



Back-Roads | Europe (BRT)

Prepare to be unwrapped by Sicily's superb landscapes, intoxicating diversity and ancient wonders. Centuries-old monasteries and Norman churches. Ancient Greek temples and bustling local markets. Sheer gorges and golden beaches. This dazzling Mediterranean island will tantalise your every desire and capture your heart with its fascinating culture.



Thank you for choosing **Back-Roads**

Your extraordinary adventure awaits!

About your tour notes

These tour notes contain everything you need to know before your tour departs – from where to meet your fellow guests and local guide to what essentials to pack for your journey.

We recommend you print this document out and bring it with you on your tour. Give a copy to loved ones at home so they can follow your adventure, too.

IMPORTANT: please refresh this document as close to your departure as possible to ensure you're equipped with the latest information available.

THE BACK-ROADS DIFFERENCE

- ✓ Embark on a locally guided walking tour of Palermo and gain a unique insight into the city's anti-Mafia movement
- ✓ Discover the fascinating history behind the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Valley of Temples
- ✓ Unlock the exotic and eclectic flavours of Sicilian cuisine with several unique tasting experiences

TOUR CURRENCIES

- Italy - EUR

Your itinerary

DAY 1 | PALERMO (SICILY)

An intoxicatingly vibrant capital, Palermo is where we'll meet for the start of our incredible Sicilian journey. Our included dinner tonight is an opportunity to get to know one another better and sample some of Sicily's sumptuous cuisine. Here's to the fantastic trip ahead! Accommodation: Hotel Principe di Villafranca (or similar)

MEALS:

✓ Dinner

DAY 2 | PALERMO – MONREALE – SELINUNTE

This morning we'll take to the streets to dive into Palermo's fascinating anti-Mafia movement with a local guide – visiting the house of anti-Mafia magistrate Paolo Borsellino, as we go. Then: it's onwards to Monreale. Perched atop the Monte Caputo, overlooking the fertile valley of La Conca d'Oro – Monreale is renowned for its awe-inspiring Cathedral. Here, we'll spend some time admiring the Norman-Byzantine architecture and stunning mosaics, before moving on to our idyllic accommodation in Selinunte. Accommodation: Agriturismo Case di Latomie (or similar)

MEALS:

✓ Breakfast

DAY 3 | SELINUNTE – MAZARA DEL VALLO AND SCIACCA – FAVARA

This morning, we're in for a culinary treat: prepare to sample a local farm's tasty olives, award-winning oil and fresh breads. Then: en route to Favara, we'll stop by Mazara del Vallo to indulge in a delicious antipasti lunch that explores the Arabic influence on Sicilian cuisine. Appetites sufficiently quenched, we'll continue to the historic fishing port of Sciacca. Dating back to the ancient Greek period, Sciacca has been known for its natural thermal springs and ceramics. Here, we'll have the opportunity to visit a local ceramic workshop and enjoy some free time to explore – before moving on to our hotel in Favara. Accommodation: The Alba Palace Hotel (or similar)

MEALS:


✓ Breakfast

✓ Lunch

DAY 4 | FAVARA – AGRIGENTO AND PIAZZA ARMERINA – RAGUSA

After breakfast we'll move on to Agrigento to visit the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Valley of Temples. One of the most impressive collections of ancient Greek monuments in the world – a local guide will reveal the history of this enchanting archaeological site. Then: the ancient history lesson continues with a visit to Piazza Armerina's Villa Romana del Casale, which contains one of the largest collections of Roman mosaics in the world. We'll end our day in the magnificent hilltop town of Ragusa, where our idyllic accommodation in the historic town centre of Ibla awaits. Accommodation: Hotel Antico Convento dei Cappuccini (or similar)


MEALS:

 Breakfast

DAY 5 | RAGUSA – MODICA – RAGUSA

We'll start our day in indulgent style: with a chocolate tasting session in Modica. And then? The gastronomic theme continues as we venture into the countryside for a fascinating lesson in cheese-making. We'll gain a unique insight into the rustic lifestyle of Sicilian shepherds from a local breeder – and learn the secrets behind creating the area's famed provola ragusana cheese. After a delicious tasting session, we'll return to Ragusa – where the rest of the day is free to wander the sloping alleyways and historic Ragusa Ibla at our leisure. Accommodation: Hotel Antico Convento dei Cappuccini (or similar)

