

Basilicata & Apulia: the Heel of the Italian Boot

An 8-day cycling tour

Tour Code: ITBASPUG02C



Enjoy a week of cycling in the heel of the Italian boot, surrounded by rolling hills covered with olive groves, vineyards and oak forests. You cycle through sunny valleys, small villages, past old farmhouses and enjoy local delicacies and good wines. The journey begins in Basilicata, in Matera and Alberobello, both on the list of UNESCO World Heritage. You continue cycling to the southern Puglia with its sandy beaches, dunes and many nature reserves. It is the area of the old Messapi civilizations, rock settlements and castles. You will reach the Itria Valley, a karst area, also called the Valley of the 'Trulli' because of the thousands of limestone structures (named in Italian trullo), which are characterized by a conical roof and are often decorated with primitive, Christian or magical symbols. The last days are dedicated to the Salento and this means sun, sea, wind and the remarkable nature of this strip of land, enclosed between two seas. You are immersed in the southern atmosphere of the picturesque towns and villages, where language, music and local festivals still exhibit traces of the Magna Grecia. Here is also the capital of the southern Italian baroque, the beautiful town of Lecce. Beauty, sun, a rich cultural past, deep-rooted traditions, delicious Mediterranean cuisine and especially the warmth and hospitality of its inhabitants will make this an unforgettable holiday.



Program in short:

1. Arrival at Matera
2. A loop to visit Altamura (59 km / 37 mi)
3. Matera - Alberobello (69 km / 43 mi)
4. Loop Alberobello - Cisternino - Castellana Grotte (40 km / 25 mi)
5. Alberobello - Ostuni (45 km / 28 mi)
6. Ostuni - Otranto (45 km / 28 mi + 70 km / 44 mi by train)
7. Otranto loop (45 km / 28 mi)
8. Departure

Tour Dates:

Self guided tour: Daily from March the end of November. The best cycle climate is in Springtime and Autumn

Group tour dates: on request

Participants:

Self guided tour minimum 2 persons

Group tour minimum 6 persons

Level: 2

Easy to medium. Flat landscape alternated with some hills, but along the shore mostly flat. The climbs are short. Cycle experience is needed.

Daily distances between 45 km / 28 miles and 69 km / 43 miles.

Total distance: 308 km / 191 miles

Total ascent/descent: +1.660m - 2.020m

Program day by day**Day 1 Arrival at Matera**

Matera has gained international fame for its ancient town, the "Sassi di Matera" (meaning stones of Matera). The Sassi originate from a prehistoric (troglodyte) settlement, and are suspected to be some of the first human settlements in Italy. The Sassi are houses dug into the tuff rock itself, which is characteristic of Basilicata and Apulia. Many of these "houses" are really only caverns, and the streets in some parts of the Sassi often are located on the rooftops of other houses. There are also many baroque squares, where you can enjoy a good glass of wine on one of the many terraces.

Overnight with breakfast in Matera

Day 2 A loop to visit Altamura

You cross the Murge plateau and reach Altamura, famous for its impressive cathedral and the special bread (focaccia). Take the time to cycle through the beautiful centre and to taste the focaccia, baked in an old wood oven. You cycle back to Matera and then enjoy a cappuccino or gelato on one of the baroque squares.

Overnight with breakfast in Matera

Distance: 59 km / 37 miles

Level: moderate

Day 3 Matera - Alberobello

You will pass through the small villages of Gioia del Colle and Noci and on to Alberobello, the capital town of "trulli", an UNESCO world heritage site. A Trullo is a traditional Apulian stone dwelling with a conical roof. The style of construction is specific for the Itria Valley (in Italian: Valle d'Itria), in the Murge area of the Italian region of Apulia (in Italian: Puglia). Trulli were generally constructed as dwellings or storehouses.

Traditionally they were built without any cement or mortar, thus avoiding taxation.

Accommodation in the historical centre in a trullo dating from 1600. Visit of the city and overnight stay.

