PALACE TOURS
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PALACE TOURS

Danube Express Luxury Train: Sicilian Odyssey

11 Nights • Luxury Experience

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ABOUT THIS TOUR

Overview

From the shimmering canals of Venice to the smoking summit of Mount Etna, the Sicilian Odyssey traces the entire length of Italy by private luxury train. Over twelve days aboard the Golden Eagle Danube Express you trade Renaissance palazzi for the violin workshops of Cremona, the porticoes of Bologna, the clifftop republic of San Marino and the ash-frozen streets of Pompeii, before a rare overnight ferry crossing of the Straits of Messina carries you into the sunlit heart of Sicily. Here the journey becomes a mosaic - the markets and grand opera house of Palermo, the Greek temples of Agrigento, the honey-stone Baroque of Ragusa, the island of Ortigia and the mosaics of the Villa Romana del Casale - before ending in clifftop Taormina beneath Mount Etna. Throughout, your elegant hotel on wheels offers private en-suite cabins, fine regional dining and impeccable service, with two-night stays in five-star hotels in Venice and Taormina bookending an unforgettable voyage through Italy's most evocative landscapes.

DAY BY DAY

Your Itinerary



DAY 1

VENICE

Begin your voyage in the enchanting city of Venice, where timeless beauty and romance are woven into every canal and cobblestone. You enjoy two nights at one of the city's most iconic five-star hotels – the perfect base from which to explore La Serenissima. This evening, gather with fellow travellers for a welcome dinner, a chance to savour fine Italian cuisine and toast the unforgettable journey ahead.

DAY 2

VENICE

Immerse yourself in the magic of Venice on a guided walking tour of its most iconic landmarks, including the magnificent St Mark's Basilica and the bustling Rialto Market – or enjoy the day at leisure with a romantic gondola ride across the lagoon. As the sun sets, the evening begins with a spectacular private concert in the historic San Zaccaria church, followed by a sumptuous dinner at the renowned Ristorante Carpaccio.





DAY 3

CREMONA

Bid farewell to Venice in style with a private boat transfer along the Grand Canal to Santa Lucia station, where the Golden Eagle Danube Express awaits. Settle into your cabin as the train crosses the causeway spanning the Venice Lagoon and follows the Po River south. Our first stop is understated Cremona, almost off the tourism radar, where we explore the 13th-century piazza and enjoy a private tour of the fabled Stradivari Museum. A gourmet welcome dinner is served on board.

DAY 4

BOLOGNA



Awake to breakfast on board as we arrive in Bologna, Italy's revered culinary capital, famed for its gastronomy, medieval towers and endless porticoes. A guided morning tour reveals the city's character, culminating in a panoramic toast atop the Torre di Prendiparte. This afternoon, choose between the thrilling Ferrari factory and museum at Maranello, or ascend to the Republic of San Marino to explore its UNESCO-listed Old Town and the heights of Mount Titano. Tonight, dinner is served aboard the train.



DAY 5

POMPEII

Step back almost two millennia among the haunting ruins of Pompeii, the Roman town frozen in time by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 AD. On a behind-the-scenes tour we see how the race to preserve its original splendour continues to this day. Afterwards we visit Casa Setaro, a family-run vineyard in the volcanic soils of Vesuvius, for a tasting of acclaimed wines and local specialities – a perfect toast to the flavours of Campania.

DAY 6

ALBEROBELLO



Begin the day in Alberobello, a UNESCO-listed gem in Puglia known for its conical-roofed trulli, whose fairy-tale quality is matched only by a tasting of local wine and olive oil. This afternoon we visit elegant Lecce, the Baroque heart of southern Italy, exploring its golden-limestone churches including the Duomo and Santa Croce. Our scenic rail journey then continues through the wild beauty of Cilento National Park toward the southern tip of the mainland.



