



Guided tour of Valley of the Temples

The 'Archaeological and Landscape Park of the Valley of the Temples' extends over 1300 hectares and contains breathtaking monumental and landscape heritage, including the ruins of the ancient city of Akragas and its surrounding territory continuing to the sea. In the Valley of the Temples, declared a [UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1997](#), resides one of the main archaeological treasures of the Mediterranean, immersed in a rural landscape of rare beauty characterized by the presence of century-old olive and almond trees. Akragas was one of the most important Greek colonies in Sicily. It extended over an area of 450 hectares and was founded around 582 B.C. by colonists from the nearby town of Gela and from the island of Rhodes.

An official guided tour of the archaeological park, led by a licensed tour guide, knowledgeable in all archaeological and historical areas of the Valley of the Temples and its surroundings, starts with the **Temple of Hera (Juno)** situated at the very top of the hill from where visitors can admire the astonishing view of the Sicilian coastline and the Mediterranean Sea. The walking tour covers about one mile in a mostly downhill direction, with various stops along the holy pathway (via sacra) to admire the city **fortifications** and **Byzantine tombs** , the **Temple of Concordia**, the **Temple of Herakles**, the **Temple of Zeus** and the **Sanctuary of Chthonian Deities (Temple of Castor and Pollux or Dioscuri)**.

The tour can be extended to include a walking tour of the Kolymbethra Garden, a small gorge located near the Dioscuri Temple, full of natural and archaeological wonders. A representative of FAI (FONDO AMBIENTE ITALIANO), will take the visitors on a tour around the garden demonstrating the various Mediterranean plants, trees and the archaeological remains of ancient Greek aqueducts still used for irrigation. After visiting the Saracen Olive, the oldest in the world, it is possible to reach the **Vulcan Temple**, located in the most western part of the Valley, where you can see the ridge of the Valley of the temples with a magnificent view of all the Temples.

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