



# Malta & Sicily

ISLANDS OF THE ANCIENT MEDITERRANEAN



WORLD AFFAIRS  
COUNCIL OF  
PHILADELPHIA  
& PARTNERS

May 1-11, 2026



### Maria Zammit

Maria Zammit has been part of the World Affairs Council system since 1989, serving in leadership roles such as Executive Director and President of the World Affairs Council of Greater Hampton Roads, as well as Secretary and Vice Chairman of the national World Affairs Councils of America. She has led Council delegations to Morocco, Vietnam, Malta to Rome via Sicily, India, Iran, and Sri Lanka. Earlier, she worked in Washington, D.C. as Assistant Director for Policy Analysis at Public Strategies and as an assistant to Ambassador Richard C. Holbrooke. She has published in the SAIS Review, Asian Wall Street Journal, and Virginian-Pilot, and served on several local boards. She holds an M.A. from Johns Hopkins SAIS.



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### Dear Council Travelers,

The Mediterranean's marvelous, multifaceted character comes alive on this enriching, nine-night journey to Malta and Sicily! Shaped by a mosaic of cultures, these beautiful islands between Europe and northern Africa abound with extraordinary treasures. Stand in awe of illustrious monuments of antiquity, from Malta's prehistoric architectural wonders to Sicily's resplendent ruins that exemplify the pinnacle of the Greek and Roman civilizations.

Over four nights in Sliema, Malta, and five nights in Taormina, Sicily, revel in Valletta's baroque splendor and Taormina's timeless allure. Enjoy guided strolls in the charming, ancient Maltese towns of Mdina and Rabat as well as lovely Ortygia, the historic heart of Syracuse, Sicily. Along the way, indulge in the Mediterranean's acclaimed cuisine and learn about enduring traditions like Sicilian pizza making and Maltese sea salt farming.

It's an exceptional experience packed with must-see attractions and enhanced with rich insights from knowledgeable local guides and lecturers. Throughout your travels, a professional Travel Director manages the details, leaving you more time to savor each day's adventures and the camaraderie of your small group.

Space on this wonderful, well-rounded program will fill quickly, so reserve your place today. The historic grandeur of Malta and Sicily awaits you!

Sincerely,

Andrew Haught  
Director of Travel  
World Affairs Council of Philadelphia

#### UNESCO World Heritage

1. **The City of Valletta, Malta**
2. **Megalithic Temples of Malta**
3. **Late Baroque Towns of the Val di Noto, Italy**
4. **Villa Romana del Casale, Italy**
5. **Syracuse, Italy**
6. **Archaeological Area of Agrigento, Italy**



*Hagar Qim temple*

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# Discovery begins here



Small in size but bursting with historic riches, the captivating islands of Malta and Sicily will reward you with unforgettable memories on this nine-night adventure! Discover the splendid cultural legacy of these sun-bleached lands at the crossroads of the Mediterranean, sought after and conquered by numerous civilizations since antiquity. It's a fascinating exploration that reveals their richly layered stories, striking natural beauty and incomparable treasures.

*Top: Temple of Concordia, Agrigento*

*Above: Maltese fishing boats*

*Cover: Valletta | Mail panel: Ancient theater of Taormina with views of Mount Etna*

## Inspiring Moments



- Take in the stately medieval and baroque architecture along the intimate streets of **Valletta**, Malta's capital.
- Appreciate the glorious ruins of Sicily's renowned ancient cities of **Agrigento** and **Syracuse**.
- Delve into Roman aristocratic life through the spectacular, world-class **mosaics of Villa Romana del Casale**.
- Behold the intriguing Neolithic temples of **Hagar Qim** and **Ggantija**, older than the Great Pyramids and Stonehenge.
- Feel transported through time within the beautiful and colorful Maltese towns of **Mdina** and **Rabat**.
- Savor the breathtaking scenery and chic ambience of **Taormina**, Sicily's celebrated resort town perched on a hilltop.
- Experience six **UNESCO World Heritage sites**.



St. John's Co-Cathedral, Valletta

Day 1 | In Transit

Depart your gateway city for Valletta, Malta. 🌐

Day 2 | Valletta, Malta | Sliema

Upon arrival, transfer ➡ to Sliema and check in to the AX The Palace. Tonight, meet your fellow travelers at a Welcome Reception and Dinner.

