



THE ROYAL OAK FOUNDATION

Americans in Alliance with the National Trust of England, Wales and Northern Ireland

# Sicily & Malta

Catania to Palermo Aboard Sea Cloud II

October 1 - 9, 2026



# Cruise *Highlights*

**Sail** the central Mediterranean for a week aboard the elegant **Sea Cloud II**, cruising to **Sicily** and **Malta** to explore several UNESCO-listed ancient treasures.

**Discover** **Syracuse**, where the fifth-century B.C. Doric columns of a Greek temple are visibly embedded in the walls of the **Duomo di Siracusa**.

**Enjoy** a private visit to a Sicilian baron's 18th-century residence in Syracuse.

**Witness** megalithic temples from 3600 B.C. on guided tours of ancient Maltese sites, featuring some of Earth's oldest freestanding structures.

**View** two Caravaggio masterpieces, including the Italian master's only signed work, during a guided visit to Valletta's **St. John's Co-Cathedral**.

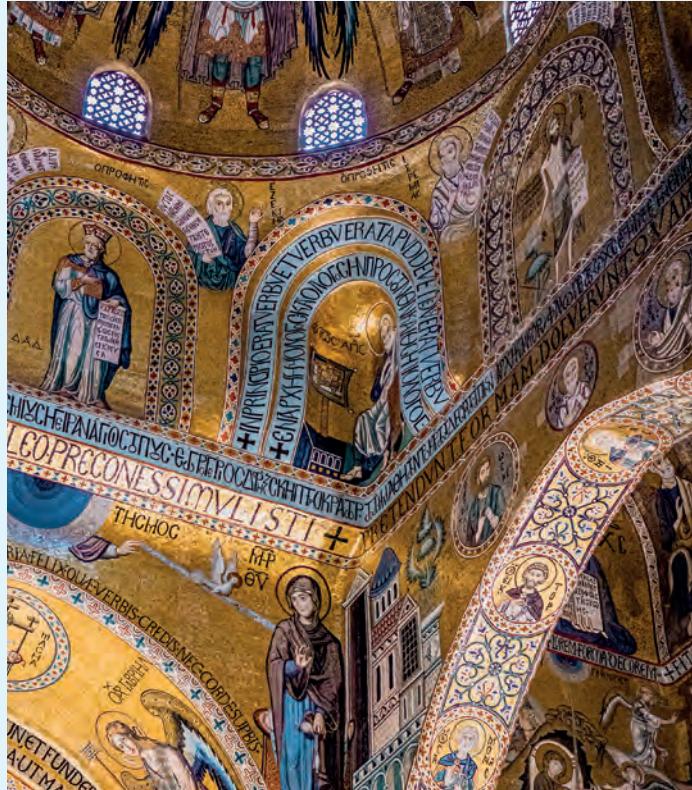
**Walk** through Sicily's ancient Greek past with experts at the UNESCO-listed, 2,500-year-old **Valle dei Templi** (Valley of the Temples) in **Agrigento**.

**See** one of the world's richest and most complex collections of *in situ* Roman mosaics, covering nearly 38,000 square feet at the **Villa Romana del Casale**.

**Visit** the fifth-century B.C. Doric temple at **Segesta**, a famously unfinished structure that stands as a relic of ancient geopolitics.

## Optional Palermo Postlude

October 9 - 11, 2026



Capella Palatina, Palermo

Extend your journey in **Palermo**, a city where Norman, Arab, and Byzantine cultures converged to create a brilliant architectural and artistic synthesis. Explore the city's UNESCO-listed sites, including Europe's oldest royal residence, the **Palazzo dei Normanni**. Inside, see the **Cappella Palatina**, with its glittering Byzantine mosaics and a spectacular Islamic *muqarnas* ceiling. At the nearby **Cattedrale di Monreale**, you will stand beneath the world's largest cycle of Byzantine mosaics. The program also includes a look at the Sicilian Baroque, with the intricate stucco work of Giacomo Serpotta at the **Oratorio di Santa Cita**, and a private visit to a historic *palazzo*, deepening your encounter with Sicily's multifaceted heritage.

**Postlude Rates**  
**\$3,599 per person, double rate.**  
**\$4,899 single rate.**

**INCLUDES:** Two nights accommodations at the Grand Hotel et Des Palmes in Palermo, with breakfast daily, one lunch, and one dinner. Sightseeing as noted. See the main program for exclusions.

