



**Jewish Heritage Tour of Sicily**  
A JCCNS Travel Experience  
October 5-16, 2025



**ITINERARY AT A GLANCE**

- 3 nights in Taormina at [Unahotels Capotaormina](#) (4\*)
- 2 nights in Siracusa at [Grand Hotel Villa Politi](#) (4\*)
- 2 nights in Marsala at [Hotel Seawater](#) (4\*)
- 3 nights in Palermo at [Grand Hotel Wagner](#) (5\*)

For more information about the trip details, please contact Group Leader Diane Knopf [dmillknopf@gmail.com](mailto:dmillknopf@gmail.com) or 617.694.8587

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**Day 1 - Sunday October 5**

Lufthansa Flight #421 to Frankfurt departs Boston at 10 PM.

**Day 2 - Monday October 6: Arrival in Taormina**

*Driving Distances: 1 hr airport to hotel*

Arrive in Frankfurt at 11:20 AM. Lufthansa Flight #308 departs 1:10 PM, arriving in Catania at 3:35 PM. Upon arrival, meet our tour director, Moshe, an expert on Jewish Sicilian history. Transfer to Taormina, a picturesque hilltop town famous for its breathtaking views. Enjoy a welcome dinner at our hotel. (D)

### **Day 3- Tuesday October 7 - Taormina Tour**

Our first full day in Sicily begins with a walking tour of Taormina. We'll see its ancient Greek theater and stroll through charming medieval streets lined with boutiques and cafes.

Enjoy free time in the afternoon and evening. You may choose to stroll the streets of Taormina - shopping, tasting gelato or cannolis, and viewing the local art. Or you may wish to stay at our resort which offers a beautiful beach area set within a cave, an ideal area to unwind. Our hotel offers a complimentary shuttle bringing guests to the shopping and eating areas of Taormina. Travelers who don't utilize the shuttle can reach this area in a 25 min walk (uphill). (B)

### **Day 4 - Wednesday October 8 - Savoca & Forza d'Agro**

*Driving Distances: Taormina to Savoca- 1 hr round trip (Forza d'Agro on the way)*

In the morning we will depart to Savoca, a town nearby, famous for having been the location of Francis Ford Coppola's Godfather and home to ruins of an ancient synagogue. The second stop will be in Forza d'Agro, a small village and another filming site of the Godfather film. Enjoy free time after this excursion concludes. A suggestion for free time: if you wish to take another excursion, visit nearby Castelmola, known for its medieval urban layout built around the ruins of a Norman Castle. (15 min from our hotel). Enjoy dinner and time to shop on your own this evening, taking advantage of our hotel's shuttle if you wish. (B)

### **Day 5 - Thursday October 9 - Mount Etna & Catania**

*Driving Distances: Taormina to Mt. Etna- 1 hr, Mt. Etna to Siracusa - 1 hr 45 min*

Check out of our Taormina hotel and embark on an exciting excursion to Mount Etna, the highest volcano in Europe and one of the largest and most active in the world, characterized by a unique geology and flora and fauna typical of the region. You will arrive all the way up to Rifugio Sapienza and see "Crateri Silvestri", small inactive volcanic cones surrounded by ancient lava flows. Arrive at a local winery to have a wine tasting session with light lunch. Then drive south toward Siracusa, making a stop on the way in Catania on the way for a short city tour. Arrive in Siracusa in time for dinner. (B,L)

### **Day 6- Friday October 10 - Siracusa ("Syracuse")**

After breakfast at the hotel, you will take part in a full-day exploration of Siracusa. First explore the Archaeological Park of Neapolis, which includes ancient treasures such as the Greek Theatre, the Roman Amphitheatre, the Latomie of Paradise and the Ear of Dionysus. A lunch with typical Sicilian food is included before discovering Ortigia, a small island connected to Siracusa by small bridges. Discover the Antico Mercato, the Road of the Jews, the Bagno Ebraico - Mikveh (a Jewish bath), Arethusa's Fountain and the Synagogue of Siracusa. Enjoy free time for dinner this evening, either at one of the several pizzerias nearby our hotel, our hotel's restaurant, or at one of the many restaurants in Siracusa or Ortigia. (B,L)

### **Day 7 - Saturday October 11 - Siracusa / Agira / Agrigento / Marsala**

*Driving Distances: Siracusa to Agira- 1.5 hr, Agira to Valley of the Temples in Agrigento -1.5 hr  
Agrigento to Marsala - 2 hr*

Today we move from the east coast to the west coast of Sicily. We will make some very interesting stops en route. Our first stop is in Agira, a small town influenced by the Jewish and Spanish who left their architectural mark on the town. Agira is home to one of the three Europe's oldest stony synagogue arks. It originally stood in the synagogue in Via Santa Croce, which after the expulsion of the Jews, became the church of Santa Croce. After some time exploring Agira, we'll continue on to arrive at the iconic Valley of the Temples in Agrigento. The Valley of the Temples is one of Sicily's most famous historical attractions, an enthralling and stunningly well-preserved archaeological site. We'll have lunch at a local restaurant before beginning our tour of the ruins. Admire the Temple of Hera, the Temple of Concordia and the Temple of Heracles. Arrive in Marsala in time for dinner at our hotel. (B,L,D)

