Abruzzo, Italy's Wild Heart



Trip style:	Destination:	Walking Grade	Carbon Footprint:
Guided Walking Holidays	Italy	4 & 8	707kg CO2

HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

Nicknamed Italy's wild heart, Abruzzo is a picturesque, unspoiled, and gloriously crowd-free region fuelled by picture-postcard villages, wildflower meadows, mountainous forests roamed by wolves and bears, and plentiful wildlife-watching thrills. Highlights include exploring corners of the lesser-known National Park of Abruzzo, exploring the cobbled streets of Scanno, and heading to the charming village of Barrea perched on the hillside above the waters of its namesake lake.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Exploring the Italian region of Abruzzo on foot
- Enjoying guided walks around the National Park of Abruzzo
- Learning about the local flora and fauna
- Visiting mountain villages and ancient beech forests
- Sampling excellent food and wine
- Experiencing a wilder side to Italy

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Return flights from London Heathrow, including baggage and transfers (flights available from other airports - price may vary)
- A choice of 2 guided walks per day with local leaders (on walking days)
- HF Holidays Tour Manager
- 7 nights' accommodation in Villetta Barrea
- 7 breakfasts, 4 packed lunches & 7 dinners
- All in-destination transport

ITINERARY - ITINERARY

Day 1 **Arrival Day**

Welcome to Hotel Degli Olmi. Unpack and settle in.

Day 2 **Through Forest and Waterfalls**

From Villetta Barrea to the Waterfall of the Nymphs.

Option 1 La Camosciara

Distance: 7 miles (11km)

Ascent: 1,200ft (360m)

We set off from the hotel crossing the Sangro river before winding our way up through mystical forests of rare black pine. Once we reach the road that follows the Scerto stream, we'll dip into the area known as La Camosciara, which takes its name from the herds of chamois that live on the high ridges.

We reach the beech forest and the beautiful waterfalls before heading back across the fields.

Option 2 La Camosciare and on to Civitella Alfedena

Distance: 9.5 miles (15km)

Ascent: 1,850ft (560m)

We'll follow the same route as the Option 1 walk to the waterfall and then on through forest clearings and pastures uphill to the village of Civitella Alfadena. We'll admire the spectacular views of over the lake and surrounding mountains before setting off downhill back to the hotel.

Day 3 **Val Fondillo**

Option 1 Val Fondillo

Distance: 8 miles (12.5km)

Ascent: 700ft (220m)

There's a short transfer to Pescasseroli from where we start our walk towards the blissful green valley, Val Fondillo. The path takes us from near the village centre up the Colli Bassi with accompanying views of the hilltop village of Opi.

We'll follow the 'tratturo', one of the ancient paths used by shepherds, below Opi to reach the entrance to Val Fondillo, which takes its name from the many springs here. There's a gentle climb to the periphery of the beech forest and a break at a clearing by the stream before heading back to Tornareccia spring. The beech forests of the Val Fondillo have been listed by UNESCO as an Ancient and Primeval Beech Forest of Europe since 2017.

Option 2 Val Fondillo to Monte Amaro

Distance: 7.5 miles (12km)

Ascent: 2,700ft (830m)

This trek starts at Val Fondillo but then veers off to climb the peak of Monte Amaro. It's a steep ascent that follows the crest of the mountain through beech forest and then out to the high pastures and across rocky outcrops to the summit at 1,850m. If you have a good head for heights, you'll be rewarded with lofty views of Monte Marsicano and the hilltop village of Opi down below.

Day 4 Scanno

You'll have the chance to explore Scanno, one of the prettiest mountain villages of Abruzzo. Its remote location and harsh winters mean life was isolated until relatively recently. There's time for a stroll around its steep and winding cobbled streets, which will give you a glimpse into the past as it's been preserved pretty much as it was. Scanno is famous for its filigree jewellery and lacemaking, which you can still see in some of the little shops in town.

Option 1 Sentiero del Cuore – Path of the Heart

Distance: 2.5 miles (4km) plus walking tour of the town

Ascent: 600ft (200m)

Our transport will take us over the winding Godi Pass to Scanno where we'll take the path from the village down to Scanno Lake following an old mule track where the slopes of Monte Genzana eventually come into focus. After crossing through woods and fields, we'll arrive at the lake where there's a spot for a refreshing dip if you fancy.

We'll start climbing again towards the Hermitage of Saint Egidio from where you can look out over the lake and notice it's shaped like a heart.

Around lunchtime we end in the historic centre of Scanno, where there is time to have lunch in one of the many cafe bars and restaurants. After lunch, we'll have a short tour of the town with our guide.

