



PUGLIA
PARADISE



Puglia Paradise Tour Summary

Journey to the heart of Southern Italy on this 11-day small-group tour of Puglia. From the Baroque elegance of Lecce and the cave dwellings of Matera to the whitewashed towns of Ostuni and the Trulli of Alberobello, discover a region rich in history, flavor, and timeless beauty.

Begin in **Bari**, wandering the historic streets of Bari Vecchia before uncovering the mystery of **Castel del Monte**. Arrive in **Lecce**, the “Florence of the South,” where Baroque elegance and local traditions await.

Set sail from **Otranto** along the Adriatic’s serene coast, stroll through the white-washed splendor of **Ostuni** and **Locorotondo**, and stand in awe of the cave-carved dwellings of **Matera**. Along the way, explore the cone-shaped **Trulli of Alberobello**, drive through landscapes dotted with ancient olive trees, and indulge in Puglia’s soul through creamy burrata, handmade orecchiette, extra-virgin olive oil, intricate papier-mâché, and lively **taranta dance**.

All this unfolds under the care of a dedicated guide and in a small group of up to 12 travelers, ensuring an authentic, unforgettable connection with Puglia’s culture, cuisine, and countryside.



11 days / 10 nights



Maximum of 12 travelers



Fully escorted with full-time tour leader

Start: Bari

Finish: Bari

Stay: 2 nights Bari, + 1 nights Matera,
+ 4 nights Lecce, + 3 nights Masseria

Tour Itinerary - Puglia Paradise

Day 1 | Friday

Welcome to Puglia! Start your journey uncovering one of Italy's last hidden gems. Tonight you will rest in a luxury hotel within walking distance of "Bari Vecchia" (the historic district of Bari) and relax after a long trip overseas. Enjoy a leisure walk through the picturesque streets of **Bari** with our expert City Guide who will introduce you to the main sites, churches, buildings, and traditions that Bari is known for, including the Basilica di San Nicola, which holds St. Nicholas' tomb under its main altar. We'll walk along the ancient walls, so we can better enjoy the view of the sea and harbor. The old town of Bari appears to revel in its own traditions. You may run into old ladies sitting by their front door, kneading fresh pasta and leaving the "orecchiette" (ear-shaped pasta) to dry out in the sun. Enjoy a delicious home-style meal with regional specialties with your fellow travelers.

Meals included: Dinner

Day 2 | Saturday

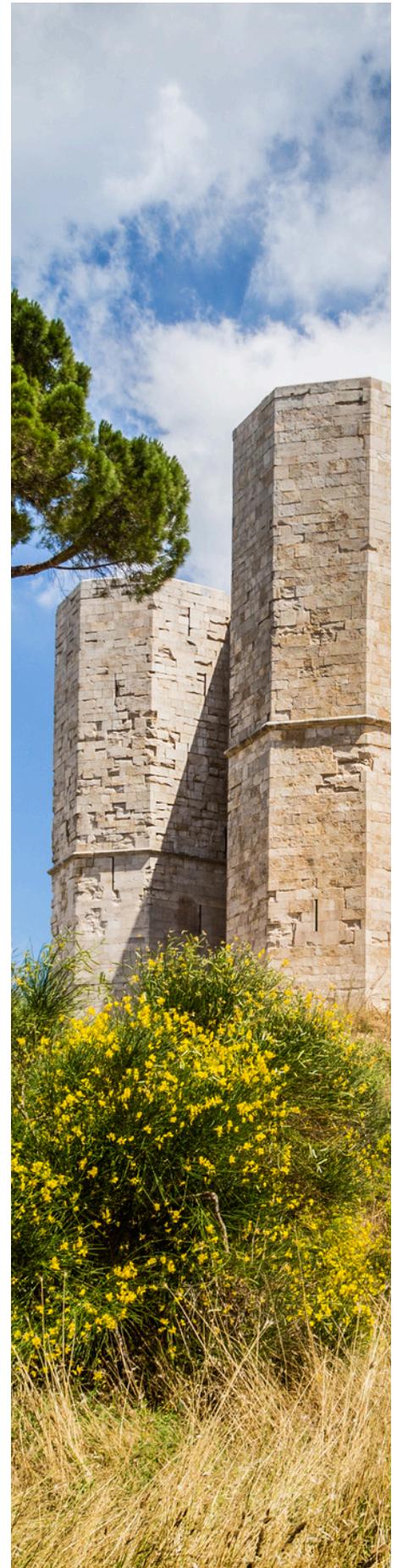
We'll leave the city of Bari to head inland, where we'll slowly see the stern and imposing **Castel del Monte** in the distance. This impressive structure dominates the surrounding countryside from a high viewpoint, where nothing interrupts its 360-degree view. There is a strong element of mystery within the castle, built in the 1240's by Emperor Frederick II of Svevia. The intent was not to create a defensive fortress, but rather a study & knowledge center where science, theology, philosophy, and alchemy experts from all over the Mediterranean could meet and exchange their thoughts & findings. The number 8, symbolizing the infinite nature of the Divine, appears repeatedly, almost obsessively, within the 8 rooms, the octagonal base, 8 towers each with 8 sides, and other architectural elements within the castle. We'll take a guided tour of this amazing site, a Unesco World Heritage site since 1996. We continue our drive to **Lecce**, aka "the Florence of the South". We will have a group lunch on the way to Lecce, then we'll check into one of the most elegant parts of the city, where different architectural styles live together in perfect harmony. Enjoy a group dinner, carefully chosen among dozens of local traditional restaurants.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Day 3 | Sunday