Dear Royal Oak Members and Friends,

The Mediterranean islands of **Sicily** and **Malta** have captivated the British imagination for centuries. From the late 18th century, when architects like Sir John Soane measured the proportions of Sicily's ancient Greek theaters to carry home the principles of Neoclassicism, to the 20th century, when Captain Alexander Hardcastle devoted his fortune to restoring Agrigento's temples, these shores have inspired Britain's artists, poets, scholars, and adventurers.

From **October 1 to 9, 2026**, the Royal Oak Foundation invites you aboard the elegant sailing yacht *Sea Cloud II* to explore this landscape. With expert guidance, discover how British cultural and imperial history intersects with the legacies of ancient Greece, Rome, and the Knights of St. John.

Cruising from the port of **Catania**, you'll first arrive in **Syracuse, Sicily**. Here, you will walk through the fifth-century B.C. Greek amphitheater that Soane documented on his Grand Tour in 1779, producing measured drawings that shaped the architecture of Georgian Britain. A Sicilian baron will host you for a tour of his 18th-century residence, **Palazzo Beneventano del Bosco**, exemplifying the Baroque grandeur that drew generations of Grand Tourists to these shores.

In **Malta**, where British rule lasted 164 years, the architectural evidence of the empire remains visible throughout **Valletta**, the capital. Inside **St. John's Co-Cathedral**, view the chapel once assigned to the English Langue of the Knights of St. John. The cathedral also houses two Caravaggio masterpieces, including *The Beheading of Saint John the Baptist*, the only painting the artist ever signed.

British colonial officials conducted the first modern excavations of Malta's prehistoric temples. Go behind the scenes at **Hagar Qim** and the **Ggantija Temples**, which predate the Egyptian pyramids by more than 1,000 years. Back in Sicily, take a guided look at **Agrigento**'s UNESCO-listed Greek temples in the **Valle dei Templi (Valley of the Temples)**, where Lord Byron wandered by moonlight in 1809. At **Segesta**, discover Sicily's unfinished Doric temple, which fascinated Soane, and admire the structural logic of Greek design that influenced the buildings and squares of Regency Britain.

An optional postlude to explore the treasures of **Palermo**, the disembarkation city, is also available, **October 9 to 11, 2026**.

**To reserve your place on this special cruise**, please contact our tour operator, Arrangements Abroad, at 212-514-8921 or [trips@arrangementsabroad.com](mailto:trips@arrangementsabroad.com). We hope you will join us for this journey through a deep and layered history.

Sincerely,



Ian Murray  
Executive Director  
Royal Oak Foundation



**Activity Level:**  
Intermediate      **Pace Level:**  
Vivace



Visit [Arrangements Abroad's](http://ArrangementsAbroad.com) website for more information about Activity and Pace Levels at [www.arrangementsabroad.com/faqs](http://www.arrangementsabroad.com/faqs).



Segesta, Sicily

# Sicily & Malta

Catania to Palermo Aboard Sea Cloud II

October 1 - 9, 2026

## Thursday, October 1:

### Departure

Depart on an overnight flight for Catania, Italy, on the island of Sicily.

## Friday, October 2:

*Catania, Sicily, Italy / Embark Sea Cloud II*

Arrive in **Catania, Sicily**. After lunch, you will be transferred to the elegant, three-masted sailing yacht **Sea Cloud II** for embarkation. Enjoy a warm welcome on deck and a champagne toast as the vessel sets sail from the harbor. After settling in, gather for the captain's welcome reception and dinner. **L,R,D**



Ortigia Island, Sicily



Palazzo Beneventano del Bosco, Sicily

## Saturday, October 3:

*Morning at Sea / Syracuse*

After a morning at sea, arrive in Syracuse, the city Roman statesman Cicero proclaimed "the greatest Greek city." Choose between two expert-guided afternoon excursions with lunch, returning for dinner aboard *Sea Cloud II*:

**Option 1:** On Ortigia Island, visit the **Duomo di Siracusa**, where Doric columns from a fifth-century B.C. Greek temple remain visibly embedded within the cathedral walls. Following your visit, a Sicilian baron extends a special invitation for a tour and refreshments at his 18th-century private residence, **Palazzo Beneventano del Bosco**, which exemplifies Ortigian Baroque grandeur.

