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The Greek Theatre in Taormina
(photos c/o Don Kasta)

THE BEST OF SICILY

Saturday, October 14 to Thursday, October 26, 2017

Tour Cost: \$4,495.00 per person from Toronto INCL taxes and based on double occupancy
Single Supplement: \$595.00 Land Only: \$3,435.00

A 13-day exploration of all the highlights of sunny Sicily, the largest and most interesting island of the Mediterranean! With Palermo and its Norman architecture, the Greek temples of Agrigento, the splendid Roman mosaics of the Villa del Casale, the Canadian War Cemetery at Agira, the great ancient city of Syracuse, amazing Mount Etna and the wonderful resort of Taormina. Sandra Pauwels and Steve Thomas will be your escorts.

PROPOSED ITINERARY:

Day 1 – Saturday, October 14:

Toronto-Rome

Late evening departure from Toronto for Rome with Alitalia. Dinner and light breakfast will be served.

Day 2 – Sunday, October 15: (D)

Palermo

Mid-day arrival in Rome and brief connecting flight to Palermo, Sicily. Upon arrival transfer to the centrally located hotel in the historical heart of the Sicilian capital. Following registration, a leisurely walking tour of the immediate vicinity including the Opera House and the Piazza Castelnuovo with its Teatro Politeama. Our alfresco (weather permitting) welcome dinner will feature a selection of Sicilian “street food” at the well-known restaurant, Antica Focacceria San Francesco.

Day 3- Monday, October 16: (L)

Palermo

Morning guided walking tour of Palermo, with highlights such as the Palazzo dei Normanni with the 12th-century Palatine Chapel, whose interior is entirely covered in mosaics; the superb cathedral and its tombs of Sicilian Kings; the Byzantine Church of la Martorana; and the impressive Baroque sculptures of the Quattro Canti. Following lunch, we coach to Monreale and its Cathedral, considered to be the apex of Sicilian-Norman art. Return to Palermo in the late afternoon with time to explore Palermo independently. Dinner at leisure.

Day 4 – Tuesday, October 17: (D)

Palermo

Departure from Palermo after breakfast to Segesta, where a superb lone Greek temple dominates a fascinating landscape of rugged mountains, a peaceful valley, and the distant Mediterranean Sea. A brief visit before continuing on to the medieval town of Erice, poised atop a cliff rising abruptly 750 meters above sea level. Local sightseeing and opportunity for lunch on terraces that offer breathtaking views and where, on clear days, the coast of North Africa can be seen! Return to Palermo in the late afternoon. Dinner in a ristorante close to the hotel.

Day 5 – Wednesday, October 18:

Palermo

A full day free to explore the Sicily's largest city. Suggestions include; a guided tour of Teatro Massimo, a visit to the Vucciria market (or another of Palermo's well known food markets), time at the excellent Archeological museum which has only recently reopened following extensive renovations, a visit to some of Palermo's lesser known churches including the Oratorio Santa Cita or perhaps you would prefer to do a little shopping. The day is yours to spend as you like. No group dinner this evening.

Day 6 – Thursday, October 19: (L, D)

Agrigento

Morning departure from Palermo as we embark on our food focused day in Sicily. Our culinary experience will take place at Planeta winery, near Menfi. Here we will indulge in a tasty journey around Sicily's culinary traditions and the recipes of Casa Planeta, celebrating the island's excellent produce, fresh seafood, olive oil, native vegetables and the herbs grown on site. The experience will end with a delicious meal accompanied by a selection of Planeta wines. Following our visit we continue to Agrigento, a town with a spectacular collection of very well preserved Greek temples for a tour of the temples and the exquisite Archaeological Museum, with our guide. Hotel registration and an aperitif before dinner in house. After, we view the temple site "by night", when the illuminated honey-coloured stones gleam in the dark - an unforgettable experience!

Greek temple in Agrigento



Day 7 – Friday, October 20: (L, D)

Syracuse

We leave Agrigento en route to the town of Piazza Armerina, in the rugged, mountainous interior of Sicily, to admire the superb mosaics of the Roman Villa del Casale. In the afternoon we continue via the

Canadian War Cemetery of Agira (short visit) to Syracuse, once the most powerful and beautiful Greek city on the island they called “Trinacria”. Dinner at the hotel.

Day 8 – Saturday, October 21:

Syracuse

Morning visit to the wonderful Archaeological Zone with the Greek theatre, the Roman amphitheatre, and the garden known as the Latomia del Paradiso, featuring the “Ear of Dionysios,” a cave with amazing acoustic properties. Afterwards we explore the original Greek settlement, known as Ortygia, a small island now connected to the mainland by two bridges; highlights here are the romantic Fountain of Arethusa and the Cathedral, a former temple! Remainder of afternoon and evening at leisure.

