



Puglia Travel Guide

REDEFINING LUXURY TRAVEL



Welcome to Puglia

Not so long ago, Puglia was largely unknown amongst international visitors. Yet today, it is a growing holiday destination that boasts amazing beaches, an intriguing history, and a delicious variety of local produce. It's time to discover this enchanting part of Italy and enjoy its abundance of offerings.

Puglia is a unique region of Italy primarily due to the insights it provides into how the locals have inhabited the land. In nearby Matera, one of the most ancient towns in the world, locals have occupied the Sassi caves for 7,000 years until the 1950's. In Alberobello, the iconic trulli housed peasants from the 15th century.

WHO SHOULD VISIT

With an abundance of things to see and do, Puglia has something to offer all travellers. Whether it's your first-time visiting Italy, or you're looking for somewhere new – Puglia will be sure to delight.

History enthusiasts will relish in the ancient towns and architecture. Gastronomes can indulge in a range of wineries, fresh seafood, and a twist on the classics of pastas, breads, and cheese. While families will enjoy the relaxed lifestyle and landscapes with plenty of activities.

WHEN TO GO

Situated in the south-east of Italy, the climate in Puglia is delightful of the year. Highs range from around 21°C in April through to 30°C in Summer and staying at around 22°C until the end of October. The Autumn and Winter seasons are a delightful escape from the cooler European winters, and perfect for cyclists.

Be aware that outside of these warmer months, the region tends to slow-down its trade, with some hotels, restaurants and attractions limiting or closing their doors for the 'winter' months. Be sure to take this into considerations when planning your trip.

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HOW TO GET THERE

PLANE: The easiest option is to catch a flight. There are two main airports to fly in to (Bari & Brindisi). We recommend Bari as it is larger, has more regular flights and is a good starting point for your discovery of the region.

TRAIN: Thanks to the high-speed regional trains you can easily reach Puglia from anywhere in Italy. However, this may take some time (think 5 or more hours depending on your starting location). Trains around the region itself are less frequent and connected than the rest of Italy.

CAR: Puglia is easily reachable by car, making it a great option for those wanting to self-drive around the area. The journey is just 3.5 hours from the Amalfi Coast and 5 hours from Rome. Driving in the region is also simpler with less traffic on the road than other Italian cities. Visitors should be aware that not all rental car companies have pick-up and drop-off locations within walking distance of train stations.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

- We recommend staying in at least two locations in Puglia, the North and the South. The driving distances are too large to explore the whole region from a single destination.
- Accommodation is often in historical buildings and many in-demand properties have fewer than 10 rooms. This means there are often stairs and that properties book out quickly. If you want specific properties, you may want to secure them first and then plan your trip around those dates. Be sure to consider mobility when choosing where to stay.
- There are great villa options in Puglia that can accommodate large groups of friends and families. Guests should be aware that villas often require longer stays, like other popular destinations in Italy. Most privately owned luxury villas will only rent their properties for 7 days (commonly only Sat-Sat). If villas are very important to your trip, ensure you plan for this limitation.



Polignano a Mare



Matera



Alberobello

Regional Highlights



Stay somewhere unique

With a distinctive and diverse history, the region of Puglia offers some truly magical accommodation types that are characteristic of each city. From traditional trulli houses in Alberobello, to cave dwellings in Matera, agriturismos in the countryside, and even tree houses in the natural parks. Each accommodation style offers a unique and authentic experience, creating memorable moments to be cherished for years to come.



Alberobello

SLEEP INSIDE HISTORICAL CAVE DWELLINGS

Matera's Old Town is said to be the third oldest town in the world and has been UNESCO World Heritage Listed since 1993. The two Sassi districts are the most well-known part of Matera, and what most tourists come to visit for.

"Staying in a cave is a truly unique and memorable experience, as it allows you to step back in time and imagine how people lived in the past. A cosy atmosphere with the Old Town located at your doorstep."

The caves have been inhabited since the Palaeolithic period, until the 1950's when they were evacuated by the Italian Government. Due to highly unsanitary conditions, and outbreaks of disease, around 15,000 inhabitants were forcibly relocated. For many years locals wanted to forget their history. However, with interest from archaeologists and other intellectuals, and UNESCO's listing of the area, the city began thriving.

Today, many of these caves have been meticulously converted into homes, boutique hotels, and restaurants, with modern amenities, all while preserving the traditional architecture.



Trulli Holiday, Alberobello



Il Palazzotto Hotel & Winery, Matera

INHABIT A TRADITIONAL TRULLO

Puglia may be best known for its iconic trulli homes found in Alberobello and the Itria Valley – but how did they come about and why are they so unique?

Many of the trulli found today, especially in the old towns of Alberobello, date back to the fourteenth century. It is said that in order to evade paying taxes to the king, all locals were ordered to build their homes in the 'trullo' style, without mortar.

The idea behind using the trulli structure stemmed from both available local resources, and the idea that the trulli could be dismantled easily in the event of a royal inspection. It is therefore a great testament that many of the trulli remain standing today!

"A unique architecture style and traditional charm, the trulli homes are comfortable, well-equipped and add a sense of historical significance to your stay. It really is a once in a lifetime opportunity!"