DAY 7

PALERMO

Wake to a gourmet breakfast in the dining car as we roll into Sicily following a rare overnight train crossing of the Straits of Messina – a unique and memorable moment of the journey. Our first stop is the lively capital, Palermo, where a gentle walking tour reveals a captivating blend of architectural styles, concluding with an aperitif and concert at the grand Teatro Massimo, Italy's largest opera house. This afternoon, choose between Corleone's Anti-Mafia Museum or the golden Norman mosaics of Monreale.

DAY 8

AGRIGENTO

Wake in Agrigento, gateway to one of Italy's most extraordinary archaeological treasures. On a privately guided tour we explore the awe-inspiring Valley of the Temples, a UNESCO World Heritage site where ancient temples rise majestically against the Sicilian sky. This afternoon we continue to Ragusa, a hilltop town bursting with Baroque charm, its honey-hued churches tumbling down the hillside, where a fun cooking demonstration reveals the secrets of traditional Sicilian cuisine.





DAY 9

SYRACUSE

This morning we arrive in Syracuse, once a flourishing centre of the Byzantine Empire, and enjoy a peaceful boat tour around the island of Ortigia. After lunch on board we journey to Caltagirone, famed for exquisite ceramics dating back to the 10th century, and visit a local artisan workshop before continuing to the Villa Romana del Casale – one of the best-preserved Roman villas in the world, its intricate mosaics telling stories of the civilisations that once ruled the island.

DAY 10

CATANIA

Explore Catania in the shadow of Mount Etna before we make our way to the clifftop resort of Taormina, perched above the glittering Gulf of Naxos. There is time to try your hand at a Sicilian pastry class and to begin soaking up the old-world charm of one of the Mediterranean's most beautiful towns, our home for the final two nights.





DAY 11

TAORMINA

The day begins with a private visit to the Mount Etna Museum, guided by a local volcanologist who brings this formidable natural wonder to life. We then head to the slopes of the volcano for an indulgent lunch and wine tasting at a traditional Sicilian Palmento, where the volcanic soil lends the wines a distinct character. This afternoon, wander Taormina's medieval streets and visit its iconic Greek Theatre at leisure. As evening falls, we gather for a farewell dinner with champagne to toast cherished new memories.

DAY 12

TAORMINA

After breakfast on our final morning, transfer to the airport for your onward journey – or extend your stay to linger a little longer amid the beauty of Taormina and Sicily.



DATES & PRICING

Departure Dates & Rates

DEPARTURE DATE	CLASS / CABIN	SINGLE	DOUBLE (PP)
Aug 29, 2027	Deluxe Class	**€46,900**	**€27,900**
	Superior Deluxe Class	**€58,500**	**€34,900**
Sep 9, 2028	Deluxe Class	**€49,250**	**€29,300**
	Superior Deluxe Class	**€61,450**	**€36,650**

Rates shown in Euro (EUR). Approximate USD equivalents available upon request.

Rates shown are per person. Single rate applies to single occupancy; Double rate applies per person in double occupancy.

🏷️ **Look for Coupons and Special Rates on our website.**

Visit https://www.palacetours.com/tour/danube-express-luxury-train-sicilian-odyssey for the latest information.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Terms & Conditions

Booking & Payment

- **Deposit:** 30% of the total tour cost is due at the time of booking. The deposit is non-refundable.
- **Final payment:** the balance is due no later than 125 days before departure.
- Bookings made within 125 days of departure are payable in full at the time of booking.
- Fares are per person. Your written confirmation shows the exact amounts and due dates.

Cancellation

- **125 days or more** before departure: 30% of the total tour cost (the deposit)
- **Less than 125 days** before departure: 100% of the total tour cost

Changes

- **Date change:** free of charge, subject to availability, when requested 125 days or more before departure; after that, a fee of 15% of the total tour cost applies.
- **Cabin upgrade:** only the fare difference between cabin categories applies.
- **Cabin downgrade or passenger name correction:** free of charge up to 35 days before departure; within 35 days, EUR 500 per change.

