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Welcome to Catania

Erasmus experience is so much more than just an exchange program. It is a lifestyle, it is a celebration, it is a movie and you are the protagonist in this life-changing experience! This guide will help you explore your new city: Benvenuti a Catania!

“Nothing can be compared to the new life that the discovery of another country provides for a thoughtful person. Although I am still the same, I believe to have changed to the bones.”

Goethe, Italian Journey
This guide is made for you thanks to the voluntary work of ESN Catania’s members.

Who are we?

ESN CATANIA ASE is part of the Erasmus Student Network (ESN) which has 408 sections all over Europe as well as a part of ESN ITALY which has 50 sections and growing! We operate on a pure “Students Helping Students” principle and we are a non-political, non-profit student organization. We have been helping exchange students get the most out of their Erasmus experience as well as encouraging and helping Italian students plan their Erasmus period abroad since 2007. ESN Catania has many diverse programs and events, all aiming to make your stay here as memorable as possible and make our ESNing experience with you as awarding as possible.

- We have created our Tandem Conversation Club and have been making Italian students and Erasmus students learn about a new culture and a new language!
- We have organized Evento Nazionale for 3 years in a row, gathering more than 2000 students from all over Italy in a 4 days outstanding National event.
- We have been introducing the coolest of Catania to all of our Erasmus friends in the Welcome Week with so many fun activities, as Treasure hunt through the streets of our town and Bar-a-thon.
- You have the chance to participate in projects spanning Europe-wide and make a difference such as Social Erasmus and Exchangeability!
- Everybody enjoys our parties, the best in town with the most interesting people at the most beautiful locations such as Beaches, Hills, Parks and every place awaiting our visit and every theme not done yet.
- Everybody enjoys the Winter Cultural Event in Rome and trips all over Sicily, to Siracusa, Taormina, Modica, Agrigento and Etna... just to name a few...
- As former Erasmus students we are helping any way we can, according to our experience we will be there to help you from everyday life to finding a house to bigger issues.

That is all for now...we hope that you enjoyed reading and that you found the information that you were looking for.
Sicily, island in a sea of light

The Greeks circumnavigated our island and called it Thrinakia, island of the three capes. The symbol of Trinacria is in the current flag of Sicily and its origin is surrounded by mystery. It is composed of the head of the Gorgon with snakes in its hairs and ears of wheat from which radiate the three legs bent at the knee. The ears of wheat are symbol of the fertility of the land. The three legs represent the three promontories of Sicily - cape Pelorus (or tip of Faro, Messina: north-east), cape Passero (Syracuse: south), cape Lilibeo (or cape Boeo, Marsala: west). According to the legend, three beautiful creatures wandered the world taking the best things from each place they visited. They arrived where the sky was clear and the sea was deep blue. Happy and fulfilled about their harvest, they danced to celebrate that place of incomparable beauty. Each one of them threw into the sea their fruit giving rise to three capes. The sky shone with a bright rainbow and a rich land made of all the wonders of the world emerged from the sea. Thus was born the beautiful Sicily, the island of the three capes. The Byzantines believed the name Sicily came from a beautiful Lebanese princess. An oracle had predicted that before she became 15 years old she was to leave her country alone in a boat, otherwise she would end up in the jaws of a cat-monster. To avoid this terrible fate, her parents desperately put her in a boat and entrusted her to the waves. After being adrift at sea, the poor princess Sicily without food or water, landed on a desert but gorgeous beach, golden sand and rich of flowers and fruits. The young princess met a young beautiful man, the only survivor. Fate had chosen him and princess Sicily to repopulate that island with a stronger and kinder breed.

