

WHATSCOOKIN' SICILY

MUSHROOMS, CULTURE AND FOOD

Oct. 21st - Nov. 4th 2017

Or

Oct. 24th - Nov. 4th 2017



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Oct. 20th Monday
Departure from the USA

Trapani (3 nights)

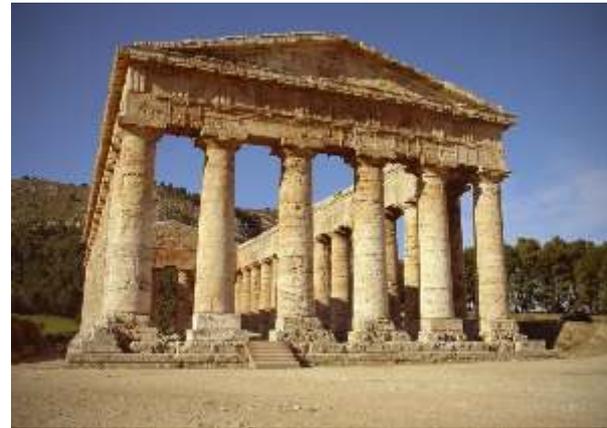
Oct. 21 Saturday (supplementary 3-day tour)
Arrival at Palermo airport and transfer to Trapani. Visit ruins of Segesta, one of the best preserved Greek archeological sights in the Mediterranean, which include a very well preserved Greek temple and a Greek theater with a spectacular view. Dinner in restaurant.

Oct. 22 Sunday (supplementary 3-day tour)
Visit the beautiful baroque city center of Trapani and get a chance to taste what are considered to be Sicily's best *cannoli*. After lunch in town take a scenic cable ride to Medieval Erice, 750m high, from which, on a nice day, you can see the Etna volcano on the other side of the island. Dinner oyo.

Oct. 23 Monday (supplementary 3-day tour)
Ride down the evocative Trapani coastline with its salt mines and windmills. Proceed to the charming town of Marsala that gave its name to its famous dessert wine. Have Marsala tasting at a winery before heading to Mazara del Vallo where we'll be having lunch. After lunch visit the historic quarters of Mazara with its labyrinth of narrow streets and magnificent baroque buildings. On our way back stop at a salt mine. The salt from these marshes is considered Italy's finest. At dusk the sun turns the salt fields rosy pink. Return to Trapani for dinner oyo.
Those participating solely in the standard mycological tour depart from the US on this day.

Palermo (3 nights)

Oct 24 Tuesday
Beginning of the mycological tour. Arrival at Palermo airport and transfer to hotel in town. Check in and orientation walk around the area where hotel is located. Dinner in Palermo.



**All activities are subject to change on the basis of which options are deemed to be the most suitable in terms of current culinary standards, the weather conditions on a given day, and other relevant criteria.*

NOTES ON SICILY

Sicily is one of the world's most captivating places, it seductively lies in the heart of the Mediterranean and has been luring travellers since time immemorable.

Its varied landscape makes a dramatic impression, from the smoking hulk of Etna to some of the Mediterranean's most pristine waters.

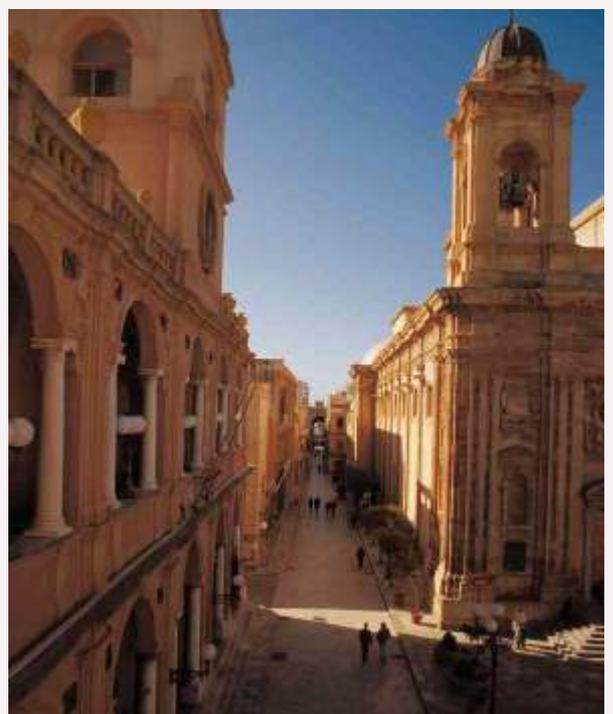
The embarrassment of cultural riches remains one of the island's most distinctive attractions. As if its classical heritage weren't formidable enough, Sicily is bursting at the seams with artistic and architectural gems from every epoch. Arab domes and arches, Byzantine mosaics, Norman castles and a stunning array of baroque architectural masterpieces, from golden-hued domes and palaces to the multi-tiered cathedral facades.

