

## Movies and Books

Below are a few films and books that should enrich your experience in Sicily. If time is precious, at least try to watch *Cinema Paradiso* and read *Extra Virginity* before we go.

### Movies

**The Godfather** Of course. Watch all three if you have time. The first one is on every list of top 10 movies ever made.

#### **Cinema Paradiso**

Italian (subtitles) written and directed by Giuseppe Tornatore.

Music: Ennio Morricone

**1989:** Cannes Film Festival - Grand Prix du Jury (tied with *Trop belle pour toi*)

**1989:** Golden Globe Awards - Best Foreign Language Film

**1989:** Academy Awards - Best Foreign Language Film

We love this movie! Watch the Director's Cut, longer but even better than the original which was shortened for the Cannes Film Festival. Weather permitting we are going to the town, Palazzo Adriano where much of the movie was shot. This excursion is way more interesting if you've seen the film.

Other famous films shot in or about Sicily: **Malena, Il Postino, The Leopard** (Burt Lancaster - I think the book is better).

### Books

#### **Extra Virginity:**

***The Sublime and Scandalous World of Olive Oil*** by Tom Mueller

Paperback: 288 pages

Publisher: W. W. Norton & Company

History, health, and hooligans. The olive oil business has been cheating people since the Babylonians. This book will change your relationship to olive oil as you find yourself staring at the shelf in the supermarket and wondering which you should be buying. We will taste fabulous oil in Sicily. Read this book before you go and you will understand why most of us bring home as much oil as we can carry.

#### **The Stone Boudoir: Travels Through the Hidden Villages of Sicily**

Theresa Maggio

We have used this book in class for several years and have visited many of the towns that Ms. Maggio writes about. Available for Kindle

From Amazon:

*In this sparkling book, Theresa Maggio takes us on a journey in search of Sicily's most remote and least explored mountain towns. Using her grandparents' ancestral village of Santa Margherita Belice as her base camp, she pores over old maps to plot her adventure, selecting as her targets the smallest dots with the most appealing names. Whether she's writing about the unique pleasures of Sicilian street food, the damage wrought by molten lava, the ancient traditions of Sicilian bagpipers, or the religious processions that consume entire villages for days on end, Maggio succeeds in transporting readers to a wholly unfamiliar world, where almonds flower in February and the water tastes of stone. A beautifully wrought meditation on time and place, *The Stone Boudoir* will be cherished by all who love fine travel writing.*

Also by Theresa Maggio if you can find it:

### **Mattanza Love and Death in the Sea of Sicily**

From Amazon:

*In 1986, love drew Theresa Maggio to Favignana, an island just off the coast of Sicily. There the young journalist encountered the mysterious world of the tonnara-the ritual trapping and killing of bluefin tuna in the Mediterranean Sea-and the mattanza, the stunning, bloody climax of the fishing season when the huge fish are wrestled from the sea and killed. Mattanza is the riveting story of Maggio's annual return to witness this timeless struggle between man and the sea. An alluring blend of memoir, history, and travelogue, Mattanza documents an insular and exotic world where the tonnara continues according to ancient ritual even as modern fishing methods edge it towards extinction.*

### **A House in Sicily**

by Daphne Phillips

From Amazon:

*This is the captivating memoir of a resourceful woman who started life anew in the "most beautiful house in Sicily." For fifty years, at Casa Cuseni in the small Sicilian town of Taormina, Daphne Phelps has extended her English charm and warm hospitality to seasoned travelers and professional escapists as well as to writers and artists like Tennessee Williams, Bertrand Russell, Henry Faulkner, and Roald Dahl. This memoir tells their story, and hers. It begins in 1947 when, thirty-four years old and war-weary, a modest Englishwoman arrived in Taormina with little Italian, less money, and a plan to sell the property she had unexpectedly inherited. Instead, she fell in love, not just with the airy quarters of the golden stone house on a hillside but also with a community and its way of life. To save Casa Cuseni from certain demolition, Daphne converted her enchanting inheritance into the wondrous pensione that for nearly half a century she has run with the blessing of every Taorminan from the local silk-shirted godfather, Don Ciccio, to Concetta Genio, her steadfast cook, housekeeper, and friend.*

Several of us got a tour of this house last year. We were in awe. It is being fully restored to the way it was when Daphne lived there.

### **The Leopard: A Novel**

by Giuseppe Di Lampedusa

From Amazon:

*Set in the 1860s, The Leopard tells the spellbinding story of a decadent, dying Sicilian aristocracy threatened by the approaching forces of democracy and revolution. The dramatic sweep and richness of observation, the seamless intertwining of public and private worlds, and the grasp of human frailty imbue The Leopard with its particular melancholy beauty and power, and place it among the greatest historical novels of our time.*

## **Photography**

### **Digital Photography: A Basic Manual**

Henry Horenstein (Author), Allison Carroll (Contributor)

Paperback: 240 pages

Publisher: Little, Brown and Company; 1 edition (November 2, 2011)

This is the book that I used in the class. One of the best if you really want to understand your camera and digital photography.

## **History**

### **Sicily: Three Thousand Years of Human History**

Sandra Benjamin

For the dedicated only. Three thousand years in 500 pages. The definitive work.

And when you've finished that:

### **The Day of Battle: The War in Sicily and Italy, 1943-1944 (789 pgs.)**

Vol. 2 of the Liberation Trilogy

Rick Atkinson Pulitzer Prize winning author of *An Army at Dawn*