

Tour  
Information



# Walking in Eastern Sicily





## Passports

Please ensure your 10 year British Passport is not out of date and is valid for a full three months beyond the duration of your visit. EU, Andorra, Liechtenstein, Monaco, San Marino or Switzerland valid national identification cards are also acceptable for travel to Italy.

## Visas

Visas are not required for British and EU nationals. For all other passport holders please check the visa requirements with the appropriate embassy.

Italian Consulate-General: "Harp House", 83/86 Farringdon Street, London EC4A 4BL.

Tel: (0)20 7936 5900. Fax: (0)20 7583 9425.

Email: [consolato.londra@esteri.it](mailto:consolato.londra@esteri.it)

Website:

[http://www.conslondra.esteri.it/Consolato\\_Londra](http://www.conslondra.esteri.it/Consolato_Londra)

Open Mon-Fri 0900-1200



## Tickets

Included with this documentation is an e-ticket, which shows the reference number for your flight. EasyJet have now replaced all of their airport check-in desks with EasyJet Baggage Drop desks.

**Therefore you must check-in online and print out your boarding passes before travelling.** Checking in online also provides the opportunity for you to pre-book seats, if you wish, at an extra cost.

Online check-in is available any time prior to travel using the reference number provided. Please see the enclosed e-ticket for more information or visit;

[www.easyjet.com](http://www.easyjet.com)

Please check that the details on your documentation are accurate and that all names are spelt correctly and match the names on your

passport. Your flight ticket is non-transferable and non-refundable. No refund can be given for non-used portions.



## Baggage allowance

We advise you to check the baggage allowances carefully as you are likely to be charged the excess if you exceed the weight limit. Maximum weights for single bags apply.

With Easyjet your ticket includes one hold bag of up to 20kg plus **one** cabin bag no bigger than 56 x 45 x 25 cm. Overhead locker space is limited on board the aircraft and on busy flights your cabin bag may have to go in the hold.

Please contact the airline for further information

<http://www.easyjet.com/en/planning/baggage>

## Labels

Please use the luggage labels provided. It is useful to have your home address located inside your suitcase should the label go astray.

## Transfers

On arrival in Catania, transfer by coach to Capri Leone (approx. 2 hours 30 minutes).

## Departure Tax

The departure tax is included in the price of your flight tickets.

## Special Requests

If you haven't already, please notify Travel Editions of any special requests as soon as possible to allow sufficient time to make the necessary arrangements. Please note that some airlines may charge for use of wheelchairs.



## Accommodation

### Hotel Antica Filanda

A small 16-room hotel in a beautiful rural location, just outside the village of Capri Leone, on a hill with lovely views over the Tyrenian Sea and the Aeolian Islands, close to the Abbey San Filippo di Fragalà. Facilities here include an excellent restaurant, bar and comfortable bedrooms with private bathroom with hydro-massage shower, air-conditioning, safe, TV, mini-bar, free wifi and telephone. The hotel also has an outdoor swimming pool which is open during the summer months.

For more information please visit the hotel's website:  
<http://www.anticafilanda.net/Albergo.htm>



### Food

Inspired by the many cultures that have settled on the island these past two millennia, Sicilian cuisine has a touch of Greek, Spanish, Arab, and of course Italian to it. The surrounding sea provides plenty of seafood, the rich, fertile soil of the island is perfect for growing olives, citrus fruit, aubergine, tomatoes, pistachios and almonds – the results are a varied, fresh, and mouth-watering combination.

Traditional dishes include *Caponata* (side dish of aubergine, capers and sweet balsamic vinegar), *Maccu* (Fava bean soup), *Arancini* (fried rice ball – a traditional snack), and *Sfincione* (Sicilian pizza, thick base with various delicious toppings).