Geography and history have also bequeathed the island a culinary tradition that draws on dishes from the influences of many different populations. To this can be added a wealth of ingredients that is exceptional even by Italian standards, the fruits of a fertile land and a teeming sea. Fish and seafood are superb as are the 'agnello' (lamb) in spring and pork from pigs raised in the Madonie mountains. Not to mention the exceptional cheeses of the island: ricotta, caciocavallo and fine sheep's cheeses.

The richness and diversity of mushrooms found on the island is as unique as its architecture, landscape and cuisine. Mycologically speaking Sicily is extraordinary, from the delicious, highly-prized and very rare *Pleurotus nebrodensis*, which can only be found in the Madonie Park in Sicily and nowhere else in the world to a giant species of mushrooms which was thought to be native only to West Africa, *Macrocybe lobayensis*, which instead was discovered to grow here as well.



TRAPANI AREA



MARSALA

RUINS OF SEGESTA

MAZARA DEL VALLO

ERICE



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Oct 25 Wednesday

Visit the city of Palermo, capital of Sicily and a feast of the senses. See some of the world's most beautiful mosaics in the Palazzo dei Normanni, the red domed San Giovanni degli Eremiti, symbol of the city and the imposing Cathedral. Abandon yourself to the sights and scents of the Vucciria Market. Lunch in Palermo and dinner oyo

Oct 26 Thursday

1st Mycoforay in Figuzza forest, 40km from Palermo and famous for its porcini and chestnut woods. Lunch in local trattoria or agriturismo. Afternoon visit of the unique Norman cathedral of Monreale with its dazzling gold mosaics. Dinner oyo.

Cefalu (2 nights)

Oct 27 Friday

Transfer to Cefalu. En route take part in 2nd mycoforay. Lunch in local trattoria or agriturismo. Reach Cefalu in time to visit its great XII century Cathedral and to have a stroll through this romantic medieval town, with its cobble-stoned streets, small fisherman's port and sandy beach. Dinner oyo.

Oct 28 Saturday

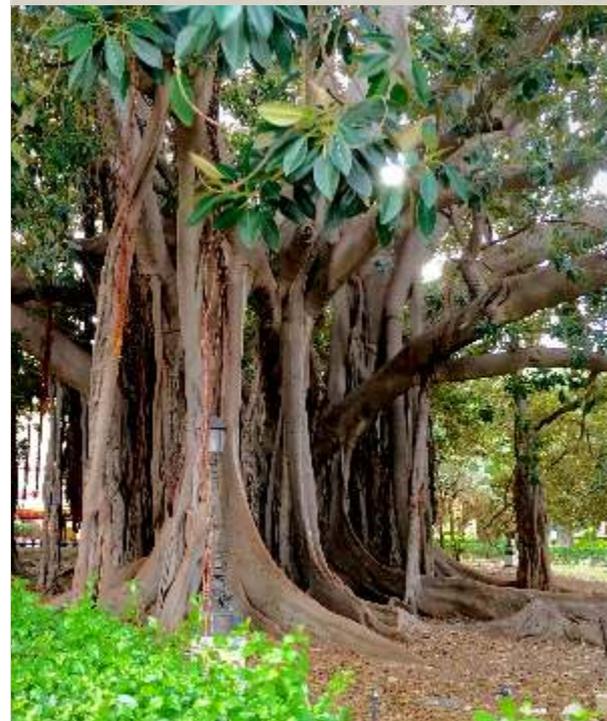
3rd Mycoforay in Madonie forest. Lunch in local trattoria or agriturismo. Afternoon activity, centered in Castelbuono, revolves around the extraction and treatment of manna, an ash tree syrup uniquely produced in Sicily and exported to the entire MiddleEast . Dinner oyo.

