

A custom adventure planned exclusively for Dave & Deb Geigert and their friends:

THE MAGICAL LAND OF

Puglia

A Culinary & Cultural Tour in Italy

May 19—26, 2025

ONWARD TRAVEL ✈️

EST 2014



OLIVE TREES HAVE BEEN GROWING IN PUGLIA FOR OVER THREE THOUSAND YEARS

Deb & Dave Geigert are thrilled to travel to Puglia, Italy, with a group of their nearest and dearest as they celebrate their Golden 50th Wedding Anniversary in May, 2025... and you're invited!

This region of Southern Italy is a place with a fascinating history, 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 ancient 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. We'll have local guides interpreting the area and enriching our experience throughout the tour, and your group will be accompanied and looked after by Barbara, a fun and friendly Onward Travel tour host who hails from Tuscany.

While discovering Southern Italy, your small group will stay in two interesting and different locales: a *trulli* farm estate in the heart of Valle d'Itria and a palace 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. A long time favorite getaway destination of Italians, Puglia will ignite your senses from the rich purple Primitivo wine to the bright blue expansive sky.



IMAGINE YOURSELF...

Admiring seaside cliffs from a catamaran, glass of bubbly in hand

Sampling the world's best burrata cheese

Strolling through ancient white cities and iconic *trulli* buildings

Arrival in Puglia

DAY 1: MONDAY MAY 19

- Gather at your farmhouse estate for an introduction to regional wines
- Toast your traveling companions over a delicious multi-course dinner

Upon your arrival at Bari International Airport a private transfer will whisk you off to your home for the next four nights: Masseria Cervarolo. Relax this afternoon 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! Our hosts 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.

Please note, on the evenings you'll be dining at the masseria, your meal is included in the tour package but beverages are not. Wine and other beverages are included with all other group meals on the itinerary.

Meals 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



Valle d'Itria Town and Country

DAY 2: TUESDAY MAY 20

- Start your day with a winery tour and typical local lunch
- Get the lay of the land as you visit three famous Puglian 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. After a relaxing morning we'll meet up with our charming guide, Michele, to spend the day together. A born and raised Puglian, quite devoted to his captivating home region, Michele will not only prove a great source of knowledge and local insight this week but he'll easily become your new friend, too! First, we are headed to a boutique winery in the heart of Canale di Pirro, one of the most picturesque wine areas in all of Puglia, characterized by a unique microclimate that makes it special not just for Puglia's famous reds but also for whites. You will visit the vine-yards, the production area and the cellar and then sit down to enjoy a tasting of six wines paired with selected specialties for a light lunch in the masseria.

The rest of the day we're going to spend exploring some of the small towns that have given Puglia its magnetic reputation. First, Michele will lead us on an "off the beaten path" visit in Alberobello, a UNESCO site like no other, birthplace of the unique trulli houses, and we'll encounter the ancient rural civilization that has somehow managed not to disappear from this enchanting place. From Alberobello we will travel on to Locorotondo to walk together through one of the most picturesque towns in all of the Valle d'Itria, the quintessential landscape of Puglia. This town is characterized by a unique skyline given by the cummersa roofs of the houses.

After Locorotondo, Michele will bring us to 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. After we've gotten the lay of the land it will be time for you to head out to explore and have dinner on your own. Cisternino is famous for grilled meats served at butcher shop restaurants around the old town, and before parting ways Michele will provide guidance on where to go and how to order. Later in the evening we'll return together to nearby Masseria Cervarolo.

Meals Breakfast, Lunch

From the Sea to the Kitchen

DAY 3: WEDNESDAY MAY 21

- Sail along the dramatic Adriatic coastline on a private catamaran
- Roll up your sleeves in the kitchen to cook at the masseria

Polignano a Mare is one of the most iconic and thrilling towns of the Adriatic coast, looking out at the sea from the top of vertical limestone cliffs, complete with little caves and grottoes and pocket-like beaches which pop up along the shoreline. This morning we're headed out to see Polignano and the stunning surrounding landscape from the water, on board a private 39-foot Catamaran. We'll pop some bubbles and those are up for it can take a swim in the lovely blue water of the Adriatic sea.