MEALS:

 Breakfast

DAY 6 | RAGUSA – NOTO – SYRACUSE

On today's agenda: a visit to the city of Noto, where we'll learn more about almond cultivation with a local expert. After indulging in an almond-themed lunch, we'll press on to lovely Syracuse. Here, a local guide will take us around the ancient archaeological park – home to the impressive Teatro Greco. This evening, we'll enjoy some free time relaxing at our hotel or exploring the nearby Ortigia area – Syracuse's ancient town centre. Accommodation: Domus Mariae Benessere (or similar)

MEALS:

 Breakfast

 Lunch

DAY 7 | SYRACUSE

Coastal Syracuse – which rivalled Athens as the most important city of ancient Greece – is yours for the taking today. We recommend arranging a boat trip to visit the enchanting hidden caves here. Or spending your free time wandering the array of ancient temples before losing yourself in the city's winding streets, which open onto magnificent baroque piazzas, enticing boutique storefronts and beautiful sea views. How you spend your day is up to you – but a visit to the stunning Piazza Duomo is a must! Accommodation: Domus Mariae Benessere (or similar)

MEALS:

 Breakfast

DAY 8 | SYRACUSE – MT ETNA – ETNA REGION

Today we head towards Mt Etna, a slumbering giant that towers over the rugged surrounding landscape. We'll take in the views from Rifugio Sapienza and have an opportunity to ride the cable car for a closer look at its smouldering craters. Then: we'll move on to a local winery for an indulgent lunch and wine pairing experience. Later, we'll make tracks for our accommodation in the foothills of Etna – where we'll spend the next two nights. Accommodation: Il Picciolo Etna Golf Resort & Spa (or similar)

MEALS:

- ☑ Breakfast
- ☑ Lunch

DAY 9 | ETNA REGION – TAORMINA – ETNA REGION

Today will be spent exploring the spectacular mountainside town of Taormina. Here, we will have plenty of time to indulge in some Sicilian dolce vita – but first: a guided visit to the dramatically situated ancient Greek theatre is in order. After a day spent exploring, tonight's farewell dinner will be well deserved. Accommodation: Il Picciolo Etna Golf Resort & Spa (or similar)

MEALS:

- ☑ Breakfast
- ☑ Dinner

DAY 10 | ETNA REGION – CATANIA

Today our adventure will end in Catania, but not before a walking tour of the ancient port city. Here we'll pay a visit to the city's famous fish market, where you'll have the opportunity to soak up the lively atmosphere. We'll even stop by a historic pâtisserie to fill our own cannoli with ricotta cheese, and sample some traditional local sweets. What a way to round off the trip!

MEALS:

- ☑ Breakfast



Tour information

Meals

INCLUDED MEALS

Breakfast (B) is included daily.

Some of your lunches and dinners are also included, either in hotels or local restaurants. These are indicated by (L) and (D) in the itinerary.

Please note that drinks will not always be included.

We will do our best to accommodate any specific dietary requirements you may have. Please ensure to make these clear to us before your tour begins so we can communicate them to our hotels, restaurants and suppliers.

Other information

Finances

CHANGING MONEY

CASH: Foreign money can be changed at banks, airports, some railway and tube stations, and at major hotels (though at a less favourable rate).

CREDIT CARDS: Visa and MasterCard are widely accepted. American Express is only accepted in some larger establishments.

CASH MACHINES: ATMS are widely available.

TIPPING

Tipping is entirely at your discretion. If you feel you have received exceptional service, it is recommended that you tip £1-2/€ per day for Drivers and £4- 5/€ per day for Tour Leaders.

Insurance

Before travelling with Back-Roads Touring, it is compulsory for all guests to take out comprehensive travel insurance. Please ensure your insurance covers medical expenses (including repatriation), cancellation cover, loss or damage to baggage and personal effects, money and personal liability.

