

Contrasts of Puglia

Hotel-to-hotel independent cycling

- Beautifully unspoiled region, full of contrasts; interest-packed cycling routes
- Historic wine towns, colorful fishing villages, white sand beaches, ancient olive orchards, tiny farming hamlets unchanged over the years
- Hand-picked hotels including 2 nights in a unique trullo house; traditional cuisine, excellent wines, lovely friendly people
- Swimming possibilities most days



An outright winner from the start, this independent 7-night cycling holiday explores a sun-soaked region of empty beaches, unspoiled villages, and low fertile hills rolling down into the clear emerald seas of the Adriatic.

Firmly tucked away “on the heel of Italy’s boot”, Puglia offers extraordinary variety and beauty with a dramatically rugged coast providing total contrast to the lush interior. Your holiday starts just outside the historic town of Monopoli where you spend the first 2 nights. You then pedal north up the coast, passing hidden coves and gold sand beaches, where you have the chance to lunch in colorful fishing villages before heading inland. Here, you’ll be intoxicated by the rich colors of the landscape – olive groves, fruit orchards, vineyards and ruby-red fields – all intensified by the wonderful limpid light of the Adriatic. Highlights include staying in unique Alberobello – a UNESCO World Heritage Site – and visiting the postcard-pretty white village of Ostuni as you wind your way back towards the sea.

Your accommodation is as varied as the landscape, with each place having been specially chosen for its unique charm and character. In Monopoli, you stay in a lovingly restored 7-room *agriturismo* just 15 minutes by bike from the sea; in Conversano, your beautiful C12 former court house, with barrel-vaulted ceilings, is just a stone’s throw from the elegant Romanesque cathedral; in Alberobello, you cannot fail to be seduced by the authentic trullo houses – limestone dwellings with conical roofs that are the architectural symbol of Puglia - and, in Pezze di Greco, you end your holiday with 2 nights in a beautifully restored C17 *masseria* (fortified farmhouse) with lovely pool, open courtyard and 200 hectares of ancient palms and olive trees.



CONTRASTS OF PUGLIA | DAY BY DAY

Day 1 Arrive at Monopoli

We meet you at Bari airport and take you to your hotel (50mins) for a welcome briefing and dinner. You spend two nights here.

Day 2 Monopoli circular cycle 38km/24mi (optional)

A perfect start with an easy, flat, circular ride heading south from Monopoli, past ancient olive groves then along the Adriatic coast to the archaeological site of Egnazia, once the location of a Greco-Roman town dating back to the 4th century BC. Visit the museum & archaeological park, or explore the nearby beach.

Day 3 Monopoli to Conversano 29km/18mi

A charming route takes you along the stunning coastline from Monopoli before heading inland to Conversano. En route take time to visit the small, but vibrant fishing village of Polignano a Mare, idyllically perched on the side of the rocky limestone cliffs. Continue - through the quaint, picturesque village of San Vito, with its multi-colored boats moored up in the tiny port - before finishing your journey in the sleepy, beautiful little town of Conversano. Set amid a landscape of olive and cherry trees, its rambling alleyways and sun-baked piazza are dominated by the Norman castle and Romanesque cathedral.

Day 4 Conversano to Alberobello 38km/24mi

Today's pedalling takes you through the rolling hills of the Valle d'Itria where the air is perfumed with wild mint and herbs. Stop off in the little towns of Putignano and Noci, and view their characteristic white washed houses and narrow alleyways. It's then off to unique Alberobello and its plethora of *trulli* houses - the architectural symbol of the region. On arrival you'll meet Mimmo, a sommelier and well-known character of the town, who will show you to your own private *trullo* house.

Day 5 At Alberobello

Spend today roaming around the historic centre, navigating your way through narrow streets, kitsch souvenir shops and tasting local delicacies. Or maybe visit the *museo del territorio* to discover the history of this unique UNESCO World Heritage Site. Alternatively, a circular cycle route (49km/31mi) takes you deep into the Itria Valley to visit stunning Locorotondo - with wonderful panoramic views across the Itria Valley. Continue on to Martina Franca - a must-see town for its marvellously intact historic centre, beautiful Baroque architecture, and stunning *palazzi*.

Day 6 Alberobello to Pezze di Greco 43km/27mi

You'll spend this morning cycling along beautiful undulating country lanes lined with weathered stone walls, before enjoying a long downhill run with panoramic views of the Adriatic coastline and the lower fertile plains. This incredible descent will bring you down to Capitulo and finishes through a patchwork of almond orchards, olive groves, vineyards and gloriously colored fields of fresh tomatoes and peppers.

Day 7 At Pezze di Greco

Today you could just relax by the hotel's pool, or cycle to the nearby beach. For the more energetic - a circular cycle route (46km/29mi) takes you to charming Ostuni whose whitewashed arches and houses are neatly piled like sugar cubes on hills rich in olive groves and vineyards!

Day 8 Return home

We take you to Bari airport after breakfast to connect with your flight home.

Note: Please note that, from spring 2011, cycling helmets are compulsory in Italy for children under 16. As we cannot provide these, we strongly recommend that you bring your own.

"Holiday of a lifetime! I enjoyed it immensely."

Miss S Hope



"A delightful part of Italy that has remained unspoilt - you have found a gem."

Mrs Richards

Dates and Prices

Departs selected dates Tour Only

2012 departures	
Apr 2-9, Apr 11-18, Oct 10-20	\$2,998
Apr 21-May 2, Oct 1-8	\$2,998
May 5-16, Sep 8-29	\$3,030
May 19-Jun 23, Sep 1-5	\$3,194

Singles: Add \$85 per night for sole occupancy of a double room.

Child: This holiday is unsuitable for children under 12.

Room upgrade: Prices from \$43 per person, per night, based on 2 sharing.

Holiday type: Independent cycling, hotel-to-hotel, no minimum group size, however airport and luggage transfers are subject to at least 2 people (in total) booked on each departure.

Departs: Selected Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays from Apr 2 to Oct 20.

Duration: 8 days (7 nights).

Meals: Continental breakfast and evening meals.

Other details: For selected departure dates, there will be 2 nights in a ★★★ hotel rather than a ★★★★★ hotel. For "What your holiday price includes," see "Holiday Planning" section pp 48-51.

Tailor-made travel choices

Nearest Arrival Airport: Bari Airport

Flights can be arranged from most US/CANADA airports, with connecting transfers as required, prices and details on request.

The above prices include our standard transfers: Bari Airport at 12:30, (transfer to hotel, 50 mins, provided). **Return:** Bari Airport by 11:15 (transfer provided).

Tour only: Transfers included from Bari airport at 12:30, and back to Bari airport departing hotel at 10:00.

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CONTRASTS OF PUGLIA | WHERE YOU STAY



Tenuta Chianchizza
★★★★
Monopoli
Days 1+2



Relais Corte Altavilla
★★★★
Conversano
Days 3



Trulli e Puglia
★★★★
Alberobello
Days 4+5



Masseria Salamina
★★★★
Pezze di Greco
Days 6+7

For extra nights we recommend Monopoli and Pezze di Greco.