

**Hearth of Sicily**  
An 8- days cycling tour

**Code tour:** ITSIC04C



This cycling tour will skirt the fabulous Tyrrhenian coastline of western Sicily for the most part but it will also allow you to discover the inland through a countryside with olive trees, vineyards and historical sites.

You will be cycling through Val di Mazara, one of the three administrative emirates into which the island was split during the Arab domination. In this area, the highlights are numerous; the archaeological site of Segesta, Trapani and Marsala with its evocative landscape made of saltpans and old windmills. The wine-town Marsala is an excellent place to enjoy the beaches, fresh seafood and the gorgeous Marsala wines. You will make a walk along the rugged and rocky coast of the Natural Reserve dello Zingaro. Small beaches will invite you to take sun and swim in the refreshing seawater. A small museum in the reserve tells you everything about tuna fishing, for a long time the most important economic business in this part of Sicily. The last stretch you cycle from Mazara del Vallo, a renowned fishing port town with a strong Arabic influence to Selinunte with its beautiful beaches and spectacular Greek ruins. Selinunte, on the southwestern coast of Sicily was an important Greek colony. The archaeological site covers 40 ha. and contains the acropolis and many temples.

## Sicilia



**Period:** Every Saturday from 15 January till 26 November 2024 (with min. 4 pax also other starting dates are possible)

**Participants:** minimum 2 persons. (Solo traveller on request)

### Level: 2,5

You cycle on flat surface or in slight hilly landscape. Steeper climbs are short and longer climbs not to steep. The route follows mainly less frequented secondary roads. On day 2 and 3 the ascent and descent is significant, the following days the stretches are more flat. You need bike experience and a good physical condition. Daily distances between 25 km / 15,5 miles and 56 Km / 35 miles. Depending on your personal preference and fitness, on day 4, 6 and 7 you can choose between two different tracks varying in elevation profile and/or distance covered. Total km: min 217 km/135 miles max 256 km/159 miles

### Program in short:

Day 1 Arrival in Castellamare del Golfo

Day 2 Walking excursion in the 'Reserva Zingaro' (28 km/17 mi cycling & 14 km/9 mi hiking)

Day 3 Castellammare - Trapani (57 km / 35,4 mi)

Day 4 Erice or Favignana (37 km/23 mi or 25 km/15,5 mi)

Day 5 Trapani - Marsala (43 km / 26,7 mi)

Day 6 Marsala - Mazara del Vallo (30 km / 18,6 mi or 50 km / 31 mi)

Day 7 Mazara del Vallo - Selinunte (35 km / 21,7 mi or 41 km / 25,4 mi)

## Day 8 End of tour

### Program day by day

#### Day 1 Individual arrival in Castellammare del Golfo

Arrival in Castellammare del Golfo, a lovely portal town, whose origins are dating back to Classic Antique Times, when it functioned as the harbor of Segesta and Erice. Bike fitting and handing over of tour documents.

Overnight with breakfast in Castellammare del Golfo

#### Day 2 Scopello: walking excursion in the 'Riserva dello Zingaro'

From Castellammare you start to cycle to the wonderful Nature Reserve "Zingaro". Only a few kilometers from the pretty village of Scopello, stretches. You will have the chance to explore it on foot allowing yourself to linger on all the aromas and scents which this untamed landscape has to offer.

Trekking along its undulating footpath you will find yourself between two very different scenes: on one side the enchanting view of the Tyrrhenian sea, with its coves and bays (calette) where you can swim and snorkel in the limpid water, on the other, the vibrancy and colours of the flora and fauna typical of this mountainous environment. On the way back you can visit Scopello, a 17<sup>th</sup> century village. Around its small square, you will find most of the houses and shops of the entire village. The old tuna fishery is situated few kilometers away onto a promontory overlooking the crystalline waters of the Tyrrhenian Sea. Bring your bathing suite. There are some nice beaches in the park.

