

Cycle Tourism in Sicily

One can't really talk about cycle-tourism in Sicily, because there isn't an actual established network of cycle tracks, such as the one in the Netherlands, where one can go anywhere on one's bike.

In Sicily there is a good road network, and very often new roads, more suitable for cars, have replaced old ones, which are consequently more suitable for bikes.

If you decide to travel by bike it is because you probably enjoy outdoor exercise and it's likely that you are fit enough to tackle the gentle ups and downs of our country roads.

The scenery is magnificent, the seasonal changing of colours and an underlying sense of history represent the very soul of Sicily.

You can cycle along quiet minor roads without encountering towns or villages; you might come across a Greek temple or a Baroque town, or an archaeological site or the remains of an ancient city whose origins are lost in the mists of time.

The favourable climate enables you to cycle all over the Island throughout the year apart from July and August, which are too hot, and from January to March, which are rather rainy.

We have all encountered, at one time or another, those forlorn and unsteady figures, very often foreigners, on their bikes, laden with baggage, pedalling boldly along highly-trafficked roads. Who are these enthusiasts and why are they here?

Cycling, as a hobby, goes back a long way, to the end of the nineteenth century, in the persons of Alfredo Oriani, a writer, and Luigi Vittorio Bertarelli, a keen cyclist and founder



of the Touring Club Ciclistico Italiano in 1894 (now the Touring Club Italiano).

The appearance of the "velocipede" (it wasn't yet called bicycle) gave one the opportunity to see the world with fresh eyes; in those days the world went round more slowly; cycling opened up new horizons and soothed the spirit.

At the beginning of the 1900s the bicycle was viewed with suspicion - too expensive and "revolutionary" for the poor, for whom the price of a bicycle could amount to a year's salary; at that time the horse was the only means of transport.

In 1894 the Mayor of Faenza had decided that the bicycle should be called an "iron-horse" and, in order not to constitute a public peril, it had to be pushed by hand through the city.

It is only 10 years since the bicycle has become an actual means of transport representing a new approach to holidaying. There has always been a strong tradition of racing bikes, but not as a means of transport or a way of travelling.

This guide, with its nine itineraries, one for each province of Sicily, aims to encourage cycle tourism in Sicily and offer a leisurely rediscovery of our island, in close contact with

the land and the Sicilians themselves, along roads with little traffic, not official cycle tracks, but certainly not the busy roads often tackled by the cyclist who has no suitable guidebook.

While we have been producing this handbook a Regional law is being passed to permit the setting up of a network of integrated cycle touring routes.

Which bike, depends where you are going...

A **roadster** or **racing bike** for asphalt roads.

A **hybrid bike** is halfway between a racing bike and a mountain bike and is suitable for steep or gentle ascents.

The **mountain bike** is suitable for the roughest terrain and the steepest of gradients.



“

The appearance of the "velocipede" (it wasn't yet called bicycle) gave one the opportunity to see the world with fresh eyes

”

Travel tips

The routes listed in alphabetical order in this guide are the result of a careful analysis of the nine provinces of Sicily, taking into consideration scenery, history and art.

None of the routes are over completely flat terrain and you need to be quite fit.

There are brief notes about tourist attractions and information about how to reach the departure points. There are also details about the degree of difficulty and the gradients.

There is little traffic on the roads, but sometimes you will have to cross a major road and cycle along it for a short stretch.

The routes around Caltanissetta and Enna require the use of mountain bikes; for all others roadsters or hybrid bikes are sufficient.

We remind British users of this guide that in Italy (and Sicily) you drive and ride on the right.

Travel tips

1 - Carry out a general check of the bike before departing: tyres, wheels and brakes. Take with you a basic kit for ordinary repairs (pump, inner tube, tyre -lever), a bicycle multi-spanner.

In order to avoid de-hydration you should drink lots of water rich in mineral salt, at regular intervals; whilst cycling along you aren't usually aware how profusely you are sweating.

Take with you light and energy-providing foods such as bananas, or bread and marmalade. You should always eat and drink enough to avoid the slightest hint of fatigue.

2 - Always wear a helmet. Always wear cycling shorts and suitable clothing in accordance with the season. It is also useful to bring a waterproof cap in case of sudden showers and for long downhill stretches. In summer remember to use sun cream.

3 - Always carry some money with you and

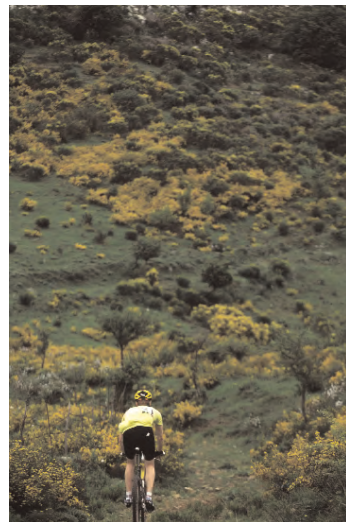
some identification;

4 - Study the itineraries before leaving, paying attention to the distances and gradients, bearing in mind your ability and level of fitness; keep a map to hand as well as the itinerary notes.

5 - Keep to the right along the route and adapt your pace to the surface and your level of experience.

6 - Show respect for all the places you go through; they are part of our common heritage; and take care not to disturb anybody while passing through.

7 - Don't be afraid of barking dogs: they are merely defending their territory and will generally just move away. If necessary get off you bike and walk with the bike between you



and the dogs; keep calm.

8 - Do not throw away rubbish along the route, and be attentive to gates, and private and public property; heed road signs. If you have to go along a road marked "private property", ask the owner's permission; be polite and respectful.

9 - If possible it is better to travel in a group, and notify us of your travel plans beforehand.

10 - Cycling requires awareness of one's limitations, so we advise you to choose routes in accordance with your physical ability and knowledge.

We have published this guide with the greatest care, especially the description of the itineraries, pointing out potentially difficult stretches.

However, we can't be held responsible for any changes to roads or inaccessibility of the places described in the guide, nor for possible damage and/or problems incurred as a result of information included in this booklet.

Key to levels of difficulty of the routes

*easy
**average difficulty
***demanding
****very hard



“

Cycling, as a hobby, goes back a long way, to the end of the nineteenth century, in the persons of Alfredo Oriani, a writer, and Luigi Vittorio Bertarelli, a keen cyclist and founder of the Touring Club Ciclistico Italiano in 1894 (now the Touring Club Italiano).

”

The Province of Agrigento

The province of Agrigento, probably best known for the "Valley of the Temples", is one of the most varied areas in Sicily, rich in archaeology.

It extends from the sea in the south to the mountains in the north. The upland sulphur mines are of great historical interest, along with their interplay of colours and shapes.

The present landscape owes a lot to the setting up of agriculture communities between the XV and XVIII centuries.

In these small towns there is usually the "mother church" and some aristocratic building, whilst the countryside is full of watch-towers, castles, and fortified palaces from the Norman Age.

“

In these small towns there is usually the "mother church" and some aristocratic building, whilst the countryside is full of watch-towers, castles, and fortified palaces from the Norman Age.

”



Route 1 - From Sant'Angelo Muxaro to Eraclea Minoa

In the south among dunes and mythological stones



The province of Agrigento has always been inhabited since ancient times.

Your cycling route covers seven centuries. Departing from Sant'Angelo Muxaro, a town of Sican origins, it takes you to Eraclea Minoa, a Greek city founded by the inhabitants of the neighbouring Selinunte.

It isn't a round trip and so it doesn't bring

you back to the same point of departure. It isn't particularly demanding, but there are several ups and downs that take you to a maximum height of 620 metres a.s.l., and then downhill as far as Eraclea Minoa.

Description of the route

Departing from the main square of Sant'Angelo Muxaro via Libertà will take you out of the town; proceed downhill as far as a "T" junction where you turn left towards "San Biagio Platani" along the S.P. 19.

The initial stretch goes downhill as far as the bridge across the River Platani. From there and for a little less than 5 Km proceed uphill as far as the town of San Biagio Platani.

After cycling through the town (about 2 Km) you arrive at a STOP sign where you turn left (road sign on your left) towards Alessandria della Rocca. This first out-of-town stretch is downhill until you cross the river Turvoli.

A little less than 10 km beyond San Biagio Platani ignore the turnoff and bear right towards Alessandria della Rocca.

You'll be cycling among almonds and olive trees, citrus groves vineyards and cornfields.

At the turn-off, 3.5 km after the previous turn-off, turn left downhill and follow signs to Alessandria della Rocca. Along this downhill stretch you'll come across a further turning where you turn left towards Cianciana.

You won't be entering the town of Alessandria della Rocca.

Now you are cycling along the S.S.118, a road with little traffic. Be careful when going through the two tunnels 3 Km beyond the last turning.

Follow the S.S.118 for a little under 10 km. Pass through Cianciana along the main road; follow signs out of the town and back to the S.S. 118.

On the S.S.118 follow signs to Cattolica Eraclea. After about 3 km exit the S.S. 118 and head for Cattolica Eraclea along the country road S.P.31.

This road is downhill for about 2 km, as far as the bridge over a tributary of the River Platani; beyond



To the Nature Oriented Reserve of the River Platani

At the crossroads with a STOP2 sign, take great care when turning right on to S.P. 61. After about 4 km go past the "car cemetery" and after a further 1.4 km there is a "T" junction with a STOP sign; turn left towards Borgo Bonsignore along the S.P. 57.

For about 4 km the road to the Reserve is lined by warehouses. Be careful because the traffic is heavy on this road.

After this short stretch a further 2.9 km will take you to the entrance to the Reserve.



Among the dunes on these beaches in summer, it is possible to come across turtles laying eggs.



the bridge the road starts to climb again for about 4.5 km and then it descends again as far as the sea across a broad and beautiful plain.

Another short stretch takes you to Cattolica Eraclea.

Exit the town in the direction of Eraclea Minoa, initially following the S.P.29 and then the S.P.30. Go through olive and citrus groves as far as a STOP sign at a crossroads. Be careful at this point.

About 1 km further on, there are the ruins of a farm on your left.

After 2.6 km pass under the S.S. 115 (N.B.: some road maps wrongly indicate the passage over the S.S.115). There is a short uphill stretch taking you to a belvedere with a view over the mouth of the River Platani and the shore bordered by pinewoods.

You'll soon be in Eraclea Minoa. At the crossroads, turn right; it is about 1 km to the archaeological site. Go straight on and downhill and you'll reach your accommodation facilities.



The Nature Oriented Reserve of the River Platani

Strong contrasts welcome the visitor to the Reserve: the blinding calcareous cliff of Capo Bianco stands out against the vegetation of Borgo Bonsignore and the changing colours of the sea. The Reserve is the first landing place for many migratory birds coming from Africa.

Among the dunes on these beaches in summer, it is possible to come across turtles laying eggs. The innermost part of the Reserve, sheltered from winds and sea salt, is a refuge for a varied and luxuriant vegetation.

Eraclea Minoa

Eraclea Minoa is a site of extraordinary simplicity and potent beauty; you are now behind the mouth of the River Platani, one of the largest estuaries on the island.

The plateau called Capo Bianco, on which the acropolis of Eraclea Minoa is situated, overlooks a wooded area.



Cattolica Eraclea

This is a little rural village founded in 1610. The structure of the town is orthogonal and originates from the baroque town plan.

Sant'Angelo Muxaro

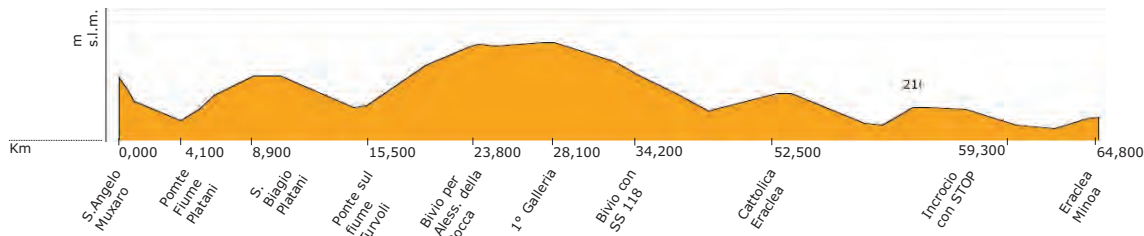
Sant'Angelo Muxaro is located in the hills inland from Agrigento, among pastures, olive and almond trees, in the heart of the central plateau, rich in sulphur, rock salt and potassium salts.

