



# Southern Italy



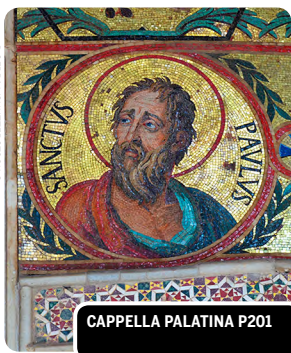
Cristian Bonetto, Brett Atkinson, Gregor Clark,  
Duncan Garwood, Brendan Sainsbury, Nicola Williams

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## Plan Your Trip

# Itineraries



10  
DAYS

### Southern Highlights

An easy introduction to some of southern Italy's must-see wonders, this 10-day overview covers everything from cosmopolitan city culture to ancient ruins, superlative coastal scenery and World Heritage-listed architecture.

Pique your appetite with two heady days in **Naples**, an urban wild child bursting with glorious art, architecture, street life and flavours. You'll be kept busy exploring its bounty of cultural treasures, which include Caravaggio masterpieces at Pio Monte della Misericordia, Palazzo di Capodimonte

and the Galleria d'Italia – Palazzo Zevallos Stigliano, as well as stirring baroque frescoes in churches such as the Duomo and Chiesa del Gesù Nuovo. The city's Cappella Sansevero is home to the *Cristo velato* (Veiled Christ), widely considered one of Italy's finest sculptures.

Spend day three roaming the time-warped ruins of **Pompeii**, among them communal baths, private residences, shops and even a brothel etched with ancient graffiti. Leap back into the present and continue to **Positano**, the Amalfi Coast's undisputed pinup town. Lap up two days





Cattedrale di Sant'Andrea (p126), Amalfi

here, hiring a boat for a spot of coastal cruising or hiking the breathtaking Sentiero degli Dei (Path of the Gods).

On day six, continue east along the Amalfi Coast, stopping briefly in atmospheric **Amalfi** to view its iconic Sicilian Arab-Norman cathedral, the oldest part dating from the early 10th century. Continue on your way to the city of **Matera** in time for dinner, then spend the following day exploring its one-of-a-kind, Unesco-

lauded *sassi* (former cave dwellings). Swap *sassi* for World Heritage-listed *trulli* (conical-roofed abodes) in **Alberobello** the following day. Late evening is the best time to experience the town's historic Rione Monti quarter, home to more than 1000 *trulli*. Spend the night, then hit the road one last time to the university city of **Lecce**, dubbed the 'Florence of the South'. It's quixotic baroque buildings make for an extravagant epilogue to your southern overview.



2  
WEEKS

## Perfect Puglia



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Puglia is one of Italy's most seductive regions, its abundance of history and one-of-a-kind architecture melded with an enviable coastline and one of Italy's simplest, healthiest cuisines.

Start your explorations in dynamic **Bari**, roaming its ancient historic centre and huge Romanesque basilica; the latter is a pilgrimage site for both Catholic and Orthodox Christians. Strike out south, via **Polignano a Mare**, to the jaw-dropping limestone **Grotte di Castellana**. Italy's longest network of subterranean caves, its most famous feature is the Grotta Bianca (White Grotto), Mother Nature's alabaster take on Gothic architecture.

From here, a two- to three-day drive south will take you through some of the finest towns in the celebrated Valle d'Itria. Among these is **Alberobello**, with its hobbit-like, World Heritage-listed *trulli*, wine-producing **Locorotondo**, beautiful baroque **Martina Franca** and chic, whitewashed **Ostuni**, the latter home to some particularly outstanding restaurants.

Next up is inimitable  **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 exploring its wealth of cultural assets. Among these is the obsessively detailed Basilica di Santa Croce and the Museo Faggiano, the latter a veritable layer cake of archaeology stretching back to the 5th century BC.

From Lecce, move on to **Galatina**, its 14th-century basilica awash with astounding frescoes. Head east to the fortified port of **Otranto**, whose own 11th-century cathedral stands out for its extraordinary 12th-century floor mosaic. If the weather is warm, enjoy a little downtime on 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. Finally, conclude your adventure in the walled island city of **Gallipoli**, feasting on raw sea urchin and octopus in its elegant town centre.