Let’s start with a little bit of history

Catania, overshadowed by Mount Etna, spreads along the Ionian coast. It is a dynamic and lively city, with magnificent architecture, a rich culture and a wealth of historic sites. According to Tucidide, Catania or Katanè as it was called, was founded in 729 B.C. by the Chalcidians of Naxos. The city of Catania was dominated by the Carthaginians and 263 B.C. and became a Roman colony. When the Roman Empire fell, Catania passed under ruling of various populations such as the Vandals, Ostrogoths, Byzantines, Arabs and Normans who occupy until the end of the eleventh century. Successively under the Angevins, the Aragons and the Spanish Bourbons was a period of great prosperity. Frederick III of Aragon, King of Sicily, set up some important political seats in Catania. The cultural growth that took place in the city is symbolized by the founding of the University (1434), the first in Sicily. The city preserved the “Middle Ages” style until the 17th century. The second half of 1600 was an extremely tragic period in Catania’s history: in 1669 there was a violent eruption of Etna and it covered everything with lava while the most disastrous of the earthquakes in 1693, wiped out the entire city, erasing almost all the vestiges of Middle Ages and Renaissance. As a result of this last catastrophe the Catania of today is actually 18th century city, and its palaces and other buildings are mostly in the baroque style. Its historic centre, declared a UNESCO World Heritage, preserves monuments of a great charm: churches and monasteries in Via Crociferi, the gigantic San Nicola church and the refined backdrops of Piazza Duomo, with the building of the town hall, the Elephant and the Cathedral, dedicated to the beloved patron Saint Agata, and many others. During the Risorgimento period, Catania rebelled against the Bourbons in 1837 and in 1848, freeing itself permanently in 1860, when the Thousand conquered Palermo. Catania was annexed to the Kingdom of Italy.
The name of Catania

Ancient indigenous population named their villages after geographical attributes of the locations. The Sicilian word, katane, means "uneven ground", "sharp stones", and "rugged or rough soil". The etymologies are easily justifiable since, for many centuries, the Metropolis of Etna has always been destroyed by lava and rebuilt within its typical black landscape. Around 900, when Catania was part of the emirate of Sicily, it was known as Balad-Al-Fil and Medinat-Al-Fil, Catania’s two official Arabic appellatives. The first means "The Country/village of the Elephant", while the second means "The City of the Elephant". The Elephant is the lava sculpture of Piazza Duomo’s Fountain. Likely a prehistoric sculpture that was reforged in the Byzantine Era, it appears to be a talisman that was reputedly powerful enough to protect the city from enemies and to keep away misfortune, plagues, or natural calamities. Another Arab toponym was Qatanyiah, "the leguminous plants" (in Arab Qataniyy). Pulses like lentils, beans, peas, broad beans, and lupins were chiefly cultivated in the Catania's Plain with time definite transformation in the name that we all know: Catania.
Let’s go for a walk

In Piazza Duomo, the heart of Catania, admire the baroque façade of the Cattedrale di Sant’Agata, Catania’s showpiece church. Constructed to replace the city’s Norman cathedral which was destroyed by an earthquake in 1693, it features a tiered baroque façade and an unusual grey and white colour scheme – like many of Catania’s 18th-century buildings it was fashioned out of volcanic rock. Inside, look out for Bellini’s tomb and the Cappella di Sant’Agata, where St Agatha’s relics are kept.

_Info: Cathedral, 7am-noon and 4-7pm daily; Sunday mass at 8am, 9.30am, 11am and 6pm; free admission._

In the middle of the piazza stands Fontana dell’Elefante, a flamboyant fountain featuring a smiling elephant and Egyptian obelisk.

Now head down to Via Pardo to enjoy some street theatre at La Pescheria, the city’s exuberant fish market. From there, work your way up to Piazza Federico di Svevia and the Castello Ursino a robust 13th century castle that houses the Museo Civico and its collection of archaeological artifacts.

_Info: Museo Civico, 9am-1pm and 3-7pm daily except Sunday, longer during exhibitions; free admission or €6 if there is an exhibition; phone: +39 095 345 830._

Pick up Via Auteri and continue to walk downhill to Piazza San Francesco d’Assisi. Here, behind scaffolding at No 3, is the Museo Belliniano, a small museum dedicated to opera composer Vincenzo Bellini in the house where he was born. Do you like opera? For a more modern theatrical experience, try for a matinee performance at the plush opera house, the Teatro Massimo Bellini, at Piazza Bellini.

