



**THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE FOUNDATION PRESENTS**  
**Treasures of Sicily**  
**March 20 – April 2, 2020**



Photo credit: Donna Schein

Join us as we explore the breathtaking treasures of Sicily's archaeological sites, historic cities, landscapes, gardens, and towns. Throughout our journey, we'll be immersed in local culture and we'll also meet some of the island's noble families in their grand palazzos. Sicily's unique history defines its culture and civilization, which are reflected in the distinctive attitudes and bonds shared by its people. Walk the streets of Taormina, perched high above the Ionian Sea, and explore the ruins of its Greco-Roman theater in the shadow of Mt. Etna. Travel back in time to Catania and Siracusa and experience the grandeur and beauty of one of Sicily's oldest and largest palaces. And dine with Virginia Borghese, the daughter-in-law of Princess Maria Carla Borghese, at the lovely family villa in Lentini.

We'll also explore the Temple of Apollo, one of the many tangible reminders of Sicily's Greek past. Our classical journey will continue in Selinunte by the sea, Segesta's mountains, and, of course, Palermo, where we'll savor the flavors of its Saracen history surrounded by Norman-inspired mosaics. Don't miss this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to experience centuries of Sicilian art, culture, and landscapes firsthand, all while enjoying the best of what modern Sicily has to offer.

Charles Birnbaum, FASLA, FAAR  
President, CEO, and Founder  
The Cultural Landscape Foundation

## ITINERARY

### FRIDAY, MARCH 20: USA

Depart USA for Catania, Italy (on Sicily).

### SATURDAY, MARCH 21: CATANIA – TAORMINA

Upon arrival in Catania, transfer as a group to Villa Schuler in Taormina, overlooking the Bay of Naxos and the majestic Mt. Etna in the distance. Converted from a Sicilian mansion into a hotel in 1905, the historic Villa Schuler is most probably the oldest owner-run hotel on Sicily. The hotel has been extensively refurbished in recent years, emphasizing its original elegance, charm and atmosphere.



Welcome reception and dinner at hotel.

### SUNDAY, MARCH 22: TAORMINA – PORTA MESSINA – TAORMINA



This morning we'll visit the Greco-Roman theater before walking to Villa Comunale and the Lady Florence Trevelyan Garden. This English-style garden has a panoramic walkway that faces the sea and Mt. Etna, adorned with numerous flower beds, bushes, trees, and finely trimmed hedges. It was originally designed to be a private pleasure garden for English aristocrat and nature conservationist Florence Trevelyan, who once enjoyed birdwatching from its cliff tops.

We'll continue by foot through Taormina to see its gothic and Baroque palaces. We'll visit the Norman cathedral, followed by lunch at a local restaurant nearby.

Afternoon at leisure.

This evening includes a private dinner at Daphne Phelps' Casa Cuseni villa. The Casa Museo, with its gardens, furniture, and paintings, is a significant contribution to Italian architectural design that has uniquely maintained its associations with the arts in England and Italy at the beginning of this century. We have the privilege of dining in the actual museum.

## MONDAY, MARCH 23: TAORMINA – ETNA – VALVERDE – CATANIA



This morning we depart the hotel and travel to Etna for a visit to the Crateri Silvestri of Mt. Etna. Created by the volcanic eruption of 1892, these inactive volcanic cones are located on the mountain's south side. Enjoy the fantastic panoramic views over Catania and the main summit of the volcano.

We'll continue on to the small village of Valverde for lunch before a visit to Giulia's Garden, which is owned by Lady Giulia, the secretary of the Etna Garden Club of Catania. The garden began taking shape in the 1990s with the help of the unforgettable Sicilian landscapist Ettore Paternò del Toscano. Today you can see cycas, iris, aloe, euphorbia, and lantana on the walls, and among the trees you will find bitter oranges and tangerines.

We'll depart the garden and continue on to Catania, checking into the Una Hotel Palace located in the heart of the city's historic quarter. The hotel is designed in a style that combines the Baroque and the modern to reflect elegance and simplicity.

Tonight, dinner will be at the hotel restaurant.

## TUESDAY, MARCH 24: CATANIA – LENTINI – VILLASMUNDO – CATANIA

This morning we'll drive to Lentini and visit Giardino Borghese for a private tour of the gardens with Virginia Borghese, the daughter-in-law of Princess Borghese, followed by lunch on the terrace.