The area was inhabited during the late Bronze Age, there is very important evidence such as the finds of the necropolis of Sant'Angelo Muxaro, preserved in the regional archaeological museums of Agrigento, Palermo and Siracusa, in the Pigorini prehistoric museum of Roma, in the Archaeological museum of Firenze and in the British Museum of London.

Technical information

Departing point:.....Sant'Angelo Muxaro
Arrival:.....Eraclea Minoa Road:.....asphalt
Bike:.....roadster/hybrid
Lenght:.....km 64,800
For who:.....keen cyclist
Gradient:.....m 980
Level of difficulty:.....***
Refreshment areas:.....None
Notes: tunnels; make sure you have front and back lights.

Route 1 - Gradient



Useful Information

A.A.P.I.T. Agrigento

Viale della Vittoria, 255 - Agrigento
+39 0922 401352 - Fax: +39 0922 25185

Azienda Autonoma Soggiorno e Turismo di Agrigento

Via Empedocle, 73 - Agrigento
+39 0922 20391 - Fax: +39 0922 20246

Tourist office: Via Cesare Battisti, 15 - Agrigento -
+39 0922 20454

Comune di Sant'Angelo Muxaro - Via Pizzo
Corvo, 33 - Sant'Angelo Muxaro - +39 0922 919506

How to reach Sant'Angelo Muxaro

By Car:

from Agrigento: SS 118 to Raffadali, then proceed towards Santa Elisabetta and Sant'Angelo Muxaro

By Bus:

from Palermo: Cuffaro Vincenzo - +39 0922-916349
From Agrigento: Lattuca Bus - +39 0922-36125/36398

Angelo e Raffaele Cuffaro & C. - +39 0922-418240



The Province of Caltanissetta

The traveller presses on inland leaving the sea behind him.

The province of Caltanissetta has scenery that is enchanting and simple, and which reminds you of the Sicilian interior described in "Il Gattopardo" by Tomasi di Lampedusa.

It is the scenery that corresponds to the common image one has of Sicily; therefore it might not surprise one in the same way as the woods, lakes, and the gentle hills. The inland Sicilian countryside is ever-changing, never dull.

The scarcity of water has always caused difficulties in agriculture; the countryside presents the beholder with a view of wide open spaces with no villages or other settlements.

There are several sulphur mines; mining dates back to the Arabs, but mining proper only began towards the end of the 1700s.

In the 1950s the collapse of the mining industry triggered off a great migration towards northern Europe and the Americas.

“

The scarcity of water has always caused difficulties in agriculture; the countryside presents the beholder with a view of wide open spaces with no villages or other settlements.

”



Route 2 (Mtb) - Round trip from/to Marianopoli, going past an old farm

Inland Sicily, along a dirt road, a sweeping panorama



The route is for the most part off-road, along a dirt road perfect for a mountain bike.

The area is especially interesting because there are three noteworthy sites (the archaeological site of Rupe di Marianopoli, the Reserve of Monte Mimiani and the Nature Oriented Reserve of Lago Sfondato), and at a short distance, on the right of the route, the archaeological site of Monte Polizzello.

About 7 km from Marianopoli you'll tackle a demanding cobbled uphill stretch taking you to a belvedere; then there is a partly asphalted

downhill stretch as far as the country road for Marianopoli.

The Forestale picnic area that you come across during the second stretch, just before the asphalt road, (Contrada Mustigarufi), could provide a meeting point and a departure point for other local excursions in the cool of the surrounding trees.

Finally, we recommend a detour to the Lago Sfondato Nature Reserve.

Description of the route

Leaving Marianopoli for Palermo, after about 400 metres, go left towards Contrada Valle Inferno (road sign on the left side of the road).

Go along this road carefully; the gentle downhill road has an uneven road surface that soon turns into a dirt road.

At the "T" junction, a little less than 3 km from Marianopoli, turn left.

1.2 km after the "T" junction, bear left at the fork.

1.2 km after the fork, there is a beautiful old building on your right.

2 km after the farm you'll see a house, on your left, and a rock on your right. Beware of guard-

dogs!

500 METRES BEYOND THE HOUSE JOIN THE STONE-ROAD ON YOUR LEFT. THIS IS ONE OF THE MOST DEMANDING SECTIONS OF THE ROUTE.

The road is uphill and when it becomes less steep, the road surface gets better. Downhill, as always, be very careful.

After about 6 km downhill, there is the picnic area of Mustigarufi. A further 4.6 km takes you to a "T" junction with the SP 42. Turn left.

Along this stretch, after 17.4 km, join the track to your right (about 2,5 km long) and you'll reach the Lago Sfondato Nature Reserve.

Once you've visited the Nature Reserve return to



the asphalt road that, after about 5 km takes you back uphill to Marianopoli.

“

The area is especially interesting because there are three noteworthy sites (the archaeological site of Rupe di Marianopoli, the Reserve of Monte Mimiani and the Nature Oriented Reserve of Lago Sfondato), and at a short distance, on the right of the route, the archaeological site of Monte Polizzello.

”



Marianopoli

The town that we've come to know today under this name was inhabited for long periods in the past.

The most noteworthy archaeological area is represented by the village of Castellazzo di Marianopoli, where the site of ancient Mitistrato has been discovered. Archaeological excavations brought to light a prehistoric necropolis and Hellenic settlements.

The Marianopoli archaeological Museum, located inside the City Hall, preserves ceramics and coins found during the several archaeological digs.



Lago Sfondato Nature Reserve

In spite of its closeness to Marianopoli the Reserve, east of Monte Mimiani, 370 metres a.s.l., is in the province of Caltanissetta.

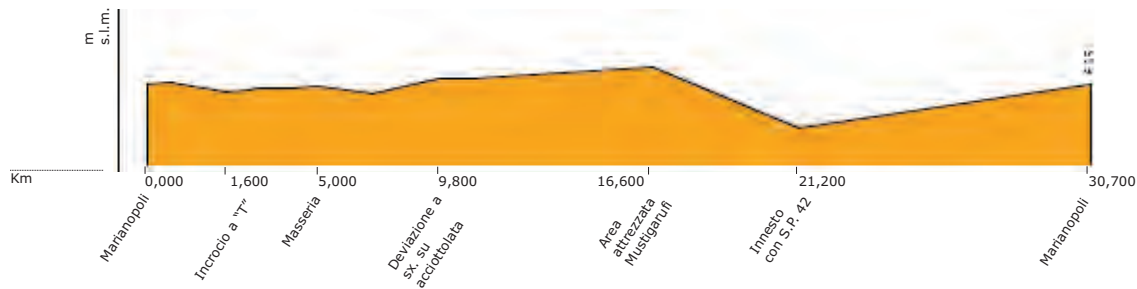
The area includes the lake, which extends for 3000 square metres and 10 hectares of pre-reserve used as pasture and for the growing of cereals.

The Reserve was established in 1997 and today is run by the Legambiente Regional Committee.

Technical information

Departing point:.....Marianopoli
Arrival:.....Marianopoli
Road:.....uneven/asphalt
Bike:.....*mountain bike*
Length:.....km 30,700
For who:.....keen cyclist
Gradient:.....m 595
Level of difficulty:.....***
Refreshment area:.....Marianopoli

Route 2 - Gradient



Useful Information

A.A.P.I.T. Caltanissetta

Corso Vittorio Emanuele, 109 - Caltanissetta
Tel: +39 0934 530411 - Fax: +39 0934 21239
Site web: www.aapit.cl.it - E-mail: info@aapit.cl.it

Tourist office: V.le Conte Testasecca, 20 -
Caltanissetta +39 0934 21089

Pro loco of Marianopoli

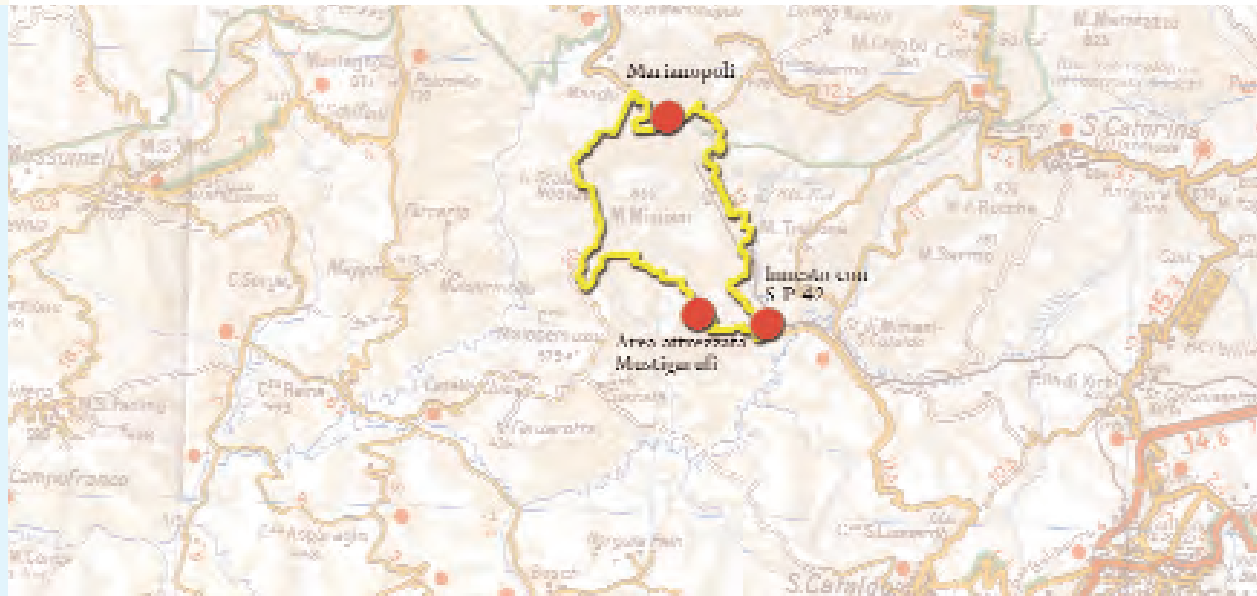
Via Veneto, 3 - Marianopoli - Tel: +39 0934 674144

How to reach Marianopoli

By Car: Coming from western Sicily: motorway A19 PA-CT, exit Resuttano, follow signs to Resuttano, go past the turn-off for Tudia towards Vallelunga. Before Vallelunga on your left you'll see the sign for Marianopoli.

Coming from eastern Sicily: motorway A19 CT-PA, exit Caltanissetta, proceed along the Caltanissetta-Agrigento highway, exit Caltanissetta, continue towards Poggio Sant'Elia and join the country road from Caltanissetta to Marianopoli.

By bus: from Palermo or Caltanissetta: SAIS Transport www.saistrasporti.it - 39 091-7041211



The Province of Catania

The Etna volcano is a symbol of the whole province of Catania; more than any other volcano it has inspired endless myths and legends.

Much has been written and imagined about the volcano, but in reality it is simply the result of the collision between the Eurasiatic and the African plates.

The excursion to the top of the volcano is certainly an unforgettable experience; the higher you climb the more the scenery changes, becoming a desert at 1800 m due to the volcanic sand.

The inhabitants of the area call Etna, in the feminine gender, "the great mountain", with a

mixture of respect and fatalism. In the province of Catania there are also the Nebrodi Mountains, and the rivers Simeto and Alcántara, the most important rivers in north-eastern Sicily.

In the east there is the sea with its rocky coastline (origin - lava) and a sandy coastline in the southern side of the province.

“

The excursion to the top of the volcano is certainly an unforgettable experience...

