



# Sardinia

ITALY'S OTHER ISLAND REGION

Join us in Italy, October 21–28, 2024

*Sardinia has all the requisites of paradise: ancient mysteries, a spectacular coastline, rugged mountains, sparkling beaches with pristine water, pink flamingoes, and fragrant herbs.*

*A true crossroads of civilizations, the island lies in the geographic center of the Mediterranean, an hour's flight from Rome. ...*



**Elifant Archaeo-Culinary Tours**

[www.elifanttours.com](http://www.elifanttours.com) / [info@elifanttours.com](mailto:info@elifanttours.com) / +1-347-868-6345

# Sardinia

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Sardinia and its surrounding islands form the region of Sardegna.

"When you pick us up that first day I can just relax, turn it all over to you, and just go with the flow."

—Barbara A., Los Angeles



Elizabeth Bartman (left) and Maureen Fant, Elifant's principals

PICTURED ON COVER: View of Alghero. Above: Three Sardinians: bronze statuette of warrior; "Giant" of Prama; shopkeeper showing carta da musica, typical Sardinian crisp bread

UNLIKE THE REST OF ITALY, MOST OF SARDINIA'S RICH archaeology is prehistoric, produced by native peoples about whom we still know little except for their sophisticated artistic and architectural legacy.

The island's strategic position and rich mineral resources attracted first Phoenician traders and then Roman invaders. We'll visit the Roman colonial cities, but also see remains left by the Phoenicians, who set up trading centers on the coast. Meanwhile, in the interior, the ancient indigenous people built the evocative, often magnificent, conical stone towers known as *nuraghi*, which survive in the thousands.

Our itinerary begins in Cagliari, the regional capital on the island's south coast. We travel west and north to conclude in charming Alghero, in the northwest.

Sardinia's cuisine divides rather sharply into land-based (the more traditional) and sea-based, and we'll have both. The peculiarly Sardinian foods we'll meet will include: unique pasta shapes—such as *malloreddus*, *culurgiones*, and *lorighitta*; full-bodied red Cannonau wine and refreshing white Vermentino; *porcetto* (suckling pig); sheep's milk cheeses; the crisp bread known as "music paper"; *bottarga*; *fregula* with tiny clams, and, for dessert, cheese-filled *seadas* drenched in bitter honey (yes, bitter), and any number of almond-flavored *dolcetti*. After all that, we'll drink the island's delicious blueberry liqueur, *mirto*, though the fearless can try the grappa whose name means "iron wire." We'll have a lesson with a chef and visit at least one winery too.

Summer lingers longer in Sardinia than the mainland, so even late October should offer some warm, sunny days along with the cooler nights—without the summer crowds.

We stay in boutique four- and five-star hotels, including some of our favorites anywhere. The coastline and countryside along our way is as spectacular as we could ever wish. But this is not the Sardinia of yachts, glitz, and Michelin stars. Along the sinuous drive to a Roman temple deep in the interior, we might even be delayed by a small herd of cattle enjoying a roadside lunch.

## What's included

The tour price includes 7 nights bed and breakfast, at least one multicourse Sardinian meal (including wine) a day as well as other meals, tastings, and snacks as described in the itinerary; all activities and transport as described; airport transfers (see travel note, below); and tips. Plus the undivided attention of Elizabeth Bartman and Maureen Fant, Elifant's principals, who plan and lead the tour themselves.

- US\$6700 per person sharing a double room
- US\$900 supplement for a private room

Meal key: B = breakfast L = Lunch D = Dinner S = Snack, drink, or tasting

## Travel note

Cagliari is well connected by air to Rome (about an hour) and other cities throughout Europe and Italy. Alghero, where the tour ends, is also linked to Italy and Europe but with fewer flights. If you prefer to fly out from a different airport, transfers can be arranged at cost. Olbia is about 90 minutes from Alghero, Cagliari about 2.5 hours. If you wish to arrive a day early (Sunday, October 20) to get acclimated, we can reserve a room for you at our Cagliari hotel up to August 1.



# Sardinia

DAYS

1-4



"There is not in Italy what there is in Sardinia, nor in Sardinia what there is in Italy."