_Info: Museo Belliniano, 9am-7pm Monday to Saturday; 9am-1pm Sunday; admission fee €3. Teatro Massimo Bellini, phone: +39 095 715 0921; www.teatromassimobellini.it; online tickets start from €20._

Duck under the Arco di San Benedetto and continue up Via Crociferi past several elegant baroque churches to Via Gesuiti on the left. At the top, on Piazza Dante, is the Monastero dei Benedettini di San Nicolò l’Arena, once Europe’s second-largest monastery but now part of Catania University. Nip in and have a nose around before descending Via Antonio San Giuliano to finish on Via Etnea. After a lunch on the run - in Savia, a historic pastry shop that does a roaring lunchtime trade in arancini. Or next door at Pasticceria Spinella with a cigar-sized crispy pastry tube stuffed with creamy ricotta cheese named Cannolo - you might enjoy a walk in Villa Bellini, a landscaped garden dating to the 19th century. Stroll past ceremonial busts of illustrious citizens, towering palms and other subtropical plants and trees, including an extraordinary graffiti-sprayed Moreton Bay fig tree near the north entrance.
Centuries of volcanic eruptions and earthquakes mean little has survived from Catania's early days when it was founded by Greeks around 729 BC. However, traces of its ancient past can still be seen. In Piazza Stesicoro you can explore the smog-stained ruins of the Anfiteatro Romano, a 2nd-century BC amphitheatre that once seated up to 16,000 spectators. Further south, you will find more theatrical ruins at the Teatro Romano-Odeon, Via Vittorio Emanuele II.

**Info:** Anfiteatro Romano, 9am-1pm and 2.30-6pm; free admission. Teatro Romano-Odeon, 9am-1.30pm and 2.30pm-6pm Tuesday to Sunday; admission fee €4; phone: +39 095 715 0508.

If this walk was not challenging for you, then you might consider about hiking Mount Etna – Europe’s largest active volcano – a must-see. A daily bus departs from the square in front of the train station to Rifugio Sapienza, the peak’s southern gateway. From late April you can take a cable car up to 2,500m and then either walk or take a further bus up to the crater zone, which at this time of the year is covered in snow.

**Info:** Etna Sicily Touring, phone: +39 348 5517136; [www.etnasicilytouring.com](http://www.etnasicilytouring.com), offer a range of excursions with prices starting at about €49 for a half-day tour.
You might also be interested in visiting

**Palazzo Biscari**: one of the most beautiful Baroque buildings in Catania. It was erected after the earthquake in 1693 on the remains of the 16th century city walls. The palace is accessed through a large portal facing via Museo Biscari. It is outstanding façade, designed by architect Antonio Amato, overlooks a beautiful view of sea from the harbor. Among its splendid 700 hundred rooms, there are a magnificent banqueting hall and grand gallery with a lovely winding staircase in Rococo style. There is also a particular bathroom, entirely decorated in wood, with a marble roman floor originating from the excavations of the Catania Roman Spa. In 1758, the Prince Ignazio Paternò Castello inaugurated inside the palace a museum that displayed his precious archaeological collection, now partially moved to the Civic Museum in the Ursino Castle.

**Teatro Massimo Bellini**: an Opera House, dedicated to the famous Catania’s composer Vincenzo Bellini. It was opened on May 31st 1890. The event was celebrated with a masterwork of Vincenzo Bellini – "Norma" symphony. The theatre façade is dominated by ornaments and allegories; in foyer, which leads to the concert hall, is located a statue of V. Bellini. The concert hall has an excellent acoustic and is considered to be among the best in the world. Its ceiling is ornamented with frescoes by Ernesto Bellandi and its stage curtain portrays the legendary "Victory of Catania over Libya" by Giuseppe Sciuti.

**Museo civico Vincenzo Bellini**: birthplace of the musician Vincenzo Bellini in Piazza San Francesco d’Assisi. It was declared a national monument and, several years later, opened as museum on 5th May 1930. The museum, has a collection of documents, souvenirs and personal objects. There are also models of scenery, autographed scores, paintings, musical instruments and various autograph manuscripts completed while Bellini studied at Naples.

**Anfiteatro Romano**: second only to that of Coliseum in Rome, the Roman Amphitheatre in Catania was considered to be one of the best and magnificent edifice. It was built around the 2nd century AD and brought to the light during the excavations in 1904 and 1906. It was oval in shape, built from lava stone, brick and marble. The Roman Amphitheatre could accommodate up to 16 000 spectators. Unfortunately, only one part of it is visible today, because other part is still buried under lava bridge or stones were removed in order to reconstruct other buildings.