We'll continue to Villasmundo to visit Giardino San Giuliano. Surrounded by extensive citrus orchards, the late-fifteenth-century fortified farmhouse has a "giardinetto" divided into four distinct areas. The traditional Arabic irrigation channels, called *saie*, are still in use. The head gardener, Rachel Lamb, will give us a tour through the gardens.

Return to the hotel to enjoy the rest of the evening and dinner at leisure.

## WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25: CATANIA – SIRACUSA – FONTANE BIANCHE – ORTIGIA – CATANIA

We'll depart Catania for Siracusa, where we'll visit the Greek theater and the Orecchio di Dionisio, or "Ear of Dionysius, a limestone cave carved out of the Temenites hill. The Latomie del Paradiso was the largest of ancient stone quarries, which were worked from the sixth century B.C. onwards and eventually descended more than twenty meters into the limestone.





We'll continue to the white sand beach of Fontane Bianche. The town and the beach are named after the numerous fresh-water springs that flow on the seabed. We will visit the Cactus Nursery Vivai Cuba. This eighteen-hectare nursery cultivates more than 300 species and varieties of succulents, which are sold throughout Europe to garden shops and garden designers. Attached to the nursery is the "Garden of mother plants," which gives prominence to specimens of the genera *Trichocereus*, *Pachocereus*, *Ferocactus*, *Orocereus*, *Carnegiea*, *Marshallocereus*, *Neocardenasia*, and *Myrtillocactus*, which are integrated into a large collection of agaves and euphorbias.

Upon arrival in Ortigia, we'll visit many ruins from the island's past, including the museum and the magnificent *duomo*. The *duomo*, known as Santa Maria delle Colonne, was erected in the seventeenth century over the remains of the Temple of Athena. The Doric columns along the façade once supported the ancient structure and now contrast with the Baroque architecture. Steps lead to the main portal flanked by the looming statues of the apostles Peter and Paul.

Return to the hotel and enjoy the evening at your leisure.

## THURSDAY, MARCH 26: CATANIA – GIARRE – CATANIA

Today begins at the University of Catania's Botanical Garden. The garden was founded in 1858 by Benedictine monk Francesco Tornabene Roccaforte and includes the "General Garden" with many exotic plants and the Sicilian Garden for cultivation of wild species from Sicily.



Next, we'll visit the private garden of Lady Valeria, founder of the Catania Garden Club, who will host us for lunch. The garden covers approximately two hectares, one of which is full of orange and olive crops; the rest is an informal ornamental garden with a good collection bulbs and Mediterranean plants, some of which are very rare.



This afternoon we'll drive to Giarre, a town located between Taormina and the base of Mt. Etna, where nature finds its maximum expression thanks to the area's microclimate. Built within the territory of the ancient Greek city of Kallipoli, Giarre was born in the sixteenth century with a name that derives from the Arabic word for "terracotta jar."

We'll continue to the Piante Faro nursery and Radicepura Gardens. The nursery Piante Faro is one of the largest in Europe, covering some 400 hectares. The family owners of the nursery founded Radicepura, a botanical park that is a hub in the worlds of horticulture and garden design and the setting for a well-known biennial festival. The festival

highlights ten garden spaces designed and created by talented young designers from around the world, and five gardens designed by James Basson, Andy Sturgeon, Antonio Perazzi, Michel Péna, and Francois Abélanet.

Return to the hotel; dinner at a local restaurant this evening.

## **FRIDAY, MARCH 27: CATANIA – CALTAGIRONE - AGRIGENTO**

This morning we'll depart the hotel and travel to Caltagirone, renowned for its ceramics. The area's high-quality clay has supported production for more than 1,000 years, and still today the industry is an important economic engine. The town's earliest settlers worked with terracotta, but it was the Arabs, arriving in the tenth century, who kick-started the industry by introducing glazed polychromatic colors, particularly the yellows and blues that have distinguished the local ceramics ever since.

We will travel through the countryside for lunch at a local restaurant in Piazza Armerina. Next, we'll visit the famous Villa Imperiale, one of the world's most important Roman building complexes, which dates to the early fourth century A.D. and houses an unrivalled collection of beautiful Roman mosaic floors.

We'll continue on to Agrigento and check into the Villa Athena hotel, which is set within the Valley of the Temples and was once an opulent eighteenth-century private residence.

Tonight dinner at the hotel.

## **SATURDAY, MARCH 28: AGRIGENTO**

This morning we'll visit the Valley of the Temples and the archaeological museum. The most impressive and renowned vestiges of Sicily's Greek past, the city's wonderful temples lie on the "Hill of the Temples" on the south side, overlooking the sea. We will have lunch at the hotel.