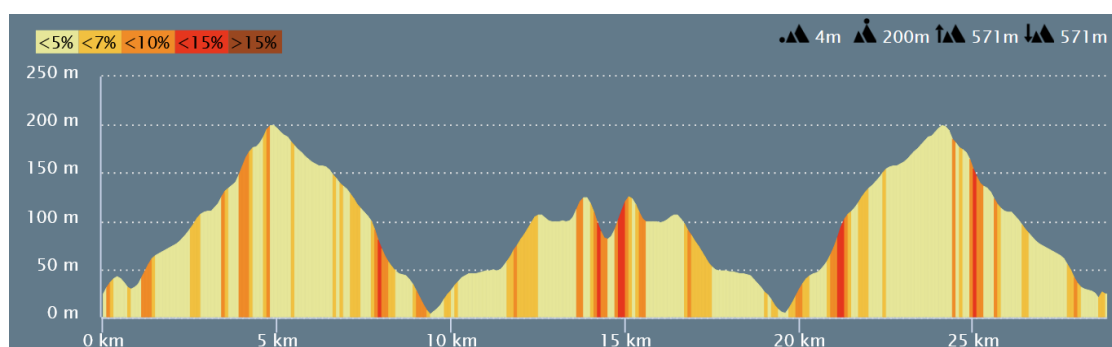
Overnight with breakfast in Castellammare del Golfo

Distance by bike: 28 km / 17 mi

Ascent & Descent: + 571m – 571m

Distance on foot: 14 km / 9 mi

Walking time: 4 hrs



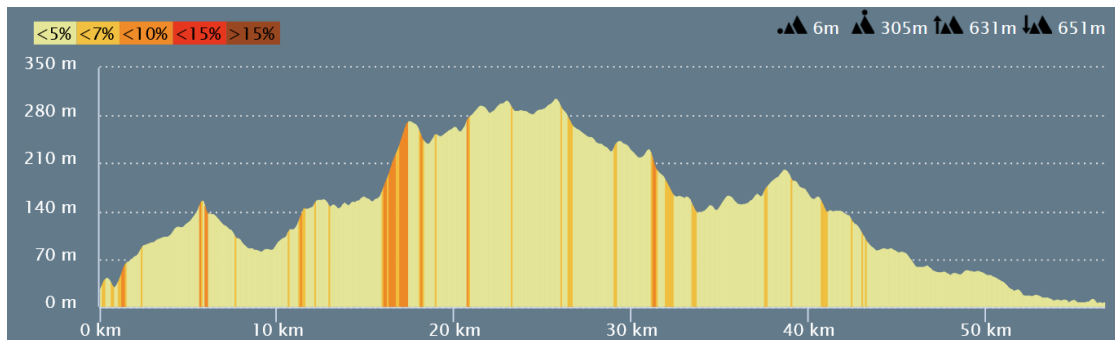
#### Day 3 Castellammare – Segesta – Trapani

After a last admiring of the fabulous gulf of Castellammare your ride takes to the hinterland of the Sicilian countryside full of olive trees and vineyards. Pedalling through this landscape, with alternating ascents to flat parts, you will reach the archaeological site of Segesta, an ancient city founded by the Elymians more than 2500 years ago. From here, following secondary country roads, you will finally arrive in Trapani, known in Sicily as the city of Salt.

Overnight with breakfast in Trapani

Distance: 57 km / 35,4 mi

Ascent & Descent: + 631m – 651m



#### Day 4 Erice or Favignana

Today you can choose between two options, which are very different one from another but both very attractive. You may decide to visit Erice, an old medieval village perched onto its homonym hill rising 750 meters asl, which you can reach either by cable car or cycling. From Trapani 11 kilometers of hairpin bends separate you from its summit, where you can enjoy a stunning view stretching all the way to the Egadi islands.

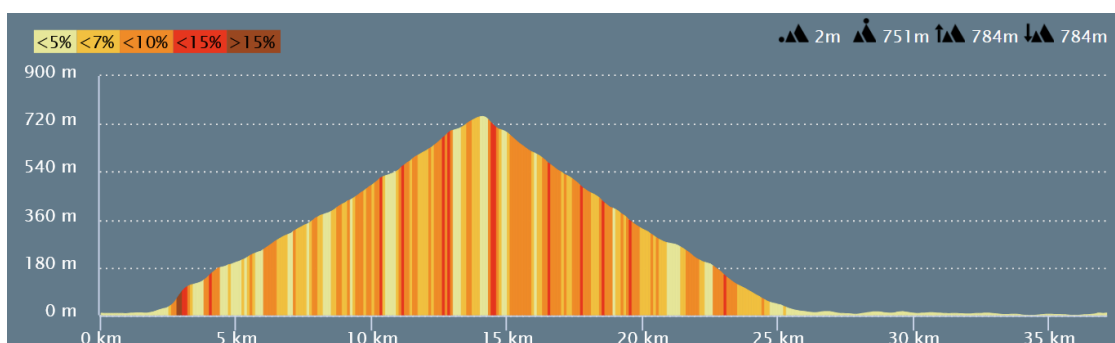
Or you could choose to spend a day relaxing in Favignana, the largest of the Egadi islands which you can reach by ferry or hydrofoil. It will certainly not disappoint you with its beautiful calette and its seafaring atmosphere. The best way to explore Favignana is by bike!

