

escape

Time for the grand getaway—
and finally, some alone time.

Paris * Sicily * things to do

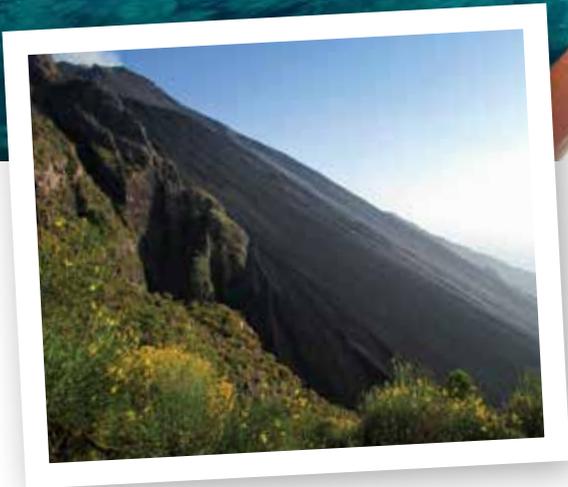


OCEAN BLUE The views are just one appeal of a trip to Sicily and the Aeolian Islands; see page 62.

The Jewel of Southern Italy

Volcanoes and *vongole* come together in a whirlwind journey through Sicily and the Aeolian Islands from luxury tour organizer Blue Parallel.

BY DANA R. BUTLER



ISLAND LIFE

A custom Sicilian adventure might include private boating near Panarea by the Aeolian Islands (above) and hiking the Stromboli volcano (left).

planning a wedding can be all-encompassing, so it can be a relief to have the legwork and organization of the honeymoon taken out of your hands. Blue Parallel has been producing breathtaking itineraries for travelers throughout Latin America for more than a decade, and the company introduced the Mediterranean a few years back.

A TAILOR-MADE TRIP TO SICILY AND ITS SURROUNDING ISLES IS FILLED WITH UNEXPECTED ENCOUNTERS AND INSIDER ACCESS TO SOME OF THE WORLD'S MOST EXCLUSIVE ATTRACTIONS AND EXPERTS. THE HISTORY OF THE REGION HAS INVOLVED 11 DIFFERENT CIVILIZATIONS, INCLUDING GREEK, ROMAN, BYZANTINE AND BAROQUE AND ALL ARE EVIDENT IN THE LANDSCAPE AND THE TRADITION.



AN ANCIENT CITY
The Basilica St. Sebastiano looms over Palazzolo Acreide.

A tailor-made trip to Sicily and its surrounding isles is filled with unexpected encounters and insider access to some of the world's most exclusive attractions and experts. Contrast the old with the new on walking tours of bustling downtown Palermo and the Norman village of Monreale. The history of the region has involved 11 different civilizations, including Greek, Roman, Byzantine and Baroque and all are evident in the landscape and the tradition.

A stunning variety of UNESCO World Heritage sites are located here, including the dramatic landscapes of the Aeolian Islands themselves and the still-active Mt. Etna. Those interested in architecture and antiquities will marvel at the Doric temples of Agrigento, the mosaics at the Villa Romana del Casale at the foot of Mont Mangone and the late Baroque towns in the wheat field- and orange grove-filled Val di Noto. With your custom travel plan, you will visit remote villages, and interact with the locals and enjoy special access to centuries-old buildings, some of which are closed to the public.

These exciting vacations are as chock full—or not—as you wish, with horseback riding, hiking, bicycle tours, boating excursions to private beaches and hidden swimming coves and helicopter flights over the volcano. And all this activity is welcome when you consider that this area's food is as rich as its history, with locally made cheeses, freshly caught seafood, olives and capers that have been produced here for ages and mineral-rich wine. These trips often include a range of personal cooking classes with world-class chefs, wine tours and tastings, bespoke menus and gourmet picnics.

The best part is that everything has already been planned, managed and handled. Accommodations include castles, vineyards and luxury estates. Expert guides are available to you 24 hours a day to answer questions and ensure stress-free days filled with stunning volcanic cliffs, quiet seaside towns, lush mountains, turquoise water and spectacular sunsets. The only difficulty will be heading home. ☹️



SNAPSHOTS OF SICILY: (Above) A charming restaurant in Marzamemi. (Below) The Cathedral of Monreale. (Bottom) Overlooking the Baroque Valley near the village Vizzini.



BLUE PARALLEL
301.263.6670
blueparallel.com