

ART AND CULTURE

- Grotta Mangiapane (Custonaci)
- Grotta del Genovese (Levanzo)
- Archaeological Park (Segesta)
- Norman Castle (Erice)
- Archaeological Area of Mozia (Marsala)
- Archaeological Park (Selinunte)
- Museum of the Satyr, Ex Church of Sant'Egidio (Mazara del Vallo)
- Casbah (Mazara del Vallo)
- Arab-Norman Castle (Salemi)
- Pietro Consagra's Stella, Alberto Burri's Grande Cretto, M.A.C. (Gibellina)
- Regional Interdisciplinary Museum "Agostino Pepoli" (Trapani)
- Ex Stabilimento Florio (Favignana)

NATURE

- Lago Preola, Gorghi Tondi (Mazara del Vallo)
- Capo Feto (Mazara del Vallo)
- R.N.O. Isole dello Stagnone (Marsala)
- R.N.O. delle Saline di Trapani e Paceco (Trapani, Paceco)
- Marine Protected Area (Egadi)
- Monte Erice (Erice)
- Beaches, Monte Cofano, Baia di Cornino (Custonaci)
- Grotte di Scurati (Custonaci)
- Bosco di Scorce (Buseto Palizzolo)
- Beaches, caves and bays (San Vito Lo Capo)
- R.N.O. dello Zingaro (San Vito Lo Capo, Castellammare)
- Monte Bonifato Reserve (Alcamo)
- Montagna Grande (Salemi)

ENOGASTRONOMY

- The red garlic of Nubia
- Sea salt
- Pizzutello tomato, cartucciaro yellow melon
- P.D.O. Oils Valli Trapanesi, Val di Mazara and Valle del Belice
- Vastedda del Belice
- Capers
- Red tuna
- Red prawn
- Cous cous
- Busiate
- Pane cunzato
- Marsala
- Passito di Pantelleria
- Cannoli
- Cassatelle
- Genovesi
- Muccunetti
- Bianco d'Alcamo

SPORTS AND EVENTS

- Snorkeling
- Kitesurf, windsurf
- Canoe, kayak
- Mini-cruises
- Horse riding
- Cycling
- Trekking
- Climbing
- Religious celebrations
- Cultural events



Tourist map of Western Sicily





Tourist map of Western Sicily

ENGLISH

Welcome to Western Sicily, here any experience is possible.

Western Sicily is sea, hills, calm, fun, history, art, tradition, great gastronomy and innovation.

Western Sicily is an extraordinary land: a millenary culture nestled in the beauty of its nature together with surprising culinary and craft traditions. An incredible stratification of history and cultures characterises this territory, a multi-cultural place since ancient times, perfectly expressed through cultural and artistic events.

These lands, once belonging to the Elymians, have been inhabited by people and civilisations as diverse as the Phoenicians, Greeks, Arabs, Normans and Spanish. For this reason, an exceptional historical and archaeological heritage is embedded in its unique landscape, but that's not all!

The incredible stratification of cultures that characterises this area finds perfect expression in the cultural and artistic events, which see inclusiveness as their ancient and modern essence.

The landscape is marked by a wealth of natural settings where it is possible to enjoy many outdoor activities: not only wonderful coastlines, with a multitude of wide beaches, small coves and nature reserves, but also mountainous and hilly areas, behind the sea, gentle slopes covered with vineyards, olive groves and wheat fields, as well as forested areas.

Western Sicily is home to ancient food and wine traditions that are waiting to be discovered: from wine and cheese production to typical products and dishes with sublime pastries. In this part of the three-pronged island, where distances are easy to cross, you can enjoy intense and exciting experiences.



