

18 MAY - 1 JUNE 2019

EXPLORE SICILY



LED BY PHILIPPA TORLONIA



Sicily through the Ages

Any lover of history cannot but fall in love with Sicily, for Sicily has been the stamping ground upon which Western civilization has trod.

Palermo and some of the West coast was founded by Phoenicians who sailed there from their native Carthage. On this tour we shall see traces of their lives and culture when we visit the island of Mozia.

We shall visit the sumptuous ballroom of Palazzo Gangi where Luchino Visconti filmed the immortal waltz scene in 'The Leopard', a golden ode to romance and elegance. We shall see the palace that was the last home of Prince Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa, the author of the Leopard and we shall dine with his nephew and heir Giacchino Lanza Tomasi

On this tour we want to share the grandeur and the beauty of the palaces, cathedrals and villas, the theatres, the temples the amphitheatres, the majesty of awesome Mt Etna, the splendour of the sun-kissed Sicilian nature and last but not least we want you to experience the joy of the Aeolian islands where land and sea and myth embrace.

Led by Philippa Torlonia, whose decades in Italy has given her an unrivalled knowledge of the estates of central Italy and a great network of contacts, this tour promises to be an unforgettable experience. Torlonia grew up in the Upper Hunter Valley in New South Wales, however, she spent most of her adult life in and around Rome, Italy, as the Principessa Torlonia, married to Marco Torlonia, 5th Prince of Civitella-Cesi.

Sicily : A Place of World Heritage

With 53 sites on the UNESCO World Heritage list, Italy has the highest number of any country in the world. And the small island of Sicily has seven of them with a further three pending.

Sicily's seven sites represent treasures of historical, cultural and natural importance.

1. Archaeological Area of Agrigento, listed in 1997

Founded in the 6th Century BC, the ancient city of Agrigento was one of the greatest Mediterranean centres. The remains of the Doric Temples which dominate the city are well preserved and are among the most amazing monuments of Greek art and culture. They testify the magnificence and supremacy of the ancient city.

2. Villa Romana del Casale, listed in 1997

This late Roman villa is located in "Contrada Casale" (Casale district) at the foot of Mont Mangone. Villa Romana was built around the 3rd and 4th century BC and represents a great example of a luxury Roman villa. The exceptional beauty and quality of the mosaics which decorate the villa illustrate the greatness and importance of the villa.



3. Isole Eolie (Aeolian Islands), listed in 2000

The Aeolian Islands are located north of the coast of Sicily. The seven islands which comprise the archipelago (Panarea, Stromboli, Vulcano, Alicudi, Filicudi, Lipari and Salina, and more than five islets) are all of volcanic origin and are separated from the land of Sicily by 200 m deep waters. Over the centuries, the Aeolian Islands have provided two different kinds of eruption (vulcanian and strombolian).

4. Late Baroque Towns of the Val di Noto, listed in 2002

The Baroque Towns listed by Unesco were rebuilt in 1693 after a terrible earthquake. These cities of south-eastern Sicily (Caltagirone, Militello Val di Catania, Catania, Modica, Noto, Palazzolo, Ragusa and Scicli) represent the result of a great collective undertaking and are the expression of a high-quality architectonica and artistic achievement. Linked to the Baroque style of the period, they also boast important improvements in town planning as well as in urban building.

5. The Rocky Necropolis of Pantalica and Ancient Syracuse, listed in 2005

This site comprises of two different parts, containing remains of both Greek and Roman origins: the Necropolis of Pantalica and the Ancient Syracuse. The Necropolis contains more than 5,000 tombs, dating back mainly from the 13th to 7th centuries BC. The second part, the Ancient Syracuse, includes Ortigia, the first centre of this city founded by Greeks in the 8th century BC. The Ancient Syracuse contains, among other things, the foundations of the Temple of Athena, a Greek theatre and a Roman amphitheatre.



