

Selim Center for Lifelong Learning
University of St. Thomas
Sicily: Exploring the Layers of History and
Rome from Antiquity to the Early Modern Era:
Legacies and Transformations
January 7 – 23, 2025

Program Direction and Academic Content to be provided by Dr. Vanca Schrunk and Bob Shoemake

Day	Date	Program Outline
1	Tuesday 07 Jan 25	Palermo. <i>Arrival flights to Palermo, Sicily under own arrangements.</i> Upon arrival to Palermo, check-in to Eurostars Centrale Palace for a two night stay in Palermo. Meet your Tour Manager who will travel with the group the entire tour. Enjoy a 3-course welcome dinner including one glass of wine per person in a local restaurant. (D)
2	Wednesday 08 Jan 25	Palermo. Start your first full day in Sicily with a morning walking tour of historical centre of Palermo, led by the group leader. You will visit the Vucciria market, Fontana Pretoria, Quattro Canti, Ballaro market, and Cathedral. In the afternoon continue with the walking tour with group leader. Visit Palazzo dei Normani and Cappella Palatina; walk to Zisa, Islamic palace & museum, entrances included. (B) <i>Whispers included for the full tour.</i>
3	Thursday 09 Jan 25	Palermo - Monreale - Selinunte - Agrigento. After breakfast check-out of the hotel and proceed to explore Sicily onboard your private touring coach. Visit the historic town of Monreale and continue to the Selinunte archaeological park with an introduction by the group leader. Lunch on own in Selinunte or on way to Agrigento. In the afternoon visit the UNESCO World Heritage site, Valley of the Temples, the site of 9 magnificent temples and the Agrigento Archaeological Museum. Upon arrival to Agrigento check-in to the Foresteria Baglio della Luna for a one-night stay. (B)
4	Friday 10 Jan 25	Agrigento - Piazza Armerina - Syracuse. Journey to Piazza Armerina, the site of a late Roman country Villa Romana del Casale with extensive, figural mosaics illustrating elite life, hunting and import of exotic animals from Africa, entrance

		included. Continue to Syracuse and upon arrival check-in to the Grand Hotel Ortigia for a two-night stay. Dinner and evening on own. (B)
5	Saturday 11 Jan 25	Syracuse. After breakfast, with depart to a morning guided walking tour led by group leader of the Neapolis Archaeological Park with the largest Greek theater in Sicily and other Greco-Roman remains. Afternoon walking tour with group leader of Ortygia with visits to Fort Maniace, the Temple of Apollo, the Cathedral (<i>incorporates a temple to Athena and has Christian, Arab and Norman phases</i>), the Mikveh of Siracusa, the Fountain of Arethusa and excavated remains of a temple of Artemis. (B)
6	Sunday 12 Jan 25	Syracuse – Catania - Taormina. Check-out of the hotel and proceed by a private coach to Catania and explore the local fish market. Lunch on own in Catania. In the afternoon, visit a local winery near Mt. Etna for a vineyard tour and tasting. Continue to Taormina and check-in to Excelsior Palace Hotel . (B)
7	Monday 13 Jan 25	Taormina. Start the day by visiting walking tour with group leader of Taormina, with visit to the Greek theater with view of Mt. Etna, entrance included, and on-site group discussion and reflection on the role of the epic and dramatic literature then and today. Afternoon and evening free for independent exploration. (B)
8	Tuesday 14 Jan 25	Taormina – Rome. Check-out of the hotel and by a private coach transfer, proceed to the train station for a direct train to Rome. Standard 2 nd class train tickets included. Upon arrival to Rome, a transfer by a private coach from the train station to the hotel. Check-in to Hotel BW Plus Hotel Universo for a nine-night stay in Rome. 3-course dinner inc. one glass of wine per person in a local restaurant. (B, D)
9	Wednesday 15 Jan 25	Rome. Free day for exploring Rome. In the evening a 3-course group dinner for new and extending participants within walking distance of hotel. (B, D)
10	Thursday 16 Jan 25	Rome. After breakfast by a private coach go to Capitoline Hill and Museums area. Meet your local guide and proceed for half a day walking tour of Capitoline Hill and Museums. Lunch on own in Capitoline Museum cafeteria. In the afternoon, explore Tiber Island and Circus Maximus led by group leader. Evening free. (B)
11	Friday 17 Jan 25	Rome. A transfer by a private coach to Roman Forum and meet your local guide for the day and proceed with a tour of the Roman Forum, Palatine Hill and Palatine Museum. Walk to Il Vittoriano, the monument built for Vittorio Emanuele II, the first King of Italy, including entrance to a panoramic view of ancient Rome. Group lunch on the terrace at Il Vittoriano (<i>subject to availability</i>). Afternoon and evening free. (B, L)
12	Saturday 18 Jan 25	Rome. A coach transfer to Colosseum and a meet your local guide for the guided tour. A guided walking tour of the Colosseum and gladiator’s barracks. Visit Constantine’s Arch next to the Colosseum then walk to the nearby St. Clemente Basilica, including the visit to Mithraeum (<i>San Clemente scavi</i>). After a lunch break on own, visit Basilica of St. John Lateran and Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore. Evening free. (B)
13	Sunday 19 Jan 25	Rome. After breakfast, proceed by private motorcoach to visit the Baths of Caracalla and the Catacombs of San Sebastian on Via Appia Antica. After light

		group lunch, the coach will leave you at the Basilica St. Maria degli Angeli for a afternoon visit. Late afternoon and evening free. (B, L)
14	Monday 20 Jan 25	Rome. Visit to St. Peter's and a guided tour of the Scavi (<i>Vatican Necropolis, subject to availability</i>). Fr. Steven McMichael, St. Thomas Theology professor, will say Mass for the group. Location TBD. Visit Pantheon and rest of the day free. (B)
15	Tuesday 21 Jan 25	Rome (Tivoli). By a private coach proceed for a day excursion to Tivoli and visit to Hadrian's Villa. In the afternoon visit Villa d'Este. with its magnificent gardens and waterfall. Return to Rome for arrival at the hotel. Evening free. (B)
16	Wednesday 22 Jan 25	Rome. Meet your local guide in the hotel lobby to depart for customized guided walking tour of the Vatican Museums. Break for lunch on own in Vatican City. Group Farewell dinner at a local restaurant including one glass of wine per person. (B, D)
17	Thursday 23 Jan 25	Rome departure. Check out of the hotel and departure under own arrangement.

(Included meals: B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)

Itinerary subject to change due to local scheduling