F. Cetti, 18th-century zoologist (*Storia naturale di Sardegna*)

What's a nuraghe?

The whole of Sardinia is dotted with the remains of some 7000 conical structures, probably fortresses, though there is no written record of their use. They were built during the later Bronze Age (c. 1800–1000 BCE) of local stone without mortar.

Nuraghi (the plural) are found nowhere else. The adjective is nuragic.



What's the difference between Phoenician and Punic?

The Phoenicians originated in what is now Lebanon. Their settlements in the western Mediterranean, notably Carthage, are known as Punic.

PICTURED ABOVE: two Sardinian classics, *polpo e patate* (octopus and potatoes), left, and *porchetto* (roast suckling pig)

## Monday, October 21

### Cagliari, introducing Sardinia

The tour begins before lunch with a quick greeting and briefing at the garden of our boutique hotel. **L, D**

- A casual introduction to Sardinian gastronomy over lunch
- Walk through Cagliari's layers of history
- Welcome aperitivo and supper in our hotel with illustrated introductions to Sardinian history and gastronomy by Liz and Maureen
- Overnight in Cagliari

## Tuesday, October 22

### Prehistoric and Roman Sardinia

This morning we meet some of the ancient peoples who lived on the island before the Roman conquest, including the builders of the curious stone towers known as nuraghi. In the afternoon, we'll head south of Cagliari to an important Roman site. **B, L, D**

- The extraordinary National Archaeological Museum of Cagliari, with its unique collection of prehistoric, Phoenician, and Greco-Roman art, which provides an unsurpassed overview of Sardinian archaeology
- Lunch southwest of Cagliari near the coast
- Nora, a major archaeological site, on a spectacular promontory west of Cagliari, with its Punic and Roman remains
- Overnight in Cagliari

## Wednesday, October 23

### Nuragic Sardinia

The island's most celebrated prehistoric site just happens to be located a short drive from the school producing Sardinia's most interesting young chefs. **B, L, S**

- Visit to a renowned beekeeper, producer of Sardinia's famous bitter honey
- A lesson and lunch at a prestigious cooking school (roll up your sleeves and cook or just watch; everybody eats)
- Su Nuraxi di Barumini, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and Sardinia's largest and most important nuragic complex
- Overnight in Cagliari

## Thursday, October 24

### Sulcis and the southwest

The focus today is Sardinia's southwest corner, where we'll meet the Phoenicians, the most skilled navigators and industrious traders of the ancient Mediterranean. Their settlement in Carthage, on the nearby Tunisian coast, grew into Rome's archenemy. Their presence in Sardinia, however, was more commercial than colonial. **B, L**

- Sant'Antioco (Sulcis), Sardinia's most important Punic site, with a brilliantly organized archaeological museum and the remains of the tophet (cemetery)
- A traditional Sardinian lunch
- Temple of Antas, a Roman temple, rare in Sardinia, built over a Carthaginian shrine
- Overnight in Oristano



# Sardinia

DAYS 5-8



### Famous Sardinians:

Grazia Deledda, Nobel laureate in literature (1926)  
 Antonio Gramsci, founder of the Italian Communist Party  
 Antonio Segni, President of Italy 1962–64  
 Francesco Cossiga, President of Italy 1985–92  
 Paolo Fresu, jazz musician

*"I wish Elifant Tours went everywhere. I would never travel any other way again."*

—Patty H., Boston



*"This land resembles no other place. Sardinia is something else. Enchanting spaces and distances to travel—nothing finished, nothing definitive. It is like freedom itself."*

D. H. Lawrence, *Sea and Sardinia* (1921)

### Friday, October 25

### Romans and Giants

The Roman presence in Sardinia dates to the invasions of the late third century BCE. Although the native population did its best to resist, the signs of Roman civilization are ubiquitous and impressive. **B, S, L**

- Tharros, the extensive remains of a well-preserved Roman city, built over Punic remains, beautifully sited on the Sinis peninsula
- Guided tasting of award-winning Sardinian olive oil at an agriturismo, followed by lunch of many traditional dishes
- Oristano, the main city of western Sardinia, with archaeological museum and 13th-century Duomo and handsome bell tower
- Overnight in Oristano

