

THE MAGICAL LAND

OF

Puglia

A Culinary & Cultural Tour in Southern Italy

May 12–19, 2027

ONWARD TRAVEL ✈️

EST 2014



AMONG THE TRULLI HOUSES OF ALBEROBELLO

Onward Travel is thrilled to return to Puglia in the spring of 2027! This region of Southern Italy is an ancient place with some of the most interesting and unique food, architecture, history and landscapes in all of Italy. Join us to discover it...

In Puglia you'll find a place with a deep soul, and what many say is the best food in the country. Puglia is home to burrata cheese, most of Italy's olive trees, beautiful Adriatic seascapes, and antique towns that will take your breath away. This adventure is a special opportunity to visit a lesser-known corner of Italy, though that is changing rapidly as the region's stellar reputation continues to spread internationally.

While discovering Southern Italy, our small group will soak up the sense of place in two very different locales before finishing the tour with a night in the charming coastal city of Monopoli. Relax at a *trulli* farm estate in the heart of bucolic Valle d'Itria and then settle in at a historic boutique hotel in urban Baroque beauty Lecce.

The region's cuisine has peasant roots, meaning it always was and still is inspired by what's local and seasonal with an emphasis on vegetables, legumes, olive oil, fresh pasta, and locally made cheeses. Enjoy a week of fabulous meals accompanied by a generous amount of local wine. A long time favorite getaway destination of Italians, Puglia will ignite your senses from the fields of blooming wildflowers to the rich purple primitivo wine to the bright blue expansive sky.



IMAGINE YOURSELF...

Looking back at the coastline at sunset, glass of bubbly in hand

Sampling the best bread in Italy, straight from a giant wood-fired oven

Strolling through ancient white cities and iconic *trulli* buildings

Setting Off from Bari

DAY 1: WEDNESDAY MAY 12

- Taste impeccable olive oil at an ancient family-owned olive estate
- Check into a historic boutique hotel in the heart of gorgeous Lecce

Our tour will begin midday in Bari today. Bari is the capital city of Puglia and a great place to explore on your own if you wish to arrive a night or two early. We will set off from the city with a packed lunch in tow, on our way to Salento, the southern part of the region where we'll be staying in the beautiful city of Lecce.

Midway, we have a special stop in store to dive right into one of the jewel's in Puglia's culinary crown: olive oil. The region is home to millions of olive trees, many of them centuries old, and produces about 40% of all the olive oil in Italy - more than any other region. We're visiting a family-owned masseria, the local word for a farmhouse estate, which is surrounded by ancient olive trees. An immediate immersion into local terroir will do well to establish our sense of place and the passionate owner of the estate will take us on a little tour and then guide us through an educational olive oil tasting... liquid gold indeed!

This afternoon we arrive at our home for the next three nights in the heart of Lecce: Palazzo de Noha Boutique Hotel. This premises was once a children's hospital built at the turn of the 16th century by a nobleman, Francesco de Noha and his wife, Marzia, as an act of charity. The historic buildings have been redesigned and restored with great care by the current owners, keeping in place the monumentality and typical Lecce building elements.

Lecce is undoubtedly the most elegant city of Puglia and one of its main cultural hubs as the capital of the region known as Salento, the southern tip of Puglia. Spending three nights here will be a lot of fun. After we've checked in to the hotel, our charming local guide Michele is meeting us for an early evening stroll, or *passeggiata*, during which he'll introduce us to this dynamic, historic city. Michele is a proud local Puglian, passionate about the history of his region, and we'll see him a lot this week. Our stroll ends at a great local restaurant for a convivial dinner of beautifully prepared local cuisine. Raise your glass to the coming days in Salento!