Changes or cancellation by the train operator

If the train operator cancels or materially changes a departure, you will be offered a new date or an amended booking, a credit toward a future journey, or a refund of the amounts paid.

All cancellation, change, or update requests must be submitted in writing by email to travel@palacetours.com. A request takes effect only once we have received and processed it, and we will confirm the outcome to you in writing. Timeframes are calculated by reference to local time and business days at the destination; a request received outside business hours is treated as received on the next business day.

We strongly recommend purchasing travel insurance, including cancellation cover, from the moment you pay your deposit. For information on available plans, please visit www.palacetours.com/insurance.

COMMON QUESTIONS

Frequently Asked Questions

How long is the Sicilian Odyssey and what route does it follow

> The Sicilian Odyssey is a 12-day, 11-night journey down the length of Italy aboard the Golden Eagle Danube Express. The route runs Venice, Cremona, Bologna, Rimini, San Marino, Pompeii, Alberobello, Lecce, Palermo, Agrigento, Ragusa, Syracuse, Caltagirone, Catania and Taormina. It combines nights on the private train with two-night stays in five-star hotels in Venice and Taormina.

Where does the journey begin and end

> It begins in Venice, where you spend the first two nights in a five-star hotel before a private boat transfer along the Grand Canal takes you to Santa Lucia station to join the train. It ends in clifftop Taormina in Sicily, where the last two nights are spent in a hotel, with an airport transfer on the final morning. Venice and Catania are therefore your arrival and departure gateways.

What is the overnight crossing of the Straits of Messina

> Between the Puglia region and Palermo the train is carried across the Straits of Messina by rail ferry overnight - a rare operation and one of the most memorable moments of the journey. You are on board while the crossing takes place and wake to breakfast in the dining car as the train rolls into Sicily. Very few rail journeys in Europe still include it.

What cabin classes are available on the Golden Eagle Danube Express

> Two classes are offered on this journey: Deluxe Class and Superior Deluxe Class, both with private en-suite facilities. Superior Deluxe cabins are the most spacious, with a full-length sofa, two additional chairs and two full-size picture windows, one of which opens; just 12 are carried on each departure. Cabins are converted for the night by your attendant and the fare for each class is shown on this page.

What is included in the Sicilian Odyssey fare

> The fare covers five-star pre- and post-tour hotel accommodation, your private en-suite cabin on board, all meals on board plus dining in local restaurants, beverages from the standard bar list, expertly guided off-train excursions with Freedom of Choice touring, all gratuities, arrival and departure transfers, luggage porterage, and the services of an on-board tour manager and doctor.

Are gratuities and transfers really included

> Yes. All gratuities, arrival and departure transfers and luggage porterage are part of the fare, so you are not expected to budget for tipping guides, drivers or on-board staff during the journey. International flights, personal expenses, travel insurance and anything not listed in the itinerary remain outside the fare.

What does Freedom of Choice touring mean on this journey

> On several days you choose between two guided options rather than following a single group. In Bologna you pick between the Ferrari factory and museum at Maranello or the UNESCO Old Town of San Marino and Mount Titano; in Palermo you choose between the Anti-Mafia Museum at Corleone or the Norman mosaics of Monreale. Your choices are confirmed before departure.

What are the archaeological highlights of the Sicilian Odyssey

> Three stand out. Pompeii is visited on a behind-the-scenes tour showing how preservation work continues today; Agrigento's Valley of the Temples, a UNESCO World Heritage site, is explored on a private guided tour; and the Villa Romana del Casale near Piazza Armerina holds some of the best-preserved Roman mosaics anywhere. Syracuse adds a boat tour around the island of Ortigia.

What happens on the Mount Etna day

> From Taormina the day begins with a private visit to the Mount Etna Museum guided by a local volcanologist, who explains how the volcano works and how it shapes life on the island. You then go up onto the slopes for a long lunch at a traditional Sicilian Palmento, where the volcanic soil gives the local produce its character. The afternoon in Taormina is at leisure.