Option 2 – Anatuccio - Stazzo dell'Affogata - Villetta Barrea

Distance: 8.5 miles (14km)

Ascent: 1,650ft (500m)

Descent: 3,350 ft (1,030m)

The route begins along an ancient dirt road that winds through a beautiful beech forest. Walking among the centuries-old trees, you can feel an atmosphere of peace and coolness, accompanied by the scent of the undergrowth and birdsong. At the end of the dirt road section, after a short zigzag, the trail gradually emerges from

the forest, revealing the first panoramic glimpses of the majestic mountains of the National Park of Abruzzo, Lazio and Molise.

The path then reaches the Stazzo dell'Affogata, at an altitude of 1,869 metres – an ancient shepherds' shelter where, in the past, during the transhumance, flocks were brought to graze during the summer season. The view from this point is spectacular; a full 360-degree panorama over the Mainarde Molisane, Monti della Meta, Balzi della Camosciara, Monte Petroso, Monte Marsicano and all the peaks surrounding Pescasseroli.
The trail continues across wide high-altitude meadows, passes another stazzo, and then gently begins to descend. As altitude is lost, the view opens even more and Lake Barrea appears nestled in the valley below. The descent then continues with a series of switchbacks through the forest, until reaching Villetta Barrea, where the hike ends directly at the hotel.

Day 5 Free Day

Spend the day as you wish. There's the hotel garden you can relax in or nearby Lake Barrea where there are beaches you can swim from. Stretch your legs with a walk along the lake to the town of Barrea to visit the castle and take photos of the view across the mountains embracing the lake.

Alternatively, walk up to Civitella Alfedena and visit the Wolf Museum to learn about these elusive inhabitants of the park and perhaps see the family of wolves that live in the conservancy.

For those who would like to do another walk, there are paths leaving the village of Villetta Barrea and climb the mountain behind, or there are easier loops around the lake.

There are also buses to nearby Castel di Sangro where there are shops and restaurants, sports facilities, and pleasant walks along the river Sangro.

Day 6 Pescasseroli and Val di Rose

Option 1 Pescasseroli and the forest of Coppo del Principe

Distance: 6.5 miles (10.5km)

Ascent: 900ft (280m)

From the national park's headquarters in the little town of Pescasseroli, your guide will fill you in on the wildlife living in the surrounding mountains, including the Marsican bear.

Our walk enters La Difesa, an area of forest used for grazing animals and takes in the tranquil setting of Coppo del Principe, a sanctuary for wildlife.

Option 2 Val di Rose

Distance: 9.5 miles (15.5km)

Ascent: 3,200ft (970m)

This option begins with a short transfer across the lake to the charming town of Civitella Alfedena. We begin our walk by taking in an array of landscapes from the top of the village before dropping down into a deep, ancient patch of beech forest home to trees hundreds of years old. With luck, we'll spot the wild herds of chamois hopping around the high crags. From the top, the views of the surrounding mountains are magnificent. The return is via the secluded Valle Jannanghera back to the Civitella Alfedena.

Day 7 Barrea

Option 1 Lake Barrea – Sorgente Jannanghera - Barrea

Distance: 6 miles (10km)

Ascent: 920ft (280m)

A short transfer will take us to the picturesque village of Barrea perched on the hillside above the lake. Wind your way up to the castle along its cobbled streets from where you can gaze out over lake and surrounding mountains. We'll then start our walk that will take us into the forest to the Jannanghera Valley and the tranquil spring where there's time to stop for a refreshment. The undulating path continues above the lake until you reach the village of Civitella Alfedena, then twists back down to the lake again. We return to Barrea where there's time to go up to the castle for stunning views of the lake and surrounding mountainside.

Option 2 Barrea – Lago Vivo

Distance: 8 miles (13km)

Ascent: 2,050ft (620m)

This walk starts above the town of Barrea and climbs quite quickly to reach a natural terrace from where there are panoramic views across to Monti della Meta and Monte Petroso, which at 2,249m is the highest in the national park. And if you're lucky, you might just catch a glimpse of the chamois hopping about on the steep cliffs here.

A little further along we stop at Lago Vivo, fed by the melting snow and dominated by the surrounding mountains. Its name ('Alive Lake') comes from the fact that it changes shape all the time depending on how much water there is. The path then descends through the deep and silent Valle dell'Inferno (Valley of Hell) where legends abound. We return to Barrea where you might choose to revisit the castle to further enjoy the stunning views of the lake and surrounding mountainside.

Day 8 Departure Day

Return to the airport for your flight home.

DAILY WALK OPTIONS



Gentle walking grade 4

The most active Gentle grade, with longer walks, some ascent, and possible steps, stiles, or off-path uneven ground. Typically, 6-7 miles (10-12km) with around 1,000ft (300m) of ascent.



Challenging walking grade 8

Challenging walks for fit, experienced walkers. Expect rugged or mountainous terrain, or some longer distances than typical for this grade. Typically, 12-13 miles (19-21km) with around 2,300ft (700m) of ascent.

