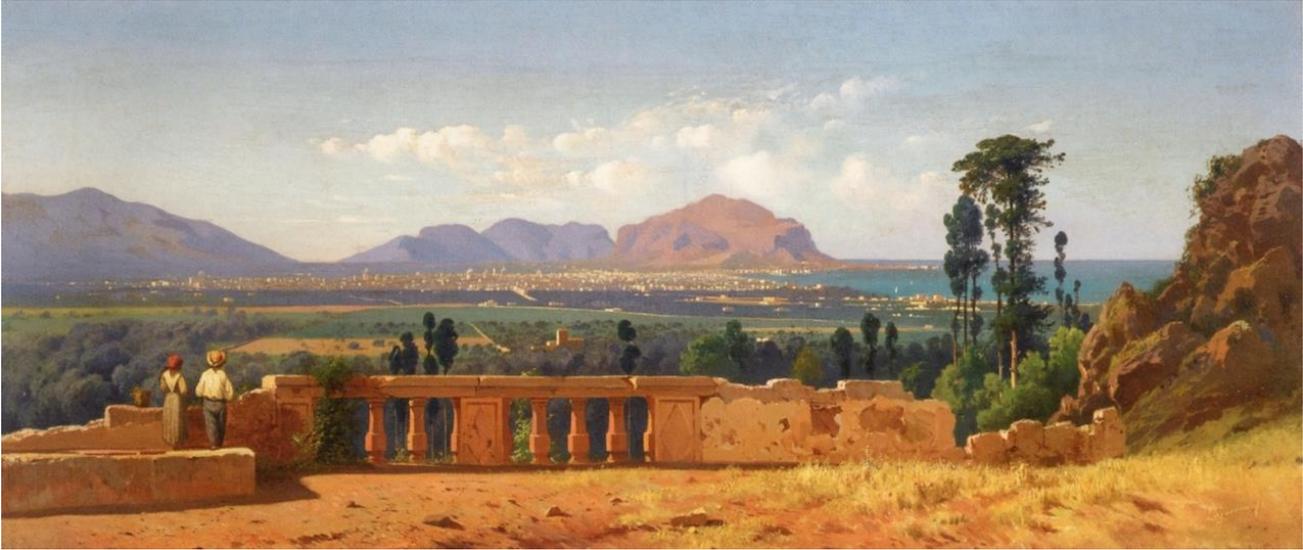


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*View of Palermo, painting by Lojacono Francesco (free of copyright c/o Wikimedia Commons)*

## **"PALERMO AND THE BEST OF SICILY"**

14 days, Friday, March 5, to Thursday, March 18, 2021

*A leisurely and 'upscale' exploration of the biggest and most beautiful island in the Mediterranean, a part of Italy, of course, but in many ways a different planet! Based in a deluxe hotel in the wonderful capital, Palermo, we will enjoy many local treasures, including superb Byzantine churches and mosaics, and also explore the major attractions of the island's western part, including the Greek temples of Segesta, Selinunte, and Agrigento; the seaports of Trapani and Marsala, and picturesque towns such as Erice and Cefalu. Next we head east via the Canadian War Cemetery at Agira to explore the island's second city, Catania, and nearby Mount Etna, Europe's biggest volcano! The tour will feature fine food and wine and be hosted by historian Jacques R. Pauwels, PhD, author of 'Beneath the Dust of Time: A History of the Names of Peoples and Places' (London, 2009), who will lecture about the history of the island from the time of the prehistoric Siculi people, who gave their name to the island, to Sicily's liberation in 1943 by Allied, including Canadian, forces.*

Tour cost "Land only" (i.e., from Palermo Airport upon arrival of the group flight on March 6 to Catania Airport on March 18): \$3,010.00. Supplement for "double room for single use": \$550.00

### **REGISTER NOW WITHOUT DEPOSIT!**

Please note that at this time the best available airfare to Sicily is \$875.00, including one checked bag. However, we are unable to book flights until we know we can operate the tour which, due to Covid-19, is not yet the case. We therefore require no deposit from those who wish to register for the tour. As soon as it will be possible to confirm the tour and flights can be booked, we will advise and a deposit will be required at that time. That means registering now does not involve a firm commitment, it only means that, when the time comes, you will be able to decide to go ahead or opt out without any penalty!