Petralia Soprana (3 nights)

Oct 29 Sunday

Transfer to Petralia Soprano the highest village in the Madonies. 4th mycoforay en route. Lunch in local trattoria or agriturismo. Petralia Soprana is beautifully positioned at the top of a hill above a treeline of pines, it is one of the best-preserved small towns in north-central Sicily, full of picturesque stone houses and curling wrought-iron balconies brimming with geraniums. Orientation walk around town. Dinner oyo.

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THE MARKETS



Oct 30 Monday

Go on 5th mycoforay in the morning. Lunch in local trattoria or agriturismo. Afternoon visit Azienda La Fontana, a winery in Geraci Siculo where they make wines and liquers (manna too): Nero d'Avola, Catarratto, Amaro Corradino and others. Dinner oyo.

Oct 31 Tuesday

Go on 6th mycoforay in the morning. Lunch in local trattoria or agriturismo. Visit Gangi which in 2014 won the award, 'Borgo Più Bello d'Italia', prettiest village in Italy and which is also renowned for its bread and local cheese, provola delle Madonie. Return to Petralia Soprano. Dinner oyo.

Catania (3 nights)

Nov 1 Wednesday

Transfer to new hotel in Catania en route visit Piazza Armerina to visit the extraordinary ancient mosaics. Lunch in a local trattoria or agriturismo. Reach Catania in time to catch some of the sites of this buzzing city with grandiose lava-stone palazzi and baroque piazzas. Dinner oyo.

Nov 2 Thursday

Free time in Catania to wander through the backstreets of the Piazza del Duomo to see the best show in town: the raucous fish market that takes place every workday morning. Go on our 7th mycoforay. In November of 2016 a species of mushroom that is native only to west Africa, *Macrocybe lobayensis*, was found for the first time outside of Africa in the province of Catania. Lunch in local trattoria or agriturismo. Dinner oyo.