Meals Packed Lunch, Dinner



MAKING THE LOCAL PASTA SHAPE ORECCHIETTE OR "LITTLE EARS"

The Salento Countryside

DAY 2: THURSDAY MAY 13

- Walk up an appetite as you tour a special local botanical garden
- Enjoy a perfect lunch that keeps on coming in true Italian style

Enjoy the delicious breakfast at Palazzo de Noha as you will each morning of our stay here. Then we are off to spend the better part of the day enjoying the countryside south of Lecce in the heart of Salento. First we're visiting a unique botanical garden for a private guided tour, this is a real Mediterranean garden with an array of plants suited to the specific climate of this region. The cactus garden will be a highlight!

Afterwards, we head deeper into the countryside to visit a farmhouse restaurant that is one of Onward's favorite places to eat in Italy. We're coming here for the sort of Italian lunch that takes up the better part of the day. The farmhouse dates back to the early 1500's and the kitchen turns out ancient Salentese recipes, prepared lovingly and with great attention to the ingredients. Course after course will surely delight you, accompanied by the fantastic wines of Puglia, in an atmosphere reminiscent of the dream you might have of the Southern Italian countryside. After lunch, wander around the gardens surrounding the house, and see if any farm animals wish to say hello, or if you can find the herbs and vegetables that were used to prepare your meal. Back in Lecce, tonight is a free evening.

Meals Breakfast, Dinner

A Traditional Day in Lecce

DAY 3: FRIDAY MAY 14

- Dance to traditional regional music after preparing lunch as a group
- Take time to wander in Lecce, exploring the shops and cafes

Today we are going to learn so much about local tradition: from food, to music, to history and Lecce legends! First of all is a market tour and cooking class: our chef will guide us through the local market, where the group will decide together what to make and purchase the ingredients. After a stop at a highly regarded *caffè* for a pick me up coffee, you're headed to the kitchen to cook and laugh and enjoy time preparing your meal together as a group.

Lunch will be a multi-course affair of the Puglian specialties you have prepared together, paired with excellent regional wines. After lunch, we'll have some special visitors: *pizzica* musicians who will introduce the group to this very important regional folk music and accompanying dance which dates all the way back to the 1400's. Some festive dancing will surely be in order! It's your last evening in Lecce, so enjoy exploring, shopping and strolling in this Baroque gem.

Meals Breakfast, Lunch

“Capital Cities” of Puglia

DAY 4: SATURDAY MAY 15

- Visit a working ceramics factory with fabulous, unique products
- Gather at our farmhouse estate for an introduction to regional wines

This morning we bid farewell to lovely Lecce to make our way north to Masseria Cervarolo, the farmhouse resort where we'll spend the next three nights. On our way there we have plans to visit two important local places: Grottaglie, known as the “ceramics capital” of Puglia, and Ceglie Messapica, known as the province's “food capital.”

Our guide, Michele, will meet us in Grottaglie first to introduce us to the artisanal ceramics tradition that has been practiced here for over one thousand years making use of locally extracted clay. We'll visit an active workshop together and later have some time for souvenir shopping. Then we're on to Ceglie Messapica, known as the gastronomic capital of Puglia (quite a distinction!) and lucky for us, Michele's home town. This is a place of very ancient and proud origins, being one of the main centers of the Messapian civilization, the pre-Roman inhabitants of Southern Puglia. Our visit here will be both tasty and educational: first we're having a very memorable lunch at a salumeria where the fresh products are super tasty and the owner is excited to welcome us as his guests. And then we'll take a nice walk through the pristine old town, dominated by the massive medieval castle and the elegant mother church.

In the afternoon we'll arrive at Masseria Cervarolo, perfectly situated in the bucolic heart of Puglia, a region known as Valle d'Itria. You'll enjoy every chance you get to relax in the tranquil atmosphere of this typical Puglian farmstead or *masseria*. The property was established in the 16th century and has been lovingly cared for and restored over time to become what it is today: an elegant and comfortable country hotel with loads of atmospheric charm, a pool, a bar and a fantastic restaurant.

