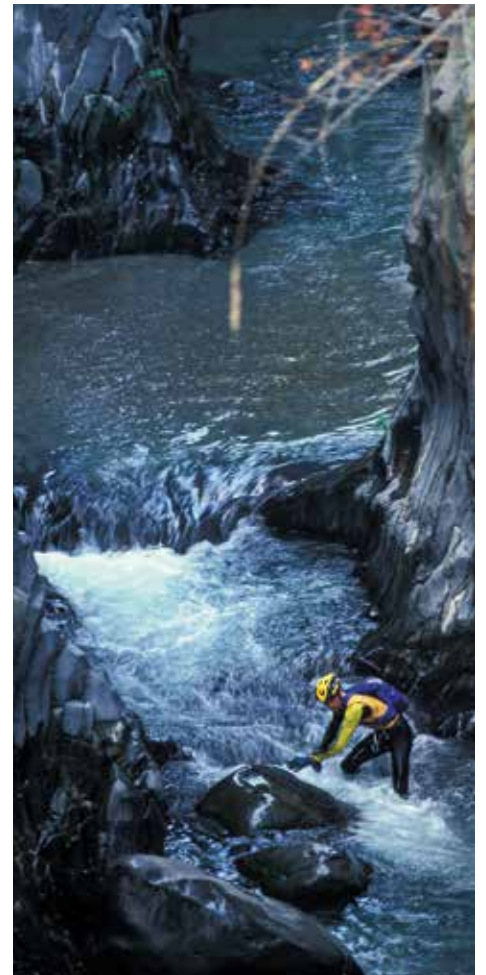


NATURE SPORT ADVENTURE



Experience the four elements

Sicily has four Regional Nature Parks — Etna Nature Park, Madonie Nature Park, Nebrodi Nature Park and Alcantara River Park — and multiple nature reserves and protected areas. They all have a primordial feel, where you can reconnect with the raw essence of nature and existence, away from the chaos of city life. On Mount Etna, you can even admire the so-called lava deserts, which offer unique scenery.



NATURE SPORT ADVENTURE



NATURE SPORT ADVENTURE



Left: **Mount Etna** (Catania), a spectacular winter eruption on the southern flank of Piano Vetore.

Below: **Acitrezza** (Catania), **Riviera dei Ciclopi**, the Stacks and the islet of Lachea.

Opposite – above left: kite surfing in **Marsala** (Trapani); middle: kite snowboarding on Mount Etna (Catania); below left: Canoeing around the Islet of Lachea in Acitrezza (Catania); right: ski mountaineering with a sea view on **Mount Etna** (Catania).

Page 37, left: descending to the **Grotta dei Ladroni** lava tube on **Mount Etna** (Catania); right: rock climbing in the **Alcantara Valley** (Catania and Messina).

Page 36, left: **Mount Etna** (Catania), a mountain biker contemplates the volcano while it ejects ash and lapilli; below: water trekking in the **Alcantara Valley** (Catania and Messina).



Go from the beach to the mountain in one hour

From Riviera dei Ciclopi, between Catania and Acireale, you can drive along the coast to Giarre and then up to Linguaglossa, where you'll arrive in half an hour or so. From here, you can take the Mareneve road and get to the Etna Nord ski resort in Piano Provenzana in another half an hour. Reaching the Etna Sud ski resort from Nicolosi along the provincial road SP 92 probably takes even less.

NATURE SPORT ADVENTURE



NATURE SPORT ADVENTURE



Attend sporting events

With fifty-five years of history, **Coppa degli Assi** is Italy's second longest-running international equestrian competition after Piazza di Siena.

This FEI (International Federation for Equestrian Sports) competition is organised by the Sicilian Region in collaboration with Fieracavalli. The Coppa degli Assi is usually held in Palermo's La Favorita riding arena, whose features and surrounding landscape make it a truly unique venue.

