



Cefalù to Mt. Etna Trail – 6 Days

An epic trail, which crosses the greenest and wildest part of Sicily, the so-called Val Demone, passing through the four natural parks of Madonie, Nebrodi, Alcantara and Etna.

Day 1: Arrival

You will arrive at the [Villa Magarà](#), a beautiful farmhouse with a swimming pool, set in the countryside at only two kilometers from the historical center of Cefalù with fantastic views down to the sea. If you arrive before 4pm you can enjoy a guided tour of the beautiful town of *Cefalù*. We will have dinner and spend the night at the farmhouse.

Day 2: Cefalù – San Mauro Castelverde (hours of riding: 7, km: 39)

After breakfast we will set off at around 8.00 in the morning and begin the trail by riding through a very scenic and varied landscape, passing cork forests, Mediterranean scrubland, vineyards, olive groves and pastures. After passing the territory of *Santa Anastasia*, home to an ancient Norman abbey and a renowned winery, we will continue on through the countryside and around *Castelbuono*, a charming medieval town steeped in history and tradition, before reaching the wild valley of the *Pollina River* (considered the eastern boundary of the territory of the *Madonie*). Here we will stop for a picnic lunch, before continuing on to the town of *San Mauro Castelverde*, a medieval town on the top of a mountain at about 1100 meters on the sea level, visit of the center and finally we reach *Al Convento*, a recently restored eighteenth century Capuchin monastery. Here, we will enjoy a hearty dinner made with typical local produce, and we will spend the night.

Day 3: San Mauro Castelverde – Monte Soprano (hours of riding: 6, km: 32)

From the town we will set off along an old "*trazzera*" (an ancient path dating back to at least the Bourbon era) with beautiful views of the surrounding countryside, crossing fields of wheat and hay until we reach an altitude of approximately 1000 metres. We will then ride directly beneath the great windmills of a windfarm to reach the *Malpassetto pass*, which marks the border of the provinces of Palermo, Enna and Messina. We will then descend into the forests of the *Sambughetti-Campanito reserve*, where we will stop for a picnic lunch. In the afternoon, we will continue on to the territory of Nicosia, followed by *Cerami*, before descending an old, steep path immersed in a cork forest, where we will take a break to visit a prehistoric *troglo-dyte* dwelling carved into the rocks and set over two levels. Finally, we will arrive at the agriturismo [Monte Soprano](#), a beautiful farmhouse with a swimming pool, where we will have dinner and spend the night.

Day 4: Monte Soprano – Villa Miraglia (hours of riding: 7, km: 38)

On this day of the trail we will ride through the heart of the *Nebrodi Natural Park*, along the famous "*Dorsale*" (the Nebrodi Ridge), a long dirt track (about 100 kilometres long) which passes through forests and high mountain pastures. This is a place full of charm, with extraordinary views: the Tyrrhenian Sea and the Aeolian Islands to the north, and the island's hinterland to the south – Enna, Caltanissetta, Agrigento, Siracusa, Catania, and Etna towering above everything else. We will enter the Nebrodi Natural Park through beech woods in the territory of *San Fratello*, famous for its sanfratellani horses, a native breed which is very strong and hardy, with a very large head, and which you may catch a glimpse of grazing in the wild. We will stop for a picnic lunch in a

shaded spot beneath centuries-old trees near a stream known as the *Nocita*. In the afternoon, we will arrive at the [Relais Villa Miraglia](#), where we will have a delicious dinner made with local Nebrodi products and spend the night.

Day 5: Villa Miraglia – Monte Colla (hours of riding: 8, km:42)

This is probably the most beautiful day of the trail, riding for more than 40 kilometres along the "Dorsale" through mountains, woods and lakes, in the midst of a strikingly beautiful landscape. First we will come to the *Maulazzo Lake*, dominated by *Monte Soro*, the highest peak in the Nebrodi mountain range (at 1847 metres) and covered in magnificent beech woods. We will then reach the famous lake *Biviere di Cesarò*, which is a resting place for migrating birds. We will continue along the "Dorsale", with lush forests giving way to clearings with panoramic views, with the Aeolian Islands to the north and the majestic peak of Mount Etna to the south. In the evening we will arrive tired but satisfied at [Monte Colla](#), the most isolated hotel on the island, housed in an eighteenth century aristocratic home at around 1400 metres above sea level in the territory of *Randazzo*. Here we will enjoy a delicious dinner prepared with local produce and spend the night.

