



2018  
HOLIDAYS

# *Altamura*

PUGLIA

**hf holidays**  
walking and activity holidays .co.uk

# WELCOME TO *Puglia*

The region of Puglia forms the “heel” of Italy and our hotel is located in Altamura, an historic walled town. Explore the narrow streets of this old 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 distinctive of Altamura usually end in small courtyards or “claustri”. The area surrounding the town features prehistoric sites where dinosaur footprints and the “Man of Altamura” skeleton have been found.

Altamura is famous for its bread, produced since the time when the town supplied ancient Rome. There are several famous bakeries where they make the delicious Pane di Altamura and Focaccia di Altamura (topped with tomatoes and herbs). Other local specialities include cheeses, fried artichokes, braised chicory, fava beans, fresh ravioli and an array of homemade sweets. There are also many other interesting shops and cafés.

The surrounding terrain features many caves, sink holes and narrow ravines. The Alta Murgia National Park is rich in many varieties of bird and flora. Puglia's gently rolling countryside offers views across the plains to the snow capped mountains of del Polino.

This area was once seen as the bridge to the east and resulted in a diverse mix of cultures, arts and history. The region also boasts three UNESCO World Heritage Sites, one of them being the town of Alberobello, famous for its unusual Trulli houses.



# ACCOMMODATION

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

**Tel:** 0039 080 3105199

The 4-star Hotel San Nicola dates back to 1741 when it was a palace of local nobility. It has been beautifully restored and is located in the centre of the picturesque old town of Altamura. It offers our guests traditional Italian hospitality and the historic town is on the doorstep with easy access to its shops and attractions.

**Bedrooms:** There are 27 rooms, all en-suite, tastefully decorated with modern comforts. All rooms have a fridge, telephone, flat screen TV, complementary toiletries and hairdryer. Wi-Fi is available in some public areas. Tea and coffee making facilities are not available in the bedrooms; however hot drinks can be bought from the reception.

**Facilities:** The public areas of this hotel have just undergone a refurbishment providing some seating in the reception area, a new bar and new restaurant.

**Meals:** All our holidays include breakfast and evening meals at local restaurants.

**Breakfast:** Is served from 7am until 10.30am as a continental buffet of cold meat, cheeses and local breads.

**Evening meal:** One of the highlights of this holiday is dining out in Altamura at two restaurants that serve local dishes and specialities. A 3-course dinner will be served at the Tre Archi restaurant and on Saturdays and Wednesdays, we eat in the hotel restaurant which has recently been refurbished. Tre Archi is within easy walking distance of our hotel and guests can experience the "passeggiata", an Italian tradition where the locals with their families and friends walk out in the evening socialising, and take in this unique atmosphere.

**Lunch:** It is possible to buy ingredients from local shops; your leaders will advise you of the options.





# Guided Walking

## ITINERARY

A unique feature of our Guided Walking holidays is the daily choice of walks. Each evening your leaders will give a short talk about the options for the next day and answer any questions that you may have. In Altamura you'll have a choice of two guided walks on each walking day. The cost of the transport to and from your walks each day is included in the cost of your holiday.



**Easier Walks:** 5 to 7 miles (8-11km) on a mixture of paths and tracks with occasional rocky sections. Up to 1,200ft (360m) of ascent in a day.



**Harder Walks:** 6 to 11 miles (9.5-17.5km) on a mixture of paths and tracks with some rocky sections. Up to 1,400ft (420m) of ascent in a day.

Please note that the itinerary outlined below is provisional and could be subject to change. For the most up to date information, please check our website. A finalised itinerary will be available at the resort and your leaders will talk every evening about the next day's walks.

### Day 1: Arrival day

On arrival at Altamura, you will have time to meet your fellow guests over the first evening meal.

### Day 2: Altamura and the Pulo

Today both groups will visit the nearby national park of Alta Murgia to see one of its most spectacular features. A short ride will take us to the 'Pulo' of Altamura, one of the largest dolines in Italy. The caves in this cliff-lined depression were once home to prehistoric man and we may have a chance to descend into one of the caves

to view the doline from the cliffs. The area is a haven for wildlife and flowers, and you may see species of butterfly, orchid, crocus and cyclamen.

