

THE MAGICAL
LAND OF

Puglia

A Culinary & Cultural Tour in Southern Italy

April 7—15, 2025

ONWARD TRAVEL ✈

EST 2014



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

Onward Travel is thrilled to return to Puglia in 2025! This region of Southern Italy is an ancient place with some of the most interesting and unique food, history, landscapes and architecture 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 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.

While discovering Southern Italy, your small group will stay in two interesting and different locales before finishing the tour with a night in Puglia's dynamic capital city, Bari. Relax at a *trulli* farm estate in the heart of Valle d'Itria and then settle in at an atmospheric design 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. 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 APRIL 7

- 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.

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 APRIL 8

- 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 vineyards, 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 APRIL 9

- 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 APRIL 10

- 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



Ancient Cities, Ancient Olives

DAY 5: FRIDAY APRIL 11

- Taste olive oil from an olive grove dating back to the Ancient Romans
- Experience a fine dining meal in a fifteenth century cloisters structure

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.

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.

Tonight we have a special gastronomic experience in store. We're headed to a fine dining restaurant in the gorgeous setting of a 15th century Dominican cloister for a tasting menu with wine pairings. And what makes it even better is that the chef is a longtime friend of Onward Travel who has now returned from the Michelin-starred restaurant in the Prosecco region where we got to know him to his native Puglia to bring his creative and delicious ideas to this new restaurant, Gimmi, where a special evening is most certainly in store.

Meals Breakfast, Dinner

A Traditional Day in Lecce

DAY 6: SATURDAY APRIL 12

- Dance to traditional regional music after preparing lunch as a group
- Explore the fascinating highlights of lovely Lecce with our guide

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 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 dancing will surely be in order!

Later this afternoon we'll 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. Carry that spirit of discovery on into a free evening in this wonderful city!

Meals Breakfast, Lunch



Sunday Lunch to Remember

DAY 7: SUNDAY APRIL 13

- 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 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.

Tonight you have a free evening in Lecce to enjoy as you wish.

Meals Breakfast, Lunch



CERAMICS IN GROTTAGLIE

“Capital Cities” of Puglia

DAY 7: MONDAY APRIL 14

- For lunch, eat your way through our guide's home town
- Arrive in Puglia's dynamic and tradition-steeped capital city

This morning we bid farewell to lovely Lecce to make our way back up to Bari, the capital city of the region. 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, as we enjoy and admire the pristine old town, dominated by the massive medieval castle and the elegant mother church, while we tour selected charcuteries, bakeries and cafes with our local friend!

In the afternoon we'll arrive at Grande Albergo delle Nazioni, a five-star hotel on the waterfront in Bari. Take a stroll through the nearby historic city center to see the traditional life of Puglia on full display. This evening we're headed out to feast as a group one last time at an upscale restaurant near our hotel where we'll enjoy a tasting menu with wine pairings as we toast our travel companions to the fantastic week we've had exploring this magical place together.

Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Arrivederci!

DAY 8: TUESDAY APRIL 15

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

Meals Breakfast

Trip Essentials

BEGINS	<p>Ostuni, Italy, on Monday, April 7</p> <p>The tour begins at 5pm at Masseria Cervarolo (75 min. from Bari Airport, 45 minutes from Brindisi Airport) Airport transfer organized per your arriving flight.</p>
ENDS	<p>Bari, Italy, on Tuesday, April 15</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>April 7–15, 2025</p> <p><u>Tour Price</u> \$4,450 per traveler, double occupancy Single supplement +\$830 per person Twin bed option +\$400 per person</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>



Trip price includes the following:

- Airport transfers and ground transportation to/from all scheduled activities.
- Four nights accommodations at [Masseria Cervarolo](#) (Ostuni, Italy) three nights at [Pollicastro Boutique Hotel](#) (Lecce, Italy) and one night at [Grande Albergo delle Nazioni](#) (Bari, 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/puglia to complete the registration form and submit payment.

\$1,500 deposit due upon booking, balance due by January 15, 2025.



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

Katerina Clauhs Dhand founded Onward Travel along with her sister, Molly, and has been hosting our tours for about a decade (hard to believe!).

Kat has lived on three continents and traveled extensively throughout the world. She especially loves to explore architecture, art, nature and wine & spirits on her tours. Kat lives in Philadelphia with her husband, they have two young children and a dog.

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**.



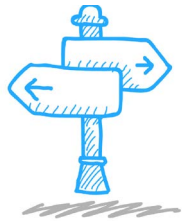
If you'd like to purchase **trip insurance**, we suggest Travelex. For more info, call them at 800-228-9792 or visit www.travelex.com and refer to location number 32-0704.



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 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](http://www.onwardtravel.co/terms) at www.onwardtravel.co/terms



Get in Touch!

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



AN AERIAL VIEW OF POLIGNANO A MARE