6. Mount Etna, listed in 2013

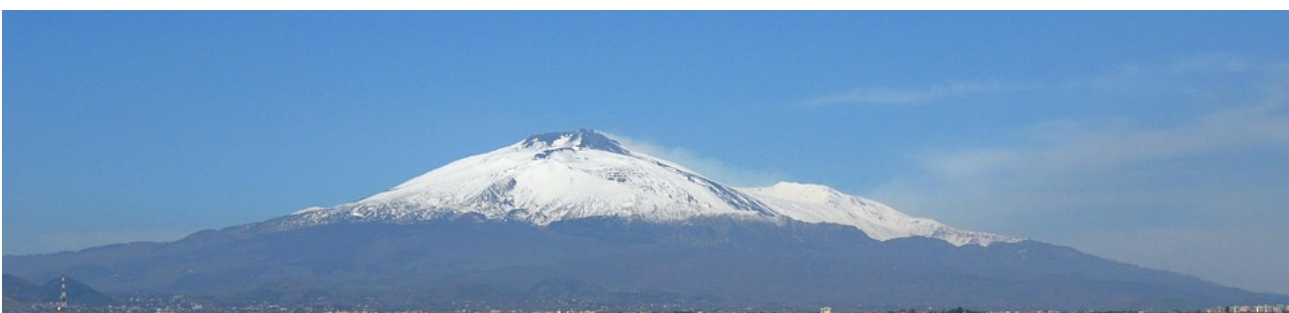
Mount Etna has been listed for its huge geological, scientific and cultural value. Mount Etna is the most active and the highest volcano in Europe and has been recognised a World Heritage Site on the basis of its intense and persistent volcanic activity, as well as for its fundamental role within the Mediterranean bio-geographical region.

7. Arab-Norman Palermo and the Cathedral Churches of Cefalú and Monreale, listed in 2015

The Arab-Norman architectural itinerary, candidate for the social and cultural syncretism that it represents, winds its way through Palermo, Monreale and Cefalu.

It includes nine monuments, both civil and religious, seven of these are in the city of Palermo. Here in Palermo is the Royal Palace with the Palatine Chapel, the church of San Giovanni degli Eremiti, the church of Santa Maria dell'Ammiraglio (della Martoriana), the church of San Cataldo, the 'Palazzo della Zisa', Admiral's Bridge, the Cathedral. Then on to the Cathedrals of Cefalù and Monreale.

The further three Sicily sites being scrutinised by UNESCO for heritage listing are Taormina, Mozia and the entire Norman area of the city of Palermo.



Itinerary

The Tour starts in Palermo on Saturday 18 May. We shall stay in the Grand Hotel Les Palmes for six nights.

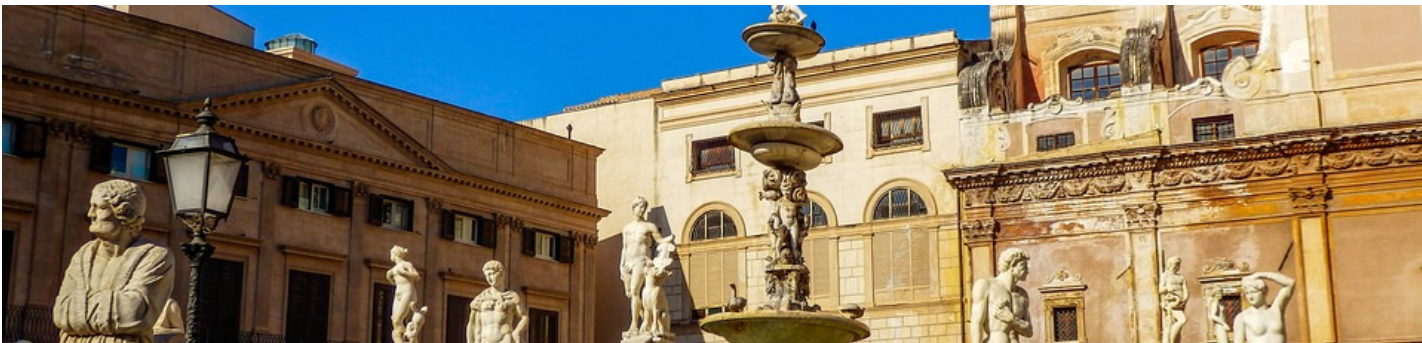
Day 1 - Saturday 18 May

Grand Hotel Les Palmes

Hotel check-in from 2pm

6pm - Our bus will take us to the Palazzo Gangi. This most opulent of all Palermo palaces where Wagner composed the opening bars of Parsifal in 1882 and where Visconti filmed the ballroom scene of The Leopard. Our hostess, Principessa Carine Vanni Calvello Mantegna di Gangi, is as golden and glamorous as her home.

We will then go for a short stroll to Palermitano Trattoria, for a truly local dining experience.



