



## **PUGLIA IN THE SPRING 2020 (Preliminary Program)**

**APRIL 20-27, 2020**

**Leave USA on April 19 for overnight flight**

Spring comes early to the Mediterranean and in Puglia, the heel of Italy's boot, the wild flowers and blossom are out and the crowds are still months away. It's already warm enough, on a fine day, to have lunch outside. Food is one of Puglia's main draws. Most of Italy's pasta and olive oil is made here, but it's the raw ingredients – the greenest vegetables, the sweetest fruit - that have put Puglia on the foodie map. Criss-crossed by groves of gnarled old olive trees and stone walls, the interior is largely flat and, by summer, bleached. The coast is alternately straight, with windswept sandy beaches, and rugged, with rocky coves. The light is sharp, the Adriatic Sea cobalt-blue. It could be Greece. In the seventh century BC, it was – at least, the Greeks colonized it. All of Puglia is too much for a short break, so stick to the Salentine Peninsula for sea air, good food and the baroque architecture of Lecce. This is your trip!



**FOR DETAILS CALL US 401.273.2652**

## PROGRAM

### ▪ DAY 1 MONDAY APRIL 20 / BRINDISI

**Morning arrival at Brindisi Airport** / Chef Walter and our deluxe transportation will be waiting for you at the Terminal. Check at **Masseria Salamina in Pezze di Greco**, about 1 hour drive from Brindisi Salento airport welcome cocktail and free time to enjoy the territory and get acquainted with your surroundings. **Welcome cocktail followed by dinner** in the evening with menu selections coordinated by Chef Walter and resident Chefs. **The Masseria Salamina will remain our residence for next 3 nights.**

**Inclusions:** *Welcome Cocktail and Dinner / Overnight Lodging*

### ▪ DAY 2 TUESDAY APRIL 21 / BRINDISI AND CELLINO SAN MARCO

Our first morning in Puglia will begin with a continental **breakfast** in the lobby of our hotel. We'll depart toward the **Tenuta Albano Carrisi in Curtipitrizzi** area outside Cellino San Marco; Tenute Al Bano is in the Salento countryside. Set between the Ionian Sea and Adriatic Sea, it is a comfortable short drive from our hotel. Owned by famous Italian singer Albano Carrisi, in the tenuta you will be invited to participate in a walk-through the tenuta, followed by a Puglia-style **Lunch with Tenuta Carrisi's own wines at restaurant Don Carmelo**. In the afternoon we will return to Brindisi, for a guided tour of the city. Brindisi faces the gentle waves of the Adriatic Sea, its natural port nestling into the mainland in the shape of a deer's head. Its long inner piers have been transformed into an elegant seafront, framing the old town, which today teems with pubs and restaurants. Visitors can immerse themselves in Brindisi's history going up the Scalinata di Virgilio (Virgil's Staircase), with the two Roman columns at the top and many more noticeable historical noteworthy locations. After the tour we'll stop for a **Wine tasting and some great tasting bites at Enoteca Anelli** in the heart of Brindisi. Return to Masseria Salamina for the overnight.

**Inclusions:** *Breakfast / Lunch / Wine tasting with food*



### • DAY 3 WEDNESDAY APRIL 22 / LECCE and SALICE SALENTINO

Continental **breakfast** served in the lobby of our hotel. This morning we will go to Lecce, known as the Florence of South. If Puglia were a movie, Lecce would be cast in the starring role.

Bequeathed with a generous stash of baroque buildings by its 17th-century architects, the city has a completeness and homogeneity that other southern Italian metropolises lack. Indeed, so distinctive is Lecce's architecture that it has acquired its own moniker, **Barocco Leccese** (Lecce baroque), and an expressive and hugely decorative incarnation of the genre replete with gargoyles, asparagus columns and cavorting gremlins. In Lecce you will have free time to enjoy the city-center and sample some food delicacies in many of the local food spots in the downtown. In the afternoon we'll reunite for a dessert tasting on **Puglia Sweets and Savories at Il Fornaio**. We continue our journey toward Salice Salentino for a **Wine-Tasting and Dinner at Award-Winning Winery Leone De Castris**. Return to Brindisi in late evening for overnight.

- **Inclusions:** *Breakfast / Sweets and Savory Tasting / Wine Tasting with food and Dinner*

**Pack your bags tomorrow we are moving to Masseria Montepaolo in Conversano**

### • DAY 4 THURSDAY APRIL 23 / OSTUNI

Continental **breakfast** will be served in the lobby of our hotel. Departure to the second leg of our Puglia Experience to Conversano, about 1 hour travel time. On the way to it, a short break in Ostuni, the famous White Town. Ostuni is the most typical and most representative town of Puglia. The beauty of Ostuni is in a particular mix of characteristics such as the white house's indicative of a Oriental modeling of the town; its surrounding walls built by the Messapi and redesigned by the Aragonese; its stratification in accordance with the various periods of its historical growth; its architecture in harmony with surrounding landscape made of olive trees that reach the blue Adriatic sea. A happy combination that has made Ostuni one of the most visited towns to in Puglia and one where to spend some precious time. After visiting the old, romantic downtown we'll stop a **Tenuta Santoro Winery** for a tasting, followed by our departure to Conversano. Check into our **Masseria Montepaolo**, glass of wine at hand and some leisure time for you to enjoy your new surroundings and explore the magnificent territory. Welcome cocktail to start, followed by **dinner** in our new residence featuring local Puglia specialties. The overnight lodging will be at Masseria Montepaolo, our residence for four nights.