”

Route 3 - Randazzo - Castiglione di Sicilia - Linguaglossa - Randazzo

Lava, wine and Spanish brooms



This route is laid out in the north of the province of Catania, along the north-eastern side of Etna, among solidified streams of lava now covered in luxuriant vegetation.

Overall the route is not difficult, except for some short uphill stretches, such as those leading in and out of Castiglione di Sicilia.

It extends along asphalt roads, starting from Randazzo and, along quiet country roads, leads to the towns of Castiglione di Sicilia and Linguaglossa, before finally returning to Randazzo.

“

The Etna volcano is a symbol of the whole province of Catania; more than any other volcano it has inspired endless myths and legends.

”

Description of the route

Randazzo circumetnea railway station.

Here, take the little road just in front of the station and follow signs for Linguaglossa, going round a little hairpin-bend to your right and passing under the railway.

Arriving in via Filangeri bear left, following directions for Linguaglossa. At the STOP sign, turn left and cross the railway. 2 km beyond the level crossing you'll arrive in Piazza Sacro Cuore, with the homonymous church on your right; go straight on.

At the STOP sign, with the little San Vito church in front of you, turn right following directions for Linguaglossa.

You are now leaving the town centre of Randazzo.

The first stop on this route is Castiglione di Sicilia.

Starting from the town-hall in Randazzo, with your back to the former monastery of San Francesco, today the town-hall, turn right and leave the building on your right: cross Piazza San Francesco d'Assisi and proceed to the STOP sign, turn right into via Roma and continue as far as the next STOP sign.

Cross via Regina Margherita and Piazza San Francesco di Paola, with the homonymous church on your right, and go on towards the cemetery, and then left towards Linguaglossa.

After 1.3 km pass under the railway bridge and, ignoring the road signs to Linguaglossa (left), go straight on as far as the square opposite





At the Campo Re fork bear left towards Moio Alcàntara and then straight on along the quiet country road.

There is a STOP sign after about 4 km; go straight on towards Castiglione. Cycle through the little village of Verzella, where there are

The Cuba

In the Cuba district, take the diversion left to the Cuba, a little Byzantine church made of lava and dedicated to Santa Domenica. It is worth a visit at the cost of a small diversion.

several wine makers; several houses are adorned with flowers and plants.

In this area, thanks to the favourable climate they produce a dry DOC wine.

After a little less than 5 km turn right, uphill towards Castiglione di Sicilia. Follow the main road and the signs to Linguaglossa, which, along a demanding paved stretch, will lead you to the Piazza Carmine.

Exit Castiglione di Sicilia and head towards Linguaglossa, with the town hall in the Piazza Carmine on your left.

The approach to the town, as well the departure, is uphill. After 5 km, at the "T" crossing with a STOP sign, turn left towards Linguaglossa; and be careful! It is about 3 km to Linguaglossa.

Return to Randazzo along a road with light traffic.

From Linguaglossa leave Piazza Matrice and cycle into Corso Umberto I, following the "Etna Nord". brown road sign.

Go straight along this road, slightly uphill, cross the level crossing and pass the Circumetnea railway station until you reach a widening of the road (3.5 km from Piazza Matrice); turn right following directions for Randazzo.

Keep on in this direction and ignore turn-offs. Above all, ignore the "Y" diversion 16.5 km after the last turning and go straight on your left.

After 4.4 Km you'll reach the Santa Caterina fork; turn right downhill and go on as far as the first buildings of Randazzo in the Piazza San Giovanni Bosco; at the "T" junction turn right and very shortly you'll once more reach the Piazza San Francesco di Paola.

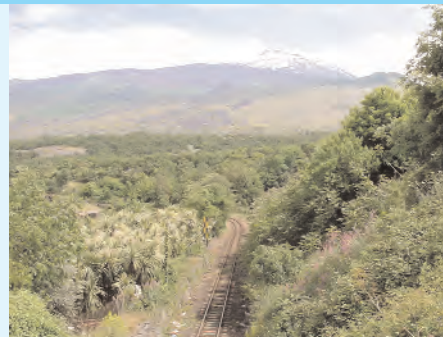


Linguaglossa

Here, as well in Castiglione di Sicilia, the former inhabitants were exiles from Naxos, fleeing the rage of the Syracusan tyrant Dionisio I.

The noteworthy buildings located along the main roads of the town date back to between the second half of the 1600s and the first half of the 1700s.

Nowadays Linguaglossa is renowned for its marvellous woods and its ski resorts on the north-eastern slopes of Etna.



Castiglione di Sicilia

What you'll remember of Castiglione di Sicilia is not the hard climb to the town, nor the little medieval town centre.

The strategic position of Castiglione di Sicilia in the valley of the Alcàntara was reason enough for the battles which the dominant powers of the island engaged in so as to take control of the area.

The original centre was founded in 496 b.c. by exiles from the town of Naxos. The town was completely damaged by the earthquake in 1693.

“ Frederick the II, who chose the area as a hunting reserve, turned the town into a fortress, building walls and defensive towers. ”

Randazzo

Greeks, Latins and Lombard came to Randazzo, each with their own language, religion and Mother Church. Santa Maria, the Latin Church, was built between 1217 and 1239 and is still well preserved.

San Martino, the Lombard Church, mostly destroyed during the II World War, has been restored.

The biggest church is the Greek one, the San Nicola church, which was built around 1200, and rebuilt in 1500.

Other churches and monasteries were built during the Swabian period giving Randazzo the aspect of a medieval town.

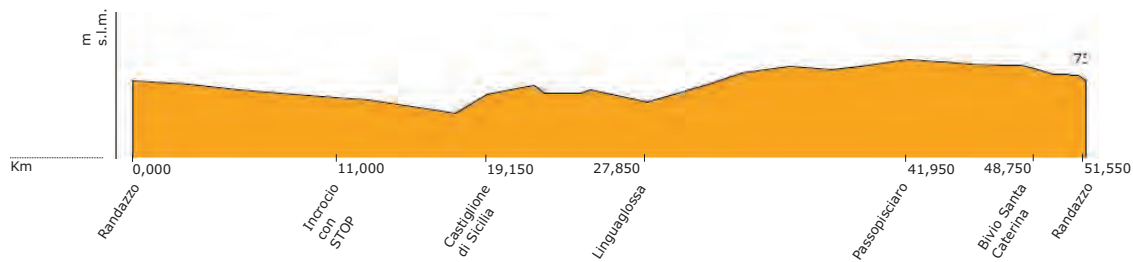
Frederick the II, who chose the area as a hunting reserve, turned the town into a fortress, building walls and defensive towers.

Even though Randazzo is the closest town to the crater it hasn't ever beenkissed by the lava.

Technical information

Departing point:.....Randazzo
Arrival:.....Randazzo
Road:.....asphalt
Bike:.....roadster/racing bike
Length:.....km 51,600
For who:.....keen cyclists
Gradient:.....m 750
Level of difficulty:.....**
Refreshment areas:.....Castiglione di Sicilia
- Linguaglossa

Route 3 - Gradient



Useful Information

A.A.P.I.T. Catania - Via Cimarosa, 10 - Catania

Tel: +39 095 7306211 - Fax: +39 095 316407

www.apr.catania.it - apr@apr.catania.it

Tourist office:

Via Cimarosa, 10 - Catania - Tel: +39 095 7306222-279

Numero verde Provincia Regionale di Catania: 800 55 1485

Etna Park: Tel: 095 821111- Fax: 095 914738

C.visit: Via Umberto 193 - Randazzo - +39 095 7991611

www.parcoetna.ct.it - ufficiostampa@parcoetna.ct.it

Nebrodi Park - Tel: 0941 793904 - Fax: 0941 793240

C.visit: Biblioteca comunale - Floresta - Tel.0941 662036

www.parcodeinebrodi.it - info@parcodeinebrodi.it

Alcantara Park

Park authority: Tel: +39 0942 981038 - Fax: +39 0942 981038

Visite: Via Umberto 193 - Randazzo - Tel: +39 095 7991611

www.parcoalcantara.it - info@parcoalcantara.it

Pro loco Randazzo - P.zza Municipio, 1- Randazzo - 095 7990064

How to reach Randazzo

By car: from Catania: A18, exit Fiumefreddo, proceed towards Linguaglossa/Randazzo.



The Province of Enna

The province of Enna is the only province of Sicily that doesn't overlook the sea. It is flanked by the Monti Nebrodi in the north, in the south by the provinces of Agrigento and Caltanissetta and in the west by the hills that extend to the Monti Sicani and the Madonie area.

There are a variety of woods, hills, lakes and medieval villages across the undulating landscape.

The area was inhabited by the Siculi and the Sicans before the Greek colonisation, and the later presence of the Arabs led to the building of numerous castles to guard the towns.

La Villa Romana del Casale

The Villa del Casale, an elegant and sumptuous building, was built between the III and the IV century B.C., when Sicily was a province of the Roman Empire.

It preserves 35000 sq. metres of mosaics which constitute the most fascinating part of the residence, both for their beauty and size.

The Villa was also part of a developed area called Sofiana (between Agrigento and Catania) and judging by its name it seems to have been a place of rest and reflection.

Route 4 (Mtb) - From/to P.zza Armerina, going past the Villa Romana del Casale

A Roman villa, the ruins of an ancient city, woods and sulphur mines



This mountain bike route, along unpaved roads and short asphalt stretches, takes you to two of the most representative archaeological sites in Sicily.

The route also includes the Parco Minerario di Floristella, but it can be shortened by about 20 km, coming back directly to Piazza Armerina after the visit to the site of Morgantina.

The initial altitude is 675 metres, and then it ranges between 590 and 840 metres a.s.l. For the most part you'll be cycling in the woods, and the most significant stretches are the uphill ones, after the visit to the Morgantina archaeological

site, and the rough track that takes you from the Parco Minerario back on to the asphalt road for Piazza Armerina.

You start from Piazza Armerina on asphalt and downhill, in order to reach the archaeological site of the Villa Romana del Casale.

Back in Piazza Armerina, enter the wood to reach the town of Aidone; from here go along another asphalted stretch and you'll arrive at the Morgantina archaeological site. The end of the round trip requires a further enchanting ride through the wood.

If you are not too tired you can prolong the trip as far as the Floristella Mining park and return to Piazza Armerina along a quiet asphalt road.

Description of the route

Depart from piazza Generale Cascino in Piazza Armerina towards the Villa del Casale/Caltanissetta/Gela. After two crossroads with traffic-lights go on downhill (about 200 metres); there is a third crossroads, turn right following signs to "Villa del Casale"/"Barrafranca".

After a while the downhill road, on your left, runs along the river of Gela. 4.6 km from Piazza Armerina turn left, and after a little under 1 km you'll be entering the archaeological site.

Proceed once more towards Piazza Armerina. At the STOP sign after 1.3 km turn right. Once you've passed under a bridge, turn left (there is a sign for a hotel). This route will take

you back to the town centre of Piazza Armerina.

After 11.1 km go downhill towards the construction with arches in front of you - this is the Santa Maria del Gesù monastery.

At the "T" junction, 1 km after the Monastery, turn left, uphill (about 50 metres). Then ignore the turning on the right and go straight on.

After 400 m turn right. This point is easily recognisable because, on your left there is a mirror, and the road narrows and proceeds straight ahead; moreover, in front of you, there is also a lamp-post with two blue/yellow stripes at its base. After 50 m turn right again, and shortly you'll be cycling parallel with the SS117 bis, on your right.

Along this road, as soon as you come to a bridge on your right and a red gate in front of you, turn left.





After about 600 m, at the "T" junction with a wooden post in the centre, turn right downhill and right again at the next "T" junction with a wall in front of us.

After 1 km you'll arrive at a junction with traffic lights; turn left towards Aidone. Be careful along this road!

After 700 m turn right starting along the unsurfaced road. This point is recognisable because there is a sign showing the tracks, on which is written "Cammino dell'alleanza, progetto nazionale per il ripristino e la manutenzione dei sentieri".

Go beyond the parking area and proceed straight along the main dirt road, which takes you inside the area of the former nursery Canalicchio.