**Easier Walk:** We'll start close to the Pulo and, after exploring the northern rim of the depression, will visit a cave dwelling. We will then descend out of the National Park, first more steeply across the limestone, then on gravel paths, through fields of grain, almond and olive groves, towards Altamura. 7 miles (11km) with 150ft (50m) of ascent and 400ft (120m) of descent.



**Harder Walk:** The harder walk starts a little further north of the Pulo. We'll take a longer walk among typical Murgia scenery towards the Pulo, visiting the depression and the caves. We return to our hotel by the same route as the easier walk. 9 miles (14.5km) with 200ft (60m) of ascent and 500ft (150m) of descent.

### Day 3: Sightseeing day: Matera and the Sassi

Both groups will travel to the World Heritage Site of Matera, about 18km from our hotel. We start from the Jazzo Gattini Visitor Centre outside the town and walk through the limestone scenery on the north of the deep Matera Gorge. We visit a number of ancient rock churches and other antiquities and enjoy spectacular views across the gorge to the city. Both groups will then go to the south side of the gorge, where there is an opportunity to visit more troglodyte houses and churches in Matera. Alternatively you could sit and have a drink in one of the many bars in this popular destination. Matera has been selected as European City of Culture for 2019.

The whole group will follow the same route accompanied by an experienced and knowledgeable local guide. Approx 5 miles (8km).

### Day 4: Alta Murgia and Castel Del Monte

A ride of about an hour across the Alta Murgia Park will take us towards our second World Heritage Site of the

week. Castel del Monte stands as a beacon to beckon us forwards and provides a fitting climax for today's walks.

**Easier Walk:** The easier walk starts to the east of the castle and wanders on good tracks through olive groves and past many whitewashed 'Trulli' houses before ascending to the castle itself, where there will be plenty of time to enjoy a drink in the café before visiting the building to speculate on the many oddities of its construction. 5 miles (8km) with 500ft (150m) of ascent.

**Harder Walk:** The harder group will start their walk near the small hamlet of San Magno, southeast of the castle and take a longer route on good tracks throughout to reach the World Heritage Site. This route crosses the heart of the park and offers a chance to see the characteristic vegetation and agriculture of the limestone soils, before joining the route of the easier group. 9 miles (14.5km) with 600ft (180m) of ascent.

### Day 5: Free day

Each week there is 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. Some options for your free day may include:

**Altamura:** You may like to explore the historic town of Altamura, with its spectacular cathedral, archaeological museum, market, shops and ancient walls.







**Alberobello:** Alternatively you may like to join an organised visit to the pretty World Heritage town and tourist hotspot of Alberobello, with its whitewashed 'Trulli' houses.

**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, also known as Santa Claus. There are also many art galleries and, more recently, the futuristic football stadium was a venue for the 1990 World Cup. Local information website: For information on Altamura and the Puglia area please visit [www.viaggiareinpuglia.it/hp/en](http://www.viaggiareinpuglia.it/hp/en)

### Day 6: Gravina in Puglia

Today both groups will enjoy a circular walk from the town of Gravina in Puglia. We walk through archaeological areas occupied from the 5th century BC, amongst olive groves and pastures used by grazing goats. We can also enjoy far-reaching views across the town and beyond. On our return we visit archaeological complexes accompanied by a guide.

**Easier Walk:** From the centre of Gravina we make our way across an ancient aqueduct to the far side of the ravine. We ascend Botromagno Hill, site of an Iron Age hill fort, to a plateau where we can explore a number of archaeological sites. Our walk takes us along tracks and paths with lovely views. On our return to Gravina, we visit the Sottoranea archaeological complex before exploring the town and perhaps enjoying refreshments while awaiting our return transport. 6 miles (9.5km) with 800ft (250m) of ascent.

**Harder Walk:** The harder walk starts just to the south of Gravina and follows tracks and quiet lanes, firstly traversing the flanks of the Serra

Pendino and then going more gently uphill to reach the plateau of Botromagno, where it joins the route of the easier walk. There are opportunities to visit some of the archaeological remains on the plateau before descending to Gravina and joining the easier party to visit the Sottoranea complex and maybe have refreshments before boarding the coach to return to Altamura. 8 miles (13km) with 1,400ft (420m) of ascent.