Day 3 | Valletta

**Enrichment:** *History of Malta.*

**Valletta.** Over a history spanning almost 8,000 years, Malta has been ruled by the Phoenicians, Romans, Byzantines, Arabs, the Order of St. John and the British, among others. In 1566, the Knights of the Order of St. John built this magnificent, fortified city between two natural harbors. On a guided walk within this UNESCO World Heritage site, admire stunning views over the Grand Harbor from the Upper Barrakka Gardens. Then, visit Valletta’s crown jewel, the St. John’s Co-Cathedral, featuring a dazzling interior and Caravaggio’s masterpiece, “The Beheading of John the Baptist.” Next, tour the elegant Casa Rocca Piccola, a 16th-century noble house. Enjoy lunch at a restaurant later.

**Free Time:** The rest of the day is yours to plan.

Day 4 | Mdina | Rabat | Hagar Qim

**Mdina & Rabat.** Largely car-free, Malta’s walled ancient capital of Mdina is known as the Silent City. Pass through the regal city gate and stroll along its enchanting lanes to see handsome noble houses and St. Paul’s Cathedral. On a walk in nearby Rabat, visit the Domus Romana, a museum on the site of a Roman house.

Relish lunch, then set off for the southern coast.

**Hagar Qim Temples.** Malta boasts some of the world’s oldest free-standing stone buildings, a group of megalithic temples recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage site. Dating from 3600-3200 B.C., these astounding structures were built before the advent of metal tools and the introduction of the wheel. Marvel at the Hagar Qim temple-complex with your guide.

**Free Time:** Return to the hotel for leisure time.

Day 5 | Ggantija | Victoria | Xwejni Bay

**Island of Gozo.** Journey by ferry to this scenic island in the Maltese archipelago for a guided tour of another of Malta’s megalithic gems, the Ggantija temple-complex, more than 5,500 years old and named for a fabled female giant. In Gozo’s capital, Victoria, head up to the atmospheric, fortified Cittadella above the city for a guided stroll. Later, learn how a local family uses centuries-old methods to collect,

Cittadella, Victoria







Ortygia, Syracuse

dry and store sea salt from a patchwork pattern of rock-cut salt pans along the shore of Xwejni Bay. Afterward, return by ferry to Malta.

**Free Time:** Your evening in Sliema is at leisure.

#### Day 6 | Embark ferry | Pozzallo, Italy | Piazza Armerina | Taormina

Check out this morning for the ferry to Sicily. After disembarking, enjoy a panoramic drive with views of Caltagirone in the Val di Noto on your route. Stop for lunch in Piazza Armerina.

**Sicily's Mosaic Masterpieces.** Study some of the most superb Roman mosaics in the world at Villa Romana del Casale, a UNESCO World Heritage site. This villa from the fourth century A.D. features more than 40 impeccably crafted floors with intricate scenes of heroes, hunting, circus games, female athletes and much more. Continue to Taormina and check in to the Eurostars Monte Tauro.

**Free Time:** Find a nice spot for dinner in town.

#### Day 7 | Taormina

**Taormina.** Meander with your guide through

Detail of mosaics, Villa Romana del Casale



this fashionable hillside resort town and see its medieval landmarks. Visit the famous Greek theater that offers stellar vistas of the Ionian Sea and majestic Mount Etna in the distance.

**AHI Connects | Pizza Cooking Demo.** Get great tips for preparing authentic Sicilian pizza during a demonstration, then dig in for lunch!

**Enrichment: Sicilian Culture & Traditions.**

Dine with your group tonight in Taormina.

#### Day 8 | Syracuse

**Syracuse.** Take in the Greek theater and the Roman amphitheater of this influential ancient Mediterranean city, then explore Latomia del Paradiso, a former limestone quarry, and the Ear of Dionysius, famed for its acoustics. After a stop to view Caravaggio's "The Burial of St. Lucy" at the Basilica Santa Lucia, walk along the picturesque lanes of Ortygia, Syracuse's island old town, a UNESCO World Heritage

Ear of Dionysius, Neapolis Archaeological Park, Syracuse





site. Visit the baroque Cathedral of Syracuse in the Piazza del Duomo on your guided stroll.

### Day 9 | Agrigento

After breakfast, depart for southwest Sicily.

**Agrigento's Valley of the Temples.** One of the most outstanding archaeological sites in the Mediterranean, the Valley is a showcase of the world's finest and best-preserved Greek temples. Be awed by the Doric temples of Concordia, Juno, Hercules and others on a tour of this UNESCO World Heritage site.

### Day 10 | Taormina

**Free Time:** Choose to join today's Elective Activity or craft your own agenda in Taormina.

**Elective | Mount Etna.** Get an up-close look at Europe's largest active volcano! Walk along the Silvestri craters and see the lava fields at this UNESCO World Heritage site. Gather for a Farewell Reception and Dinner.

