

The cost of this program, double occupancy is **\$3630** per person (single supplement \$550). This includes the following:

- i) Round trip airfare on British Airways, Boston-London-Rome.
- ii) One-way internal flight Palermo-Rome.
- iii) 10 nights' accommodation in first-class hotels, double occupancy, all rooms with private facilities.
- iv) 10 continental breakfasts.
- v) 6 table d'hote dinners, 3 courses + coffee.
- vi) Discover Europe courier Gavin Miller for 11 days.
- vii) All ground transportation by private coach as detailed in the itinerary.
- viii) Boat ride, Sorrento-Capri and local boat excursion to Blue Grotto.
- ix) 1st class rail Salerno-Taormina, with reserved seats.
- x) Etna excursion by cable car & jeep, Day 13.
- xi) Entrance fees to all sites featured in the itinerary.
- xii) Local guides in Rome, Pompeii, Palermo, Siracusa.
- xiii) Porterage of one suitcase per person.
- xiv) All customs fees, airport taxes, hotel taxes & service charges.

This itinerary is based upon using the following hotels:

Rome	Hotel Atlante Star
Sorrento	Hotel Belair
Taormina	Hotel Villa Sant' Andrea
Piazza Armerina	Hotel Park Paradiso
Palermo	Centrale Palace

Discover Europe reserves the right to substitute hotels of equal or superior standard should the above prove unavailable at the time of booking.



Mt. Etna, from Catania



The Colosseum, Rome



St. Peters, Rome

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DUBE Travel

presents

Full Bloom Italy

The Art & Artifacts of Southern Italy & Sicily

hosted by Kellie Bigos

April 24 - May 05, 2003

The boot of Italy stretches 800 miles from north to south and the variation in culture, climate, food and traditions between the north and south are as hugely fascinating as the miles that separate them. Southern Italy dances to a different beat than its northern counterpart, and its color and warmth, its antiquity and architecture, its flair and flamboyance beat out a rhythm that is uniquely its own. This April, when the chill of winter has not yet fled New England shores, travel to southern Italy with Kellie Bigos and friends and experience the alluring richness of life in the lower boot!

We begin in Rome, the Eternal City, and birthplace of the Roman Empire. Panoramic sightseeing includes Vatican City and St. Peter's Basilica before we step back further in time to walk in the footsteps of Julius Caesar at the Forum and the gladiators at the Colosseum.

Leaving Rome, we head south for a day in Naples and its archaeological and architectural treasures. Poets and writers have praised the beauty of Naples for centuries, and its setting on the sweeping Bay of Naples, overlooked by the towering Vesuvius, is indeed memorable. We'll visit the National Archaeological Museum before continuing south to Sorrento, gateway to the Amalfi Coast.

A day excursion from Sorrento to the island of Capri by boat allows us to admire the dramatic scenery of this legendary coastline. Once on the island we'll have free time to explore the harbor and the main town. Weather permitting, we'll travel by small fishing boats to the Blue Grotto, the most famous of the marine caves on the island where the light enters by refraction through the water, casting an ethereal blue color throughout.

We'll make an early morning start at Pompeii, just outside Naples, before the heat of the day and the crowds arrive. This extraordinary Roman city was preserved virtually intact when it was engulfed in ash in AD79, and an expert Pompeii guide will steer us through its narrow streets to see the finest houses and mosaics. This afternoon we catch a train from Salerno to Taormina, crossing to Sicily at Messina by ferry.

Our time on Sicily showcases its very best, from the awe-inspiring fury of Mount Etna and the gracious resort of Taormina to the bright lights of Palermo. We'll explore Sicily's finest Greek ruins at Siracusa, the Valley of the Temples, and Selinute, and the Imperial Roman Villa at Casale. From Palermo, the island's capital city, we'll visit Monreale's gorgeous Duomo and the charming fishing village of Mondello. There is no question but that when you leave Sicily, you'll leave a piece of your heart behind.

This spring, shake your cabin fever and join Kellie Bigos, Gavin Miller and *Discover Europe* on a fascinating journey through southern Italy and Sicily where the ancient and modern meet to create the richest of travel experiences.



The Trevi Fountain, Rome



Day 01, Thursday 24th April **Overnight: Plane**
 Depart Boston this evening aboard your British Airways flight to London.

Day 02, Friday 25th April **Overnight: Rome**
 Upon arrival in London, you'll transfer to the short connecting flight to Rome. Your courier, Gavin Miller, meets you this morning in Rome and transfers you to your hotel in the heart of the Eternal City. Time to rest from the flight before Gavin leads an orientation to the neighborhood. This evening we gather for our opening dinner party in an exuberant welcome to Italy! **(D)**

Day 03, Saturday 26th April **Overnight: Rome**
 Panoramic sightseeing begins at Vatican City, with visits to the Vatican Museum, the Sistine Chapel and the chance to stand in awe at the work of Michelangelo, and the Basilica of St. Peter's. We conclude the day at the ancient Forum, the very heartbeat of the Roman Empire, and the monumental Colosseum. The evening is free to try one of Rome's superb restaurants or pizzerias. **(B)**