Day 9 – Sunday, October 22:

Syracuse

Breakfast at the hotel followed by a full day tour to Ragusa and Noto. The Baroque towns listed by Unesco were rebuilt in 1693 after a terrible earthquake. The cities represent the result of a great collective undertaking, and are the expression of a high-quality architectural and artistic achievement. Linked to the Baroque style of the period, they also boast important improvements in town planning as well as in urban building.

Day 10 – Monday, October 23: (D)

Taormina

Today we travel the scenic “Coast of the Cyclops” to the seaport of Catania, birthplace of the composer Vincenzo Bellini and Sicily’s biggest city after Palermo. Visit to Cathedral Square with the Baroque Fountain of the Elephant, emblem of the city, and opportunity to shop on Via Aetna, the elegant main street and perhaps enjoy a sea lunch accompanied by the smells and sounds of the amazing fish market. Continuing along the coast, we arrive in the late afternoon at the idyllic resort area of Taormina and Giardini Naxos, dominated by Mount Etna and bordered by the Ionian Sea. After registration, a wander through one of Europe’s most well known resort coasts...with just a soupçon of delicious danger as Mount Etna sends tiny curls of smoke over the landscape. Dinner tonight will be interesting!



Taormina and Mt. Etna

Day 11 – Tuesday, October 24:

Taormina

This morning we explore Taormina’s ancient streets; the lush Gardens of the Villa Comunale, the superb hilltop Greco-Roman theatre, with its marvelous views of Mount Etna and also enjoy a spectacular city bus ride to Castel Mola, a picturesque village offering stunning panoramic views from its ancient walls

and piazzas. Afternoon excursion to the town of Messina and the quaint hilltop town of Savoca. Upon return to Taormina, evening at leisure.

Day 12 – Wednesday, October 25: (L)

Taormina

After breakfast, a brief drive takes us to the slopes of Mount Etna, the massive, 3,330-meter high volcano - Europe's highest - that dominates the entire island of Sicily. This excursion features desolate lunar landscapes of molten lava and homes abandoned during past eruptions, but also prosperous villages whose inhabitants produce wonderful products such as wine, honey, cheese and fruit on the rich volcanic soil. Also visit to the Research Station La Sapienza, situated at an altitude of almost 2,000 meters, where we will see the Monti Silvestri, cones formed by eruptions during the 1980s'. Here too, we will also enjoy our farewell lunch of delicious Sicilian specialties in a winery located on the slopes of Mt. Etna! Remainder of the day for personal choices: retail therapy along Corso Umberto, contemplating the panoramic vistas with a glass of wine or an afternoon on the beach.

Day 13 – Thursday, October 26:

Morning transfer to Catania Airport and the domestic flight to Rome in good time for the transatlantic connection to Toronto. Lunch and a pre-landing snack will be served before arrival in Toronto.

Welcome Home!

Tour Cost: \$4,495.00 per person from Toronto INCL taxes based on double occupancy
Single Supplement: \$595.00 Land Only: \$3,435.00

Included in the tour price are:

- Economy class, return flight on Alitalia Airlines;
- Accommodation in well located premium hotels, based on double occupancy (all rooms have private facilities) – single room supplement \$595.00;
- Meals: buffet breakfast daily and a total of 9 full-course dinners/lunches;
- Overland transportation via deluxe private coach, equipped with AC, WC, video/audio;
- Sightseeing, visits, and excursions as indicated in the itinerary, including admission;
- Hotel taxes and gratuities (except driver).

Not included:

- All expenses of a personal nature;
- Meals other than those mentioned above;
- Beverages with dinners;
- Coach chauffeur and guide gratuity of €50.00 to be collected by Tour Leader;
- Travel insurance. Call office for rates.

RECOMMENDED READINGS:

Bitter Almonds: Mary Taylor Simeti,

On Persephone's Island: A Sicilian Journal: Mary Taylor Simeti

Midnight in Sicily: Peter Robb

Normans in Sicily: John Julius Norwich

Sicily: An Informal History: Peter Sammartino and William Roberts.

Six Characters in Search of an Author: Luigi Pirandello

The Leopard: Giuseppe Tomasi de Lampedusa

Wine Dark Sea: Leonardo Sciascia

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TERMS AND CONDITIONS

RESERVATIONS AND DEPOSITS:

Reservations should be made as early as possible to ensure the departure of your choice. A deposit of \$750.00 is required at the time of registration. **Your reservation is confirmed upon receipt of your deposit and application form. No reservations will be accepted without a signed application form.**

REFUND OF UNUSED ARRANGEMENTS:

Because the rates of Pauwels Travel Bureau Ltd. are based on group participation, no refund can be made for any tour accommodation or tour service or tour feature not taken. If cancellation occurs while the tour is in progress, no refund can be made for the tour portion not taken. We strongly suggest that to allow for any unexpected contingencies, you purchase the all-inclusive insurance.

