



“SAMPLE PROGRAM 8 DAYS IN PUGLIA”

8 days of cultural and epicurean experiences in Puglia



With whitewashed buildings, secret castles and the crystalline Mediterranean Sea you will experience an abundance of seafood, an outstanding array of fruits, vegetables and vineyards to ensure you will enjoy exemplary food and wine from the Puglia region. I

ndulge in local cuisine with inspirational flavours from Michelin Chefs, local trattoria's and secret street food matriarchs. Whilst sailing in the exquisite crystal waters of the Adriatic you will soak up the sun and enjoy boutique luxury accommodations as we share 8 wonderful days in Puglia.

life is a combination of magic and pasta
federico fellini



DAY 1: **Arrival**

Arrival in Bari/Brindisi airport and transfer to your cave hotel hotel in **Matera**, where you'll be welcomed with a drink. Dining (a la carte beverages) in a local trattoria.

Overnight in Matera

DAY 2: **Amazing Matera**

Visit **Matera**, an astonishing UNESCO World Heritage Site: this city has gained international fame for its ancient town, the "Sassi di Matera" (meaning "stones of Matera"). The Sassi originate from a prehistoric (troglodyte) settlement, and are suspected to be some of the first human settlements in Italy. Because of the ancient and primitive scenery in and around the Sassi, it has been used by filmmakers as the setting for ancient Jerusalem: a good number of famous biblical period motion pictures were filmed in Matera, amongst which Mel Gibson's blockbuster "The Passion of the Christ" and the latest remake of Ben Hur.

Lunch at your leisure.

Following take some breath-taking pictures of the city from Murgia Materana Park and explore this amazing site with a nice walk through the cave churches.

Transfer to your next accommodation, a stunning Masseria set in the central part of the region. Check-in and rest of the evening at leisure.

Overnight in Monopoli/Fasano.

DAY 3: **Traditions in Bari Vecchia, Cliffs of Polignano a Mare & Cooking Class**

This morning we will take you on a walking tour of **Bari**, Puglia's prosperous seaside capital, with tangled streets and the charming old town reveal Romanesque churches, the riotous market and the elegant medieval piazzas, the beautiful St. Nicola's Basilica, home of Saint Nicolas, one of the most beloved saint in the whole world and father of the legend of Santa Claus; guided walk to other remarkable historical attractions, seaside promenade and busy pedestrian shopping area.

We'll finally experience the whole range of the local street food – *panzerotti* and *focaccia* and a tasting of raw seafood at the fish market!

Next we'll drive to **Polignano a Mare** for a guided walk to admire the impressive panoramas from the seaside terraces overhanging the magnificent limestone rocks, with an unparalleled view over the blue-green Adriatic, and why not, indulging yourself with a tasty *gelato* or *granita*, pride of the locals.

Then experience Polignano from the water as we tour around the shore line and its caves. After a dip in the Adriatic Sea and a drink on board, you're off for a cooking class in which you'll learn how to make fresh pasta in a charming 1600' *masseria* (farmhouse) immersed in a wonderful expanse of olive trees. And your dinner today will be based on your efforts!

Overnight in Monopoli/Fasano.



DAY 4: **Pedaling the Itria Valley, The White City & Olive Groves**

After a thorough bike fit, it's time to explore Puglia on two wheels! Your ride begins with a lovely climb into the chic and beautiful hilltop town of Cisternino, where you will enjoy sweeping views of the Itria Valley. You will have time for a coffee or gelato to recharge your batteries before continuing along the ridge of the Murgia plateau to **Ostuni**, a stunning white citadel with breathtaking sea views. After lunch on your own, we'll visit a fascinating olive oil estate to learn some valuable facts on the medieval peasant culture by walking through the millenary olive groves. The Puglia region has over 50 million olive trees and is the first producer of extra-virgin olive oil in Italy and the biggest single production region in the world. Then it's back on the bike to return to your hotel for a relaxing evening and dinner.

Overnight in Monopoli/Fasano.

DAY 5: **Cheese-making, Seaside Towns, Winery, Trullo County & "fornello" dinner**

Today head toward a cheese factory for a live demonstration of *mozzarella* and *burrata* making and tasting of the produce.

Your day continues with a nice Ape calessino stroll in **Monopoli**, a lively seaside town that still retains the charm of a medieval village, custodian of architectural beauty, traditions, spirituality and folklore.

With a nice drive through the gentle hills, reach a renowned winery to taste a selection of the best local grapes, paired with some local snacks, right before reaching **Alberobello**, the World Heritage Site of fairy-tale *trulli*, traditional dry stone huts with conical roof, constructions specific to this area of the region.

Plenty of shopping opportunities to be chosen from olive tree cooking tools, local linen and good-luck terracotta whistles!

Your final destination for tonight's dinner is **Cisternino**, the town famous for its barbecuing butchers! All you have to do is choose your meat - maybe the local specialty, *bombette*, little meat parcels filled with mince, ham and cheese - and take a seat outside with a carafe of local wine. The butcher will then barbecue your chosen goodies and bring them out to you when ready. A truly local (and delicious) eating experience!

Back to your hotel.

Overnight in Monopoli/Fasano.

DAY 6: **Ceramics in Grottaglie & Baroque Lecce**

After check-out, this morning we're headed to Grottaglie, the "city of ceramics" as it's called because of the large number of traditional and artistic artisanal pottery laboratories scattered in this medieval town.

Following transfer south for a guided visit of Lecce, commonly nicknamed "The Florence of the South" because of its countless Baroque beauties, with its lovely *centro storico* (historic centre) and Roman ruins. Treat yourself on local delicacies like *puccia* (flat bread filled with your choice of salami and everything else!) and *pasticciotto* (sweet cake filled with lemon custard).

Check-in at your hotel located in the heart of this lovely town and rest of the day at leisure.

Overnight in Lecce.



DAY 7: **Hiking in Salento & Gems of Salento**

This morning travel to the stunning seaside town of **Otranto** known as the jewel of the Salento province for your hiking adventure. Set out on a guided trekking adventure along the coastal paths of the Nature Park from Otranto to Leuca then our guide will take you to see the Aragonese Castle and the Cathedral, consecrated in 1088, which hosts an astonishing mosaic floor known as the “Tree of Life” depicting images from religions around the world. Skulls, bones, and relics of the Martyrs of Otranto, who perished in the 15th century siege surround the high altar.

On the way back we will make a stop in stunning **Galatina** to explore the Basilica di Santa Caterina d’Alessandria in where you’ll see frescoes depicting biblical stories, including the life and passion of Christ and the martyrdom of Santa Caterina. The town is also known for its pastries and we will be sure to try some of the famous “pasticiotto leccese”.

You’ll also learn more about the legend of the tarantella dance, renowned throughout the Salento province.

Overnight in Lecce.

DAY 8: **Departure**

Breakfast. Farewell meeting and transfer to Bari/Brindisi airport.





The rate include:

- Transfers in bus or minibus from/to Bari and/or Brindisi airport
- Private bus or minibus available throughout the tour
- 7 lodgings in b&b service in 4-5 stars hotels
- Typical “fornello” dinner beverages included
- Private cooking class with dinner
- Food and wine tasting in wineries and food manufacturing sites
- Private boat excursion
- All luggage transfers
- 8 days of professional, local guides with knowledge of the secrets and stories of the region

The rate do not include:

- Cost to reach Puglia
- Medical and cancellation insurance (can be quoted separately)
- Alcoholic drinks, personal expenses and tips
- Extras
- Everything not clearly included in the paragraph “The rate include”