After 300 metres you arrive at a glade where you go straight on between two lines of cypresses. A little further you'll cycle past the side of a barracks. Keep on in this direction and ignore side roads.

A little forward on you'll come to the asphalt road that leads to the barracks, cross it and enter the

woods again, proceeding through the woods until the asphalt road turns right.

About 600 m after the barracks, along the asphalt road, follow the directions shown on a wooden sign, on which is written "CA" on a white/red background ("Cammino dell'Alleanza"); there is a map at the entrance to the wood.

Ignore the right turn 200 m ahead, and go straight on (please note the sign CA just after, in your direction).

The wood you'll be cycling through is for the most composed of eucalyptus, but there are also cypresses, poplars, locust-trees and oak trees. The province of Enna is indebted for its woods to reforestation projects which started in the 1950s.

After a little less than 1 km, the route turns right and there are two parallel roads; both of them are OK. A little further on the track goes steeply uphill.

Turning: after 400 m, at a little widening of the road, turn right, completing an angle of 150° as you cycle around a stone with two blue/yellow painted stripes; at this point there is also a sign that identifies the road.

After about 600 m you reach a "T" junction: turn right.

After 700 m (km 20.2 from Piazza Armerina, including the trip to the Villa del Casale) at the fork with several yellow, iron poles at its centre, turn left and proceed in this direction. 400 m beyond the fork, at the little glade, bear right along the little uphill path.

In a short while, you'll be cycling along a stretch that, on the left, offers a broad view over the area of Aidone, that extends as far as the Monti

Aidone

The position of the castle, now ruined, on a rock of the Monti Erei (about 900 m a.s.l.) is among the reasons for the birth of this town at the beginning of the XI century.

The medieval town layout is well preserved and it is possible to distinguish several signs of Islamic architecture. In 1693 Aidone was seriously damaged by an earthquake.

Nebrodi and Etna.

A little further on, while negotiating a bend you'll join the downhill asphalt road. After 700 m, at the junction with another asphalt road, turn left downhill through almost 360°.

A little more than 1 km and you'll encounter another "T" junction, and turn right. This is the SS 288 to Aidone; a little further on, at the fork to enter the town, go on along the road on the right that will take you to the Santa Maria La Cava church (XII century) and to Aidone: Piazza Filippo Cordova.

From piazza Filippo Cordova follow the flow, and following directions on a yellow road sign "museo/ruderi del castello normanno"; turn right

again in via Garibaldi and at the next junction turn left into via F. Crispi, following the yellow sign to "Morgantina".

At the end of via Crispi, you are obliged to turn left into via G. Marconi, where you turn left again and immediately right, with the petrol station on your left.

At the fork proceed left towards the belvedere, until you arrive at the town hall square where there stands the San Leone church.

On the left side of the church, the via Santa Maria La Cava demands a final effort before taking you to the belvedere in which there are also the remains of the "Castellaccio". Proceed right along via Erditea. Be careful going downhill, especially if the road surface is wet, and follow the main road.

The Castellaccio

It is the most ancient monument in Aidone. It was built in the Norman period and almost completely destroyed by the 1693 earthquake; for a short period the few remaining rooms were used as a prison, until time and neglect turned the Villa into a mass of ruins.





The downhill road passes by the Maria Santissima delle Grazie church (XVIII century) and then by the Sant'Antonio medieval church. At the "T" junction with a STOP sign turn left on to the SS 288 and proceed as far as the paved road on your left to the Morgantina archaeological site.

We are now going to describe the route that takes you directly back to Piazza Armerina, and the route that goes to the Park of Floristella before returning to Piazza Armerina.

Once you've visited the Morgantina archaeological site return to the SS 288, now uphill, leaving the paved road at your back, and proceed until you come to the sign for Piazza Armerina.

Follow this sign, first pass under a bridge and then join the SS 288 again. On this road go on towards Piazza Armerina as far as the entrance Rossomanno, Grottascura, Bellia Nature Oriented Reserve, on your right.

Leave the SS 288 and pass beyond the wooden gate of the Reserve, cycling along the cart-road as far as the fork: turn left following the previously encountered "CA" sign.

Rossomanno, Grottascura, Bellia Nature Oriented Reserve

The Reserve, established in 2000 and occupying 1561 hectares, extends on three levels that range from 600 to 800 metres a.s.l. From the geological point of view they represent outcrops of marine deposits made, for the most, of sandstone. The woods are full of conifers, eucalyptus and the remains of an ancient oak wood.

After 500 metres the wood ends, go through the gate, cross the glade and go on towards the next gate in front of you, which takes you to the other side of the wood. Going along a beautiful winding stretch with a soft surface due to the stratification of the leaves, you come to a "T" junction.

BE CAREFUL! THIS IS POINT IN WHICH THE TWO ROUTES SEPARATE.

Description of the route that takes you directly to Piazza Armerina

At the "T" junction turn left and at the "Y" fork go left. At the next "T" junction go left again and keep to the main path as far as the gate that opens out on to the SS 288.

Go through the gate (should it be closed, use the little passageway on the right) and turn right, on to the SS 288, proceeding as far as the wide "T" junction: here we recommend you pay the maximum attention when turning left towards Piazza Armerina. In a little less than 2 km you'll be back in Piazza Armerina again.

Description of the extended round trip to the Floristella Park and Piazza Armerina

At the "T" junction turn right and at the next junction turn left, following the sign "CA", and 100 m further on, ignoring the next turning right, keep to the main direction.

A little later, going along a stretch through a cypress wood, you will go past a fire protection barrier on your right, and at the turn-off left proceed straight on in the direction of the "CA" path shown on the sign, whilst continuing to flank the fire protection barrier.

Ignore the path on your right 700 m ahead, and go straight on. Your direction will be confirmed by a further sign "CA" numbered 29.

After less than 1 km you will arrive at an intersection of several roads; ignore the first on your left, and take the subsequent one left. Please, note, also at this point, the sign (signpost number 30).

After a further 700 m you come to a crossroads with no trees: turn left. At the end of the short downhill stretch turn right going past the Ronza

picnic area (about 200 m on your left).

After a little less than 1 km on the right side of the road there is an uphill road with a picnic area at the corner. Join this uphill road that takes you to the site of the small and mysterious "Pietre incantate" or "Pupi ballerini" sandstone figures (Rossomanno resort).

With the "pietre incantate" on your right, go straight along an occasionally difficult stretch for non-expert cyclists (who we advise to push the bike by hand).

Proceed as far as the "T" junction and turn left. After about 1.1 km turn left on to the SS 117 bis and after a further 300 m turn right towards Enna, proceeding as far as a path, km 1.7 from the turn-off for Enna, on your right.

This point is easily identifiable because on your right there is a panoramic view of the sites of the Grottacalda mines (on the left) and Floristella (on the right), and an old farm you will be going past.

Look for a little widening on your right: just before it there is a "give way" road sign. Be careful when joining the little downhill road as it descends steeply. Proceed as far as a farm.

Turn left going around the farm which is on your right, and continue along the downhill asphalt road as far as the crossroads with STOP sign with the intersecting SS 117 bis.

Cross the road carefully and continue along the road opposite. After 500 m turn left towards the remains of the Grottacalda mine, then come back to the same point to continue towards the Floristella Mine.

Going past ruins on your right join the road on





your left, which is a hairpin bend right. It is a stretch of the old railroad that used to cross this area.

A little further on, with the ruins of an ancient station on your right, turn left on to a road that takes you on to a dirt road leading to the entrance of the Floristella mining park (about 100 m on the left).

At the sign, on the left, there is the mine; along the path on the right you'll reach the Pennisi Palace.

After visiting the mining Park cycle along the dirt road in the opposite direction and turn right at the turning that takes you back to the old railway road.

If you happen to go under a bridge it means you have gone too far! From the old railway go back to the hairpin bend and continue right until you reach the left turning from which we set out.

At the crossroads with the SS 117 bis go straight on uphill along the dirt road that takes you back to the asphalt road.

Cycle along this road and just before the road sign (Enna - left, Piazza Armerina - right) turn

right along a downhill asphalt road.

The road is lined with trees and is almost completely traffic-free. A little less than 6 km further on, at the "T" junction, turn left uphill; after about 5 km there is a turn-off on the bend which you ignore.

A further 1.8 km takes you to a "T" junction with a STOP sign with the intersecting SS 117 bis. Be careful along the SS 117 bis, which will take you to Piazza Armerina after a further 2 km.

“

The Villa del Casale, an elegant and sumptuous building, was built between the III and the IV century B.C., when Sicily was a province of the Roman Empire.

”



Floristella Mining Park

It is a quiet and enchanting place, with one of the most important open-air archaeological industrial museums in Europe, proof that Sicily was the first sulphur-exporting region in the world.

It is our belief that a visit to the Floristella Mining Park represents an experience that will help you penetrate a part of the economic and social history of Sicily.

Morgantina

About eight centuries separate the archaeological sites of Morgantina and Villa del Casale.

The first farmers, the Morgeti, arrived here from Italy around the X century B.C., led by Morges, a legendary figure, to whom the town owes its name.

The first contacts with Greek culture go back to the VII century B.C., whereas it seems that, around 500 B.C., the town was dominated by Greek tyrants.

It is one of the most rewarding archaeological sites in southern Italy and you should also try to visit the Archaeological Museum of Aidone.

Piazza Armerina

The city has medieval origins and a local dialect called "gallo italicico" is spoken. Thanks to the corn trade, in the first decade of the XIV century, the town started to grow and several Gothic and Baroque churches and palaces, still visible today, were built.

“

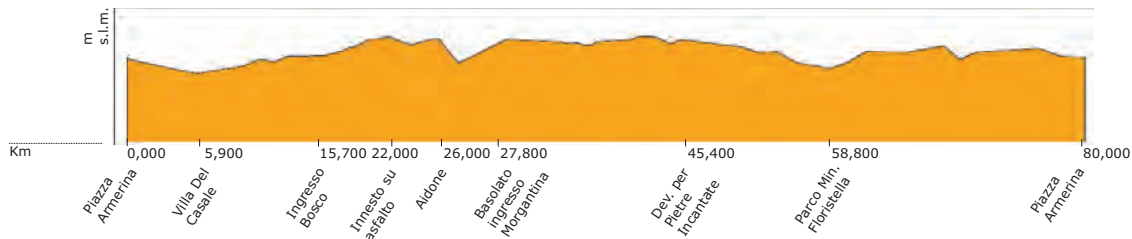
There are a variety of woods, hills, lakes and medieval villages across the undulating landscape.

”

Technical information

Departing point:.....P.zza Armerina
Arrival:.....P.zza Armerina
Road:.....mostly unsurfaced
Bike:.....mountain bike
Length:.....km 80,000
For who:.....keen cyclist
Gradient:.....m 945
Level of difficulty:.....***
Refreshment areas:.....Aidone

Route 4 - Gradient



Useful information

A.A.P.I.T. Enna - Via Roma, 411 - Enna
Tel: +39 0935 528288 - Fax: +39 0935 528229
www.apr-enna.com - info@apr-enna.com

Tourist office: Morgantina: Tel: 0935 86777

Azienda Autonoma Soggiorno e Turismo di Enna

Piazza N.Colajanni, 6 - Enna - Tel:0935 500875/0935 26119

Azienda Autonoma Soggiorno e Turismo di Piazza Armerina - Via Gen. Muscarà - Piazza Armerina 0935 680201

www.aziendaautonomapiazza.com

info@aziendaautonomapiazza.com

Villa Romana del Casale - Tel: +39 0935 680036

Floristella Park - Tel: +39 0935 958105

How to reach Piazza Armerina

By car: da Palermo o da Catania: percorrere la A19 fino all'uscita Mulinello e proseguite sulla SS 117 bis, in direzione Gela fino al bivio per Piazza Armerina.

By bus: SAIS Autolinee www.saisautolinee.it Tel: 800 920900 da tel. fisso / 199 720700 da tel. mobile (da Enna, Catania, Palermo);



The Province of Messina

Messina is located in the north east of Sicily. In the west there are the Monti Nebrodi and the homonymous Regional Park; in the east the Monti Peloritani, along the coast of the Ionian Sea.