### **Day 8 - Sunday October 12 - Marsala & Mazara del Vallo**

*Driving Distances: Marsala to Mazara del Vallo 30 min one way, 1 hr round trip*

This morning we'll head to Mazara del Vallo, a town overlooking the Mediterranean Sea with a historic centre dating back to the 11th century. See its fish market, walk through the Jewish, Muslim, and Christian Quarters, and see the countless ceramics around the city with intricate patterns. Then tour the Museum of the Dancing Satyr, which hosts some treasures of the Sicilian archaeological heritage. Return to Marsala for a short guided city tour, followed by free time to explore the center of Marsala on your own from late afternoon into dinner hours. After free time for dinner in the center of Marsala, we'll be transferred back to our hotel. (B)

### **Day 9 - Monday October 13 - Marsala / Trapani/ Erice / Palermo**

*Driving Distances: Marsala to Erice - 1 hr, Erice to Palermo - 1 hr 45 min*

Leave Marsala as we head toward Palermo. On the way, we'll stop in Trapani for a brief orientation. Continue on to nearby Erice where we'll see its Jewish quarter and its wonderfully preserved medieval village offering breathtaking vistas of the western coast of Sicily. Wandering along its cobbled alleys, discover an ancient temple, a Norman castle, and medieval churches. You may choose to try one of the numerous Marzipan and almond cookie shops for which the city is very famous! Visit a local winery, where you will have the chance to learn about its wine production process and have a tasting session. Arrive in Palermo in the afternoon and enjoy the balance of the day on your own. There are dozens of fantastic restaurants within the blocks surrounding our hotel, a prime area to enjoy a night on your own! (B,L)

### **Day 10 - Tuesday October 14 - Palermo**

Enjoy a full day guided tour of Palermo. Visit the Cappella Palatina, the Duomo and Piazza Pretoria, among others. After lunch at a restaurant, continue on to visit Palazzo Steri (also known as Palazzo Chiaramonte) and the Cappella Palatina, built by Byzantine, Muslim and Latin workers, an excellent example of how different cultures and religions can coexist. Walk through the typical open space market, where you will have the chance to taste a wide variety of

Sicilian specialties for a snack if you choose. Tour the Jewish Quarter before enjoying dinner at leisure. Explore the restaurants of Palermo on your own, with dozens located within a short walk of our hotel! (B,L)

### **Day 11 - Wednesday October 15 - Palermo & Cefalù**

*Driving Distance: Palermo to Cefalu - 1 hr one way, 2 hr roundtrip*

Start our day at the majestic Monreale Cathedral, known for its over 130 Byzantine mosaics, many depicting the Old Testament and one of the finest examples of Norman architecture. Every inch of wall and ceiling space is covered with painstakingly detailed mosaics containing 4,850 pounds of pure gold. Proceed to the beautiful coastal village of Cefalù. One of the most beautiful villages in Italy, Cefalù is an evocative walkable seaside town steeped in history and culture. Enjoy a guided tour followed by free time to walk around. Return to Palermo for a farewell dinner at a local restaurant, celebrating the memories made in Sicily. (B,D)

### **Day 12 - Thursday October 16 - Sicily / Boston**

*Driving Distance: 30 min to airport*

After breakfast our journey concludes as we head to the Palermo airport for our return flight. Lufthansa flight #323 departs 11:30 AM. After a 3 hr 50 min layover in Frankfurt, Flight #420 returns to Boston at 8:15 PM. (B)

### **Optional Tours**

Both optional tours require advance registration.

#### **Taormina: Cooking Class (Oct 7) - 110 EUR/pp**

Join a local chef in his home for a cooking class! Prepare several dishes ranging from fresh pasta making to local fish, meats, and vegetables. Unlimited wine is included. After an in depth cooking class, we will dine at the outdoor terrace of the home. You will see how the locals live in the prime city center location of Taormina, a unique experience that most visitors do not get to see. Digital recipes and an apron commemorating your experience is included. Experience lasts about 3.5 hours.

*Travelers must pay in cash on the day of the event. Cancellations are not permitted and any last minute cancellations would require full payment. USD is not accepted, payment must be in Euro.*

#### **Boat Excursion (Oct 8) - \$38/pp**

Take a boat tour down the coast, admiring the magnificent landscape as we sail. Sailing lasts around 2 hr and locations visited will depend on weather and sea conditions.

*The size of the boat and final optional tour cost is dependent on and therefore subject to change based on how many participants sign up. Travelers opting into this excursion should express their interest at the time of sign up as a headcount is needed for planning purposes. Any necessary cost adjustment based on final group size will be communicated and payment is not due until the time of final payment.*