

Route 15

- **Tour:** Zingaro
- **Starting point:** San Vito
- **Arrival:** Agrigento
- **Points of interest:** Riserva naturale dello Zingaro - Corleone - Valle dei Templi
- **Km:** 220



A particularly nice route for the motorcyclists who love driving and good kitchen, roads with beautiful landscapes and curves where you can discover and taste the flavours of Sicily.

■ **History and traditions:**

San Vito lo Capo is famous to be a seaside town and its coast is splendid and opens into a bay which extends from S. Vito to the cape of Solanto, at the foot of mount Monaco.

Here you can find a tuna station that is inactive since 1600. The place was visited by pilgrims devoted to St. Vito, where there is a sanctuary dedicated to him. It was erected in the XIII century on an old chapel and was fortified in 1545.

There are many towers in this place, raised to signal the presence of hostile boats, such as Impiso's, Torrazzo's, Sceri's, Roccazzo's and also Isolidda's.

Corleone

Corleone is a small town in the province of Palermo. The name of the town was also used as surname of the main character in Mario Puzo's book and Francis Ford Coppola's film, *The Godfather*. The father of Michael Corleone (played by Al Pacino), Don Vito (played by Marlon Brando in *The Godfather* and Robert DeNiro in *The Godfather, Part II*) emigrated to the United States from Corleone. In real life, Pacino's grandparents emigrated from the town of Corleone in the same generation as Don Vito Corleone does in the film.

The Mother Church dedicated to St. Martin Bishop was initiated in the late 1300's. Its present look is the result of numerous changes and refurbishments. Its interior has nave and aisles divided into various chapels containing precious art pieces.

Agrigento

The Valley of the Temples rises southernmost, on the traces of the old town and includes many temples built in the 5th century BC.

Walking along the path you can find:

- The temple of Concordia; the only temple still standing in its whole.

- The temple of Castor and Pollux; tributed to Leda and Zeus's twins.
- The temple of Olympian Zeus
- was built in the 5th century BC and dedicated to Zeus
- The temple of Heracles; was built to commemorate the soldiers died during the Second Punic War.
- The temple of Hera Lacinia (Giunone)

■ Food and wine:

In St. Vito every year, in September, takes place the "Festival of couscous". Many Sicilian, Egyptian, Palestinian, Moroccan, Algerian and Tunisian chefs take part to the competition in preparing this special dish. The competition concludes with the public tasting of couscous.

■ Sightseeing and Landscape:

Zingaro

The Natural Reserve of the Zingaro is situated in the extremity of the tyrrhenian west coast of Sicily and it is the continuity of the set of calcareous reliefs of the Mesozoic origin in the Palermo area, near to Mount Cofano. In the reserve, the general climate indicated for the vegetation has an average temperature of 19° C and a rainfall capacity of 645 mm. Also when it doesn't rain, often there are on the mountains beneficial fog banks that come from the sea and that maintain local damp microclimates.

Ficuzza

Close to Palermo there is Ficuzza, an interesting naturalistic place.

The road that seems is designed from a motorcyclist. A suggestion: guide, then return behind and stop to relax between the trees and the nature.

The Bosco della Ficuzza is one of the richest and charmer woods in Sicily. King Ferdinand of Bourbon himself in the late 16th century made Ficuzza his hunting lodge. The vegetation is highly varied comprising oaks, ashes, cork-oaks, maples; it is home to a rich wildlife including small mammals, countless species of birds and wild-boars. Some buildings, among which is the Palazzina Reale, also lie amidst the wood.

...continuing for Corleone you could follow a small shunting line and visit the sanctuary of the Madonna of the Rosary of Tagliavia, goal of pilgrimages.

Agrigento

Its origins are very ancient and notably Agrigento still offers the enchanting view of a presumedly sacred area built when Greeks landed there to start the civilisation of Magna Graecia.

The remains include some temples, in strategic position on the peak of several hills around the town, dominating the valley (famous as the Valle dei Templi "Valley of temples"). The valley is known for the springtime event where the pervasive yet pleasant scent of orange flowers (locally called zagare).

In a poor village close to Agrigento, the Contrada Xaos (which means Chaos), was born perhaps the most famous Italian dramatist, Luigi Pirandello.