**Option 2:** Discover the **Parco Archeologico della Neapolis**, the civic and cultural center of ancient Syracuse. Walk through the 16,000-seat Greek amphitheater, Sicily's largest, carved directly from bedrock in the fifth century B.C. Contrast this with the Roman Amphitheatre, built around 20 B.C. for gladiatorial spectacles. **B,L,D**

## Sunday, October 4: *Pozzallo / Noto / Modica*

From the port of **Pozzallo**, drive to **Noto**, a sun-baked town draped across a plateau. An expert guide will lead you along the elegant **Corso Vittorio Emanuele**, whose sculpted golden limestone façades were captured in HBO's *The White Lotus*. Choose to take lunch at leisure in Noto or aboard the ship.

Afterwards, opt to visit nearby **Modica** and the soaring **Cathedral of San Giorgio**, once called one of "the Seven Wonders of the Baroque World." You may also stop for a tasting of Modica's intensely flavored chocolate. This evening, enjoy dinner aboard *Sea Cloud II*. **B,L,D**

## Monday, October 5: *Valletta, Malta / Tarxien / Qrendi or Mdina / Rabat*

Founded by the Knights of St. John in 1566, **Valletta** is the only national capital UNESCO has recognized in its entirety, boasting one of the world's densest concentrations of historic treasures.



Cathedral of San Giorgio, Modica



St. John's Co-Cathedral, Valletta, Malta

A guided tour of the 16th-century **St. John's Co-Cathedral** reveals an interior of High Baroque splendor, including a floor composed of nearly 400 inlaid marble tombstones. In the Oratory, view two **Caravaggio** masterpieces: *The Beheading of Saint John the Baptist*, his largest work and the only painting he ever signed, and *Saint Jerome Writing*.

Continue to the **Tarxien Temples**, megalithic structures from 3600-2500 B.C., among Earth's oldest freestanding buildings. Afterwards, choose between two afternoon excursions:

**Option 1:** Travel to **Qrendi** to visit two UNESCO-recognized prehistoric sites. At **Hagar Qim Temples**, built from 3600-3200 B.C., the façade contains Malta's largest megalith. Nearby, the **Mnajdra Temples** function as a precise astronomical calendar.

**Option 2:** Explore the medieval fortifications of **Mdina**, Malta's ancient capital, and **Rabat's Wignacourt Collegiate Museum**, an 18th-century Baroque residence built for the Chaplains of the Knights of St. John. It houses important paintings by Mattia Preti, an underground complex of catacombs and tombs, and the grotto where St. Paul the Apostle founded Malta's first Christian community. **B,L,D**

## Tuesday, October 6:

Xaghra (Gozo) / Victoria / Afternoon at Sea

Venture to the Maltese island of **Gozo** for a guided tour of the UNESCO-recognized **Ggantija Temples**, officially recognized as the world's second-oldest man-made structures. Dating to between 3600 and 3200 B.C., they predate both Stonehenge and the Egyptian pyramids by over 1,000 years.

Continue to the **Citadel of Victoria**, Gozo's fortified heart since around 1500 B.C. Here, visit the Baroque **Cathedral of the Assumption**, completed in 1711. Marvel at Antonio Manuele's 1739 *trompe l'oeil* ceiling painting, which creates a masterful illusion of a coffered dome. After the citadel, transfer to the **Ta' Pinu National Shrine** to admire its neo-Romanesque architecture and peaceful grounds before returning to the ship for lunch as it sails for Sicily. **B,L,D**

## Wednesday, October 7:

Porto Empedocle, Sicily, Italy / Agrigento or Piazza Armerina

Sea Cloud II arrives at **Porto Empedocle**, Sicily, where you may choose between two expert-guided excursions to UNESCO World Heritage Sites:



Villa Romana del Casale

**Option 1:** Explore the **Valle dei Templi (Valley of the Temples)**, Europe's largest archaeological park, covering 3,212 acres. A highlight will be the **Temple of Concordia**, one of the world's best-preserved Greek temples. Its conversion to a Christian church in the sixth century A.D. protected it from the stone quarrying that destroyed many other ancient buildings.

**Option 2:** Visit the **Villa Romana del Casale** near **Piazza Armerina**, a sprawling Roman country estate built in the early fourth century. This luxury villa contains the world's richest, largest, and most complex collection of *in situ* Roman mosaics, covering nearly 38,000 square feet. **B,L,D**

## Thursday, October 8:

Trapani / Segesta or Erice / Afternoon at Sea

From the port of **Trapani**, choose between two morning excursions that explore the legacy of ancient Sicily and the Greek colony here, known as Magna Graecia:

**Option 1:** Visit **Segesta** to see its famously unfinished Doric temple, constructed by the indigenous Elymian people around 420 B.C. Continue to the adjacent **Greek theater**, built in the late fourth to early third century B.C., which commands a spectacular panorama over the rolling Sicilian countryside toward the Gulf of Castellammare.