We recommend you carry your insurance details with you at all times. You may be asked to provide details of your medical insurance or a payment guarantee in some countries before medical assistance can be provided.

For more information, please see our FAQ page:
www.backroadstouring.com/faqs

If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to contact our friendly Customer Service team: www.backroadstouring.com/contact-us

Passports and visas

Please ensure your passport is valid for at least six months after the last day of your tour. Some countries will refuse entry if you do not have at least six months validity remaining on your passport after your departure date. Depending on your nationality, you may require a visa to enter certain countries.

It is your responsibility to obtain visas prior to your tour's departure. To determine which visas you'll need, you can consult either your own government's website or the government websites of the countries in which you will be travelling.

PLEASE NOTE: Some visas can take up to six weeks to acquire, so don't leave it until the last minute. Also, bear in mind that the validity of a visa often runs from its date of issue rather than the date of entry into the country. Please check with the appropriate embassy/embassies prior to departure as requirements do change periodically.

We advise you to either carry a photocopy of your passport (and visa, if applicable) with you while abroad, or to ensure that you leave a copy with relatives back at home. This will enable the local embassy or high commission to arrange a replacement if the original should be lost or stolen. If you do take copies with you on your tour, please ensure that you keep these separate from your

Medication and mobility

Whilst on your tour, we want you to have the smoothest journey possible which requires some mobility conditions:

- You must be fit enough to get on and off the vehicle on a regular basis, and to walk around towns and villages or to attractions.
- You must be able to walk up and down stairs and use a shower over the bath.

Please note that, unfortunately, we are unable to accommodate mobility scooter or wheelchair users as we frequently stay in traditional-style hotels and the majority do not have lifts or ground-floor rooms.

If you take medicine for certain conditions, such as diabetes or heart problems, please carry it with you at all times.

Please declare any medical conditions you may have in advance of your tour. If you are in any doubt as to whether our tours are suitable for you, please contact our friendly Customer Service team:

www.backroadstouring.com/contact-us

Mental health and wellbeing

Culture shock, homesickness and periods of feeling down happen regardless of age. Be rest assured that if you're feeling low, your Tour Leader and Driver will do their utmost to make you smile.

Measures you can take to look after your mental health and wellbeing while on the road with us are:

- Call loved ones. Hearing a familiar voice whilst in an unfamiliar destination can help ground you and remind you you're not alone.
- Eat well. Nobody feels their best when they're hungry. There are plenty of nutritious culinary delights to be savoured along the road!
- Integrate with your fellow guests. The more you socialise with the group, the less likely you'll feel homesick.

Transport

We travel in premium mini-coaches equipped with comfortable seats, air conditioning and large windows for enjoying the view.

With far more flexibility than a standard-size coach, we're able to take the scenic route – winding through beautiful countryside to the heart of tiny villages and coastal towns.

What to bring

Based on our experience, the following items are essential.

Please note, this is a general packing list for Back-Roads tours. What you pack will depend on the countries you're visiting as well as the time of year you plan to travel.

CLOTHING:

- | | | |
|---------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ☑ Sun hat | ☑ Long-sleeved tops | ☑ Light jacket |
| ☑ Sunglasses | ☑ Short-sleeved tops | ☑ Waterproof jacket |
| ☑ Sleepwear | ☑ Shorts/skirts | ☑ Trousers |
| ☑ Warm jacket | ☑ Socks | ☑ Swimwear |
| ☑ Underwear | ☑ Smart casual evening wear | ☑ Walking shoes/comfortable shoes |

OTHER THINGS TO PACK:

- | | | |
|---------------------------|--|--------------------|
| ☑ Multi-use adapter plug | ☑ Toiletries | ☑ Camera |
| ☑ Batteries | ☑ Sunscreen | ☑ Towel |
| ☑ Umbrella | ☑ Reusable water bottle | ☑ Insect repellent |
| ☑ Any personal medication | ☑ Basic medical kit (including paracetamol, aspirin, plasters etc) | |

That's it!

We look forward to seeing you on tour.