

# The Magic of Old Italy

## Experience Puglia

Between the tranquil landscape dotted with olive groves, the warm sea air, and the charm of its locals, Puglia captures the true magic of old Italy. The history, landscape and architecture reflect the myriad of civilizations that were drawn to the region because of its influential port towns and position on the Adriatic; the Greeks, Romans, Venetians, Normans and Spanish all left their mark here. Our routes feature sublime coastal roads, whitewashed towns, fortified farms, and distinctive stone trulli, while the culinary highlights include fresh seafood, local wine and olive oil. What's more, given its relative underdevelopment, Puglia offers some of the best and quietest biking we know.

### THE B&R DIFFERENCE

"B&R does it right in every way; the hotels, biking routes, tours, variety, and especially the guides! They even manage to find hidden treasures and people unavailable to the typical tourist. You could never design a better trip than the people at B&R!"

*Kristin Turner*

### WHY TRAVEL WITH B&R?

We know any region is best understood through its people. B&R has been in Puglia for years and we are still making new friends. (It's hard not to in Puglia—the people are so welcoming.) You'll meet local personalities who enhance enormously the depth of our experience as we travel through the region.



Other questions?  
Call Distinctive Journeys  
at 770 888 6677

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# the journey

## Days 1 & 2 Otranto

AFTER MEETING IN BRINDISI, WE DRIVE DOWN THE coast to the beginning of our first ride, a flat route that makes its way south into old town Otranto, where we'll enjoy a seaside welcome lunch so fresh you'll swear that the seafood leapt out of the water and onto your plate. There's time after lunch to explore this historic town before jumping on your bikes and realizing why B&R has brought you here, as the afternoon ride winds along one of the Mediterranean's prettiest coastlines before turning uphill to our hotel. After some personal time to cool down and freshen up, we drive the short distance to dinner, catered just for us at a nearby 12thC castle and complete with musicians who will serenade us with moving, traditional Greco-Salento songs.

The next morning, we head out for a free-flowing day that will unravel the incredible history here. Our ride takes us past prehistoric menhirs, around 8thC Byzantine crypts, and through quaint towns that once protected the natives from Turkish invasions, before reaching the coast again. This is some of the most spectacular riding anywhere in the B&R world, let alone Italy. Pedal as few or as many seaside miles as you want, choose a scenic cliff-side grotto to explore, then pause for lunch on your own in the panoramic port town you fancy most. Avid riders can extend their pleasure by taking the challenge of a Century Ride all the way to the southernmost tip of western Europe. The afternoon route

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continues back up the coast before heading through the quiet hinterland back to our hotel, where the day is far from done. Tonight a local wine producer will join us at the hotel for an introduction to the region's up and coming wines before we sit down to a family-style dinner featuring *orecchiette*, a regional specialty.

### HOTEL

#### *Masseria Montelauro, Otranto*

A lovely hotel located just outside of Otranto, this recently restored *masseria* incorporates styles from around the Mediterranean. The main building is an old fortified farmhouse that is largely original, while the furnishings are an appealing blend of Moroccan and Italian. The hotel is family owned, and we are bound to feel like guests in a southern Italian home, where hospitality is paramount.

### THE BIKING

**Day 1:** A 33 km (20 mi.) ride to Otranto, then along the coast, with a longer 11 km (6 mi.) option to Santa Cesarea Terme for a total of 44 km (27 mi.). **Elevation gain: 272 m**

**Day 2:** A 52 km (31 mi.) ride along the stunningly beautiful Salento coast south of Otranto. You can more than double the route for a 105 km (64 mi.) Century option to Santa Maria di Leuca. **Elevation gain: 396 m**

### Day 3 Lecce

Departing from Otranto we meander past the tranquil Alimini Lakes, then inland through the Graecia Salentina on our way north. This is an area famous for towns with charming historic centres and its local dialect, which is based on ancient Greek. En route, we'll stop for an exclusive visit inside a frantoio ipogeo, an underground olive oil mill where we'll get a chance to taste the award-winning olive oil from the area. Afterwards we'll continue biking to a tiny masseria just outside Lecce for a "slow food" lunch together in one of the region's more intimate settings. You can even order your lunch in Greek if you're able! The afternoon ride brings us into the thriving city of Lecce, the jewel in the crown of Spanish Baroque in Italy, and a city cultured enough to be nicknamed the "Florence of the South." After settling comfortably into our hotel located just steps from the main square, we reconvene this evening for an aperitivo in a noble palazzo in the heart of town where we'll have the opportunity to meet the owners, still living here after generations. Tonight is your chance to head out for dinner on your own amongst the wealth of dining establishments tucked among the limestone streets near our hotel.

#### HOTEL

##### *Risorgimento Hotel, Lecce*

Situated in the heart of Lecce's old town and shopping district, this newly restored 18thC property has maintained its historic splendour which is visible throughout the building's façade and interiors. With beautifully appointed rooms, fitness centre and Salus per Aquam Spa you will feel right at home.