An impressive number of horses and athletes — including international equestrian stars — have graced the event over the years, earning it the name of “mini Olympics for equestrian sports”.



Above left: **Palermo**, a moment during **Coppa degli Assi**.

Left: **Enna**, the **Rocca di Cerereis** located in the homonymous **UNESCO geopark**. This geopark has an astounding geological heritage, which is protected through safeguarding policies and initiatives aiming at promoting sustainable tourism.

NATURE SPORT ADVENTURE

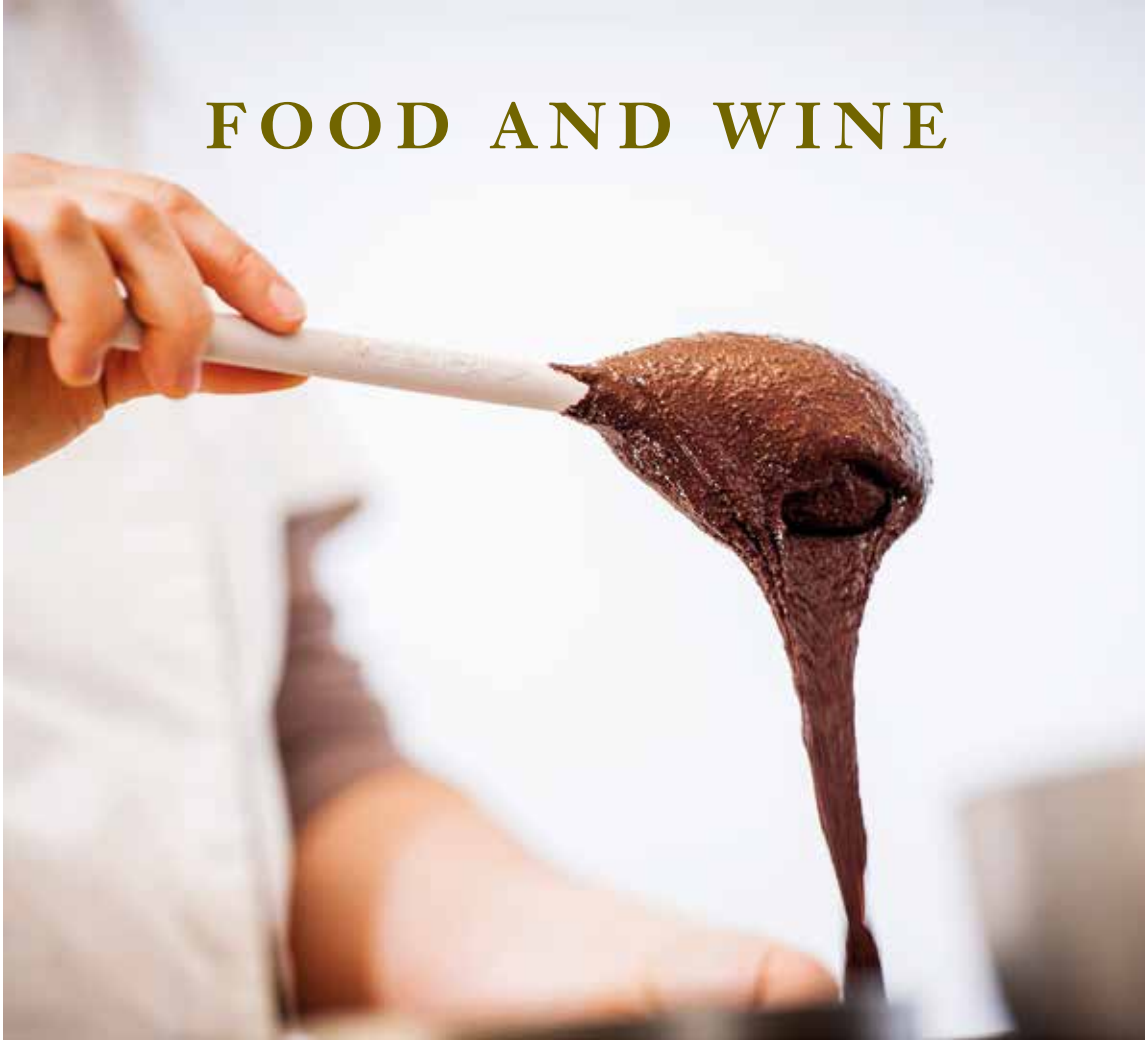


Above left: **Aeolian Islands** (Messina), navigating between Salina and Lipari. Exploring these islands by boat is an experience you'll never forget, especially if you happen to come across dolphins who come out to play.

Above right: **Portopalo di Capopassero** (Syracuse) is the southernmost part of Sicily, where the Mediterranean and Ionian seas meet. Portopalo is very windy and attracts sailing, surfing, and windsurfing enthusiasts all year round.

Left: **Stromboli** (Aeolian Islands, Messina), a spectacular picture of the **Sciara del Fuoco**, the scarp along which lava flows down to the sea.

FOOD AND WINE



A beautiful, generous land like Sicily, which produces fruits and vegetables with unique organoleptic properties, naturally inspires a rich, delectable cuisine with vivid colours and alluring shapes.

With so many civilisations leaving their mark, blending their culinary traditions with local ones, the island's history has undoubtedly contributed to such variety.

Today, Sicilian cuisine is considered one of Italy's richest and most visually appealing.

As for wines, Sicily holds an important record. Residues in ceramic jars suggest that wine was being made there 6,000 years ago, making it the

earliest evidence of winemaking. What's for sure is that Sicilian wines were already famous in classical antiquity.

Sicily has a large number of indigenous grape varieties that make excellent wines, which are gaining increasing international recognition. The island is also known for its typical dishes, street food, gelato, and desserts. Unmissable Sicilian delicacies include pasta alla Norma, pasta con le acciughe, sarde a beccafico, caponata, pane e panelle, arancine, cassata, granita, *brioscia c'u tuppù*, paste di mandorla, and cannoli.

