



# Southern Italy



THIS EDITION WRITTEN AND RESEARCHED BY

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## SPECIAL FEATURES

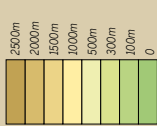
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# On the Road



A horizontal scale bar with two units. The top unit is kilometers, with a marker at 0 and a label at 100 km. The bottom unit is miles, with a marker at 0 and a label at 50 miles. A north arrow is located to the left of the scale bar.



an eerie and ancient townscape (p138)

Italy's kookiest-looking town (p119)

## The Florence of the Baroque (pl24)

Hyperactive street life and markets (p39)

A town frozen in  
time (p74)



### Capri

Live it up,  
VIP-style (p61)

### Tyrrhenian Sea

### Amalfi Coast

Be seduced by a legendary  
coastline (p86)

### Aeolian Islands

Island-hop seven volcanic  
beauties (p179)

Stromboli  
Aeolian Islands

Salina  
Filiucudi  
Alicudi  
Panarea  
Lipari  
Vulcano

Ustica

### Trapani

Levanzo  
Marettimo  
Favignana

Marsala

### Palermo

Cefalù

### Tyrrhenian Coast

Mount Etna  
(3340m)

Taormina

### Ionian Coast

Catania

### Agrigento

### MEDITERRANEAN SEA

### Agrigento

Greek temples and  
Mediterranean views (p211)

Pantelleria

### Syracuse

Ragusa

Modica

Noto

### Reggio di Calabria

Scilla

Montalto  
(1955m)

Parco Nazionale  
della Sila

Tropea

Golfo di  
Squillace

Cosenza

Paola

CALABRIA

Ionian  
Sea

### Mount Etna

Tackle Europe's volcanic  
heavyweight (p198)

18°E

17°E

16°E

15°E

14°E

13°E

12°E

39°N

38°N

37°N

37°N



## OUR STORY

A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In 1972 that's all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime – across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end – broke but inspired – they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, *Across Asia on the Cheap*. Within a week they'd sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born.

Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Melbourne, London and Oakland, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony's belief that 'a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse'.

## OUR WRITERS



### Cristian Bonetto

**Coordinating Author, Naples & Campania** An ex-writer of farce and TV drama, it's not surprising Cristian clicks with southern Italy. The Italo-Australian has both lived and holidayed in the *bel paese* (beautiful country), and his musings on the region's food, art and politics have appeared in newspapers, magazines and websites across the globe. When he's not in Napoli dodging scooters and seeking out more secret wonders, you'll find Cristian scouring the rest of the globe

for insight and delight. Cristian tweets at @CristianBonetto.



### Gregor Clark

**Sicily** Gregor caught the Italy bug at age 14 while living in Florence with his professor dad, who took him to see every fresco, mosaic and museum within a 1000km radius. He's lived in Le Marche, huffed and puffed across the Dolomites, and fallen head-over-heels for Sicily while researching Lonely Planet's *Cycling Italy* and the last three editions of the *Italy* guide. A lifelong polyglot with a degree in romance languages, his peak experience this trip was celebrating his

birthday atop an erupting Stromboli.



### Helena Smith

**Puglia, Basilicata & Calabria** Helena has been visiting Italy since she was five. At that time chocolate spread on toast was the main draw – now she goes back for the warmth, the art and the atmosphere. Researching this edition took her from mountain villages in Abruzzo to Baroque Lecce and the ancient cave city of Matera.

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# Itineraries



3  
WEEKS

## Coast to Coast

Start on the Tyrrhenian Coast with three days in culture-packed **Naples**. On day four, time-travel in Pompeii before spending two relaxing nights in **Sorrento** shopping for artisan crafts, people-watching behind oversized sunglasses and sunning on its nearby beaches. Next up is the enigmatic Amalfi Coast. Lap up two days in romantic **Positano** and a further two days in **Amalfi** and panoramic **Ravello**, the latter home to breathtaking gardens and a summer-long arts fest. On day ten, continue east to **Salerno** for fabulous seafood and street life, then shoot inland to ancient **Matera**. Give yourself a couple of days to explore the town's extraordinary *sassi* (former cave dwellings) and to hike through the dramatic Matera Gravina gorge.

Continue on to the fortified port of **Gallipoli** for medieval architecture and the town's famed raw seafood. The following day, see Ionian and Adriatic seas meet in **Santa Maria di Leuca**, then take two days to lap up the sugar-soft, white sand beaches of the Baia dei Turchi in **Otranto**. Next stop: **Lecce**, home to some of Italy's most extraordinary baroque architecture. Spend three days here, making a side trip to **Galatina** to admire its astoundingly frescoed 14th-century basilica. From Lecce, it's an easy onward jump to transport hub **Brindisi**.





## Grand Southern Tour

Grand *palazzi* (mansions), spectacular coastlines and World Heritage-listed towns and ruins – savour the best of southern Italy on this truly unforgettable route. Begin with four days in **Naples**, exploring its art-crammed palaces, secret cloisters and aqueducts. Take a day trip to **Caserta** to gape at its bigger-than-Versailles royal palace and another day trip to the haunting ruins of **Pompeii**. Treat yourself to two days on ethereal **Capri**, one of Italy's most spectacular islands, before jumping across to **Sorrento** for a day of shopping and ambling.

