

Puglia Food & Hike

Trip style: Small group holidays

Destination: 📍 Italy

Trip code: PUG07-LFH12

Grades: 1, 3

Carbon Footprint: 🌿 763kg CO2



HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

For a taste of authentic Italian living, this holiday serves up a feast of food and walking experiences. Not only will you learn how to create classic Italian dishes courtesy of a cooking class, but you'll also visit a traditional bakery and a cheese farm to see how local bread and mozzarella cheese are made. Further highlights include guided tours of gorgeous Gravina and Castel del Monte, plus a full day in UNESCO-listed Matera to discover its network of alleyways, staircases, and series of Sassi cave dwellings.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Staying on the edge of the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Matera
- Learning about traditional dishes with local producers and artisans
- A cooking lesson in a typical Italian Dimora in Altamura
- Exploring Gravina's alleys, palaces, and Romanesque churches
- Walking in the Alta Murgia National Park
- Learning how local bread, panzerotto, and mozzarella cheese are made
- A more personalised experience thanks to small group sizes (maximum 16 people)

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Return flights from London Gatwick, including baggage and transfers
- Guided walks with local leaders
- HF Holidays Tour Manager
- 7 nights' accommodation in Matera
- 7 breakfasts, 4 lunches & 6 dinners
- One cookery lesson and three food demonstrations
- Tours of Matera, Castel del Monte, and Gravina

ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrival Day

Arrive in Italy and transfer to your hotel.

Day 2: The Sassi of Matera and historic bakery experience

In the morning, we take a tour of Matera, a UNESCO World Heritage site since 1993. A guide will accompany you in the discovery of one of the oldest cities on the planet, through the two historic districts characterized by scenic alleys and cave houses, some of which were inhabited until the 1950s. Matera is a fascinating place that leaves all visitors in awe! The tour ends with a visit to a historic bakery where the famous and delicious Altamura bread with Protected Designation of Origin (DOP) is produced. DOP means that the bread is produced and packaged in a designated geographical area and using traditional techniques. We will have a light lunch including sampling this delicious bread. The afternoon is free for independent exploration of Matera.

Day 3: Pulo di Altamura and cooking class

Distance: 3.4 miles (5.5km) Total ascent: 311 feet (95m) Total descent: 219 feet (67m) Today we'll walk around the Pulo di Altamura, one of the largest sinkholes in Southern Italy. There'll be a guided visit explaining the archaeological finds in the area and the geology, cultural and historical significance of the sinkhole. After time to freshen up at the hotel, we'll transfer to take part in a cooking lesson followed by dinner.

Day 4: Castel del Monte, panzerotti making and Gravina

This morning we'll visit the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Castel del Monte for a guided tour. The famous octagonal castle, which is a symbol of Puglia, was built at the request of Emperor Frederick II. Later, there'll be a panzerotti making lesson, where you'll learn how to make this typical Apulian snack of fried dough stuffed with tomato and mozzarella. We'll round off the day with a guided tour of Gravina di Puglia. Stroll among narrow alleys, ancient palaces, and marvellous Romanesque churches, finishing at the aqueduct bridge that spans the ravine overlooking the city for breathtaking views.

Day 5: Murgia Plateau walk and mozzarella making

Distance: 4.6 miles (7.4km) Total Ascent: 285 feet (87m) Total Descent: 226 feet (69m) We'll walk a panoramic trail on the Murgia Plateau that runs along the edge of the karst step overlooking the Bradano Valley, which divides Puglia from the mountains of Basilicata. After the walk, we'll have lunch in a typical masseria, attending a mozzarella-making lesson with an expert cheese maker.

Day 6: Free Day

Each week there's a free day when no guided walks are offered. This is an ideal opportunity to relax around the hotel, walk independently, or visit local places of interest. Options include: Altamura: You may like to explore the historic town of Altamura, with its spectacular cathedral, archaeological museum (which includes an exhibition about Altamura Man – a Neanderthal whose remains were found embedded in stalagmites in a nearby cave),

market, shops and ancient walls. Bari: Easily reached by public transport, this old town and port contains many buildings of historical interest. Puglia's capital contains many churches, but the most well-known is the 11th century Romanesque Basilica de San Nicola, dedicated to St Nicholas, who is also known as Santa!

