Puglia Food & Hike



Trip style:	Destination:	Walking Grade	Carbon Footprint:
Small group holidays	Italy	2	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 the historic town of Altamura, famed for its fantastic bread.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- 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 - ITINERARY 2026

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 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.

DAILY WALK OPTIONS



Gentle walking grade 2

Full or half-day gentle walks on good paths, with plenty of time for rest stops, views, and places of interest. Typically, 3-5 miles (5-8km) with around 350ft (100m) of ascent with few or no stiles.

ACCOMMODATION

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.

Hotel San Nicola - Puglia (2027)

The 4-star Hotel San Nicola is located in the heart of the old town of Altamura just 150 metres from Federico's Cathedral. A former palace built in 1741 as the residence of the Cagnazzi family, the hotel has 24 comfortable bedrooms, 24 hour reception, bar and restaurant and free Wi-Fi throughout. Take the opportunity to sample the local Foccacia de Altamura from a nearby bakery which has been producing bread since 1421.

Your evenings

The friendly atmosphere of our holidays continues into the evening.

Most of our socialising at Altamura is over a relaxed meal, opportunity to talk about your day with your fellow guests and sample some local wines and dishes. See the town came alive in the evening with all the local families walking out, treating their children to ice creams and just sitting over a coffee.

FOOD & DRINK

Dining at the Hotel San Nicola

Breakfast

Continental buffet breakfast: this is served from 7am in the courtyard dining room. This will include cereals, fruit juices, yoghurt, fresh fruit, cheeses/meats, selection of breads and croissants, jams, tea and coffee.

Lunch (payable locally)

Packed lunches can be bought from the local shops a few minutes from the hotel and can also be purchased from the hotel.

Evening meal

For our evening meals we eat out at local restaurants close to the hotel. The restaurants are within easy walking distance of our hotel and guests can experience the "passiagata", an Italian tradition where the locals with their families and friends walk out in the evening socialising, and take in this unique atmosphere.

ROOMS

Your room at the Hotel San Nicola

There are 24 modern en-suite bedrooms.

All bedrooms are equipped with a:

- Phone
- Air conditioning
- Flat screen
- TV
- Minibar
- Complimentary toiletries
- Hairdryer

ABOUT YOUR STAY

Facilities at the Hotel San Nicola

The hotel has:

- 24-hour reception
- Room service
- Laundry
- Ironing and dry cleaning service (extra charge)

TRAVEL DETAILS

Address

Hotel San Nicola
Via Luca de Samuele Cagnazzi 29
70022 Altamura (BA)
Puglia

Tel: 0039 080 3105199

LOCAL AREA

Explore the narrow streets of this historic town and you will find the interesting Romanesque-Gothic cathedral which has the most intricately carved portal in Puglia, and 14th/15th century miniature sculptures. The alleyways or "claustri", distinctive to Altamura usually end in small courtyards. This area has prehistoric sites where you can see dinosaurs' footprints and "Man of Alamura", a Paleolithic skeleton.

> *We loved the location of this holiday, it felt like we were seeing the real Italy, not many tourists in Altamura so no exceptions made. The town was celebrating a religious festival, the main square where we stayed was particularly beautifully decorated with special light features - a bit like Christmas! We ate, drank and shopped the same as the locals and people were very welcoming. The area was full of little churches you could pop into and one afternoon we heard singing and went in to listen to a group of nuns singing – it was very memorable. The sightseeing days were exceptional and the trulli really were special. The places we ate were full of local diners and delicious puglian cuisine. We went on to spend a week in Sorrento which provided a great contrast and chance to experience the variety of Italy. (Caryl and Chris, Oxon)*

Shops and facilities: Altamura is famous for its bread, made since the time when the town supplied ancient Rome. There is a famous bakery where they make the Pane di Dlamura and Focaccia de Altamura (topped with tomatoes and herbs). Other local specialities include cheeses, fried artichokes, braised chicory, fava beans and fresh ravioli and an array of homemade sweets.

There are many other interesting small shops and cafés.

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.

Useful information

Please ensure you have around 30 euros cash per person each day as cash is still widely used in Puglia.
Please ensure you bring mosquito repellent.

LOCAL CURRENCY

The local currency is the Euro (€)

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