Itinerary Cont.

Day 2 - Sunday 19 May

Grand Hotel Les Palmes

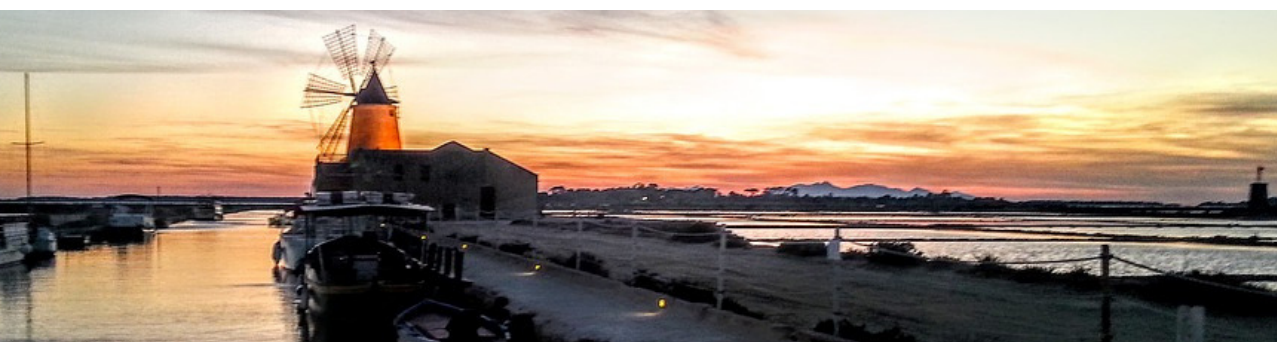
9am - Our bus will pick us up for our tour of the Whitaker Estates.

We will first visit Villa Malfitana, the garden and villa of Joseph Whitaker and his family. This enterprising family from Yorkshire came to Sicily at the time of the Napoleonic wars to grow fortified wines near Marsala. These found an instant market success as, due to Napoleon's blockade, the Spanish Madeira was unavailable.

The Whitakers made a vast fortune and Joseph Whitaker and his Sicilian wife built the Art Nouveau Villa Malfitana at the beginning of the 19th century. A cultured and philanthropic man of many interests including archaeology, ornithology and botany, Whitaker was a great patron of the arts and an avid collector. He acquired many rare species for the garden of Villa Malfitana and for the Botanical Garden. Villa Malfitana was the hub of the social life of Palermo. Whitaker purchased the Phoenician Island of Mozia and began archaeological excavations in 1915.

Today the Island of Mozia and the Villa Malfitana are owned by the Whitaker Foundation.

11.30am - We drive to the West Coast of Sicily and then a short ferry ride to the Island of Mozia where we will lunch.



Itinerary Cont.

On the return trip we shall visit the Temple of Segesta built in the 5th century BC. According to legend, Segesta was built by exiles fleeing from Troy.

Dinner at a local trattoria

Day 3 - Monday 20 May

Grand Hotel Les Palmes

Free Morning to walk and shop.

You might like to walk through the Market and visit the church of The Immaculate Conception.

Free lunch

2pm - Our bus will take us to Bagheria where we shall visit the fascinating Villa Palagonia.

Built in 1715, the super eccentric villa which was known as the Villa of Monsters was said to be 'the most original villa in the world and the most famous in Europe'.

Our second port of call will be Villa Spedalotto where we shall dine with Donna Anna Monroy Paternò, Marchesa di Spedalotto, in her neoclassical villa where the scent of the lemon trees intoxicates.



Itinerary Cont.

Day 4 - Tuesday 21 May

Grand Hotel Les Palmes

9.30am - Our bus will take us to the Botanical Garden where we will meet the Curator of the Garden, Manlio Speciale, and his American wife, Cassandra Funsten, a noted art historian and landscape architect. It was here that Goethe imagined the 'Urpflanze', the archetypal plant that he thought was the origin of all the different species in the vegetable kingdom. Inaugurated in 1795, the Botanical Garden was designed by French architect and intellectual Léon Dufourny. Strongly influenced by the culture of Enlightenment, Dufourny introduced Neoclassical taste into the very Baroque Sicily. Among statues, sphinxes, hermae, caryatides, exedras, geometrical decorations, Doric columns and porticos, in a landscape of elegant chromatic sobriety, live 12,000 plant species including a giant "Ficus magnolioides", the garden's emblem.