Pasta dishes are also popular – try *Spaghetti ai ricci* (sea urchin pasta), the aubergine, tomato, basil and ricotta *Pasta alla norma* (originally from Catania), or *Manicotti* (similar to *cannelloni*, tubes of pasta filled and baked) – as is seafood, freshly caught, served simply grilled, boiled or fried. As for meat, the most frequently seen are lamb and goat.

A result of the Arab control of the island in the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries, apricots, melons, raisins, saffron and couscous often feature in dishes – such as *Couscous al pesce*.

Typical sweets include *Cannoli* (crusted tube filled with ricotta and sugar), *Cassata* (rich, creamy ricotta filled cake), *Gelato* (possibly invented in Sicily), and the lighter *Granita* (sweetened and flavoured crushed ice).

Table service is common in most restaurants and bars. Usually, a discretionary service charge is added to your bill in restaurants and bars, and no further tipping is required.



### Drink

The world's largest wine producer, Italy is home to some of the oldest viticulture regions. Named according to their grape variety or after their village or area of origin, excellent wines are produced throughout Italy and Sicily, with local wines offering great value and quality. With an ideal climate and soil (thanks to Mount Edna) grapes have been grown in Sicily since the Greeks first colonised the island. The dry white and rosé wines are excellent accompaniments to the seafood dishes, whereas the Nero d'Avola produces sumptuous hearty reds. The most famous Sicilian wine, the fortified *Marsala*, is similar to sherry and port and comes in *oro* (golden), *ambra* (amber), or *rubio* (ruby), in a range from sweet to dry varieties. The golden, sweet, sometimes sparkling dessert wine *Moscato* is very pleasing.

Sicily also produces excellent liqueurs, such as *Ala*, *Averna*, *Fichera*, and some that can also be found on the mainland – *Limoncello*, *Grappa*, *Anisette* and *Amaretto*.

### Meals included in the price of your holiday are:

**Breakfast** – daily

**5 lunches**

**Dinner** - daily



## Destination

The region of Nebrodi offers an amazing variety of landscapes and sights – from volcanic Etna, wooded mountainsides and lava caves to lost villages, monasteries and much more. En-route picnics and trattoria lunches will keep you fortified and dinner is included each evening at your comfortable hotel, the Ristorante-Hotel Antica Filanda, ideally located for the walks.

Please note that walking boots are essential and clients should be in good health. Guided walks are rated mainly as medium, covering 4 to 15 kilometres a day with one free day.

For more information about the Nebrodi Natural Park:

<http://parks.it/parco.nebrodi/Eindex.php>

### The walks:

#### Day 2

**The Pilgrimage trail and the Sicilian Lake District (approx. 15km/5 hours - graded medium).**

Today we follow the route used for centuries by traders, farmers and locals on their pilgrimage to the Chapel of Three Virgins, a reminder of feudal life which lasted here until the end of World War II and described on the Chapel Pilgrims 'prayer book' by an English visitor as "a most curious place in the world". Then we continue towards Sicily's very own Lake District, with Lake Trearie (at 1435m above sea level), home to a plethora of birdlife, both permanent and migrant. The day also includes a typical Nebrodi barbecue lunch with wine by the lake.

#### Day 3

**Woodland, lake and mountain trail (approx. 12km/5 hours - graded easy to medium).**

Today's scenic and peaceful walk takes us through the natural woodland and mountain streams of the Bosco Mangalaviti – an area of extraordinary beauty with wonderful flora and fauna from oaks and beech trees to typical plants and flowers, to Lake Biviere (1278m) which offers spectacular vantage points. Here we will enjoy a picnic lunch with wine by the nearby spring fountain before descending to the hillside medieval town of Alcara Li Fusi with its splendid churches with marzipan pink and orange

plasterwork and silent squares, home of 'The Muzzuni', the oldest pagan feast in Italy.

