

BESPOKE ITINERARY - LUXURY - SMALL GROUP

Discover Puglia

"A Gastronomic Immersion"

14 days / 13 Nights

Uniquely Designed Tours
To See More, Taste More & Experience More





Travelling to - Monopoli, Locorotondo, Alberobello, Bari, Matera, Ostuni, Grottaglie, Lecce, Otranto, Gallipoli, Martina Franca, Polignano a Mare

Apulia, or Puglia in Italian, is one of Italy's most magical regions. It is the spur of the boot of the Italian landmass, with an intricately chiseled coastline that often creates an island-style feel. The sense of history here is ubiquitous but never oppressive – vying for your attention is an almost staggering range of sites from prehistory to Magna Graecia, and from the Roman Imperial age to the Renaissance and the Italian Baroque after that.

Tourists usually visit only the most famous Italian cities like Rome, Venice and Florence but there are so many places in Italy less known but rich in art and enchanting landscapes. One of them is Puglia: the hidden treasure of Italy. Puglia, the heel of Italy...is located in the Southern Italy.

It is fast becoming Italy's new hot destination for people who would like to taste the Mediterranean lifestyle. Its mild climate, enchanting landscapes and the healthy Mediterranean diet are exceptionally attractive.

Nature, art, history, ancient traditions, beautiful beaches, excellent food and wine, as well as the proverbial hospitality of its people, are the qualities of Puglia!

Puglia...a beautiful land where the sun becomes wine!

Puglia is one of the top wine producer in Italy. Mild climate, 300 sunny days a year, 800 kms of coastline from the Adriatic Sea to the Ionian Sea, favor the production of high quality of wine grapes that become excellent wines. Puglia has been a crossroads of peoples, each capable of leaving an indelible mark on all the region's cultural aspects and also profoundly impacting the agricultural and winegrowing lands.

We will guide you to taste different types of Apulian wine: Primitivo, Negroamaro, Nero di Troia, Moscato di Trani... and discover the places where they are produced.

With over 30 years of culinary experience, my unique Food Tours focus on old fashioned hospitality, quality, affordable luxury and personalised service. Above all my food tours are created for the traveller who wants to pack a bag and book a ticket. Everything has been taken care of for you.

With small groups up to 10 people, bespoke itineraries, luxury accommodation and your own private chef and local guide, my Food Tours are definitely the best for value and experience offering something different for all travel lovers, solo, couples, young and old. Best of all, for your personal comfort there is no twin sharing unless requested, rooms are all private, fully serviced and with your own ensuite.

Discover Puglia

"A Gastronomic Immersion"

Full Itinerary

Day 1 Welcome to Puglia

We start our first day with a guided walking tour of Bari admiring the Old Quarter and the Signoras who still make the famous Orecchiette on the street. Lunch is a typical menu of local street food in one of our guides favourite restaurants. The afternoon and dinner is free for you to explore the night life of Bari when the streets come alive. (B/L) Overnight in Bari

Day 2 Hand-made Italian bread & Matera UNESCO site

After breakfast we visit Matera, a UNESCO World Heritage Site best known for the Sassi di Matera, an ancient city with houses that have been excavated into the rocks and inhabited since the Stone Age. Rupestrian churches, houses, caves, and ancient streets create a unique and suggestive landscape, where Mel Gibson chose to shoot the movie, The Passion of the Christ.

The food experience today will be in a "panetteria" (bakery). We will learn about the ancient way of preparing the dough and rules of baking DOP bread using the local wheat. DOP - Denominazione d'Origine Protetta | Protected Designation of Origin. The DOP label guarantees that your favorite cheese, prosciutto, olive oil, etc., is produced, processed, and packaged in a specific geographical zone and according to tradition. Each step, from production to packaging, is regulated. You will have an opportunity to taste this local specialty and understand why this bread is one of the best in Italy!

