



ON THIS THREE-DAY TRAIL YOU WILL DISCOVER ONE OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL AND MYSTERIOUS PARTS OF THE ISLAND

This trail is available at any time on request throughout the year, for a minimum of two riders.

Day 1: Arrival

You will arrive at the first accommodation, in the territory of **Castiglione di Sicilia**.

Day 2: Castiglione di Sicilia – Montalbano Elicona (hours of riding: 7)

We will set off from [Le Terre di Castel Leone](#) in the Alcantara valley, and after crossing the river we will begin to climb up through the *Malabotta forest reserve*, on the far eastern side of the *Nebrodi mountain range*, from where you can admire breath-taking views of the valley and of *Etna*. We will continue to climb up to about 1200 metres above sea level, to reach the "*patriarchs of the forest*", enormous oak and beech trees, which are hundreds of years old. Here we will stop for a picnic lunch before continuing on to *Argimusco* (nicknamed "the Sicilian Stonehenge"), famous for its striking megaliths – according to some, created by years of weathering, and according to others, sculptures carved by ancient civilizations, but missing from the official record of the region's history. From here we will descend the northern slopes to reach the medieval town of *Montalbano Elicona*, where we will visit the old town and the castle, before arriving at our hotel on the town's main square, where we will have dinner and spend the night.

Day 3: Montalbano Elicona – Monte Colla (hours of riding: 6)

After breakfast we will begin by climbing up through the eastern territory of the Nebrodi mountains, crossing pastures and arable land and riding through chestnut and hazel woods. Along the way we will pass "*tholos*", small circular stone buildings used since prehistoric times by unknown civilizations and up to the present day by local shepherds. After reaching *Floresta*, the highest town in Sicily, at an altitude of 1275 metres, we will stop for a picnic lunch. In the afternoon we will continue into the *Nebrodi Natural Park* and ride along scenic paths through oak, maple and beech woods, enjoying beautiful views of the surrounding landscapes, before arriving at [Monte Colla](#), the most isolated hotel on the island and housed in an eighteenth century aristocratic home at around 1400 metres above sea level. Here we will have dinner and spend the night.

Day 4: Monte Colla – Castiglione di Sicilia (hours of riding: 7)

After breakfast we will set off in the direction of the source of the *Alcantara River*, and continue on towards *Santa Domenica di Vittoria*, a typical Sicilian village on the edge of the Nebrodi Park, which we will pass through, before descending into the fertile valley between Etna, the Nebrodi

mountains and the Peloritani mountains. We will pass orchards and fields of local vegetables before arriving at *Mojo Alcantara*, a small village famous for its "eccentric" crater (meaning that it is located outside the perimeter of Etna), which exploded a few thousand years ago. The crater's lava flow followed the route of the Alcantara River, setting its course and carving out the river's famous gorges for which it is known around the world. After a picnic lunch we will continue along small country lanes bordered by stone walls made from lava rock and paths crossing back and forth across the river before arriving at the *Gorges of Castiglione* and the *Cuba Bizantina*, a place of worship built in an unusual quadrangular shape and dating from around the seventh or eighth century AD. Finally, we will arrive back at our starting point.

Day 5: Departure

Breakfast at and departure.

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Prices:

- 980,00 € per person for a double room.

- 1080,00 € per person for a single room.

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

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 eight 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, B&B 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: 10 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, 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, Castiglione di Sicilia, Montalbano Elicona, Floresta, San Piero Patti, Randazzo, Bronte, Catania, Taormina.

Closest airport: Catania.

Transfers: to and from Catania airport.

Logistical base: [Le Terre di Castel Leone](#)