#### Day 4

**Castania "the abandoned town" (approx. 8km/3 hours - graded medium).**

Today we walk along the Trazzera Regia (Kings Road) with astonishing views over the Fitalia River Valley, which links the Tyrrhenian Sea on the North Coast of Sicily with the Ionic Sea at Catania. En-route we will be stopping in a local private country house to sample the traditional farmer's breakfast with Etna wine, 'the local red coffee!'. We then continue to reach the ancient settlement of Castania whose inhabitants were persuaded to move to the new town of Castell'Umberto a century ago, after a series of landslides. We explore the narrow, cobbled streets of this abandoned town where there appear to be as many churches as homes, as well as enjoying a typical lunch with wine at a family run trattoria.

#### Day 5

**Free day.**

A free day with the possibility to join an optional visit to the weekly open market in the town of Randazzo, the closest town to the main crater of Mount Etna, followed by a visit to Lord Nelson Castle in the town of Maniace: a former Benedictine Abbey of Norman origin (1174).

#### Day 6

**The trail of Silence (approx. 12km/5 hours - graded medium).**

Today's walk takes us to the "Rocche del Crasto" (Goat Peaks) region "where eagles dare". We will walk along the route used by monks and nuns for centuries to reach the several abbeys, convents and monasteries set up by the Normans in the Nebrodi area and whose Abbots and Abbesses were put in charge of all aspects of daily life, as well as religious. The area offers wonderful views from Mount Etna to the Aeolian Islands. A traditional picnic lunch with wine en-route will fortify you before continuing along paths only accessible to walkers to reach the Abbey of San Filippo di Fragalà, one of the greatest in Sicily founded in 595 A.D. and rebuilt, as we admire today, by the Normans in 1090. One can still see the monks' cells, kitchen, dining areas, and the striking fresco of Christ, Madonna and Saints,

which predates similar images in the mosaics at Palermo, Cefalù and Monreale. Time at leisure in the nearby town of Frazzanò.

## Day 7

**Mount Etna (approx. 4km/3 hours - graded medium).**

Saving the most famous natural landmark in Sicily until last, we hike through the wine land of Etna to the north side of Mount Etna, with its barren, eerie black lava landscape of Monti Sartorius (1666 - 1806) whose craters were formed during the 1865 eruptions, then through the “Bosco delle Betulle” (wood of birches) to the “Grotta dei Ladroni”, a tunnel made by the lava flows centuries ago, where in 1776 the locals built a cave to use as an ice house. A typical Etna lunch with wine in a local restaurant is followed by a wine tasting in the nearby town of Linguaglossa.

## Clothing & Equipment

We recommend you bring the following items:

- 1 good size day sack
- 1 water bottle (1 litre)
- A personal first aid kit, sun/rain hat, sun cream and insect repellent (which may not be necessary)
- Fleeces and/or warm layers for cold weather and chilly evenings
- Waterproof coat and trousers
- Plenty of T-shirts/layers so you can adjust to weather conditions
- A walking stick or ski sticks can be very useful for uneven terrain

It is essential when walking in rural terrain to have comfortable, well-fitting and protective **footwear**. It is advisable that boots are ankle high to provide good ankle support. Vibram soles tend to have better grip. It is always advisable to break in your boots before your holiday. Try two pairs of socks, one thin pair close to the skin, and a thicker outer sock.

Harden your feet with alcohol before you come walking. Bring a foot care kit, with the especially useful moleskin and second skin, and compeed for blisters.

## Reading/film suggestions

### *Cinema Paradiso*

For his charming film, Tornatore chose Sicily as a filming location – the stunning landscape and atmospheric towns are the perfect backdrop for this delightful Oscar-winning production.

### Giovanni Verga

The great Sicilian writer immortalised the varied landscapes, towns, villages and sites of Sicily and its centuries of feuding. His best known novella (and later opera) *Cavalleria Rusticana* and his collection of novels about his home, *Novelle Rusticane*, will give you a taste of Sicily.

### Leonardo Sciascia, *Open Doors, The Wine Dark Sea, The Day of the Owl, Sicilian Uncles ...*

Through his excellent stories and essays, Sicilian author Leonardo Sciascia provides a fascinating insight into modern Sicilian history, family ties, political parties, alliances and allegiances.