Which cities have hotel stays rather than nights on the train

> Two nights are spent in a five-star hotel in Venice at the start, and the final two nights are in Taormina. The rest of the journey is on board the Golden Eagle Danube Express, which serves as your hotel on wheels: you unpack once and your cabin attendant looks after you through the day and evening.

What is the private concert in Venice

> On the second evening in Venice, after a day exploring St Mark's Basilica and the Rialto Market or enjoying a gondola ride, guests gather for a private concert in the historic church of San Zaccaria. Dinner at a well-known Venetian restaurant follows. It is one of several exclusive access moments on the journey, alongside the Stradivari Museum in Cremona and the Teatro Massimo in Palermo.

How much does the Sicilian Odyssey cost and how is the fare quoted

> Fares are quoted per person based on two people sharing a cabin, and vary by cabin class and departure. The exact fare for each departure and class is shown in the booking list on this page, so it always reflects current pricing rather than a figure that may have moved. We confirm the final amount in writing before any payment is taken.

Can I travel solo on the Sicilian Odyssey

> Yes. A single occupancy fare is published for this journey and is shown alongside the sharing fare on this page. Because a solo guest occupies a full en-suite cabin for eleven nights, the single fare is significantly higher than the per person sharing rate. Contact us early, as single cabins are limited on each departure.

What deposit is required and when is the balance due

> A deposit of 30 percent of the tour price confirms your cabin and is non-refundable. The balance is due 125 days before departure, and bookings made within 125 days of departure are payable in full at the time of booking. Your written confirmation shows the exact amounts and the dates they fall due.

When does the Sicilian Odyssey depart

> The departure currently on sale is 29 August 2027, a Sunday, with availability and fares by cabin class shown in the booking list on this page. This is a once-a-year itinerary with a small number of cabins, so it tends to sell well in advance. Contact us and we will confirm what is open in each class.

How are children priced on this journey

> Child fares are based on age at the departure date, with bands of 0 to under 5 years and 5 to under 12 years; guests aged 12 and over pay the adult fare. The pace of this itinerary, with twelve days of guided touring and long days ashore, suits older children best. Tell us the ages in your party and we will advise honestly.

How much walking is involved and how fit do I need to be

> The touring is extensive: Pompeii, the Valley of the Temples, the hill town of Ragusa and Taormina's medieval streets all involve walking on uneven ground, cobbles and steps, often in warm weather. A reasonable level of fitness makes the journey far more enjoyable. If anyone in your party has mobility limitations, tell us before booking and we will be candid about what is realistic.

What is the weather like in Sicily and southern Italy in late August

> Late August is high summer in southern Italy and Sicily, with hot, dry days, particularly at inland archaeological sites such as Agrigento and the Villa Romana del Casale. Lightweight clothing, a sun hat, high-factor sun protection and plenty of water are essential, with something smarter for evenings and the farewell dinner. Venice at the start of the journey is warm and humid.

Do I need travel insurance and what about entry requirements

> Travel insurance is not included and we strongly recommend comprehensive cover, including cancellation, from the moment you pay your deposit; the deposit and balance schedule makes this particularly important on a journey booked far ahead. Italy is part of the Schengen area, so entry requirements depend on your nationality - check with the Italian consulate or embassy covering where you live.

How do I ask a question or book Danube Express Luxury Train: Sicilian Odyssey

> Email travel@palacetours.com, call 786-408-0610, or message us on WhatsApp at https://wa.me/17864080610 - you will reach a travel specialist or our AI assistant. The departure shown on this page can be booked directly from the departure list, and we confirm cabin class availability, the exact fare and the payment schedule in writing before anything is charged.

Ready to Book Your Journey?

Contact Palace Tours for personalized rates and departure dates

travel@palacetours.com | 786-408-0610

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