

EXPLORE!

Family Active Sicily
8 days

Italy, Sicily - Trip code FSI

Family Active Sicily

Sicily, an island that offers adventure with a rich historical backdrop. This active trip blends a variety of activities with the cultural highlights of Palermo and Taormina. Activities include; sea kayaking, snorkelling, cycling, a water park, climbing, archery, power fan (falling from a high platform attached to a safety harness), walking on Mt Etna and a pasta/pizza cookery lesson. Activities are graded easy and just require an enthusiasm for adventure! Each evening we return to the comfort of our hotel and even a tree tent!

Trip highlights

- ★ **Palermo** - Sicily's capital - learn to cook pasta and gnocchi
- ★ **Etna Land** - visit an award winning water park with 14 slides
- ★ **Madonie Adventure Park** - Stay in a tree tent as well the chance to try out zip lines and tree climbing
- ★ **Coastal adventures** - Try sea kayaking in the Isole Ciclopi Marine Park
- ★ **Alcantara Gorge** - Walk amongst the lava landscapes of the Alcantara River Valley
- ★ **Blue Cave Bay** - Snorkel in the Isola Bella Marine Park
- ★ **Mount Etna** - Walk some of the way up Europe's highest and most active volcano

ACCOMMODATION GRADE:

Standard

Our standard, mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service, often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en suite facilities.

TRIP PACE:**Moderate**

Moderate pace tours are ideal if you want a holiday which combines exciting activities and experiences with plenty of time to relax and unwind. Typically you'll be active and busy for part of the day but then also have time to rest and recharge your batteries.

GROUP SIZE:**14 - 20**

Maximum group size ranges from between 6 to 20 people, depending on the type of trip, the transport and accommodation used and activities included. We rarely have groups that are smaller than five or six people and the average is 12 people plus an Explore leader.

Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

DAY 1 - Join trip in Palermo

Arriving at Palermo, Sicily's capital, there may be free time to explore the city which boasts Islamic culture, Byzantine magnificence and the vigorous world of medieval Europe that all merge into a fascinating mix of architecture and decoration. Why not visit the Gothic Cathedral which was founded in 1185 by the Englishman, Walter of the Mill, and its extensive mosaics and beautiful cloisters.



Accommodation: San Paolo Palace Hotel (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Meals Provided: None

DAY 2 - Full day exploring Palermo

Overlooking the azure waters of the Tyrrhenian Sea, Palermo is one of Sicily's cultural and historic highlights. We spend the day exploring some of its treasures today, stopping off at the Piazza Marina to visit Villa Garibaldi - a small garden set amidst some of Palermo's best-known historic buildings. This afternoon we enjoy a cookery lesson of pasta and gnocchi, putting our culinary skills to the test. We get to eat our dishes at the end of the class, a great opportunity for the whole family to get involved!



Accommodation: San Paolo Palace Hotel (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available

DAY 3 - Madonie Adventure Park and stay in Tree Tents

After breakfast this morning we drive 2hrs to the Madonie Adventure Park, for a full day amongst the wooded landscapes near Petralia Sottana. We have a full day to enjoy the parks many delights. You can choose to either brave the assault course through the trees, with zip-lines, rope ladders and 'Tibetan bridges' or try your hand at archery, tree climbing and 'Power fan' (which involves free-falling from high platforms whilst attached to a safety harness).

There are five tree tents within the trees set around 6 meters off the ground surrounded by the forest. The tents can accommodate three people per tent with another five tents on the ground, positioned on platforms for those wanting to sleep nearer the forest floor. The area is illuminated at night and there are toilets close by (just in case you were wondering !). It's advisable to bring warm layers of clothing with you as it can get chilly at night.



Accommodation: Adventure Park Madonie (or similar)



Simple Tree-House

DAY 4 - Visit Etna Land

Pack your swimsuits, water shoes, sunscreen and goggles as we experience the islands largest water theme park. The award winning water park boasts over 14 slides all designed for excitement and adventure including; The Black Hole (guests are seated on a 2-person dinghy that slides through a dark and twisting tunnel), Jungle Splash (20 seater boat with a drop of 30 meters towards the splash zone below), Hydro and Dark Kamikaze slides both with steep drops where your back sometimes doesn't even touch the slide, Twin Twister (four slides linked together over 120 meters) and Rafting River with a 4-person dinghy that slides right into the pool. The Wave Pool, the largest in Europe, comes to life every hour for splashing fun. Take a break from the excitement by enjoying a relaxing float around the Lazy River or at the Blue Lagoon, an oasis of rocks and waterfalls. You can also enjoy a hydro massage at the relaxing Hydro Pool.

