EXPLORE! Tour Notes

PRICE GUARANTEE 100% NO SURCHARGES

On Foot in Puglia and Basilicata (PU 2015)

WALK & TREK

TOURDURAT
8
DAYS

Tour Style: Classic
Tour Comfort: Standard
Tour Type: Centre Based
Trek Grade: Easy to Moderate
tour Code: PU

Tour Highlights - On Foot in Puglia and Basilicata

- ✓ Gargano Peninsula - Enjoy hikes in the ancient and protected Foresta d'Umbra
- ✓ Vieste - Pretty seaside resort with whitewashed buildings
- ✓ Matera's 'Sassi' - Discover the fascinating UNESCO-listed ancient troglodyte quarter
- ✓ Alberobello and Locorotondo - Walk amongst the beehive-shaped trulli houses
- ✓ Food and Wine - Sample delicious local produce and regional specialities

Tour Essentials

Accommodation:	7 nights Standard Hotel
Included Meals:	7 breakfasts, 2 lunches, 0 dinners
Start Point:	Join tour: Bari airport
End Point:	Tour ends: Bari airport
Maximum Altitude on Trek (m):	800
Transport:	Taxi, Minibus
Countries:	Italy

On Foot in Puglia and Basilicata

Discover Puglia and Basilicata's beautiful countryside and laid-back charm on this twin-centre walking holiday to the 'heel' of boot-shaped Italy. From the pretty seaside town of Vieste on the Gargano Peninsula, we enjoy walks in ancient pine forests and along the rugged coast. In Matera we explore its ancient Sassi, a UNESCO-listed troglodyte quarter, and hike gorge-rim trails. On rambles around Alberobello and Locorotondo, we discover the charming beehive-shaped trulli houses of the Itria valley. We also enjoy sampling locally-produced wine, cheese and olive oil and other regional specialties.

Suitability

We've given each of our tours a comfort rating and a tour pace, walking or cycling grade to give you a general idea about the level of activity on each tour and the standard of accommodation you will be staying in at the end of your day's adventure.

Often you'll stay in different styles of accommodation during your tour; so we make an average rating across the entire tour. For more information on where you'll stay each night, please refer to the day by day tour itinerary.

Tour Comfort: Standard

Our mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en-suite facilities.

Tour Style: Classic

Packed with adventure, these tours offer inspiring destinations and authentic travel experiences at a reasonable price. Using all kinds of transport and accommodation, we'll take you off the beaten track to discover the true heart of the people and places you visit.

Trek Grade: Easy to Moderate

This grade is ideal if you want to enjoy both easy and moderate level walks on the same tour. You'll be walking mainly on good paths and at low altitude, with occasional more demanding ascents or descents.

Your tour itinerary

Tour itinerary notes

While our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day itinerary as printed below, a degree of flexibility is built in. Overnight stops may vary from those suggested.

DAY 1 Join tour Bari airport; transfer to Vieste on Adriatic coast

Our holiday starts at the airport in Bari from where it's around 2.5 hours drive to the charming seaside resort of Vieste on the Gargano Peninsula where we are based for the next four nights. Once a sleepy fishing village, it's now a popular holiday destination for Italians. A beautiful village of white flat-roofed low buildings, dominated by a simple 13th century cathedral, Vieste's streets cascade down to a sun-bleached limestone promontory surrounded on three sides by the azure-blue Adriatic.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available **Swimming Pool Available**

Included Meals: None

DAY 2 Walking in the ancient forests of the Gargano Peninsula

This morning we take taxis for the drive inland to the higher parts of the Gargano and start our first walk from Caserma Caritate at 300 metres altitude. Our walk takes us along trails in the Gargano National Park into the 'Foresta d'Umbra', a special area of untouched ancient and dense forest that is a remnant of that which once covered the whole of southern Italy. Aleppo pines, oaks, yews and beech trees shade the mountainous terrain and more than 65 different types of orchid have been discovered here. We gradually ascend to finish the walk at Villagio Umbra at 800 metres altitude. Today's walk is expected to take approximately four hours with a total ascent of 600 m and a total descent of 100 m.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available **Swimming Pool Available**

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 3 Coastal walking; sample local produce at a farmhouse picnic lunch