The two sides join at Portella Mandrazzi, (1125 metres a.s.l.) A Regional Park extends for half the area of the Nebrodi Mountains.

This is natural scenery, where sweeping views and remote gorges alternate, and where it is still possible to find substantial areas of the type of woodland that once covered Sicily (such as the beech woods of Monte Soro or the Caronia Mountains, or the nearby Malabotta wood).

Besides their natural beauty, these mountains also have charming medieval towns sprawling among their slopes.

The Malabotta wood

The Malabotta Wood is an environment of great biological interest with trees such as the bay or the yew. Large areas are covered with oaks, turkey oaks, beeches and also pines chestnuts, maples and poplars.

In the neighbourhood of the wood there are the Rocche dell'Argimusco, where you can see calcareous megaliths eroded by wind and rain. From land above 1000 metres a.s.l. you can enjoy a beautiful view that sweeps over the Etna volcano and the Messina Strait as far as the Aeolian Islands.

Route 5 - Round trip from/to Montalbano Elicona

In the green heart of Sicily, among little stone villages.



This round trip on asphalt will give you the chance to visit little villages on the mountain-sides of this province, whilst maintaining contact with a natural environment that can stir the emotions. Along this route the gradients are not too hard.

Notes: always take with you a water-proof jacket as the weather might be variable due to the high altitude. There could also be some mist especially in summer. Moreover, we suggest you stop off at one of the typical hosteleries along the route in order to try local specialities.



Description of the route

Starting from the main square of Montalbano Elicona: Piazza Maria Santissima della Provvidenza, at an altitude of 875 metres a.s.l., leave the square and the homonymous church behind you and proceed straight on along the uphill paved road in front of you.

Cycle along this road to the end and turn right at the STOP sign on the left, uphill into via Etna, proceeding as far as the junction with the country road and a little chapel; on your right there is a crossroads with road signs.

At the crossroads turn left towards Tripi/Roccella. This first part of the route is uphill and is therefore the most demanding part. A little less than 5 km from Montalbano Elicona, at the "T" crossing turn right towards San Piero

Patti, on to the SP 115 and after a little less than 1 km, on your right, there is the turning for the Malabotta Wood.

Ignoring the turn-off for the wood, (which is nonetheless worth a visit), proceed right downhill. Keep on in this direction as far as the SP 115, which is lined with trees, but requires some attention because of its irregular surface.

After 0.5 km you reach a "T" junction with a STOP sign: turn left towards San Piero Patti. Ignore the exit for Roccella on your left, about 200 m after you've turned off.

Proceed uphill along this stretch of the SP 110 and after a little less than 4 km, you'll reach Contrada Polverello, where there is a hostelry and a little bar.

At the "T" junction with a STOP sign turn right





towards San Piero Patti proceeding downhill on to the SP 122.

A little less than 1 km from Santa Maria village, an administrative division of the municipality of San Piero Patti, you arrive at a crossroads with several signs: turn left following the direction on your left to San Piero Patti.

After 3.6 km, at the turn-off left, go straight towards Patti as far as the fork for the town centre of San Piero Patti - you've cycled 31.3 km!

Coming back to the fork for the town centre of San Piero Patti, follow signs for Raccaia and at

San Piero Patti is a small town whose origins seems to pre-date the Arab conquest of Sicily. We suggest you visit the Santa Maria church, at the side of which there is a baroque bell tower, and inside which there is a beautiful lacunar ceiling.

the "T" junction turn left towards Raccaia on to the SP 136.

About 6 km from San Piero Patti, after a series of ups and downs, go past the fork on your right. From this point on your route is uphill, even though never too demanding.

Arriving at Fondachello, an administrative division of the municipality of San Piero Patti, at a widening of the road, proceed left towards Ucria, going quickly through Fosso Chiodo resort.

A little less than 2 km from Fosso Chiodo you'll reach a fork; turn right downhill towards Ucria. After about 1 km from the fork and 46.4 km from Montalbano Elicona, you'll arrive in Raccaia.

At the next fork, if you wish to go to the town centre, follow signs for the "municipio" on your right. If you want to go directly to Ucria, follow the signs and proceed left, downhill.

Cross two bridges and keep on in the direction of Ucria, also at the signs located immediately before the second bridge.

Following this direction you come across a third bridge from which the road starts to climb again. At the "T" junction turn left towards Ucria and once in the town, 57.3 km from Montalbano Elicona, at the next fork, follow signs for Randazzo.

Ucria

This is a small town 700 m a.s.l. We don't know much about the origins of this town, but according to legend it was founded by a survivor from a previous village existing at the top of Monte Castello, but the name might also have descended from the Arabic Ocrya, which means village. The site on which the town has risen has been inhabited since ancient times, as testified by archaeological finds, such as a large sandstone monolith 1.200 metres a.s.l., near the Rocca di San Marco, and dating back to the Palaeolithic era.

Leave Ucria and head towards Randazzo along an uphill stretch that, about 5.2 km from Ucria, will take you to a fork with a typical Nebrodi hostelry; keep in the same direction towards Randazzo, along the SS 116, uphill.

After about 7 km, you'll arrive at a large fork with a building in front of you; go straight on and you'll enter the town of Floresta. Turning left, on the other hand, and keeping on in the same direction, you'll arrive at the end of your trip.

From the exit-sign from Floresta, (direction

Floresta

Legends tell us about the presence, in this place, of Roman slaves who were employed to chop wood. Then, due to the unfavourable weather conditions in winter, Floresta was abandoned. In the XIV century the village was a mass of little sheepfolds and small stone buildings (called Cubburi) probably used as dwelling-places.

Montalbano Elicona), after a little less than 1 km follow signs to Randazzo, continuing as far as a square with a hostelry on the right and a turn-off to your left.

Turn left here towards Montalbano Elicona on to the SP 122. After a short stretch you'll reach Contrada Polverello: turn right towards Montalbano Elicona.

After about 4 km you'll reach the fork with the SP 115: join this road towards Montalbano Elicona. At the next fork, turn left on to the SP 110 Montalbanese, downhill, keeping to the main direction.

Be careful along this downhill stretch as the surface of the road is now and then irregular. After 11 km downhill you'll come to the first buildings of Montalbano Elicona, and a little

further you are once more at the fork which we passed at the beginning of our itinerary.

Pass the fork and a little further on turn left, downhill, towards the centre ("centro"). Along this straight, downhill stretch be careful at the crossroads; in a short while you'll be back again in the Montalbano Elicona main square.

“ This is natural scenery, where sweeping views and remote gorges alternate... ”

Montalbano Elicona

Montalbano Elicona has maintained its medieval origins till today. You can see this in the cobbled roads, in the ancient churches or in the balconies of noble buildings.

The local cuisine, as always in Sicily, is based on simple ingredients peculiar of folk traditions. We suggest you try the tasty broad beans *macco* with wild fennel, and the home-made "maccheroni" with pork sauce, sprinkled with baked ricotta.

Technical information

Departing point:.....Montalbano Elicona
Arrival:.....Montalbano Elicona
Road:.....asphalt
Bike:.....roadster/racing bike
Length:.....km 96,100
For who:.....keen cyclists
Gradient:.....m 1.770
Level of difficulty:.....***
Refreshment areas:.....C.da Favu scuro, S.Pietro Patti, Raccuia, Ucria, Floresta

Useful information

A.A.P.I.T. Messina

Via Calabria, is. 301 bis - Messina
Tel: +39 090 640221 - Fax: +39 090 6411047

Tourist office: Tel: +39 090 674236

Azienda Autonoma Soggiorno e Turismo di Messina -

Piazza Cairoli, 45 - Messina

Tel: +39 090 2935292 - Fax: +39 090 694780

www.azienturismomessina.it/azienturismo@azienturismo-messina.it

Nebrodi Park

Ente parco: Tel: +39 0941 793904 - Fax: +39 0941 793240

Visit: Biblioteca com. - Floresta - Tel: +39 0941 662036

www.parcodeinebrodi.it - info@parcodeinebrodi.it

Comune di Montalbano Elicona

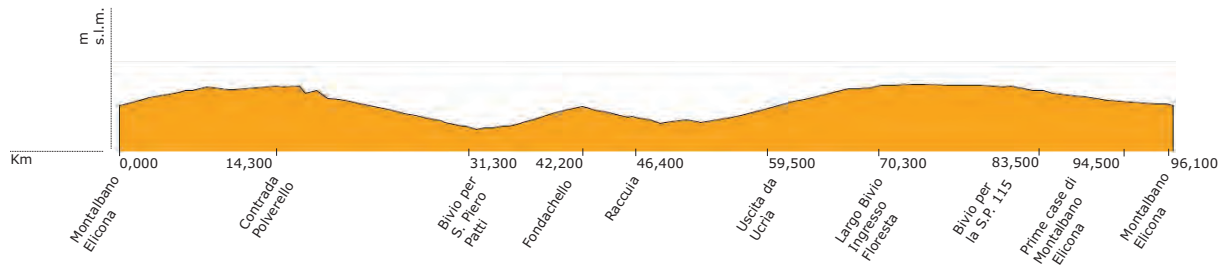
Via Roma, snc - Montalbano Elicona

Tel. +39 0941 678019 / +39 0941 679012

www.comune.montalbanoelicona.me.it

info@comune.montalbanoelicona.me.it

Route 5 - Gradient



The Province of Palermo

The province of Palermo is described in the "Il Gattopardo" by Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa, and of particular merit is the description of the route that takes you from Palermo to the area of Corleone, beyond the mountains that bound the Conca d'Oro.

This is one of the areas belonging to the large Sicilian landowners, scenery for the most part devoid of trees, but always changing according to the seasons. The province of Palermo was hit by the earthquake that in 1968 destroyed several towns in the province of Trapani.

“

This is one of the areas belonging to the large Sicilian landowners, scenery for the most part devoid of trees...

”

Route 6 - From Ficuzza to Corleone

From a Bourbon hunting reserve in Corleone, cycling along ancient dirt roads



This is a route on which flat roads, easy climbs and more demanding climbs alternate.

The route takes you from the cool of the Ficuzza wood (660 m a.s.l.) to the town of Corleone (500 m a.s.l.), crossing great hills. It reaches a maximum height of 830 m a.s.l. along the SP 5, 12 km from Ficuzza.



Description of the route

With the hunting lodge behind you proceed downhill and at the STOP sign go straight towards Piana degli Albanesi, going along the SS 118 for a short stretch and after 900 m turn left on to the SP 5 towards Piana degli Albanesi.

Along this road, at first downhill, you'll enjoy beautiful panoramic views of the surrounding countryside. Go along it as far as the Maganoce fork: Then, 12.9 km from Ficuzza, you'll reach the Maganoce fork on a downhill stretch; turn left on to the SP 102, towards San Cipirello.

BE CAREFUL DESCENDING THIS PANORAMIC ROAD: THE ROAD SURFACE IS OFTEN IRREGULAR AND THERE ARE

SEVERAL UNEVEN STRETCHES.

After 2 km downhill, ignore the road in front of you, where there is a no entry sign, and proceed downhill bearing right.

After a further 2 km downhill take the hairpin bend left, ignoring the turn-off on your right. After a little more than 2 km, at the STOP sign you are at the Kaggiotto fork - turn left towards San Cipirello, Camporeale and at the next turning go right towards Corleone/San Cipirello.

A further downhill stretch takes you to a STOP sign with a "T" junction. Turn left towards Corleone on to the SP 4. The uphill country road goes round the Pizzo di Pietralunga (the pointed rock in front of you, after the fork of Masseria di Pietralunga). Soon





Archivio Vision s.r.l. - Assessorato Regionale Turismo
Foto di Meio Minnella

after, arriving at the Pizzo di Pietralunga fork, leave the SP 4 and turn left towards Santuario Madonna di Tagliavia.

From this point the route goes along quiet roads built in the 1950s.

There are some, never very demanding, uphill stretches. There are occasionally cracks or potholes on the road surface, which is sometimes just a dirt track. So you have to be careful!