Of course, many of the trulli today have been restored and now have mortar holding their walls together. You can now stay in an authentic trullo in the oldest trulli districts of Alberobello. Rentals offer modern amenities while preserving the traditional architecture.

Must-do experiences

1 GET LOST IN THE SASSI DI MATERA

Matera is a UNESCO site known for its ancient cave dwellings carved into the rocks, known as sassi. They are a unique and rare example of human habitation dating back to the Paleolithic era. Walking through the narrow streets and alleys of the sassi is like stepping back in time. The cave dwellings are now converted into museums, hotels and restaurants, making it possible to explore them while also enjoying the modern comforts.

2 DISCOVER ALBEROBELLO

Alberobello is a UNESCO site known for its unique and well-preserved trulli, which are traditional conical-roofed houses made of limestone. The trulli are a unique and rare example of human habitation and architecture and walking through the streets offers an opportunity to discover the local culture and history. Discover the local handicrafts, such as pottery and textiles, and even stay in a traditional trulli home for a truly unique experience.

3 SET SAIL ON A BOAT TRIP

This is a unique and exciting way to explore the beautiful coastline. Admire the stunning scenery and crystal-clear waters of the Adriatic Sea, whilst visiting the hidden coves, grottos, and caves that can only be accessed from the water. Along the way, you may spot a wide variety of marine life, including dolphins and sea turtles. Our favourite locations to do this are Santa Maria di Leuca or Polignano a Mare.

4 FLORENCE OF THE SOUTH

Lecce is famous for its baroque architecture, ornate buildings, churches & palaces adorned with intricate stone carvings & sculptures. The Basilica di Santa Croce is considered one of the most beautiful in Italy. Known for its local cuisine, Lecce is a cultural hub, home to several museums and art galleries displaying the works of local artists. The city also has a lively nightlife scene, with many bars and restaurants to choose from.

5 LOCAL COOKING CLASS

A local cooking class with an Apulian family is a great way to learn about the culture and cuisine. You will learn how to cook traditional dishes, as well as about the history and ingredients that make Apulian food so special. Cooking classes are a fun and interactive experience for all ages. Plus, at the end of the class, you get to enjoy the delicious meals that you have cooked together as a family. And it will be a great memory to take home with you.

6 DINE AT GROTTA PALAZZESE

This cave restaurant in Polignano a Mare is known as one of the most beautiful and romantic restaurants in Italy. Open from Jun-Sep, it offers a unique dining experience on its terrace looking across the sea and coastline. The restaurant serves seafood and traditional Puglian dishes. Although it is not hatted, it is very popular for its location & stunning views, so we recommend making a reservation in advance.



Enchanting Puglia 2023

8 DAYS

Embark on a journey of Italy's boot, discover beautiful whitewashed villages, stunning coastlines with turquoise coloured waters, ancient ruins and gastronomical delights. The magic of Puglia has long been known to the Italians, but now the secret is out, and it awaits you on this magnificent Small Group Journey.

Please see our website for the most recent itinerary, departure dates, availability and prices. Scan the QR code:



Basilica di Santa Croce, Lecce



Matera

Ormina Highlights & Inclusions

- > Experience the region's 'must see' towns including Matera, Grottaglie, Lecce, Otranto, Alberobello and Polignano a Mare.
- > 7 nights in a boutique property and 5-star hotels including a Trullo.
- > 7 breakfasts (B), 2 lunches (L), 1 dinner (D).
- > Guided sightseeing of Matera, Lecce, Alberobello and Castellana Cave.
- > Private cooking class to make traditional orecchiette.
- > Guided tour with wine pairings at a local winery followed by lunch.
- > Visit the charming seaside villages of the Salento Peninsula.
- > Private boat excursion in Santa Maria di Leuca.
- > Entrance to Casa Grotta & Chiesa Rupestre, Basilica di Santa Croce and Duomo, Trullo Sovrano and Castellana Cave.
- > Visit the UNESCO World Heritage sites of Matera and Alberobello.
- > Deluxe VIP transport.
- > Airport transfers on first and last day.
- > Note: hotel city taxes, if applicable, are not included.

DAY 1 Bari – Matera (D)

Welcome to Puglia, a region less travelled that is bursting with stunning landscapes and history. On arrival, transfer to ancient Matera to relax and freshen up before an organised welcome dinner.

STAY 2 NIGHTS Le Origini or similar.

DAY 2 Matera (B)

Enjoy a walking tour of Matera, a UNESCO World Heritage listed city and one of the oldest continually inhabited settlements in the

World. Discover the Murgia National Park famous for its caves and rock formations, as well as the limestone shaped caves of the Sassi rock. Enjoy free time in the afternoon to explore at your leisure.

DAY 3 Matera - Ginosa - Grottaglie - Lecce (B, L)

Visit Ginosa for a private orecchiette (hand made fresh local pasta) cooking class followed by an amazing lunch with wine. Afterward, pass through the charming town of Grottaglie, famous for its ceramics. Enjoy time to observe the craftsmen and browse the many shops selling the unique hand-made goods. Continue to Lecce, known as the 'Rome of the South' with its ancient Roman amphitheatres, 17th Century Baroque style churches and Palaces, surrounded by stunning countryside, coastlines and small towns. Arrive in the late afternoon and enjoy the evening at leisure.

