



PUGLIA, AMALFI COAST AND ROME: A FAMILY ADVENTURE

Gather the family and discover parts of Italy's iconic coastline that are perennial favourites and some that are lesser known.

Tailor-Made Journeys, Suggested Itineraries, Families & Multi-Generational Travel



Europe, Italy



15 days from AU\$31,250 pp



Private

Journey Overview

Gather the family and discover parts of Italy's iconic coastline that are perennial favourites and some that are lesser known. Stay in villas and boutique lodgings along the way that provide an exclusive base for daily adventure and cultural riches. From the magical *trulli* of Puglia to the clifftop villages of Amalfi, the ruins of ancient Pompeii to Rome and her many treasures, there's history aplenty and robust culinary traditions that celebrate fresh produce and Italy's agrarian heritage. Experience *la dolce vita* for yourself on this immersive family adventure.

Journey highlights

- Savour fine wine and food at one of Puglia's most renowned wine estates
- Meet an olive oil producer, learning the history of this 'liquid gold' at this underground mill
- Hear from a *maestro trullaro* the history behind Puglia's traditional cone-shaped dwellings
- Sail around the Island of Capri on your own crewed yacht, admiring the endless beaches, cliffsides and spectacular grottoes
- Step inside the living museum that is Rome and breathe in its history and architectural marvels



Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive Lecce

Welcome to the charming coastal region of Puglia, where you will receive a warm A&K welcome before a private transfer to your baroque bolthole in Lecce just steps from the Basilica of Santa Croce. The day is yours to enjoy as you please.

With the longest coastline of any region in mainland Italy, Puglia offers a blend of medieval hilltop towns, olive groves and a coastline peppered with quaint villages just waiting to be explored.

La Fiermontina Family Collection

Day 2: Lecce

Step outside your grand palazzo hotel and take to the streets on a guided walking tour. Take your time soaking up the impressive architecture as you stroll from the imposing and harmonious Piazza del Duomo to the masterful Santa Croce and the Roman amphitheatre. You'll be swept away by the profusion of artistic wonders.

This afternoon is at leisure to enjoy the historic grandeur of the hotel, take a dip in the rooftop pool or stroll the city streets. This evening an optional seaside aperitif experience is recommended in nearby Gallipoli whose terraced houses and baronial palaces exude Mediterranean charm. Immerse yourself in the local culture and dine on fresh seafood direct from the market, paired with local wine and soak up the spectacular views.

La Fiermontina Family Collection | Meals: B

Day 3: Design Your Day Puglia

Today you can choose your own adventure with a selection of Design Your Day activities:

Hike traditional *traturri*

Discover a little-known side of Puglia meandering along trails that were once shepherd paths and trading links between villages. Known as "traturri", this time-honoured network of ancient roads that linked villages and orchards to the neighbouring Adriatic is a timeless tradition that has shaped rural Puglia today. Guided by a local, stroll through olive groves and along the picturesque coastline.

Otranto Tour & Winery Visit

Head east towards Otranto for a full-day discovery, beginning with a visit to a family-run vineyard. Learn more about the varietal distinctions and regional wine-making process as you are led by a passionate member of the family. Afterwards, continue to Otranto, Italy's easternmost city perched on the Adriatic coastline. Stroll through the old town enclosed by Aragonese walls and overlooking splendid azure waters. Visit Otranto's cathedral, the town's most important monument, housing a spectacular 12th century mosaic pavement. A curious blend of pagan, Old Testament and New Testament imagery, it's a truly spectacular icon.

Puglia by bike

Head out of the city today to the Idro Valley, cycling towards the Byzantine-era St Maurus Crypt. Continue to the village of Casamassella, home to a foundation dedicated to biodynamic agriculture and the ancient tradition of weaving, a captivating immersion into local life. Cycle on to Giurdignano in Salento, known for the prolific number of megalithic stone monoliths and tombs which dot the area. Sit down for lunch at a local bakery before cycling to Porto Badisco for a leisurely break and a refreshing swim. The last stretch of the day takes you along the magnificent coastal road admiring the Punta Palascia lighthouse en route. By late afternoon, return to Otranto for the transfer back to your hotel.