Day 7: Hike to Scoparella woods and wine tasting

Distance: 4.4 miles (7.2km) Total Ascent: 157 feet (48m) Total Descent: 492 feet (150m) The Scoparella woods is one of the largest wooded areas in the Alta Murgia, north of Bari. The forest, characterised by the presence of oak trees, owes its name to the broom, which covers the undergrowth, with which brooms were actually created. Among the colours and scents of rosehip, hawthorn, asphodels, asparagus, and numerous medicinal plants, our hiking trail will lead us to the ancient Jazzo del Demonio, a farm that inspired a story of sheep, shepherds and demons that became a legend. In the afternoon, we'll visit a local winery for a wine tasting experience.

Day 8: Departure Day

Depart Matera after breakfast. With flight guests will transfer to the airport for their return flight home.

Hotel Nazional

This modern hotel situated in the heart of Matera is just a short 20-minute walk from the Sassi di Matera cave dwellings. Guests are assured of a comfortable stay in spacious, well-lit rooms and can unwind after a day of exploring in the elegant bar or outdoor terrace.

Vaccinations & health information - SHARED WITH ALL EU NEW 2026

Before booking, you should check with your doctor to see whether any health precautions are needed for your trip. Health advice and requirements can change, so we recommend doing this in good time before travel. As a general rule, travellers should ensure they are up to date with routine UK vaccinations and boosters, including, for example, MMR and diphtheria, tetanus and polio. Some countries may require you to have specific vaccinations such as Malaria, Rabies and Yellow Fever. Please check with your GP if you are unsure. Please note that the use or possession of some common prescription or over-the-counter medicines is restricted or banned in certain countries. If you will be carrying medication, you should check with the relevant embassy or consulate before travelling. As an extra precaution, we recommend keeping medication in its original packaging, carrying a copy of your prescription, and, where possible, asking your pharmacist to provide the medication name in the language of the country you are visiting. For further country-specific health advice, visit www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk or www.traveldoctor.co.uk. If you are travelling from outside the UK, please consult your own doctor and check local entry requirements.

Passport & Visa information - SHARED FOR ALL EU NEW 2026

This information is for those travelling with a full 'British Citizen' passport; for all other nationalities or passport holders, please check with your local consulate for advice. **Passport Requirements** This information applies to travellers holding a full British Citizen passport. Entry requirements vary by destination and can change at short notice. For most EU and worldwide destinations, passports must be valid for the entire duration of your stay. Some countries also require a minimum period of validity remaining on your passport (often up to 6 months beyond your return date), even if you are not staying that long. We strongly recommend ensuring your passport has at least six months' validity remaining at the time of travel to avoid any issues. If you hold a different type of British passport or a passport issued by another country, you must check the requirements with the relevant embassy, consulate, or official government website. **Visa Requirements** Visa rules depend on your nationality, destination, length of stay, and purpose of travel, and they can change frequently. It is your responsibility to check whether you require a visa before travelling. British passport holders should check the latest entry, passport validity and visa requirements for their destination on the UK government's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) website: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>

Packing list - Overseas Guided Walking

It's best to be prepared for all weather conditions. To make it easier, here is a list of items you should consider packing. Essentials Walking boots Waterproof jacket Waterproof trousers Insulated jacket/top Walking clothing Walking socks (plus spares) Sunhat Gloves/mitts and warm hat Water bottle (minimum 2 litre capacity) Headtorch High-factor sunscreen (minimum SPF 30) Sunglasses with a dark lens Rucksack (15-30 litres) Mobile phone Personal first aid kit (containing your medication, blister plasters, etc.) Passport Visa (if applicable) Copy of your travel insurance policy UK Global Health Insurance Card (formerly known as EHIC) Recommended Collapsible walking poles Swimwear and travel towel Snacks Dry bags Rubbish bags Insect repellent Optional extras Camera Sit mat Flask for hot drinks Durable lunch box Gaiters GPS device (excluding Bhutan, Georgia and India)