We will then visit the Palazzina Cinese, the Royal Residence of King Ferdinand III and his wife, Queen Maria Carolina. The palace is an exuberant expression of Chinoiserie and is located within the fabulous park of La Favorita. It has an elegant Italian garden.

6pm - We will visit Villa Tasca, one of the great romantic gardens of Palermo and dine in the villa with the owner, Count Giuseppe Tasca d'Almerita and his wife, Louisa. During the Belle Epoch, Villa Tasca was, like Villa Malfitana, the centre of polite society and Wagner, who stayed there frequently, composed the third act of Parsifal in the Villa in 1881.



Itinerary Cont.

Day 5 - Wednesday 22 May

Grand Hotel Les Palmes

10am - Our bus will take us to Monreale to see the Cathedral and the Cloister. Then on to the unique village of Tonnara di Scopello, with its stone tower fortification and a rich history of fishing for tuna, which has been the setting for many films. The town was abandoned for over two decades before undergoing a unique revival.

We will lunch at a local restaurant in the village.

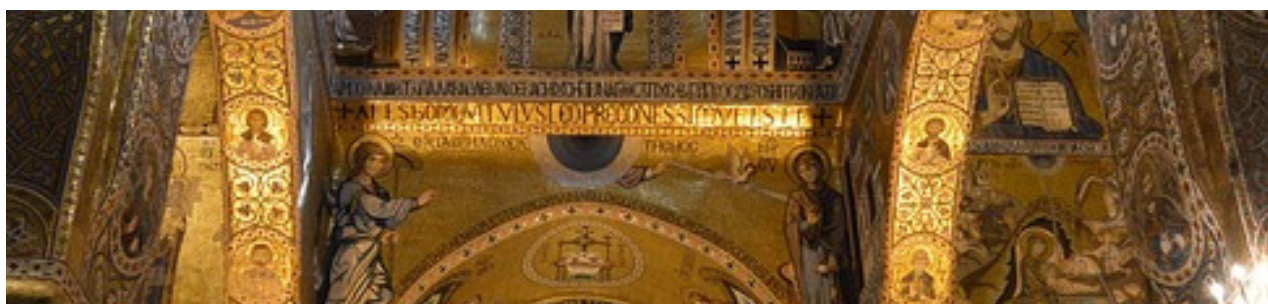
Free dinner

Day 6 - Thursday 23 May

Grand Hotel Les Palmes

10am - Our bus will take us to the Norman Palace and the Palatine Chapel. Consecrated in 1140 for King Roger II, the Palatine Chapel has a solemn beauty that epitomises all that was wonderful in the Norman era. Craftsmen from three different religious traditions worked side by side in multicultural cooperation and created what Guy de Maupassant described as 'the marvel of marvels'.

Free Lunch



Itinerary Cont.

In the afternoon we visit Palazzo Abatellis (the regional museum).

8pm - Dinner at Palazzo Butera with Duke Gioacchino Lanza Tomasi and his Venetian wife, Nicoletta. The palace, built atop the 16th-century city walls looking over the Bay of Palermo, was purchased in 1849 by Giulio Fabrizio Tomasi di Lampedusa, the Prince astronomer who was to become the model for the main character in the Leopard. This world famous book was written by his great-grandson, Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa. The palace was the author's last home until his death in 1951 and is now the home of Gioacchino, his nephew and adopted son.

Day 7 - Friday 24 May

Palermo to Agrigento

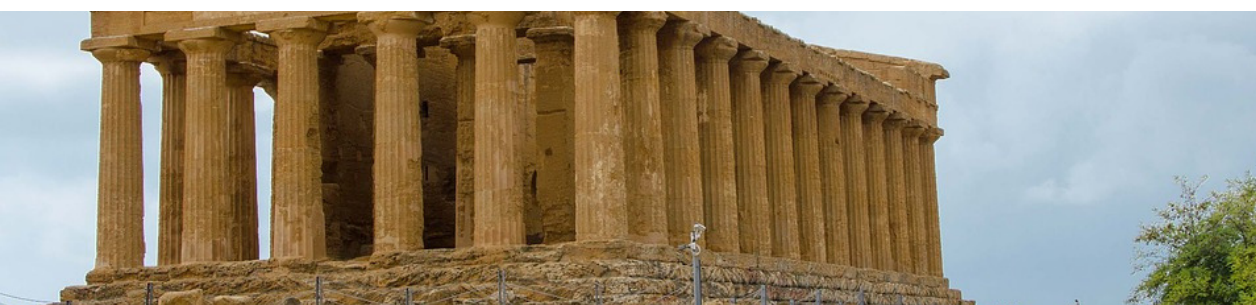
Grand Hotel Les Palmes

9.30am We load our cases onto the bus and visit the Castle of Caccamo

Free lunch at Caccamo

After lunch we shall leave for Agrigento and the Valley of Temples.

