



THE ROAD LESS TRAVELLED - PUGLIA

19 APRIL - 2 MAY 2026

10 - 23 MAY 2026

13 - 26 SEPTEMBER 2026

4 - 17 OCTOBER 2026





Trulli in the Valle d'Itria

OVERVIEW

AUD 10,170
(PER PERSON, TWIN SHARE)

AUD 11,970
(PER PERSON, SOLO TRAVELLER)

Since 2007, Italian Tours has crafted unforgettable journeys for those who share our passion for Italy and believe that the best holidays are enjoyed in great company. Our intimate group sizes (maximum of 12 people) and thoughtfully selected itineraries ensure an authentic and delightful Italian holiday.

We embrace a leisurely pace, allowing you ample time to savour Italy's charms without the rush. Each itinerary includes plenty of free time for personal exploration and indulgence in local interests.

Our Puglian adventure starts in the charming town of Lecce, known for its expansive pedestrian zones and exquisite baroque architecture. We explore the enchanting Salento area and some of Puglia's most picturesque towns.

The Valle d'Itria will captivate you with its iconic trulli homes, and the stunning coastal views along Polignano a Mare and the Gargano Peninsula are a photographer's dream. We'll engage with local artisans, visit traditional producers, and learn about regional specialties and wines.

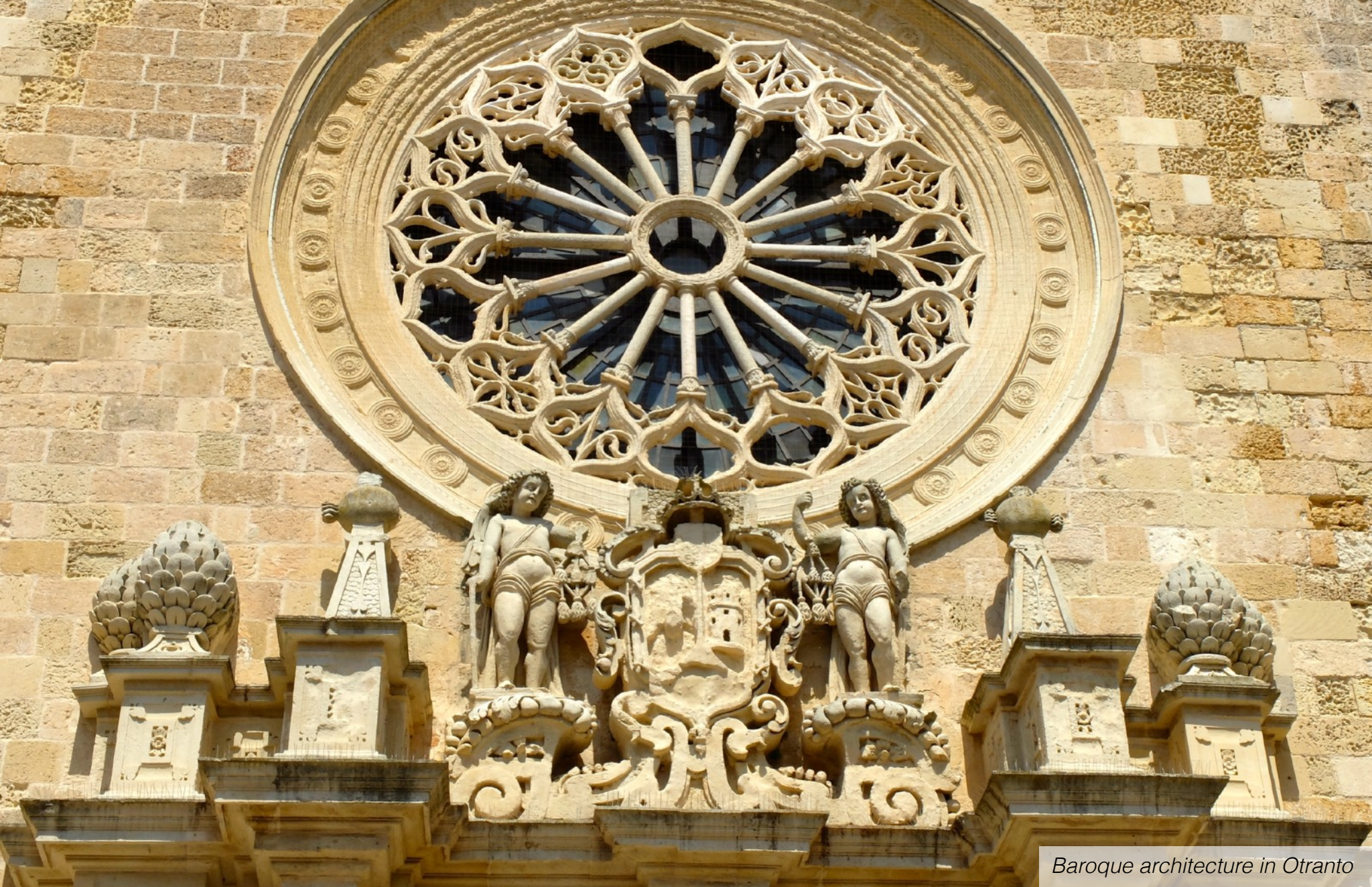
To maximise comfort and minimise travel hassle, we stay in just four well-chosen hotels over 14 days: Lecce (3 nights), Valle d'Itria (3 nights), Gargano Peninsula (3 nights), and Polignano a Mare (4 nights). The tour includes five lunches and five dinners in select restaurants renowned for their exemplary cuisine and wines, which are characteristic of the regions we visit. Beyond scheduled meals, we relish sharing restaurant recommendations and additional dining experiences.