ART AND CULTURE - A Journey through history

Multicultural origins characterise this corner of Sicily, whose territory is shaped by myths and legends: the ancient land of the Elymians has been inhabited by Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Arabs, Normans and Spanish. A journey through history that starts with the ancient evidence found in the numerous natural cavities of this area which, in some cases, were occupied until the 1950s, such as the Grotta Mangiapane 1 which hosts a small village of houses that are currently part of an evocative itinerary to discover trades and traditions in the Living Museum (Custonaci). Exceptional examples of rupestrian art can be found both along the coast of San Vito Lo Capo and in Levanzo, in the Grotta del Genovese 2, one of the most important prehistoric sites in the Mediterranean. The journey through history proceeds through two very important centres: Segesta and Erice. The Archaeological Park of Segesta 3 reveals, through its monuments, the major role that the city must have played in Sicily during the centuries of Greek and Punic occupation. From here you ascend to Monte Erice, where the Norman Castle 4 is now located, which was an ancient pagan temple dedicated to the Erisace Venus. From here you can enjoy a 360° panorama, as far as the Stagnone of Marsala, a lagoon archipelago through which you will reach the Archaeological Area of Mozia 5, which tells us a story of Mediterranean connections. Continuing southwards, the visitor is immersed in the waters of the sea that made the site of Selinunte great and flourishing, and which is now one of the largest archaeological parks in Italy 6, nestled in a beautiful landscape where the blue of the sky blends with the green of the Mediterranean scrub, plunging into the turquoise sea. Continuing along the coast, heading north-west, it is possible to take another trip through the Mediterranean mosaic of cultures: in Mazara del Vallo, at the Museum of the Satyr (ex Church of Sant'Egidio) 7. Here, the exceptional work that gives the museum its name is the bronze and lead statue that immortalises a Satyr in the act of performing a perpetual turn in a vertiginous dance. Moreover, in the heart of this city, near the fishing port, is a Medina also known as Casbah 8, the Saracen settlement built in the 9th century. From the coast you can proceed inland to Salemi, in the Belice Valley. This ancient centre was also home to historic Jewish and Muslim districts, overlooked by the Arab-Norman Castle 9. The Belice Valley, whose gateway is represented by Pietro Consagra's monumental sculpture "Stella", holds numerous fragments of the memory of the seism reworked through art, of which Grande Cretto di Gibellina di Alberto Burri is a paradigmatic element, to be visited together with the Museum of Contemporary Art - M.A.C. 10. Continuing towards the coast, heading north-west, you reach Trapani, with its suggestive old town centre, rich in Baroque palaces, fragments of the ancient walls and the many remains preserved at the Regional Interdisciplinary Museum "Agostino Pepoli" 11 which, with its heterogeneous collections, relates how the city distinguished itself in the tradition of the great masters of the art of its red gold, coral. From Trapani, gazing out to sea, lies the archipelago of the Egadi Islands. There in Favignana, near its colourful harbour, is the Ex Stabilimento Florio 12 centre for the production of canned tuna in the early 20th century and today a multi-purpose museum.

ENOGASTRONOMY - The ancient tradition of taste

The excellence of the local raw materials has made the gastronomic culture of Western Sicily appreciated all over the world not only for its richness and uniqueness but also for the certification of the wholesomeness and origin of its products, which boast a large number of Slow Food Presidia. One example is the red garlic of Nubia 26, the main ingredient in recipes with a distinctive flavour, the result of a rotational cultivation of the unique soil of the area between Trapani and Paceco, which also includes the Saline (saltworks), from which sea salt 27 is still extracted using ancient artisanal techniques. Paceco is also the source of the pizzutello tomato and the cartucciaro yellow melon 28, both of which have been revived from local agricultural traditions. The generous soils of Western Sicily, whose slopes and valleys are dotted with olive groves, also produce three P.D.O. oils: Valli Trapanesi, Val di Mazara and Valle del Belice 29. The milk of the Belice sheep, on the other hand, is used to make the only Italian P.D.O. spun paste cheese of ovine origin, Vastedda del Belice 30, a Slow Food presidium. Moving towards the coasts of Pantelleria, the volcanic soils and climatic conditions give the capers 31 their unique flavour. From this sea come two excellent red species that have made the fishing tradition great: the red tuna 32 and the red prawn of Mazara del Vallo 33. Western Sicily offers a true voyage of taste: among the typical dishes, the Cous cous or cùscusu alla Trapanese 34 is worth mentioning, especially with fish, a dish linked to various Mediterranean cultures, typical of San Vito Lo Capo, Trapani and Mazara del Vallo, but common with variations throughout the area. Busiate 35, Trapani-style pesto or pane cunzato 36 all smell of excellent local products. Western Sicily is also a paradise for the sweet tooth, who can accompany the tasting of pastries with famous D.O.C. liqueur wines such as Marsala 37 or Passito di Pantelleria 38. Even the desserts are made using excellent local ingredients: from the sheep's ricotta cheese that fills the cannoli 39 and cassatelle 40, to the almonds and citron for the desserts of Badia, to whose tradition belong the mustazzoli and the queen of Erice pastries, the genovese, 41 a sweet filled with delicious cream. The traditional convent pastry recalls the ancient mucconetti 42 of Mazara del Vallo, prepared in the convent of San Michele. The sfincia, on the other hand, is the soft cake always present on feast days. Black and white grape varieties are used to produce a wide range of white wines (Catarratto, Grillo, Grecanico, Zibibbo and Damaschino) and red wines (Nerello Mascalese, Frappato and Calabrese). The variety of the land and the biodiversity of the vines have brought about famous wines such as Marsala and other excellent D.O.C. wines, such as Bianco d'Alcamo 43, Erice and Passito of Pantelleria.