In a little less than 2 km, 33.7 km from Ficuzza, you'll reach a little crossroads (Quadrivio Arcivocale) where you go straight on towards Tagliavia.

After 1.6 km, on an uphill stretch, take the road on your right (there is a road sign indicating an uneven road surface) and go downhill across the fields.

In a little less than 4 km there is a second crossroads where you go straight. Pass the crossroads, and after 400 m, ignore the right turning and follow the main direction; there is soon a downhill stretch that will take you to a "T" junction with the SP 4.

At the crossing turn left on to the SP 4 towards Corleone, leaving on your right a brickyard. Continue on to the SP 4, which, slightly uphill, takes you to the town of Corleone.

“ One of the most noteworthy features in this area, and in the province of Palermo overall, is the Rocca Busambra. ”

Ficuzza

Ficuzza is a small village near Corleone built up around a Bourbon hunting lodge. Beyond the little Royal Palace, which is the most imposing building of the village, there is the Rocca Busambra.

The close-by hunting reserve is nowadays one of the Regional Nature Reserves and includes more than 1 million vegetable and plant species, and most of the animal species of Sicily.

It extends over 4000 hectares and, from the scientific point of view, represents one of the largest and most important protected areas in southern Italy.

One of the most noteworthy features in this area, and in the province of Palermo overall, is the Rocca Busambra (1613 m a.s.l.), an enormous rock in the middle of the countryside.

Corleone

Several sites testify to the ancient origins of Corleone. In particular the rocky massif, that overlooks the town, at the top of the Montagna Vecchia, which has been there since time immemorial.

During the Roman era Corleone had a strategic position because it was located along the road that joined Agrigento with Palermo.

This is corroborated by the miliarium (Civic Museum Pippo Rizzo), a stone (252 b.C.) on which was written a distance, which was probably the distance between Agrigento and Corleone.

Nowadays, Corleone, with its traditional farming resources and its scenery, has all the requisites for a new period of growth for the town.

Regie trazzere

The *regie trazzere* were ancient tracks used by shepherds for pasturing their sheep and goats, but also to connect the villages with larger towns.

After 1865, because of the progressive abandoning of the countryside the "regie trazzere" lost their importance and were incorporated in the ordinary road network.

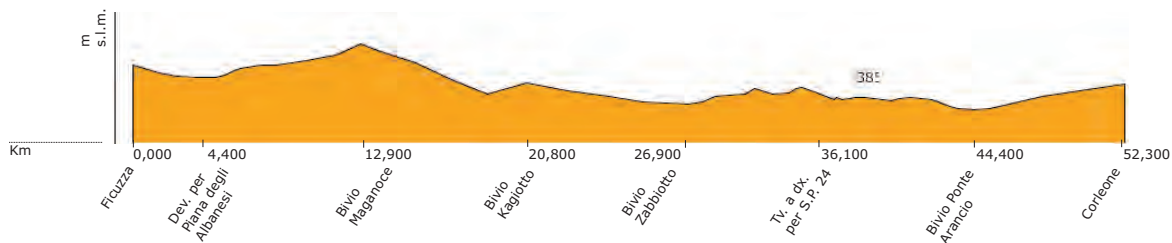
Nowadays, the "regie trazzere", whenever they are open, represent a fascinating way to travel through the island and are most suitable for cycle tourism.



Technical information

Departing point:.....Ficuzza
Arrival:.....Corleone
Road:.....asphalt roads with short dirt stretch
Bike:.....roadster/racing bike
Length:.....km 52,300
For who:.....keen cyclists
Gradient:.....m 835
Level of difficulty:.....**
Refreshment areas:.....None

Route 6 - Gradient



Useful information

A.A.P.I.T. Palermo

Piazza Castelnuovo, 35 - Palermo
Tel: +39 091 6058111 - Fax: +39 091 582788
www.palermotourism.com -
mail@palermotourism.com

Tourist office

Palermo centro: Piazza Castelnuovo, 34 - Tel: +39 091 583847/+39 091 6058351 - Fax: +39 091 586338
Stazione centrale FS: Piazza Giulio Cesare - Tel: +39 091 6165914

Falcone Borsellino Airport: +39 091 591698

Tourist office - Comune di Corleone

Via Orfanotrofo, 7 - Corleone - Tel: +39 091 8464907
www.comune.corleone.pa.it - corleone@olomedia.it

Bosco della Ficuzza Nature Reserve

Distaccamento Forestale di Ficuzza: Tel: +39 091 8464062

Centro Reg. di Recupero per la Fauna Selvatica: Tel: 091 8460107



The Province of Ragusa

The scenery changes once again. You are now in the region of the Monti Iblei, the "quarry" mountains, in the realm of the baroque.

Over the millennia the rivers worked away the calcareous stone of these never particularly high mountains, creating a network of gorges, the so-called "quarries", of great interest from the naturalistic and morphologic point of view.

After the 1693 earthquake, the towns that had been destroyed were rebuilt in a new style of the period, Baroque, giving birth to a astonishing succession of pretty, historical towns.

“ The Carob tree belongs to the leguminous plant family, typical of the area of Ragusa, and can grow to a considerable size. ”



Route 7 - From/to Ibla going past Donnafugata, Scicli and Modica

Stone lace among laughing masks



The route described here offers you one of the most beautiful views in this province: the countryside with typical dry-stone walls and the baroque style that typifies most of the towns in the provinces of Ragusa, Siracusa e Catania.

The tour is long, but certainly within the capabilities of the reasonably fit. It can be divided into two stages, along the sandy coastline or through the inland villages.

At the beginning the route is for the most part downhill, as far as Donnalucata - except for the uphill stretch from Ibla to Balata di Modica: then it starts to climb on the way back to Ibla.



Description of the route

Departure is from Ibla. With the San Giorgio church behind you, enter via Conte Cabrera on your left and go along it right to the end. At the "T" junction turn right into via Chiaramonte.

After a little less than 400 m, you arrive at a fork with a sign that obliges you to turn right: ignore the sign (it is for cars only and is only valid on Sundays and public holidays from h 21,00 to h 24,00) and go straight on downhill.

After 1.1 km you'll reach a STOP sign: turn left towards Giarratana, along the SS 194.

Proceed for a further 4.7 km downhill, and now heading away from "Giarratana" turn right towards San Giacomo, crossing a little bridge. Now there is an uphill stretch that offers a panoramic view of the River Irmínio valley.

At the STOP sign in Balata di Modica, turn right downhill towards Modica. Keep on in this direction to Modica, ignoring any turn-offs.

The route is now on the flat with short ups and downs. About 22 km from Ibla, turn left for Modica upper town.

From here on there is a long downhill stretch that will take you through Modica, as far as Scicli.

Proceed downhill, along the main road. A little less than 2 km from Modica, at the bottom of Corso Sicilia, at the fork, proceed left downhill. The point is easily recognisable due to the presence of a yellow building at the centre of the fork.

Once in piazza San Giovanni - please, note the



homonymous church on your right- continue downhill along Corso Regina Margherita.

At the end of a series of bends that take you to Modica lower town, at the STOP sign, turn left along corso Umberto I, towards the centre ("centro"). Along this road there are several bars where you can try an excellent "granita", not to mention the chocolate, which has a long history and tradition in Modica.

At the end of Corso Umberto, at the roundabout, turn right towards the Modica railway station ("stazione Modica"); soon after the road splits: continue left, passing under the SS 115.

You are now cycling downhill along the Fiumara di Modica, at first on your left and after crossing a little bridge, on your right. This stretch will take you to Scicli.

Your route eventually takes you along via San Nicolò; go straight on, downhill, and after 100 m turn left along Corso Umberto.

After a little less than 1 km, at the fork, turn right downhill, following signs to "Carabinieri", and

after 100 m directions for "centro"; soon after, on the bridge, on the left follow signs towards "centro", on via Penna.

To leave Scicli: with the railway station on your right, along via Monfalcone, towards Cava d'Aliga/Sampieri, go straight on. Your route takes you over a level crossing, then a STOP sign: go straight along Viale I Maggio, which will take you out of the town of Scicli.

At the roundabout, turn right for "contrada Genovese" and go straight on as far as a STOP sign, where you turn right towards Donnalucata.

Once in the town, at the traffic lights, go straight on towards Marina di Ragusa, Playa Grande, Vittoria and along via Miccichè, you go past the sea on your left.

Donnalucata is a little coastal village that was once the port of Scicli.

Leave Donnalucata by the SP 89 with the sea on your left, and at the STOP sign proceed towards Marina di Ragusa along the SP 63, and a little later turn right towards "contrada Ferrante".

With a short detour of about 300 m it is possible to reach the entrance of the River Irminio Macchia Foresta Nature Reserve. To reach the reserve go straight on along the SP 63.

About 6 km from Donnalucata, follow signs to Santa Croce Camerina/Marina di Ragusa at the fork for contrada Ficazza/Ragusa, maintain your direction for Marina di Ragusa along the SP 89, also at the next crossroads (contrada Nave). On this road a sign in front of you indicates a

steep climb, and another sign (a blue one) indicates, on the left, Marina di Ragusa.

Go straight on towards this steep uphill stretch, which is a little less than 800 m. Now the sea is on your right.

After about 2 km, at the STOP sign, turn left towards Ragusa. After a little more than 1 km, at the next STOP sign, maintain your direction for Ragusa by taking the SP 25.

THIS IS A TRAFFICKED ROAD SO BE VERY CAREFUL.

After a little less than 2 km, at the fork, turn left towards Santa Croce Camerina along the SP 37.

The road goes through Cava Biddemi, gently downhill at first, among olive trees and open pasture, and then climbs uphill after going across the valley floor.

At the fork abandon your direction for Santa Croce Camerina and proceed towards contrada Magazzè. Proceed with care as the road has an irregular surface.

After about 3 km, at the "T" junction, (without road-signs), turn left and cycle in total relaxation along this stretch lined with dry stone walls, where olive trees, carob trees and typical farms dot the countryside of the province of Ragusa.

At the STOP sign, turn right along the SP 60 and continue along the gradual climb as far as the turning to Donnafugata on your left, where you turn downhill.

This stretch, after about 10 km, takes you

downhill to Donnafugata.

With the castle behind you, leave Donnafugata. Turn right and after 100 m at the roundabout, turn right again towards Croce Camerina/Comiso/Ragusa. At the STOP sign turn right towards Ragusa and go straight along the SP 14, uphill.

After 5.7 km, at km 4/VI, turn right. The point is easily recognisable because of the sign "Carabinieri" and the presence of a white road sign indicating the distance 4/VI.

You are now on the SP 13.

In less than 10 km from the turning you'll reach Ragusa. At the roundabout go straight on in the same direction, also at the large fork, as far as via Gagini - here turn left following the sign to "centro".

Carob tree

This tree belongs to the leguminous plant family, typical of the area of Ragusa, and can grow to a considerable size.

Enter Corso Italia and continue downhill, along Corso Italia in the direction of "scavi archeologici", downhill towards Ibla. You'll reach Ibla not far from Piazza della Repubblica. In order to go back to Piazza Duomo, follow the signs to San Giorgio (the "duomo" of Ibla).



“ Scicli is also an example of the baroque style, typical of south-eastern Sicily. In Scicli you can find churches and palaces of great artistic interest. ”

Modica

Arriving in Modica from above allows you to go through the town centre and observe what nowadays remains of the medieval town: narrow alleys intersect churches and palaces.

Of architectural interest are the San Giorgio and San Pietro baroque churches, located in the upper-town and in the lower-town respectively.

The oldest part of Modica was founded in 1250 B.C. by the Siculi, in the area in which nowadays there stands the castle.

Scicli

The eighteenth-century town of Scicli is the fruit of the rebuilding process of an ancient village, founded by the Siculi around the X century B.C., and then destroyed during the 1693 earthquake.

Scicli is also an example of the baroque style, typical of south-eastern Sicily. In Scicli, most of the historic buildings are located out of the town centre, where, nevertheless, you can find churches and palaces of great artistic interest.