## ITINERARY:

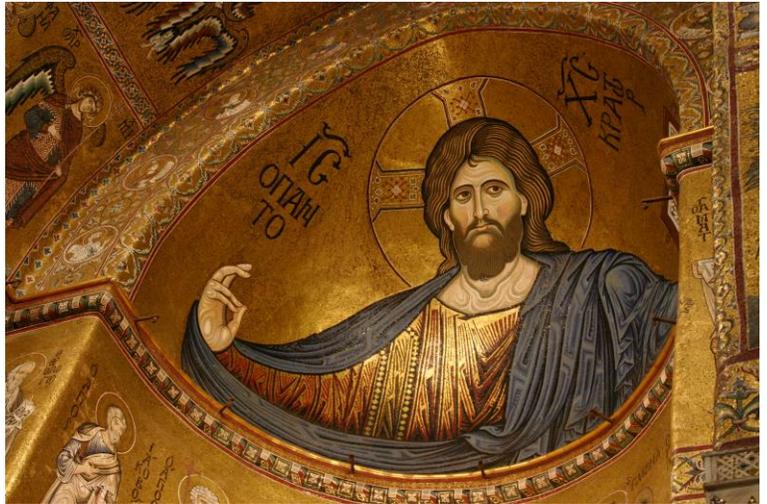
Day 1 - Friday, March 5: Evening departure from Toronto to Rome with Alitalia. Dinner and a light breakfast will be served on board. (Please note that this is the recommended flight arrangement, technically not included in our “land only” tour arrangements which start the following day upon arrival in Palermo with a transfer to the hotel.)

Day 2 - Saturday, March 6: Morning arrival in Rome, and connecting flight to **Palermo**, Sicily. A transfer to the centrally-located five-star/deluxe [Grand Hotel Wagner](#) will be available to all passengers arriving on this flight or already at the airport. Passengers arriving later will have to take a taxi to the hotel. Free time to settle in. Welcome dinner in the hotel or in a nearby restaurant.

Day 3 – Sunday, March 7: Full-day sightseeing tour of Palermo, with highlights such as the Palace of the Norman kings of Medieval Sicily and the adjoining Palatine Chapel, whose interior is entirely covered in mosaics; the superb Cathedral and its tombs of Sicilian Kings, including Norman king Roger II and Frederick II, who was also German emperor; the wonderful Byzantine and/or Norman churches of San Cattaldo and La Martorana; the impressive Baroque sculptures of the Quattro Canti; Piazza Pretoria, etc.

*The fabulous mosaics in Monreale >*

Day 4 - Monday, March 8: Morning sidetrip to **Monreale**, a picturesque hilltop town overlooking the fertile valley known as Conca d’Oro or “golden shell,” as well as Palermo and the Mediterranean Sea. Visits to the fabulous Cathedral with its outstanding mosaics, a splendid example of “Sicilian-Norman” art, and the adjoining cloisters, inspired by Islamic architecture and featuring wonderful Romanesque pillars and capitals. On to the seaside resort of **Mondello**, situated on a beautiful inlet of the Tyrrhenian Sea, where we break for lunch. In the afternoon, return to Palermo



via the **Monte Pellegrino** mountain road, offering spectacular views of the coast, with a stop briefly to inspect the immensely popular shrine of St. Rosalia, patron saint of the city. Today, group lunch for dinner.

### UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES VISITED ON THIS TOUR:

Palermo with its Arab-Norman architecture – Church and Byzantine mosaics of Monreale – Church and Byzantine mosaics of Cefalu – Agrigento with its Greek temples — Mount Etna.

For more information, see: [Unesco World Heritage sites of Sicily](#)

Day 5 – Tuesday, March 9: This morning we check out Palermo’s famous [Vucciria market](#), then explore the surrounding old harbour district, the city’s historical cradle, dating back to the time of the Phoenicians, with sights such as Piazza Marina, Garibaldi Gardens, the monumental city gate known as Porta Felice, and churches such as Santa Maria della Catena and San Domenico. The rest of the day is free to shop and/or explore the city on your own. Free evening, and perhaps it will be possible to enjoy a classical music concert, ballet or opera in the magnificent Teatro Massimo, the equally imposing Teatro Politeama, or another venue.

Day 6 – Wednesday, March 10: After a leisurely late breakfast, visit to the [National Archaeological Museum](#), famous for its rare Phoenician and outstanding Greco-Roman antiquities. The rest of the day is free. You may

want to visit another local museum or art gallery, perhaps the Regional Art Gallery of Sicily, housed within the [Palazzo Abatellis](#), a 15<sup>th</sup>-century Gothic palace, or enjoy a stroll through the Botanical Gardens. Another option - but not for the faint-hearted! - is to accompany your guide to the [Capuchin Catacombs](#), where approximately 8,000 mummified corpses are on display, described as “the place where the living meet the dead”!