**Option 2:** Ascend to the medieval hilltop town of **Erice**, perched 2,460 feet above sea level on an isolated mountain peak. Visit the **Castello di Venere**, the 12th-century Norman fortress built directly upon the foundations of the ancient Temple of Venus.

Return to the ship for lunch and an afternoon at sea, followed by the captain's farewell reception and dinner. **B,L,R,D**

## Friday, October 9:

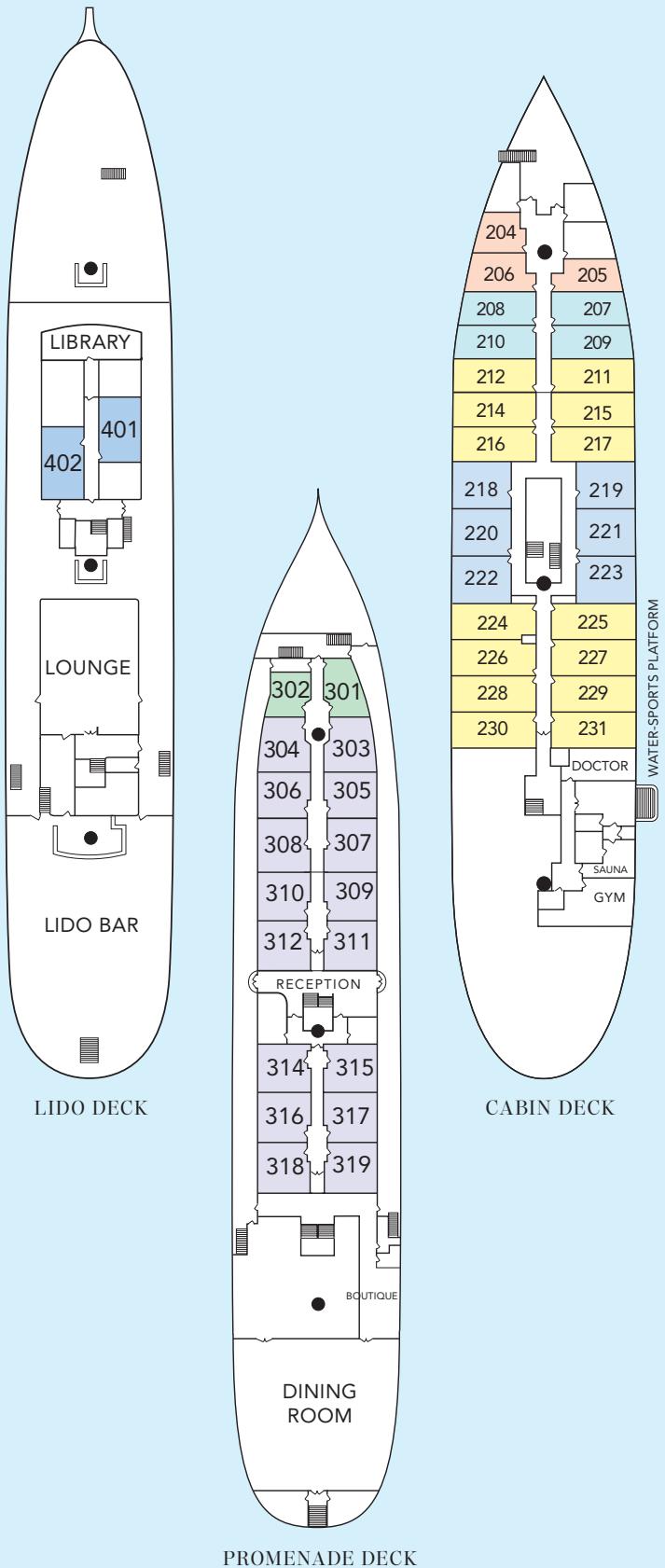
Palermo / Disembark / Return

Disembark *Sea Cloud II* this morning in Palermo and transfer to the airport for your flights home. **B**

Extend your adventure in Palermo, Sicily, on an optional postlude from October 9-11, 2026.

**DISCLAIMER:** This itinerary is subject to change at the discretion of The Royal Oak Foundation and Arrangements Abroad. For complete details, please carefully read the terms and conditions at [www.arrangementsabroad.com/terms](http://www.arrangementsabroad.com/terms).