### Saturday, October 26

### Into the interior and north

Continuing north, we stop at one Roman and two nuragic sites en route to the charming small city of Alghero, which maintains traces of its Catalan past. Our elegant five-star hotel, in a historic villa on a promontory, is an easy 15-minute walk from the town center. **B, L, D**

- Roman baths at Fordongianus
- The majestic Nuraghe Losa, distinctive for its trilobate shape and complex engineering
- Paulilatino-Santa Cristina, an archaeological park with an imposing sacred well
- Dinner and overnight in Alghero

### Sunday, October 27

### A Sardinian mosaic

Our last day will be blessed by the fairies. That is, we visit some Domus de Janas, "fairy houses," as locals call the underground prenuragic chamber tombs discovered in the early 20th century. **B, L, S**

- The Anghelu Ruju necropolis, near Alghero
- The nuragic village of Palmavera, near Alghero
- The Roman town of Turris Libisonis, today Porto Torres, on the north coast, with magnificent mosaics
- Visit to an award-winning winery and fabulous Sunday lunch
- Overnight in Alghero

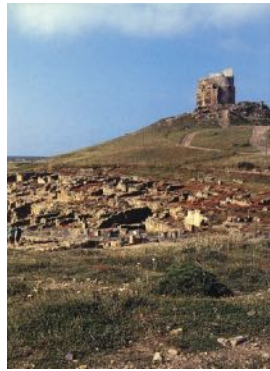
### Monday, October 28

### Departure

Individual departures from Alghero Fertilia airport (AHO). **B**



Ready to book  
the tour?



## Ready to book the tour? We're delighted.

Click [here](#) to complete a booking form. If you have trouble with the site, just put the information in an [email](#) with BOOKING SARDINIA in the subject line.

*"The best two weeks of  
eating of my life."*

—Bob D., Los Angeles

When we receive your form, we'll confirm that space is available and will send an invoice for the deposit of \$3000 per person. Payment may be by check in US dollars drawn on a US bank or by credit card (through [paypal.com](https://www.paypal.com)). If you need to use a different method, simply make a note on the booking form. (You will be responsible for any additional charges.)

We will bill you for the balance of the tour, due 90 days before departure.

**Questions about the tour or  
destination?**

**Send us an [email](#) or give us a  
ring (+1-347-868-6345).**



The first impression is sweet, then the bitterness takes over. A metaphor for Sardinia? No, it's rare and precious corbezzolo honey, the ideal accompaniment to *seadas*, a cheese-filled pastry that is the most Sardinian of desserts.

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PICTURED ABOVE: two views of Tharros  
(left and center); wine on the west coast  
of Sardinia (right)



# Elifant

A NEW RECIPE FOR HIGH-END  
CULTURAL TRAVEL IN  
THE MEDITERRANEAN



## Elifant Archaeo-Culinary Tours are unique, small- group trips for sophisticated travelers who delight in learning about the ancient world while indulging in the culinary present.

Each archaeo-culinary<sup>SM</sup> tour concentrates on a circumscribed area of Italy, the route defined by the archaeological remains. We may choose the sites because they're too important to miss or because we have extraordinary access to interesting sites closed to the public.

We build a food-related itinerary around the archaeological route. Through fabulous meals and visits with chefs and niche producers, we learn about contemporary and traditional local food, while the ancient ruins provide a historical backdrop to how this food culture evolved. Informal talks over evening *aperitivi* often supplement topics addressed during the tour. Menus are carefully planned to highlight local specialties and traditions.

### Don't worry about a thing

The comfort level is high. Hotels range from very comfortable to downright luxurious, restaurants from rustic trattorias to cutting-edge elegant, and travel (except in city centers) is by private bus. Every hotel selection involves choosing the right balance of charm, location, and comfort. The days are full, but the activity level is moderate. Participants should be able to walk up to half a mile at a time—extraordinary strength or stamina not needed.

Everyone receives plenty of individual attention before and during the trip, whether it's about travel advice, food allergies, or more in-depth discussion of the places we've seen and foods we've eaten.

### No elephants in the room

"Elifant" stands for Elizabeth (Bartman) and (Maureen) Fant, Elifant's principals.