**Via Crociferi**: a triumph of 18th century Baroque. It starts in Piazza San Francesco d’Assisi and can be reached by passing under the arch of St. Benedict. The first impressive building is the Church of St. Benedict, followed by the Church of St. Francis Borgia and Jesuit College, used to house the Art Institute. Opposite the College is located the Church of San Guliano, with a beautiful iron gate and a facade of rare beauty. Continuing on the other side of Via Antonino di Sangiuliano one will find the Convento dei Crociferi, and, finally, at the end of the street, the entrance to Villa Cerami, which houses the Law Faculty of the University of Catania

**Chiesa San Nicolò l’Arena**: built on a site of a Benedictine Monastery, is an imposing monumental edifice. Construction of the church began in 1558, but the earthquakes of 1669 and 1693 caused it to collapse. In the 1700s begun the reconstruction works. Unfortunately, because of lack of funds it was partly unfinished. The interior is divided into naves and aisles by impressive pillars. The church is a home for an extraordinary organ, with 2916 silver pipes enclosed in an elaborately carved case of gilded wood.
**Teatro Romano-Odeon:** probably built between 1st and 2nd centuries AD, on the pre-existing Greek Theatre. It had a diameter of about 87 meters and could seat up to 7000 spectators. Today is still visible the remains of the cavea, orchestra, and some parts of the scene. Next to the Roman Theatre there is the Odeon, which could seat up to 1300 spectators. It was used for the choir rehearsals and competitions.

**Casa di Giovanni Verga:** housed on the second floor of 19th century building in Via Sant’Anna, between via Vittorio Emanuele and via Garibaldi. Giovanni Verga (1840-1922) was one of the greatest Sicilian’s writers, who lived and wrote here for many years. After his death, the house was bought by Sicilian Region and opened to visitors as a house-museum. Inside there are preserved some pieces of furniture and books that belonged to Giovanni Verga. The library in Giovanni Verga’s house boast more than 2500 books written by Italian and foreign writers such as Giacosa, Oriani, Rod, Capuana, Di Giacomo, Turgenev, Dostoevskij, Tolstoj, Gorkij, Flaubert, Maupassant, Dumas.

**Castello Ursino:** built between 1239 and 1250 by the architect Richard of Lentini, by order of Frederick II of Swabia and served as the residence of the Aragon’s Royal family in the 14th century. It has four circular and semi-circular towers, and today is the seat of the Town Museum. It houses a valuable coin collection, sculptures from Greek and Roman times and such works of art as a representation of The Virgin on a Throne dated 1947, and a portrait of S. Cristoforo.

**La Pescheria:** the fish market old as the ancient Catania itself. Located between Piazza Pardo and Piazza di Benedetto, it is astonishing with its wonderful show of colours, smells and sounds. It is a typical Mediterranean market where one can found various type of fish, meat, cheese, fruit, vegetables, spices and many other foodstuffs. The Fish Market is a worth to visit, even when you are “just looking”.

**Pozzo di Gammazita:** is in the heart of the old town centre of Catania, named Gammazita by a girl who threw herself into it. Around 1280 Catania was under the rule of France. The people of the town suffered many wrongs by French oppressors. In those days Gammazita, a beautiful young lady, was living in Catania. Usually she went to the well to get water. A French soldier fell in love with her and decided to court her even if she was engaged. Gammazita could not reject him forever and, one last time, given up all hope she threw herself into the well to preserve her virtues.

According to the legend, the waters of the well turn red occasionally to remember what happened a long time ago. Apparently, people tried to explain bloodstain in the water due to it being full of minerals and rusty materials. In her Honour today Gammazita’s sculpture is situated in University Square.

Don’t miss out the following destinations while you are in Sicily!

- Siracusa - Ortigia
- Taormina - Cefalù - Isole Eolie
- Acicastello - Acitrezza - Riviera dei ciclopi
- Agrigento - Valle dei templi
- Riserva dello Zingaro

**IMPORTANT:** ESN Catania organize already day-trips to some of these destinations throughout the year! Keep it in mind since Group Trips are more fun.
Trasportation

How to reach Catania?