Take time to settle in and then enjoy a small tour of the grounds, including a look inside the Baroque chapel which has been mentioned as an important pilgrimage site in local records going back centuries. Then we'll dive right into one of the most special of Puglian products: wine! The restaurant's sommelier will guide us in a wine tasting focused on the regional varietals you'll be encountering in the week to come. After the wine tasting, it's time to enjoy a delightful dinner from the masseria's kitchen which is helmed by an accomplished and creative chef who uses seasonal ingredients to pay homage to traditional local recipes.

Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

FEATURING ANCIENT STONE WALLS, LUSH LOCAL PLANTS, ICONIC TRULLI BUILDINGS AND LOVINGLY DECORATED INTERIORS AND COMMUNAL SPACES, MASSERIA CERVAROLO IS A MAGICAL DESTINATION FULL OF PUGLIAN SPIRIT

OnwardTravel.co Based in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and the Hudson Valley, New York

Valle d'Itria Town and Country

DAY 5: SUNDAY MAY 16

- Visit a family-owned winery to learn about their local production
- Soak up the essence of the region as you visit three famous towns

Start your day with a delicious breakfast at Masseria Cervarolo, featuring house baked cakes and a gorgeous spread of “zero kilometer” (aka super locally sourced) products.

There will be time this morning to soak up the country estate vibes of the masseria, as relaxing within the terroir is an essential part of the Puglian experience. For those who wish, a guided bike ride can be arranged this morning with E-bikes as an option.

Depart the masseria just before lunchtime to head to a nearby family-owned winery, where after walking through the grounds we'll sit down for a delightful, fresh lunch of small plates prepared in the “zero kilometer” philosophy and paired with pours of their wines.

After lunchtime we are off to meet Michele in Ostuni, the closest town to our masseria. Known as “the white town,” captivating Ostuni is one of the most iconic whitewashed hilltop towns in the region... replete with Eastern Mediterranean charm, the origins of this settlement date back to the dawn of mankind and Neanderthal civilizations. Michele will guide us through its enchanting alleys and small piazzas, telling us everything about the history and the most interesting sites of this marvelous place. Next we're going to Locorotondo where we'll walk together through another one of the most picturesque towns in central Puglia. This town is characterized by a unique skyline due to the *cummersa* roofs of the houses.

Finally, we'll arrive in Cisternino, home to a beautifully preserved old town featuring narrow lanes, whitewashed houses and the sort of lively piazzas that give you a glimpse into traditional Italian life. But what Cisternino is really known for is its butcher shop restaurants and tonight we'll indulge in a classic local meal of grilled meats - the perfect thing paired with heavily structured local reds like primitivo!

Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



Back to Basics: Bread & Caves

DAY 6: MONDAY MAY 17

- Watch Italy's favorite bread come out of a giant wood-fired oven
- Visit the third oldest city in the world (after Aleppo and Jericho)

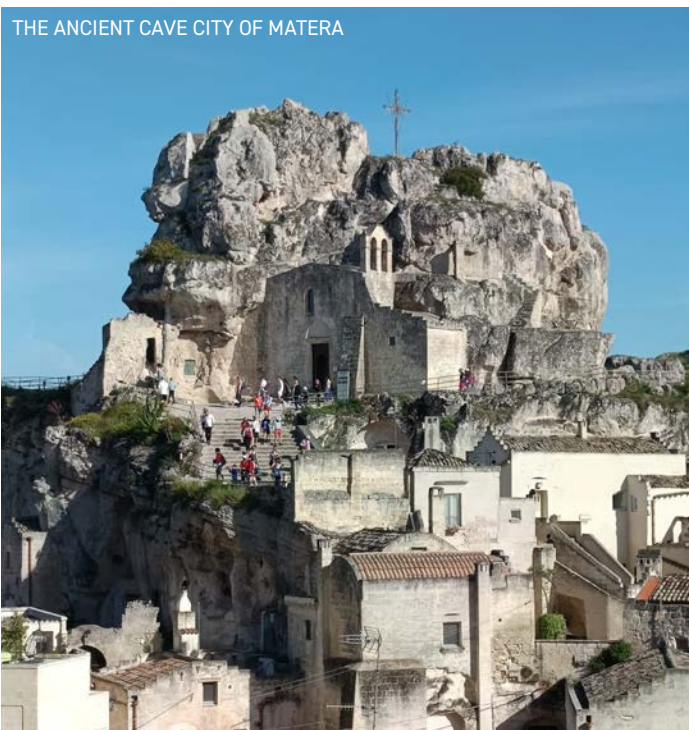
Bread from the small city of Altamura is famous the world over, and this morning we're headed there with our local guide, Michele, to visit a bakery with an ancient oven and learn about the process of making this famous bread. Of course, nothing beats bread fresh from the oven and we'll have plenty of opportunity to sample. Then we'll stroll through town before settling in at a favorite local restaurant for lunch.