Liz, an archaeologist with a lively interest in cookery, is a past president of the Archaeological Institute of America and a prominent scholar of ancient Roman sculpture. Maureen, an award-winning food writer, studied classical archaeology before moving to Rome and becoming an expert in Italian cuisine.

Both Liz and Maureen call on their personal connections in the worlds of archaeology and food for access to special people and places, but curate and lead the tours themselves to give their guests all the convivial pleasures of traveling with friends. Tour participants speak of Maureen and Liz's knack for explaining their subjects without being either too scholarly or too simple.

### Great company

If you've read this far, you'll understand that Elifant tours are special tours for special people. Group size ranges from 6 to 12, and includes couples, friends, and a good many solo travelers. Our meals are like dinner parties with an absolutely fantastic mix of guests—often taking their first group tour.

And no one ever feels left out. Liz and Maureen jointly lead and guide every Elifant tour and are always available to chat, have a coffee, or talk in greater depth about the day's subjects.

Every site visit is an  
adventure in living  
the past. Every meal  
is an event.

### Destinations so far

Rome  
Bay of Naples  
Basilicata + Puglia  
Sardinia  
Emilia-Romagna  
Western Sicily  
Southern Etruria  
Abruzzo + Molise  
Eastern Sicily  
Friuli-Venezia Giulia + Veneto

### Contact us

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PICTURED ABOVE: Detail from the Villa of the Mysteries, Pompeii (left). Detail from the mosaic pavement in the Ortranto cathedral (right).



# Terms

## AND CONDITIONS



### Costs

The 8-day tour—as per the above description, including 7 nights bed and breakfast; meals and other food (including wine), activities, and transport as described; tips; and airport transfers—will cost US\$6700 per person. An additional charge of US\$900 is made for solo travelers.

### Reservations and payments

To reserve space, complete the online booking form or send an email request to [info@elifanttours.com](mailto:info@elifanttours.com). You will then receive an invoice for a deposit of US\$3000 per person per tour. We accept payment, only in U.S. dollars, by personal check drawn on a U.S. bank, wire transfer, or [paypal.com](https://www.paypal.com) (including credit cards). You are responsible for any bank or service charges related to the payment method you choose. When you submit your deposit, you are bound to the terms and conditions outlined below.

### Cancellation and refunds

Your deposit is refundable until June 23, 2024 (which is 120 days before the start of the tour), but thereafter will be nonrefundable. The balance will be due on or before July 23, 2024 (which is 90 days before the start of the tour) and will become nonrefundable after that date. Cancellations will be effective once they are received in writing and confirmed by Elifant. For this reason, we highly recommend that participants carry personal travel insurance. A \$100 administrative charge, as well as any other charges or expenses incurred by Elifant in connection with the payments, will be deducted and withheld from all refunds. If you need to cancel after any of your payments become nonrefundable, you may, with Elifant's approval, transfer your booking to a third party who satisfies the conditions of the tour, including paying any remaining amounts due. (We will retain a \$100 administrative fee.) Partial or full refunds cannot be made to clients who for any reason do not participate in some part of the program or complete the tour, or whose start on the tour is delayed.

### Tour cancellation

If we are forced to cancel the tour, you will receive a full refund without further obligation on our part.

Tours are costed on the basis of a minimum number of passengers traveling together. If this minimum is not reached, we will either cancel the tour and offer a refund in full or, subject to clients' agreement, operate the tour at the necessary supplement.

### Alterations to the tour

We will do our utmost to provide the tour described in the published material, but retain the right to modify or cancel any tour, accommodation, or arrangement due to unforeseen circumstances amounting to Force Majeure. In such circumstances, we will inform you as soon as possible, and should the change be such that it alters the nature of the tour, we will give you the choice of an alternative tour or a full refund of all money paid. As we will absorb all financial loss consequent upon cancellation due to Force Majeure, we will not cancel any tour for reason of political tension or natural disaster unless the U.S. Department of State so recommends.

We reserve the right to make, without notice, minor alterations to the published program that do not change the nature of the tour or the value supplied.

If we have to cancel at any time and for any reason, Elifant is not responsible for any monies paid to others for travel in conjunction with this tour, notably any airline cancellation penalty incurred by the purchase of a nonrefundable air ticket.