"The tour was absolutely fantastic, and all that it is cracked up to be on your website. We were amazed at the beauty of Puglia and were stunned by the local food. The accommodation was first-rate. The group size is perfect for the sort of tour that you offer.

Our guide, Marco, ...was greatly appreciated for his care and sense of humour. He introduced us to many Pugliese dishes and especially to Café Leccese, which became a great hit with the whole group. We are now making it at home!!

Paul and Sue, 2023





Baroque architecture in Otranto

ITINERARY

DAY 1 - ARRIVE IN PUGLIA

Welcome to Lecce, your home for the next three nights! This wonderful city features ornate iron balconies, streets lined with golden stones, fascinating Roman ruins, and the distinctive local Baroque architecture. Arriving in Puglia is convenient via Brindisi airport, the nearest airport, or by fast train from Rome or Milan. Our journey begins with an evening aperitivo and a welcoming dinner.

Overnight: Lecce

DAY 2 - EXPLORING LECCE

Spend your morning soaking in the charm of Lecce, a city with a history even more ancient than Florence. With our expert local guide, you'll explore atmospheric streets, visit awe-inspiring churches to discover artistic gems and enjoy a leisurely coffee in the vibrant central piazza.

The afternoon offers free time to explore Lecce at your own pace.

Overnight: Lecce

DAY 3 - PASTICCIOTTO IN GALATINA AND OTRANTO ON THE SEA

Today, we venture to Galatina, renowned for its rich history and delicious pasticciotto. Start with a visit to the Church of Santa Caterina d'Alessandria to admire an exquisite fresco cycle by Francesco d'Arezzo, depicting scenes from the New and Old Testaments. Afterwards, indulge in a sweet treat at Pasticceria Ascalone, where the famed Pasticciotto Galatina was created, and perhaps sample other local pastries.



In the afternoon, we head to Otranto, a picturesque fortified town with medieval walls and crystal-clear waters. Don't miss the Cathedral of Santa Maria Annunziata, home to the ancient Tree of Life mosaic and an intriguing zodiac mosaic, both crafted in the twelfth century by the monk Pantaleone.

Overnight: Lecce

DAY 4 - AN INTRODUCTION TO PUGLIESE WINE

Today, we bid farewell to Lecce and set our sights on the vineyards of Salento. Our first stop is Masseria Li Veli, a top wine producer, where we enjoy an exclusive guided tour. Discover the secrets behind their prestigious wines and enjoy a tasting session paired with a delightful lunch featuring regional specialties. After a memorable experience, we journey towards the picturesque Valle d'Itria. Here, we'll stay in a beautifully restored masseria, offering a glimpse into the life of the region's past barons and farmers, all while providing modern comforts. We'll be staying here for the next three nights.

Overnight: Valle d'Itria

DAY 5 - A CHEESE PRODUCER AND GROTTAGLIE

Awaken to the rustic charm of Valle d'Itria and prepare for a day immersed in local traditions. We visit a nearby farm that produces excellent local cheeses and olive oil. Witness the art of mozzarella making and sample freshly made cheeses that epitomise the flavours of Puglia.

