

JUNE 22–29, 2026

Puglia

Bari · Valle d'Itria · Matera · Lecce · Otranto

HOTELS	CONFIRMED DINNER	TRANSPORT
Le Terrazze Suites, Bari Borgo Canonica, Cisternino Palazzo Paisiello, Lecce	Trattoria Le Zie Jun 26 · 7:30 PM Cash only	Rental car Parking rule: always park outside & walk in

AT-A-GLANCE ROUTE

Date	Base	Focus
Jun 22	Le Terrazze Suites, Bari	Arrival, Bari Vecchia, first seafood dinner
Jun 23	Borgo Canonica, Cisternino	Polignano short stop, Abbazia di San Vito, Cala Incina, Monopoli
Jun 24	Borgo Canonica, Cisternino	Alberobello, Locorotondo, Martina Franca, Cisternino dinner
Jun 25	Borgo Canonica, Cisternino	Gravina in Puglia + Matera day trip
Jun 26	Palazzo Paisiello, Lecce	Ostuni, optional Carovigno -> Lecce -- Trattoria Le Zie 7:30 PM
Jun 27	Palazzo Paisiello, Lecce	Grotta della Poesia, Torre Sant'Andrea, Otranto, Porto Badisco
Jun 28	Le Terrazze Suites, Bari	Transfer north, last dinner, airport-ready
Jun 29	--	8:30 AM Bari flight -- leave hotel 6:00 AM

RESTAURANT BOOKINGS AT A GLANCE

Restaurant	Status	Contact
Trattoria Le Zie, Lecce	Confirmed Jun 26, 7:30 PM	Cash only -- +39 0832 245178
La Tana del Polpo, Bari	Book now -- phone only	+39 080 975 3338 -- Via Vallisa 50/51
Borgo Canonica dinner	Ask at check-in	Pick one of 3 nights
Alle Due Corti, Lecce	Book on arrival	+39 0832 242223
La Locanda dei Mercanti, Monopoli	Night before	Call evening of Jun 22
Al Vecchio Fornello, Cisternino	Walk in	Fornelli pronti -- just point
Pescaria, Monopoli	Walk in	Queue, don't book

Trattoria Le Zie: cash only -- bring euros. To book by phone: "Vorrei prenotare un tavolo per due persone per [day] alle [time]."

DAY 1

Arrive in Bari

Monday, June 22 · Le Terrazze Suites

Drive	Airport → city ~20 min
Energy	Light first day — let the city come to you
Route	Bari Vecchia Walking Route — all on foot, ~2-3 hrs

H

Le Terrazze Suites

Start here

1

Panificio Fiore or Panificio Santa Rita

Focaccia barese, bakery since 1508. Go before 9 AM for the best slab.

2

Strada delle Orecchiette (Via dell'Arco Basso)

Nonnas sit in doorways rolling orecchiette by hand and selling it direct. Pure street theatre — go before midday, they pack up after.

3

Basilica di San Nicola + Crypt

One of the great Norman churches of Italy. Go inside and down into the crypt — candlelit, Byzantine, deeply atmospheric. Free entry.

4

Cattedrale di San Sabino

10 min walk from San Nicola. Less visited, arguably more beautiful inside. Extraordinary carved details.

5

Castello Svevo di Bari

Walk the seafront to the Norman-Swabian castle. The exterior at dusk is the best free moment in Bari.

6

Lungomare Nazario Sauro

Sunset walk to end the day, views over the old port.

FOOD & DRINK

- **Focaccia barese** — thick, olive-oil-soaked, tomato-topped. Eat it from a panificio, not a tourist café.
- **Orecchiette con cime di rapa** — the iconic Pugliese pasta. Order it everywhere you see it.
- **Panzerotto** — deep-fried half-moon pastry with mozzarella and tomato. Eat standing up, hot from the fryer.
- **La Tana del Polpo** — dinner. Book ahead: +39 080 975 3338 (phone only, Via Vallisa 50/51). Walk-in: arrive 7:30 PM sharp.
- **Mastro Ciccio** — faster street-food option if a casual arrival night is preferred.