ACCOMMODATION

Hotel Degli Olmi

The Hotel Degli Olmi is a friendly, family-run hotel close to the centre of the village of Villetta Barrea in the heart of the

National Park. Dario, who is in charge of the kitchen, trained with the famous Italian chef Niko Romito and the family are justly proud of his cuisine which is all home made using organic and local produce and featuring Abruzzese dishes as well as better-known Italian favourites. There's a comfortable lounge and bar to relax in and also a pleasant garden where you can enjoy watching the sun go down with a glass of local Abruzzo wine.

Joining instructions (with Flights)

Book your holiday 'with flight' from London Heathrow to Naples airport.

If you choose this option we automatically include return transfers between the airport and the hotel. The coach transfer takes approx 2.5 hours to the hotel.

Joining instructions (without Flights)

Alternatively, tailor your journey to suit you by booking your holiday 'without flight' allowing you the freedom to book your own flights from your local airport.

If you choose this option, transfers are not included in the price. However, below are some suggestions to help you reach your destination:

- We can book you a seat on the **HF Holidays' transfer coach** from Naples airport. This is timed to meet the HF Holidays' flights* (You can call us on +44 (0)20 3974 8865 for more information).

Transfers must be pre-booked. Please call +44 (0)20 3974 8865 for more details

* Please note that HF Holidays is not responsible for your onward travel if you fail to meet the transfer coach

FOOD & DRINK

Dining at the Hotel Degli Olmi

Breakfast

Cereals, yoghurt, home-made cakes, pastries and biscuits, eggs, ham and cheese.

Dinner

3-course meal with three choices of first course and main course. There will always be a vegetarian option. They can accommodate vegan,gluten free and allergies as long as they know beforehand.

(NB: there is also an outdoor solar heated pool but we can't guarantee that it will be open before 1st June as night-time temperatures are still very cool in May. But if it's warm enough they will open it. It normally closes again in mid September.)

All rooms have:

· free wifi
· fridge
· telephone
· TV (Italian channels only)
· safe
· private shower (no rooms have baths)

The hotel is located in the village of Villetta Barrea and just a short walk from Lake Barrea where there are places to swim. There are bars and small shops in the village. Villetta Barrea is famous for its stags that roam around the village and especially in September and October its quite possible for bears to come down to the village too.

Standard rooms have windows and can be on the first or second floor

Superior rooms all have balconies

VACCINATIONS & HEALTH

Vaccinations & health information

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.

PASSPORTS & VISAS

Passport & Visa information

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

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Packing list

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)
- Swimcap (compulsory in Itialian resorts)
- 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)

JOINING INSTRUCTIONS (WITH FLIGHTS)

With flights

Book your holiday 'with flights' and you can choose to depart from selected UK airports* to your destination. For latest flight times and prices please call us on 0203-974-8865 or email reservations@hfholidays.co.uk

If you choose to book your flights with us, we automatically include return transfers between the destination airport and hotel.

JOINING INSTRUCTIONS (WITHOUT FLIGHTS)

Without flights

If you are booking on a land-only basis, you can join the group transfer at an additional cost. To do so, your arrival and departure times must be in line with the scheduled group flight timings. Guests travelling at different times will need to arrange their own transfers. Please contact us before booking to discuss the available options and costs.

USEFUL INFORMATION

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is a condition of booking. Therefore, if you have not already arranged insurance, it is imperative that you do so before you travel.

For more information about healthcare and its costs, please visit: https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/

Drinking Water

Drinking Water

Standards for drinking water vary widely around the world. In many destinations, tap water may not be safe to drink, brush your teeth with, or use for making ice. Where advised, you should drink only bottled or treated water and ensure that bottle seals are intact before use. If bottled water is unavailable, water should be boiled or filtered.

Staying well hydrated is particularly important in hot climates and during active holidays. Carry water with you and drink regularly.

If you are unsure about local water safety, check official country-specific health advice before travel, or ask your accommodation or local guides for guidance once you arrive.

TRIPNOTE VALIDITY

TRIP NOTE VALIDITY These Trip Notes are valid based on the date printed at the bottom of the page. They will occasionally be updated post booking and pre-departure. We will send you the latest trip notes prior to departure through a link in your pre departure documents or we can send you a copy in the post if preferred. In booking this trip you should be confident in your ability to participate in all activities described in these Trip Notes. If you have any doubt about your suitability you should call HF Holidays and ask to speak to one of the team about this itinerary. The information in these Trip Notes is given in good faith. Where differences exist between the Trip Notes and our current brochure, the Trip Notes supersede the brochure. All holidays can be subject to unexpected changes; so please be prepared to be flexible where necessary. At times, it may not be possible to follow the itinerary as planned due to weather conditions, political, physical or other factors. In these circumstances we will make the best possible alternative arrangements to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary.

Document produced: 23 November 2026