






COASTAL NATURE RESERVES, GREEK TEMPLES AND PICTURESQUE SEAFARER VILLAGES OF ARABIC ORIGINS

 self-guided tour

 Bike tour

 218-258 km

●●○ Medium

Duration: 8 days / 7 nights

DESCRIPTION

This cycling tour will skirt the fabulous Tyrrhenian coastline of western Sicily for the most part but it will also allow you to ride inland through a countryside boasting olive trees, vineyards and history in abundance. You will be cycling through Val di Mazara, one of the three administrative emirates into which the island was split during the Arab domination and its highlights are numerous: from trekking along the hilly footpaths of Riserva naturale dello Zingaro overlooking the sea to visiting the Greek roots of the island in the archaeological site of Segesta; from Trapani, the City of Salt to Marsala, the City of Wine, with its evocative landscape made of salt pans and old windmills; and finally from Mazara del Vallo, a renowned fishing port town with a strong Arabic influence to Selinunte with its beautiful beaches and spectacular Greek ruins. The route follows mainly less frequented secondary roads. Most of the parts are flat, some are light uphill sections, but still easy to manage. This tour is suitable for all healthy persons with a little bit of bike practice.

DETAILED ROUTES



Day 1: Castellammare del Golfo

Arrival in Castellammare del Golfo, a beautiful portal town whose history goes back to the Classic antique era when it was the harbour of the towns of Segesta and Erice. Handover of the bikes and the tour information.



Day 2: Scopello and Trekking excursion to the Nature Reserve "Zingaro" (approx. 28 km cycling - 14 km Hiking roundtrip 6h)

From Castellammare you start cycling to the wonderful Nature Reserve "Zingaro". You will have the chance to explore it on foot, trekking along its undulating footpath offers an enchanting view of the Tyrrhenian sea, with its coves and bays (calette) where you can swim and snorkel in the limpid water. On the way back you stop in the pretty village of Scopello, a lovely, old hamlet (locally known as baglio from the arab bahal: courtyard) dating back to the 17th century. Around its small square you will find most of the houses and shops of the entire village. Level of difficulty: short steep climb at the beginning of the stage, then easy.



Day 3: Castellammare - Segesta - Trapani (approx. 56 km)

The ride of this stage will allow you to explore the hinterland of the Sicilian countryside where olive trees and vineyards are in abundance. 25 kilometers into this landscape, alternating ascents to flat parts, you will reach the archeological site of Segesta, an ancient city founded by the Elymians more than 2500 years ago. From here, following secondary country roads, you will finally arrive in Trapani, known in Sicily as the city of Salt. Level of difficulty: medium.



Day 4: Erice or Favignana (approx. 37 or 25 km)

The options for today are very different one from another but both very attractive.

You may decide to visit Erice, an old medieval village perched onto its homonym hill rising 750 meters asl, which you can reach either by cable car or cycling. From Trapani 11 kilometers of hairpin bends separate you from its summit, where you can enjoy a stunning view stretching all the way to the Egadi islands.

Level of difficulty: easy by cable car; difficult by bike.

Or you may choose to spend a day relaxing in Favignana, the largest of the Egadi islands which you can reach by ferry or hydrofoil. It will certainly not disappoint you with its beautiful calette and its seafaring atmosphere. Favignana is best explored by bike!

Level of difficulty: easy.



Day 5: Trapani - Marsala along the salt way (approx. 44 km)

Today's itinerary is completely flat as you will skirt the beautiful coastline the whole time. Windmills, salt pans and mounds of freshly extracted salt will be the backdrop to an unmatched landscape. You will also have the chance to visit MOTHIA island, the ancient cradle of Phoenician- Punic civilization which can be reached by motorboat from the lagoon within few minutes. Today's stage ends in Marsala, a city famous for its homonym wine and for the landing of Garibaldi with his expedition of the Thousand.

Level of difficulty: easy.



Day 6: Marsala - Mazara del Vallo

SICILY'S WILD WEST

(approx. 30 - 50 km)

Today's stage continues along the enchanting Tyrrhenian coastline until it winds inland through the typical countryside of this parts of Sicily with its numerous vineyards and *bagli* (old centers of farming activities). It will end in Mazara del Vallo, seat of the most important Italian fishing fleet and located at the mouth of the river Mazaro which divides the town in two.

The Arab influence is so dominant as you stroll through the narrow alleyways of the Kasbah (Arabic quarter) with its bright colours and powerful scents, that you will be reminded of the African continent just across the sea.

Level of difficulty: easy.

Day 7: Mazara del Vallo - Selinunte

(approx. 35 - 41 km)

After leaving Mazara, you will continue along a road which runs only a kilometer in parallel to the coast and will take you to the Nature Reserve "Lago Preola e Gorgi tonidi". Immersed in a valley, a series of small lakes of karstic origins will appear without warning. Anyone passionate about watching fauna and flora typical of a swampy habitat, will find this rewarding.

Riding on a hilly road in direction of Campobello di Mazara, you pass by Cave di Cusa, famous because from here all the material necessary to the building of the temples of Selinunte, was extracted. Only 13 kilometers further down the road you will have the opportunity to visit the archeological site of Selinunte, the ancient Greek city which will take you back few thousand years. Relax and swim at Selinunte's beaches.

Level of difficulty: medium-easy

Day 8: Selinunte

After breakfast individual departure.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- **Classification:** self-guided tour
- **Duration:** 8 days / 7 nights
- **Distance:** ca. 218-258 km
- **Starting point:** Castellammare del Golfo
- **Arrival:**

By plane: airport Palermo or Trapani.

- **Accommodation:**

B&B of comparable level or 3***-4**** hotels

Attention: Tourist tax – if requested – has to be paid on the spot.

- **Rental bikes:**

Hybrid -bike

E-Bike

- **Transfer:**

Transfer airport Palermo – Castellammare del Golfo: €40.00 per person min. 2 persons

Transfer Selinunte – airport Palermo: €65.00 per person, min. 2 persons

For arrivals or transfers after 10pm a supplement of € 10.00 per person is applied.

The transfers would be paid on site, to reserve upon booking.

INCLUDED SERVICES

- 7 nights with breakfast in 3-4 star hotels or B&B of comparable level
- full breakfast or breakfast buffet
- luggage transfer from hotel to hotel
- detailed maps and road book (1 kit per room)
- telephone assistance

NON INCLUDED SERVICES

- bike and helmet rental
- transfer to/from airport
- lunch and dinner (if not booked)
- city tax
- anything not mentioned above under "Rate includes"

SICILY'S WILD WEST

own bike	0 €
fitnessbike (hybrid - sicily west)	120 €
electric bike (Sicily west)	190 €