



## **The Ultimate Ancient (and Modern) Resort**

The Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Saracens, Arabs, Normans and Spaniards knew a great place when they saw one. Since ancient times, all of these folks had a residence in Taormina—the ultimate tourist resort. What a magical atmosphere. A gorgeous view, sun eight months of the year, scrumptious food, and plenty of activities to keep a person busy.

The first hotel opened in 1874 and since then, it's become one of the world's top tourist destination—with good reason. Who wouldn't want to visit a chic resort town that oozes the Sicilian "dolce vita."



*View from the top; how blue and clear can the water be?*

Perched on the top of a mountain, it offers spectacular views of the Ionian Sea. Want to scuba dive? Sail? Or just sit in the sun and dip your toes in the clear waters? From the old town at the top of the mountain, the cable car will zip you down to the cool water and Isola Bella. Here's a short video of the beaches at the foot of the mountain.

**Water, water everywhere!**

When the sun goes down, the suntan lotion gets washed off and the parade of tourists began walking the myriad of small, twisty medieval streets. Or they swarm to the main square where the striking hot pink bougainvillea flowers are everywhere and all the activity is going on. With a wealth of crafts and souvenirs to buy and food to enjoy, the evenings pass quickly. The atmosphere is relaxed and since there are a few churches located on the main square, there are often wedding parties to see. Who wouldn't want to get married in such a breathtaking and romantic spot?



*There are plenty of ceramics to choose from*



*The main square will be packed at 6 pm*



*You can always catch a glimpse of a wedding in the main square*

Any cultural activities around? There are top level art performances at the ancient Greek theater (so beautifully preserved), art museums, public gardens, palaces, abbeys and cathedrals to view. Here's a video from travel expert Rick Steves to give you the highlights. **Rick Steves Tour**



There are restaurants, trattorias and pizzerias, pastry-shops, bars, cafes, pubs for any taste and budget. Forget McDonalds; Sicilians aren't into fast food. A slow pace is more the style. The cuisine draws much from the culinary culture of all its invaders. The Arabs introduced eggplant and rice as well as a sweet and spicy cuisine. The French and Spanish introduced a Mediterranean stew of pasta, tomatoes, vegetables, sea food, lemons, and extra virgin olive oil. Sicilian food mixes Italian staples – pasta, tomato sauce and fresh vegetables – with local specialties and products from the island: red chilies, tuna, swordfish and sardines, olives, pine nuts and the famous Sicilian pistachios. BUT, no one can beat the Sicilian cannoli in Taormina. And no one ever passes one up!



*Spaghetti with seafood-  
-a speciality*



*You can dine on the terrace with  
a view!*



*Don't forget the cannoli!*

And finally, if you have just a little more time to spare, here's a last video that gives you the flavor of the town. **Taormina by day and night**

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