**By plane:** Catania-Fontanarossa Airport (IATA: CTA) with scheduled and charter planes arriving from destinations throughout Italy and Europe.

From the airport, there are half-hourly buses to Catania’s bus station. The trip takes about 20 minutes.

**By bus:** Frequent buses run to Taormina, Messina, Enna, Caltanissetta, Ragusa and Syracuse. Less frequent buses run to local destinations, Naples, Rome etc. The main bus station is opposite the railway station and 10 minutes walk from the city centre.

**By train:** Frequent trains run up the east coast to and from Taormina (but the station in Taormina is a long walk below the town, at Giardini Naxos better to take the Bus) and Messina, then on to Naples and Rome etc. Trains also run to Enna, Palermo (slower than the buses) and Syracuse. A scenic route runs inland to Caltagirone and Gela. There is one daily train to Agrigento. The railway station is 10 minutes walk from the city centre.

**By ferry:** Several Ferries run from mainland Italy to Catania. There is an overnight car ferry that runs daily between Naples and Catania as well as ones from Genova and Civitavecchia. One can also get a ferry to/from Valletta, Malta.

Local buses

**A.M.T.:** Local bus lines in Catania. It offers 50 bus lines and a special tourist line (number 410) on request. There are different kind of bus tickets: time ticket (90 mins) for 1€ or the daily ticket for 2,50€. There are also different monthly subscriptions. [www.amt.ct.it](http://www.amt.ct.it)

**A.S.T.:** Offers link with a lot of secondary cities like Avola, Caltagirone, Car lentini, Grammichele, Ispica, Lentini, Mazzarrone, Mirabella Imbaccari, Modica, Noto, Palagonia, Piazza Armerina, Pozzallo, Rosolini, S. Michele di Ganzaria, Scicli, Signonella. [www.aziendasicilianatrasporti.it](http://www.aziendasicilianatrasporti.it)

**Etna Trasporti:** Links to Aidone, Fiumefreddo, Gela, Giardini Naxos, Recanati, Licata, Piazza Armerina Ragusa, Marina di Ragusa, S. Croce Camerina, Taormina, Valguarnera, Vizzini. [www.etnatrasporti.it](http://www.etnatrasporti.it)

**Intebus:** Links to Agira, Avola, Catenuova, Leonforte, Nicosia, Nissoria, Noto, Pachino, Portopalo, Priolo, Regalbuto, Siracusa: [www.interbus.it](http://www.interbus.it)

**SAIS Trasporti:** Links to Agrigento, Caltanissetta, Canicatti. [www.saistrasporti.it](http://www.saistrasporti.it)

**SAIS Autolinee:** Links to Enna, Messina, Palermo. [www.saisautolinee.it](http://www.saisautolinee.it)

Subway

**Metro** service runs only on weekdays, from the station Catania Borgo to Catania Porto, and vice versa. The service runs every 15 minutes, in both directions from 07:00 to 20:45. The ticket is valid for 90 minutes from validation and costs 1€. There is also a monthly subscription for 12€. [www.circumetnea.it](http://www.circumetnea.it)

Taxi

Finding a taxi in Catania is easy. You can get it piazza Duomo or where it has its taxi label on. You can order one. Stopping a taxi on the street is cheaper than ordering it as you also have to pay for the call. You can order a taxi also with an app, to download app check the web site.

Radio taxi Catania: +39 095 330 966 [www.radiotaxicatania.org](http://www.radiotaxicatania.org)

From airport to Catania’s train station, expect to pay 20€ and 18€ to Catania’s Duomo.

ALWAYS KNOW AND AGREE ON THE PRICE BEFORE ENTERING THE TAXI
Food

From cannoli to arancini, if you are headed to the island yourself, prepare to be overwhelmed at just how varied and diverse Sicily’s cuisine really is! Thanks to its hot-potato history (everyone from Arabs to Normans governed the island), Sicily’s cuisine represents a complex layer of cultures. Plus, the island itself is incredibly fertile; produce grown on Sicily includes olives, oranges, lemons, eggplants, tomatoes, pistachios, almonds, grapes, and more—not to mention all of the seafood fished right off the coast. The result? A cuisine that is fresh, varied, and absolutely delicious! Here are just some of our favorite foods from Sicily!