5pm - We visit the Valley of the Temples.



Itinerary Cont.

We arrive at Baglio di Luna Hotel, Agrigento

In 581 BC Akragas as Agrigento was known, was founded by Greek colonists and described by the Greek poet, Pindar as 'the fairest city inhabited by mortals'. Today it is an outstanding historic testimony to Magna Graecia, and the glory of the temples set high above the sea on a rocky ridge amidst secular olive trees is a sight not to be forgotten.

Dinner in our hotel

Day 8 - Saturday 25 May

Agrigento to Noto

Baglio di Luna Hotel, Agrigento

9.30am - We go by bus to Piazza Armerina, Villa del Casale. So grand was this 3rd to 4th century BC Roman villa that it is thought that it may have belonged to a member of the Imperial family. It was saved from destruction by a flood that buried it under mud in 12th century and it was only rediscovered at the end of 19th century. The mosaics are exceptional and considered the best Roman mosaics in the world.



Itinerary Cont.

12.30pm - En route to Noto we will stop for lunch at the Caltagirone Ceramic Factories where you can browse through the factories and lunch at your leisure in one of the small cafes.

4pm - We will depart for Noto which was utterly destroyed in the earthquake of 1693 that devastated most of Eastern Sicily. Huge reconstruction followed throughout the area in the much loved Baroque style and Noto is one of the best examples. It is so beautiful that it feels like a film set. Splendid at any hour, it is truly remarkable in the early evening when the red-gold buildings seem to glow with a soft inner light.

Hotel Porta Reale, Noto

Dinner at trattoria in Noto

Day 9 - Sunday 26 May

Noto to Ortygia

Hotel Porta Reale, Noto

Wander around Noto.

11.30pm - We board our bus for the towns of Ragusa and Modica.



Itinerary Cont.

Free lunch

5pm - We depart for the Island of Ortygia. This miniscule island has seen eons of history. It was the birthplace of Archimedes and the epicentre of the 2,700 year old city. It has hosted such VIPs as Sappho, Plato, Virgil and St. Paul.

Grand Hotel des Estrangers, Ortygia

Dinner in our hotel

Day 10 Monday 27 May

Ortygia to Syracuse

Grand Hotel des Estrangers, Ortygia

11am - We will visit Castello Pupillo where we will lunch and enjoy a wine tasting. Our hosts are Barone Antonio Pupillo and his daughter, Carmela. They will give us some of their delicious wines to have with our lunch.

This squat little castle was built at the time of the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II, known as 'Stupor Mundo'. The walled garden, the Hortus Conclus, and its system of rills owes much to the Arab influence. Pieces of stonework with Arabic inscriptions have been found in the fields and gardens.



Itinerary Cont.

Hotel Gutkowski, Syracuse

8pm - Dinner at Palazzo Beneventano and our host will be Barone Pietro Beneventano del Bosco and his wife, Rosanna.

Pietro is a marvellous raconteur and he will tell us stories about Archimedes and his Greek Fire and the antics of Sir William Hamilton, Lady Hamilton and Lord Nelson.

Day 11 - Tuesday 28 May

Hotel Gutkowski, Syracuse

12.30pm - We will visit the garden of Il Biviere where we shall have lunch with Virginia Borghese.

In the evening we shall have the option to attend a performance of a melodrama at the Greek theatre.

Free Dinner

Day 12 - Wednesday 29 May

Hotel Gutkowski, Syracuse

During the day there will be time to walk around Orgita and visit the food markets.



Itinerary Cont.

6pm - We shall drive to the garden of San Giuliano. The property has been in the hands of family of the Marchesi di San Giuliano for 800 years when the first orange trees were planted. Today the Marchese is ably assisted by Rachel Lamb, a British landscape architect, who will tell us all about the garden. We shall dine in the garden.