We drive for around 15 minutes inland and then walk up into the hills through typical Mediterranean maquis vegetation. Along our way we pass a number of ancient Neolithic sites. We stop at a stunningly located Masseria, a typical fortified ancient farmhouse of the region, and enjoy a tasty picnic lunch with many local specialities. Later we descend to the long beach of Vieste and have some free time for enjoying that beach or spending time in Vieste itself. This evening, there's the option to go to a dinner sampling local produce and some regional specialities at one of Vieste's lovely restaurants, built into a natural cave in the middle of the old town. Puglia is a predominantly agricultural province, producing around 40% of Italy's olive oil and a large proportion of its wine. The region's cuisine is home-country inspired, using the abundant local produce such as durum wheat, tomatoes, artichokes, fava beans, rocket, courgettes, beans, fennel, peppers, onions, beef and lamb. Puglians pride themselves on their orecchiette, little ear-shaped shells that are still produced by hand and served with tasty sauces such as meat ragu, broccoli and lard, mushrooms or turnip tops. Puglia's long coastline and fishing tradition bring large quantities of seafood to the table with red mullet, anchovies, gilt-head bream, mussels, sea bass and cuttlefish featured in many recipes. Today's walk is expected to take approximately five hours with a total ascent of 100 m and a total descent of 600 m.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available **Swimming Pool Available**

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 4 Free day for optional walking or boat trip

Today has been left free to enjoy Vieste, perhaps taking some time out to relax on one of the nearby beaches or enjoying a boat trip along the rugged coastline which can be combined with some walking on a secluded stretch of coast.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available **Swimming Pool Available**

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 5 Drive to Matera; walk through Matera's Sassi and Gorge

Today we drive inland to Matera, our second base for the holiday and which is just over the regional border in Basilicata. The town is impressively located on the side of a gorge eroded by the Gravina River and is famous for its ancient 'Sassi', a UNESCO-listed troglodyte quarter whose origins date back to the prehistoric era. In the 1950s the government of Italy forcibly relocated most of the population of the Sassi which it considered a slum. Today the quarter is regenerating with hotels and other businesses moving in. We plan to eat our picnic lunches at the spectacular viewpoint opposite Matera, before our afternoon walk which takes us through the dramatic gorge opening with spectacular views of Matera. After seeing some of the limestone churches built into caves, we walk all the way to the hotel passing through the Sassi. Todays walk is expected to take approximately three hours with both a total ascent and descent of 150 m.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 6 Day out to Alberobello and Locorotondo with olive oil tasting

Today we drive to the pretty towns of Alberobello and Locorotondo in the Itria valley to enjoy a short walk exploring the world of the 'trulli'. A trullo is a traditional dry stone hut with a conical roof and often whitewashed walls, which were generally constructed in the 19th century as both dwellings and storehouses. Trullo are built singly or in groups of up to 5 trulli, and a group would be occupied by

a single family. Inside an individual trullo dome is just one room, although additional separate spaces were created by curtains hung across arched alcoves. Locorotondo is also known for its white wine, both still and sparkling, and also olive oil, which we will enjoy at a tasting. Todays walk is expected to take approximately two hours with both a total ascent and descent of 70 m.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 7 Walk along the Matera Gorge; enjoy a farmhouse lunch

We drive out of town for 15 minutes and then start the walk along the Gravina di Matera gorge with spectacular views, churches built into limestone caves featuring more of the incredible wall paintings from Byzantinian times. We stop at a local farm house for a wonderful, included lunch with wine and cheese tasting and local specialities. Returning to our hotel, the afternoon is free for exploring more of Matera at your own pace Today's walk is expected to take approximately three hours with both a total ascent and descent of 300 m.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 8 Transfer to Bari airport where tour ends

This morning we transfer back to Bari airport (around one hour) where the holiday ends.

Included Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation and Meals

Food & Drink

Included meals: 7 breakfasts, 2 lunches,0 dinners included in the price of this tour. Please be prepared to pay for non-included meals. Please note that costs for drinks and meals can vary depending on location.

Budgeting for your Tour

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the tour price, any optional sightseeing, souvenirs and items of a personal nature such as laundry.

Food

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide.Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Italy

Lunch £: 8 - 10

Dinner £: 15.00 - 20.00

Drink

The prices for drinks can vary greatly depending upon location and the prices detailed below are an average guide. In general you would expect that drinks purchased in a supermarket or local bar to be less expensive, whilst drinks in an upmarket bar or restaurant may be more expensive.

Italy

Bottle of Beer £: 2.00

Water £: 1.00

Other Sightseeing & Activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations.

Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Optional Excursions

Vieste - Take a boat trip to explore more of this rugged rugged coastline (approximatley 3 hours) €15 pp

Tipping - Tour Leader

Tour Leader: At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Foreign Exchange

Italy

ATM Availability: Major towns.

Credit Card Acceptance: Larger hotels and restaurants.