Cook with a local in Lecce

Apulian cuisine is shaped by the rich local produce grown in its fields and orchards and the bounty which comes from the sea. Learn some of its culinary secrets at a local cooking class in Lecce where you first join your host Gianna at the market to select ingredients for the task ahead. Stop for an espresso on the way, or a cheese and antipasto plate, and arrive at the cooking school fully recharged. Don your apron and let the cooking begin. Gianna will present a selection of local recipes which you will assist her with before savouring the fruits of your labour over lunch with wine tasting to complement the dishes.

This evening, a special visit to one of Puglia's oldest and most renowned wine estates is on offer. Visit the ancient wine cellar and impressive wine museum, tasting a selection of the most celebrated wines of the region. Then, sit down to a private feast in the estate's castle paired with local wines, served by a private butler and sommelier. Dating back to the 16th century, the castle is one of the most majestic properties in the region, its sweeping views of the stunning vineyard the perfect backdrop for this unforgettable experience.

La Fiermontina Family Collection | Meals: B

Day 4: Lecce - Savelletri di Fasano

Today you head north, visiting the village of Ostuni. Known as the "White City", it is a charming example of Mediterranean architecture, with sun-drenched streets and quaint cobbled alleyways, hints of the Middle Ages seen around every corner. Explore its many wonders on a guided tour, visiting its crown architectural jewel, the Rione Terra district, with its narrow streets, stairways and arches unfolding between sparkling white houses.

Famous for its monumental olive trees, you'll visit an olive oil producer with an ancient underground mill, taking a magical trip back in time to the erstwhile local peasant culture as you explore the mill and learn about the production process.

Masseria Torre Maizza | Meals: BL

Day 5: Savelletri

Take a step back in time today when you visit Alberobello. Founded in the 15th century by the Counts of Acquaviva, this UNESCO World Heritage site is home to Puglia's historically traditional cone-shaped dwellings known as *trulli*. Arriving into this charming region, your guide will take you to meet one of the few remaining "maestro trullaro" – a dedicated local who maintains the historic *trulli* building tradition. Learn about these charming structures, the building process and the history of these iconic dwellings.

On the way back, visit a family-run dairy farm where the owners will treat you to a cheese-making demonstration and tasting. Learn about kneaded cheeses such as *mozzarella*, *burrata* (a Pugliese specialty), *caciocavallo* and *scamorza*, fresh cheeses such as *ricotta*, and aged cheeses such as *canestrato* and *cacioricotta*.

Masseria Torre Maizza | Meals: B

Day 6: Savelletri - Bari - Savelletri

Today is an opportunity to appreciate the abundant architectural wonders of Bari, Puglia's capital city, which has been at the crossroads of civilisations for millennia. Start at the medieval maritime quarter that oversees the petite peninsula, and meander through its winding streets, admiring the immense arches, palaces and churches that tell the stories of the city's past. Continue inland to medieval Castel del Monte, one of Puglia's most profound monuments. Built by Frederick II, it continues to intrigue historians to this day with its fascinating blend of decorative styles.

Masseria Torre Maizza | Meals: B

Day 7: Savelletri

Today is yours to plan accordingly. Relax in the stylish surrounds of your villa, sit by one of the many swimming pools, play a round of golf or a game of tennis, settle into one of two beach clubs, plan a spa treat or cycle around the nearby area. An optional sailing adventure aboard your own private yacht comes highly recommended this afternoon. Cruise along the sparkling Adriatic coast enjoying refreshments in the sunshine and the passing vista of white clifftop homes, caves, colourful towns and beach clubs. Drop anchor in a secluded cove and cool off in the azure waters before returning to your villa.