After lunch it's time to cross from Puglia into the neighboring province of Basilicata to visit a town that feels like fiction, Matera. Inhabited since the paleolithic period, this is one of the most ancient towns in the world and one of Italy's most impressive UNESCO sites. During our walking tour up and down the windy streets we could explore cave-houses called sassi, churches carved into the rock with magnificent medieval frescoes, and an ancient and ingenious system for the collection of water.

We'll head home to the masseria after visiting Matera, and by the time we arrive it will be early evening. Tonight we'll relax and enjoy one last delightful dinner together in the farmhouse restaurant at Masseria Cervarolo.

Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

THE ANCIENT CAVE CITY OF MATERA



From Burrata to Boats

DAY 7: TUESDAY MAY 18

- Taste burrata cheese exactly as it was intended to be eaten: FRESH!
- Head out on the water for a sunset toast looking back at the coast

Today is our last day in Puglia together and it's going to be epic! There will be time to relax a little bit more at the masseria this morning, and then we're checking out and heading to a dairy farm to experience one of the most iconic treasures of Puglia: burrata cheese! Meet the cheesemakers and learn about their production before we sit down to a delicious light lunch of fresh burrata and local accompaniments.

From the farm we are just a few minutes way from what is perhaps the most famous destination in Puglia: Alberobello. We'll be with Michele one last time today and he will show us around this UNESCO site like no other, the birthplace of the unique *trulli* houses. We'll encounter an ancient rural civilization that has somehow managed not to disappear from this enchanting place.

In the late afternoon we'll arrive at Hotel Palazzo Indelli in seaside Monopoli. A beautiful and historic city, it's a great place for us to spend our last night and breathe in a little bit of sea air. Take a stroll through the city to soak in its authentic "lived in" atmosphere of real Italian life. We'll walk together to the port, still used by working fishermen, to hop on a pair of boats which will take us out into the Adriatic Sea. As the sun sets, let's look back at the coastline, with its ancient fortifications and small pocket beaches, raise a glass and toast to this spectacular peninsula! Back on land, we're headed out to feast as a group one last time at a delicious restaurant near our hotel where we'll surely wish to raise a glass to our travel companions after the fantastic week we've had exploring this special region together.

Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Arrivederci!

DAY 8: WEDNESDAY MAY 19

Transfers to Bari Airport or city center will be arranged today based on traveler's departure times and continued travel plans.

Buon viaggio!