### Surcharges

The price of this tour is based on the euro–U.S. dollar exchange rate as of October 28, 2023. We reserve the right to impose a surcharge to reflect increases in the exchange rate. We also reserve the right to add a fuel surcharge if prices increase significantly. If the increase of either exceeds 8 percent of the tour price, we will offer you the option to cancel, with a full

refund of all monies paid, provided we are notified within seven days of the surcharge's being imposed.

### Health and insurance

All participants should be in good health and able to keep up with an active group. You are personally responsible for your own health and medical treatment. We expect you to carry adequate travel and medical insurance, including medical evacuation, or assume responsibility for such expenses. Elifant, in conjunction with the appropriate medical advice, if applicable, has the right to disqualify any client at any time during the course of the tour, if considered necessary for the medical well-being or safety of the individual, or if, in our opinion, the client's actions are materially affecting the enjoyment of the tour for the remainder of the group. Any decision with regard to any reimbursement for any part of the tour not completed will be made by Elifant.

### Baggage and personal effects

These remain your responsibility and risk at all times. Elifant will accept no liability for loss, damage, or misdirection of your baggage or effects.

### Airport transfers

Please book your flights early to avoid disappointment. To arrange for your airport transfers, Elifant will need your arrival and departure information at least 60 days before the start date of the tour (August 22, 2024). Clients failing to provide such information by then will be subject to a surcharge of \$100 per person or be responsible for their own transfers.

### Responsibility

As a condition of participation, each passenger will be required to sign a Release of Liability, which will be distributed at the start of the tour.

*Continued on next page*



# Terms

## AND CONDITIONS



(continued)

All participants must be vaccinated against Covid-19 and be prepared to show proof of vaccination (via a document acceptable to Italian authorities) if asked. We expect all participants to adhere to any local requirements, such as wearing face masks or distancing.

Elifant is not responsible for the performance of the services provided by carriers, hotels, and agents, and is not liable for any damage or compensation payable to any participant in respect to loss or injury sustained by the participant, regardless of its cause.

### Is this tour for you?

Tour participants need not be athletes but should have a good basic level of fitness. We try to pace our activities so that we don't walk more than one kilometer/three-fifths of a mile without a break. But then we'll do another stretch, and another, and yet another, so that at the end of the day we've walked quite a good distance—often uphill, downhill, and on stairs—and may have stood a lot too in museums and on sites. That can be taxing for the unaccustomed, even on city streets and more so on the rugged terrain of archaeological sites. In addition, our days tend to be full. Some participants, of all levels of fitness, find trekking/hiking sticks or canes and even folding walking-stick seats (for museums) helpful.

Fortunately, while some destinations require considerable stamina, others are easier. It's important to choose your tour wisely because people who can't keep up might find they need to sit out some of the more strenuous activities.

Sardinia is one of our most active tours. Even the time we spend in towns and cities will involve walking. Tour buses are not allowed to drop passengers very near the entrance to many museums and sites, and we will visit several rather expansive archaeological areas. Only the sure-footed will enjoy this tour.

If you have any doubts about which tour is for you, feel free to email or phone us. We'll be happy to give you more details.

And next ...

## ROME TO RIMINI

March 31–April 7, 2025

We'll "march" across the Boot behind the Roman legions along two of the great Roman roads—the Salaria and the Flaminia—to follow the traces of their conquest of the indigenous peoples of central Italy.

This itinerary, from Rome to the Adriatic and back, touches four Italian regions (Lazio, Umbria, Marche, and Emilia-Romagna) and crosses an area famed for its medieval and Renaissance attractions and natural beauty. Yet our focus is its ancient sites (e.g., Carsulae), urban remains (in Spoleto, Ancona, Rimini, and more), and gems of archaeological museums with unique artifacts of both the Romans and the peoples who lived here before they came.

We'll dine on the hearty pastas of the central mountains (vincisgrassi, anyone?), cave-aged ewe's milk cheeses, and cutting-edge seafood on the star-studded coast. We'll concentrate on the Marche for wines—Verdicchio di Iesi and Rosso Conero. Everyone's favorite snack will surely be the toothsome meat-filled fried olives of charming Ascoli Piceno