We recommend the eighteenth-century Beneventano Palace, one of the most noteworthy examples of Baroque in the province of Ragusa.

Farms

The farms of Ragusa, which appeared in the 1500s and the 1600s, look like little villages, and are not only centres of production but also dwelling places. For the most part the farms in Ragusa are still active and productive.

Donnafugata castle

The elegant Donnafugata castle, is situated out in the country; it is Gothic, and not Baroque like the other buildings in this area of Sicily.

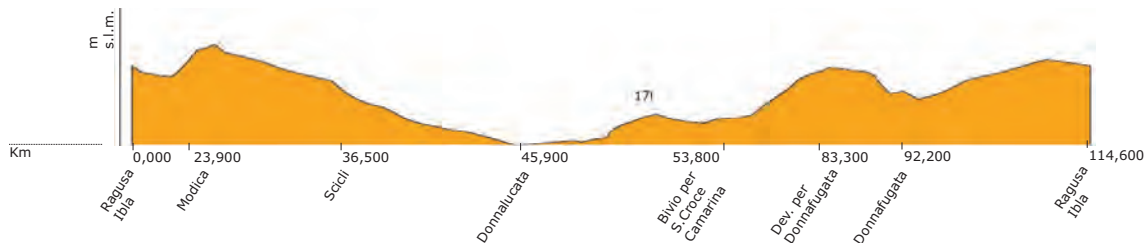
The castle goes back to the XVII century and we recommend a visit to the castle and the park (about 8 hectares). Be sure to go inside the castle where most of the original furnishings still survive.



Technical information

Departing point:.....Ibla
Arrival:.....Ibla
Road:.....asphalt
Bike:.....roadster/racing/hybrid
Length:.....km 115,000
For who:.....keen cyclists
Gradient:.....m 985
Level of difficulty:.....***
Refreshment areas:.....Balata di Modica,
Modica, Scicli, Donnalucata, Donnafugata

Route 7 - Gradient



Useful information

A.A.P.I.T. Ragusa

Via Cap. Bocchieri, 33 - Ragusa Ibla
Tel: +39 0932 221511 - Fax: +39 0932 623476
www.ragusaturismo.it - info@ragusaturismo.com

How to reach Ragusa-Ibla

By car: A19 Pa-Ct motorway: exit Mulinello and continue towards Piazza Armerina. Go past Piazza Armerina, follow signs to Caltagirone/Grammichele and proceed towards Ragusa along the SS 514.

By bus: from Catania: Etna Trasporti www.etnatrasporti.it Phone:+39 095 7461333;

from Palermo: AST - Azienda Siciliana Trasporti
www.aziendasicilianatrasporti.it Phone: 840 000323.



The Province of Siracusa

The "quarries" and the earthquake of 1693 are two of the principal factors in the present landscape of Siracusa province.

You are in the southernmost part of the island, where quietly flowing rivers have carved deep gullies "cave" out of the white rock of the Iblei hills.

These gullies were inhabited as far back as the year 2000 b.c. by ancient peoples arriving from the east. The necropolis of Pantalica with its 500 caves in the rock face, is the largest in Europe.

The earthquake led to a complete rebuilding of the towns in the area, in the Baroque style, in an undulating natural landscape that, allied to the play of light on stone, lend a certain magic and charm to the buildings.

Palazzolo Acreide

Palazzolo Acreide is another of the jewels of the Val di Noto area, where the Baroque is in contrast to the ancient ruins.

Ancient Akrai was founded by the Siracusans in 664 b.c. in a strategic position overlooking the surrounding countryside.

The theatre was built at the height of the town's fame about 300 years b.c. The Baroque town in this region is one of eight protected by UNESCO.

It was re-built after the 1693 earthquake, and a visit to its alleys and squares is highly recommended, above all Palazzo Iudica-Cafici with its long balcony supported by 27 brackets decorated with grotesque masks.

Noto and Noto antica

The Spanish governor at the time of the 1693 earthquake decided to re-build the town of Noto nearer the coast in order to facilitate trade.

It took ten years to re-build the town; the old town was finally abandoned in 1702, but the economic and social crises that hit the town in the aftermath of the earthquake meant Noto couldn't regain its former prestige.

Noto Antica

Little is known about the origins of this town. Over the centuries its strategic position had always made it the object of attention, with each successive domination adding to its cultural wealth.

The Siculs, Greeks, Arabs turned it into one of the most beautiful towns in Sicily, until the earthquake of 1693 reduced it to rubble.

You can reach the ancient ruins via the Porta Reale gateway, along a dirt road leading to the ruins of the castle that overlooks the surrounding area of "cave" (quarries/gullies).



Route 8-Round trip from Palazzolo Acreide, going through Noto Antica

Ancient stones and gullies carved out by the silent waters



Departing from Palazzolo Acreide (650 m a.s.l.), and downhill, you'll reach the ancient town of Noto and, except for a few short stretches, you'll be cycling downhill as far as Noto.

We suggest you stay in Noto in order to visit the town and the coastline (trips not described in this guide). The way back to Palazzolo Acreide is uphill, but not too hard.

Description of the route

From the central square of Palazzolo Acreide, with the San Sebastiano church behind you, cross the square and turn left along via Carlo Alberto, with the Town Hall on your left. At the end of via Carlo Alberto there is Piazza San Michele; cross it leaving the homonymous church on your right.

From Piazza San Michele, proceed towards via Acre, following signs to the Greek Theatre; this road takes you out of Palazzolo, downhill along the SP 24, towards Noto.

After 300 m go left downhill towards Noto, keeping in the same direction as far as Testa dell'Acqua, where 15 km from Palazzolo Acreide, heading away from Noto, you'll be heading straight towards Burlò along the SP 64.

After about 4 km along this quiet country road you arrive at the turn-off for Ancient Noto: turn right following signs to Noto Antica. A further 2 km or less, downhill, along this country road, will take you to Noto Antica.

Continue downhill along the asphalt road (do not

enter Noto Antica). After a little bridge, the road goes uphill with several short, tough stretches. The scenery is pleasant and very relaxing.

After 2.6 km you'll arrive at the Santa Maria della Scala Sanctuary.

From the Sanctuary, not far beyond a little bridge, the road is uphill, and on its left, is full of votive niches representing the Via Crucis.

At the STOP sign, turn right, downhill, towards Noto. You are now on the SS 287; go downhill as far as Noto.

In a little more than 10 km downhill you'll arrive in Noto; follow signs to the centre and at the crossroads with traffic lights, go straight on along via Roma following the sign to "centro"; soon after, at the next crossroads, turn left on to via Salvatore La Rosa, following the brown road sign "informazioni turistiche".

A few hundreds metres more will take you to the main street of Noto. The tourist office is opposite you.

Return to Palazzolo Acreide

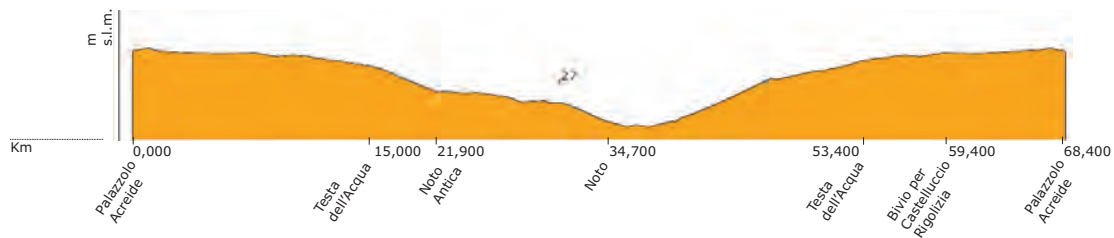
To leave Noto: go along Corso Vittorio Emanuele and at the bottom, at the roundabout with the obelisk, turn left, downhill. At the STOP sign go straight on towards Pachino.

After a little less than 1 km along the SS 115, turn right along the SP 24 towards Palazzolo Acreide. After about 15 km you'll go past Testa dell'Acqua again and, proceeding along this quiet country road, a further 15 km will take you back to Palazzolo Acreide.

Technical information

Departing point:.....Palazzolo Acreide
Arrival:.....Palazzolo acreide
Road:.....Asphalt
Bike:.....racing/hybrid/roadster
Length:.....km 68,400
For who:.....keen cyclists
Gradient:.....m 685
Level of difficulty:.....***
Refreshment areas:.....Testa dell'Acqua,
agriturismo c/o Noto Antica

Route 8 - Gradient



Useful information

A.A.P.I.T. Siracusa

Via San Sebastiano, 43 - Siracusa
Tel: +39 0931 481200 - Fax: +39 0931 67803
Sito web: www.apl-siracusa.it
E-mail: info@apl-siracusa.it

Tourist office:

Siracusa: Via San Sebastiano, 43 - Siracusa - Tel: +39 0931 481232 / +39 0931 67710 - Fax: +39 0931 468287
Noto: Piazza XVI maggio - Noto - Tel e fax: +39 0931 836744 / +39 0931 573779

Azienda Autonoma Soggiorno e Turismo di Siracusa
Via Maestranza, 33 - Siracusa

Tel: +39 0931 464255 - Fax: +39 0931 60204

Tourist office - Comune di Palazzolo Acreide

Piazza Pretura, 1 - Palazzolo Acreide
Tel: +39 0931 871280

How to reach Palazzolo Acreide

By Car: from Agrigento: SS 118 to Raffadali, then continue to Santa Elisabetta and Sant'Angelo Muxaro.

By bus: from Catania and Siracusa: AST - Azienda Siciliana Trasporti www.aziendasicilianatrasporti.it - 840 000323



The Province of Trapani

The interplay between time and nature: a blinding and magical light, ancient ruins, the wind, the windmills between Marsala and Trapani.

Ancient peoples: the Elims, 1800 b.c., who founded Erice and Segesta and Salemi. The sea conceals hidden treasures from the past, often accidentally brought to the surface by fishermen, such as "il Satiro danzante", a Hellenic bronze figure, or the Punic galley now in Marsala museum.

Here too, in 1968, an earthquake devastated the Valle del Belice region, on the borders of Agrigento and Palermo.

There are areas of great natural beauty such as the nature reserves "riserva della foce del fiume Belice e dune limitrofe", and the "Zingaro".



Marsala

Marsa Allah, the port of Allah in Arabic, was founded by the Phoenicians, fleeing from the nearby island of Mozia, but the name is nowadays linked more readily to the sweet dessert wine "marsala", which brought the English families to the island in the 18th century, the various Whitakers, Inghams, Woodhouses.

Today one can reach the small island of Mozia by boat, and in the peace and quiet admire what remains of one of three most important Phoenician centres in Sicily.

Route 9 - From Marsala to Salemi and Segesta

Western regions... among vineyards and ancient villages



The route through the province of Trapani starts from the coast and extends eastwards towards the interior. Leaving the sea behind you, the route measures 70 km, which can be covered in two stages, with a rest in Salemi.

The gradient ranges between 80 and 540 m a.s.l.; at the beginning the maximum height is in Salemi (450 m a.s.l.), but between Salemi and Segesta it reaches a height of 490 m a.s.l. in the town of Vita. The route ends up in Segesta (350 m a.s.l.).

Description of the route

From the centre of Marsala, the main church behind you, in Piazza della Repubblica, enter via XI Maggio, continuing as far as the intersection with via Amendola: proceed as far as via Pascasino, and then as far as Corso Gramsci, turning into via Castelvetroano.

On this corner there is a petrol station: enter via Castelvetroano and, going over the railway bridge, carry straight on past the set of traffic lights.

At the petrol station on your left, there is via Vita, directly opposite the petrol station.

Turn into via Vita and at the roundabout, after about 1.1 km, go straight on. A further 1.2 km will take you to a "T" junction.

Turn left into via Salemi (SS 188). Cycle along this street for about 900 m as far as house number 309 (on the left) then turn left on to the SP24.

At the beginning of the SP24, on the right corner there is a marble sign that says: "Contrada Cardilla".