Masseria Torre Maizza / Meals: B

Day 8: Savelletri - Sorrento

Today you'll cross the country from east to west stopping en route in Matera for a guided tour. Continually inhabited for over 10,000 years, Matera - La Citta' dei Sassi - is considered among the most ancient on earth. An authentic open-air museum, the city was described by UNESCO as the "most outstanding, intact example of a troglodyte settlement in the Mediterranean region" with evidence of human settlement dating as far back as the Paleolithic period. This afternoon, take to the streets on a walking tour of the city breathing in its magical aura. The town is a disarming blend of contrasts; an inimitable tangle of cave-dwellings, magnificent baroque palaces and beautiful stone churches. Witness first-hand the main stages of the evolution of human history as you make your way through the Sassi: from the dark caves of the Murgia inhabited by our oldest ancestors to the rock-hewn churches and crypts of early monastic communities and the elegant streets of the Piano, rich in 17th century monasteries and palaces. Venture underground to explore the deep cisterns and canals once used for water collection.

Lunch is at your leisure before continuing to the Sorrentine Peninsula.

Grand Hotel Excelsior Vittoria / Meals: B

Day 9: Sorrento - Amalfi Coast - Sorrento

Today's excursion takes you east along the romantic Amalfi Coast Road, considered the most scenic in all of Europe, its twists, turns and loops running the full length from Sorrento to Ravello. Stop in at petite coastal towns along the way, many of which have inspired artists and writers for centuries. Perched on a cliffside above the glittering Tyrrhenian Sea, glamorous Positano is one of the most famous of the Amalfi Coast villages, its colourful houses cascading down the steep hillside and its kaleidoscope of boutiques a magnet to discerning shoppers. In Amalfi, the largest of the coastal towns, the pretty seafront setting is the perfect place to recharge in one of the many atmospheric cafés which line the water's edge before visiting the distinctive black and white patterned cathedral with its 13th century façade. Return to your Mediterranean hideaway later this afternoon.

Grand Hotel Excelsior Vittoria | Meals: B

Day 10: Amalfi Coast Design Your Day

Today is yours to plot your own course with a selection of optional activities:

Cook Neapolitan cuisine with an expert

Passionate about their food, Italians take great pride in their home-grown produce and flavoursome fare and the Neapolitans are no different. In a spectacular private villa, a local chef will help you unlock the secrets behind their favourite dishes tasting along the way and a visit to the wine cellar where the villa's own 'wine man' Charlie explains his winemaking technique before pouring you a sample. Lunch in the garden is a spread of your freshly prepared dishes.

Hike the Path of the Gods

High above Positano is the *Sentieri degli Dei* which delivers awe-inspiring views for keen hikers and photographers. As you walk along the seven-kilometre trail, soak up the expansive Amalfi coastline high above the sea all the way to the island of Capri.

Grand Hotel Excelsior Vittoria | Meals: B

Day 11: Amalfi Coast

Take to the water today on your own private motor-yacht, for a visit to the enchanting island of Capri. Popular since Roman times, the limestone island has also been a magnet for artists, poets and intellectuals for centuries and in recent times members of the jet set. From your own yacht, you can explore Capri as you wish. Drop anchor for a swim at any one of the island's glorious beaches. Pull in for lunch at a glamorous eatery. Sail past Punta Gradola to reach the famed Blue Grotto, an underwater cave where you'll transfer to a small vessel to experience the iridescent colours inside. And be sure to stroll the cobbled streets of Anacapri for a spot of shopping or take to the hills for a walk along the clifftops.

Grand Hotel Excelsior Vittoria | Meals: B

Day 12: Sorrento - Rome

Depart the Amalfi Coast and privately transfer to Rome by road, stopping en route at Pompeii for a real-life history lesson, where you'll hear from a local expert about this once opulent town which was completely destroyed by the volcanic eruption of Vesuvius in 79AD. Wander through what remains of its grand villas, avenues and forum and imagine life in the time of the Roman Empire. Next stop is Naples to refuel on pizza, the city's favourite dish, before arriving in the Italian capital. A heady blend of artistic and architectural masterpieces, classical ruins and extravagant baroque churches and piazzas, Rome boasts 2,700 years of history can be seen everywhere throughout the 'Eternal City'.

Settle into your hotel with the evening yours to relax.