CANCELLATION POLICY:

Refund of deposit is made in full if cancellation is received in writing by Pauwels Travel Bureau Ltd. more than 90 days prior of the departure date of the tour less a \$500.00 non refundable administrative fee per person. For cancellation received in writing 90 days prior or less the following cancellation charges apply:

90 days to 46 days before departure:	25% of tour cost
45 to 31 days before departure:	50% of tour cost
Within 30 days prior to departure:	100% of tour cost

RESPONSIBILITY:

Pauwels Travel Bureau Ltd. reserves the right without notice, to withdraw any part or all of the tour. Factors such as airline schedule changes, hotel overbookings, inclement weather, etc. may necessitate changes in the itinerary as outlined. There may also be other circumstances in which changes become necessary or advisable. Any savings realized by these changes will be passed on to the passengers, any resultant expenses shall be borne by the passenger. Pauwels Travel Bureau Ltd. acts only as an agent in securing hotel, transportation and other travel services and in no event shall be held responsible for the failure by any person or company to render any transportation, lodging or other travel service to be provided on the tour. All hotel, transportation and other travel services are provided to tour members subject to all the terms and conditions under which they are offered to the public generally. The acceptance of the initial service to be provided under the tour shall be considered an acceptance by the tour member of those conditions. Pauwels Travel Bureau Ltd. also reserves the right to decline, to accept or retain any person as a member of the tour, in which case equitable refund will be made at the discretion of the tour operators.

AIR TRANSPORTATION:

Transatlantic economy flight by scheduled IATA carrier(s), based on an economy class group fare. All fares are subject to specific rules and regulations, to changes and to government approval. Deviations from the group flights are possible but subject to higher rates. Pauwels Travel will research any request for date or routing changes at the time they are requested. Should any individual rate be less than the group fare plus airline and administrative fees, the lower rate will be offered to the tour participant. Individual airfares are subject to immediate ticketing and the fare plus taxes must be paid at the time the ticket is issued by the participant requesting the change. Should the group airfare be the lowest available rate, an administrative fee of \$50.00 plus any airline charges will apply.

APPLICATION FORM

Please book ___ seat(s) on the "Best of Sicily Tour" October 14 – 26, 2017.
Enclosed is my/our deposit of _____ (\$750 per person, *plus* insurance premium if taken.)
I will be booking "Land only" and will be securing my own airfare _____.

Deposit and insurance premium, if taken, are due with registration. You will be invoiced for an interim payment of \$1000.00 and then the balance approximately 45 days prior to departure.

WE REQUIRE A COPY OF YOUR PASSPORT (INFORMATION PAGES ONLY) VALID 3 MONTHS AFTER TOUR DATE TO BE SENT IN WITH YOUR APPLICATION FORM AT TIME OF REGISTRATION.

PASSPORT NAME(S): **Please** indicate the appropriate title (Mr., Mrs., Miss, Dr., Ms.)

Surname _____ First _____ Middle(s) _____

Surname _____ First _____ Middle(s) _____

If applicable, give your commonly used first name as you would like it to appear on your name tag: (e.g. "Liz" for "Mary Elizabeth") _____

ADDRESS: _____
Postal Code: _____

PHONE: _____ (Email) _____

If traveling alone, is a SINGLE ROOM REQUIRED?: YES _____ NO _____

If sharing, is there a Bed preference?: twin _____ double _____

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS: We find the earlier a request is made, the more success we have in filling it, **so please list any dietary requests, allergies, any special physical needs or frequent flyer numbers etc**
We cannot ensure requests made 30 days or less prior to departure will be possible.

Insurance, Please call the office for premiums then record it on application and add premium to deposit.

I /we would like to purchase (please check and record your rate):

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

All-inclusive Package \$ _____ Non-medical Package \$ _____

Other \$ _____ **OR** Decline Insurance _____

PAYMENT: Cheque payable to Pauwels Travel Visa Mastercard American Express

Amount Paid: _____

Card Number: _____ Expiry: _____ Security Code: _____

Signature: _____

"I/we agree to the terms and conditions attached to the program, have indicated our insurance choice, indicated any special requests and included payment".

Date _____ **(Signature)(s)** _____

Please forward this fully completed and signed form, copy of passport and payment to:

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