RAMON SENEVY SHUTTERSTOCK ©

Top: Basilica di Santa Caterina d'Alessandria (p163), Galatina

Bottom: Locorotondo (p153)

15  
DAYS

## Sicily to Calabria

PLAN YOUR TRIP ITINERARIES

Ancient cultures and natural beauty collide in this two-week adventure. From Greek temples and Norman cathedrals to rugged mountains and coveted coastal resorts, strike out on a gripping journey through Italy's southern extremes.

Fly into **Palermo** and take two days to savour the city's cross-cultural food, markets and architecture. Soak up the glittering, 12th-century Cappella Palatina, snoop around the revamped archaeological museum, and detour to nearby **Monreale** to marvel at its mosaic-encrusted Norman cathedral. On day three, day trip west to the 5th-century-BC ruins of **Segesta**, one of Italy's most remarkable ancient sites.

From Palermo, head east to eye-candy **Cefalù** on day four. Spend a night – just enough time to admire its commanding Arab–Norman cathedral and crystalline sea. Come day five, shoot through to **Taormina**, a long-time haunt of poets, painters and hopeless romantics. The town was once Sicily's Byzantine capital and its sweeping ancient Greek theatre is the island's second largest. Allow two nights and consider hiking up nearby **Mt Etna** on one of your days.

Day seven sees you catching a ferry from Messina to **Reggio Calabria** in time to see the *Bronzi di Riace* at the Museo Nazionale di Reggio Calabria. The finest examples of ancient Greek sculpture in existence, the bronze sculptures are southern Italy's answer to Florence's *David*. Rest your head in tiny Gambarie, using the town as your base as you explore the wild beauty of the **Parco Nazionale dell'Aspromonte** over the next two days.

Come day 10, head back down to the Tyrrhenian coast. Lunch on fresh swordfish in castle-capped **Scilla**, continuing through to dazzling **Tropea**, Calabria's coastal darling. Spend two nights recharging your weary bones, lazily ambling its labyrinthine streets and catching some of the south's finest sunsets. Restored, continue north to the gritty yet erudite city of **Cosenza** on day 12. After taking in its impressively preserved medieval core on day 13, hit Camigliatello Silano for two nights, concluding your adventure with soul-lifting hikes through the alpine beauty of the **Parco Nazionale della Sila**.



Top: Cefalù (p213)  
Bottom: Stigghiola (stuffed goat's intestines)







9  
DAYS

## The Deep South

This itinerary touches some of the deepest, rawest, most surreal corners of the south, from a cave-studded city to rare Albanian mountain villages. Add a dose of sparkling Tyrrhenian blue and you have a journey guaranteed to get under your skin.

Start this soulful journey in the cave city of **Matera**, one of Europe's most unusual settlements. Spend a couple of days exploring its famous *sassi*, as well as the *chiese rupestri* (cave churches) on a hike along the Gravina. The dynamic Casa Noha museum offers valuable insight into both the *sassi* and the city's poverty-stricken past.

From Matera, escape south to the **Parco Nazionale del Pollino** for an invigorating fix of nature. Base yourself in **Terranova di Pollino** for four days, hiking through pine woods and beech forest to Basilicata's highest peak, Monte Pollino. Spanning alpine meadows and deep river canyons, the national park harbours rare stocks of roe deer, wild cats, wolves and birds of prey, among them the Egyptian vulture. It's also home to the curious Albanian villages of **San Paolo Albanese** and **San Costantino Albanese**, where you may just find yourself dancing to the *zampogne* (double-chantered pipes). Another of the park's unexpected treasures is the rare Bosnian pine tree, *pino loricato*.

Lungs filled with mountain air, it's time to head west to the gorgeous coastal jewel of **Maratea**. Pass a couple of days relaxing in the town's crystalline Tyrrhenian waters and sailing to nearby grottoes and coves. Back in town, kick back at local bars and feast on fresh seafood. Recharged, it's time to 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**. An ancient settlement whose past rulers have included Arabs, Normans, Swabians and Anjous, its piercing views and sunsets make for a beautiful, soul-soothing wrap-up.



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Top: The sassi (p171), Matera  
Bottom: Maratea (p178)

3  
WEEKS

## The Grand Tour

PLAN YOUR TRIP ITINERARIES

Covering Campania, Basilicata, Calabria and Sicily, this three-week trip is rich in both blockbuster sights and off-the-beaten-track highlights.