Travellers Cheques: Only in major towns. Please note, the exchange rate for cash and Travellers Cheques is poor.

Local Currency: Euro.

Recommended Currency for Exchange: GBP.

Where to Exchange: We recommend that you change any currency into Euros prior to arrival. Bureau de Change are generally only found in major cities and large airports.

Joining your Tour

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a ‘flight inclusive’ package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the ‘Land Only’ arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific ‘Joining Instructions’ prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found on our website at www.explore.co.uk, in the tour specific dates and prices section.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer. For more information please refer to https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the ‘Land Only’ arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer please refer to https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Important Information

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of joining any of our tours that you must have valid travel insurance. It must indicate that you have cover for (at least) medical expenses and emergency repatriation in the event of illness or injury. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling in England and Scotland. We also strongly recommend your policy includes curtailment, personal effects and cancellation protection as all deposits paid are non-refundable. You will also need to ensure your travel policy covers you for all activities you intend to do whilst on tour.

We are delighted to include FREE travel insurance **for all qualifying customers** who book an Explore trip between 01 January 2015 and 31 August 2015.

For more information about Travel insurance and to check whether you are eligible to receive free cover, please visit

www.explore.co.uk/insurance. Explore Worldwide Ltd are an Introducer Appointed Representative of Campbell Irvine Limited. who are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. The registration number can be checked by visiting the the FCA's website www.fca.gov.uk or by contacting them on 0800 111 6768.

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Visa Information

Visas are not required by U.K., CAN, US, AUS and NZ citizens. Other nationalities should consult the relevant consulate.

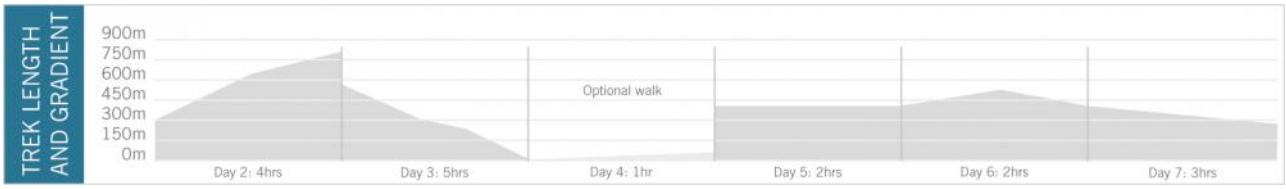
All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related issues with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

Vaccinations & Protection

Italy

Nothing required. Tetanus recommended. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/ and from your local healthcare provider.

Preparing for your Tour



Maximum Altitude on Trek (m)

800

Trekking Details

We walk between 3 and 5 hours on five days of this tour. Some of the trails will be rocky underfoot. We have graded this tour as easy to moderate.

Climate

Italy

April/May and October/November are pleasantly warm. June/September are the hottest months. Showers are common in Autumn.

Clothing

You will need light layers of clothing for walking during the day and a fleece and waterproof jacket for early mornings and evenings, and early/late season. A sunhat is essential and bring a swimming costume if you wish to bathe in the sea.

Equipment

You should bring a 2 litre water bottle, sunhat, sunglasses and sunscreen. Trekking poles are also useful.

Footwear

We recommend you bring walking boots - leather or fabric are both fine. Some of the paths are a bit rocky underfoot and so you could twist an ankle if not wearing boots. Trainers are not recommended. Make sure that your boots are worn-in and comfortable before the start of the trip. We recommend that you wear/carry your walking boots as hand luggage on the international flight: should your luggage be delayed, your well broken-in boots will be irreplaceable.

Bring trainers and sandals for relaxing and other sightseeing

Luggage: On Tour

Take one main piece of luggage and a daypack

Unfortunately it does occasionally happen that luggage does not always reach its destination on the same flight as its owner, or possibly it may be damaged in transit. If you are unlucky enough for this to occur, it is important that you file a PIR (Property Irregularity Report) with the airline before leaving the airport. This is essential when you come to make a claim either against the airline or from your travel insurance company

Luggage allowance on tour: 20kg

General Information

Country details

Italy

Population: 60,681,514

Size of Country: 301,338 Sq KM

Major Language: Italian

Religion: Roman Catholic

Time Difference to GMT: +1

Electric Supply & Plugs

Italy

2 Pin Round

Why Choose Explore

We've been creating award-winning pioneering adventure holidays for over 30 years, earning the trust of thousands of delighted customers, who feel safe in our hands. Our tour leaders have expert local knowledge and our tours are designed to take you off the beaten track to see the most exotic, inspiring and dramatic places in the world.

