

Sicily & Volcanic Walks of the Aeolian Isles

Tour Style: Guided walking

Destination: Italy

Trip code: SBLCL

3 & 4



HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Explore Sicily's green and rolling countryside on foot where the imposing Mount Etna - Europe's highest and most active volcano - is visible from almost all directions. Stay in no less than five stunning locations across the mainland and UNESCO-listed Aeolian Islands on one unforgettable tour. Sail across the Tyrrhenian Sea to trek between the smoking fumaroles of the isle of Vulcano, discover Lipari's pastel-coloured waterfront, and scale the heights of Stromboli. Back on Sicily, you'll walk the lava-strewn trails that typify the landscape leading to the top of Mount Etna and spend your final evening in Sicily's Black City - the ancient port of Catania which is built from dark volcanic rock.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Return flights from London Gatwick, including baggage and transfers
- Guided walks with local leaders
- HF Holidays Tour Manager
- 7 nights' comfortable accommodation

- 7 breakfasts, 2 packed lunches, 6 dinners & 1 packed dinner
- All in-destination transport

HOLIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Staying in Milazzo, one of Italy's most beautiful villages
- Discovering the striking red rocks of the Fossa Crater on the isle of Vulcano
- Watching as Stromboli's summit bubbles and glows against the night sky
- Walking through the lava tunnels of Mount Etna
- Admiring the Baroque-style architecture of historic Catania
- Visiting Lipari, the largest of the Aeolian Islands

ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrival Day

Arrive in Catania and transfer to your hotel in coastal Milazzo, where we stay tonight.

Day 2: Island Of Lipari

Hydrofoil to Lipari

Lipari, the capital of the Aeolian Islands showcases complex geology and colours of pumice, obsidian and kaolin. We'll stay in charming Lipari for two nights.

Option 1 - Punta Crapazza

Distance: 5 miles (8km)

Total Ascent: 338 feet (103m)

Total Descent: 338 feet (103m)

Free time in the morning where you may decide to do one of the following: visit the castle; explore the museum with its archaeological and vulcanological section; swim in the sea; or enjoy some "dolce far niente" (the sweetness of doing nothing) in the charming little square of Marina Corta.

In the afternoon, we'll set off on a beautiful hike to Punta Crapazza for magnificent views of the island of Vulcano from the Lipari Observatory. We'll return to the town centre along an ancient path across the remote countryside of the island.

Option 2 - Cave Di Caolino

Distance: 7 miles (11km)

Total Ascent: 656 feet (200m)

Total Descent: 984 feet (300m)

Starting at Quattropani, our path takes us from the kaolin cellars to reach the thermal baths of San Calogero, the favourite place of the Romans for the hot water that still flows today. This area features beautifully coloured rock formations and stunning panoramic views.

Day 3: Island Of Vulcano

The UNESCO World Heritage Site of Vulcano lies closest to the coast of the seven islands of the Aeolian Archipelago.

Distance: 4.5 miles (7km)

Total Ascent: 1,279 feet (390m)

Total Descent: 1,279 feet (390m)

Boat to Vulcano. Our whole group will ascend the Fossa Crater with stunning views of the whole of the Aeolian Archipelago from the top.

Our walk begins with easy paths, ascending more steeply along twisting paths – being on the Fossa Crater is a very unusual experience because of the continuous smoke and vapour emissions, and the hissing sounds and heat of the volcano itself. We'll take the hydrofoil to Lipari after our walk.

Please note: Itineraries are subject to change according to volcanic activity and possible issues with access to the crater. In this case, an alternative route will be offered.

Day 4: Island Of Stromboli

Another UNESCO World Heritage Site, the island of Stromboli is our most northerly destination in the Aeolian archipelago, and we will stay here overnight. It's impossible to miss the imposing volcano Mount Stromboli. The whole group will take an afternoon walk up the volcano.

Distance: 4.5 miles (7km)

Total Ascent: 952 feet (290m)

Total Descent: 952 feet (290m)

We'll take the hydrofoil to Stromboli and enjoy some free time to explore. Stromboli always provides a unique experience thanks to its constant eruptions – our viewpoint will be on the border of the Sciara del Fuoco. We'll climb to the authorised limit of 290m.

Please note: Itineraries are subject to change according to volcanic activity and possible issues with access to the walking paths. Visitors will be accompanied by authorised guides for access to the higher levels of the volcano.

