



Discovering
La Via dell'ORO GIALLO



A fascinating new historical and archaeological journey along the route of yellow gold: Sicilian wheat

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La Via dell'**ORO GIALLO**

The Via dell'Oro Giallo [yellow gold route] is a new and original tourist itinerary that connects some of Sicily's best-known and most popular historical and archaeological sites with as yet hardly-known and little-visited points of interest. The route offers visitors a one-of-a-kind experience.

The proposed itinerary sets off from the sea to reach the hills in the island's hinterland, alternating between warm, pastel landscapes and dense flora with a less mild climate, the route passes through archaeological treasures and panoramas of extraordinary beauty.

The Via dell'Oro Giallo proposes a visit to points of interest around the **cities of Gela, Piazza Armerina, Aidone and Enna** along the wheat route, indeed Yellow Gold, whose crops have covered this area since Greek times, characterising its economy and social life. These customs gave rise to myths and beliefs that still live on in city traditions with special celebrations today.



- GELA -

Timoleon's Walls

(Viale Indipendenza, 13)

A grandiose example of military architecture, the walls of Capo Soprano are unique not only in Sicily but in the entire Mediterranean area. Made in mixed media with a thickness of about 3 metres, they consist of a tall base of local calcarenite blocks attributed to the time of Timoleon (second half of the 4th century BC), and a later elevation in fragile mud bricks, arranged regularly and bound together by clay and sand, likely also originally plastered.



Acropolis

(Corso Vittorio Emanuele)

A superb Greek Doric column and the symbol of the city stands tall on the hill Molino a Vento, also home to the most important traces of the ancient settlement dating back to prehistoric times, as well as to the Greek Rhodian-Cretan colony (689-688 BC) that established its acropolis here with the sacred area consecrated to Athena. The remains of a typically Greek urban layout known as the Hippodamean Plan testify to the fact that the hill was also the site of dwellings and workshops.



Archaeological Museum

(Corso Vittorio Emanuele)

The history of Gela and its territory from its origins to the Middle Ages is told by the rich collection of exhibits in the archaeological museum next to the remains of the acropolis of Molino a Vento. Visitors can admire thousands of precious artefacts here, all testifying to the daily life of the colony, the intense trade with Greece, the extraordinary variety of polychrome terracotta architectural elements from the sacred buildings as well as the ceramics imported from Athens. The numismatic collection is exceptional, with coins from all over the Mediterranean area.



- PIAZZA ARMERINA -

Villa Romana del Casale

(Contrada Casale, on Provincial Road 90)

Villa del Casale is the most extraordinary example of a rural aristocratic residence from the late imperial Roman period in the Mediterranean. It is especially unique thanks to its close to 4,000 square metres of mosaic floors and grandiose architecture. It is one of the archaeological sites of greatest international interest, as tangible evidence of the Roman presence in Sicily and of a time when the triangular island was considered the granary of the Empire due to the abundance of grain production here. Like a huge rug of small, multicoloured stone tesserae, the mosaics of Villa del Casale tell us about daily life in late Roman Sicily.



Museum of the City and Territory at Palazzo Trigona

(Piazza Cattedrale, 20)

The museum in Palazzo Trigona, the 'youngest' of the regional cultural sites in the province of Enna, illustrates the history of the Piazza Armerina territory, also with technological tools. Visitors are welcomed by Baron Marco Trigona, the master of the house who - thanks to the support of technology - introduces the tour of his palace. A very streamlined museum itinerary unfolds among its elegant rooms, focused on illustrating the main findings from the urban and suburban area, such as the prehistoric site of Monte Manganello, the Siculo-Greek city of Montagna di Marzo and the valuable findings from the Casale area, home to the UNESCO site of the Roman villa known to the world for its precious mosaics.



- AIDONE -

Morgantina

(Contrada Morgantina)

Morgantina is one of the largest, most important archaeological sites in the Mediterranean. As an exceptional case-study for knowledge of the Siculians and Greeks of Sicily, it covers an area of around 92 hectares, including the splendid agora with monumental public buildings, including a theatre and benches for the citizens' assemblies, as well as residential quarters with aristocratic residences with elegant mosaic and cocciopesto floors. Those who visit Morgantina today can appreciate an ancient city that has been entirely preserved: a small 'Pompeii of Sicily' as it was called by the archaeologist Paolo Orsi, among the first to conduct regular excavations there in the early 20th century.