Day 7 – Thursday, March 11: Excursion along Sicily’s northern coast to the very picturesque town of **Cefalu**, tucked between a huge rock and the blue Mediterranean, nicknamed the “Sicilian Gibraltar.” The highlight of our visit will be the fabulous cathedral and its mosaics, featuring a superb ‘Christ Pantocrator’. On the way back to Palermo, we will stop to inspect the ruins of the Greek temple of **Himera**, site of a famous victory of the Greeks against the Carthaginians in 480 BC. This evening, dinner in a popular *trattoria* near our hotel.

Day 8 – Friday, March 12: Today we explore the extreme western region of Sicily, a fascinating landscape of windmills, salt pans, vineyards, and fascinating old towns, some founded by the Phoenicians about 3,000 years ago! We begin with a tour of the old town, harbour, and picturesque fish market of **Trapani**. Travel along a coastline sprinkled with salt flats and windmills to the seaport of **Marsala**. Here we visit historical Cape Lilibeo as well as an excellent museum, featuring the “[Marsala Ship](#)” the earliest warship known from archeological evidence, a Carthaginian warship discovered in 1971. Marsala produces a sweet wine, made famous by English merchants in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, so we dutifully drop into a local cantina to taste this delicious product! In the afternoon, visit to **Erice**, a small medieval town situated atop a cliff rising abruptly 750 meters above sea level. We enjoy breathtaking views, possibly as far as the coast of North Africa, from the ruins of the castle, built on the foundations of a temple dedicated to Astarte, the Phoenician Aphrodite, allegedly associated with ‘sacred prostitution’. Erice is the perfect place to enjoy a mid-afternoon gelato or cappuccino break and to try some pastries in the famous shop of Maria Grammatico. Return to our hotel in the early evening.



*< View of Trapani and the Aegadian Islands from the hilltop town of Erice*

Day 9 - Saturday, March 13: After breakfast, we board our coach and motor to **Segesta**, where a superb lone Greek temple dominates a grandiose landscape of rugged mountains, a peaceful valley, and the Mediterranean in the distance. On to the southern coast of the island for visits to the fascinating ancient quarries at **Cusa** and the impressive ruins of the temples on the site of the Greek city of **Selinunte**. Opportunity to enjoy a seafood lunch in a restaurant on the beach. Return to Palermo in late afternoon.

Day 10 – Sunday, March 14: Our last full day in Palermo is entirely at leisure. An optional full-day excursion will be available to the [Aegadian Islands](#) (Italian: Isole Egadi), a mini-archipelago of three islands rising from crystal-clear blue waters off the western tip of Sicily. The Romans defeated the Carthaginians in a naval battle fought here in 241BC, as a result of which Sicily became a Roman possession. Our visit will focus on the island of **Favignana**, epicenter of the historic tuna fisheries, known as the *mattanza* or “slaughter.”

Day 11 – Monday, March 15: Departure from Palermo after breakfast. We motor to **Agrigento**, a town on the south coast of Sicily, for a guided tour of the spectacular collection of very well-preserved Greek temples and the excellent local archaeological museum. In the afternoon we continue to Canadian War Cemetery at **Agira**, an opportunity for your tour guide to tell you about the Canadian army’s role in the liberation of the island in 1943. Late afternoon arrival in Sicily’s second city, **Catania**, a bustling seaport situated on Sicily’s eastern coast at the foot of 3,330-meter high Mount Etna, the island’s huge volcano. Accommodation in the first-class

[Hotel Parco degli Aragonesi](#), situated in a garden near the shores of the Ionian Sea. Dinner in the hotel's restaurant.



*Mt. Etna with Catania in the foreground*

Day 12 - Tuesday, March 16: After breakfast we visit Catania's famous fish market, the Cathedral with the tomb of a famous native son, the composer Bellini, and the famous main street, the Via Etnea, as well as the ruins of Roman monuments that survived the major historical eruptions of Mount Etna. Time permitting, there will be an opportunity for some shopping in Catania before we return to the hotel for a free evening.

Day 13 – Wednesday, March 17: This morning, leisurely tour of the slopes of [Mount Etna](#), Europe's highest volcano, classified as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. This excursion features desolate lunar landscapes of molten lava sprinkled with ruins of homes abandoned during recent eruptions, but also prosperous villages whose inhabitants rely on the rich volcanic soil to produce wonderful products such as wine, honey, cheese, and fruit. We will pause at the Sapienza Research Station, situated at an altitude of almost 2,000 meters, to inspect the Monti Silvestri, cones formed by eruptions during the 1980s. Afterwards, group lunch of delicious Sicilian specialties in a winery on the slopes of Mt Etna, with great views (weather permitting) of the coast and the Ionian Sea below!

