

## Conditions and Practical Information while in Sicily at Fiumedinisi

### At the excavation site:

For daily fieldwork, it is recommended that you wear strong shoes (e.g. kind that many workmen wear) for walking over unpaved ground and rocks. If you don't have such shoes to bring, please let me know, I may have some available.

### Safety/health issues:

The archaeological site is located at a relatively high point above the nearby towns. We estimate that walking downhill from the site to where we are staying may only be 20 minutes, while walking uphill to the site would be much longer. In any case, a vehicle will always be at the site, and available as needed for trips into the nearby towns and other areas.

A pharmacy is available in each of the adjacent towns, while there is a practicing doctor in the adjacent town, and hospitals not far away. First Aid kits will be available both in the field and in the lab, and coolers for food and water will be supplied and checked in the field, and replenished as necessary. There is a fresh springwater source just 5 minutes away. Staff will have cellphones so that emergency or other important calls may be made (and I have tested cellphone connections at the site). Currently there is no bathroom facility at the site, but we are planning to have a portapotty delivered.

### General

I strongly recommend that you limit yourself to one large suitcase and one small carry-on bag. The large suitcase should have good wheels. This will greatly facilitate getting to/from airport terminals, as well as any travel you do on trains etc. before/after the field school. You should also bring a day-pack in which you can carry whatever you need out to the field daily, or on weekend trips (e.g. a camera, jacket, water bottle, notebook, etc.). Either use this as your carry-on bag on your flight, or pack it inside your suitcase for air-travel. Be sure to pack any medications in your carry-on bag (and bring enough for the whole trip).

### Clothes

While most of your time will be participating in a field school, you do need to bring a broad range of clothes. For Monday-Friday fieldwork, functional clothes are all that is necessary; long pants are highly recommended for travelling through some brush, and a sweatshirt or something else lengthy would be needed for cool mornings. A hat or bandanna, suntan lotion, and bug repellent are also recommended (but such things can also be easily acquired in Sicily).

Especially when in the nearby small towns, regular, "traditional" clothes are highly recommended for walking around, shopping, etc. - but there's no need for anything fancy. It's uncommon to wear short pants, skimpy blouses, tank tops, etc. except near the beach. At least one nicer outfit to wear for going out to dinner, to church, etc. is recommended; also, if you don't look like a bum when you fly, you're less likely to get searched. Sneakers (e.g. for regular wear, weekend trips, etc.), sandals (for beach), and a nicer pair of shoes would be useful for everyone.

The daily temperatures forecast for Catania are: May (high 22 C, low 12 C); June (high 27 C, low 16 C) [20 C = 68 F; 25 C = 77 F; 30 C = 86 F]. Relative humidity forecast at about 70% for Catania, probably less in the Fiumedinisi area. Great European weather website: <http://www.eurometeo.com/english/climate/>

### Equipment/Cameras/Other

The few things everyone should bring are: a notebook (bound-type approx. 4-6" wide is best), pens and pencils, tape measure (metric), work gloves, and if you already have one, a trowel, pocket knife, compass, and/or GPS unit. These items will otherwise be supplied.

Don't forget your camera (if you desire); if using film, it's much less expensive in the US, so be sure to bring enough. Lead-lined bags are only necessary for highspeed film (800 ASA and higher); if you plan to have your camera/film hand-inspected, use the clear film canisters. Flash is rarely allowed in museums. If you're bringing a digital camera, be sure you have enough memory (or something to download to), and a way to recharge the batteries.

Like with any travel, it's up to you to decide on such things as a battery-operated alarm clock, flashlight, radio, tape player, laptop computer, musical instrument, cards, games, novels, stationery, binoculars, snorkel/diving or fishing gear, guidebooks or other readings. Umbrellas, raincoats, fancy clothes and expensive jewelry are not necessary.

Other personal items recommended to bring or acquire include: small first aid kit (band aids, aspirin/Tylenol, antibacterial cream, antihistamines); tissues/toilet paper/handkerchief (so you don't end up using your shirt); hand wipes and/or cleaning gel; other hygiene products; sunglasses; some zip lock bags to store/organize your personal items; Italian dictionary or phrase book. One of my assistants noted that on lengthy flights she likes to bring travel packs of premoistened washcloths (Dove makes some), and reminds everyone to bring whatever one might need on an overnight flight (contact lens solution, toothbrush/paste, maybe a change of clothes just in case there are any flight delays), and that one should dress comfortably, and get up and walk around the plane every couple hours to reduce the chance of DVT (especially if you are short, tall, or athletic).

### **Electricity/Batteries**

If you have any electric appliances (shavers, hairdryers, laptops, etc.) you will need the appropriate converters. Italy has 220V current and uses the standard European 2-circular-prong plug. Regular alkaline batteries are readily available, but make sure you bring any special sizes required by your camera or other device.

### **Passport, Tickets, Money, Security**

You should have your own passport and airline tickets to/from Sicily. The Italian airports are good places to change money; you will get a much better exchange rate there (and at other ATMs in Italy) than changing money in the US. If you have travellers checks, definitely go to the bank in the airport to exchange some of them after arrival. ATM machines are also abundant (and will accept the USF credit union card!), with at least one in the towns near where we are staying. If you plan to borrow money from a credit card, be sure you know the 4-digit PIN. Most stores and even small shops will take major credit cards in urban areas, but less so in small towns. Remember that you are responsible for your own incidental expenses; you should bring (or be prepared to withdraw from an ATM) enough cash for meals, snacks, etc. The professional cook's complete group meals will be available for 10 Euro each.

We will not be visiting any place known to be dangerous in any way; in big cities, train stations, etc., one should be cautious just as you are in the US. Keep your wallet/money in a secure place, and hold onto your pocketbook firmly.

### **Phone/Email**

Public phones are available in the nearby towns. If you plan to make phone calls back to the US, I recommend obtaining a phone card and activate it for international calls. AT&T is quite reliable, but also expensive (a hefty fee just to make the call, plus per-minute charges). VoiceNet (800-990-3353) and IDT (800-525-0287; [www.global-call.net](http://www.global-call.net)) are low-cost alternatives that I have used before; another that has been recommended is available at: <http://nobelcon.com/> (18¢ per 2 minute intervals, plus 78¢ per month fee).

Web-cafes are also increasingly abundant in case you wish to check your email (make sure you know how to do it!), certainly possible on weekends when we travel to the "bigger" cities. Access in nearby towns will be investigated, but aren't likely.