

CULTURAL WALKING TOUR

Puglia

Matera to Lecce

CLASSIC JOURNEYS
THE WORLD'S FINEST WALKING TOURS



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*Classic Journeys
provides unbeatable
access to experiences
around the globe.”*

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TRAVEL + LEISURE

The Rustic 'Heel' of Italy's Boot

When we ask our Italian guides where they'd most like to take our friends who think they know Italy, we get one response: Puglia. And then they use their hands to paint a vista of gnarled olive trees silhouetted against a lapis lazuli sea. To express the amazing sunlight. To sketch the saw-toothed skyline of a village comprised entirely of "trulli"—the conical stone roofs unique to the region. You should see them describe the food you'll find—pasta from locally grown wheat, sea-fresh fish, peppery olive oil. Italians love the heel of their boot and it's easy to see why. Especially since it's also where you're as likely to find a Baroque city as a family of shepherds tending 500 sheep. Best of all, Puglia passes the most important Classic Journeys test—it offers fine leisurely walking, elegant accommodations, and a glimpse into a region and culture that's not quite like any you've encountered before.

The Classic Journeys Difference

- ACTIVE HIKING & WALKING
- LOCAL WELL-CONNECTED GUIDES
- PREMIERE HOTELS
- FOODIE FOCUSED
- HANDCRAFTED TRIP DESIGN
- MORE IS INCLUDED

What's Included

- All breakfasts, 4 lunches (1 cooking instruction), 3 dinners
- Full-time experienced guide(s) who are with you throughout the trip and handle behind-the-scenes logistics
- Admissions to tastings, historic sites and other scheduled events as noted in the detailed daily itinerary
- Gratuities for hotels, meals, and baggage
- All land transportation during the trip
- Award-winning boutique hotels that provide you unlimited access to the people and places, culture and history you came to experience

Above & Beyond Benefits

→ PERFECT PAIRINGS DINNERS

A special dinner prepared by one of our favorite chefs with a procession of wines tailored to each course.

→ WINE ON US

In many regions, we uncork wonderful local wines at every dinner, compliments of Classic Journeys.

→ INVISIBLE CHECK-IN

When your group arrives, we whisk you and your bags to your room immediately. No waiting – no tipping.

→ PRIVILEGED ACCESS EVENTS

One-of-a-kind access to remarkable people, places and activities arranged just for you.

Terrain

Easy to moderate on good trails and coastal paths. At your option, up to 2 to 3 hours of walking per day, with a mini-van usually in support.

DAY 1 »

Savelletri (Brindisi)

The Baroque city of Lecce is justifiably known as 'the Florence of the South'. You'll begin here, saving your in-depth exploration of the city as a punctuation for the end of the week. Today, you're headed into Puglia's picturesque countryside as you wind through olive groves along the heel of Italy's boot. Your destination has been in demand for more than 2,000 years. Between green farm fields and the rocky coast of the Adriatic Sea lies the perfectly-sited location the ancient Romans chose to build their small but strategically important city of Egnazia.

On foot at eye level, see for yourself why the Romans and others found this area so desirable. Stretch your legs on a scenic walk through the countryside, passing 800-year-old olive groves, stacked dry stone country walls, and cultivated farmland bursting with seasonal vegetables that include broccoli, pumpkin, and Swiss chard. Your walk leads to prehistoric cave dwellings where you'll enjoy an aperitivo in a truly unique and authentic setting.

MEALS: D

OVERNIGHT: SAVELLETRI

DAY 2 »

Matera

Today you'll head to Matera, passing through the Valle d'Itria countryside, known for its rolling hills, olive groves, quaint villages and iconic trulli architecture. The best way to approach Matera is on foot in order to allow it to reveal itself to you little by little. First a glimpse over a ridge here and then a peak along a canyon there. Your guide follows scenic footpaths along Parco delle Murgia's plateau before making a gradual descent into its canyon, past ancient cave dwellings no longer inhabited but with jaw-dropping views of Matera from across the river at its base. There you cross a scenic suspension bridge and walk up and into the town for your first in person views of the town so beautiful it was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

After time to relax, eat lunch in any of the quaint trattorias and take in some shopping, join your guide for an eye level exploration of this unique and historic city. Thousands of houses and some churches have been excavated in the soft tufa sandstone where people have lived in caves since prehistoric times. Learn how some of the homes have been restored and converted into little museums where many of the tools, furniture and kitchen have been kept as they were over 200 years ago.

MEALS: B, D

OVERNIGHT: MATERA

DAY 3 »

Matera / Altamura

In the land around Altamura the farmers live a very simple life. Their houses are draped with tomato vines that are hung out to dry and then covered in olive oil infused with oregano. Many of them still carry their bread to the communal oven to bake. Known as Pane di Altamura, it's the only bread in Italy with a Denominazione d'Origine Protetta (DOP), an E.U. designation to protect it from being co-opted by inferior ingredients. For thousands of years travelers have been marveling at its deliciousness and the Roman poet Horace even described it as the "best bread in the world." You'll walk through this tapestry of life yourself this morning on the way to the farm of our friend, Maria.

Arriving at the farm, you'll be greeted by Maria and her family. Together, they tend to a flock of over 500 sheep, and every afternoon they return from the fields to make cheese - fresh and seasoned - that they keep in the cellar and share with you. They also have dozens of pigs, from eight to 400 pounds, from which they create special delicacies. After an exploration of the farm, you'll get the 'Only with Classic Journeys' opportunity to visit their large country kitchen, drink their homemade wine and prepare lunch with your hosts. The hands-on and informal cooking instruction includes local specialties like free range organic lamb,

festively stuffed peppers, and mouthwatering cheese cake. Buon appetito! Good news, your deliciously authentic lunch comes with no guilt as you can walk off the calories on a scenic footpath.