### Theresa Maggio, *The Stone Boudoir*

Travel writer Theresa Maggion journeys to her ancestor's land and beautifully describes the charm of Sicilian villages, the splendour of the landscapes and the complexity of the culture.

### Giuseppe de Lampedusa, *The Leopard*

Describing the changes in Sicilian life in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, the decadence of the aristocracy and the rise of democracy and revolution, Giuseppe di Lampedusa perfectly combines public and private, in a beautiful, powerful historical novel.

### Goethe, *Italian Journey*, 1817.

The diary of his trip to Italy and Sicily in 1786-88, in which he mentions that “To have seen Italy without having seen Sicily is to not have seen Italy at all, for Sicily is the clue to everything.”

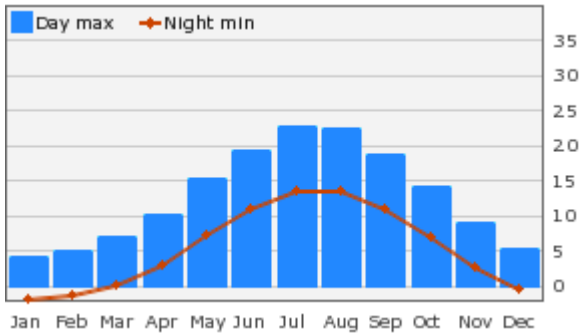
## Tour manager

Your tour manager will be on hand throughout the tour to ensure that everything operated according to plan. If you have any problems or questions please see him or her immediately – it is often possible to resolve complaints or problems very quickly on the spot, and do everything to help you enjoy your holiday.



## The Basics

**Climate** – The weather in the Aeolian archipelago should be pleasant, but there is always the chance of the odd shower. Our best advice is to come prepared.



**Time** – GMT +2 hours (Summer time Apr-Oct); GMT + 1 (Standard time Nov-Mar)

**Language** – Italian

**Religion** – predominantly Roman Catholic

**National holidays** – New Year's Day (01 Jan); Epiphany (06 Jan); Easter Monday; Liberation Day (25 Apr); Labour Day (01 May); Republic Day (02 Jun); Assumption of Mary (15 Aug); All Saints' Day (01 Nov); Immaculate Conception (08 Dec); Christmas Day (25 Dec); St Stephens Day (26 Dec).

**Currency** – Euro. €1 = 100 cents. Notes are in denominations of €500, 200, 100, 50, 20, 10 and 5. Coins are in denominations of €2 and 1, and 50, 20, 10, 5, 2 and 1 cents.

**Banks** – Cashpoints compatible with international banking networks are located in all towns and cities, as well as airports, major train stations and other spots. They usually offer an attractive exchange rate. Those banks that still exchange foreign currencies into local money will always charge a transaction fee, so withdrawing money from an ATM usually represents the most logical means of obtaining euros.

**Credit cards** – American Express, Diners Club, MasterCard and Visa are widely accepted across the country. If you're eating at a restaurant, check prior to the meal that your card will be an acceptable form of payment. Even in cities, it's advisable to carry a supply of cash with you at all times. Varying amounts of commission can be charged.

**Electricity** – 220 volt, two-pin continental plug.

**Drinking water** – Tap water is safe to drink. (Although you'll find plenty of bottled water for sale too)

**Shops and museums** – You will see appealing shops selling souvenirs, artisanal produce and traditional food and drink. Opening hours on small islands tend to be from 0900-1300 and 1600-1900.

**Clothes & Shoes** – You may like to bring a warm sweater for cool evenings. Light rain wear for the occasional storm and good grip/flat walking shoes are recommended. Although very common in tourist towns in Italy, please note that street vendors selling all kinds of designer knockoffs are illegal and could land you with a hefty fine. Care should also be taken when buying antiques since Italy is renowned for skilled imitators.

