



WTM LONDON 2025

Sicily: An Outstanding Tourist Destination.

Growth, innovation, and hospitality drive Sicilian tourism.

Sicily approaches the end of **2025** with a renewed sense of self: today, it is undeniably one of Europe's great tourist destinations — and, above all, it is determined to **cement** this role over time.

It is no longer just an image built on landscapes, art, archaeology, food and wine traditions, **vineyards**, and the sea, but a concrete reality — recognized, measured, and evaluated on the basis of data, results, and strategic choices. And, as always, the numbers speak for themselves.

In **2024**, Sicily recorded **22.4 million overnight stays** and **7 million arrivals** in accommodation facilities. In the first ten months of **2025**, it has already surpassed **20.5 million overnight stays**, showing an **11.6% increase in stays** and a **1.3% rise in arrivals**, with an **average length of stay of 3.6 days**.

This means that those who choose Sicily are staying longer, exploring not only the well-known destinations but also mountain villages and towns far from the coasts and large cities — experiencing the island in a deeper, more authentic way.

The data confirm this trend: **short-term rentals have increased by 16%, injecting** new life into historic centers and local communities.

At the same time, the **airports of Palermo and Catania** have exceeded **22.7 million passengers**, with **164,000 flights (+8.4%)** — clear evidence of the island's growing connectivity and international accessibility. These numbers are expected to rise further with the expansion of **Trapani Birgi Airport**, which will serve the entire western area of the island.

The share of passengers arriving from the European Union has risen to **33%**, and in **2025** new direct routes have been launched to strategic hubs in **Northern Europe, the United Kingdom, Eastern Europe, and the Mediterranean**.

In particular, travel from the United Kingdom has grown by **5.5%** in the first nine months of **2025**, with an **average stay of more than 4.5 days** — a simple yet powerful sign: visitors aren't just coming to **see** Sicily, they're coming to **live** it.

A major strategic step has also been achieved with the opening of **direct flights between Sicily and the United States**, thanks to new long-haul routes from **Palermo and Catania**.

This change has an impact not only on tourism but also on **cultural and personal levels**.

Sicily is not a new destination for Americans — it's a land that already has deep roots in the United States, built on stories of migration, return, family, and memory.

The large Italian-American communities in **New York, New Jersey, Chicago, and New Orleans** have preserved language, flavors, and traditions that today are finding a new path home. These new air connections bridge not only geographical distances but also emotional ones, encouraging **roots tourism** — travel motivated by heritage, identity, and reconnection.

These results now place **Sicily second in Europe for tourism appeal**, right after **London** and ahead of **Paris and Rome**.

In **2024**, the island received the **Tourism Oscar** as **Italy's best destination**, and in **2025**, Sicilian attractions awarded Tripadvisor's international **"Best of the Best"** recognition increased from three to four — an unprecedented achievement.

Never before has Sicily shown such vitality: its cities host festivals, theater and music seasons, monuments, and cultural itineraries, while its villages offer food and wine experiences, nature tours, trekking routes, and themed trails.

Among them, the **Itinerarium Rosaliae**, tracing the path of **Saint Rosalia** from **Santo Stefano di Quisquina (Agrigento) to Monte Pellegrino (Palermo)**, and the **Blue Zone villages** of **Caltabellotta and San Giovanni Gemini**, where life expectancy easily exceeds 90 years.

Sicily's **reputation** has followed the same upward trend: the **Destination Reputation Index** has reached **84.5 out of 100**, steadily growing over the past three years.

The most satisfied visitors come from the **United States, Australia, and Poland**, followed by the **United Kingdom, Italy, France, and Germany**.

At the heart of this success lies **hospitality**: the average score assigned to hotel staff is **91.3 out of 100**, consistent across all provinces.

This demonstrates that the quality of human connection — the way people welcome, listen, and guide — remains one of the most authentic **hallmarks** of Sicilian identity.

All this takes place in one of the richest regions in the world for **cultural and natural heritage**: **1,636 kilometers of coastline, 7 UNESCO sites, 87 protected areas** including **one national park and four regional parks**, and more than **200 cultural sites**, representing about a third of all those recorded in Italy.

The island's accommodation network offers **220,000 beds**, with a significant presence of medium-high and high-end facilities: **5-star hotels represent 3.5%** of the total, compared to a national average of 2%.

At the same time, there is strong attention to **young travelers, backpackers seeking authentic and sustainable experiences**.

Sicily's growth, however, is not based solely on its heritage, but on a **clear vision**.

The region has invested in the new features of its **Regional Tourism Observatory**, powered by **artificial intelligence**, capable of analyzing in real time visitor flows, online reputation, mobility patterns, prices, events, and experiences.

This platform no longer just describes what is happening — it can now **forecast future trends**, enabling more informed and strategic planning.

Alongside this, a **policy of support for tourism businesses** has been launched, focused on enhancing the quality of the offer. A total of **€135 million** has been allocated through **FSC 2021–2027 funds**, aimed at the renovation of existing facilities, the recovery of unused properties, and the creation of new ones — with **non-repayable grants of up to 80%**.

The goal is clear: to build a model of hospitality that is **competitive, sustainable, and aligned** with international trends in contemporary tourism.

Today, tourism can no longer be seen as a simple flow of arrivals, but as a network of relationships, choices, experiences, and responsibilities.

Sicily has all the tools to rise to this challenge — and, above all, it has **the people, the communities, and the businesses ready to achieve it together.**