Meals Breakfast

BEGINS	<p>Bari, Italy, on Wednesday, May 12</p> <p>The tour begins with a mid-day pickup from Bari. If you are flying into Bari today (Airport code: BRI), please select a flight that lands before 12pm. Coming early is a great idea and Onward is happy to help you make plans.</p>
ENDS	<p>Monopoli, Italy, on Wednesday, May 19</p> <p>No activities are scheduled today. Transfer provided to Bari Airport or city center.</p>
SUITABILITY & MOBILITY	<p><u>This tour includes walking for 15-30 minutes at a time, plus stairs and cobblestones.</u> Travelers may always opt out of activities they deem too physically challenging but refunds will not be provided. Many of the ancient settlements we will be visiting were built into the existing landscape, so please be prepared for uneven terrain.</p>
TOUR DATES & PRICE	<p>May 12–19, 2027</p> <p><u>Tour Price</u> \$4,800 per traveler, double occupancy Single supplement +\$1,200 per person <i>See below for details for those interested in twin beds</i></p> <p><i>Contact Onward if you are interested in arriving early or extending your stay. Note that air travel is not included and a current passport is required for travel to Italy.</i></p> <p><i>You are welcome to pay by credit card, please add a 3% surcharge.</i></p>
AIR TRAVEL	<p>The tour will start and end with transfers to/from Bari Airport (BRI). Please confirm flight plans with Onward Travel before booking and don't hesitate to contact us if you'd like any assistance finding the right itinerary.</p>

Additional lodging options & pricing

At two of our hotels, Palazzo de Noha and Palazzo Indelli, rooms with twin beds are available. However at Masseria Cervarolo they are not. For travelers who will be sharing a room there are the following options for our three night stay there:

- Share a room with one European Queen bed, slightly larger than a U.S. Queen (160x200cm)
~ For double occupancy, this is the standard double occupancy rate as above
- Share a suite with one European Queen and one single bed *Limited availability*
~ For double occupancy, additional \$170 per traveler
- Share a suite with one European Queen and two single beds *Limited availability*
~ Double occupancy, additional \$280/traveler | Quadruple occupancy, discount \$105/traveler

OR: Have your own room at Masseria Cervarolo and share a two-twin bed room with your roommate at the other hotels for an additional charge of \$480 per traveler.

Trip price includes the following:

- Airport transfers and ground transportation to/from all scheduled activities.
- Three nights accommodations at [Palazzo de Noha Boutique Hotel](#) (Lecce, Italy), three nights at [Masseria Cervarolo](#) (Ostuni, Italy) and one night at [Hotel Palazzo Indelli](#) (Monopoli, Italy).
- Most meals: daily breakfasts, five lunches, and five dinners. We've planned fantastic gourmet experiences with wine included.
- Local experts and guides and an Onward Travel host at your service.
- Activities, tastings, cooking classes, and tours as detailed in the itinerary.

Register now!

Visit onwardtravel.co/trip/puglia to complete the registration form and submit payment.

\$1,500 deposit due upon booking, balance due by February 1, 2027.



The Onward Travel Tour Director for this trip is Molly

Molly Crist founded Onward Travel with her sister and has been leading tours for over a decade.

Molly lives on her family's apple orchard in New York's Hudson Valley with her husband and their three young children. She enjoys gardening, cooking, and hiking. Molly loves making memories with her travelers!

Please take note of the following useful information, and view more at www.onwardtravel.co/letsgo



Once Onward Travel receives your registration form, we will send you an **invoice** with instructions to pay the **deposit**.



If you'd like to purchase **trip insurance**, we suggest Travelex. For more info, call them at 800-228-9792 or visit www.travelex.com and refer to location number 32-0704.



Four to six weeks before the tour **we will mail you a packet** with a packing list, traveler directory and other useful info.



Make sure you know where your **passport** is now! For travel to Europe, it should be valid for three months past your return date.



Onward Travel's cancellation policy in a nutshell:

- \$250 of your initial deposit is nonrefundable
- Cancel within 90 days and the full deposit is nonrefundable
- Cancel within 60 days and 50% of total trip fee is nonrefundable
- Cancel within 30 days and the full trip fee is nonrefundable

See the full *Terms & Conditions* at www.onwardtravel.co/terms



Get in Touch!

Contact Onward Travel with questions or special requests:
letsgo@onwardtravel.co
845-293-2729