In case that you are hungry and you’re looking for some street food...

**Etoile d’or**, open 24/7 all day every day.  
**Minipizza**, Piazza Teatro Massimo.

**Savia**, Via etnea in front of Villa bellini.

We have also very cheap University restaurants. Restaurants are open from 12:00 till 14:00 for lunch and from 19:00 till 21:30 pm for dinner. Every meal will cost you around 2€ each time. The food is also given as a take away upon request.

**Where?**

- Ristorante Universitario "Vittorio Emanuele" - Via Vittorio Emanuele n° 36 - 38 - 40 Catania
- Mensa “Cittadella” - Viale A. Doria, 6 (inside Cittadella universitaria)
Are you hungry? Hmmm... What to eat? You open the menu of the tavern and it all sounds so Italian to you? At this menu you will find illustrated explanations of the most famous Sicilian foods and beverages:

**Arancini**: are balls of saffron rice filled with tomato ragout, or meat or cheese or a combination of these. The rice balls are then rolled in flour, coated with beaten egg and rolled in bread crumbs. They are deep-fried until golden brown, and resemble an orange (arancino).

**Caponata**: like many Sicilian dishes, this one is based on eggplant. Eggplants are chopped and fried, and then seasoned with sweet balsamic vinegar, capers, and sometimes pine nuts and raisins. The result is a sweet-and-sour “salad” that’s a delicious accompaniment to the meal as a side dish or even the main dish itself.

**Parmigiana di melanzane**: yep, more eggplant! Known to English speakers as “eggplant parmesan” (although there is no parmesan in the dish), eggplant is sliced, fried, and layered with cheese and tomato. And no, you don’t see chicken or veal parmesan in Sicily (or anywhere else in Italy); that is the version that Italian immigrants made up when they moved abroad.

**Spaghetti ai ricci**: seafood is a major specialty in Sicily—even sea urchins! This spaghetti is very simple, but takes a long time to make. The cook has to cut the sea urchins in half (avoiding the spines!) and scoop out just the “good” part of the meat, leaving behind the rest. The meat flavors the spaghetti with a delicate, slightly salty taste. If you are wondering why this dish can be expensive, it is because it takes about 15 sea urchins for one portion of pasta!

**Pasta alla Norma**: one of Catania’s signature dishes is pasta alla Norma, a delicious marriage of fried aubergines, tomato and basil and “ricotta salata” that is named after Bellini’s opera. It’s served all over town but is particularly good at the Nuova Trattoria del Forestiero (Via Coppola 24, +39 095 316 283; closed Monday) where it costs just €5.

**Pasta al pesto di pistacchi**: although most of us think of the basil variety from Liguria when we think “pesto”, it actually could apply to any similar sauce—including even ground-up pistachios.

**Carne di Cavallo**: Via Plebiscito is the home of the horse. It is also a fine place to go if you want to get a taste of the, at times, shockingly real Sicily. Via Plebiscito runs from the Pescheria or fish market, behind Piazza Duomo around in a semi circle to near Piazza Stesicoro.

**Frutta martorana**: other places call this “marzipan”, but here in Sicily, the almond paste is molded into little (incredibly realistic!) fruits—hence fruits of Martora, or frutta martorana.

**Cassata siciliana**: a sponge cake is soaked in liqueur, its slices layered with sweetened ricotta, and the whole thing covered in almond paste, then icing. Oh, and studded with candied fruits and other goodies. This one’s for serious sweet tooths only!

**Cannoli**: for a taste of Sicilian tradition, search out I Dolci di Nonna Vincenza (Piazza Placido 7, +39 095 715 18 44; [www.dolcinonnavincenza.it](http://www.dolcinonnavincenza.it)), a lovely old-fashioned shop selling cakes, pastries and biscuits. A tube of fried dough gets filled with sweetened ricotta—and often topped off with candied fruit, pistachios, or chocolate chips.

**Granita**: the perfect summer refreshment, granita, originally from Sicily, can now be found all over Italy. It is just ground ice with sugar and fresh fruit... but it is every bit as refreshing as it is simple.
Nightlife in Catania

Catania is a city that never sleeps! If you are a party animal or a culture lover, in Catania surely you will find whatever it is you are looking for! This city provides different ways of having fun, from nightclubs until classic music concerts. For more information you can check our website and our Facebook pages, where you can find what is going on in Catania’s cultural life.

