



Flavors of Sicily with With Chef Tonya

10 days | Mar 26 2027—Apr 04 2027

Arancini? Cannoli? Caponata? All originated in Sicily, and all are just the appetizer to the island's matchless cuisine. On this Food Tour, you'll dig into this Mediterranean crossroads, pinpointing the Greek, Arab, Norman, and Spanish influences that inform Sicilian cooking. Start in Palermo—the island's storied capital—before sipping and snacking your way from town to town. You'll sample wines in Castelbuono and explore the sun-bleached streets of Cefalu; taste chocolates, cheeses, and seafood in Modica and Syracuse; and hunt for truffles in the fragrant forests of Catania. Each experience builds up to the grand finale: a contessa-hosted dinner.



Your tour package includes

- 8 nights in handpicked hotels
- Breakfast daily
- 6 lunches
- 2 dinners with beer or wine
- 2 wine tastings
- 4 food tastings
- 3 cooking lessons
- 7 sightseeing tours
- Expert Tour Director & local guides
- Private deluxe motor coach

Included highlights

- Cefalu Cathedral
- Castelbuono wine tasting
- Mercato del Capo in Palermo
- Sicilian cooking classes
- Olive oil farm & tasting
- Modica chocolate tasting
- Ricotta cheese farm-to-table lunch
- Radicepura Botanical Garden picnic
- Catania region truffle hunting
- Farmhouse Contessa farewell dinner

Tour pace

On this guided tour, you'll walk for at least 1.5 hours daily across uneven terrain, including cobblestone streets and unpaved roads.

For more information, contact

<https://groups.goaheadtours.com/tours/san-diego-mesa-2027-sicily> | 1-800-438-7672 | **Flavors of Sicily with San Diego Mesa College**

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10 days

Overnight Flight → 1 night

Day 1: Travel day

Board your overnight flight to Palermo today.

Palermo → 3 nights

Day 2: Arrival in Palermo

Included meals: welcome dinner

Welcome to Italy! Settle into your hotel in Palermo, Italy's fifth-largest city and the capital of the island of Sicily. Then, gather with your Tour Director and fellow group members at a welcome dinner, served with beer or wine.

Day 3: Sightseeing tour of Cefalu & Castelbuono wine tasting

Included meals: breakfast, wine tasting, lunch

Today, head east along Sicily's Tyrrhenian coast to Cefalu, a seaside jewel with glittering highlights to match. There, follow your Tour Director on a short walk to glimpse its best sights.

- Pause in the Piazza del Duomo, the city's main square, and gaze at the imposing walls of Cefalu Cathedral. Built like a fortress, this church towers over the old medieval town.
- Roam Cefalu at your leisure, wandering down alleys in search of the perfect souvenir or getting in some extra sightseeing on your own. (For an excellent photo op, walk out onto the Molo di Cefalu and snap shots of the city, with a rugged ridgeline as a backdrop.)

Afterward, return to your bus and drive inland to Castelbuono. Named after the castle that watches over the settlement, this town also produces some excellent wines—and you'll get to sample some during a visit to the Santa Anastasia Winery. Tour its state-of-the-art facilities, housed in a restored 12th-century abbey, and stop for a multi-course lunch paired with some of the winery's own vintages.

Day 4: Food tour of Palermo & arancini cooking class

Included meals: breakfast, tasting, lunch

This morning, embark on a guided tour of

Palermo—a beautiful bayside city on the shores of the Tyrrhenian Sea. With a local guide in the lead, you'll wind through its historic center, passing UNESCO World Heritage Sites and Baroque delights alike.

- Spot a pair of Palermitan icons: the imposing Norman Palace, once the seat of kings, and the architecturally diverse facade of Palermo Cathedral.
- Pass the Quattro Canti. Officially known as Piazza Vigliena, this vibrant square features four matching facades—each decorated with ornate sculptures, fountains, and statues representing the four seasons, as well as the patron saints of the city.
- Visit the bustling Mercato del Capo to snack on some of the city's favorite street foods: panelle, or thin chickpea fritters; crocche, or savory potato croquettes; sfincione, a thick-crust pizza topped with onions, anchovies, and caciocavallo cheese; and gelato sandwiched between fluffy brioche.

Arancini, Sicily's beloved street food, originated way back in the 10th century—and this afternoon, an expert chef will teach you how to make them yourself. Begin at a cooking school, where your instructor will explain this food's Arab roots and how local ingredients (think: saffron-infused rice and caciocavallo cheese) lend authentic arancini their inimitable flavor. Then, roll and fry your very own bites before snacking on your creations with your groupmates.

Syracuse Region → 2 nights

Day 5: Syracuse region via olive oil farm & cooking class

Included meals: breakfast, tasting, lunch

Today, journey eastward across Sicily's sun-drenched interior. Your final destination: the Syracuse region—with a pair of pit stops en route.