Day 5: Etna - Day 1

Back on the mainland, we'll explore Etna, a stratovolcano known as one of the wildest of all. We'll board the hydrofoil to Milazzo, and then transfer to the northern side of Etna for a little relaxation time, staying here for two nights.

Day 6: Etna - Day 2

Option 1 - Monte Crisimo

Distance: 6.5 miles (10km)

Total Ascent: 656 feet (200m)

Total Descent: 656 feet (200m)

After breakfast, we start our excursion to discover this incredible mountain. We'll walk through pine woods and

ferns to observe the lava stream of the last destructive eruption of Etna – the “perfect eruption” of 2002. It is a unique experience to observe and learn about the morphology, geology, and history of volcanoes, and to get to know Etna from within. During our walk we will also visit a lava tunnel – a cave created by the lava flow. We'll enjoy a packed lunch during the excursion before returning to the hotel.

Option 2 - Trekking Grotta Dei Lamponi (Raspberry Cave)

Distance: 9.5 miles (15km)

Total Ascent: 1,968 feet (600m)

Total Descent: 1,968 feet (600m)

We'll transfer to Piano Provenzana to view the lava craters and formations from the most recent spectacular eruption of 2002."From here we start trekking to the Grotta dei Lamponi (1,700m), a very interesting lava tunnel, surprisingly deep and fascinating.

After enjoying a packed lunch at the Rifugio Timparossa, we'll continue our path walking through lava rocks and beechwoods before returning to Piano Provenzana. This circular trek is one of the most beautiful on Etna thanks to the variety of its landscapes.

Day 7: Etna And Catania

Option 1 - Etna Trekking And Monti Sartorius

Distance: 4.5 miles (7km)

Total Ascent: 328 feet (100m)

Total Descent: 328 feet (100m)

We transfer from the hotel and reach the Monti Sartorius ancient craters – a series of small craters created by the eruption of 1865. A walk along its edge is accessible and we will continue with a stop to see the lava streams from 1928.

Option 2 - Serracozzo

Distance: 4 miles (6km)

Total Ascent: 1,640 feet (500m)

Total Descent: 1,411 feet (430m)

After a short transfer from our hotel, we'll reach Rifugio Citelli. From here, we'll start our climb to the Cave of Serracozzo, passing through a beautiful forest of white birch. The cave itself is an incredible lava tunnel created by an eruption in 1971. We'll see streams of lava rock as we then make our way to Belvedere Serracozzo at the top craters, to admire breathtaking views of the Valle del Bove

There is also an optional trek to the top of the main crater at a height of 3340m accompanied by an authorised vulcanological guide. This is not included in the cost of the holiday.

Our whole group will transfer to Catania for our last evening. After some free time to explore, we'll enjoy a farewell group dinner together at a local restaurant.

Day 8: Departure Day

We hope to see you again soon.

ACCOMMODATION

Hotel Cassisi, Milazzo

Hotel Cassisi blends modern comfort with historical charm, just steps from Milazzo's marina. Unwind in stylish rooms, enjoy a drink in the welcoming lounge bar, or hit the rooftop terrace for outstanding views. Ideally located for the port and hydrofoil to the Aeolian Islands, this elegant boutique hotel promises a delightful stay.

Hotel Borgo Eolie, Lipari

For a serene retreat on the island of Lipari, the Hotel Borgo Eolie ticks all the boxes. Combining traditional Aeolian architecture with modern, spacious rooms, and an outdoor pool, it's the perfect base for exploring the island's rich history and natural beauty.

Hotel Filadelfia, Lipari

In the heart of Lipari, Hotel Filadelfia offers comfortable rooms with a warm, friendly atmosphere. Relax by the pool or stroll to the nearby shops, cafés, and beaches. (September 2025 departures only)

Hotel Villaggio, Stromboli

Set against the dramatic backdrop of Stromboli's volcano, Hotel Villaggio offers charming rooms in a lush garden setting. Enjoy a peaceful retreat with direct beach access, a cosy restaurant, and stunning sea views. (May & October 2025 departures only)

Hotel Sirenetta, Stromboli

A seafront gem on Stromboli, the Sirenetta boasts panoramic views and direct access to the black sand beach. Featuring a sea-view terrace and a delightful restaurant, it's the ideal spot for admiring the island's famous volcano. (June & September 2025 departures only)

Il Picciolo Resort

Set between the stunning landscapes of Etna Park, Nebrodi Park, and Alcantara River Park, Il Picciolo Etna Resort & SPA offers a perfect blend of natural beauty and refined elegance. Enjoy a rejuvenating retreat with modern comforts including stylish guest rooms, a luxurious spa area, an outdoor swimming pool, and contemporary restaurant. (May 2025 departures only)

Hotel Mareneve Resort, Etna

Sitting at the foot of Mount Etna, Hotel Mareneve Resort offers luxurious rooms with impressive volcano views. When you're not busy exploring Mount Etna's UNESCO-listed landscape, indulge in a spa treatment at the wellness centre, dine on traditional dishes in the Sala Etna restaurant, or relax with a drink at the 24-hour bar.

