

ITALY – PUGLIA & THE SOUTH, ITALY'S BEST KEPT SECRET

8-day / 7-night one-hotel **GUIDED** walks & sightseeing from Alberobello in the undiscovered south of Italy



This walking and sightseeing holiday explores Italy's best-kept secret, the rural region of Puglia, near the 'heel' in the south of the country. Fringed by the azure Ionian and Adriatic seas, the gentle rolling countryside offers wide-ranging views across the plains to snow-capped mountains. Walks in Puglia follow the trails of the Templars on ancient routes through wheat fields and groves of olive, walnut and cherry trees, and visit ancient towns steeped in history. The rural charm and traditional cuisine of Puglia, the breadbasket of Italy, is amply displayed in its quaint trattorias and cafés. The cuisine is rustic, often featuring bread and pasta made from locally grown and milled durum wheat, and cooking methods are typically simple and traditional. Puglia's native vines include *Negroamaro* (robust reds and fragrant rosés), and *Primitivo* (also known as Zinfandel), a full-bodied red.

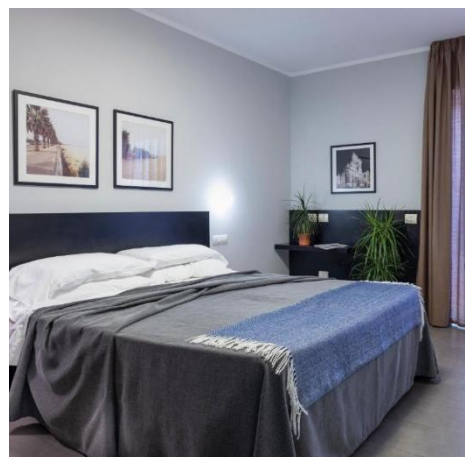
Cost from: \$4245 per person (twin share) Single room supplement from \$920

Departs: 21, 28 April, 5, 12 May, 15, 29 September, 2027

Tour includes: 7 nights in a comfortable hotel room with ensuite bathroom, 7 breakfasts, 7 evening meals, experienced walks leader, local transport to/from the walks.

Not included: Meals and drinks not mentioned, any personal expenses, excursions on your free day. Airport transfers from/to Bari at set times can be pre-booked at extra cost, please ask for details when booking.

Accommodation: The 4-star family-owned and run Hotel Colle del Sole is located just outside of Alberobello's city centre and 500 metres from the World Heritage-listed *trulli* areas Aia Piccola and Rione Monti. Rooms are furnished in a modern style, and guests can enjoy the bar and in-house restaurant Sciarabà, plus the large garden and outdoor pool. The buffet breakfast features typical Puglian pastries and breads like pasticciotti, taralli and pane de Altamura, among many other options. *On occasion we may use an alternative property of similar standard and location.*



Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on (03) 5750 1441 for details or reservations

Trip Grading: Easy to moderate. Easier walks of 6-9km on good tracks and paths, with up to 120m ascent in a day. Harder walks of 9-12km on good paths, with some rocky sections and up 300m ascent in a day.

A typical European centre-based walking holiday offers a choice of up to two guided walks each day. You choose the walk that best suits your ability and fitness. Walks leaders make the final decision on which routes are offered; each evening they will brief you about the walks for the next day and answer questions you may have.

Suggested itinerary (Routes are determined by the walk leaders each day and are subject to change):

Day 1: Arrival day.

Plan to arrive at the hotel in Alberobello mid-afternoon. Transfers at set times from Bari Airport are available at extra cost, ask us for details.

Day 2: Noci countryside.

Our introductory walks take in the countryside around Noci, a small village whose name translates to 'walnuts'. Both walks begin at the Barsento church, an important example of Romanesque rock architecture typical of the 11th and 12th centuries. The church stands on a promontory for good views of ancient oak forests and stretches of wheat fields lined with dry stone walls. After our walk there is time to explore the laneways and courtyards of Noci.

Day 3: Pirro Canal and Apulian Aqueduct.

Both walks start from the lush woods of the Selva di Fasano, the easier route heading gently downhill into the rural valley of the Canale di Pirro, while the longer route traverses the rolling hills of the Selva di Fasano, with sweeping views across the valley and the patchwork of farmland below. We walk through olive groves and orchards to the imposing Ponte dell'Acquedotto Pugliese, a majestic stone bridge, part of one of Europe's longest aqueducts. Time permitting we stop at Cocolicchio, one of the oldest settlements of *trulli*, on our way back to Alberobello.

Day 4: Coastal Dunes Regional Park.

The Parco Dune Costiere boasts diverse habitats, including ancient olive groves, stands of juniper and of course coastal dunes. The easier walk follows a broad path past centuries-old farmsteads to the Lido Morelli, where there is evidence of ancient aquaculture. The longer walk also takes in Lama Cornola, a small canyon housing a Rupestrian village, a remarkable example of an Apulian cave settlement.

Day 5: Free day.

No walks are planned for today. Relax at the hotel or explore the local area. The *trulli* areas of Aia Piccola and Rione Monti are just a 10-minute walk from the hotel, or you might like to visit Locorotondo, a lovely and relatively untouristed town with whitewashed houses, narrow streets and a distinctive circular layout.

Day 6: Ostuni countryside.

A longer or shorter walk in the green hills of Ostuni, covered with olive groves. As time permits we visit the archaeological site of Santa Maria di Agnano, where the fossilised skeletal remains, estimated to be more than 26,000 years old, of an ancient female known as the "Woman of Ostuni" were discovered in a cave.

Day 7: Pianelle Wood.

Our walks begin at the visitor centre of the Bosco delle Pianelle. The wood covers some 1200 hectares and boasts a diversity of wildlife including toads, geckos, turtles, and a variety of snakes. Badgers, weasels, foxes and even wolves are also occasionally spotted here. We walk through holm oak forest and Mediterranean scrub including mastic, wild orchids and strawberry trees.

Day 8: Departure day.

Tour ends after breakfast (set transfer to Bari Airport available at extra cost).



Contact Outdoor Travel direct for more details and reservations

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