

## Sicily and I

Perhaps the most prolonged leg of our journey to Sicily was in fact the expedition to Stansted Airport. Coming from southeast London, Stansted is certainly more difficult to get to than Italy itself. Nonetheless, having boarded our Ryanair flight, it was a mere 3 hour flight to Palermo where our true adventure began.

We arrived late that evening in Mondello, a charming seaside town boasting amazing weather and supreme views of the eastern coast of the island. We rented an apartment for the week which was both convenient for our outgoing trips (close to the local bus terminus) and for evening walks along the shore. Mondello is a small suburb of Palermo.



It was on day three that we actually took the bus into town to visit

some of the archaeological museums in Palermo. The highlight of the city's museum 'scene' is the Antonio Salinas Regional Archeological Museum. Boasting a well curated collection of Greco-Roman art from around the island, the museum is a small haven in the centre of town. I've included an image of a Roman dolomite sarcophagus which caught my eye.

The museum's sherd collections are also extensive! Although small finds are not always hugely featured in collections, they have dedicated cases of Greco-Roman pieces excavated over the past few centuries; there are constantly new pieces being added. The museum is a highly active space.



The remainder of the city was similarly enchanting. The Metropolitan Cathedral of the Assumption of Virgin Mary (although not ancient!) is another major site which we really enjoyed. It is situated within its own square and is a real hodgepodge of old and new architectural styles. The main facade was actually erected in the 1100s whereas

the actual cathedral was completed in the 18th century. It is stunning!

The old town of Palermo is definitely another highlight. Set along the seafront, the 2,700 year old history of Palermo as a city has been uniquely preserved in some of these houses and shopfronts. Most of these shop buildings are run as ice cream parlours, and they are certainly generous with their portion sizes. Never before have I eaten so much ice cream than in Palermo!

Our travels around Palermo were a huge success- albeit very short. If I return to Sicily, I will certainly pursue further travels as my appetite has been sufficiently whet. I would also like to improve my Italian. I would like to express my gratitude to the both the UCL Classics department for granting me the award. My trip in the summer was unforgettable and I thoroughly enjoyed being able to travel around such a beautiful city.