Nov 3 Friday

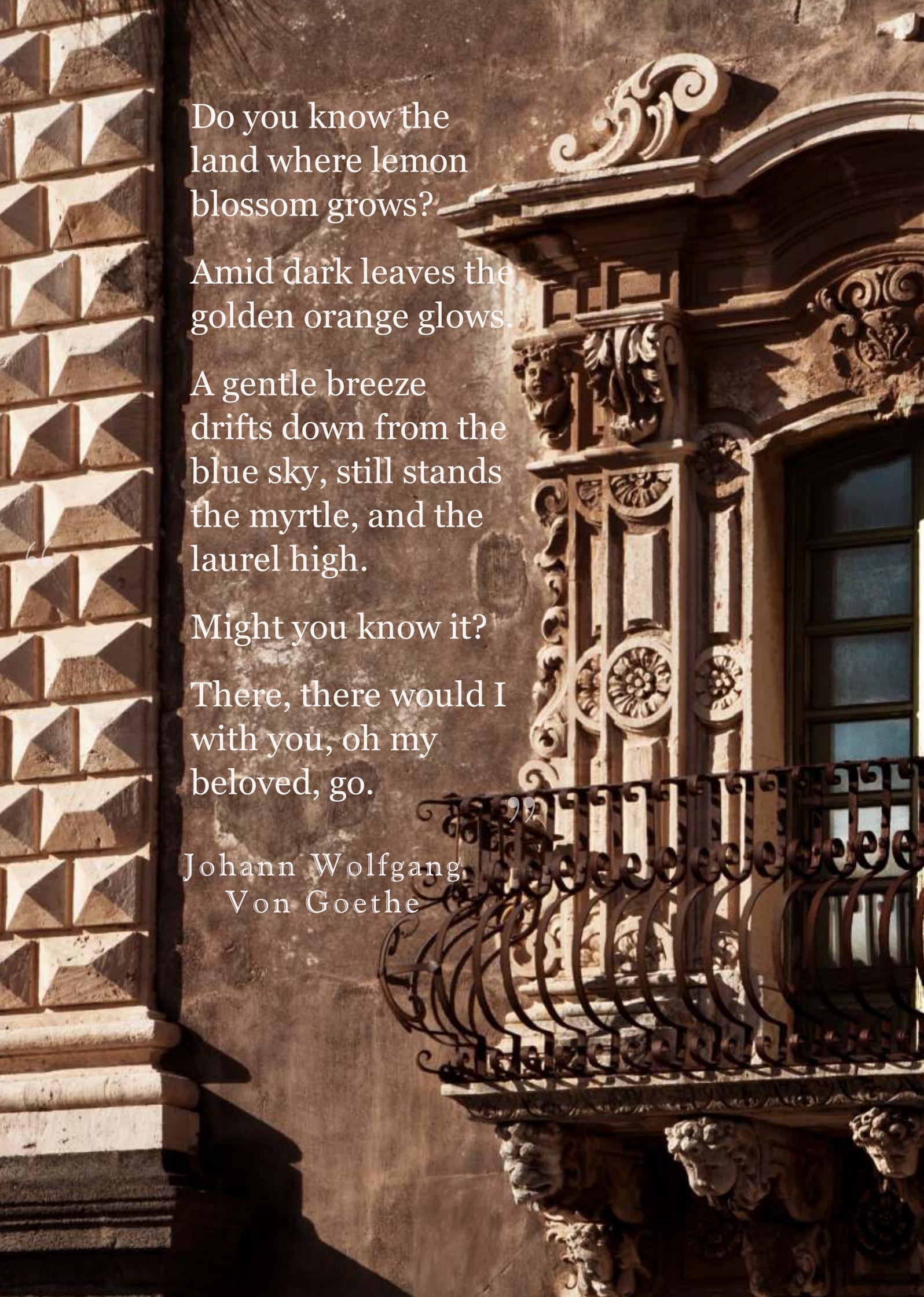
Whole day dedicated to Mount Etna. Look for mushrooms as you hear the volcano rumble. Farewell luncheon. Return to Catania for dinner oyo.

Nov 4 Saturday

After breakfast departure from Catania airport: back to US.



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Do you know the
land where lemon
blossom grows?

Amid dark leaves the
golden orange glows.

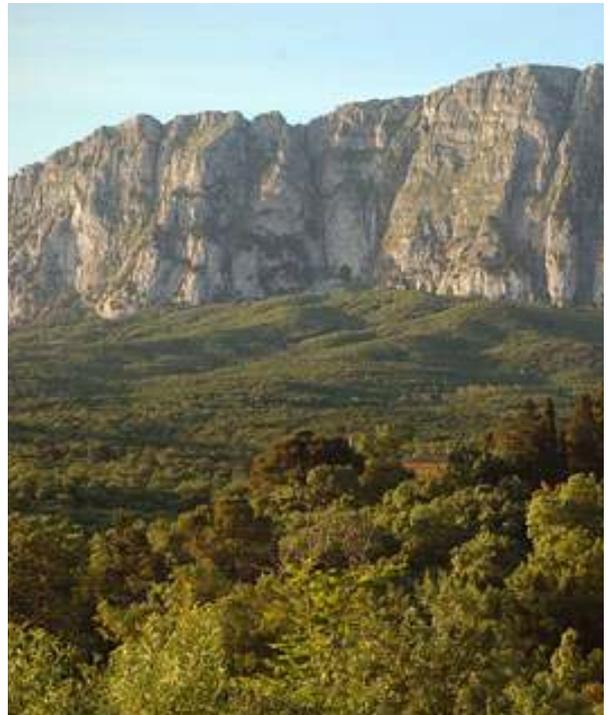
A gentle breeze
drifts down from the
blue sky, still stands
the myrtle, and the
laurel high.

Might you know it?

There, there would I
with you, oh my
beloved, go.

Johann Wolfgang
Von Goethe

THE SICILIAN WOODS





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