SHOPS & LOCAL FINDS

- **Terra e Fuoco / Sig. Cilea** — ceramics studio in Bari Vecchia. Buy a traditional pumo here, not from a tourist stall — Alessandra treats walk-ins like family.
- **Scenario & Bidonville** — best independent/vintage stores in Bari, in the Murat quarter.
- **Take home** — DOP olive oil, taralli, dried orecchiette, Primitivo wine, capocollo, vincotto.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ★ The Basilica di San Nicola crypt is one of the most atmospheric spaces on the whole trip — candlelit, Byzantine, usually quiet.
- ★ Walk the lungomare south past the castello at dusk. The light on the old port is one of the best free moments of the trip.
- ★ Strada delle Orecchiette: go before 10 AM or the nonnas pack up.

TIPS

Bari Vecchia is completely safe and walkable — the maze of alleys is part of the experience. Don't avoid it.
Parking: use hotel parking or a garage. Don't drive into the old-town core.

DAY 2

Polignano, San Vito, Cala Incina, Monopoli

Tuesday, June 23 · Sleep: Borgo Canonica, Cisternino

Drive

Bari → Polignano 40 min → Monopoli 15 min → Borgo Canonica 45-55 min

Energy

Scenic coastal day — pretty stops and first swim

H

Le Terrazze Suites, Bari

Depart morning

1

Polignano a Mare

Cliffside viewpoint, keep short, arrive before 9 AM

2

Abbazia di San Vito

Quiet harbor + abbey, less tourists than Polignano, give it more time

3

Cala Incina

Rocky cove swim, bring water shoes

4

Monopoli

Main lingering stop, long lunch, harbor walk, old town

MONOPOLI IN DETAIL

- **Porto Vecchio & the harbor** — walk the harbor edge from the seafront side; fishing boats, Carlo V Castle reflected in the water.
- **Castello Carlo V** — walk the exterior and terrace for views over the port.
- **Cathedral of the Madonna della Madia** — airy baroque cathedral; the Byzantine icon is said to have arrived on a raft from the sea.
- **Old town alleys** — far less touristy than Polignano; local bakeries, small bars, everyday life unperformed.

FOOD & DRINK

- **Burrata** — you're in the heartland. Eat it fresh, slightly warm, with local bread.
- **Pescaria (Monopoli)** — gourmet fish sandwich. Queue, don't book. Walk in.
- **La Locanda dei Mercanti** — sit-down lunch. Call the evening before.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ★ Polignano is heavily Instagram-trampled in June. Go before 9 AM or cut it short. Abbazia di San Vito gives the same dramatic mood with almost nobody there.
- ★ Don't feel pressure to swim if the towns absorb you — you have better, quieter water on Day 6.
- ★ Ask about on-property dinner at Borgo Canonica at check-in tonight.

TIPS

Polignano: park outside the historic center and walk in.

Monopoli: outer-port or edge-of-center. White lines free, blue lines paid.

DAY 3

Valle d'Itria, Cisternino Dinner

Wednesday, June 24 · Sleep: Borgo Canonica, Cisternino

Drive Countryside loop ~1 hr total

Note Borgo Canonica is 6 min from Cisternino — no stress after dinner

H

Borgo Canonica

Depart morning

1

Alberobello

Rione Monti + Aia Piccola, 1 hr max, go early

2

Locorotondo

Main lingering stop, circular belvedere, white lanes, local wine

3

Martina Franca (optional)

Baroque contrast, buy capocollo here

4

Cisternino, evening

Arrive ~6:30 PM, aperitivo + fornelli pronti dinner

ALBEROBELLO -- BRIEF STOP

- **Rione Monti (go early)** — the iconic trulli district. Before 9 AM the lanes feel ancient rather than commercial.
- **Rione Aia Piccola** — cross the road from Rione Monti. Almost no shops, just whitewashed cones and local residents. Most tourists never find it.
- **Then leave** — an hour is enough. Save your time for Locorotondo.

LOCOROTONDO -- MAIN STOP

- **The circular belvedere** — walk the outer ring road for panoramic views over the Valle d'Itria: trulli, vineyards, olive groves in every direction.
- **Via Nardelli and Via Morelli** — whitewashed lanes, flowers on balconies, cats on steps. Almost no tourists.
- **Locorotondo DOC on the ridge** — sit at a bar on the belvedere with a glass of local white wine and look out over the valley. The most "Puglia" moment of Day 3.

