

VILLA SANT'ANDREA

A BELMOND HOTEL
TAORMINA MARE

DISCOVERING ETNA'S WINES ON THE CIRCUMETNEA RAILWAY



On the 'Cafittera' route, past vineyards and ancient lava flows

A train journey to discover Etna's wines and evocative lava landscapes accompanied by Tom Harrow, an internationally renowned wine journalist and expert. Guests at the Villa Sant'Andrea will immerse themselves in the beauty of the Etna region, its vineyards and wine cellars aboard the so-called '*Cafittera*' ('coffee maker' in Sicilian), so named after its piercing whistle, once a frequent sound for the inhabitants of the foothills of Etna. Thanks to the construction of this railway, Etna wines could be easily exported overseas as early as the 19th century. It therefore not only provided an important means of transport in the area, but also benefited the economy of the Sicilian hinterland. The history of the Circumetnea railway is closely linked to the English entrepreneur Robert Trehwella, who built Villa Sant'Andrea as a summer residence after falling in love with Taormina. In 1885, it was the Englishman who presented the Circumetnea railway project to the Ministry of Public Works, which gave the go-ahead on 23 May 1889, inaugurating the first section on 2 February 1895. For years, the Circumetnea railway, which connected the port of Catania with that of Riposto and Giarre, was the only means of transport that linked numerous municipalities in the Etna foothills.

The FIAT 'Littorina', an icon for generations

When, on 18 October 1932, Mussolini travelled from Rome to Littoria (now Latina) for the inauguration of the new station, he did so on board one of the new FIAT railcars. On this occasion, a journalist

celebrated the futuristic vehicle in an article in which it appeared for the first time with the name 'Littorina', a reference to the destination of the trip. Consequently when, between 1932 and 1938, Senator Agnelli had to choose a name for the first generation of these new railcars, he used the name suggested by the journalist in that celebratory article, creating an icon that has been handed down for generations. On board a historic train from this first generation of Littorine, usually kept in the Museo Ferroviario di Bronte, guests will set off from Piedimonte station to reach the Fessina and Camporè wineries. Sat on these seats, they will not only travel by rail, but will also experience a journey through time filled with unique moments and accompanied by the story of a guide specialised in winemaking and the local area.

Wine stages: a journey of tastings and local Etna specialties

The red train will make its first stop near the Fessina winery. A technical tasting of four fine wines will be held among the vineyards of this enchanting estate, accompanied by samples of typical Sicilian products and small dishes, such as caponata or fresh ricotta with basil sorbet.

Visitors will then return to the Circumetnea train, which will make a second stop at the Camporè winery, which is unique since the Littorina takes travellers right to the heart of the vineyards, where an old railway stop is exclusively opened for our guests. Donated in the early 20th century by the King of Italy Vittorio Emanuele to his aide-de-camp, Cavaliere Giovanni Vagliasindi del Castello, in the past the Camporè estate exported its fine wines to France via this little station, which made it possible to easily reach the Port of Riposto. In these places steeped in history and tradition, you will enjoy a meal prepared by the loving hands of the 'Mamme del Borgo', a group of local women who are passionate about traditional Sicilian cuisine and whose aim is to ensure that the secrets of the oldest recipes never die out. During lunch, served in the winery's gardens, the 'mothers' will serve typical dishes such as arancinetti with wild fennel and granita made on the spot by pastry chef Giovanna Musumeci by using the traditional 'nivarata' method.

Scheduled days: 30 September - 3 October

The Curiosity Circle to discover the wines of Etna on board the Circumetnea, scheduled from **30 September to 3 October 2021**, is part of the Belmond Group's new campaign to organize weekends devoted to personal growth and exclusivity. During this adventure, one of the greatest international wine experts, **Tom Harrow**, will accompany guests through the vineyards on board the 'Littorina', telling them about the history and landscapes of the Etna region. The day after the experience, the wine expert will give the guests a masterclass on Etna's wines at the hotel, followed by a tasting dinner prepared by chef Agostino D'Angelo.

For bookings and information:

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About Belmond

Belmond has been a pioneer of luxury travel for over 45 years, building a passion for authentic escapes into a portfolio of one-of-a-kind experiences in some of the world's most inspiring destinations.

Since the acquisition of the iconic Hotel Cipriani in Venice in 1976, Belmond has continued to perpetuate the legendary art of travel, taking discerning global travellers on breathtaking journeys. Its portfolio extends across 24 countries with 46 remarkable properties that include the illustrious Venice Simplon-Orient-Express train, remote beach retreats like Cap Juluca in Anguilla, Italian hideaways such as Splendido in Portofino, or unrivalled gateways to world natural wonders such as Hotel das Cataratas inside Brazil's Iguazu National Park. From trains to river barges, safari lodges to hotels, each unique property offers an incomparable experience with its own story to tell. The essence of the Belmond brand is built upon its heritage, craftsmanship and genuine, authentic service. Belmond sees its role as custodians of timeless heritage, dedicated to preserving its assets through sensitive ongoing restoration plans. Belmond is part of the world's leading luxury group LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton.

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