Overnight with breakfast in Alberobello

Distance: 69 km / 42 miles

Level: moderate

Day 4 Loop Alberobello - Cisternino - Castellana grotte - Alberobello

Today you make a ride towards the Itria Valley, a lovely landscape with many trees, authentic villages ... and the magical Trulli. Valley is actually not a proper name, because it is not a typical valley in a mountain landscape, but the valley is formed by karst subsidence. You pass Cisternino, which has the typical construction for this region: an old historic centre, consisting of whitewashed stone buildings with cool, shaded interiors, a maze of alleys and many churches. You climb out of the Itria Valley to arrive at Castellana Grotte, where [large caves](#) can be seen. You return to Alberobello for your overnight stay in the Trullo.

Overnight with breakfast in Alberobello

Distance: 45 km / 28 miles

Level: easy

Day 5 Ostuni the White City

You cycle through the Selva di Fasano and follow the Adriatic coast to Ostuni, an architectural gem. It is called the 'White City' because of its whitewashed houses and churches.

Overnight with breakfast in Ostuni

Distance: 45 km / 28 miles

Level: easy

Day 6 Ostuni - Otranto

After breakfast, you take the train and go to the beautiful baroque city of Lecce. Here you can see beautiful baroque facades of churches and palaces. You can taste the delicious Puccia (a local bread stuffed with salami and vegetables) or a pasticciotto (pie). After your visit of Lecce, you ride along the coastal road to Otranto.

Overnight with breakfast in Otranto

Distance: 45 km / 28 miles + 70 km/ 44 miles by train

Level: easy

Day 7 A loop: Otranto - Porto Badisco - S. Cesarea - Otranto

Otranto has a nice old walled centre with a castle. A masterpiece is the mysterious mosaic in the Romanesque cathedral. The route follows the typical southern Italian jagged rocky coast. The sun and the stunning views are unique in this area where once the Turks and Greeks landed.

Overnight with breakfast in Otranto

Distance: 45 km / 28 miles

Level: easy

Day 8 End of tour after breakfast

Departure after breakfast

Hotels:

*** or **** stars hotel and Trulli houses

Prices per person 2024

Standard hotels

In double room € 950

In single room € 1.300

Half Board supplement on request

Extra night in Matera in double room: on request

Extra night in Matera in single room: on request

Op aanvraag is een hotelupgrade mogelijk

Bike rent:

Hybrid bike rental 7 days € 120

Electric bike or gravel racing bike €240

Carbon racing bike €240

Helmet €10

Water bottle €5

Extra on request:

- Guided tour in the Sassi from € 25 p.p. duration 2 hours (min. 4 persons)
A tour through the Sassi district discovering the typical courtyards surrounded by cave-houses.
- Wine tour Matera from € 35 p.p. duration 3 hrs (4 persons). An escorted tour through the Sassi district along beautiful paths and cave-houses. The visit includes two rock churches, a monastery and a wine cellar, all in the caves. You will learn how wine was processed in caves until the end of XIX century. You will taste 3 Lucanian wines.
- Transfer Bari airport - Matera (min 2 persons) € 50 p.p.
Transfer Otranto -Bari airport on request
Transfer from Brindisi APT to Matera: 120 € (min 2 pax)

Included in **self-guided tour:**

- 7 overnight stays with breakfast in standard or deluxe hotels
- Luggage transportation
- Gps tracks and trip notes
- Back up service

In the tour is not included:

- The tourist taxes, which has to be paid directly in the hotel
- The Medical/Luggage insurance, which we highly recommend
- Drinks, lunches and dinners
- Everything not mentioned under 'included in the tour'

The bikes:

The bikes (Hybrid trekking) are delivered with odometer, pannier, repair kit and extra inner tube. Gears: shimano Deore / Alivio 27/24

Bikes for rent: Hybrid Bikes, Road Bikes, Gravel Bikes or Ebikes



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