After the morning on the water, let's visit the town for some free time for lunch. Enjoy an artisanal gelato as you stroll the sunny streets and if you're up for it you should definitely try an octopus sandwich - a famous culinary treat of Polignano a Mare!

Late afternoon, back at Masseria Cervarolo and after a little time to rest, you'll meet the chef in the atmospheric kitchen laboratory where you'll work together to prepare some traditional Puglian recipes. After your cooking class, enjoy a casual and fun dinner together.

Meals Breakfast, Dinner

Cheese & Bread & Caves, oh my!

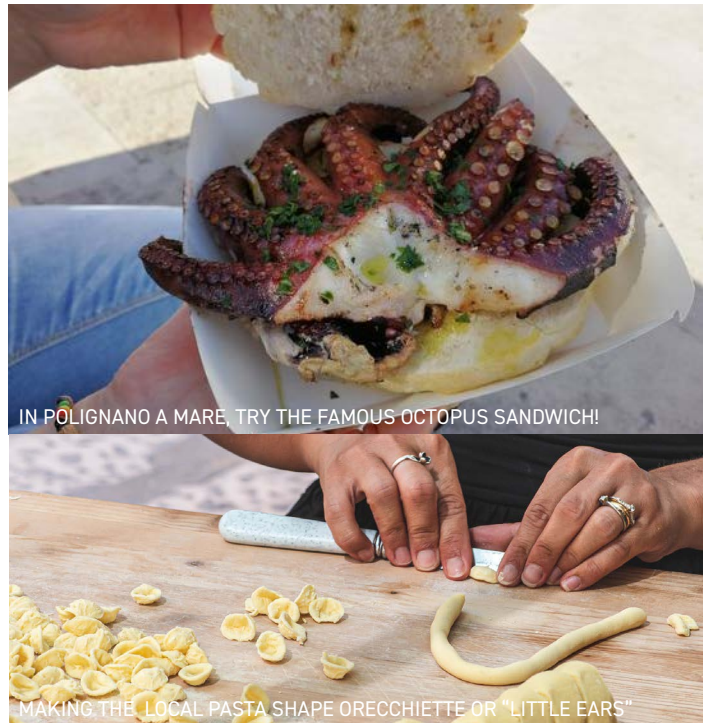
DAY 4: THURSDAY MAY 22

- Taste some of the best bread and cheese in the world
- 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 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. Did you know that another wonder of the culinary world, burrata cheese, is also a Puglian export? After we've spent time with the bakers its time to visit the cheesemakers and learn about the process of making burrata and other types of locally beloved cheeses. Then we're headed to their cheese bar in the heart of a nearby forest for a special lunch unlike any other... Incredible local cheeses and typical traditional dishes accompanied by plenty of local wine.

After lunch in a fairytale forest it's time to cross from Puglia into the neighboring province of Basilicata to visit a town that also 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



IN POLIGNANO A MARE, TRY THE FAMOUS OCTOPUS SANDWICH!

MAKING THE LOCAL PASTA SHAPE ORECCHIETTE OR "LITTLE EARS"

Ancient Cities, Ancient Olives

DAY 5: FRIDAY MAY 23

- Taste olive oil from an olive grove dating back to the Ancient Romans
- Arrive at your palace hotel in the heart of elegant Lecce

This morning we will bid farewell to Masseria Cervarolo and once we've checked out we're off to meet Michele in nearby Ostuni. 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 narrow and enchanting alleys, telling us everything about the history and the most interesting sites of this marvelous town.

DAILY ITINERARY The Magical Land of Puglia May 19–26, 2025

After free time for shopping, exploring and lunch we'll venture into the countryside to visit an ancient fortified masseria surrounded by a magnificent olive grove dating back to Roman times. At the end of an educational tour of the estate, you'll have a professional EVO oil tasting. From here it's about an hour's drive south to the Baroque jewel box of a city known as Lecce. We'll spend the next three nights in the heart of Lecce at Patria Palace Hotel, a thoughtfully and beautifully designed property in a renovated 18th century palace, built for a noble family by one of the most important regional architects of the time, Mauro Manieri, who in fact designed many of the most important Baroque buildings in the city.