FOOD & DRINK

- **Fornelli pronti, Cisternino** — Al Vecchio Fornello or Rosticceria L'Antico Borgo. Walk in, point at the butcher counter, sit, eat.
- **Bombette** — small pork rolls stuffed with cheese and herbs, grilled over wood coals. The valley's signature dish.
- **Locorotondo DOC** — crisp white wine from Verdeca grapes. Order at any bar on the belvedere.
- **Capocollo di Martina Franca** — the valley's prized smoked cured meat. Buy vacuum-packed at any Martina Franca butcher.

SHOPS & LOCAL FINDS

- **Locorotondo DOC wine** — buy a bottle or two at any local enoteca to drink at Borgo Canonica.

- **Capocollo from a macelleria in Martina Franca** — vacuum-packed, travels well.
- **Taralli** — sesame, fennel, or chili varieties. Every alimentari has them. Perfect car snack.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ★ Rione Aia Piccola (across the road from Rione Monti) is far more authentic — most tourists never go there.
- ★ Locorotondo in late afternoon golden light is the most beautiful moment of Day 3. Time it right.
- ★ One morning at Borgo Canonica with no plan — coffee, olive trees, nowhere to be — is worth more than one more town.

TIPS

Fornelli pronti: arrive between 7-8 PM. Walk in, look at the butcher counter, and point.

All towns: park outskirts, walk up. Alberobello: outskirts, walk uphill.

DAY 4

Gravina in Puglia + Matera

Thursday, June 25 · Sleep: Borgo Canonica, Cisternino

Drive ~1 hr 20 min to Matera; Gravina is 30 min before it on the same road

Energy Big day — two extraordinary places

H

Borgo Canonica

Depart morning

1

Gravina in Puglia

1 hr stop, bridge viewpoint, cathedral, cave churches

2

Matera

Full day, Sassi Barisano + Caveoso, cathedral, viewpoint

GRAVINA IN PUGLIA -- 1 HR STOP

- **Ponte Viadotto** — the famous bridge with dramatic gorge views. Park nearby and walk from here.
- **Cathedral of Gravina** — 13th-century cathedral, usually empty. Extraordinary carved detail. Ancient frescoes in the crypt.
- **Cave churches in the ravine (if time)** — rupestrian churches carved into the rock face, some dating to the 8th century.

MATERA -- FULL DAY (RIGHT ORDER MATTERS)

- **FIRST: Belvedere di Murgia Timone** — before entering the Sassi, drive across the ravine (10 min). The panorama from the opposite cliff is the photograph you've seen. Let it land before you descend.
- **Piazza Vittorio Veneto** — park here and look over the rim into the canyon. Then descend on foot.
- **Sasso Barisano** — the more restored, livelier Sassi district. Follow the lanes, take random detours, get completely lost.
- **Church of San Pietro Barisano** — one of the largest rupestrian churches in Matera. A few euros entry.
- **Matera Cathedral on the Civita** — the 1268 cathedral on the rocky promontory between the Sassi.
- **Sasso Caveoso + Santa Maria de Idris** — rawer, steeper, more atmospheric. Built into a rocky spike, extraordinary frescoes inside.
- **Piazzetta Pascoli belvedere** — best viewpoint within the Sassi. Stay for sunset if you're having dinner here.

FOOD & DRINK

- **Crapia** — humble legume and grain soup, the traditional dish of Matera. Order in a cave restaurant.
- **Pane di Matera IGP** — extraordinary sourdough with durum wheat semolina. Buy a loaf, it keeps for days.
- **Peperoni cruschi** — dried sweet peppers fried crispy. Hard to find outside Basilicata.
- **Aglianico del Vulture** — the great red wine of Basilicata. Order it with the crapiata.

RECOMMENDATIONS

★ Drive to Belvedere di Murgia Timone FIRST — the panorama from the opposite rim is the single best view of Matera.

★ Matera is better absorbed than over-programmed. Two hours of slow wandering in Sasso Caveoso beats a rushed checklist.

★ If the Sassi move you, seriously consider staying for sunset and dinner rather than driving back early.

TIPS

Wear real shoes in Matera — the Sassi are steep and uneven. Not sandals.

Entry to the open-air Sassi is free. Cave churches: 3-5 euro each. Palombaro Lungo cistern: 5 euro, worth it.

Parking: outside the Sassi and walk.

