

# 04.

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WITH  
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By Stephanie Pearson



## Sicilian Sizzle

OFFER HER AN ISLAND SHE CAN'T REFUSE

MAYBE IT'S THE SULTRY, CITRUS-SCENTED BREEZE blowing off the Mediterranean. Or the sulfurous smoke that billows from the top of Mount Etna, a subtle reminder that Sicily is home to Vulcan, the Roman god of fire. Or perhaps it's because the enigmatic island is a perpetual tease—forever out of reach of the Italian mainland. Whatever the reason, this subtropical oasis can seduce almost anyone into misbehaving, it seems—slightly naughty behavior is the norm here.

It's fitting that D.H. Lawrence holed up with his wife, Frieda, in the town of Taormina, on Sicily's northeast coast, back in the 1920s to write *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, one of the most scandalous novels of its era. More recently, an ad campaign by a Sicilian hotel association declared: "Let your love bloom under the sun of Sicily." The deal was simple: Book a room at any of 24 of the island's Hotels del Sole, frolic between the sheets for a night or two, then return nine months later—with the fruit of your passion in tow—to claim a free weekend. Whether you're picnicking on mussels and moscato under a full moon near the Greek temple of Segesta, anchoring a yacht off a deserted beach near the medieval city of Cefalù, or looking for the Aeolian Islands from Etna's summit, Sicily is custom-made for coupling up.

Even faulty appliances can't break the spell. Paul Bennett and Lani Bevacqua, an American couple now living in Paris, sailed from mainland Italy to a villa west of Palermo for their honeymoon. On their first night, the washing machine sprang a leak, flooding their cozy Sicilian getaway in an unfortunate and ironic Venetian twist. Since everything moves

### REV YOUR ENGINE

A scooter is just the right speed for enjoying the local beauty.

FROM LEFT: JOHN HUBA/ART + COMMERCE; DYNAMIC GRAPHICS GROUP/CREATAS/ALAMY