There are some height restrictions on certain attractions up to 1.4 meters high

Later in the day we head to our hotel in a traditional Sicilian village of Francavilla in the fertile Alcantara valley. The hotel features an elevated swimming pool and terrace with fantastic views of the surrounding countryside.



Accommodation: Hotel D'Orange D'alcantara (or similar)



Standard Hotel

DAY 5 - Trip to Mount Etna

One of the highlights of our journey is a visit to the slopes of Mount Etna, the highest volcano in Europe (3330 meters) and one of the largest in the world.

We'll drive up the mountain this morning, passing through citrus groves and beech woods to Linguaglossa Rovittello where we taste a selection of dairy products and salami. We continue to Curva Sparita which is where the lava flow of 2002/2003 engulfed a part of the old road to Mareneve before arriving in Piano Provenzana (1,800m). Continuing by foot along a path that goes up to the crater of the Northeast side of the volcano to an altitude of about 2,300 m, we stop off at an old Bottoniera (numerous craters formed in 1923 including the longest one on the volcano) for lunch.

After lunch continue walking for around 1 ½ hours, returning to Piano Provenzana to be reunited with our transport and visit a volcanic cave which is one of more than 200 caves in the area (1,750 m). Before we head back to our hotel there is the opportunity to view photographs of previous eruptions that have been taken by a local well known photographer.



Accommodation: Hotel D'Orange D'alcantara (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Meals Provided: Breakfast & Dinner

DAY 6 - Explore Alcantara Gorge: walk and Sea Kayak

We spend today exploring the landscapes that lie along the Alcantara River. Carved from basalt rock, the gorge drops down over 50 meters, following the course of the river and providing us with some stunning but short walking trails. We take a nature walk up to the Terrace of Venus this morning, before continuing along the Gorge Trail to view the surreal monoliths of lava that lie strewn across the valley floor. Total 2km/1hr walking with ample time for stops along the way.

After lunch we travel to Aci Castello where we will sea kayak along a guided course exploring the protected marine park of Isole Ciclopi for a few hours, circumnavigating the towering sea rocks of the Faraglioni di Actrezza before returning back to Acicastello. Life jackets, 2 or 3 seater kayaks and full instruction provided, no previous experience is necessary.



Accommodation: Hotel D'Orange D'alcantara (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Meals Provided: Breakfast & Dinner

DAY 7 - Tour of Taormina and Snorkeling

This morning, we depart for the town of Taormina. Perched on a cliff overlooking the Ionian Sea, this pretty town is home to an ancient Greek theatre which is famous for one of the most iconic views in Sicily - that of snow-capped Etna, historic churches and a number of lively bars and cafes. We then drive to Naxos where we pick up our snorkeling gear. We visit the Isola Bella Marine Park by rib boat and snorkel in two spots, the Blue Cave Bay and Isola Bella South Side. Snorkelling equipment is provided including; fins, mask, snorkel, wet suit and life jacket.



Accommodation: Hotel D'Orange D'alcantara (or similar)



Standard Hotel

DAY 8 - Trip ends Catania airport

After breakfast we drive to Catania airport where the trip ends.

Family information

Triple rooms: This trip allows the option for triple rooms to be included within the booking on all night stops within the holiday, with the exception of the tree tents which are suitable for two people in each tent. If you would like this option please ask our Sales team for further information.

Average Age: As a guide we have identified the actual average age of the children who have travelled on this trip over the last 5 years, to help you decide whether it's the right one for your family. The average age on this trip is 14 years old, this trip is suitable for active teenagers.

Minimum age

11



Why book this trip

This is an epic adventure with lots going on and activities a plenty - from spending the day in a water park that boasts a kamikaze slide to staying in a tree tent - this is no ordinary holiday. We will be mountain biking, walking through gorges, sea kayaking, snorkelling and walking on the slopes of Mount Etna plus trying out pizza making - a great adventure for all the family and for any capability.

What's included?



Included meals

Breakfast: 7
Dinner: 6



Transport

Bus
Boat



Trip staff

Explore Tour Leader
Activity Guide(s)
Boat Crew
Driver(s)



Accommodation

6 nights standard hotel
1 nights simple tree-house

Trip information

Country information

Italy

Climate

April/May and October/November are pleasantly warm. June/September are the hottest months. Showers are common in Autumn.