DAY 5

Ostuni, Carovigno (opt.), Lecce

Friday, June 26 · Sleep: Palazzo Paisiello, Lecce

Drive Borgo Canonica → Ostuni 20-30 min; Ostuni → Lecce ~1 hr

Dinner Trattoria Le Zie, Lecce — 7:30 PM, cash only, bring euros

H

Borgo Canonica

Checkout, depart morning

1

Ostuni centro storico

Morning, cathedral, white maze, panoramic terrace

2

Palazzo Paisiello, Lecce

Check in, evening wander, Trattoria Le Zie 7:30 PM

OSTUNI -- MORNING

- **Park outskirts, walk uphill** — the moment the white city appears above you is worth the walk.
- **Cathedral of Ostuni** — one of the most beautiful late-Gothic churches in Puglia. Free entry.
- **The white maze** — no route, just wander upward. Every alley rewards curiosity.
- **Northern panoramic terrace** — views over the Valle d'Itria to the Adriatic on a clear day.

LECCE EVENING WALK

- **Enter through Porta Napoli** — the triumphal baroque gate. Start here.
- **Basilica di Santa Croce** — the greatest baroque facade in Lecce. Stare at it longer than feels reasonable.
- **Church of Sant'Irene + Celestini courtyard** — just beside Santa Croce. Usually completely empty.
- **Piazza del Duomo at dusk** — one of the most beautiful enclosed piazzas in Italy.
- **Piazza Sant'Oronzo + Roman Amphitheatre** — lively central square, 2nd-century amphitheatre excavated below street level.
- **Trattoria Le Zie** — 7:30 PM, your confirmed reservation. Cash only.

FOOD & DRINK

- **Friselle (Ostuni)** — barley ring soaked in water, topped with tomatoes and olive oil.
- **Pasticciotto leccese** — short-crust pastry filled with custard cream, eaten warm for breakfast.
- **Caffè leccese** — cold espresso over almond milk and ice.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ★ If you love Ostuni, drop Carovigno entirely and arrive in Lecce with the afternoon free.
- ★ Specchia — a tiny hilltop village 30 min south of Lecce, almost no tourists. Good detour if energy allows.
- ★ Your first Lecce evening: just wander before dinner. Piazza del Duomo after dark, don't miss it.

TIPS

Trattoria Le Zie is CASH ONLY — make sure you have euros before dinner.

Lecce: park outside the ZTL walls and walk everywhere.

Ostuni: go in the morning — gets very hot in late June.

DAY 6

Grotta della Poesia, Otranto, Torre Sant'Andrea

Saturday, June 27 · Sleep: Palazzo Paisiello, Lecce

Drive Lecce → Grotta ~35 min; → Otranto ~25 min; Torre Sant'Andrea nearby

Energy Best swim-and-coast day — start early

H

Palazzo Paisiello, Lecce

Depart early

1

Grotta della Poesia / Roca Vecchia

Ancient sea cave, 3,000 years of inscriptions, arrive early

2

Torre Sant'Andrea

Natural limestone arches, no facilities, stunning

3

Otranto

Cathedral mosaic + castle + old town, allow 2-3 hrs

4

Porto Badisco (optional)

Tiny fishing cove 10 min south, no beach clubs

OTRANTO IN DETAIL

- **Enter through Porta Alfonsina** — the main medieval gate.
- **Cathedral (allow 45 min)** — the floor mosaic (128 sq metres, 1163) is the largest medieval mosaic in Europe. Also: the Chapel of the Martyrs and the ancient-column crypt below.
- **Aragonese Castle** — walk the exterior and terrace for views over the port and Adriatic.
- **Old town lanes to the port** — tiny whitewashed alleys opening onto glimpses of blue water.

FOOD & DRINK

- **Fritto misto di mare** — mixed fried seafood. Otranto is a fishing town.
- **Local rosé (rosato)** — dry Negramaro rosé from Salento.
- **L'Ortale or Peccato di Vino** — slightly off the touristy waterfront.

SHOPS -- OTRANTO

- **Coral jewellery** — look for small goldsmiths in the lanes behind the cathedral.
- **Local ceramics** — small shops in the old town with Byzantine and coastal motifs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ★ Grotta della Poesia: ancient graffiti spanning 3,000 years — give it real time, not a quick look.
- ★ Otranto cathedral floor mosaic: one of the great medieval artworks in Europe. Don't rush it.
- ★ Torre Sant'Andrea: natural limestone arches, turquoise water, no facilities. Don't skip.

TIPS

Start early — Grotta della Poesia and Torre Sant'Andrea both fill up as the day progresses.

Parking — Grotta: roadside, arrive early. Otranto: outer lots.