After lunch we'll drive to Giardino della Kolymbethra, a peaceful and shady grove of citrus and other fruit trees, olive trees, palms, almonds trees, and many other plants.



Return to the hotel and enjoy the rest of the afternoon at leisure.

Enjoy dinner at Kokalos, housed in an old farmhouse and inserted perfectly in the picturesque and beautiful Valley of the Temples.

## **SUNDAY, MARCH 29: AGRIGENTO – SELINENTE – PALERMO**

Depart Agrigento for Palermo.

Our first stop is at the Selinunte archaeological park, with its ruins of Greek temples perched on a plateau overlooking an expanse of the Mediterranean. The city was one of the most superb colonies of ancient Greece. Founded in the seventh century B.C., Selinunte became the rich and prosperous rival of Segesta, so the Carthaginians sent an army to destroy the city. We'll see its Doric temple dating to the fifth century B.C., its acropolis, and its fortifications from the fourth century B.C. Lunch nearby overlooking the sea.



We'll continue to Palermo and check into the Grand Hotel Wagner, named for the famous German composer Richard Wagner, who lived on the namesake street with his family between 1881 and 1882. The hotel exudes an aura from another era, where crafted wrought-iron features add to the warmth of the timber and complement the precious golden decorations. The interior of the hotel is ornately decorated with historical paintings, carpets, rare marbles, columns, hand-made windows, and a rare antique fireplace.

Dinner at Gigi Mangia near the hotel.

## MONDAY, MARCH 30: PALERMO

Today we'll begin at the Palermo Botanical Garden, which opened in 1795 around a set of neoclassical buildings, where we can view a collection of citruses, impressive varieties of ficus, and other varieties from the Mediterranean and from the Southern Hemisphere, including an avenue of silk floss trees. The adjacent Villa Giulia, Palermo's first public park and one of the earliest public open spaces in Europe, was established in 1777 and named for the wife of the then-Viceroy of Sicily.



Next we'll visit the Palazzina Cinese, the pleasure pavilion designed for the Bourbon King and Queen during their forced exile from Naples at the time of the French occupation in the late eighteenth century. Here we'll discover the beautifully executed frescoes in the Chinese style, situated just outside the Park of the Favorita, the hunting park of the Bourbons laid out in 1799 for the pleasure of King Ferdinand IV and his courtiers. A parterre de broderie, using hedges planted with *Duranta erecta*, known as the French garden, can be best appreciated from the windows of the little palace.

We'll continue on to lunch at the kind invitation of Duke and Duchess Gioacchino Lanza Tomasi. Palazzo Lanza Tomasi, built on the remains of the sixteenth-century city walls, faces the waterfront of Palermo. The principal charm of the palace derives from its location and from the delicate play of light in its interior. The furnishings, representative of the great patrician homes of Palermo, include a collection of the very best Sicilian cabinet work.

Return to the hotel, where the rest of the afternoon and evening are spent at your leisure.

## TUESDAY, MARCH 31: PALERMO

We'll begin our visit to Sicily's capital at one of its oldest and most popular sites, Palazzo Reale. We'll visit the chapel, the Royal Apartments (as long as the Senate does not call an emergency session), and the garden designed by Dr. Manlio Speciale, curator of the Botanical Gardens.

A brief ten-minute walk will bring us to the church of San Giovanni degli Eremiti, founded by Roger II in 1142. Although little is left of the church's interior, the five red cupolas and the elegant cloisters set in verdant gardens elegantly combine hard and soft landscaping.



We'll then meet the motor coach for transfer to the Town of Monreale overlooking the Conca d'Oro, Palermo's valley, where we'll see the famous *duomo* and the magnificent Benedictine Cloisters, followed by lunch.



We will finish the day with a tour of the gardens and a buffet dinner at Villa Tasca, one of the city's best-preserved historic gardens, with a wide range of monumental exotic trees. Follies indicative of the then-Count Tasca's values and aspirations, as well as a grotto and waterfall, enhance the fantasies of the landscape.

## WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1: PALERMO – BAGHERIA – PALERMO

Today we'll see Bagheria, which became the preferred location for the summer residences of the aristocracy after the Prince of Butera, formerly viceroy of Sicily, built his own residence there in 1658. Villas, like the fortified Villa San Marco, complete with bastions and a drawbridge, soon followed as a flurry of villa construction took place during the second and third decades of the eighteenth century. Two of the most striking, Villa Valguarnera and Villa Palagonia, were designed by Tommaso Maria Napoli and date from 1712 and 1715, respectively. Bagheria

developed as a well-planned town after a descendant of the original Prince of Butera redesigned his estate so as to increase his rental revenue. It was a favorite stopping point on the grand tour: Patrick Brydone, Goethe, John Soane, Karl Friedrich Schinkel, and others stayed here. Unregulated development in the twentieth and 21st centuries, however, has not been kind to the town's Baroque and neoclassical heritage.

We'll first visit Villa Palagonia, with its unusual glazed ballroom, mirrored and painted, and the numerous sculptures depicting human and bestial figures that grace its garden and its walls.

We'll have lunch with the owners of Villa San Marco, where our hostess, Baronessa Daniela Camerata Scovazzo, will guide us through her garden. We'll dine either in the courtyard garden surrounding the austere and fortified building or in its ground-floor room. We'll also visit the Villa Valguarnera, where we'll be escorted by its owner, Princess Vittoria Alliata di Villafranca. She successfully challenged the mafia to reclaim her property after they illegally inhabited it while the will of her aunt was being contested. The garden includes a steep climb to the summit from where there is a good view of Bagheria. At the end of our visit, we'll take refreshments before returning to the hotel.



A farewell dinner will be held at Palazzo Raffadali this evening. Originally built in 1468 on what was the southern wall of the Punic-Roman walls, the palazzo was largely demolished and rebuilt by the Raffadali family in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The style is Catalan. The wall fabric comprises fifteenth-century ashlars, with a large portal dating back to the seventeenth century, through which one accesses an atrium with an eighteenth-century staircase. Princess Stefania Raffadali will be our hostess this evening.

## **THURSDAY, APRIL 2: PALERMO – HOME**

Today our tour ends. Depart independently to the airport for your flight back home.



## **TOUR COSTS**

**LAND ARRANGEMENTS: \$8,850.00 per person, double occupancy**

**SUPPLEMENT FOR SINGLE OCCUPANCY: \$1,280.00**

**CONTRIBUTION TO THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE FOUNDATION: \$750.00 per person, tax-deductible**

**TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS BY:**

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**RESERVATION FORM:**  
**THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE FOUNDATION PRESENTS**  
**Treasures of Sicily**  
**March 20 – April 2, 2020**

Please mail or fax this form, together with your check(s) or credit card information in the amount of **\$2,700.00 per person**, at this time, to: **SUSAN GULLIA, PROTRAVEL INTERNATIONAL;**  
**1633 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, NY 10019; Phone: (212) 409-9556; Fax: (212) 755-1376;**  
**Email: sgullia@protravelinc.com**

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PHONE (    ) \_\_\_\_\_ FAX (    ) \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF BIRTH: 1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_

ACCOMMODATIONS: (    ) One Large Bed (    ) Two Beds (    ) Double for Single Occupancy

AIR: From \_\_\_\_\_ Outbound Date \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ Return Date \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_  
CLASS OF SERVICE: (    ) Coach (    ) Business (    ) First (if available)

INSURANCE: YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_ (IF YES A QUOTE WILL BE SENT TO YOU)

Special diet requirements or allergies \_\_\_\_\_

Other Physical or Medical limitations \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Voluntary tax-deductible contribution to The Cultural Landscape Foundation: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (Total contribution) (\$750 per person). The Cultural Landscape Foundation is a U.S. tax-exempt organization (Tax ID 52-2092229) under 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Your contribution is deductible to the full extent allowed by law.

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(Name on credit card) (Credit card number) (Exp. date) (cvv)

I/We confirm that I/we have carefully read and agree to the *Terms & Conditions* of this program and agree to make full payment to Protravel International by check or credit card no later than **February 25, 2020**. Each participant must sign below.

Signature (required) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature (required) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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**Included:** Hotel accommodations as shown in the itinerary (the right is reserved to substitute other hotels in similar categories); breakfast daily and all other meals as indicated in the program; a complete program throughout the tour, including transportation and admission to all points of interest; English speaking guide, airport arrival group transfer based on majority of arrival times.

**Not Included:** International airfare to Italy; airport departure transfers, items of a personal nature, such as laundry, phone/fax communications; gratuities; items not on the regular menus; expenses of hotels, meals, guides, buses, cars, railroad, boats, etc., for sightseeing not included in the itinerary; insurance of any kind; any other items not specifically included.

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