Day 14 – Thursday, March 18: After a late breakfast, short transfer to nearby Catania Airport in time for the departure of our return flight to Toronto, via Rome, with Alitalia.

**Tour cost “Land only” (i.e., from Palermo Airport upon arrival of the group flight on March 6 to Catania Airport on March 18): \$3,010.00. Supplement for “double room for single use”: \$550.00**

Included in the tour price:

- Accommodation for 9 nights in a deluxe hotel in Palermo and 3 nights in a first-class hotel in Catania, based on double occupancy;
- Breakfast daily, four dinners, some with wine/water, and one full winery lunch, also including wine;
- Airport transfers, sightseeing, and visits as outlined in the itinerary;
- Services of our tour escort and gratuities for drivers and local guides.

Not Included:

Beverages with meals; meals other than those shown above; items of a personal nature; and travel insurance (rates are available upon request.)

## RECOMMENDED BOOKS ABOUT SICILY:

- \* Lawrence Durrell, *Sicilian Carousel*
- \* Giuseppe Tomasi de Lampedusa, *The Leopard*
- \* Sandra Benjamin, *Sicily: Three Thousand Years of Human History*
- \* John Keahey, *Seeking Sicily: A Cultural Journey Through Myth and Reality in the Heart of the Mediterranean*
- \* John Julius Norwich, *Sicily: An Island at the Crossroads of History*
- \* Peter Robb, *Midnight in Sicily: On Art, Food, History, Travel and la Cosa Nostra*
- \* Mark Zuehlke, *Operation Husky: The Canadian Invasion of Sicily, July 10-August 7, 1943*



## TERMS & CONDITIONS

### RESERVATIONS AND DEPOSITS:

Reservations should be made as early as possible to ensure the departure of your choice. No deposit will be taken until we know the tour is operating. Once the decision has been made to go or not, registered participants will be notified about the status and if operating offered the opportunity to pay the deposit or withdraw their registration. If a participant decides then to participate, a deposit of \$750.00 (or more depending on the date of confirmation) will be required. Your reservation is confirmed upon receipt of your deposit and registration form. No reservations will be accepted without a signed registration 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 (no deposit is being made before we determine the trip will operate and contact you for your decision to proceed or not.) 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 61 days before departure: 25% of tour cost  
60 to 31 days before departure: 50% of tour cost  
Within 30 days prior to departure: 100% of tour cost

#### RESPONSIBILITY:

The acceptance of the initial service to be provided under the tour shall be considered an acceptance by the tour member of those conditions. We also reserve the right to decline, to accept or retain any person as a member of the tour. We reserve the right without notice, to withdraw any part or all of the tour. Factors such as airline schedule changes, hotel overbookings, inclement weather, travel warnings by the Canadian Government etc. may necessitate changes in the itinerary. There may also be other circumstances in which changes become necessary or advisable.

By commencing the tour, I agree to the release and agreement as included below.

#### RELEASE & AGREEMENT:

By placing my deposit and commencing the tour I understand and agree to the following:

1. That all tours are delivered in conjunction with other service providers, including but not limited to travel agent and booking services, airlines, hotel and accommodation providers, transportation providers including but not limited to coach, train and ferry services, restaurant providers, and local guides. We shall not 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 hotels, transportation and other travel services are provided subject to all the terms and conditions under which they are offered to the public generally.
2. I know that tour programs include walking and may including hiking and fitness programs that have potential hazardous activities associated with them. I should not participate prior to approval by my physician. I assume any and all other risks associated with these events included but not limited to falls, contact with other participants, the effects of the weather including high heat and/or humidity.
3. To release, indemnify and hold harmless Pauwels Travel Bureau and their affiliates (which term shall include parents, subsidiaries, officers, directors, shareholders, agents and employees of Pauwels Travel Bureau as well as Pauwels Travel themselves) (the "Released Parties") from, and agree not to sue the Released Parties for, any claims that I may have arising from, or in connection with, any personal injury, bodily injury, mental anguish, emotional distress, physical, property or other damage that I may suffer from any cause whatsoever related in any way to my participation in this tour. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, I release, indemnify and hold harmless the Released Parties from, and agree not to sue them for any personal injury, bodily injury, mental anguish, emotional distress, physical, property or other damage that I may suffer from the Released Parties' negligence other than from intentional or reckless acts by such parties. I further agree to release, indemnify and hold harmless the Released Parties from any and all acts of God, war (whether declared or undeclared), terrorist activities, incidents of politically motivated violence, illness or quarantine, strikes or government restrictions or the acts or omissions of any other agents over which the Released Parties have no direct or indirect control, including, without limitation, airlines, railways, bus companies, hotels, shipping companies, guides and sub-contracted agents or tour operators. This release also includes activities not offered that may be considered risky. I further release any Tour Directors, bus drivers or other individuals involved in my tour.
4. That the air carrier's liability for loss of or damage to baggage or property, or for death or injury to person, is limited by their tariffs, or the Warsaw Convention, or both.