Day 04, Sunday 27th April **Overnight: Sorrento**
 South this morning to Naples, one of Italy's most colorful and boisterous of cities. Sandwiched between the majesty of Mount Vesuvius and the beautiful sweep of the Bay of Naples, the city is an unforgettable experience. We'll pause at the National Archaeological Museum with its vast array of Roman and Greek treasures before continuing into the city centre to view the triumphal arch entrance of Castel Nuovo, the Palazzo Reale and the Galleria Umberto I, which faces the Teatro San Carlo. We continue to Sorrento with free time to explore from the hotel before dinner this evening. **(B, D)**

Day 05, Monday 28th April **Overnight: Sorrento**
 Today, an excursion to the island of Capri, one of the legendary beauty spots of the Mediterranean. Weather and tides permitting, we travel by local boat to the Blue Grotto, a cave bathed in an iridescent blue light. Free time to explore Marina Grande and to walk up the cobbled narrow street to Capri, the island's main town. Here there are spectacular views out over the bay towards the mainland and Mount Vesuvius. We return to Sorrento on an early afternoon boat with time to drive along part of the spectacular Amalfi Coast. The evening is free in Sorrento. **(B)**



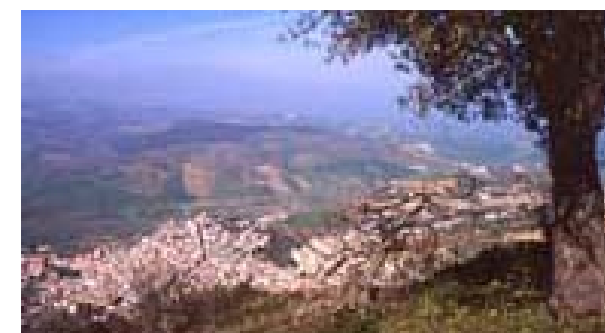
The Forum, Rome



The Duomo, Taormina

Day 06, Tuesday 29th April **Overnight: Taormina**
 An early start this morning at Pompeii, the extraordinarily preserved Roman city that was engulfed in ash from the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in AD79. A local guide will show us the highlights, including the House of the Faun and the House of the Vetti with their magnificent frescoes and mosaics. Free time for lunch and your own wanderings through the eerie streets before we make a prompt departure for the Railway station in Salerno, where we board the direct train to Taormina in Sicily. A late supper will be awaiting us at our hotel. **(B, D)**

Day 07, Wednesday 30th April **Overnight: Taormina**
 This morning a walking tour introduces the architectural treasures of Taormina. This afternoon to Etna! We'll take a cable car as far as Rifugio Montagnola from where we can continue by jeep with local guides, weather permitting. This is truly a once-in-a-lifetime experience and a tremendous photo opportunity. We return to Taormina for a free evening. **(B)**



Panorama, Piazza Armerina

Day 08, Thursday 1st May **Overnight: Piazza Armerina**
 A short drive this morning to the ancient city of Siracusa, one of the most important cities of the Greek world, and the most beautiful, according to Cicero. A sightseeing tour introduces the city's highlights including the Baroque Duomo (which incorporates the 5th-century BC Temple of Athena) and Archaeology Park with its spectacular Teatro Greco, carved from the hillside. After time for lunch, we continue west through some spectacularly wild countryside to the quiet town of Piazza Armerina. There will be time to explore and wander the pretty streets before we gather for dinner. **(B, D)**

Day 09, Friday 2nd May **Overnight: Piazza Armerina**
 This morning we begin at the Imperial Roman villa at Casale; this rich villa was excavated in 1950 having spent the previous 700 years hidden beneath the mud. The mosaic floors are particularly superb. We return to Piazza Armerina for a free afternoon and evening. **(B)**

Day 10, Saturday 3rd May **Overnight: Palermo**
 Today we begin at the Valle dei Templi, just outside Agrigento on the south coast. A series of Doric temples strung out along a ridge facing the sea, these are easily the most captivating of the Sicilian Greek remains, and unique outside Greece. We continue west along the coast to the Greek city of Selinute, its mighty temples lying in great heaps, toppled by earthquakes. We'll visit both the east and west sites and also stop to explore the nearby quarries where the stone was excavated in the fifth century BC. We then take the fast motorway route to Palermo and our hotel on its outskirts. **(B, D)**



Mosaic, Villa Casale



Market, Monreale

Day 11, Sunday 4th May **Overnight: Palermo**
 Morning sightseeing of Palermo with a local guide introduces this brash and energetic capital city. Visits include the exquisite Cappella Palatina with mosaics to rival those of Ravenna, the massive Norman Cattedrale, and the magnificent church of La Martorana, one of the finest medieval buildings in Palermo. After free time for lunch, we drive just outside Palermo the small hill-town of Monreale to enjoy the commanding views over the Conca d'Oro valley. But the real purpose of our visit is to see the Duomo. Its rather severe exterior gives no hint of the extraordinary medieval mosaic work that covers the central and side apses as well as the aisles. From Monreale we head for Mondello, a picturesque fishing village with an excellent selection of restaurants. Free time in Mondello to explore, admire the sweep of beach, before we enjoy a boisterous farewell dinner party. **(B, D)**

Day 12, Monday 5th May **Overnight: Home**
 Morning transfer to Palermo Airport for the internal flight to Rome to connect with our British Airways flights to Boston, via London. **(B)**



Mondello

Key to included meals: **B** = Breakfast, **L** = Lunch, **D** = Dinner