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. This evening is yours to venture out into the dazzling limestone lanes of town, which you'll find full of restaurants, lively piazzas, boutiques, wine bars and plenty of other delights for you to discover.

Meals Breakfast, Lunch

A Day of Friendship & Love

DAY 6: SATURDAY MAY 24

- Dance to traditional regional music after preparing lunch with friends
- Celebrate the special fifty year marriage anniversary of Deb & Dave

Today is a very special day: Dave & Deb's 50th Anniversary! We are going to pack it full of fun, laughter, great memories and delicious food and drink. Let's get the celebration started with a market tour and hands on 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 cafe 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 couples dances will surely be in order!

Take some time to relax this afternoon and in the evening a beautiful gourmet dinner *al fresco* will be arranged, so Dave and Deb can raise a glass to commemorate this special occasion surrounded by their beloved friends.

Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

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



Salento Town and Country

DAY 7: SUNDAY MAY 25

- Enjoy a lunch that keeps on coming in true Italian Sunday style
- Explore the fascinating highlights of lovely Lecce with our guide

Take it easy this morning: sleep in, take a stroll, do a little shopping. For lunch you're headed out of town to the most picturesque farmhouse restaurant for the sort of Italian Sunday 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 Salento 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.

Once you've returned to Lecce, walk off the meal with Michele who will show you some of the ancient history of the city which is sometimes called "the Florence of the South" or rather "the Florence of baroque art." With its aristocratic old town characterized by impressive Roman ruins, scenographic squares, magnificent Baroque churches and palaces, Lecce is a place you will enjoy exploring. Spend the rest of the evening together how you like - Onward will be happy to help you make a restaurant reservation, or maybe an evening at a local wine bar will be just the right way for the group to toast the wonderful week you've had together.

Meals Breakfast, Lunch

Arrivederci!

DAY 8: MONDAY MAY 26

Transfers will be arranged today based on traveler's departure and continued travel plans. *Buon viaggio!*

Meals Breakfast

Trip Essentials

BEGINS	<p>Ostuni, Italy, on Monday, May 19</p> <p>The tour begins at 5pm at Masseria Cervarolo. Airport transfer organized per your arriving flight.</p>
ENDS	<p>Lecce, Italy, on Monday, May 26</p> <p>No activities are scheduled today. Airport transfer organized per your departing flight.</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 19–26, 2025</p> <p>Tour Price \$4,025 per traveler</p> <p><i>Based on 11 travelers</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) or Brindisi Airport (BDS) or talk to Onward to make a different plan.</p> <p>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>

PERFECT BURRATA CHEESE FROM CASEIFICIO DICECCA



Trip price includes the following:

- Airport transfers and ground transportation to/from all scheduled activities.
- Four nights accommodations at [Masseria Cervarolo](#) (Ostuni, Italy) and three nights at [Patria Palace Hotel](#) (Lecce, Italy).
- Most meals: daily breakfasts, five lunches, and four dinners. We've planned fantastic gourmet experiences with wine and cocktails included unless noted otherwise.
- 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/geigert to complete the registration form and submit payment.

\$1,000 deposit due upon booking, balance due by February 1, 2025.



**The Onward
Travel Tour
Director
for this
trip is
Barbara**

Barbara Bandinelli is a tour guide in her home city of Florence and Onward has been working with her there for so many years we've lost count! Her fun and interesting Florence walking tours are always a highlight of our travelers' Tuscan experience.

Barbara considers herself a true Italian who loves "to talk, to chat, to eat, to drink" and she can't wait to enjoy life together in Italy with you!

TRAVELER INFORMATION The Magical Land of Puglia

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**.



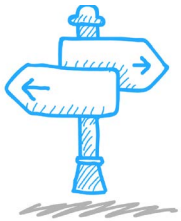
If you'd like to purchase **trip insurance**, we suggest Travelex. For more info, call them at 800-228-9792 or visit www.travelex.com and refer to location number 32-0704.



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 Mexico, it only needs to be valid until 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](http://www.onwardtravel.co/terms)

Get in Touch!

Contact Onward Travel with questions or special requests:
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AN AERIAL VIEW OF POLIGNANO A MARE