Leave Lecce and head East for a relaxing day on the water of the Adriatic Sea. From the port of Otranto, we'll be boarding a **traditional sail boat** that will take us along the beautiful coast of the region, where sandy beaches alternate with green-blue caves and craggy outcrops facing the clear waters of the Adriatic. We'll enjoy a typical aperitivo on the boat, perhaps take a refreshing swim, before heading back to Otranto to continue our journey. Once back in **Otranto**, the easternmost Italian city, with a charming historical center, an imposing castle "Castello Aragonese", and many picturesque viewpoints of the sea. Not to be missed is the Cattedrale dell'Annunziata, where you can see a massive mosaic floor dating back to the 12th century, with semi-precious stones depicting the Tree of Life, with fascinating scenes that mix sacred stories with profane ones. Walk around the cobblestone alleys decorated with flowers and stop by hidden gems such as the Byzantine Basilica of Saint Peter's. Once we return to Lecce, you'll be able to enjoy dinner on your own.

Meals included: Breakfast and Aperitivo



Day 4 | Monday

After breakfast, an expert local guide will meet us at the hotel to introduce us to Lecce's famous landmarks including the splendid Roman Amphitheater, the richly decorated Cathedral of Maria SS. Assunta. The way the light reflects on the buildings of Lecce is truly remarkable; making them spectacular by day, almost made of gold, but most strikingly dramatic at night time. We'll be driving north, stopping at a local **boutique winery**, where the intense and full-bodied Salice Salentino wine is made from dark purple grapes of Negroamaro (which translated to "black-bitter"). We'll learn about the production of the area, aging techniques, and then sit down for a wine tasting and delicious home-made lunch. We return to the hotel. We visit a traditional **papier mâché workshop**, where you can learn all about the ancient craft and why it bloomed in Lecce. You enjoy the rest of the evening on your own.

Meals included: Breakfast and Lunch

Day 5 | Tuesday

Today we'll be visiting **Gallipoli**, a fishing village with beautiful sea views and alleyways lined with clotheslines and locals leaning over balconies, conversing and greeting visitors as they walk by. We continue on towards the west coast, stopping in **Galatina**, a village where ornate palaces, rich portals, and Baroque churches boast the most elegant embellishments of Rococo' style. A must-see is the Romanesque-Gothic Basilica of Santa Caterina d'Alessandria, where you'll be able to admire some of the most breath-taking frescoes from the School of Giotto, of which the importance is only second to the Basilica of Assisi. Before we head out to dinner back in Lecce, we'll be entertained by a local dance crew performing the famous "Taranta", among the most recognized forms of traditional southern Italian folk dance. It's characterized by a fast upbeat tempo, performed by a supposed victim of a "tarantula" bite, who is able to "shake off" through contortions and perspiration the delirium attributed to the spider's venom.

Meals included: Breakfast and Dinner

Day 6 | Wednesday

Today we are exploring **Altamura** a charming town with beautiful palaces and churches such as the imposing Cattedrale dell'Assunta. Here, we'll stop for leisurely lunch. Taste the first bakery product in Europe branded "DOP" (a certification that protects the traditional recipe, process, and place of production) the famous Pane di Altamura, prepared with "mother yeast", ground wheat flour from the Murge area of Puglia, and baked in a wood brick oven. It dates back to Medieval times and is often in the shape of a "priest's hat". We'll visit a local bakery where you'll learn how this traditional bread is made. After some free time to stroll around Altamura, we continue our drive to Matera's deep and complex history through the centuries. Said to be one of the world's oldest towns, dating back to pre-historic times **Matera** is known for its "Sassi", incredible cave dwellings dug into the limestone rock. The dramatic landscape surrounding the town as it rises from a deep gorge created by the Gravina river, give Matera an almost surreal atmosphere. Enjoy a group dinner, carefully chosen among dozens of local traditional restaurants.