Time difference to GMT

+1

Plugs

2 Pin Round

Religion

Roman Catholic

Language

Italian

Sicily

Budgeting and packing

Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

A selection of optional activities are listed below to help you budget for your Family adventure. Whilst the basic tour price you pay before you travel includes a great selection of highlights, we have also built in free time to allow you the flexibility to choose from a

Carefully selected range of additional excursions and activities or take time to relax, the choice is yours. At certain destinations along the way there may be several options to choose from and it may not be possible to fit all the activities in; your Explore Leader will be able to give advice on which are the most suitable for your family.

Madonia Adventure Park

Day 3: Mountain biking. There are a maximum of 10 bikes to hire, this activity is not guided. No charge.

Clothing

In summer you will need clothing for hot, humid conditions. Sunhat, sunglasses, long trousers and long sleeved shirt recommended for protection from the sun. In May and October half-term the sun should still be strong but temperatures will certainly be lower than in the summer months, particularly at night when you will need some warmer clothing and jackets.

At any time of year you will feel cold at the top of Mount Etna, therefore you should bring warm clothes, which will also be useful for our night in the tree tents at Madonie Adventure Park.

Footwear

We recommend a good pair of sturdy recreational shoes/walking boots for the short walks, Mount Etna, cycling and climbing and activities in Madonie Adventure Park. Trainers and/or sandals for travelling/beach time.

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

One main piece of baggage and daypack. Remember you are expected to carry your own luggage so don't overload yourself.

Equipment

A water bottle, sunhat and high factor sunscreen are all essential. You will need a swimsuit and swim hat and towel for the gorge, as well as beaches and pools, a swim hat is a requirement for the hotel in Francavilla.

You may also wish to bring cycle gloves for cycling and while undertaking the ariel course, water shoes for both kayaking and Alacantara gorge and of course cycle helmets for the cycling (though one is provided). A torch is useful in case of powercuts/emergencies and for inside the tents in Madonie.

Tipping

Explore leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Explore Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Local crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. In order to make things easier for you, the Explore Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the trip.

Accordingly, you should allow £20 per adult for tipping

Country Information

Italy

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch price

£5.00 - 10.00

Dinner price

£15.00 - 20.00

Beer price

£2.00 - 4.00

Water price
£1.00 - 2.00

Foreign Exchange

Local currency
Euro.

Recommended Currency For Exchange
GBP.

Where To Exchange
We recommend that you change any currency into Euros prior to arrival. Bureau de Change are generally only found in major cities and large airports.

ATM Availability
Major towns.

Credit Card Acceptance
Larger hotels and restaurants.

Travellers Cheques
Only in major towns. Please note, the exchange rate for cash and Travellers Cheques is poor.

Sicily

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Foreign Exchange

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

Bus, Boat

Accommodation notes

Booking a Single Room

All of our group tours are planned and operated on a twin-share basis, meaning that the standard cost is based either on individual travellers sharing accommodation with another group member of the same sex, or people who book together sharing accommodation. Please refer to the tour notes where the single room option availability is detailed on a night by night basis for this tour, and the price for the available nights is detailed on the dates & prices tab by departure date. For Self-Guided trips the Single Room supplement offers the option of a single room each and is charged per person. The Single Room supplement also applies to the third person in a party of three that will be accommodated in a single room.

One of the many attractions of this holiday is staying in tree tents within the Madonie Adventure Park. There are five tree tents within the trees set around 6 meters off the ground and surrounded by the forest. The tents can accommodate three people per tent with another five tents on the ground which are positioned on platforms for those wanting to sleep nearer the forest floor! The area is illuminated at night and there are toilets close by. The forest is also rich in biodiversity and has a wide variety of plants and trees including Chestnut, Pine, Poplar and Beech.

The hotel that we stay at for the second half of the trip is located in the traditional Sicilian town of Francavilla di Sicilia in the fertile Alcantara valley, rich in history with a choice of restaurants offering fresh dishes from the local area as well as a bakery and ice cream shop. The hotel features an elevated swimming pool and terrace with fantastic views of the surrounding countryside.

Family swimming

Enjoy the hotel swimming pools and enjoy dips in the sea including a snorkelling trip

Essential Information

FCO Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice click [here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, click [here](#)

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Price Guarantee

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

Visa and Passport Information

Italy: Visas are not required by UK, E.U Nationals, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our [Essential Information](#) and [Booking Conditions](#).

Transfers

[Find out more about Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions before you book.](#)

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Polar, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer click [here](#)

Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure

your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom. Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. [Read more about them here.](#)

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Included activities

Due to the volcanic dust and sulphur fumes, we ask asthma sufferers or customers with heart conditions of any kind to take these factors into consideration before taking part in any included activities on Mt Etna.

Non refundable permits

Italy

Vaccinations

Nothing required. Tetanus recommended. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at [Explore Travel Health](#) and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

Sicily