Day 6: Monte Colla – Etna North (hours of riding: 7, km: 36)

We will set off in the direction of the source of the *Alcantara River*, and continue on towards *Randazzo*, a typical Sicilian village between the Nebrodi and Etna Parks, which we will pass through, before ascending Etna's northern slopes, until we reach *Mount Spagnolo*, where we will follow the *Altomontana piste* to our accommodation, the [Chalet Clan dei Ragazzi](#), immersed in an enchanting pine forest, where we will have dinner and spend the night.

Day 8: Departure

After breakfast we will transfer you to the airport (or other locations on the island, as requested).

Prices:

€1810 per person for a double room.

€2060 per person for a single room.

The price includes six days of riding with an English-speaking equestrian / local culture guide, seven nights in comfortable accommodation with a full dinner and breakfast, luggage transport by support vehicle, six picnic lunches, transfers from/to the airports, insurance, and chaps / riding hat rental (if required).

Level: Comfortable at all three paces (walk, trot and canter), with experience of hacking out in the open.

Age requirements: 16 years old and above.

Group size: Nine people maximum.

Key information / requirements: Between six and nine hours in the saddle per day. You must be comfortable at all three paces (walk, trot and canter). You must be physically fit. This programme is aimed at intermediate and advanced riders and it is not suitable for beginners or riders with only limited experience. The terrain is varied and there may be long trots and gallops along the way.

Equipment: It is possible to hire riding hats and chaps on site. The following items are essential: waterproofs, layers (it can be cold at altitude), boots and chaps, and sun cream.

Weight: Max 90 kg.

Accommodation: Agriturismo or 3* good quality hotels.

Themes: Mountains, forests, flora, fauna, lava flows, craters, history, mythology, agriculture, views.

Meals: Picnic lunches, typical Sicilian dinner in the evening (minimum four courses). Refined Sicilian cuisine prepared with local produce. Evening meals include: starter, pasta course, meat /

main course, dessert, wine, water and digestif (liqueur, grappa, limoncello or other available options), coffee or tea. Continental or American-style breakfasts on request. For groups of four or more riders, picnic lunches are provided by support vehicle (together with tables, chairs and cutlery) and include: fresh bread, salad, cheeses, olives, charcuterie, Sicilian specialities, wine or other drinks on request, coffee or tea. For groups of less than four riders, picnic lunches consist of sandwiches and fruit (carried in saddlebags).

Languages spoken: English, French, Italian, Spanish, Sicilian.

Horses: 14 horses of Sicilian breeding, all well trained and accustomed to the terrain. The horses live out at pasture. The guide cleans, grooms and tacks up the horses.

Tack: Comfortable English saddles, with a sheepskin cover, or Western saddles on request. All horses are ridden with a martingale and a crupper.

Luggage transport: By support vehicle.

Optional additional activities: Swimming pool, walks, massages, guided tours of towns and historical sites with a local guide.

Nearby towns and places of interest: Etna Natural Park, Alcantara Natural Park, Nebrodi Natural Park, Madonie Natural Park, Cefalù, Castiglione di Sicilia, Nicosia, Troina, Randazzo, Catania, Taormina.

Closest airport: Catania or Palermo on arrival and Catania on departure.

Transfers from/to the airports: Included in the programme price.

Departure from: Cefalù.

Sicilian Experience di Carmela Angela Ricciardello
Mastro Nino Incaprera 37, 90015 Sant'Ambrogio (PA) Italia .
mobile tel: +39 3495763215
P.I. 05929650827

info@sicilianexperience.com www.sicilianexperience.com