Come day eight, it's time to hit the hairpin turns of the Amalfi Coast. Indulge with two days in **Positano**, from where you can hike some of the breathtaking Sentiero degli Dei (Walk of the Gods), and another two nights in **Amalfi** or **Ravello**. Roam the stoic Greek temples of **Paestum** on day 12 before continuing east to fellow World-Heritage treasure **Matera**, taking two days to wine and dine in its arthritic laneways and extraordinary 'cave' buildings. Next up are the Greek ruins of **Metaponto**, the former hometown of Pythagoras and location of the incredible Tavole Palatine, one-time meeting point for medieval Crusaders. More ancient tales await in nearby **Policoro**, with archaeological artifacts spanning 9000 years. From here, slip into the sprawling wilderness of the **Parco Nazionale del Pollino**, Italy's largest national park. With Terranova di Pollino as your base, spend three days hiking through invigorating woods and exploring the curious Albanian villages of San Paolo Albanese and San Costantino Albanese.

Continue west to the superlative coastal jewel of **Maratea**. Allow two days to bathe in its turquoise waters, then continue south to Calabria's seaside showoff **Tropea** for two further days of seafood and sunsets. Further south in Villa San Giovanni, catch a ferry across to Sicily, spending two days in stylish, coastal **Taormina**, Sicily's former Byzantine capital and home to the world's most spectacularly located Greek amphitheatre. On day 25, scale mighty **Mt Etna**, then head back down for the architectural wonders of **Catania** on day 26. Wrap up in stunning **Syracuse**, a picture-perfect jumble of sun-bleached ruins, baroque piazzas, animated markets and irresistible blue sea.



2 WEEKS

## Perfect Puglia

Puglia is one of Italy's most underrated regions. Start your revelation in dynamic **Bari**, exploring its ancient historic centre and huge Romanesque basilica. Strike out south, via **Polignano a Mare**, to the famous **Grotte di Castellana**, Italy's longest network of subterranean caves. From here, a two- to three-day drive south will take you through some of the finest Valle d'Itria towns, including **Alberobello**, with its hobbitlike *trulli* houses, wine-producing **Locorotondo**, beautiful baroque **Martina Franca** and chic, whitewashed **Ostuni**. Next up is **Lecce**, dubbed the 'Florence of the South' for its operatic architectural ensembles and scholarly bent. Hire a bike and spend at least three or four days here before moving on to **Galatina** to see its basilica, awash with astounding frescoes. Head east to the fortified port of **Otranto** and the inviting beaches of the Baia dei Turchi, then push south along the wild, vertiginous coastline to **Santa Maria di Leuca**, the very tip of the Italian stiletto. Conclude your adventure in the island city of **Gallipoli**, feasting on raw sea urchin and octopus in its elegant town centre.



3 WEEKS

## Best of Sicily

Sicily is sweet, spicy and intriguing. For a taste, fly into **Palermo** and take three days to savour its fusion architecture, mosaics and markets. Spend day four roaming the ruins at **Segesta** before continuing on to **Trapani** to sample its Arabesque cuisine. The next morning head up to **Erice**, one of Italy's most arresting medieval hilltop towns. Come back down to spend day six sipping sweet local wine in **Marsala** and day seven exploring ancient **Selinunte**. More archaeological marvels await on day eight at the Valle dei Templi in **Agrigento**, with its five Doric structures perched on a ridge overlooking the Mediterranean coast. On day nine, shoot southeast to the Val di Noto and spend a couple of days in its baroque, World Heritage-listed towns, especially **Ragusa**, **Modica** and **Noto**. Change gear on days 12 and 13 with a stay in youthful, worldly **Catania**, a city famed for its fish market and kicking nightlife. Tackle **Mt Etna** on day 14 before two days of wining and sunning in chic, coastal **Taormina**. From **Messina**, catch a hydrofoil to the **Aeolian Islands** for five days of island-hopping along this arresting volcanic ridge.

9  
DAYS

## The Deep South

Start your soulful saunter in the cave city of **Matera**. Spend a couple of days exploring its famous *sassi*, as well as the *chiese rupestri* (cave churches), on a hike along the Gravina. From here, continue south to the Parco Nazionale del Pollino for a serious nature fix. Base yourself in **Terranova di Pollino** for four days, hiking through pine woods and beech forest to Basilicata's highest peak, Monte Pollino, and dancing to the *zampogne* (double-chantered pipes) in the Albanian villages of **San Paolo Albanese** and **San Costantino Albanese**. Don't leave the park without spotting the rare Bosnian pine tree, *pino loricato*. Lungs filled with mountain air, it's time to head west to the gorgeous coastal gem of **Maratea**. Pass a couple of days soothing your muscles in the town's crystalline Tyrrhenian waters, kicking back at local bars and feasting on fresh seafood. From here, head south to Calabria on the SS18 coastal road. If it's September, you might catch a chilli-eating competition in **Diamante**. Otherwise, keep moving until you reach Calabria's most arresting coastal town, **Tropea**, where your journey ends with piercing views and sunsets.

9  
DAYS

## Campanian Island Hop

Three islands stud the Bay of Naples, and each has its own distinct feeling and appeal. Fly into **Naples** and soak up the city's heady jumble of hyperactive street life, frescoed churches and erudite palaces. On the third day catch a hydrofoil to **Capri**, your first island stop. Amble lazily through the chichi laneways of Capri Town and Anacapri, roam the ruins of an imperial Roman villa, and be rowed into the world's most arresting sea grotto. On day five, catch a ferry west to **Ischia**, the biggest of the bay islands. Spend your three days sauntering through luxurious gardens and soaking in the island's famous thermal waters. Swoon over the island's renowned white wine and tuck into its most celebrated dish, *coniglio all'ischitana* (Ischian-style rabbit). If you can manage to pull yourself away, catch a ferry across to pocket-sized **Procida** on day eight for two days of lo-fi bliss. Relive scenes from the film *Il Postino* in pastel-hued Marina Corricella, eat fresh fish by the beach and take a dive to explore the island's rich marine life. Refreshed and recharged, it's an easy hydrofoil trip back to Naples.

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