Catania is famous for its legendary nightlife and not just in Sicily. This city offers many places to have goodtime. The most popular meeting place is in the city centre, in the area of Piazza Duomo, Piazza Università and near the Teatro Bellini. Between the airy Baroque piazzas, and picturesque streets and courtyards, there are many pubs and clubs, which are always crowded and lively. In summer they turn into famous “Caffè Concerto”, extending their activities in the City’s open spaces and offering live music and multimedia events. The choice of fun things to do is never-ending: there are many theatres, fashion disco clubs and an endless variety of pubs, where always you can find live music. You can choose between modern, Arabic or Irish style, minimal Japanese atmospheres and exclusive wine bars. City’s inhabitants make Catania’s nightlife so interesting that it seems natural to stay out until dawn. And if you get hungry after walking, talking and dancing there are several bars open 24 hours a day.

Piazza Teatro Massimo

Piazza Bellini or Piazza Teatro Massimo, where the theatre Massimo Bellini is situated, is the right place to be for a night out in Catania. There are many nightclubs and bars on this square and along the street with the same name. This square is crowded with the young people of Catania. During warm seasons, the bars have tables out along the street where you can sit and watch people walking and drinking. This street is partly pedestrianized. You will see at least 4-5 pubs directly facing the square, plus you will find a few others if you dare wonder in the small alleys nearby. The places are almost inevitably crowded of young sicilians, though you will find people of a higher age in certain hangouts. Most of the bars will have tables outside in the summer, which get occur though The Bellini square is also a great place for people watching, especially at summer time when it is closed to private traffic (though the regular jams in the winter are also starkly fascinating to observe).

Internetteria

From breakfast to pre-dinner in a cozy and colourful place. A place that has always been a meeting place for young people of Catania. Large outdoor area, active and heated in winter, the restaurant offers a wide selection of teas and herbal teas plus the ability to order all kinds of alcoholic and soft drinks.

www.facebook.com/internetteria-95719227094

Ostello

You find yourself 20 meters underground in a cave in lava, with wet feet by the cool clear waters of a mountain stream that brings to mind both the washerwoman who came here to wash the clothes and the ancient Roman nobleman who took the water from here to the spa. Atmosphere is dynamic, animated unpredictably and extraordinarily colourful. You can meet people from all over the world who speak, play and dress differently from each other, but all united by the sun and the sea of Sicily.

Beside the old fish market every morning, gives colours, foods, flavours and aromas for the typical Sicilian cuisine in the restaurant of the hostel.

www.agorahostel.com
Useful information

How can I call my country?  Country code + tel. Number
How can my parents call me? +39 + Italian tel. number
How do I send mail? Signs denoting post offices are usually bright yellow with a blue writing saying “Poste Italiane”. Post-boxes are red. If you need to send mail or package you can find all you need at the post office. There is a post office next to Villa Bellini, on Via Etna.
How much is Catania going to cost me? (Information from typical monthly budget for last year)

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation</td>
<td>170 - 240€</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>100 - 120€</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>30 - 40€</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>100 - 150€</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>400 - 550€</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dictionary

We understand that these are your first days in Catania and everything that you hear sounds so weird to you. We have prepared a mini dictionary with some useful words and phrases that you will definitely need.

Yes: si
No: no
I don’t understand: non capisco
Please: per favore
Thank you (very much): grazie (mille)
You are welcome: prego
Excuse me: mi scusi, scusami
I am sorry: mi dispiace
How are you?: Come stai?
Fine, thank you!: bene, grazie!
What is your name?: come ti chiami?
My name is ... : mi chiamo ...
Nice to meet you: piacere di conoscerti
Goodbye: arrivederci
Good morning: buongiorno
Good evening: buonasera
Good night: buonanotte

At the bar...

One Beer: una birra
White/red wine: vino bianco/rosso
How much does it cost?: quanto costa?

ESNcard

Is not only a discount card. It is card that shows who you are. It is also a membership card. The ESN card is distributed exclusively by ESN Sections. Being a cardholder means having access to international, national and local events, advantages and discounts. For further info visit our website or ask us.