

## **A GRAND TOUR OF SICILY: PALERMO TO TAORMINA**

**April 6-15, 2019**

*“To have seen Italy without seeing Sicily is not to have seen Italy at all, for Sicily is the clue to everything.” - Goethe, Italian Journey.*

The Institute of Classical Architecture & Classical America in conjunction with Classical Excursions announces its fifth tour to Sicily. Following the tradition of the most adventurous Grand Tourists of the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, participants will discover the exotic allure of the Mediterranean’s largest island, which has been host to a spectacular number of cultures throughout its history. The Greeks, Romans, Carthaginians, Arabs, Normans, Spanish and Italians have all left their distinctive mark.

The tour begins in bustling Palermo and progresses to the famous Valley of the Temples at Agrigento. Three nights are spent in Ortygia, the island city of ancient Siracusa with daytrips to Ragusa Ibla and Noto, as well as excursions and walking tours within the city of Siracusa. The last night of the tour is spent in picturesque Taormina.

### **TOUR HIGHLIGHTS**

The magnificent temples of Agrigento includes the Temple of Concord, one of the world’s best-preserved Greek temples.

Palermo’s wealth of Norman, Catalan-Gothic, Baroque and Neoclassical architecture under the shadow of Monte Pellegrino.

The extraordinary mosaics of the Villa del Casale, the 3<sup>rd</sup> century A.D. summer villa built for a member of the Roman imperial family.

The awe-inspiring and mysterious unfinished Doric Temple at Segesta.

The theatrically baroque cities of Ragusa Ibla and Noto, both rebuilt after the devastating earthquake of 1693 and filled with flamboyant palazzi and breathtaking perspectives.

The surreal Duomo of Siracusa with Greek Doric columns and metopes exposing its temple origins behind an exuberant baroque façade on one of Italy’s most beautiful piazze.

The picturesque resort of Taormina with its Greek/Roman theatre and breathtaking views of Mount Etna and the Ionian Sea.

Visits and dinners in private palazzi: The age-old Palazzo Ajutamicristo in Palermo, Palazzo Spedalotto in Bagheria, Palazzo Beneventano del Bosco on Siracusa's sublime Piazza del Duomo; and the exuberant Palazzo Biscari in Catania famed for its extravagant ballroom.