So, it's no coincidence that food and wine tourism is booming and continuously expanding in Sicily.



Top left: His Majesty, the **ricotta cannolo**; top right: **pupi di zuccaru** (sugar dolls).

Left: a typical Sicilian breakfast with **granita** and a **brioscia c'u tuppù**; above: **Sicilian cassatelle**.

Opposite: making **Modica chocolate**.

FOOD AND WINE

Left to right: some **typical Sicilian products**: Pachino tomatoes, Pantelleria raisins, Salina capers and white grapes, Trapani salt made in picturesque salt pans, Bronte pistachio, and freshly caught fish.

Opposite: delicious Sicilian specialties. Above left: pasta con le sarde (pasta with sardines, olives, and tomatoes); above right: parmigiana; below left: panelle and potato croquettes; below right: an icon of Sicilian cuisine, the arancino.



FOOD AND WINE



FOOD AND WINE



Above, left to right: a delicious and enticing **cous cous dessert**, **aubergine rolls**, local **black olives**, and **sfincione di Bagheria**.

Left: **Catania**, the **Pescheria**, the famous fish market. Sicilian **street markets** have a long history. They are usually located in the heart of towns and cities and offer a lively, authentic atmosphere enhanced by the *abbanniata*, the custom of Sicilian vendors to yell out the features of their products to attract attention.

Opposite – above: **Marsala** (Trapani), the famous **Florio Winery** established in 1833 by Vincenzo Florio; below: **fine Sicilian wines** on display.

FOOD AND WINE



FOOD AND WINE



Drink excellent wine

Sicily's wine sector is constantly growing, and wine tourism is booming. The island is blessed with many native vine varieties, which make excellent, increasingly world-renowned wines, twenty-three of which are DOC (Controlled Designation of Origin) wines.

Above left: Marsala **filtering**.

Above right: wine **tasting**.

Left: grape **crushing**.

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