Villa Agrippina a Gran Melia Hotel | Meals: BL

Day 13: Rome

Today is another enlightening historic immersion in Ancient Rome. Your expert guide will reveal the imposing Colosseum, commissioned by Emperor Vespasian; the Arc of Constantine dating from 315 AD, and the excavations of the vast Roman Forum, where remains of temples, streetscapes and palaces can be appreciated up close. Your guide will also reveal the other imperial fora of Trajan, Augustus and Caesar, before a visit to the Palatine Hill, inhabited since the ninth century BC and believed to be the place where Romulus, founder of Rome, lived.

After lunch at your leisure, cross the Tiber River to discover the Vatican Museums. Part of the Papal Residence, they are estimated to contain 1,400 rooms, chapels and galleries, and house an extraordinarily rich collection of precious arts, maps, sculptures and antiquities, including Michelangelo's frescoed ceiling masterpiece within the Sistine Chapel. Afterwards, head to the centre of the Vatican, to the vast Basilica of St Peter with its beautiful mix of Renaissance and Baroque architecture, standing in awe of the stunning interior, an elaborate and detailed display of marble, mosaic, gilt and bronze.

Villa Agrippina a Gran Melia Hotel | Meals: B

Day 14: Design Your Day Rome

Spend your final day in Rome with a choice of engaging of activities and tours:

Authentic Pizza Making

Try your hand at creating the authentic Italian pizza. Learn the history and techniques from an expert before donning your apron and preparing your own dough. Marvel at the deft skills of the pizzaiolo, who guides you through the fun process of twirling the dough, a talent that takes years to master. This unique skill has joined a list of more than 350 traditions, art forms and practices recognised by UNESCO. Top and bake your creations in a traditional woodfire oven, enjoying the fruits of your labour for lunch.

Street Art & Street Food

Enjoy a unique immersion into Rome's contemporary art world, discovering the new colours of the city on a tour of its captivating street art, with the chance to meet artists in their studios and step inside the most intriguing galleries. After working up an appetite, tour specially selected neighbourhoods, markets and trattorias meeting the people who craft the local fare and learn about their food traditions. Taste your way through a cornucopia of delights, immersing yourself in Rome's thriving food scene.

Subterranean Rome

Take a journey back in time on a half-day excursion accompanied by your expert guide. Explore the unique church of St Clemente, the ancient church built over the remains of a 4th century basilica which, in turn, covers buildings from the time of the emperor Nero. Marvel at one of the finest mosaics from the period, which represents the Tree of Life., before an underground adventure in the Roman catacombs. With a multitude of saints buried here, these catacombs later became shrines and places of pilgrimage.

This evening, why not farewell Italy in style, with a private meal at the Palazzo Manfredi's AROMA rooftop restaurant? Let A&K organise a classical Italian dinner, or a standing sundowner, and toast your adventure against the backdrop of the mighty Colosseum.

Villa Agrippina a Gran Melia Hotel | Meals: B

Day 15: Depart Rome

After breakfast, transfer to the airport for your onward flight.

Meals: B

Map



Accommodation

Borgo Egnazia, Fasano BR



Borgo Egnazia is an extraordinary resort hotel overlooking the Adriatic Sea set amongst olive and citrus trees and next to the world-renowned San Domenico Golf Course. Constructed entirely from the local tufa stone, the hotel is inspired by local traditions yet is thoroughly contemporary in style delivering the highest luxury standards. The 183 stylish rooms and suites provide every comfort and there are seven restaurants and two bars offering abundant dining choices. Leisure facilities include a spa with hammam, sauna and Jacuzzi, tennis courts, a private beach, two pools and a fitness centre.

Why we like it

- Built in the green belt of San Domenico Golf and a few steps away from the sea with magnificent views of the sea or of the Apulian countryside
- Borgo Egnazia meets the needs of everyone, with its 63 rooms in the central building La Corte and the Borgo village featuring 92 typical houses, rooms and suites
- Unparalleled privacy and elegance can be found in the 29 Villas with gardens, private swimming pools, balconies and breath taking views of the Adriatic
- Vair is an experimental spa inspired by popular Apulian traditions and ancient natural remedies
- Nearby is the San Domenico Golf Club, 18-hole championship course and club house

Abercrombie & Kent

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