



Regione Siciliana

Invest in Sicily

Isola bella, Taormina



Territorial geography

Sicily is located in the central Mediterranean Sea, south of the Italian Peninsula, from which it is separated by the narrow Strait of Messina.

It's the largest island in the Mediterranean and is the largest and most southern region of Italy. It covers an area of 25,711 km² on which they are registered 5,051,075 inhabitants.

The Sicilian population is distributed between 9 provinces and 3 metropolitan cities that reveal a varied territory with numerous tourist attractions of various kinds: sea, mountains, parks and nature reserves, art, culture, entertainment, typical culinary products and folklore.



Economy

The Sicilian economy is organized on various sectors, such as agriculture, livestock, fishing, industry, energy, mining and tourism.

Thanks to the regular growth of the last years, Sicily is the eighth richest region of Italy in terms of total GDP.

Economic activity	GDP (mil. €)	% sector (region)	% sector (Italy)
Agriculture, farming, fishing	2,923.3	3.52%	1.84%
Industry	7,712.9	9.30%	18.30%
Constructions	4,582.1	5.52%	5.41%
Commerce, hotels and restaurants, transport, services and (tele)communications	15,159.7	18.28%	20.54%
Financial activity and real estate	17,656.1	21.29%	24.17%
Other economic activities	24,011.5	28.95%	18.97%
VAT and other forms of taxes	10,893.1	13.13%	10.76%
GDP of Sicily	82,938.6		

Agriculture

Sicily has long been noted for its fertile soil due to the volcanic eruptions in the past and present. The local agriculture is also helped by the pleasant climate of the island.

The main agricultural products are wheat, citrons, oranges (Arancia Rossa di Sicilia IGP), lemons, tomatoes (Pomodoro di Pachino IGP), olives, olive oil, artichokes, Opuntia ficus-indica (Fico d'India dell'Etna DOP), almonds, grapes, pistachios (Pistacchio di Bronte DOP) and wine.

Cattle and sheep are raised. The cheese productions are particularly important thanks to the Ragusano DOP and the Pecorino Siciliano DOP.

Ragusa is noted for its honey (Miele Ibleo) and chocolate (Cioccolato di Modica IGP) productions.



Wine Sector

Sicily is the third largest wine producer in Italy (the world's largest wine producer) after Veneto and Emilia Romagna.

The region is known mainly for fortified Marsala wines. The best known local varietal is Nero d'Avola.

Other important native varietals are Nerello Mascalese used to make the Etna Rosso DOC wine, Frappato that is a component of the Cerasuolo di Vittoria DOCG wine, Moscato di Pantelleria (also known as Zibibbo) used to make different Pantelleria wines, Malvasia di Lipari used for the Malvasia di Lipari DOC wine and Catarratto mostly used to make the white wine Alcamo DOC. Furthermore, in Sicily high quality wines are also produced using non-native varietals like Syrah, Chardonnay and Merlot.

Sicily is also known for its liqueurs, such as the Amaro Averna produced in Caltanissetta and the local limoncello.



Industry and manufacturing

The region has three important industrial districts:

- Catania Industrial District, where there are several food industries and one of the best European electronics industry centres called Etna Valley (in honour of the best known Silicon Valley) which contains offices and factories of international companies such as STMicroelectronics and Numonyx;
- Syracuse, Petrochemical District with chemical industries, oil refineries and important power stations (as the innovative Archimede combined cycle power plant); the latest Enna Industrial District in which there are food industries.
- Palermo, where there are important shipyards (such as Fincantieri), mechanical factories of famous Italian companies as Ansaldo Breda, publishing and textile industries. Chemical industries are also in the Province of Messina (Milazzo) and in the Province of Caltanissetta (Gela). There are petroleum, natural gas and asphalt fields in the Southeast (mostly near Ragusa) and massive deposits of halite in Central Sicily.

Tourism

Sicily's sunny, dry climate, scenery, cuisine, history and architecture attract many tourists from mainland Italy and abroad.

The tourist season peaks in the summer months, although people visit the island all year round. Mount Etna, the beaches, the archaeological sites, and major cities such as Palermo, Catania, Syracuse and Ragusa are the favourite tourist destinations, but the old town of Taormina and the neighbouring seaside resort of Giardini Naxos draw visitors from all over the world, as do the Aeolian Islands, Erice, Castellammare del Golfo, Cefalù, Agrigento, the Pelagie Islands and Capo d'Orlando .

The last features some of the best-preserved temples of the ancient Greek period. Many Mediterranean cruise ships stop in Sicily, and many wine tourists also visit the island.

Cefalù



Saline in Trapani

The Province of Trapani is one of the largest sea salt producers in Italy. The natural reserve of the Saline in Trapani was established in 1995, which covers almost 1000 hectares in the territory.

The reserve, inside which the ancient salt extraction activity is carried out, is an important wetland that offers shelter to numerous species of migratory birds. It is managed by the WWF Italy.



UNESCO World Heritage Sites

Valle dei templi, Agrigento

There are seven UNESCO World Heritage Sites on Sicily. By the order of inscription:

- **Valle dei Templi** is one of the most outstanding examples of Greater Greece art and architecture, and is one of the main attractions of Sicily as well as a national monument of Italy. The site is located in Agrigento.
- **Villa Romana del Casale** is a Roman villa built in the first quarter of the 4th century and located about 3 km (2 mi) outside the town of Piazza Armerina. It contains the richest, largest and most complex collection of Roman mosaics in the world.



Villa Romana del Casale, Piazza Armerina

- **Late Baroque Towns** of the Val di Noto "represent the culmination and final flowering of Baroque art in Europe". It includes several towns: Caltagirone, Militello in Val di Catania, Catania, Modica, Noto, Palazzolo Acreide, Ragusa and Scicli.
- **Cathedral of San Giorgio** in Modica
- **Necropolis of Pantalica** is a large necropolis in Sicily with over 5,000 tombs dating from the 13th to the 7th centuries BC. Syracuse is notable for its rich Greek history, culture, amphitheatres and architecture. They are situated in south-eastern Sicily.
- **Mount Etna** is one of the most active volcanoes in the world and is in an almost constant state of activity and generated myths, legends and naturalistic observation from Greek, Celts and Roman classic and medieval times.
- **Arab-Norman Palermo and the cathedral churches of Cefalù and Monreale**; includes a series of nine civil and religious structures dating from the era of the Norman kingdom of Sicily.

Mount Etna, Catania



- ▶ **Aeolian Islands** are a volcanic archipelago in the Tyrrhenian Sea, named after the demigod of the winds Aeolus. The Aeolian Islands are a popular tourist destination in the summer, and attract up to 200,000 visitors annually.
- ▶ **Arab-Norman Palermo and the Duomo of Cefalù and Monreale**; includes a series of nine civil and religious structures dating from the era of the Norman kingdom of Sicily.

Duomo of Monreale, Palermo



Aeolian Islands, Messina



Cuisine

Sicilian cuisine is the style of cooking on the island of Sicily. It shows traces of all cultures that have existed on the island of Sicily over the last two millennia. Although its cuisine has a lot in common with Italian cuisine, Sicilian food also has Greek, Spanish, French and Arab influences.

The Sicilian cook Mithaecus, born during 5th century BC, is credited with having brought knowledge of Sicilian gastronomy to Greece: his cookbook was the first in Greek, therefore he was the earliest cookbook author in any language whose name is known.