#### THE BIKING

**Day 3:** A 53 or 70 km (32 or 43 mi.) ride into the old town of Lecce.



### Days 4 & 5 Ostuni & Trulli Territory

Join us this morning for a historical walking tour of the city center of Lecce, often called the "Florence of the South", taking in the magnificent Duomo and Basilica di Santa Croce, or sleep in and meet us for our late morning drive north to Ostuni. Explore the town by foot and you'll discover why it's called the "white city," with its whitewashed winding alleys adorned with lush plants and flowers hanging from brightly painted windows. After stretching our legs, we hop on our bikes for a short ride to our exclusive lunch spot, set amidst ancient olive groves. We get back on our wheels after lunch and coast through rolling vineyards and groves for

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a while, followed by a stretch alongside the aquamarine Adriatic to the gates of our hotel. Once there, you're left with one critical question: do I opt for a dip in the pool, visit the Aveda spa, or take in the ocean views from the hotel's rooftop lounge? It's a true embarrassment of riches! Tonight, we'll dine in the hotel's restaurant, enjoying its refined atmosphere and cuisine.

Our final day starts with a short drive to the rolling countryside overlooking the Valle d'Itri, just west of our hotel. From here we'll embark one of the most beautiful stretches of Puglia on our final day's ride, one of the most beautiful of the trip. Our route takes us to Alberobello, "city of trulli," where we'll enjoy exploring these idiosyncratic buildings, which are undoubtedly the most distinctive feature of Puglia. Their exact origin is still a bit of a mystery; similar structures are found in many parts of the Mediterranean, from Cappadocia in Turkey to Provence, Greece, Egypt, Sicily and Sardinia. Alberobello's centre is lined with trulli that now house gift and specialty food shops, and the town has recently been designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. You are free to explore the town before continuing onto a local caseificio (dairy) located just outside Locorotondo for a mozzarella-making demonstration and the most amazing cheese tasting. On our final ride this afternoon we'll pass over a rolling landscape of vineyards and stands of cherry trees, all dotted with the whimsical trulli and surrounded by picturesque hilltop towns before the pleasant afternoon descent to sea level and our hotel. Tonight we're heading just down the road to our friend Franco's haunt. Surrounded by vegetable and herb gardens, this Locanda features the freshest seafood in the area and we'll be sure to wash it down with plenty of local wine, toasting to a memorable week together.

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#### HOTEL

##### *Torre Maizza, Savelletri*

The Torre Maizza is an oasis among the olive groves with its 26 spacious rooms, tranquil pool and panoramic rooftop bar. Aside from the splendid common areas of the main masseria, an Aveda spa is available for those seeking extra pampering, while in finer weather visits to its private beach club are only a short shuttle away.

#### THE BIKING

**Day 4:** A 38, 65 or 111 km (24, 40 or 68 mi.) ride down from the Ostuni town and into ancient olive groves.

**Day 5:** A 62 or 84 km (38 or 52 mi) a spectacular ride into Alberobello with some Rolling hills along the way followed by an incredible downhill to the sea.



### Day 6 Homeward Bound

After breakfast together, we bid each other arrivederci. We'll drop you at the Bari airport from where you can connect to your return flight home or continue your travels in Europe.

# The Wonderful Conundrum of Puglia

By Mark Nojaim

When I think of Puglia, I always smile with delight at how perplexed I was when I first arrived. At a restaurant one night, I simply ordered an *antipasto* to start my dinner and proceeded to watch 18 delectable plates of food arrive. The wholesome array of colours, tastes and flavours was overwhelming, but what was more impressive was the proud chef happily nodding at the foreigner he had just welcomed!

That meal was to me the conundrum of Puglia: a collection of foods, histories, geography, architecture and culture wrapped in the most hospitable and welcoming place in Italy. Puglia, the heel of the boot, is safely away from the hordes of tourists and the ultra-modern Italians from Rome and the Italian north. This is where a farmer welcomes you with open arms and a toothless smile to his magnificent *terra* and its bounty.

Puglia has one of the most dramatic landscapes in Italy. We bike past thousand-year-old silver-green olive groves standing in the brilliant red soil dotted with white *trulli* as the azure sea sits in the backdrop. This land has lured Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Turks and Spaniards. The feudalistic Aragonese rule, which lasted until the 1870s, kept a damper on economic growth—but also helped

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preserve the simple integrity and hospitality of the Pugliese *contadino* that modern Italy has now lost.

And how do the Pugliese show their hospitality? At the table! Puglia is known as the *Giardino d'Italia*, or “Garden of Italy.” With its rich soil, the region is a paradise for fresh fruits and vegetables. Its proximity to the sea lends itself to spectacular seafood, and its hinterland produces fabulous cheeses and amazing organic meats. Moreover, what better way to welcome a visitor than to drink a glass of wine? Don’t let the French or the Tuscans take all of the credit for their wines; Puglia, as the top producer of wine in Italy, has traditionally shipped its wines north to lend body and alcohol content, or shall we say *spirit*.

The inspiration of the Pugliese hospitality and kitchen leaves every B&R traveller with a sense of the simplicity and relaxation of generations past. Come see the magic for yourself.