We enjoy a fascinating walking tour through the unique and ancient Sassi di Matera and visit the Casa Grotta museum (ancient cave house) fully furnished as it was in the past. We give you the afternoon to wander Matera on your own, sit and relax in a cafe' enjoy an aperitivo or do a spot of shopping. we return to Bari giving the evening free. (B/L) Overnight in Bari



Day 3 Polignano a Mare with Gelato cooking class

After checking out, we head out to one of the most photographed beaches and the town famous for its hand made gelato - Polignano a Mare. A characteristic Mediterranean fishing village that stands on a rocky cliff with historic houses and terraces directly overlooking the sea. We take a guided tour through the old center of town then we cool down with a fun gelato tasting and gelato making class. You will learn easy recipes and the best techniques for obtaining authentic Italian gelato. When everything is ready you will enjoy your hand-made gelato of course and a lighty lunch typical of Puglian party food! Our afternoon is a beautiful boat tour looking back at the cliffs of Polignano a Mare. We then drive to Monopoli, a typical Mediterranean fishing village located on the Adriatic Sea. A thriving seaport in Byzantine and Norman times, although its strategic position made it the object of regular attacks by pirates. We meet in the evening for our dinner in one of the local restaurants. Overnight in Monopoli. (B/L/D)

Day 4 Monopoli

With a relaxed start to the day we head off for a guided walking tour of Monopoli. Known for the Baroque Monopoli Cathedral, featuring a tall bell tower and an archaeological museum in its crypt with sculptures and ancient tombs, Monopoli boasts over centuries of interesting history and is a perfect place to wander. We stop for a typical seafood lunch and give you the rest of the day free to take a swim, do some shopping or just sit having a drink with stunning views of the sea. Overnight in Monopoli (B/L)

Day 5 Locorotondo – Hand-made mozzarella experience in local farm

After breakfast we head off for a morning visit to the town of Locorotondo perched on top of a hill in Val D'Itria. Locorotondo means 'round place' and this small town is as delightful as its name suggests. Its historical center is picture-perfect: small alleys, cute balconies and dainty corners quietly bask in the Southern Italian sun.

The town has won the coveted award of 'borghi piu' belli di 'Italia', Italy's most beautiful villages, and it is indeed one of the most beautiful small towns in Italy. the old town layout follows a circular plan, with narrow and concentric arranged streets lined with whitewashed houses called Cummerse.

We then move to the countryside and visit a local farm famous for the production of Apulian organic cheese. You will not only taste freshly hand-made mozzarella, burrata and other Apulian cheeses. Mariangela, the owner of the farm, will cook for us a traditional family lunch and she will show you how to make fresh Mozzarella, hand-made of course! The evening is free to further explore Monopoli. Overnight in Monopoli (B/L)



Day 6 Cooking Class and Alberobello

After breakfast we visit one of Italy's most unique towns: Alberobello "the capital of Trulli houses", a world renowned UNESCO site. Trulli are ancient 14th century stone houses with a round shape and a conical roof; they are an icon of the region. In fact, this peaceful part of Southern Italy is the only place in the world where they have ever existed! We lead you through a guided walking tour along the picturesque Trulli district and the Aia Piccola area where some local people still live in these fairytale houses.

We then head to a beautiful Masseria for a fabulous cooking class learning traditional tips to pasta, focaccia and Taralle making. Here we enjoy a fabulous long lunch then return back to Monopoli. Your evening is free. Over night in Monopoli (B/L)

Day 7 Olive oil tasting in local farm & Ostuni "the white city"

Today we will visit a local farm that produces some of the best olive oil. With over 6 million olive trees in Puglia, this is the place for robust virgin oil. We then visit the iconic and much photographed village of Ostuni known as "la città Bianca" (the white city) for its century old houses completely painted in white, a tradition the inhabitants still keep to this day. After our tour you will have free time to wander the streets, take photos or perhaps stop for a coffee and just take in the local Apulian life. Lunch is free in Ostuni and there will be plenty of time for shopping. We then drive to our Masseria, check in and enjoy a wonderful local dinner with Zero miles ingredients. Overnight in our Masseria (B/D)