Later, we explore Grottaglie, a town synonymous with ceramic craftsmanship. We meet local artisans and perhaps collect a piece of handcrafted pottery as a keepsake. Afterwards, we unwind back at our accommodation.

Overnight: Valle d'Itria

DAY 6 - LOCOROTONDO AND ALBEROBELLO

This morning, we explore the enchanting town of Alberobello, a UNESCO World Heritage site famous for its trulli. These distinctive stone dwellings with conical roofs offer a glimpse into the area's traditional architectural styles. Enjoy time capturing photos and learning about the history of these fascinating structures.

Later, we visit Locorotondo, known for its circular layout and well-preserved historic centre, offering a peaceful ambience for leisurely exploration. We head to Martina Franca in the evening, enjoying its baroque architecture, vibrant local life and a delicious group dinner.

Overnight: Valle d'Itria

DAY 7 - TRANI AND THE GARGANO PENINSULA

This morning, we depart for Trani, a jewel of the Adriatic coast celebrated for its picturesque seaport and the magnificent Cathedral of San Nicola Pellegrino. The cathedral, built in the 12th century, is a testament to the Puglian Romanesque style, with its impressive rose window, bronze doors, and a bell tower that offers panoramic views of the Adriatic Sea. Stroll along the bustling port where local fishermen offer their fresh catch of the day, providing a glimpse into the town's vibrant maritime culture. Explore Trani's historic centre with its charming streets and lively piazzas. Enjoy some free time to indulge in a leisurely lunch at a local trattoria, where the seafood is as fresh as it gets.

In the afternoon, we make our way to the Gargano Peninsula, a picturesque corner of Puglia. Its charm lies in its dramatic coastal cliffs, beaches, and the quaint whitewashed houses that dot the old towns of the area. This region is less frequented by international tourists, offering a serene and authentic taste of Italian summer life.

Overnight: Gargano Peninsula (either Mattinata or Vieste, depending on the departure date)

DAY 8 - THE GARGANO COAST AND A PILGRIM'S CHURCH

Set sail along the rugged coast of Gargano, where dramatic cliffs meet the crystal clear waters of the Adriatic. Enjoy opportunities for swimming and discovering secluded coves. In the afternoon, our journey takes us to the spiritual heart of the region, Monte Sant'Angelo. Here, we visit the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Sanctuary of St. Michael Archangel. Built in the 13th century by Charles I of Anjou, this sacred site has been a pilgrimage destination for centuries. Delve into its rich history and enjoy the serene atmosphere that has drawn pilgrims here for generations.

Overnight: Gargano Peninsula (either Mattinata or Vieste, depending on the departure date)

DAY 9 - THE FORESTA UMBRA, A TRABUCCO, AND THE GARGANO COAST

Spend the morning exploring the striking Gargano coast by bus, winding through dramatic cliffs and crystal-clear coves. You'll stop in postcard-perfect seaside towns such as Vieste, where whitewashed houses cling to the cliffs, and narrow alleyways invite a stroll. Midday brings a memorable lunch at a traditional trabucco—a centuries-old wooden fishing platform transformed into a rustic seafood restaurant suspended above the sea.





Bari

In the afternoon, journey inland through the serene, shaded trails of the Foresta Umbra, a protected woodland in the heart of the Gargano National Park. This tranquil drive offers a peaceful contrast to the coast, with opportunities to stop, breathe in the cool forest air, and soak in the quiet beauty of this ancient ecosystem.

Overnight: Gargano Peninsula (either Mattinata or Vieste, depending on the departure date)

DAY 10 - FROM THE GARGANO TO BARI AND POLIGNANO A MARE

Leaving the serene beauty of the Gargano Peninsula behind, we journey south toward the bustling port city of Bari. On arrival, enjoy some free time for lunch at your leisure before we set out on a guided walking tour of the city's historic heart. Discover the iconic Basilica of San Nicola, marvel at Romanesque architecture, and stroll through lively backstreets where the aroma of fresh pasta lingers in the air and locals go about their daily rhythm.

In the afternoon, we continue along the Adriatic coast to the charming town of Polignano a Mare, our base for the final days of the journey.

Overnight: Polignano a Mare

DAY 11- A FREE MORNING, THEN OLIVE OIL TRADITIONS AND OSTUNI

Enjoy a relaxed morning in Polignano a Mare—perhaps wander down to the cliffside viewpoints or have a coffee in one of the town's sunny piazzas.