# Sea Cloud II



## Cruise Rates

Cabins	Decks	Double	Single
<b>204 to 206</b>	<b>Cabin</b>	<b>\$7,999</b>	<b>\$9,999</b>
Upper/lower twin berths, shower			
<b>207 to 210</b>	<b>Cabin</b>	<b>\$10,499</b>	<b>\$15,399</b>
Superior Cabins. Twin beds, shower			
<b>211 to 217 &amp; 224 to 231</b>	<b>Cabin</b>	<b>\$12,499</b>	<b>\$18,799</b>
Deluxe Cabins. Twin beds, shower			
<b>218 to 223</b>	<b>Cabin</b>	<b>\$14,499</b>	<b>Inquire</b>
Deluxe Cabins. Twin beds, shower			
<b>301 &amp; 302</b>	<b>Promenade</b>	<b>\$15,999</b>	<b>Inquire</b>
Deluxe Cabins. Twin beds, shower			
<b>303 to 312, 314 to 319</b>	<b>Promenade</b>	<b>\$18,999</b>	<b>Inquire</b>
Junior Suites. Twin beds, bathtub with shower			
<b>401 &amp; 402</b>	<b>Lido</b>	<b>\$20,999</b>	<b>Inquire</b>
Owner's Suites. Queen-size bed, bathtub, and separate shower			

## Rates Include

- Seven nights cabin accommodations aboard *Sea Cloud II*
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, R=Reception, D=Dinner). Bottled water, soft drinks, juices, and coffee/tea with all meals; thoughtfully selected wine and beer with onboard lunches and dinners; complimentary open bar aboard *Sea Cloud II* throughout the cruise (including all standard spirits)
- Enrichment program of lectures and talks
- Escorted sightseeing, transportation, and entrance fees for all included visits
- Airport/pier/airport group transfers for participants on arrival and departure days
- Taxes, service, and portage charges; gratuities to local guides and drivers; customary shipboard gratuities

**NOT INCLUDED IN RATES:** International airfare; passport/visa fees; meals not specified; alcoholic beverages other than what is noted in inclusions; personal items and expenses; airport transfers other than for participants on arrival and departure days; excess baggage; trip insurance; optional Palermo postlude; any other items not specifically mentioned as included.

# Sea Cloud II



*Sea Cloud II* is a three-masted sailing yacht steeped in the elegance of yesteryear and complemented with the most modern amenities. Sister ship of the legendary *Sea Cloud*, *Sea Cloud II* has 47 outside cabins and travels under 23 billowing sails trimmed by hand. From the mahogany-paneled library and gracious lounge to the gym and water sports platform, no detail has been overlooked. Praised by the world's most discerning travelers, *Sea Cloud II* receives consistently high rankings from *Condé Nast Traveler*. Passengers enjoy open seating at all meals and complimentary use of all water sports equipment. A doctor is on call 24 hours a day. Please note that there is no elevator on *Sea Cloud II*.



*Sea Cloud II* (top) and Owner's Suite (above)

THE ROYAL OAK FOUNDATION  
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**RESERVATION FORM**

To reserve a place, please call Arrangements Abroad at 212-324-1893 or 855-533-0033, fax: 212-344-7493; email: [trips@arrangementsabroad.com](mailto:trips@arrangementsabroad.com); or complete and return this form with your deposit of \$2,000 per person (of which \$1,000 is non-refundable for administrative fees) to *Arrangements abroad*. Mail to: Arrangements Abroad, 260 West 39th Street, 17th Floor, New York, NY 10018-4424.

Name(s) in full as on passport(s). Please print.

## Address

City

Zip

Telephone (mobile)

(home)

E-mail

## ACCOMMODATIONS

Sea Cloud II cabin preference (1) \_\_\_\_\_ (2) \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to share a room/cabin with

## FORM OF PAYMENT

- Enclosed is my check (payable to *Arrangements Abroad*)
- Debit card  Credit card

Name on debit/credit card

Debit/credit card number

3- or 4-digit security code

Expiration date

I/We confirm that I/we have carefully read and agree to the Terms & Conditions of this Program (see <https://www.arrangementsabroad.com/terms-conditions/> to review or call for a copy). I/We agree to full payment by check, wire transfer, or credit card 120 days prior to departure. Each participant must sign below.

Signature (required)

Date

Signature (required)

Date

Front cover: Ta' Pinu National Shrine, Gozo, Malta

Back cover: *Sea Cloud II* (top); Erice, Sicily (bottom)

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