### Day 7: Mercadante Forest

Today's walks in the Mercadante Forest provide a contrast to the open landscape of the limestone plateau.

**Easier Walk:** Our route starts from a taverna in the forest taking us through the northern edge of this woodland and out to open heathland. We continue to a deserted 'jazzo' before our route heads back into the woods and returns us to the taverna. 6 miles (9.5km) with 400ft (120m) of ascent.

**Harder Walk:** We follow the same route as the easier walk to the deserted 'jazzo'. From here we will continue on the open land south of the forest before heading back into the woodland on good paths to join the easier party for refreshments. 9 miles (14.5km) with 400ft (120m) of ascent.

### Day 8: Departure day

#### In the evenings

In Europe, our walking holidays continue into the evening. Enjoy a glass of wine or local beer whilst listening to your leaders outlining the next day's walks. Your group will be dining at a local restaurant and a leisurely meal you can walk with your leaders for an evening stroll joining the "passeggiata". Relax with a book in a quiet lounge or enjoy a drink at a bar with your fellow walkers talking about your day.

**Your Walking Leaders:** HF Holidays' leaders are a pivotal feature of our walking holidays. During the day they will guide you on the walks in a caring and considerate way, showing you places of interest on the route. All our leaders have been selected on an intensive residential course so you can relax and enjoy your holiday knowing that you are in safe hands. Our leaders welcome your comments on the holiday survey; constructive suggestions are very helpful.

We take pride in the quality of our holidays and work closely with all our providers to ensure our holidays meet your expectations. If for any reason you are not satisfied our leaders are the best people to help.

**Local interest guides:** In some of our resorts we may employ the services of a local interest guide who will accompany you on a walk to enhance your enjoyment of the area by giving you an insight into its history and culture. Tips for local guides have not been included in the price of your holiday. This is at your own discretion and we invite you to do this directly with the local guide.

**Maps:** Your leaders will of course carry all the maps and detailed walk instructions needed for the walks. The maps available for this area are 1:100,000 scale and therefore do not detail many of the walking routes.

**Children:** We welcome unaccompanied children of 14 or over on our walks on the basis that they can take full responsibility for themselves. Children under the age of 14 must be accompanied by an adult.

## WALKING SAFETY

**Hydration:** In warm weather it is very important to keep hydrated. You will need to carry water with you on walks, more during hot weather or on more demanding walks.

One good way of hydrating is to use a hydration pack which allows drinking without constant stopping. This can then be filled up from water sources as required.

**Insurance:** Insurance is a condition of booking. Therefore if you have not already arranged insurance, it is imperative that you do so, and advise us of the insurance company and policy number.

We have negotiated special holiday insurance and full details of this cover can be found in our brochure or at [hfholidays.co.uk](http://hfholidays.co.uk). There is no extra charge for pre-existing illnesses. If you would like to purchase insurance from us please call us on **020 8732 1220** or email [holidayservices@hfholidays.co.uk](mailto:holidayservices@hfholidays.co.uk).

Even with an EHIC card, medicines and out-patient treatment normally have to be paid for at the time and the costs reclaimed afterwards – details are available at [dh.gov.uk/travellers](http://dh.gov.uk/travellers). Therefore insurance is extremely important, as is access to emergency money, preferably a credit card.

**10 | Call 0345 470 7558 or visit [hfholidays.co.uk](http://hfholidays.co.uk)**

## WHAT TO WEAR & BRING

To enjoy your walking comfortably and safely, it is essential that your footwear, clothing and equipment are suitable. Changeable weather is possible throughout the year, so our advice is to come prepared for all eventualities. You will need:

- comfortable outdoor clothing
- waterproof jacket and overtrousers
- ankle supporting footwear with non-slip soles
- small rucksack
- water bottle (at least 2 litres, more for hot climates) and a thermos flask if you wish
- sunhat, sun cream and sunglasses

The following are recommended to all walkers, and are essential for mountainous and hilly areas:

- walking boots
- spare pullover or fleece
- hat and gloves
- spare high-energy food e.g. chocolate bar or Kendal mint cake
- torch

You may also wish to consider bringing:

- walking pole(s) – many guests find these useful, particularly for descents
- camera
- personal first aid kit

**Footwear:** We recommend wearing walking boots on all our walks, as these provide the best ankle support and grip. Modern 'approach shoes' offer appropriate levels of grip and may be worn on some low level walks, but users should be aware that they offer less ankle support. Lightweight trainers, denim jeans and waterproof capes are not recommended for any walks.