Overnight with breakfast in Trapani

Distance to Erice: 37 km / 23 mi

Distance to Favignana: 25 km / 15,5 mi

Ascent & Descent to Erice: + 784m – 784m



#### Day 5 Trapani – Marsala along the salt way

Today a flat ride along the beautiful coastline. Windmills, salt pans and mounds of freshly extracted salt will be the backdrop of this an unmatched landscape. You will also have the chance to visit Mothia Island, the ancient cradle of Phoenician- Punic civilization; can be reached by motorboat from the lagoon within few minutes.

Today's stage ends in Marsala, a beautiful sea town where a special liqueur, the "Marsala" is produced and where Garibaldi landed with his expedition of the Thousand.

Overnight with breakfast in Marsala

Distance: 43 km / 26,7 mi

Ascent & Descent: + 122m – 112m



### Day 6 Marsala - Mazara del Vallo

Today's stage continues along the enchanting Tyrrhenian coastline until it winds inland through the typical countryside of these parts of Sicily. There are numerous vineyards and bagli (big old farm centers). The route will end in Mazara del Vallo, seat of the most important Italian fishing fleet and located at the mouth of the river Mazaro, which divides the town in two.

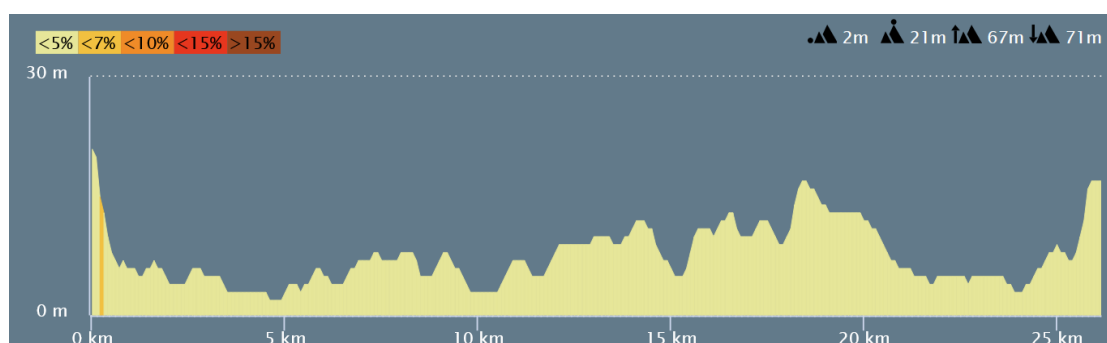
The Arab influence is dominant as you can see when you stroll through the narrow alleyways of the Kasbah (Arabic quarter) with its bright colours and powerful scents, that you will be reminded of the African continent just across the sea.

