



A Tour of Etna by Rail-Car

It's impossible to travel through the east of Sicily without being captivated by Mount Etna: the resident giant, an ever-changing volcano.

By moving round it, each different perspective offers up scenes and images that range from the magical to the fairy-tale. Mount Etna is not just about lava, craters, excursions, trips, picnics and skiing; it can be full of excitement even on an ordinary day. For example, you can climb on board one of the F.C.E.'s (Ferrovia Circumetnea) famous "littorine" (diesel rail-cars) that take you on a fabulous tourist trip where you'll discover all of Etna's marvellous landscapes.

During the journey, which lasts almost 3 hours, you can enjoy views of unique and indescribable panoramas, ones that only Etna and the surrounding territory can offer. You go from fragrant orange groves and vineyards, to rough, wild landscapes dominated by lava flows, to the endless vision of lush Mediterranean undergrowth.



You needn't be alarmed if the train suddenly stops in the middle of the countryside: this is a request stop.

Until not so long ago, these stops were for peasants who used the train to reach the flat farmland and then return back home. Today, they could become the ideal starting-point for an interesting excursion.



For example, from the small station of Passo Zingaro, you can climb up a mule-track through pistachio cultivations and age-old lava flows to Mount Minardo. Alternatively, from the Gurridda stop you can reach the lake nearby.

It was Catania's Chamber of Commerce and the town councils of the piedmont towns on Etna concerned that pushed for the birth of the Circumetnea. The first official act of recognition came only on 31st December 1883 by royal decree. On 2nd February 1895, the stretch between Catania and Adernò (today

Adrano) became operational followed shortly afterwards by the others. The opening of a railway line allowed the towns of Adrano, Bronte, Maletto, Randazzo and Lingaglossa to be set free from their century-old isolation. In 1937, during a time of self-government, 6 Fiat ALn 56 rail-cars were bought. They were called "littorine" and were characterized by their cheapness and low running costs. Moreover, because they could run at higher speeds, they halved the journey time. The "littorina", which replaced the first steam locomotives from the end of the nineteenth century, made a lasting impression on the history of the railway, so much so that the little Circumetnea train is still called 'a Littorina today.

Below you'll find the "littorine" train times leaving from the station closest to "Case Perrotta", that is Giarre, about 10km away, and arriving at the "Borgo" station in Catania. There is a change of carriages at the station of [Randazzo](#), where you can admire the splendour of the [Sicilian Baroque](#), the town museum of natural science and the archaeological museum "P. Vagliasindi".



The WINTER timetable is effective until 20th June 2011 (the service does not operate on Sundays or holidays).

The cost for the whole journey is €6,85

and also includes the use of the underground railway to go from the "Borgo" station in Catania to the stazione Centrale.

Stazioni	Treno 6	Treno 12	Treno 14	Treno 16	Treno 20	Treno 24	Treno 22	Treno 28	Treno 26	Treno 30	Treno 34	Treno 36
Giarre	6.27	8.31		10.02			12.29		13.43	14.55		18.10
Randazzo	7.51	9.46	9.54	11.16	12.09	13.14	13.47	14.32	14.59	16.12	17.10	19.26
Catania	9.53		11.57		14.18	15.15		16.36			19.14	21.30

The SUMMER timetable is effective from 20th June 2011.

Stazioni	Treno 6	Treno 12	Treno 14	Treno 16	Treno 20	Treno 24	Treno 22	Treno 28	Treno 26	Treno 30	Treno 34	Treno 36
Giarre	6.27	8.31		10.02			12.29		13.43	14.55		18.10
Randazzo	7.51	9.46	9.54	11.16	12.09	13.14	13.47	14.32	14.59	16.12	17.10	19.26
Catania	9.53		11.57		14.18	15.15		16.36			19.14	21.30

In order to complete the round-trip of Etna and return to the station at Giarre, you should use the state railway service between Catania and Giarre, which takes about 30 minutes and is the decidedly shorter route.

'Trenitalia' weekday timetable for the journey Catania – Giarre (cost:€2,70)

Stazioni												
Catania	10.03	11.15	11.46	12.25	13.10	13.20	13.55	14.22	14.47	15.12	15.27	16.20
Giarre	10.26	11.37	12.08	12.55	13.37	13.51	14.16	14.48	15.20	15.45	15.57	16.49

Stazioni					
Catania	17.00	17.41	18.30	19.40	20.35
Giarre	17.30	18.08	18.49	20.06	20.58