

WHAT TO VISIT

Agrigento

We enter the narrow streets of the historic center, between the alleys that "know" Arabic and Norman to silently admire, from the top of the city, the extraordinary Valley of the Temples, the white branches of almond trees blooming in February or the orange of the ruins at sunset. Immersed in the valley, the simple silhouette of the church of S. Nicola stands out, inside which we find the sarcophagus of Phaedra, while the nearby museum preserves the marble perfection of the Efebo and the beauty of the Attic vases.

Agrigento is the reality in which Pirandello's writings take shape, the land where, on the occasion of the feast of "S. Calò ", the religious yearning merges with popular tradition; it is the nature that bursts into the "African sea", in the whiteness of the marl of the "Scala dei Turchi" as in the suggestive Kolymbetra Garden.

It is also a riot of colors and shapes in the "marturana fruit", of delicate flavors in the ricotta cassata and in the typical pistachio sweets.

A meeting of cultures, therefore, and the enchantment of the landscape, the strength of popular traditions and typical delicacies: all this is released from this unique place.

What to visit in Agrigento

In the historic center, the Cathedral of S. Gerlando and the Lucchesiana Library, S. Lorenzo, the diocesan museum Mudia and the church of S. Maria dei Greci, the Abbey of S. Spirito, the Pirandello theater and the Palazzo dei Filippini.

In the Valley of the Temples, declared in 1998 by UNESCO as "World Heritage", the Temple of Concordia, of Juno Lacinia and Hercules, and the remains of the other Doric temples: Olympic Jupiter, Castor and Pollux, Esculapio, Vulcano.

In the area of the Valley, again, the Hellenistic Roman Quarter and the church of S. Nicola next to the Oratory of Falaride. The Regional Archaeological Museum with the interesting finds preserved in it, the important collection of Attic vases with red depictions and the marble statue of Efebo; the Kolymbetra Garden and, a short distance away, the birthplace of Luigi Pirandello.

Surroundings

In Favara it is possible to admire the Chiaramonte Castle, the facade of the Church of the Madonna del Carmine, the Mother Church with its large dome and the magnificent sixteenth-century ceiling of the Church of the Rosary.

Extremely engaging for the avant-garde trends it represents is the "Farm Cultural Park" in the historic center.

Despite its eminently Baroque appearance, Naro also preserves the remains of the Arab-Norman domination and Sicilian Gothic architectural masterpieces. The Chiaramonte Castle and the old Cathedral, the 17th century cathedral, the Sanctuary of S. Calogero, the church of S. Caterina are fascinating, while the museum of graphic arts arouses curiosity.

Palma di Montechiaro contains the myth of the Leopard. Interesting are the Mother Church and the Doge's Palace, the Church of S. Maria del Rosario, the Benedictine Monastery and the Chiaramonte Castle which remained the property of the Lampedusa family until the death of Giuseppe Tomasi in 1957.

In Mussomeli, full of suggestion, the majestic Chiaramonte Castle dominates the valley.

In Caltabellotta, in the upper part of the city, there is the Mother Church and the Castle. The Hermitage of S. Pellegrino and the Church of Sant'Agostino permeate the place with sacredness and serenity.

Do not forget the Greek Theater and the archaeological site of Eraclea Minoa, where there are the remains of a Hellenistic sanctuary and the ruins of houses from the Hellenistic period. At the entrance to the archaeological park there is a small Antiquarium.

They are of considerable naturalistic and landscape interest in the area of:

Realmonte the white coast of the "Scala dei Turchi": a natural staircase eroded by the wind, marvelous for the blue of the sea, the white of the marl cliffs and the reflected solar brightness.

In Siculiana the Torre Salsa nature reserve, WWF oasis.

In Montallegro the Lipu Oasis of Lake Gorgo and the bay of Bovo Marina.