Day 8 Martina Franca

A perfect time to sleep in, we give you some free time in the morning to ease into the day. The afternoon, we drive to the beautiful town of Martina Franca. Martina Franca is a picturesque town celebrated for its well-preserved Baroque architecture and charming historic center. Encircled by ancient city walls, the town is adorned with ornate buildings, including the stunning Basilica di San Martino. The town's winding cobblestone streets, lively piazzas, and local markets contribute to its vibrant atmosphere, making it a delightful destination for those seeking a blend of cultural richness and Southern Italian charm. We enjoy a walking guided tour and then meet for dinner in one of the local restaurants tucked away in the maze of small cobbled streets. Overnight in our Masseria (B/D)



Day 9 Grottaglie Ceramics and Cooking class

Grottaglie, nestled in the Puglia region of Italy, is a town renowned for its historical significance in ceramics and pottery production. The town's name itself, derived from "grotta" (cave), reflects the presence of numerous caves in the area that were traditionally used as workshops. Today, Grottaglie's Old Town is a labyrinth of narrow streets adorned with vibrant ceramics, showcasing the town's artistic heritage. The Quartiere delle Ceramiche is a must-visit, where artisans craft intricate pottery, from traditional earthenware to contemporary art pieces. Grottaglie's annual Ceramics. We visit a couple of ceramic studios and give you some free time to wander. We return to our Masseria for an afternoon cooking class and dinner. Overnight at Masseria (B/D)

Day 10 Vineyards, Wine Tasting & Lecce "the Florence of the Southern Italy"

After breakfast and our Hotel check-out, we drive to Salento known as "the heel of the boot" and the most Southern part of Puglia. On the way to our next Hotel in Lecce, we will stop and visit a local winery with a tour of the vineyard, wine production and cellar. We will be treated to a private lunch with matching wines and tasting the best of country Puglia.

We arrive in Lecce with its century old churches and elegant noble buildings showcasing why Lecce is the capital of the Baroque art in the South of Italy. For this reason, Lecce is called "the Florence of the Southern Italy". We explore the city by foot with a guided tour through the historical center visiting the Duomo of Lecce, the Roman amphitheater and the beautiful Basilica of Santa Croce. Lecce has a lot to offer for foodies! One of the local specialties that you can't miss is the typical Pasticciotto Lecce (a sweet pastry filled with delicious cream and cooked in the oven). We check in to our hotel in the center of town perfect for you to head out and explore this beautiful walled city. We meet later for a light dinner in one of the local iconic restaurants known for its traditional home cooking. (B/L/D)

Day 11 Lecce Market tour and Cooking Class

Walking from our hotel we meet celebrated local foodie to take us on a food adventure with a market visit and cooking class to celebrate Salento's local fare. The afternoon is a walking tour of Lecce with appetitive and light dinner to finish the day. Overnight in Lecce (B/L/ Light Dinner)



Day 12 Gallipoli

A day to pack your swimmers and towel. We drive to one of Puglia's most loved towns is on the island of Gallipoli. Gallipoli, situated on the Ionian coast of Puglia, is a captivating blend of history, seaside beauty, and vibrant culture. The town is divided into two parts– the historic Old Town on a limestone island, connected to the mainland by a 17th-century bridge. The Old Town, surrounded by ancient walls, boasts narrow streets, Baroque architecture, and a picturesque harbor. Gallipoli's beaches, like Spiaggia della Purità, offer crystalline waters and sandy shores. We enjoy a fabulous shared table lunch in a much loved osteria and then head back to Lecce giving you the evening free. Overnight in Lecce. (B/L)

Day 13 Otranto

Our trip starts with the visit of Otranto, the eastern point of Italy, and also called “the door to the East”. We enjoy a walking tour through the historical town and visit of the ancient cathedral famous for its grandiose mosaic floor depicting the Tree of Life with images decorating its spreading branches created in the 12th century. We give you free time for lunch to wander the narrow streets of Otranto "centro storico" and admire the impressive panorama of the blue-green Adriatic Sea. We return to Lecce in the late afternoon and meet you later in the evening for our final dinner in a local restaurant focused on typical traditional Apulian recipes. Overnight in Lecce (B/D)

Day 14 Departure

After breakfast, we bid you farewell and arrange your private transfer to the airport/train station. We wish you well for your onward journey and hope you have enjoyed your tour to Puglia. (B)