Regional Archaeological Museum

(Largo Torres Trupia, 1)

The Regional Archaeological Museum was inaugurated in 1984 inside the 17th-century convent and adjoining Capuchin church; the treasure chest tells the story of Morgantina from prehistoric times to the Roman era, bearing witness to the daily life of the rich Greek city of Sicilian origin. The lower floor was renovated in 2009 and includes the Acrolites, the Goddess, the Silvers and the Head of Hades, the well-known finds excavated illegally and recovered through archaeological investigations and research. These exceptional works of art, masterpieces of Greek sculpture and goldsmithing, make the institution an interesting example of a museum of legality.



- ENNA -

Lake Pergusa and Cozzo Matrice

Among the many protected areas in the territory around Enna, the Special Nature Reserve of Lake Pergusa is closely linked to the legend of Demeter: according to the ancient Greeks and Romans, the king of the Underworld, Hades, abducted the young goddess Kore near the shores of the lake. The lake was considered the cradle of the most important myth in the ancient Mediterranean, from which the cycle of the seasons is said to have originated. A curious phenomenon is the reddening of the water, which is infrequent today, caused by the proliferation of sulphur bacteria that give the lake a unique pinkish-violet colour. At the nearby archaeological site of Cozzo Matrice that has been inhabited since the Copper Age, the remains of a fortified settlement from the Greek period (6th-5th century BC) can be seen, to which the monumental necropolis with chamber tombs excavated in the rock can be attributed.



Rocca di Cerere, Castle of Lombardia (Viale Nino Savarese) and Interdisciplinary Museum in Palazzo Varisano (Piazza Mazzini)

The cliff known as Rocca di Cerere and the area of the Castle of Lombardia, which together make up a large urban archaeological park, correspond to the most impregnable and best defended part of the ancient citadel of Enna, dominated by a large area for worship consecrated to Demeter, the goddess of the harvests, called Ceres by the Romans. Little remains today of the ancient classical vestiges, also described by Cicero: the medieval Castle of Lombardia towers over an extraordinarily beautiful landscape, and is one of the largest fortresses in Italy. In the nearby interdisciplinary museum of Palazzo Varisano, which faces the Duomo, visitors can admire numerous archaeological finds that tell the thousand-year history of Enna and its surroundings from prehistory to the Middle Ages.



Multimedia Museum of the Myth

(Viale Nino Savarese)

The recently inaugurated Multimedia Museum of the Myth recounts the famous mythological episode of the abduction of Persephone/Proserpine by Hades Pluto using technology, entrusted to the narration of the actor Neri Marcorè. Located in the urban archaeological area of Enna, not far from the monumental cathedral where the Madonna of the Visitation is venerated, it is a clear legacy of the pagan goddess. The Multimedia Museum of the Myth reminds us that one can die and be reborn many times!

Duomo

(Piazza Duomo, 1)

The Duomo, or Cathedral, is a UNESCO national monument and 'monument of peace'. Enna's most majestic church was consecrated to Maria SS. della Visitazione, the patron saint solemnly celebrated on 2 July. There are many references to the worship of Ceres: a local tradition has it that the church, erected in the early 14th century at the behest of Queen Eleanor of Anjou, was built on the foundations of a pagan building dedicated to the goddess of the harvest.



Belvedere Fountain

(Piazza Francesco Crispi, 9)

The most grandiose reminder of the legendary abduction of Kore in the area of Enna's historic centre is the bronze sculptural group, a replica of the famous marble Rape of Proserpine by the sculptor Gian Lorenzo Bernini, which triumphs over the fountain of the belvedere named after Guglielmo Marconi in the city's most beautiful vantage point. The fountain was designed by architect Vincenzo Nicoletti Guarnaccia of Palermo and inaugurated in 1935 to celebrate the birthday of His Majesty King Victor Emmanuel III.

Aidone



Enna



Gela



Piazza Armerina



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