### Day 11 | In Transit

Transfer to the airport in Catania for the return flight to your gateway city.

Note: Itinerary may change due to local conditions.

Flights and transfers included for AHI FlexAir participants.

Elective experiences available at an additional cost.

## Active Travel

This **Active Program** is designed for people who are in good health and can comfortably participate in a demanding daily schedule of physical activities. For more details, please call or visit our website.

### Excursions on this program require:

- walking on cobblestones, unpaved paths and uneven surfaces
- getting on and off motor coaches
- walking on steep inclines/declines and up and down stairs

## Included Features



### Accommodations (with baggage handling)

- **4 nights** in Sliema, Malta, at the first-class AX The Palace.
- **5 nights** in Taormina, Italy, at the first-class Eurostars Monte Tauro.

### Transfers (with baggage handling)

- All transfers in the Land Program: ferries and deluxe motor coaches.

### Extensive Meal Program

- 9 breakfasts, 6 lunches and 3 dinners, including Welcome and Farewell Dinners; tea or coffee with all meals, plus wine with dinner.

### Your One-of-a-Kind Journey

- **Small group:** Sized just right at 28 guests.
- **Enrichment by expert speakers** enhances your insight into the region.
- **Engaging excursions** showcase the local culture, heritage and history.
- **Elective** and free time to pursue your individual interests.
- **AHI Connects:** Local immersion.
- Welcome and Farewell Receptions to mingle with fellow travelers.
- A personal VOX headset to hear your English-speaking guide clearly.
- Tipping of guides and drivers.
- Complimentary travel mementos.
- **AHI Sustainability Promise:** We strive to make a positive impact wherever we travel.

Old town, Mdina





*Piazza del Duomo, Syracuse*



*Mdina, walled ancient capital of Malta*



*Salt pans along the shore of Xwejni Bay*



*Piazza IX Aprile, Taormina*



# 2026 | Departure Details

## Program Dates

**Travel dates** ✈ **May 1-11, 2026**

✈ Travel dates include any overnights required for international travel. These dates may vary depending on air schedules.

**Tour dates\*** **May 2-11, 2026**

\* Tour dates begin on the scheduled arrival date at your destination and end on the scheduled departure date from your destination.

## Land Program

<b>Full Price</b>	<b>\$5,945</b>
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<b>Special Savings</b>	<b>\$750</b>
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<b>Special Savings Price*</b>	<b>\$5,195</b>
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**\*This Special Savings Price includes our \$250 Early Booking and \$500 Pay-in-Full discounts and is valid if you book by the date on the address panel and pay in full at booking.**

Deposit amount is \$750 per person.  
Final Payment is due at least 120 days prior to departure.  
Price includes applicable program taxes (such as VAT and port charges).  
All prices quoted are in USD, per person, based on double occupancy and do not include air transportation costs (unless otherwise stated).  
Special offers, promotions and discounts cannot be combined.  
Single accommodations are an additional \$1,695 (limited availability).

**Please note:** Program-specific terms and conditions are available at <https://worlda.ahitravel.com/destinations/1927A?schoold=235>.

## AHI FlexAir

### Let us arrange your flights

Our experts are ready to assist you in booking flights. Our personalized air program offers the following advantages:

- **price guarantee** to protect you from fuel surcharge increases after ticket purchase
- arrival and departure **transfers** on group dates
- **flexibility** to change or cancel your reservation before departure on most flights (Fees may apply.)
- **assistance** in the event of schedule changes or delays

## AHI Travel Expertise

**Travel Consultants** assist with the reservation process.

**Travel & Air Coordinators** offer their personalized assistance with flights, electives and special requests.

**Travel Information** provides pre-departure details and enrichment about your destination.

**Your Travel Director**, a seasoned, multilingual professional, manages daily logistics so you enjoy a seamless experience.

**Handpicked Expert Guides and Knowledgeable Lecturers** deepen your appreciation for the region and its history, culture and current events.



# Accommodations

Our travel experts have carefully selected these first-class hotels for their prime locations within these vibrant towns in Malta and Sicily. During your stay at each property, delight in friendly, attentive care from the professional staff. Of utmost importance is the superior quality of their services, amenities and accommodations.



**AX The Palace |** Sliema



**Eurostars Monte Tauro |** Taormina



*View of Sliema from AX The Palace Hotel*

*Maltese balconies, Sliema*



Book your journey today!

800-942-5004

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