Discover Puglia - A Gastronomic Journey 14 Days 13 Nights

Price Includes

- Fully escorted tour, 14 days, 13 nights in the beautiful scenic surrounds of Puglia and the Itria Valley, the food bowl of the southern region, forming the heel of Italy's "boot,"
- Specialised escorted service of Chef Dominique Rizzo, Director and Curator of Pure Food, Wine Culture Tours
- Private Italian Guides for 13 days
- Group pick up transfer from Bari Airport on the tour start date
- Transfer to Bari or Brindisi Airport/train station or hotel on the tour finish date
- Air-conditioned private transport with our own private driver
- All accommodation and hotel taxes in 4 Star Hotels/Masseria and Spa Resorts selected for their personalised service, amenities, locations and their food
- All Private, escorted visits and tastings
- Meals - All breakfasts are provided, 9 lunches and 7 dinners are also included, some morning/afternoon teas and aperitives are provided as stated- where lunches/dinners are not provided, morning activities, tastings and included lunches and dinners are of ample abundance
- Beverages - All beverages with meals including wine, beer, juice, soft drink, tea and coffee are provided
- All guided tours as specified in the tour are included
- All transfers by bus, car, taxi as specified in the tour itinerary are included
- Admission to all historical sites, galleries and museums mentioned in the itinerary are included

Highlights

- Visit of a local farm with organic hand-made Mozzarella and Apulian cheeses tasting
- Apulian cooking class with chef
- Apulian cooking class in Masseria with Extra virgin olive oil tasting
- Bakery experience in Matera
- Visit of a local farmhouse with tasting of Apulian typical food
- Visit of a local winery with Apulian wines tasting
- Gelato cooking class in typical Italian Gelateria
- Pasticciotto tasting in Lecce
- Guided walking Tours of Monopoli, Locorotondo, Alberobello UNESCO Site, Bari, Matera UNESCO Site, Ostuni, Lecce, Otranto and Polignano a Mare
- Free time to explore, shop and relax and much more...

The fee does not include

- Airfares
- Everything not included in itinerary (Tour Inclusions)
- General expenses - phone calls, laundry, room upgrades
- Transfers outside of the tour dates, personal transport outside the tour dates, excess baggage, security and government taxes outside the tour dates
- Beverages and meals outside of described "Tour Inclusions"
- Room service beverages and meals when not participating in the scheduled meals
- Hotel City Tax - approximately 2 euro per person per night to pay directly to hotel reception
- Travel and medical Insurance

Sharing the Love of Food

Why Past Clients Love My Food Tours

Best quality of food...loved every minute of it"

To experience Dominique's Food Tour is to experience Sicily at its best, from the best quality of food, amazing lunches at Acireale with luscious figs wrapped in smoked salmon, and tasting delicious olives, cheese, salami and bread for lunch in the olive grove. It wasn't just the food that was amazing, there was the experience of the fish market in Catania, the boat trip around the Aeolian Islands topped off with Stromboli erupting. We loved every minute of it and learnt so much about Sicily from Dom and Gian Luca, the guide. Jay and Igor Gold Coast, Australia.



"A true holiday...more than a taste, an absolute feast"

The promotional material for the Western Sicily Food and Wine Cooking Tour, as usual, promised a wonderful experience. We, however, were treated to so much more than we could ever imagine and it was far beyond our wildest expectations. The exceptional planning and execution of the tour made for a most memorable time. The tour, fully escorted by Dominique Rizzo and her capable and friendly team, left us wanting for nothing. The diversity and quality of the food, drinks, accommodation and places of interest were superb. A true holiday! More than a taste – an absolute feast! Well, what a wonderful tour we had with Dom. It exceeded all our expectations and fulfilled our dreams.

G & B Mayes Toowoomba, Australia



"Very hard for us to top that holiday!"

Our cooking is progressing really well - a big improvement in confidence level since our classes in Sicily. We have repeated the chicken dish we cooked during your class and it is now a regular. Also working through the cookbook and I did a very small dinner party for my sister and husband for their 40th wedding anniversary last week. I tackled the potato cake which was fun to cook and actually looked great along with the zucchini carpaccio and Sicilian-style steak. Best wishes for your ventures and adventures and thank you for orchestrating the wonderful time we had on our trip in July. It will be very hard for us to top that holiday!