## HOLIDAY TIPS

**Language:** Italian

**Currency:** Euro

**Money:** There are several ATM machines in Altamura where you can obtain money.

**Electricity:** 220 Volt AC with round two pin plugs; you will need an adaptor for any appliances brought from the UK.

**Tap water:** Is considered safe to drink, but if you prefer, bottled mineral water can be purchased from the hotel or local supermarkets.

**Telephone code:** If the international number you wish to call starts with a 0, you must drop the starting digit when dialling the number.

To dial a UK number 0044

To dial a Italian number 0039

# linger a little

## LONGER

If you enjoyed your holiday in our destination of Altamura, we recommend our other holiday at our new destination in Catalonian Spain, Roses.

### Two weeks or more

Make the most of your break and enjoy a longer holiday – either two weeks of walking at one resort or by combining complementary holidays, such as Sorrento on the Neapolitan coastline and Altamura, in the undiscovered region of Puglia. We arrange the transfers between the resorts so that you don't have to. See our brochure or website for more information.

### Self-guided Walking

For those who prefer to explore independently, we recommend our Self-guided Walking holidays. In selected

European destinations you can discover unspoiled scenery, historic sites and the local culture at your own pace by following our carefully planned walking routes.

### Leisure Activities

We offer a range of Leisure Activities holidays at some of our European destinations, including Discovery or Garden Tours, Photography, Painting, or Yoga.

### Worldwide

From Alaska to Australia our Worldwide Journeys invite you to explore world famous destinations, and some lesser known gems, on six continents including Europe.

## TRANSFER INFORMATION

If you have booked your holiday 'with flight' you will arrive at Bari Airport. From the UK, we offer flights from London Gatwick. Please note that meals are not provided on most European flights, although some airlines may offer a small snack.

Where possible you will be met as you enter the arrivals hall by an HF Holidays' leader. Your leader may be on the same flight as you or may already be at the airport. Occasionally we will ask our transfer coach company to meet you. The driver will be in the arrivals hall holding an HF Holidays' sign. Please note that where possible we combine our airport transfers and you may have a short wait at the airport for the rest of your group who will be arriving on a different flight. You will be notified of this in your final confirmation letter.

The onward journey to Altamura by coach takes approximately 1 hour.

**For independent travellers:** For guests who have booked their holiday 'without flight' HF Holidays can help you to reach the hotel in the following ways:

**HF Holidays' transfer coach** from Bari airport. These are timed to meet the HF Holidays' flights (provisional HF Holidays' flight times can be found on [www.hfholidays.co.uk](http://www.hfholidays.co.uk) or call **(1)20 8732 1220**). Cost per single journey is €19.50. Please note that HF Holidays is not responsible for your onward travel if you fail to meet the transfer coach under any circumstance.

**Transfer to Sorrento:** You will be transferred direct from Altamura, stopping with time to have a lunch. The journey will be approximately 4 hours.

Our **Airport Taxi** service is available on request. **Transfers and taxis must be pre-booked.** If you have not already booked your transfer or taxi please call **+44 (0)20 8732 1220**

### Airport parking and accommodation

If you require airport parking or accommodation before your flight, we recommend our partner Holiday Extras. Call **0871 360 2603** and quote **HX031** or book online at [holidayextras.co.uk/hfholidays](http://holidayextras.co.uk/hfholidays)



# EXPERTS IN ADVENTURE

SINCE 1913

Call **0345470 7558** | Visit [hfholidays.co.uk](https://www.hfholidays.co.uk)  
Email [reservations@hfholidays.co.uk](mailto:reservations@hfholidays.co.uk)



Share your story

