

**COVER-TO-COVER
UPDATE**

**#1 NEW YORK TIMES
BESTSELLER**



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REVISED SECOND EDITION

A TRAVELER'S LIFE LIST

by **PATRICIA SCHULTZ**

and a good base for the 5-to-6-hour round-trip climb up the volcano.

WARRIO: Vulcano, the island closest to Sicily, is 22 miles/35 km off the north shore. **HOTEL RASA:** Tel 39090-963013; www.hotelrasa.it. Cost: from \$210 (off-peak), from \$350 (peak). When: closed mid-Oct-mid-Apr. **HOTEL QUARTARA:** Tel 39090-963027; www.quartarahotel.com. Cost: from \$210 (off-peak), from \$375 (peak). When: closed Nov-late Mar. **LA CANNA HOTELS:** Tel 39090-963056; www.

lacannahotels.it. Cost: from \$80 (off-peak), from \$250 (peak). When: closed Nov-late Apr. **HOTEL SUCREW:** Tel 39090-9634222; www.jacobigross.it. Cost: from \$180 (off-peak), from \$390 (peak). When: closed mid-Nov-mid-Mar. **LA SORRENTA PARK HOTEL:** Tel 39090-960025; www.lasorrenta.it. Cost: from \$140 (off-peak), from \$250 (peak). When: closed mid-Oct-mid-Apr. **BEST TIMES:** May-Jun and Sep for lowest crowds; Jul-Aug for scenery season.

From Sacred and Serene to Modern-Day Chaos

THE GEMS OF PALERMO

Palermo, Sicily, Italy

No other city in Europe has hosted such a variety of civilizations and waves of conquerors as Palermo, shaped by 25 centuries of tumultuous history. Examples of this rich and eclectic heritage begin with the Palazzo dei

Normanni, home to the island's 9th-century Arab rulers and transformed into a sumptuous palace (now the seat of Sicilian government) by the Normans in the 13th century but retaining its Islamic aesthetic. The palace's Cappella Palatina is completely cocooned with Byzantine mosaics, a blending of western and eastern traditions depicting humans, wild animals, and scenes from the Bible. Built in the same period, the Duomo imbibes similar influences with domes, towers, and elaborately tiled arches as does the evocative Chiesa di San Giovanni degli Ermiti (Church of St. John of the Hermit), topped with five red domes and surrounded by exotic gardens and narrow streets.

For the most breathtaking window on this unique heritage, travel 5 miles from the city center to Monreale, with its magnificent 12th-century Cathedral di Santa Maria la Nuova. Built of golden Sicilian stone by the Norman king William II on a mountaintop overlooking his capital, the cathedral is an extravagant marriage of Moorish and Norman styles, with

multicolored mosaics glorifying every centimeter of wall space. Enjoy a quiet moment in the adjacent cloisters, where no two of the 216 slender pillars are alike.

Sicily's greatest markets can be found in Palermo. Ballarò, in the Albergaria district, and Capo, behind the Teatro Massimo, are especially vibrant spectacles of merchants singing about their wares; piles of briny



The cathedral and cloister of Monreale represent the largest concentration of Arab, Byzantine, and Norman art in one place.

octopus and anchovies, mountains of fresh herbs, plump tomatoes, and glistening olives. Put together a meal from the stalls, or enjoy a taste of old Palermo at Casa del Brodo at the edge of another market, *Vaccaria*, and serving such old favorites as *frittelle di fave* (fava beans fried with cheese). At *Piccolo Napoli*, the freshest seafood is simply grilled.

The rambling 17th-century palazzo, near the marina, that was home to Prince Giuseppe Tomasi Lampedusa, author of *The Leopard*, is now the inviting *Butera 26*. The prince's adoptive son and daughter-in-law, the Duke and Duchess of Palma, house guests in nine spacious and comfortable apartments, host dinners, and arrange city tours and cooking lessons. In the heart of the old town, the six-room BR22 infuses an old palazzo with modern flair. Stop for a drink at the graceful *Villa Igea*,

an Art Nouveau *deyranu*-turned-hotel, on the bay 2 miles north of the city center. Old world charm permeates the lush seaside gardens and spacious guest rooms amash in Sicilian charm.

VISITOR INFO: www.palermotourism.com. **PALAZZO 882 NORMANNE and CAPPELLA PALATINA:** Tel. 39091-705-1111. **CASA DEL BRODO:** Tel. 39091-321-1655; www.casadelbrodo.it. **Cost:** dinner \$30. **PICCOLO NAPOLI:** Tel. 39091-320-431. **Cost:** dinner \$50. **BUTERA 26:** Tel. 390333-016-5432; www.butera26.it. **Cost:** double occupancy apartments from \$85. **BR22:** Tel. 39091-320214; www.br22.it. **Cost:** from \$145. **VILLA IGEA:** Tel. 39091-631-2111; in the U.S., 888-814-2010; www.villa-igea.com. **Cost:** from \$170. **When:** Nov-late Dec and early Jan-mid-Mar. **Best times:** Holy Week (week before Easter); around Jul 15 for processions and celebrations honoring patron St. Rosalia.

Splendid Monuments of the Ancient World

SICILY'S GREEK TEMPLES

Sicily, Italy

The Greek colonists who began arriving on the coastal areas of the southern Italian peninsula and the island of Sicily in the 8th century B.C. brought with them their Hellenic politics and culture and expanded their

civilization to include what became known as Magna Graecia. At the southeastern tip of Sicily, in Siracusa, which once rivaled Athens



Agrigento's Temple of Concordia served as a church dedicated to Saints Peter and Paul in the Middle Ages.

in power and splendor, a Greek presence remains in the amazingly well-preserved Teatro Greco, which stages classic plays each summer. Other important landmarks are preserved in the nearby Parco Archeologico.

On the small island of Ortigia, in Siracusa's harbor, the Baroque *Duomo* incorporates the thick columns of an ancient temple of Athena. Checking into the nearby *Algha Ortigia Charm Hotel*, in an old seaside palace, pots, guests and waterside promenades, medieval lanes, and palazzo-rimmed piazzas—and close to *Don Camillo*, serving some of Sicily's most delicious seafood in a 17th-century palazzo.

In Agrigento, the Greeks erected a string