Make sure to venture out at night in Matera. The Sassi (the ancient part of the city) are already beautiful in the daytime, but seeing the troglodyte dwellings and their light tufa stone illuminated by candles and lanterns is something else entirely and really otherworldly.

MEALS: B, L

OVERNIGHT: MATERA

DAY 4 »

Alberobello / Lecce

As they say, necessity is the mother of invention. And so it is in nearby Alberobello, an incredibly picturesque village where the houses have special roofs. These trulli were built with thousands of pieces of limestone placed together one by one in a conical shape, without using concrete. As you walk the cobblestone streets, your guide shares stories and anecdotes of how in the 15th century the Kingdom of Naples imposed tributes on each new urban settlement. This led to an ingenious idea by the locals; to build their homes in such a way that they could be demolished with ease whenever the king's delegate was about to collect taxes. The look of the village is unique and fantastic, as if from a fairy tale book. Take in the views as you walk through the village with the opportunity to explore on your own the charming little shops built right inside these unique stone huts.

Midday, continue to a masseria, an old country estate that has been carefully restored by the modern-day members of an ancient family. The scenic courtyards and manicured gardens are the perfect setting for a memorable alfresco lunch of local country specialties. The zero kilometer and farm to table food movement started in Italy in the mid-1990's about the same time as we began exploring at Classic Journeys. And today's feast is a mouth-watering parade of dishes that reflect that, including homemade tagliatelle pasta with the freshest pesto basil and other herbs picked right from the garden. This afternoon, enjoy a guided walk through the estate's private olive tree plantation with trees that are more than 1,000 years old.

MEALS: B, L

OVERNIGHT: LECCE

DAY 5 »

Otranto / Lecce

Channel your inner Ottoman on a cinematic coastal walk. With the brilliant blue sea at your right, your footpath leads from Porto Grande and traces the coast around Punta Faci, the eastern most point in Italy, past the Torre del Serpe lighthouse that dates to Roman times, to Punta Ora and ultimately into the walled town of Otranto. The walk is not just beautiful, its historically fascinating too, as your guide shares the story of its Ottoman invasion in 1480.

Midday, walk through the rocky and wild landscape, halfway between the green hills and blue sea, with no other people around for miles. Your walk passes ancient watch towers overlooking the sea, often intersects shepherds watching over their cows, sheep and goats that graze freely in the wild Mediterranean scrub and culminates at an ancient agriturismo. Here, your hosts are waiting for you with an 'Only with Classic Journeys' experience, a specially prepared multi-course lunch with wine pairings from the estate.

Later in the day, there's ample time in Lecce for an afternoon visit. The entire historical center is packed with palaces and churches built in Baroque style, rich with decorations and sculptures carved from the famous stone that is soft and light and gives an incredible look to the facades, especially when illuminated at night. As part of your walk, you'll also be able to see the almost completely intact Roman amphitheater.

MEALS: B, L

OVERNIGHT: LECCE

DAY 6 »

Gallipoli / Lecce

Gallipoli is known for its gracious old center and lively fish market. On foot you can get eye to eye with the fishermen and their catch as it comes in daily. While here, you'll also enjoy a fascinating journey underground to explore an old "frantoio," an historic press used to produce the olive oil that was of the highest demand throughout all of Europe in the 17th and 18th centuries.

The setting for lunch is at the beautiful farmhouse of a landscape architect and his wife who have restored it with care. The same wealthy family owns many acres surrounding the house so you'll also enjoy a countryside walk along the little 'white roads', the gravel lanes that wind through the olive groves to another family member's home.

Our friend is a noted collector of plants, flowers, medicinal herbs and small trees for the last 40 years. They're all on display in the beautiful greenhouse which is usually only seen in architecture and gardening magazines. With your gracious host, wander through the property listening to fascinating stories about its history and the varieties of plants grown there.

MEALS: B, L, D

OVERNIGHT: LECCE

DAY 7 »

Lecce / Brindisi

Enjoy a leisurely morning lingering over your *colazione* (breakfast) or wander around town to explore on your own. Perhaps you'd like to stroll through the old center to indulge in another espresso or gelato.

Late morning, you'll head to Brindisi airport to part company as you travel onward or extend your time in southern Italy.

MEALS: B

Tour Hotels



[Borgo Egnazia](#)

A whitewashed seaside compound, this chic property is designed as a Mediterranean village. Elegant rooms decorated in shades of white amplify Puglia's sun. The property offers indoor and outdoor pools, a terrific spa and a range of dining options.

NIGHTS: 1 nights



[Aquatio Cave Luxury Hotel & Spa](#)

Aquatio Cave Luxury Hotel & Spa is an enchanting 5-star property located in Matera, one of the world's oldest cities. The luxurious rooms have been expertly designed in the ancient caves and enhanced with modern amenities for an unforgettable stay.

NIGHTS: 2 nights



[Patria Palace Hotel](#)

Originally a princely palace built in the 17th century, this prestigious 5-star hotel has been restored, preserving its original beauty while adding every modern comfort. Each of the hotel rooms is personalized with original fresco paintings.

NIGHTS: 3 nights

Arrival & Departure

→ ARRIVAL DETAILS

START LOCATION: **Lobby of Patria Palace**
START CITY: **Lecce**
START TIME: **1:00 PM**

→ DEPARTURE DETAILS

END LOCATION: **Brindisi airport**
END CITY: **Brindisi**
END TIME: **1:30 PM**