In the afternoon, we venture into the olive groves of a family-run estate that tells the story of Puglia's most treasured crop. Walk among gnarled trees that have stood for centuries and learn how ancient and modern techniques combine to produce some of Italy's finest olive oil. A tasting session offers a flavourful glimpse into this rich heritage.

We then continue to Ostuni, the dazzling White City. With its winding alleys, whitewashed buildings, and sweeping views, it's a joy to explore. Take time to wander, shop, or enjoy the magic of golden hour in one of Puglia's most





Castel del Monte

photogenic towns.

Overnight: Polignano a Mare

DAY 12- CASTEL DEL MONTE AND CULINARY DELIGHTS

Today begins with a drive inland to the majestic Castel del Monte, a UNESCO-listed masterpiece built by Emperor Frederick II. Its unique octagonal design, mathematical precision, and air of mystery have intrigued visitors for centuries. Explore its lofty chambers and take in sweeping views across the surrounding plains.

After the visit, we'll enjoy a special lunch at Antichi Saporì, one of Puglia's most beloved restaurants. Chef Pietro Zito transforms local, seasonal ingredients into an unforgettable culinary experience rooted in tradition.

Overnight: Polignano a Mare

DAY 13 - MATERA

Today, we explore the UNESCO World Heritage site of Matera, a city celebrated for its remarkable cave dwellings known as the Sassi. Matera's fascinating history stretches back to prehistoric times when these cave formations were

first inhabited. The city's unique landscape caught the eye of filmmakers, including Mel Gibson for his film 'The Passion', adding a touch of Hollywood allure to its ancient streets. Over centuries, these caves have housed communities until the 1950s, when residents were relocated. Matera has been revitalised, hosting vibrant businesses, boutique hotels, and quaint bars.

We'll spend a whole day here, starting with a guided tour in the morning to delve deep into its history and architecture, followed by free time in the afternoon to explore this captivating city at your own pace.

Overnight: Polignano a Mare

DAY 14 - FAREWELLS

On the last day of the tour, we provide a transfer service to Bari, with scheduled stops at Bari Centrale train station by 10:00 am and Bari Airport by 10:30 am. Reflect on the wonderful memories and spectacular sights of Italy as you prepare to depart, taking a piece of Puglia back home with you.





Alberobello



Luca and Philippa



Ostuni

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

STAY

- ❖ 3 nights in Lecce in a centrally located hotel
- ❖ 3 nights in the Valle d'Itria in a masseria in the countryside
- ❖ 3 nights in the Gargano Peninsula (Vieste or Mattinata)
- ❖ 4 nights in Polignano a Mare in a sea-side hotel

INCLUSIONS

- ◆ Experienced and bilingual tour leader on hand for the duration of the tour
- ◆ Group transfer at the end of the tour as per the information below
- ◆ Accommodation (on a twin-share basis) in charming four and five-star hotels
- ◆ All breakfasts, five lunches and five dinners (wine, or something softer if you would prefer, is included with all lunches and dinners)
- ◆ All land travel in Italy in private, air-conditioned mini-coach
- ◆ Entry fees to all attractions listed in the itinerary
- ◆ Expert, local guides at key attractions

EXCLUSIONS AND ADD-ONS

- ◆ Local city tax (payable directly at the hotels)
- ◆ Add a night pre-tour at our hotel in Lecce (subject to availability)
- ◆ A private transfer from Brindisi or Bari Airport to Lecce can be arranged

GETTING TO PUGLIA AND DEPARTING

If you are flying to Puglia, the closest airport to Lecce is Brindisi. You can also fly into Bari, but it is further from Lecce.

You can also arrive in Lecce on the high-speed train from Rome or Milan.

At the end of the tour, we provide a transfer to Bari train station (arriving by 10 am) and to Bari airport (arriving by 10.30 am).

PHYSICAL FITNESS

We don't place any age limitations on the tour and welcome anyone with a moderate level of physical fitness. Specifically, you should be comfortable on your feet for up to 3 hours with short breaks and confident on uneven surfaces.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Travel insurance is compulsory when travelling on one of our tours.

BOOKING

If you would like to book a place on this or any other tour, or if you have some questions about the itinerary, please don't hesitate to contact Luca or Philippa at Italian Tours.

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E ciao@italiantours.com.au