From this point you'll be heading inland, towards Marsala at first, and then towards Salemi, avoiding the traffic on the SS 188 and cycling through the countryside, among vineyards, olive trees and little stone cottages.

Not long after turning off you will go through Contrada Misilla, one of the last towns before Salemi. After a further 2.2 km take the turning for Paceco-Castelvetroano (ignore signs to Marsala-Salemi, which take you to the SS 188); this direction will be confirmed after another 200m by the presence of a little church on your left.

Be careful: this road has very few road-signs, so we advise you to follow the directions given in this guide very carefully (in the section: "Description of the route")

After exactly 1 km ignore the turning right and go straight on.

After 1.2 km turn right downhill towards "Paceco-Castelvetroano SP 8".

After a little more than 2 km there is a crossroads: go straight on, following signs to "Paceco-Castelvetroano SP 8".

After 1.7 km you come to the ruins of an ancient farming village (baglio): it is the Baglio Rinazzo, now unfortunately reduced to the role of sheepfold.

Turn right, towards "Paceco-Castelvetroano SP 8" and, 200 m further on, ignore the turning to





"Bagli"

These are groups of buildings in the middle of the countryside, and along your route; they are typical of Trapani and were originally used as storehouses for crops and dwelling places for the workers.

They were almost all built between the 17th and 18th centuries, and some have now been restored and have been transformed into centres of wine production in an area of some renown in this field.

"Marsala-Salemi" on your right.

After 900m the road becomes a dirt-road for about 2.5 km; that's why you need a hybrid bike on this route. Stick to this direction; even though the road is unsurfaced, it does have road-signs.

Ignore the turning left which takes you to a bridge, almost 1 km from the beginning of the dirt road.

At the "T" junction turn left towards "Paceco-Castelvetrano SP 8".

After 4.6 km there is a "T" junction with a STOP sign: turn right in the direction of "Marsala-

Salemi" and immediately after take the road on your left.

You are about to embark on a stretch with variable gradients, and, for the most part, uphill. It will take you to Salemi (about 450 m a.s.l.), avoiding busy roads.

After 7.1 km ignore the turn-offs, initially left, and then right, 100 m further on, taking you to "Ex Birgi". Go on uphill..

At the crossroads after 3 km, turn right towards Salemi.

A short uphill stretch will take you through the Ulmi town centre. Soon after, down a gentle descent, you'll reach the junction with the SS 188. Turn left towards Salemi. A further 2 km or less will take you to Piazza Libertà.

In the second leg of the route there are a few steep uphill stretches, particularly enticing for whoever might like to go on a short (but fun!) detour from Salemi, with a series of demanding ups and downs.

As stated in the introduction it is quite possible to divide the trip into two stages.

To Segesta

With piazza Libertà behind you, enter via Marsala (the one you've already come along), slightly uphill.

After 1 km ignore the turning right towards Palermo and proceed towards Trapani-Marsala.

After a further 1.3 km turn right uphill. The point is easily recognisable as there are several shops near the turning.

Go on uphill for 1.6 km (a steep climb) At the fork turn right downhill.

A little less than 200 m further on, turn left downhill. At this fork there isn't any road-sign.

After a little less than 2 km you come to a "T"

junction with a STOP sign: turn right towards Vita.

After a little more than 3 km, along a route with a variable gradient, proceed downhill. Pass the crossroads and enter via Libertà, one of the roads into Vita, a little agricultural village founded by Vito Siccomio in 1606, and partially damaged by the 1968 earthquake.

If you don't want to enter the town of Vita, and wish to go directly to Segesta, turn left, following signs for Domingo.

From Vita to Domingo/Segesta the road is sometimes uphill. At the fork outside Vita go straight towards Domingo.

Once again you'll be enchanted by the magnificent views; in front of you there is the Montagna Grande and on your right the Monte Baronia. The lake you've just seen is the Lake Rubino.

5 km after the fork outside Vita go past a quarry, and at the "T" junction turn left uphill towards Trapani.

At a roadmen's house on your right, turn right towards Bruca.

After about 5 km downhill you will have crossed the A29 motorway and at the fork immediately after, turn right towards Bruca/Segesta.

Continue downhill. After less than 2 km turn right towards Segesta.

After 4.7 km, on your left, there is a level crossing and the turning for Castellammare; go straight on towards Segesta, a little further on the left, before passing under the motorway; there is a refreshment point. It is less than 2 km to the archaeological site of Segesta.

Salemi

For the Arabs it was Salem, the place of delights. Their successors, the Normans, built the castle one can still visit today in piazza Alicia.

The festivities of san Biagio and san Giuseppe are particularly important here, with the tradition of baking hard wheat bread, at harvest-time, in memory of past famines.

There are areas of great natural beauty such as the nature reserves "riserva della foce del fiume Belice e dune limitrofe", and the "Zingaro".

Segesta

On arrival you will see the imposing Doric temple standing on top of a hill; this is one of the best preserved Greek archaeological sites and one of the most widely-recognised images of Sicily.

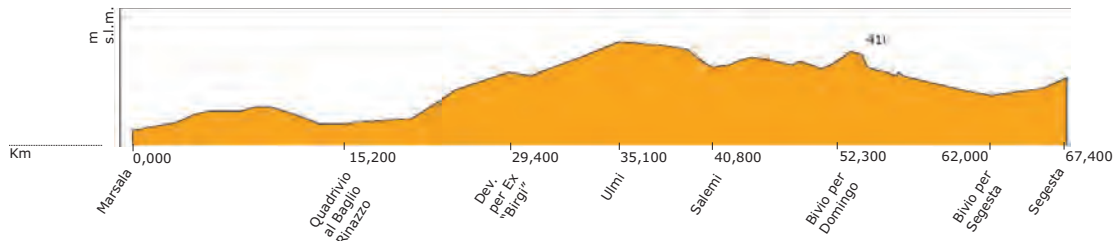
Partly carved out of the mountain-side, and not far away, is the Greek theatre. Begun around 450b.c., and continued by the Greeks, it is not clear whether the theatre was ever completed.

Yet one can't help asking oneself if the beauty of the surroundings wasn't a prime requisite for the choice of these ancient sites!

Technical information

Departing point:.....Marsala
Arrival:.....Segesta
Road:.....asphalt/dirt
Bike:.....hybrid
Length:.....km 67,400
For who:.....keen cyclists
Gradient:.....m 825
Level of difficulty:.....***
Refreshment areas:.....None

Route 9 - Gradient



Useful information

A.A.P.I.T. Trapani

Via San Francesco D'Assisi, 27 - Trapani
Tel: +39 0923 545511 - Fax: +39 0923 29430
www.aptr.trapani.it - apttp@aptr.trapani.it

Tourist office:

Piazza Saturno - Trapani
Tel: +39 0934 29000 Fax: +39 0923 24004

Tourist office - Comune di Marsala

Via XI Maggio, 100 - Marsala
Tel: +39 0923 714097 - Fax: +39 0923 598666
www.comunemarsala.it - comunemarsala@comune-marsala.it

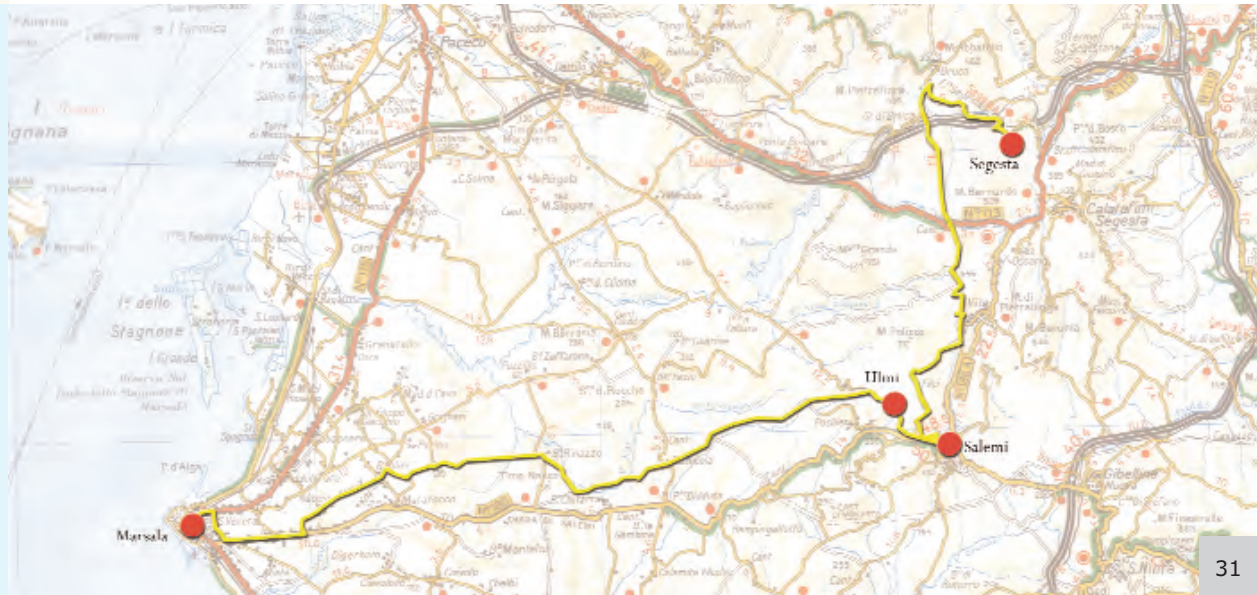
How to reach Marsala

By car: A29 Palermo-Mazara del Vallo Motorway towards Trapani. Exit Marsala and proceed along the SS 115 Trapani - Marsala.

By bus: from Trapani: AST-Azienda Siciliana Trasporti www.aziendasicilianatrasporti.it - 840 000323;

from Agrigento: Autolinee Lumia www.autolineelumia.it
Phone: + 39 0922 20414;

from Palermo: Salemi Autoservizi www.autoservizisalemi.it
Phone: +39 0923 981120.



Bibliography

- . Alfredo Oriani *La Bicicletta* Longo Editore Ravenna 2002;
- . Enrico Caracciolo *Vacanze in bicicletta, dalla gita al viaggio a tappe* Touring Club Italiano;
- . Touring Club Italiano Sicilia Milano 1989
- . Gilda Messina, Lina Stramondo *Le riserve naturali gestite dall'azienda regionale foreste demaniali* Edizioni Arbor Palermo 2002
- . Touring Club of Italy *Sicily. A complete guide to the island to its towns, monuments and incomparable landscapes* Touring Club srl 1997
- . Istituto Comprensivo Giovanni XXIII di Marianopoli, classe IIA a.s. 2000/2001. *Per antiche strade. Marianopoli, Viaggio nella memoria*
- . Istituto Geografico De Agostini. *Sicilia Archeologica, vicende preistoriche e storiche*. Novara 1991
- . Francesco Alaimo. *Natura e paesaggio nella provincia di Agrigento*. Fabio Orlando editore Pa 2003
- . Giuseppe Lo Jacono in *Kalós-arte in Sicilia*, anno 10 n. 1 Genn/Febb. 1998 Edizioni Ariete Pa 1998
- . Ignazio Alessi-Giuseppe Vaccaro. *Nel regno sicano di Kokalos-Sant'Angelo Muxaro, natura archeologia e storia*. Comune di Sant'Angelo Muxaro
- e Banca di Credito Cooperativo di San Biagio Platani
- . Francesco Alaimo. *Parco dei Nebrodi*. Fabio Orlando Editore Pa1998
- . Touring Club Italiano *Catania e provincia* Mi Aprile 2000
- . Vincenzo Consolo *Di qua dal faro* Mondadori
- . *Aidone e Morgantina* Edizioni Ariete Pa 1999
- . Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa *Il Gattopardo*
- . Fondazione "Giuseppe Whitaker" I Whitaker di Villa Malfitano. Atti a cura di Rosario Lentini e Pietro Silvestri Palermo 16-18 Marzo 1995

SPECIAL THANKS TO

- Val di Kam for his help in developing the Agrigento itinerary
- Sergio Lo Giudice, of the Piazza Armerina forestry, for his help with the Enna itinerary