STAY 3 NIGHTS Risorgimento Resort 5-star or similar.

DAY 4 Lecce (B, L)

Stroll amongst the stunning architecture, Roman ruins and discover Lecce's traditions on a walking tour including entrance to the Basilica di Santa Croce and Duomo. Afterwards, enjoy a winery tour and lunch with wine pairings at their local restaurant.

DAY 5 Lecce - Santa Maria di Leuca - Castro - Otranto - Lecce (B)

Enjoy a full day excursion exploring the beautiful villages and coastline of the Salento Peninsula. Visit Santa Maria di Leuca for a private boat ride, including time to swim off the boat in amazing waters. Afterward, enjoy time for an independent lunch before passing through the picturesque village of Castro to Otranto, where you have time to explore before returning to Lecce.

DAY 6 Lecce – Ostuni – Martina Franca - Alberobello (B)

Visit the beautiful, whitewashed town of Ostuni, with a historical tradition of painting all the houses with white lime. Stroll the streets at your own leisure and perhaps visit its local treasures such as the

Cathedral and the baroque Church of Santa Maria Maddalena. Continue to Martina Franca, an old town surrounded by stone walls and featuring piazzas and narrow, winding streets. Enjoy time for an independent lunch before arriving in Alberobello for an overnight stay in a real Trullo.

STAY 2 NIGHTS Le Alcove Luxury Resort 5-star or similar.

DAY 7 Alberobello - Polignano a Mare - Castellana Cave - Alberobello (B)

Discover Alberobello and its tradition and landscape with a walking tour. Afterward, travel to the beautiful seaside village of Polignano a Mare with leisure time for independent discovery, a swim at its amazing beach with pristine turquoise water and possibly independent lunch at its world-renowned Grotto Palazzese. Afterward, visit the Castellana Cave with a guided tour before returning to Alberobello.

DAY 8 Alberobello – Bari (B)

After breakfast, transfer to Bari for your ongoing journey.

2023 Departures and Pricing

STARTS	ENDS	PRICE*
Turin	Milan	Twin Share per person
22-May-23	29-May-23	SOLD OUT
10-Jun-23	17-Jun-23	\$5,090
26-Jun-23	03-Jul-23	\$5,090
24-Jul-23	31-Jul-23	\$5,090
11-Sep-23	18-Sep-23	SOLD OUT
24-Sep-23	01-Oct-23	\$5,090
Single supplement		\$2,600

* All prices are listed in AUD unless otherwise stated. Prices in other currencies are available on our website.

Discover more

START YOUR JOURNEY IN BARI

Enjoy the region's harbourside capital and get lost in the maze of cobblestones streets in the Old Town. Bari makes a great pre-tour extension.



ADD AN EXTENSION IN MONOPOLI

Unwind at the end of your Apulian discovery by the ocean. We recommend staying at: **Locanda Don Ferrante 5-star**. As the best hotel in Monopoli be sure to secure your spot early!



Continue your journey

Make your road trip a little more interesting. If you are coming from (or heading to) the Amalfi Coast, we recommend these stops on the way.

BUFFALO CHEESE FARM

Visit the capital of ancient mozzarella made with buffalo milk including ancient techniques and traditions, handed down between generations.



RUINS OF PAESTUM

An overlooked UNESCO World Heritage site with breathtaking ancient Greek temples, houses, ancient city piazzas and artifacts.



Group accommodation

If you are looking for a slower paced stay in the region, or perhaps you're travelling with a family or group of friends and want a central location to stay, a villa or masseria could be the perfect option.

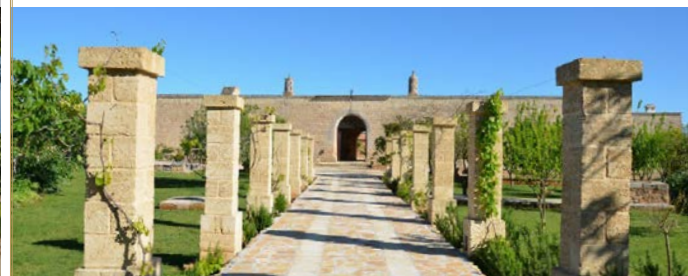
VILLA STAY

Puglia has a number of villas scattered across the landscape, but the best ones are often found around Ostuni. Be aware that many villas only rent Sat-Sat. Get in contact with us to help find something to suit your needs.



MASSERIA FARM STAY

Many local families have converted their working farms into luxury accommodations called 'masseria'. These amazing properties are a great countryside option for bigger groups, with organic produce for all guests to enjoy.





Ormina Tours

Head Office: Level 45, 680 George St,
Sydney NSW 2000

Mailing: PO Box 123,
Leederville WA 6902

Reservations

Sydney + 61 2 8076 2295

Perth +61 8 9200 4495

New York +1 929 292 1152

Email

info@orminatours.com

Website

www.orminatours.com

 @OrminaTours

 /OrminaTours