NATURE - A dive into biodiversity

The biodiversity of Western Sicily is truly amazing. From one end of the area to the other, there are countless natural experiences to enjoy. The nature reserves are a valuable resource for the region: starting from the southern area, near Mazara del Vallo, you can find the reserves of Lago Preola and Gorgi Tondi 13 with their fresh and salt water lakes in a karst landscape, together with the area around Capo Feto 14 with its long unspoilt beach. Proceeding along the coast, you can see the blades of the windmills and the orange colour of their roofs, announcing the approach to the land of the saltworks, whose precious ecosystem is protected and safeguarded by the R.N.O. Isole dello Stagnone 15. This evocative landscape continues along the coast to the R.N.O. Saline di Trapani e Paceco 16, where you may be lucky enough to come across pink flamingoes. Here you can admire almost 300 species of birds on their migration route to Africa, including the avocet. From Trapani on the horizon, you can see the archipelago of the Egadi Islands, Europe's largest Marine Protected Area 17, whose islands are a paradise of biodiversity. Levanzo has plenty of trekking routes and Marettimo is home to wild, unspoilt nature. Returning to the Sicilian coast heading south-west, it is worth stopping at the heights Monte Erice 18, which is full of paths, marked and traced out by the C.A.I. - Club Alpino Italiano (Erice has its own reception point for hikers), such as the Sant'Anna path, which climbs up the western slope of the mountain and offers an exceptional panorama. Beautiful natural landscapes can also be found in Custonaci, which includes the Monte Cofano nature reserve, the Baia di Cornino 19 and the Grotte di Scurati complex 20, elements that make it an essential destination for nature, trekking and seabed enthusiasts. Heading inland, you reach the Bosco di Scorce 21, just a few minutes from the centre of Buseto Palizzolo, a wooded area consisting mainly of cork oaks. Continuing northwards, you will reach San Vito Lo Capo, whose coastline is framed by crags that characterise its appearance. Here the maritime landscape is marked by a constant alternation of beaches, sheer cliffs and rocks, as well as caves and bays 22. The seaside village is also located between two important nature reserves, Zingaro 23 and Monte Cofano. The Riserva dello Zingaro is a must-see: it consists of a coastal zone, a hilly zone and a mountainous zone. From these heights, the landscape should be savoured first-hand, walking along the red earth paths, bordered by specimens of dwarf palm trees, and then reaching the deep blue sea, whose underwater landscape is a riot of colour and where red coral (corallium rubrum) is repopulating it. Another stop that should not be missed is the Monte Bonifato Reserve 24 in Alcamo with its woods, from which you can enjoy a wonderful view of the Gulf of Castellammare. Finally, heading back towards the Belice Valley, there are two important naturalistic areas: the Montagna Grande area 25 in Salemi, which is home to a number of protected species, and the nearby Grotta di Santa Ninfa, where you can admire amazing valleys and landscapes.