**Camera** – Bring plenty of memory cards/film and any spare camera batteries as these are not always available. Please check with your guide before photographing people.

**Bath plugs** – The hotel has plugs for basins, but it is useful to carry a 'universal' one with you.

**Telephones/mobiles** – You should be able to use your mobile phone in Italy, depending on your operator and contract.

**Tipping** – To keep our tours affordable, we do not increase the tour price by adding in tips. However, in the tourism industry, there is a certain level of expectation that when receiving a good service, one does award with a tip. Tour Managers, Representatives, Guides and Drivers appreciate a tip at the end of their involvement with the tour, but this is entirely at your discretion. We believe in allowing you to tip according to your level of satisfaction with their services, but for your guidance about £2-3 per person per day for the tour manager is the norm. We would like to reiterate that tipping is an entirely optional payment and this information is given purely to answer any questions you may have about it.



## Health

### Doctor/Dentist/Chemist

Please talk to your tour manager if you are feeling unwell and they will organise for you to see a doctor.

**Keep receipts for insurance claims.**



### Hospital

Your tour manager/hotel reception will arrange hospital transport.

**Keep receipts for insurance claims.**

### General Health Advice

We suggest you take a good supply of your own individual medicines with you and always keep some in your hand luggage in case you get delayed or your luggage goes astray. General-purpose supplies for bites, stings, or scratches, and your usual medication for headaches, or stomach upsets are always recommended. Oral re-hydration sachets are excellent for topping up salt and glucose levels.

Visit the NHS Fit For Travel website for more generally information specific to the country you are visiting – [www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk](http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk)

### Sun Protection

Always ensure you take sufficient sun protection and moisturiser. A sun hat and sunglasses are also advisable.

### Mosquitos

Like most Mediterranean islands, you might get a few mosquitos about in the evenings so it is worth taking some repellent.

### Inoculations

You should check with your own doctor and take their advice as to which inoculations are required for the country you are visiting, as only they know your medical history and recommendations are liable to change at short notice.



## Insurance

To be covered under your Travel Insurance Policy, if you become ill, it is essential that you contact a local doctor and also telephone the emergency number of your insurance company. You will **NOT** be covered for any claim unless this procedure is carried out. Your insurance company will then decide on the best course of medical attention.

### European Health Insurance Card (EHIC)

The EHIC replaced the old E111 in 2006. Valid in all EEA countries, the card lets you get state healthcare at a reduced cost or sometimes for free. It will cover you for treatment that is needed to allow you to continue your stay until your planned return. It also covers the treatment of pre-existing medical conditions.

Please note that the EHIC **is not** an alternative to travel insurance. It will not cover any private medical healthcare or costs such as being flown back to the UK, or lost or stolen property. Therefore, it is important to have both an EHIC and a valid private travel insurance policy. It is also important to note that each country's healthcare system is slightly different, so the EHIC might not cover everything that would be generally free on the NHS.

We strongly recommend that you take out an appropriate travel insurance policy when you travel abroad.

For more information about the EHIC please visit:

<https://www.ehic.org.uk>



## Emergencies

**Should an emergency arise, please call our offices on:**

00 44 20 7251 0045

Outside office hours (Mon-Fri 0900-1700), telephone our emergency staff on:

00 44 20 7431 8201 or

00 44 7899 796542 or

00 44 7831 133079 or

00 44 1235 850720

**PLEASE USE THESE NUMBERS ONLY IN THE EVENT OF A GENUINE EMERGENCY.**

If you find that you are in need of consular assistance during your holiday:

British Consulate Rome

Via XX Settembre 80/a

00187 Rome

Italy

Email: [italy.consulate@fco.gov.uk](mailto:italy.consulate@fco.gov.uk)

Tel: +39 06 4220 2431

Fax: +39 06 4220 2334

Open Mon-Fri 0900-1700.

Outside these hours, emergency consular assistance is available on +44 (0) 207 008 1500.

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