- Visit a family-run olive farm outside the city of Agrigento and walk among its gnarled, centuries-old trees. As you do, your host will explain the traditional harvest, milling, and production processes that the farm follows to this day.

- Indulge in a guided tasting, training your palate to detect the slight differences between olive oils and discovering which regional dishes pair best with each.
- Continue to the Azienda Agricola Mandranova, a family-owned-and-operated agriturismo, and join your hosts in their kitchen during a hands-on cooking class.
- Roll up your sleeves and practice prepping Sicilian classics like involtini di carne (thin meat rolls) and caponata (a sweet-and-sour eggplant relish).

Finally, complete the day's travels at your hotel in the Syracuse region, where you'll have the evening to yourself.

Day 6: Modica & ricotta farm lunch

Included meals: breakfast, tasting, lunch

Today's day trip takes you southwest to the baroque hilltop city of Modica—a place where different civilizations have left their mark since the Bronze Age, and where the locals have had centuries to perfect one very delicious art form: chocolate-making.

Stop to visit Sicily's oldest chocolate factory and sample some of its creative confections.

(Jasmine? Red pepper? You could try chocolate flavored with both and more.) After, continue to a nearby ricotta farm to learn how the creamy cheese is made. Work up your appetite by hearing all the different dishes it's used in—then dig into some of them at an included lunch prepared using homemade ricotta.

Catania → 3 nights

Day 7: Catania via Radicepura Horticultural Park picnic & wine tasting

Included meals: breakfast, lunch, wine tasting

Hit the road one final time, turning north to Catania. You'll end your day in Sicily's second city, but before that, you'll detour past Catania to visit the Radicepura Horticultural Park. Spread over roughly 12 acres in the shadow of Mount Etna, this botanical paradise nurtures some 3,000 species of plants in an elegantly manicured environment.

Once you're done in the gardens, you'll walk to the palmento—a traditional winemaking facility used as a set in "The Godfather Part II"—and sit

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down for a tasting of Pietradolce wines, produced a stone's throw away on Mount Etna's northern slopes. Finally, tuck into a picnic lunch amid lush surroundings before heading to Catania and checking into your hotel.

Day 8: Truffle hunt & Sicilian cooking class

Included meals: breakfast, lunch

Lace up your walking shoes and head into the forests of the Catania region, where a local guide leads you on a hands-on truffle hunt through the undergrowth—nose to the ground, eyes peeled for one of the culinary world's most prized treasures. Once you've foraged your fill, trade the forest floor for a farmhouse kitchen, where a local chef takes you through the art of traditional Sicilian cooking. The truffles you unearthed earlier take center stage as you roll up your sleeves and craft a lunch from scratch—earthy, aromatic, and entirely your own doing. Pull up a chair and savor every bite of a meal that began, quite literally, at your feet.

Day 9: Food walking tour of Catania & farmhouse contessa farewell dinner

Included meals: breakfast, tasting, farewell dinner

Standing in the shadow of the stratovolcano Mount Etna, the ancient port city of Catania overflows with Baroque buildings—the result of extensive rebuilding after a devastating earthquake in 1693. Today, you'll meet up with a local guide and strike out for a walking tour, with a special focus on the city's cuisine.

- Start in the busy Piazza del Duomo before exploring the city's famous, open-air fish market. (You're likely to spot whole branzino, tuna, and other freshly caught delicacies neatly laid out on ice.)
- Crunch into a cartoccio—a paper cone packed with arancini, panelle, crocche, and other fried delights—to start your tasting tour on the right foot.
- Follow up your savory starter with a cipollina. This local favorite takes puff pastry and stuffs it with tomato, mozzarella, and sweet onion—the perfect snack for those on the go.
- End with a tasting of two sweets: minnuzze, rounds of sponge cake soaked in a liqueur and filled with ricotta and other goodies; and scorzette di arancia, candied orange peels coated in dark chocolate.

Finally, wrap up your tour at the Azienda Agricola Casabianca. Led by the contessa Giovanna Modica Notarbartolo, this 17th-century countryside villa sets the scene for a fitting farewell feast.

After your guided sightseeing of Catania, transfer

to a magnificent 17th-century countryside villa—home to an Italian contessa and the perfect setting for tonight's farewell celebration marking the culmination of your Sicilian culinary journey.

- Indulge in aperitivi on the garden terrace—local wines, artisanal focaccia, buffalo mozzarella, and the like.
- Gather round a beautifully set table in the villa's former stalls and dig into a multi-course meal, served with beer or wine.
- Learn the secrets behind lemon-infused linguine, wild mushroom risotto, and more of the contessa's treasured family recipes, and take a taste of Sicily with you back home.

Flight Home

Day 10: Departure

Included meals: breakfast (excluding early morning departures)

Transfer to the Catania airport for your flight home.