

Chronology of Events – Sicily

1943

January 1943

Decision taken at the Casablanca Conference, attended by Allied Heads of Government and Chiefs of Staff, to invade Sicily once operations in North Africa concluded. Invasion of Sicily allocated the codename 'Husky'. General Dwight D EISENHOWER appointed Supreme Allied Commander and General Sir Harold ALEXANDER as Deputy.

11 February 1943

Supreme Allied Commander appoints General MONTGOMERY to command Eastern Task Force (Force 545) and Lieutenant General PATTON to command the Western Task Force (Force 343). Force 141 (later to become 15th Army Group) formed to assume overall command of operations, commanded by General ALEXANDER.

10 July 1943

Units from the 1st Airlanding Brigade land by glider to capture the Ponte Grande bridge near Syracuse. Only twelve gliders land in the vicinity of the bridge which is captured by troops from the South Staffordshire Regiment.

40 (Royal Marine) and 41 (Royal Marine) Commandos land with difficulty to attack Italian coastal batteries.

Units from 82nd (U.S.) Airborne Division land inland of designated beaches.

British 8th Army lands in the south east corner of Sicily, with the XIII Corps (5th Infantry Division and 50th (Northumbrian) Infantry Division) on the right flank, near Syracuse; and XXX Corps (51st (Highland) Infantry Division, 1st Canadian Infantry Division and 231st Infantry Brigade) on the left flank.

U.S. 7th Army lands on southern shores of Sicily, with 1st U.S. Infantry Division, 45th U.S. Infantry Division under command of II U.S. Corps, with 3rd (U.S.) Infantry Division under direct command of U.S. 7th Army.

Syracuse captured by Allied troops.

- 11 July 1943 Units from the German Hermann Goring Division and Italian Livorno Division counterattack the American landings.
- 12 July 1943 Augusta captured.
- 13 July 1943 General Officer Commanding Italian 54th Napoli Division surrendered. Resistance increases around Carlentini and Lentini. Two German divisions, the 1st Parachute Division and 29th Panzer Grenadier Division ordered to Sicily.
- Units from the 1st Parachute Brigade land to capture the Primsole Brigade near Catania. Only about two-hundred and fifty men reach the objective out of one-thousand nine-hundred who took off. Fierce battle with German parachute troops resulted.
- 15 July 1943 The American bridgehead now extends inland to Niscemi, Canicatti and Palma di Montechiaro. American troops exploring various routes of advance.
- 16 July 1943 Primsole Brigade captured by units from the 50th Infantry Division, but the advance of XIII Corps held up significantly.
- 17 July 1943 Units from the 82nd U.S. Airborne Division begin an advance that covers one-hundred and fifty miles in six days.
- 20 July 1943 1st Canadian Infantry Division, advancing on the left flank of the 8th Army, launch a joint attack with U.S. forces that captures Enna. The division then turns right towards Messina.
- 22 July 1943 Palermo captured by units from the U.S. II Corps.
- 29/30 July 1943 78th Infantry Division, just arrived in Sicily, under command of XXX Corps commences advance on town of Centuripe, located on high ground in the foothills of Mount Etna. The town is defended by units from the German 3rd Parachute Regiment and Hermann Goring Division.
- 1/2 August 1943 The fierce battle for Centuripe continues, with units from the 78th Infantry Division slowly forcing their way up and into the town, where house to house fighting takes place.
- 3 August 1943 U.S. forces take Nicosia, and the Canadians take Regalbuto and Agira. German forces withdraw from Centuripe and Catania.

- 5 August 1943 Catania is taken by XIII Corps.
- 6 August 1943 78th Infantry Division take Aderno.
- 15 August 1943 No. 2 Commando is landed at Scaletta Marina, about eight miles south of Messina in order to speed up the advance of 8th Army, which is now delayed due to demolitions and German rearguards.
- 16 August 1943 7th Infantry Regiment of 3rd U.S. Infantry Division enters Messina from the west during the evening to find German forces have been evacuated across the Straits of Messina.
- 17 August 1943
10.00 hours British troops from No. 2 Commando enter Messina from the south. The Sicilian campaign is over.