


Italy's Best Foodie Vacation: Here's How To Eat Your Way Through Sicily



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Jul 24, 2018, 10:07am • 3,239 views • #Wanderlust

First inhabited some 10,000 years ago, Sicily is a dazzling destination with a fascinating and arguably incomparable past, thanks to its centuries-long perch at the crossroads of history before becoming part of Italy in 1860. The island's strategic location in the Mediterranean—100 miles northeast of Tunisia and separated from the Italian mainland by the Strait of Messina—landed it squarely in the sights of the Phoenicians, Arabs, Greeks, Romans and Bourbons (to name just a handful), who stormed its shores and conquered various parts over the ages, each adding a unique cultural layer to this former front line of some of the world's greatest empires.



Sicily's incomparable history owes much to its strategic position in the Mediterranean, and informs its unique cuisine. ITALIAN NATIONAL TOURIST BOARD



Modica, in southeastern Sicily, is renowned for its Baroque charm and Mexican-style chocolate. MODICASA

A UNESCO World Heritage Site in the country's southeast, Modica, often referred to as the city of 100 bells and 100 churches, is acclaimed for both its breathtaking Baroque architecture and its esteemed chocolatiers, a legacy of roughly 500 years of Spanish rule between the 13th and 18th centuries. Here, in her grandparents' airy former apartment overlooking the historic center, Katia Amore, founder of the [Love Sicily](#) cooking school, will teach you how to make Modica's famous chocolate just like the Aztecs did in 16th-century Mexico (straight from cacao beans, with no cocoa butter or other additives you'll typically find in today's chocolate). The confection's signature grainy texture derives from the fact that the added sugar shouldn't melt, which requires working the cocoa at a relatively low temperature. The charming Amore expertly demonstrates this technique in the apartment's roomy, inviting kitchen, decorated with tiles handmade to mimic the 19th-century Neapolitan beauties that adorned the space when her grandmother cooked there.



Katia Amore, founder of the Love Sicily cooking school, will teach you the art of chocolate-making, the Aztec way. ALEXANDRA KIRKMAN

You'll taste the fruits of your labor at the class' end, along with some other sweet treats. While the traditional flavors of Modica chocolate are vanilla, cinnamon, and spicy *pepperoncino*, other flavors (including lemon, orange and marjoram) abound; you'll be spoiled for choice and can sample them all at [Antica Dolceria Bonajuto](#), founded in 1880 and Sicily's oldest chocolate producer, located right down the road.

Siracusa