Commence with three days in **Naples**, roaming its secret catacombs, baroque churches and palatial Museo di Capodimonte, one of Italy's great art galleries. Take an easy day trip to the formidable royal palace of **Caserta** or to the ill-fated ancient towns of **Pompeii** or **Herculaneum**. Whichever you choose, treat yourself to two romantic days on **Capri**, making time for quiet hikes, the spectacular Grotta Azzurra and the unforgettable views from atop Monte Solaro. Sail across to **Sorrento** for a night, then hit the fabled Amalfi Coast on day six, allowing two days in see-and-be-seen **Positano** and a further night in **Amalfi** or hilltop **Ravello**. Travel back in time roaming millennia-old Greek temples in **Paestum** on day nine before continuing to fellow World Heritage marvel **Matera** and its otherworldly abodes.

Come day 12, it's time to escape to the wilds of the **Parco Nazionale del Pollino**. 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. Both towns were founded in the 16th century by ethnic Albanian refugees (*Arbëreshë*) who left Koroni in Greece during its Ottoman occupation.

Slide down to Calabria's Tyrrhenian coastline on day 15, home to seaside show-off **Tropea**. Allow two nights of waterside *dolce vita* (sweet life) before catching a ferry from Villa San Giovanni to Sicily on day 17. Allow yourself another two days of coastal slumming in chi-chi **Taormina**, home to a 3rd-century-BC theatre and a world-class summertime arts festival. If you can pull yourself away on day 19, wrap things up with a couple of days exploring **Syracuse**, described by Roman philosopher Cicero as the 'greatest Greek city and the most beautiful of them all'. Its Hellenic past lives on at the Parco Archeologico della Neapolis, considered to be one of Sicily's most important archaeological sites.

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Top: Tropea (p193)

Bottom: Tempio di Cerere, Paestum (p133)



# Behind the Scenes

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This guidebook was produced by the following:

### Destination Editor

Anna Tyler

### Senior Product Editor

Elizabeth Jones

### Regional Senior Cartographer

Anthony Phelan

### Product Editors

Alison Ridgway, Claire Rourke

### Book Designers

Virginia Moreno, Mazzy Prinsep

**Assisting Editors** Sarah Bailey,

Andrea Dobbin, Gabrielle Innes, Anita Isalska, Kate Morgan, Lauren O'Connell, Fionnuala Twomey, Simon Williamson

### Cover Researcher

Meri Blazevski

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# Map Legend

## Sights

- Beach
- Bird Sanctuary
- Buddhist
- Castle/Palace
- Christian
- Confucian
- Hindu
- Islamic
- Jain
- Jewish
- Monument
- Museum/Gallery/Historic Building
- Ruin
- Shinto
- Sikh
- Taoist
- Winery/Vineyard
- Zoo/Wildlife Sanctuary
- Other Sight

## Activities, Courses & Tours

- Bodysurfing
- Diving
- Canoeing/Kayaking
- Course/Tour
- Sento Hot Baths/Onsen
- Skiing
- Snorkelling
- Surfing
- Swimming/Pool
- Walking
- Windsurfing
- Other Activity

## Sleeping

- Sleeping
- Camping
- Hut/Shelter

## Eating

- Eating

## Drinking & Nightlife

- Drinking & Nightlife
- Cafe

## Entertainment

- Entertainment

## Shopping

- Shopping

## Information

- Bank
- Embassy/Consulate
- Hospital/Medical
- Internet
- Police
- Post Office
- Telephone
- Toilet
- Tourist Information
- Other Information

## Geographic

- Beach
- Gate
- Hut/Shelter
- Lighthouse
- Lookout
- Mountain/Volcano
- Oasis
- Park
- Pass
- Picnic Area
- Waterfall

## Population

- Capital (National)
- Capital (State/Province)
- City/Large Town
- Town/Village

## Transport

- Airport
- Border crossing
- Bus
- Cable car/Funicular
- Cycling
- Ferry
- Metro station
- Monorail
- Parking
- Petrol station
- S-Bahn/Subway station
- Taxi
- T-bane/Tunnelbana station
- Train station/Railway
- Tram
- U-Bahn/Underground station
- Other Transport

## Routes

- Tollway
- Freeway
- Primary
- Secondary
- Tertiary
- Lane
- Unsealed road
- Road under construction
- Plaza/Mall
- Steps
- Tunnel
- Pedestrian overpass
- Walking Tour
- Walking Tour detour
- Path/Walking Trail