#### B&R REGIONAL EXPERT

##### **Mark Nojaim**

Mark (or Marco as he is affectionately known to most) has guided for B&R around the world. His two favourite countries to travel in are Italy and Vietnam, because in both, the quality of the biking is only surpassed by the incredible cuisine.

## The Details



## the details

### 2017 Price:

From \$4,795

(\$600 single supplement)

Single supplement is based on the most affordable rooms within B&R's allocation. Upgrades often available.

### Duration

6 Days / 5 Nights

Please see our website for list of departures.\*

\*Some departures use a slightly different itinerary. Please call for details.

### Start

Brindisi  
Palazzo Virgilio  
9:00am

### Finish

Bari  
Airport  
Any time between  
8:00am - 1:00pm

### HOTEL TYPE

#### Signature Hotels

Hotels on our Signature trips are unique expressions of the region. Oftentimes that means they've had a previous life as a monastery or a castle, but in every case it means they offer both an exceptionally comfortable stay and a taste of the region's culture. Best of all, we're friends with our hoteliers. [Translation? Preferential treatment for you.]

### LEVEL OF ACTIVITY

#### Recreational

Our first three days of biking are on rolling coastal and flat interior roads winding through olive groves. Our last two days are along rolling terrain through vineyards and groves. Daily distances range from 46 to 80 km (29 to 50 mi.).

### HOTEL PALAZZO VIRGILIO, BRINDISI [www.palazzovirgilio.it](http://www.palazzovirgilio.it)

The Palazzo Virgilio is the newest hotel in Brindisi, and as such the best option for the rendezvous for our trip. It does not boast topnotch amenities or service, so travellers should not expect the standards of a B&R trip hotel. It is, however, clean, comfortable, and convenient, with a pleasant position at the top of the city's Corso. We highly recommend you stay here the night before your trip begins.

### WHAT'S INCLUDED

- All hotel accommodation
- All breakfasts, three lunches and four dinners, including wine
- Services of B&R guide(s) and support van
- All special events and private tours
- Use of a customized hybrid or a racing bike with drop bars, equipped with handlebar bag and helmet
- Detailed maps, route suggestions and water bottle
- All transportation from rendezvous to drop-off
- All baggage transportation
- All gratuities for baggage, porters and hotel service

### ROOM UPGRADE

If you would like to upgrade your accommodation on this trip, please enquire at time of booking to learn cost and availability.

### MORE INFO

#### How do I get to Brindisi?

Since most transatlantic flights will bring you to Milan or Rome, one of these will most likely be your point of arrival unless you have pre-trip plans elsewhere in Europe. Flying is the best way to get to Brindisi from either Rome or Milan. There are a dozen flights daily from Rome, and about half as many from Milan. It is also possible to reach Brindisi by rail, although it is less convenient and, especially from Milan, quite a long journey. The train from Rome takes approximately 5.5 hours; from Milan it can be as long as 9 hours.

Other questions?  
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The itinerary information may vary slightly for your specific departure as we continuously research and develop each trip. Inclement weather may also necessitate minor alterations. Prices are per person and in USD. © 2017 Butterfield & Robinson Inc.



## your next steps

At Butterfield & Robinson, the guiding starts while you're still at home. We make sure you know everything you need to know before you've even left your living room.

### READY TO BOOK?

- Call or email a Distinctive Journeys with any remaining questions, and to reserve your space. [1-770-888-6677](tel:1-770-888-6677) / [Doug@Distinctive-Journeys.com](mailto:Doug@Distinctive-Journeys.com)
- Reserve your flights to and from the region.
- Book your hotel accommodation for the night before your B&R trip.
- Make sure your passport is up to date.
- Enquire after travel insurance.

Once you are confirmed on a B&R trip, you will receive a Confirmation Email that links to tons of information to help you prepare for your trip. Then, about a month before you leave, we will send you a list of your fellow travellers, final rendezvous instructions and your hotel contact numbers.

### YOUR BIKE

We pride ourselves on having the very best equipment for each activity and locale, maintained by expert staff and custom tweaked just for you. To learn about our biking equipment and see pictures of what you'll be riding, visit us at [butterfield.com/about/equipment/bikes](http://butterfield.com/about/equipment/bikes). And don't forget that we will modify your bike to accommodate most special gear requests. Just ask.

### ROOM UPGRADE

If you would like to upgrade your accommodation on this trip, please enquire at time of booking to learn cost and availability.

### EXTENDING YOUR TRIP

Chances are that you will pass through Rome at some point during your trip. From ancient to medieval to Renaissance to modern, Rome offers it all. It is an extremely walkable city and home to many great sites, restaurants and hotels. B&R provides a list of recommendations—courtesy of our Rome-based guides—as part of your Confirmation Email upon booking.

In the meantime, if you have any questions about your B&R experience—big, small or downright quirky—please call a Travel Advisor, or contact your travel professional. We are always happy to help.

### FIND US ON FACEBOOK

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Like B&R on Facebook and get the latest news and photos from the road, updates from guides and more.

### Weather: Brindisi

month	high	low
Jan/Feb	55	45
Mar/Apr	70	53
May/Jun	82	55
Jul/Aug	86	69
Sep/Oct	79	55
Nov/Dec	64	48

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