DAY 7

Lecce Morning, Drive to Bari

Sunday, June 28 · Sleep: Le Terrazze Suites, Bari

Drive Lecce → Bari ~2 hr, leave late morning

Energy Low-stress — last Lecce morning

H

Palazzo Paisiello

Breakfast at Caffè Paisiello — pasticciotto + caffè leccese

1

Museo Faggiano

5,000 years of layered history under a family basement, book ahead online

2

Claudio Riso cartapesta studio

Via Vittorio Emanuele II, watch the craft, buy direct

3

Church of San Matteo + Sant'Irene

Unique curved facade, empty baroque courtyard, if time allows

LECCE SHOPPING -- DO THIS MORNING

- **Claudio Riso (Via Vittorio Emanuele II)** — most famous cartapesta (papier-mâché) master in Lecce.
- **Pierpaolo Gaballo (Via Arte della Cartapesta 15)** — more contemporary cartapesta.
- **Local wine shops / enoteche** — Negramaro, Primitivo, Salice Salentino DOC to take home.
- **Almond products** — pasta di mandorle, almond paste fruits from any old-town pasticceria.
- **Lace / tombolo** — handmade bobbin lace, a Lecce tradition.

BARI -- FINAL EVENING

- Check back into Le Terrazze Suites. Drop the car if your rental plan allows.
- Spend the afternoon loosely — one more old-town walk, shopping, or a long slow coffee on the lungomare.
- Last dinner in Bari — a glass of wine on the lungomare and wherever looks good is the right energy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ★ Museo Faggiano is genuinely one of the most extraordinary small museums you'll visit anywhere. Don't skip it.
- ★ This is your last chance for cartapesta. Claudio Riso's studio is worth the visit even just to watch the craft.

TIPS

Leave Lecce late morning — no need to rush. Easy Bari drive.

Pack the car and settle hotel charges the night before.

DAY 8

Departure

Monday, June 29

Flight Bari departure at 8:30 AM

Leave hotel 6:00-6:15 AM

Drive ~15-20 min to the airport

- Pack the car and settle any hotel charges the night before.
- Keep breakfast expectations low — prioritise a calm airport run.
- If returning a rental car, build in a little extra buffer.

Buon viaggio.

DAY Ref

Quick Reference

Hotels · swim spots · parking · restaurants

CONFIRMED HOTELS

Hotel	Nights	Notes
Le Terrazze Suites, Bari	Jun 22 & 28	Request AC confirmation at check-in. Near lungomare.
Borgo Canonica, Cisternino	Jun 23-25	Ask about on-property dinner at check-in. Beautiful trulli rooms, pool.
Palazzo Paisiello, Lecce	Jun 26-27	Breakfast at Caffè Paisiello directly outside. Steps from Santa Croce. Rated 9.6.

HIDDEN SWIM SPOTS

Spot	Day	Notes
Abbazia di San Vito	Day 2	Scenic harbor cove. More photogenic than swimming.
Cala Incina	Day 2	Rocky local cove. Bring water shoes.
Torre Sant'Andrea	Day 6	Natural limestone arches. Scramble down from roadside. Stunning.
Grotta della Poesia	Day 6, early	Sea cave + ancient inscriptions. Go early.
Porto Badisco	Day 6, opt.	Tiny fishing cove. No beach clubs.

PARKING BY STOP

Stop	Approach
Bari	Hotel parking or garage. Don't drive into old-town core.
Polignano a Mare	Outside historic center, walk in.
Monopoli	Outer-port or edge-of-center.
Alberobello / Locorotondo / Ostuni	Outskirts lots -- walk up.
Gravina in Puglia	Near the Ponte Viadotto bridge viewpoint.
Matera	Outside the Sassi and walk. Most important here.
Lecce	Outside the walls -- walk into center.
Otranto	Outer lots, walk to old town.

White lines = free, blue lines = paid. ZTL zones: if it feels too easy to drive into the pretty part, you're probably not supposed to.

RESTAURANT SHORTLIST

Area	Shortlist
Bari	La Tana del Polpo (+39 080 975 3338, phone only) - Mastro Ciccio
Monopoli	La Locanda dei Mercanti - Pescaria
Cisternino	Al Vecchio Fornello - Rosticceria L'Antico Borgo
Lecce	Trattoria Le Zie (Jun 26, 7:30 PM) - Alle Due Corti
Otranto	L'Ortale - Peccato di Vino