SPORTS AND EVENTS - Living Western Sicily

Long beaches of golden sand, pebbly bays or rocks plunging into the iridescent blue sea. Here, the sea is for everybody and there are plenty of ways to experience it, in a simultaneous combination of peace and wonder. Its depths and seabeds are extraordinary, with countless places to snorkel 44. Each of them with different characteristics, depths and degrees of difficulty, can be enjoyed with the aid of local diving centres. Among the Underwater Archaeological Trails, there are some that even allow you to admire wrecks and finds, such as Cala Minnola in Levanzo, Cala Gadir in Pantelleria, the submerged port of Capo Boeo in Marsala, the Kent Wreck and the Macine Wreck in San Vito Lo Capo and many others. You can also enjoy moments of relaxation and fun on the beaches and in the unspoilt coves at the Zingaro Nature Reserve, the Monte Cofano Reserve or the Egadi Islands, snorkelling to enjoy the colours of the seabed. You can also opt for kitesurfing or windsurfing 45 on the Stagnone lagoon in Marsala, or on the beaches of San Vito Lo Capo and Pozzello (Mazara del Vallo). For those who want to experience the sea in silence and far from the shore, canoeing or kayaking 46 are ideal in places such as the Zingaro National Nature Reserve, the Monte Cofano and Macari reserves or the Stagnone of Marsala. Boat lovers can visit caves, coastlines and islands, taking advantage of the numerous marinas and their daily services of excursions (with mini-cruises to the Egadi Islands 47) or boat hire to discover caves and coves inaccessible from land. Some beaches are also equipped to accommodate yoga and free-body disciplines enthusiasts: from the beach of San Vito Lo Capo to Pozzello (Mazara del Vallo) to Cala Bukutu (Custonaci), just to name a few. To regenerate body and soul, it is possible to stop at the thermal baths. In fact, the thermal waters of Segesta are ideal for enjoying the health benefits of wellness treatments, as is the Specchio di Venere (Mirror of Venus) in Pantelleria: a true open-air spa. Peaceful paths, such as those in the mountains and woods of the Bosco di Scorce or those along the coast between the dunes of the wild Pozzello beach (Mazara del Vallo) are perfect for wonderful excursions on horseback 48 or relaxing bicycle rides 49. Trekking 50 and rock climbing 51 can be practised in the areas of Trapani, Erice (through which the S.I.C.A.I. trail - Sentiero Italia - passes) and San Vito Lo Capo or in the surroundings of Buseto Palizzolo. Experiencing Western Sicily also means enjoying ancient traditions that are now combined with many events throughout the year. From religious celebrations 52 connected with the devotion to St. Joseph and linked to the culture of bread (in Salemi, Custonaci, Paceco, the Egadi Islands - especially Marettimo), to the solemn rituals of Holy Week, in Salemi, Buseto Palizzolo, Erice and Trapani. Noteworthy are the food and wine events, such as the Food Fest in Mazara del Vallo, Stragusto, the festival of street food and markets, in Trapani or the Cous Cous Fest in San Vito Lo Capo, which has revived the international roots of this dish. The seaside village hosts many events, including the International Kite Festival. Lastly, there is no shortage of cultural events 53 linked to theatre and music, such as the Dionisiache of Segesta, which provides an opportunity to enjoy exciting plays and enchanting sunrises, the Orestyadi of Gibellina, in the splendid setting of Baglio Di Stefano, home of the Foundation from which the event takes its name and the location of Mimmo Paladino's "La Montagna di Sale" (Salt Mountain), the prestigious Luglio Musicale Trapanese and, finally, the numerous literary fairs.



How to get there:

By air The nearest airports are: 'Vincenzo Florio' in Trapani - Birgi and 'Falcone e Borsellino' in Palermo - Punta Raisi.

By sea The port of Palermo is connected to the most important Italian and international ports.

Getting around:

Car/motorbike/bicycle You can either bring your own favourite vehicle, or you can hire one at the airports and numerous rental services available.

Boat The marinas of the coastal towns are safe and equipped for every need, including the rental of sailing and motor boats, catamarans and dinghies.

Bus Timetable info and tickets: www.autoservizi.salemi.it www.segesta.it www.aziendasicilianatrasporti.it www.autolineelumia.com

Cable railway Trapani-Erice Timetable info and tickets: www.funiviaerice.it

Hydrofoils and ferries to the islands Timetable info and tickets: www.carontetourist.it www.libertylines.it www.traghettdelleisole.it

Train Timetable info and tickets: www.trenitalia.com