Carmel and Richard Brisbane, Australia





"I have never eaten and drank so much"

Words cannot describe the amazing experience we had. An all-expense paid holiday seeing the most amazing sights and history and FOOD, FOOD, FOOD! My goodness, I have never eaten and drank so much food and wine, all whilst sitting in the most beautiful environments. It was something we will never forget.

Nicholas Sydney, Australia



"An amazing tour...well organised and relaxing"

I wanted to thank you for an amazing tour. You are gorgeous, personable and fun, and together with Gianluca and Fortunato make a fantastic team. I had so many wonderful experiences, the tour was well organised and relaxing. And what a lovely, friendly group of fellow travellers. Carroll, Australia



"You have thought of everything."

The planning and organisation of all the events and the food we consumed was amazing; you have thought of everything. Thank you for your patience and friendliness, I felt extremely comfortable and at ease with you and everyone else on the tour.

Comerford, Wagga Wagga Australia



"Experience that we will never forget"

What a wonderful time we have had on Dominique Rizzo's Food, Wine and Cooking tour. We just hadn't expected Sicily to be so beautiful. It was really a magnificent and pleasurable experience that we will never forget. Ancora mille grazie e buon viaggio for the next trip.

Julie and Peter, Brisbane, Australia

TRAVEL WITH DOMINIQUE RIZZO TO EXPERIENCE THE BEST

Food, Wine and Culture Tour

The menus, selected restaurants and dining experiences are hand chosen to give you a variety of tastes and flavours allowing you to experience foods from the land, sea, city and mountain. We consciously include zero kilometre venues and restaurants with Slow Food accolades who support sustainability, preservation of tradition and local produce.

Our 4 & 5 star Hotels, Resorts and country style accommodation is also personally selected for not only its quality, but also its location, services, hospitality and the relationships we have built up over the years. We want to ensure you are not only very comfortable and relaxed but you also get to experience all aspects of a regions terrain and lifestyle.

Our guides are personally selected for their knowledge of the regions, their spoken English and their humour. This ensures you enjoy informative, interesting and fun guided tours. We do when necessary use whispers or small group microphones to ensure you can wander at your own pace without missing out on understanding the history and unique aspects of each area we visit.

We are not about racing you around the country. We prefer to stay in each of the accommodation for a minimum of 2 -4 nights giving you an opportunity to unpack and settle in. Moderate walking is involved on guided tours, we can certainly accommodate people who are a little slower on their feet. Luggage services are available to assist with retrieving luggage off and on our bus and to and from the hotels/rooms if required.

The places we visit do include some of the main tourist sites of a region. Although unique to Dominique Rizzo Tours are the sights and activities that are personally booked for these tours alone. You will not find these on any other Tour.

We include everything! Even days and evenings off from the tour for you to relax on your own or to further explore a destination. There are no hidden costs, add ons or payments that are further required to complete the full itinerary. You are welcome to opt out of any of the activities to do your own thing, although we have selected each of the activities to give you an opportunity to see, do and taste as much of Sicily as possible with siesta time in-between.

Our tours suit couples, singles and people of all ages. Our tours are privately booked with a minimum of 10 and maximum of 14 guests so that you get personalised attention, comfort when travelling and opportunity to visit boutique establishments, restaurants, and unique venues not suitable for large number tours.

We can certainly cater for dietary intolerances and can accommodate coeliac, dairy free and vegetarians. Our cooking classes are for everyone from the novice cook to the budding chef and are fun and informative giving you an opportunity to pick up some new skills and learn about the cuisine.

Chef Dominique Rizzo has been running her Sicilian Tours for over 10 years and is a complete professional with an attention to detail and service. On tour she is on call to assist you anyway she can. This tour is about creating a memorable travel experience of a lifetime for YOU. Our desire is for you to enjoy a relaxing holiday where you can get the most out your time away. We have selected the best so you can completely immerse yourself in the culture, lifestyle, food and wine of a region.