5. That Pauwels Travel Bureau shall have no liability or responsibility for me when I am absent from activities, such as visits to friends or relatives or during stay-ahead/stay-behind option periods if the stay-ahead/stay-behind period does not include the services of a Tour Director.
6. To abide by directions of my Tour Director or other leadership personnel during my tour. Failure to do so may result in my termination from tour immediately. I understand that to disobey such rules or directions are to waive the right to any refund, and that I may be sent home at my own expense. The participant and family undertake full financial responsibility for any damage caused by the participant and agree to pay his/her return home on the first available flight, should his/her behavior be deemed detrimental to the welfare of the group.
7. To abide by all local laws when in Canada and abroad, including those concerning drugs and alcohol. (Minors must have parents' permission to use alcohol even if the local law would otherwise permit them to.) I understand that if I abuse or disobey such laws, even unintentionally, I waive my right to a refund, and Pauwels Travel may send me home at my own expense. I also understand that should local authorities be involved, I will be subject to the laws of the country I am visiting.
8. That if I become ill or incapacitated, Pauwels Travel and its employees, or a designated chaperone may take any action they deem necessary for my safety and well-being, including securing medical treatment (at my own expense) and transporting me home. Pauwels Travel retains the right, in its sole discretion, to contact the traveller's parent(s) and/or guardian or emergency contact with regard to health issues or any matters whatsoever that relates to the traveller's tour. These rights transcend any and all privacy regulations that may apply. In the event of a medical emergency, Pauwels Travel will attempt to cause appropriate treatment to be administered, and the traveller authorizes Pauwels Travel to do so. Pauwels Travel, however, makes no warranty that it will be able to cause effective (or any) emergency treatment to be administered.
9. That Pauwels Travel may use any film likenesses taken of me and any of my comments while on a tour for future publication and also use my contact information for future Pauwels Travel communications.

#### A WORD ABOUT *GROUP* AIRFARES:

Please note that when booking one of our air inclusive tours, Pauwels Travel has negotiated reduced rates with the airline that we are able to confirm and lock in up to 359 days before travel. While it is wonderful to share the savings and flexibility this provides with you, our valued guests, the privilege does come with some restrictions. In some cases it may not be possible to collect frequent flyer miles, you may not be able to check in online 24 hours before travel, or you may need to try checking in with your ticket number rather than your booking reference and, in **almost ALL cases we are not able to offer advanced seat selection.**

It is the airline that makes the reservation and has control over the booking so it is their policy, not ours, that prevents us from assigning specific seats. If a request is made, it is passed on to the airline by our staff when they submit the names to the airline, i.e., 30-60 days prior to departure. Calling us several days before you leave will not change this fact nor will getting upset with our staff.

If a certain type of seat is indispensable to you, we suggest that you book our tour on a "land only" basis and make individual flight arrangements, in which case you may be able to get the seat of your choice; Pauwels Travel would be happy to assist you with that reservation at absolutely no additional charge. We will offer you the best fare available, but please note that this can only be done once a tour is a guaranteed departure because your individual airfare's conditions are likely to involve cancellation penalties. We thank you in advance for your kind understanding of the above!

## REGISTRATION FORM

Please book \_\_\_\_\_ seat(s) on the "Palermo and Best of Sicily" tour of March 5 to 16, 2021.

Enclosed is my/our deposit of \_\_\_\_\_ (\$0.00 per person, *plus* insurance premium if taken.)

I wish to book on group flights \_\_\_\_\_ OR land only \_\_\_\_\_.

**Deposit and insurance premium, will not be required until the trip is guaranteed to go. You will be invoiced for the balance prior to departure.**

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

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 \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ (Email) \_\_\_\_\_

If traveling alone, is a SINGLE ROOM REQUIRED? YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

If sharing, what is your bed preference: twin (2 beds) \_\_\_\_\_ double (1 bed) \_\_\_\_\_?

**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 here.

We cannot ensure requests made 30 days or less prior to departure will be possible.

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**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 completed and signed form, copy of passport and payment to:

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