Meals included: Breakfast and Dinner



Day 7 | Thursday

After check-out, we'll be driving south, and stop along the way in the picturesque village of **Ostuni**. From the road below, it looks like a floating mirage of white light mid-way between the sea and land. From the ancient town, up the hill, you can see a beautiful coastline wrapped by lush green fields. The medieval heart of the town, called "Terra", is crisscrossed by narrow alleys, steep stairways, craft shops, family-style restaurants, and small courtyards adorned with geranium planters. The 15th century Romanesque-Gothic Cathedral boasts a rare 24-SPOKE rose portal. We'll be driving, stopping at a local Masseria to enjoy a fun group **cooking class** at a traditional family Masseria, a fortified farmhouse in typical Pugliese style, dating back to the 1600's. This charming building allows to really sample life in southern Italy with the family's warm hospitality. After lunch with local specialties, we'll arrive at our resort, where you can relax, spending time on your own, and completely free your mind before your group dinner.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Day 8 | Friday

Today we're exploring the beating heart of the **Valle D'Itria**, the heart of the region of Puglia. Visit **Locorotondo**, a circular-base village with stunning views of the countryside. We enjoy a pleasant walk in the narrow streets around the white-washed houses of Locorotondo. Time in the afternoon to explore **Martina Franca**, the largest town in the Valley. Explore its old center which boasts beautiful baroque architecture and quaint streets. Taste some local Gelato and then have some free time. Enjoy a group dinner, carefully chosen among dozens of local traditional restaurants.

Meals included: Breakfast and Dinner

Day 9 | Saturday

Explore the beating heart of the Valle D'Itria, **Alberobello**, one of the world's most unique places and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. We'll visit the community of **Trulli**, dating back to the 1400's with our expert City Guide, who will tell us about life in these peculiar cone-shaped dwellings and how they came to be. Enjoy lunch on your own in Alberobello, before heading altogether towards **Cisternino**, considered one of the most fascinating villages in the whole area. Time to stroll around before returning to the hotel for some time to rest. Tonight, you'll learn about olive oil and savor home-made dishes at a nearby family-owned farm, surrounded by thousand-year-old olive groves and beautiful lush gardens with large tropical plants and fragrant citrus trees.

Meals included: Breakfast and Dinner

Day 10 | Sunday

After checking out from the hotel, we'll drive back up to Bari. On the way, we'll make a stop in **Polignano a Mare**, a small village sitting on the edge of a dramatic cave overlooking the sea, and then continue to **Monopoli** where we will enjoy a group lunch, before we head back to Bari. After check-in, enjoy some extra time to experience the history and liveliness of Bari, explore its vivacious nightlife and bustling streets. Let the memories of the trip fill up your thoughts before returning home.

Meals included: Breakfast and Lunch

Day 11 | Monday

Thank you for choosing Nada's Italy for your Italian adventure. We hope to have you back and experience more parts of this colorful culture again soon! Until next time, beautiful ITALIA says Ciao!

Meals included: Breakfast



What's included ?

Small group travel: maximum of 12 travelers per group!

Fully escorted day trips with a full-time English-speaking Tour Leader and professional private drivers.

Meals included: all *breakfasts*, some *lunches* and *dinners* (included meals are shown at bottom of each day's itinerary.)

Beverages included: bottled water, soft drinks, coffee, and 2 glasses of wine per meal (choice of red or white wine)

Private Walking Tours by licensed English-speaking City Guides, including PRIORITY entrance & tickets to attractions.

Private Transportation for day trips and transfers in comfortable air-conditioned Mercedes Executive vans (does not include: transfer from and to the airport, airfare, or any other personal travel expenses).

A+ Rated Customer Service with Nada's Italy you can rest assured that your travel experience will be completely stress-free. Your personal Journey Coordinator will assist you with any additional services you may need, provide expert packing and travel advice, and answer any questions you may have before your trip.

Return Traveler Program: receive up to \$800 credit per person towards any future trips you take with Nada's Italy!

No bag limit (many tour companies have a 1-bag limit per person).

Taxes & Fees: Local VAT taxes and government fees, City Tax, gas, highway tolls, city access licenses and permits, parking fees.

Staff & restaurant tips (additional gratuities can be given at the sole discretion of each traveler).

Important information

- Some tours start and end in different cities, make sure to book your flights accordingly.
- Reminders, hotel information, and arrival instructions will be sent only by email, please make sure we have your current email address.
- You must be in good physical condition to sign-up for this trip! There will be extended standing and walking over uneven pavement. An average walking tour is about 2-3 hours without sitting.
- We strongly recommend that you purchase Travel Insurance for your trip. For suggestions on policies and a quote, please contact us.
- You should know that air conditioning in Italy, as well as WIFI connection, are not always as reliable as they are in the United States.
- The hotel staff assigns rooms to guests, some rooms may include stairs. A view is not guaranteed. As we work mainly with small upscale boutique hotels, rooms can differ in size and layout. Please contact us if you have specific requests/needs.
- Even though tips to staff and restaurants are included, it is suggested that you put aside approximately \$100 in combined gratuities for your driver & Tour Director for your trip.
- It is your responsibility to obtain the required documents to travel to Italy. Your passport should be valid for at least 6 months after your return date.
- In the unlikely event your tour does not reach the minimum participation requirement of 6 travelers, we will work with you to choose another available tour or tour date. We will do our best to make the transition as smooth as possible.
- Please note: while we do our best to adhere to our published itineraries, they may be changed at the discretion of the Tour Leader due to weather conditions and other unforeseeable circumstances.
- Unless stated otherwise, all rates are per person, based on double occupancy, land only, in USD, and subject to availability. Rates may vary by departure date and are subject to change without notice.