Day 13 - Thursday 30 May

Syracuse to Salina

Hotel Gutkowski, Syracuse

10am - Depart for Taormina to visit shops and the Greek Amphitheatre, where we are free for lunch in the town.

2pm - Depart for Milazzo where we board the 4pm Hydrofoil to Salina (1.5 Hours)

Hotel Signum, Salina

Dinner in our hotel



Itinerary Cont.

Day 14 - Friday 31 May

Hotel Signum, Salina

11am - We shall take a private boat tour around the islands of Panarea and Stromboli. Panarea is rightly called the Island of Love as it is both beautiful and romantic. Stromboli on the other hand is a wild child and, with a little of luck, we may see some action from the tireless volcano.

Our captain will provide us with lunch on board the boat.

4pm Return to our hotel

Dinner free

Day 15 - Saturday 1 Jun

Hotel Signum, Salina

1.30pm - We shall visit Palazzo Biscari, the most important palace in Catania and lunch with the owners, Principessa Giovanna Moncada and her son, Lorenzo.

4pm - Arrive Catania Airport to board flights



Booking Form

We require the following information to secure your accommodation and/or your flight bookings.
Full name/s: (as it appears on your passport).

(1) Passport Number.....
Passport Expiry date
Country of Issue.....

(2)..... Passport Number.....
Passport Expiry date
Country of Issue

Preferred name: (1)..... Date of Birth:

Preferred name: (2)..... Date of Birth:

Address:

..... State: Postcode:

Phone: (day).....(evening)..... (mobile).....

Email address:

I would like to book () place/s on this tour. Please include a deposit of \$2000 per person with your booking.

Accommodation preferences

I/we would like a single occ. Room twin-share accommodation double room

Comments

.....

I have the following special meal requirements:.....

.....

BOOKING

Please complete this form and return it together with your deposit to

Cheques payable to: Historic Houses Association of Australia

Payments via direct deposit to:

Account Name: Historic Houses Association of Australia

Bank: Westpac, Martin Place, Sydney. **BSB:** 032 024 **A/C No.:** 339312

Include your Surname as payment reference. Note: Some banks only accept numeric references - in this case please use the last four digits of your telephone number as your payment reference.

Note: All information provided on this form shall remain strictly confidential.



INFORMATION To discuss all aspects of the tour itinerary please contact the HHA on
T 02 9252 5554 | E tours@hha.net.au



HISTORIC HOUSES
ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

Credit Card Authorisation Form

CARDHOLDER INFORMATION

Name: _____

Billing Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Postal Code: _____

Country: _____ Email: _____

Postal Address (if different): _____

Direct Telephone: (____) _____ - _____

I authorise the Historic Houses Association of Australia to charge my credit card (listed below) in the amount of \$ _____

Cardholder Signature

CREDIT CARD INFORMATION

Credit Card Type: MasterCard Visa American Express

Number: _____

Expiration Month: _____ Expiration Year: _____ Security Code: _____

Cardholder Signature: _____ Date: __/__/__

Terms & Conditions

The land base tour price of \$13,250 per person twin share (add \$1,850 single room supplement if applicable)

Included in the tour price:

- Fully escorted 14 day tour with Phillipa Torlonia
- Full breakfast daily
- Lunches and dinners as per itinerary featuring typical Sicilian cuisine with 3 courses and wine
- Private coaches and mini-vans as required for the entire itinerary.
- Private boat
- Entrance fees and private tours of villas as described in the itinerary

Not Included:

Tips and incidentals

International airfares

What happens if the tour is cancelled? You will receive a full refund of all monies paid.

Will the itinerary change? Occasionally circumstances beyond our control make it necessary to make slight changes to the daily itineraries. We will inform you immediately should any such changes occur.

Travel insurance: all participants are required to obtain comprehensive travel insurance from your preferred insurance company.



Terms & Conditions Cont.

Deposits: A deposit of \$2000 per person is required to confirm your booking.

Final payments due by 15 March 2019

Cancellation Fees

- Cancellations received 60 days or more before travel, deposits will be refunded less the amount to cover administration, booking fees etc. This may be reduced or increased dependent on expenses incurred.
- Within 60 days, 50% of the deposit will be refunded
- Within 30 days, 50% of the full tour price will be charged.
- Within 7 days, 100% of the tour price will be charged.
- Once the tour has commenced, no refunds will be given, including any unused portion of the tour.

