



Southern Italy



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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, breathtaking 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 Reale di Capo-

dimonte and the Galleria di Palazzo Zevallos Stigliano, as well as stirring baroque frescoes in churches such as the Duomo and Chiesa del Gesù Nuovo. The city's Cappella Sanseverio 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 pin-up town. Lap up two days





Positano (p109)

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 Arabic-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', its quixotic baroque buildings make for an extravagant epilogue to your southern overview.



2
WEEKS

Perfect Puglia

Puglia is one of Italy's most underrated 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, Unesco World Heritage-listed *trulli* houses, 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.



M.T./SHUTTERSTOCK ©



SABINO PARENTI/SHUTTERSTOCK ©

Top: Polignano a Mare (p131)
Bottom: Sea urchin

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 its glittering, 12th-century Cappella Palatina, snoop around the city's revamped archaeological museum, and detour to nearby **Monreale** to marvel at its mosaic-encrusted Norman cathedral, considered Sicily's finest. 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 VIP-favourite **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 of elegant slumming and consider hiking up nearby **Mt Etna** on one of your days.

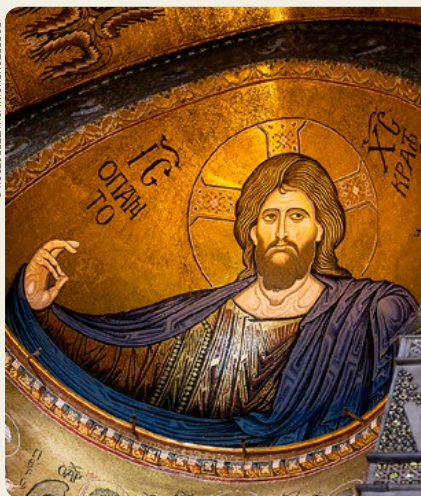
Day seven sees you catching a ferry from Messina to **Reggio di Calabria** in time to see the *Bronzi di Riace* at the Museo Nazionale di Reggio Calabria. The finest examples of ancient Greek sculpture in existence, the bronze sculptures are southern Italy's answer to Florence's *David*. Rest your head 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**.

GAGLIARDI/IMAGES/SHUTTERSTOCK ©



ROBERTO/NONINI/SHUTTERSTOCK ©



Top: Santa Maria dell'Isola (p183), Tropea
Bottom: Cattedrale di Monreale (p200), Monreale





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). Both towns were founded in the 16th century by ethnic Albanian refugees (*Arbëreshë*), who left Koroni in Greece during its Ottoman occupation. 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 the Arabs, Normans, Swabians and Anjous, its piercing views and sunsets make for a beautiful, soul-soothing wrap up.



EMMES SHUTTERSTOCK ©



VALDANCO SHUTTERSTOCK ©

Top: Sasso, Matera (p161)

Bottom: Fiumicello (p171), Maratea

3
WEEKS

The Grand Tour

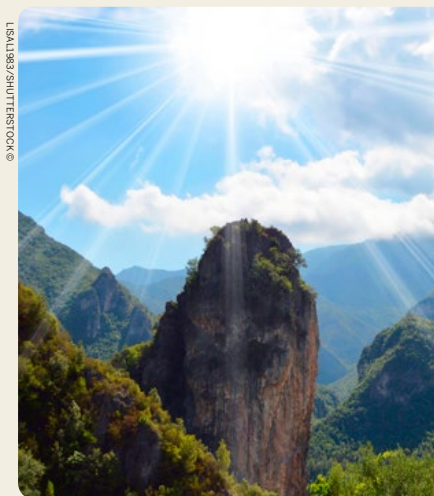
PLAN YOUR TRIP ITINERARIES

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

Commence with a trio of days in **Naples**, roaming its secret catacombs, baroque churches and world-renowned Museo Archeologico Nazionale. 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, drop into ancient **Metaponto**. The hometown of number-crunching Pythagoras, it's also where you'll find the so-called Palatine Tables, a reputed pit stop for Crusade-bound knights. Then 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.

Slide down to Calabria's Tyrrhenian coastline on day 16, 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 18. 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 20, 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 one of Sicily's most important archaeological sites.



Top: Teatro Greco (p215), Taormina

Bottom: Monti di Orsomarso (p172), Parco Nazionale Del Pollino



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
- Tube station
- 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



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

Curator, Naples & Campania Cristian has contributed to more than 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.



Gregor Clark

Sicily Gregor Clark 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. Since 2000, Gregor has regularly contributed to Lonely Planet guides, with a focus on Europe and the Americas. Titles include *Italy, France, Brazil, Costa Rica, Argentina, Portugal, Switzerland, Mexico, South America on a Shoestring, Montreal & Quebec City, France's Best Trips, New England's Best*

Trips, cycling guides to Italy and California, and coffee-table pictorials such as *Food Trails, The USA Book and The Lonely Planet Guide to the Middle of Nowhere*. Gregor was born in New York City. He has lived in California, France, Spain and Italy prior to settling with his wife and two daughters in his current home state of Vermont.



Hugh McNaughtan

Puglia, Basilicata & Calabria A former English lecturer, Hugh decided visa applications beat grant applications, and turned his love of travel into a full-time thing. Having also done a bit of restaurant reviewing in his home town (Melbourne, Australia), he's now eaten his way across Europe and North America. He's never happier than when on the road with his two daughters. Except perhaps on the cricket field...

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