- **Inclusions:** *Breakfast / Wine Tasting with food / Welcoming Cocktail / Dinner*

## - DAY 5 FRIDAY APRIL 24 / ALBEROBELLO & LOCOROTONDO

Continental **breakfast** is served in the hotel lobby. On our nature day, we will travel to Alberobello, a Unesco World Heritage site famous for Trulli that it's worth a few hours. Trulli or conical stone huts are found amongst the olive trees over countryside of the Valle d'Itria but Alberobello is the only entire town of Trulli, almost 1500 of them. Away from the aquamarine waters of the Mediterranean and the cute seaside towns of Polignano e Mare and Monopoli, there lies a stunning green expanse of countryside known as Valle d'Itria. Dotted with iconic whitewashed trulli and abundant olive groves, its narrow winding lanes lead from one pretty little village to the next. You will enjoy a tour of the trulli, followed by a **Wine Tasting** and Puglia food specialties at **Winery I Pastini**. We resume our day going toward Locorotondo. A name that flows from our lips in the most wonderful of ways, and a delightful place truly deserving of the accolade '**Borghi più belli d'Italia**' (one of the most beautiful villages in Italy). Locorotondo is known for its wines and for its round historical centre, from which derives its name, meaning "Round place". It was in fact built on a circular plan with narrow concentric streets lined with white terraced houses. The beauty of the historic centre is represented by this labyrinth of white alleys where the houses end with the unusual pitched roofs called "Cummerse", a feature typical of the historical centre of Locorotondo. Our evening **dinner** will be hosted at restaurant **U curdunnu**. Return to Masseria Montepaolo for the overnight.

- **Inclusions:** *Breakfast / Wine Tasting with food / Dinner*

## - DAY 6 SATURDAY APRIL 25 / MATERA

After continental **breakfast** in the lobby hotel, we will travel to the region of Basilicata to visit Matera, the city of stone, where Mel Gibson produced the movie *The Passion of Christ*. This remarkable city is the third oldest continually inhabited in the world and a Unesco World Heritage Site. The gastronomy in Matera is linked to the farming and pastoral tradition: simple and natural ingredients combined in a cuisine of genuine flavors. Legumes, meats, vegetables, homemade pasta (orecchiette) topped with tomato sauce, broccoli, cardoncelli mushrooms, cheese (pecorino and caciocavallo), extra virgin olive oil and of course bread of Ma tera IGP (ideal for the typical tomato bruschetta, with cream and wild onions peppers bran) is the basis of Matera dishes. Our group will spend the entire day in Matera, designated European culture capital in 2019. **Lunch** and **dinner** in Matera. Return to Masseria Montepaolo for the overnight.

**Inclusions:** *Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner*

## - DAY 7 SUNDAY APRIL 26 / POLIGNANO A MARE, BARI & ALTAMURA

Continental **breakfast** will be served in the lobby of our hotel. Today will be your last day of travel within Puglia, we have a packed program and we are going to Bari, but first we'll make a stop at lovely Polignano a mare. Polignano offers all the right ingredients for a perfect day out. The tiny old town, reached through the Porta Vecchia gate, combines charming, white-washed streets with beautiful old churches such as the Chiesa Matrice. You may find yourself getting lost in the winding streets, but you won't mind at all. Before you know it, you will have reached one of three panoramic terraces offering breathtaking views of the beautiful Adriatic Sea and coastline. The city is the "capital" and a huge sea gate of South Italian region called Puglia. Bari is a Mecca for orthodox people as the relics of St. Nicolas from Myra are kept here. Bari as the whole Puglia is a place where various cultures crossed due to invasions and changing governors. For about 25 years Bari was also an independent Arab emirate. Bari is one of the biggest Italian cities with its characteristic 9 neighborhoods and is absolutely different from what you are used to seeing in Central and Northern Italy, or even Southern Naples and Palermo. You will enjoy a guided tour of the most emblematic locations of Bari Vecchia and beyond. While on tour you will experience some of **Bari Street Foods** such as **Sgagliozze, Popizze and Panzerotti**. Afterwards we depart toward **Altamura**, town of the famous DOP bread. This is the first and only bread in Europe that is protected: all the ingredients (water, flour,) must come from Altamura. This bread is famous for its taste, shape and its vivid yellow color. In Altamura you will have some free time for last-minute shopping and souvenirs and then meet for bread tasting with food at **DA GESU'**, one of the oldest producers of Altamura bread. By late afternoon, it will probably be time to return to our hotel in Conversano. Take some time to gather your thoughts, last packing details and get reunited for **our farewell Sunday Family Dinner at Masseria Montepaolo**.

- **Inclusions:** *Breakfast / Street Food Tasting / Altamura Bread Tasting / Farewell Dinner*

## - DAY 8 MONDAY APRIL 27 / DEPARTURES

Early breakfast followed by the departure toward **Brindisi Airport** for the connecting flights, based on scheduled departures.

▪ **Certified guide and historian Sheila Filipponi is fluent in Italian and English . Spanish is also spoken by Chef Walter**

**NOTE: THIS PROGRAM MAY BE SUBJECT TO MINOR CHANGES DEPENDING ON UNFORSEEING SITUATIONS. WE WILL ALWAYS UPGRADE FOR THE BEST...PROMISE!**