- With over 30 years' experience, we are passionate about what we do.
- Pioneering small group adventures, self-guided, private journeys & tailormade holidays.
- Award winning tour leaders who you can trust.
- Responsible travel is and always has been one the driving principles of Explore.

Our adventure holidays are full of exciting things to see and do, exploring in small groups travelling by bus, boat, plane, rickshaw, camel, elephant, or any number of unusual forms of transport . Often you will stay in family run hotels and village houses and enjoy authentic local cuisine. In this way, it's easy to discover the true heart of the people and the place you travel to – and make some new friends along the way. Each tour is uniquely different, so please feel free to browse through our tours to see what may whet your appetite.

Our commitment to the environment

We are passionate about sustainable travel and work hard to create tours where your holiday delivers real benefits to the local communities. We minimise our impact by travelling in small groups, respecting local cultures and traditional, reducing waste and offsetting 100% of the CO2 from our flights.

When you travel with Explore, you are directly contributing to local economies and helping empower the people you meet. We currently support a range of charities and good causes, including: Toilet Twinning (helping to flush away poverty), Lone Buffalo Foundation (a community project based in Laos providing creative skills for young people), Dekamer (a turtle rescue centre in Turkey) and Kids Saving the Rainforest (a wildlife rescue centre in Costa Rica supported through the LATA foundation). We also care passionately about the world's wildlife. We are patrons of the Born Free Organisation and Friends of Conservation.

Cool Earth

Explore are proud to support Cool Earth in their effort to reduce global carbon dioxide levels through the prevention of deforestation in the South America rainforest. Cool Earth focus on areas in immediate danger of deforestation, supporting local communities to be forest guardians. To date 350,000 acres of rainforest has been protected. Saving rainforest also protects rare animals and plants, allows local forest communities to maintain their way of life, and protects a major source of oxygen and fresh water. When you travel on an Explore holiday we make a donation to Cool Earth that exceeds the impact of our customers flights each year.

Earth Matters

- The Travel Foundation

  Explore are active members and supporters of the Travel Foundation which has established a variety of sustainable tourism projects in destinations and works with industry to improve practice. Visit their website www.thetravelfoundation.org.uk
- Tourism Concern

  Explore support the work of Tourism Concern who campaign for fairly and ethically traded tourism, and are part of its Ethical Tour Operator Group www.tourismconcern.org.uk
- For further information on responsible travel go to www.explore.co.uk/ResponsibleTourism/

Know before you go

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Advice follow the link at www.explore.co.uk/travel-safety

Booking Your Holiday

Peace of mind - book with confidence

You can book your Explore holiday with confidence, as all monies paid to us for your trip are fully protected. Explore is a fully bonded tour operator licensed by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and by ABTOT.

The air holiday packages (Tours including flights) that we advertise are ATOL protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's LicenceÂ granted by the Civil Aviation Authority.Â Our ATOL number is ATOL 2595. In addition, As a member of the Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited (ABTOT), Explore has provided a bond to meet the requirements of the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992. Please note that packages booked outside the UK are only protected when purchased directly with Explore.

Reserving your place

To reserve your place on this tour you will need to check availability on the Explore website or through our dedicated call centre based in the UK where you can. Our tours can fill up quickly so you are advised to book as early as possible. If your chosen date is ‘Available’ or ‘Guaranteed’ we will be able to provisionally hold you a space for up to 48 hours.

For Self-Guided holidays and Private Journeys simply choose your date of travel and let us know so we can confirm all ground services.

The easiest way to confirm your booking is through our website. When you are ready to book, we normally require a 10% non-refundable deposit, but for some holidays this may be more to cover such items as permit fees, internal flights or other non-refundable services. If your travel starts within 60 days of booking, full payment will be required at the time of booking

100% No Surcharge Guarantee

The price paid for our holidays is no longer subject to change. Once booked and confirmed we will guarantee the price you pay will not increase, whatever the circumstances. You will not be approached to pay fuel surcharges unlike the vast majority of other adventure tour operators. The price guarantee applies to all new bookings departing between 1st January 2014 and 31st December 2015.

Tour Itinerary Versions

Itinerary details may vary depending on departure date and alternative itineraries for this tour may exist. Please refer to the dates and prices page on our website to check which itinerary operates on each departure date.

Please ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of these tour notes immediately before you travel, as from time to time our itineraries may be amended, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers. You will be informed of any major changes to your tour but small changes may just be added to these tour notes.

Please note: 2015 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing in 2015. 2016/17 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing from 1st January to 31st December 2016.

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