## Boundaries

- International
- State/Province
- Disputed
- Regional/Suburb
- Marine Park
- Cliff
- Wall

## Hydrography

- River, Creek
- Intermittent River
- Canal
- Water
- Dry/Salt/Intermittent Lake
- Reef

## Areas

- Airport/Runway
- Beach/Desert
- Cemetery (Christian)
- Cemetery (Other)
- Glacier
- Mudflat
- Park/Forest
- Sight (Building)
- Sportsground
- Swamp/Mangrove

Note: Not all symbols displayed above appear on the maps in this book



### **Duncan Garwood**

From facing fast bowlers in Barbados to sidestepping hungry pigs in Goa, Duncan's travels have thrown up many unique experiences. These days, he largely dedicates himself to the Mediterranean and Italy, his adopted homeland where he's been living since 1997. He's worked on around 50 Lonely Planet titles, including guidebooks to Italy, Rome, Sardinia, Sicily, Spain and Portugal, and has contributed to books on world food and epic drives. He's also written on Italy for newspapers, websites and magazines. Duncan contributed to the Survival Guide.



### **Brendan Sainsbury**

**Naples & Campania** Born and raised in the UK in a town that never merits a mention in any guidebook (Andover, Hampshire), Brendan spent the holidays of his youth caravanning in the English Lake District and didn't leave Blighty until he was 19. Making up for lost time, he's since squeezed 70 countries into a sometimes precarious existence as a writer and professional vagabond. In the last 11 years, he has written over 40 books for Lonely Planet. When not scribbling research notes, Brendan likes partaking in ridiculous 'endurance' races, strumming old Clash songs on the guitar, and experiencing the pain and occasional pleasures of following Southampton Football Club.



### **Nicola Williams**

**Sicily** Border-hopping is way of life for British writer, runner, foodie, art aficionado and mum-of-three Nicola Williams who has lived in a French village on the southern side of Lake Geneva for more than a decade. Nicola has authored more than 50 guidebooks on Paris, Provence, Rome, Tuscany, France, Italy and Switzerland for Lonely Planet and covers France as a destination expert for the *Telegraph*. She also writes for the *Independent*, *Guardian*, lonelyplanet.com, *Lonely Planet Magazine*, *French Magazine*, *Cool Camping France* and others. Catch her on the road on Twitter and Instagram @triplalong.



## 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 Franklin, London, Melbourne, Oakland, Dublin, Beijing and Delhi, 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

**Sicily** Cristian has contributed to over 30 Lonely Planet guides to date, including *New York City*, *Italy*, *Venice & the Veneto*, *Naples & the Amalfi Coast*, *Denmark*, *Copenhagen*, *Sweden* and *Singapore*. Lonely Planet work aside, his musings on travel, food, culture and design appear in numerous publications around the world, including the *Telegraph* (UK) and *Corriere del Mezzogiorno* (Italy). When not on the road, you'll find the reformed playwright and TV scriptwriter slurping espresso in his beloved hometown, Melbourne. Instagram: [recat75](#).



### Brett Atkinson

**Puglia, Basilicata & Calabria; Sicily** Brett is based in Auckland, New Zealand, but is frequently on the road for Lonely Planet. He's a full-time travel and food writer specialising in adventure travel, unusual destinations, and surprising angles on more well-known destinations. Craft beer and street food are Brett's favourite reasons to explore places, and he is featured regularly on the Lonely Planet website, and in newspapers, magazines and websites across New Zealand and Australia. Since becoming a Lonely Planet writer in 2005, Brett has covered areas as diverse as Vietnam, Sri Lanka, the Czech Republic, New Zealand, Morocco, California and the South Pacific.



### Gregor Clark

**Puglia, Basilicata & Calabria; Sicily** Gregor is a US-based writer whose love of foreign languages and curiosity about what's around the next bend have taken him to dozens of countries on five continents. Chronic wanderlust has also led him to visit all 50 states and most Canadian provinces on countless road trips through his native North America. Since 2000, Gregor has regularly contributed to Lonely Planet guides, with a focus on Europe and the Americas. Gregor earned his degree in Romance Languages at Stanford University and has remained an avid linguist throughout careers in publishing, teaching, translation and tour leadership.

OVER MORE  
PAGE WRITERS

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