Hotel Umberto House, Catania

A stylish boutique hotel in Catania's historic centre, Hotel Umberto House offers contemporary rooms and a cosy lounge. Just a short walk from Piazza del Duomo and other attractions, it's perfect for exploring the city.

USEFUL HOLIDAY INFORMATION

Joining Instructions (With Flights)

Book your holiday 'with flights' and you can choose to depart from a range of UK airports* to your destination. For latest flight times and prices please call us on 0203-974-8865 or email reservations@hfholidays.co.uk

If you choose to book your flights with us, we automatically include return transfers between the destination airport and hotel.

Joining Instructions (Without Flights)

Alternatively, tailor your journey to suit you by booking your holiday 'without flights' and you'll have the freedom to book your own flights from your local airport.

If you choose this option, transfers are not included in the price. However, below are some suggestions to help you reach your destination:

Shared group transfer

You can still purchase a seat on our group airport transfer, but you must arrive in destination prior to the main group. It is your responsibility to book flights which allow enough time to meet our shared transfer.

Please note, all flight times are subject to change. If your arrival and/or departure time changes and no longer fits our group transfer, we will be unable to delay departure for you. Should this occur, we will refund you the cost of the transfer and you can either make your own way to the accommodation or we can book a private taxi transfer (at your expense). HF Holidays cannot be held responsible for your onward travel if you are unable to meet the transfer coach.

Private taxi transfer

Depending on your destination, we may be able to arrange a private taxi transfer for you. Please call us up to 5 weeks in advance to enquire about availability and costs for this option on 0203-974-8865.

*Subject to availability

Essential Information

It's best to be prepared for all weather conditions. To make it easier, here is a list of items you should consider packing.

Essentials

- Walking boots
- Waterproof jacket
- Waterproof trousers
- Insulated jacket/top
- Walking clothing
- Walking socks (plus spares)
- Sunhat
- Gloves/mitts and warm hat
- Water bottle (minimum 2 litre capacity)
- Headtorch
- High-factor sunscreen (minimum SPF 30)
- Sunglasses with a dark lens
- Rucksack (15-30 litres)
- Mobile phone

- Personal first aid kit (containing your medication, blister plasters, etc.)
- Passport
- Visa (if applicable)
- Copy of your travel insurance policy
- UK Global Health Insurance Card (**formerly known as EHIC**)

Recommended

- Collapsible walking poles
- Swimwear and travel towel
- Snacks
- Dry bags
- Rubbish bags
- Insect repellent

Optional extras

- Camera
- Sit mat
- Flask for hot drinks
- Durable lunch box
- Gaiters
- GPS device

Useful Information

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is a condition of booking. Therefore, if you have not already arranged insurance, it is imperative that you do so, and advise us of the insurance company and policy number.

We work with Campbell Irvine to provide you with competitive single and annual multi-trip insurance. Please see our website for more information and details of how to contact them for a quote:

<https://www.hfholidays.co.uk/about-us/booking-information/insurance>.

For more information about healthcare abroad and its costs, please visit: <https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/>.

Local Currency

The local currency is the Euro (€)

TRIP NOTE VALIDITY

These Trip Notes are valid based on the date printed at the bottom of the page. They will occasionally be updated post booking and pre-departure. We will send you the latest trip notes prior to departure through a link in your pre departure documents or we can send you a copy in the post if preferred.

In booking this trip you should be confident in your ability to participate in all activities described in these Trip Notes. If you have any doubt about your suitability you should call HF Holidays and ask to speak to one of the team about this itinerary.

The information in these Trip Notes is given in good faith. Where differences exist between the Trip Notes and our current brochure, the Trip Notes supersede the brochure. All holidays can be subject to unexpected changes; so please be prepared to be flexible where necessary. At times, it may not be possible to follow the itinerary as planned due to weather conditions, political, physical or other factors. In these circumstances we will make the best possible alternative arrangements to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary.

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