#### Shorter route:

Overnight with breakfast in Mazara del Vallo

Distance: 30 km / 18,6 mi

Ascent & Descent: + 67m – 71m

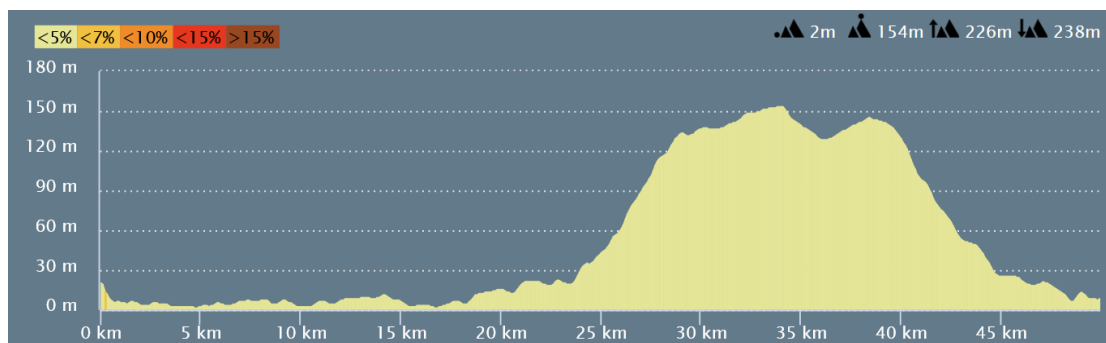


#### Longer route:

Overnight with breakfast in Mazara del Vallo

Distance: 50 km / 31 mi

Ascent & Descent: + 226m – 238m



### Day 7 Mazara del Vallo – Selinunte

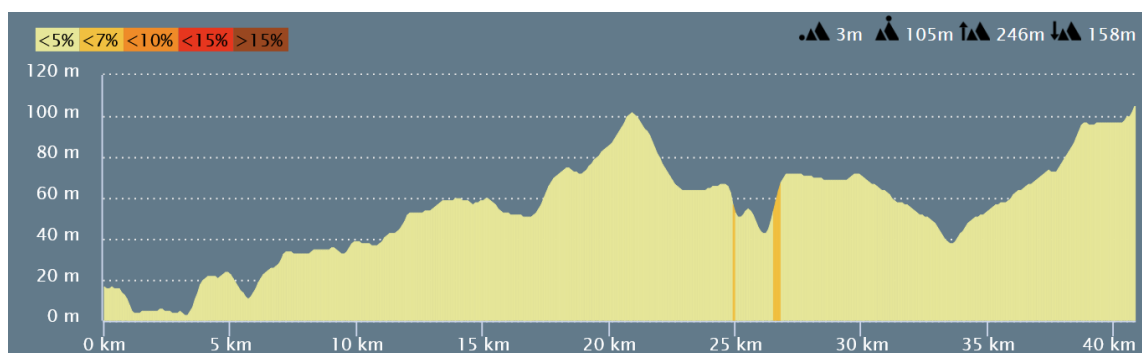
After leaving Mazara, you will continue along a road, which runs a kilometer parallel to the coast and will take you to the Nature Reserve “Lago Preola e Gorgi tondi”. Immersed in a valley, a series of small lakes of karstic origins will appear to you without warning. Anyone passionate of the fauna and flora typical of swamps will find it rewarding.

Riding on a hilly road in direction of Campobello di Mazara, you pass the Cave di Cusa, from where all the material, used to build the temples of Selinunte, was extracted. Only 13 kilometers further down the road, you will have the opportunity to visit the archeological site of Selinunte, the ancient Greek city that will take you back a few thousand years. The archaeological park stretches for about 1.300 meters from east to west and is one of the largest and most impressive archaeological sites in the Mediterranean. On a part with pretty much anything found in Greece itself, Selinunte has lain abandoned for over 2,000 years, its numerous temples, acropolis and agora in dignified ruins. Relax and swim at Selinunte’s beaches.

Overnight with breakfast in Selinunte

Distance: 35 km / 22 mi or 41 km / 25,4 mi

Ascent & Descent: + 246m – 158m



### Day 8: Departure

Breakfast and end of our services.

#### Hotels:

\*\*\*, \*\*\*\* stars hotels or B&B of same level

#### Price per person 2023

Double room € 835

In Single room	€ 1.085
Travelling alone	€ 1.235
Surcharge High season (July/ August)	€ 130
Supplement Half Board	€ 250
Bike rental hybrid bike	€ 120
Bike rental e-bike	€ 190

Transfer per person, min 2 persons (to be paid on site / 4 or more people price on request):

Palermo airport – Castellammare € 35

Selinunte –Palermo airport € 60

For arrivals after 10 pm a supplement of € 5 p.p. is requested

Child reduction:

0-5 years 100%

6-10 years 50%

11-13 years 25%

**Included in the tour:**

- 7 nights with breakfast in 3 or 4 star hotels or B&B of same level
- Luggage transfer
- Assistance telephone
- Road Book in English 1 kit per room

**Not included in the tour:**

- Transfers from and to the airport
- Helmet rental
- Dinners & Lunches
- Beverages
- Local hotel taxes and extras
- All not mentioned under 'Included in the tour'



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