Bicycle Tours in Italy: Cycling Puglia's White Villages

OVERVIEW

Beautifully situated on the Adriatic Coast between the spur and heel of Italy's "boot" lies Puglia. Nestled against the brilliant blue of the Mediterranean ancient Greek and Italian cultures mingle among hillside vineyards, olive groves, and whitewashed villages. Join us as we begin our bicycling journey in Matera, a world renowned UNESCO World Heritage Site, where dwellings carved into limestone caves create an enchanted and ancient stone city. We'll pedal east toward Alberobello, another UNESCO World Heritage Site, through a landscape filled with unique conical shaped dwellings known as trulli. Finish in the striking "Città Bianca" or "White City" of Ostuni. Along the way you'll enjoy meals prepared with Italian, Greek, and Middle Eastern influences and discover the warmth and hospitality of Southern Italy's friendliest people.

If this sounds great but you prefer a longer ride join us on the extended Cycling Puglia's White Villages Plus the Salento which extends this trip.

HIGHLIGHTS

UNESCO World Heritage Sites - Sassi of Matera and trulli of Alberobello, White city of Ostuni, Cheese tasting, Locorotondo, Ancient olive mill visit, Via Traiana

TOUR FACTS

Tour Style	Classic: Learn more about our Classic tours at https://www.experienceplus.com/choosing-the-best-tour/styles/classic
Includes	7 days, 6 nights accommodation; meals as noted in itinerary; guided visit of Matera; guided visit of Alberobello; 1 cheese tasting; and olive mill visit
Countries	Italy
Begin/End	Matera / Ostuni
Arrive/Depart	Bari (BRI), Naples (NAP) or Brindisi Airport (BDS)
Total Distance	214 - 234 km (132 - 144 miles)
Avg. Daily Distance	43 km (26 miles) per riding day
Tour Level	❯❯❯❯❯❯
Keep in Mind	We work hard to maintain consistency across all of our tours, but some trips have unique differences. Here are some things to keep in mind about this tour. There is a van shuttle on Day 3.

Please Note: We may have small itinerary changes to this trip after you download this PDF document. If you have booked this trip and there are major changes, including changes to towns or activities, we'll email you directly. However, you should always be sure to refer to the online itinerary for the most up-to-date trip information including arrival and departure tips before you depart for your trip:
https://dev.experienceplus.com/bike-tours/italy/puglia/puglia-white-villages

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DATES & PRICES

Dates	Price	Single Supplement*
May 05, 2024	USD$4550	USD$550
Sep 08, 2024	USD$4550	USD$550
Sep 22, 2024	USD$4550	USD$550
Sep 29, 2024	USD$4550	USD$550

DAILY RIDE SUMMARY

Day	Distance/Gain	Terrain	Day Level	Notes
1	Test ride			
2	41km / 315m (26mi / 1033ft)	Hilly		
3	47km / 370m (29mi / 1214ft)	Gentle		
4	45km / 435m (28mi / 1427ft)	Rolling hills		Today's ride is an optional loop ride
5	38km / 382m (24mi / 1253ft)	Hilly		
6	42km / 361m (26mi / 1184ft)	Rolling hills		Today's ride is an optional loop ride
7	Last Day			

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ARRIVAL INFO

Meeting time 2 p.m. - on Day 1, meet your fellow cyclists and Tour Leaders at the Day 1 Hotel specified on the itinerary.

Note:

As you are planning, remember that the hotels listed in our itineraries are our primary hotels and are - in rare cases - subject to change. Before you make arrangements, check with us if your tour departure is guaranteed. If your tour departure is out further than 6 months, please also check with us as there might be slight changes to the itinerary.

The below information will help you plan your arrival. For more tips or other routes, you might like Rome2Rio. The fare and timing information listed below is approximate.

We suggest flying into the Bari's Karol Wojtyla Airport, also called Bari Palese (BRI).

1. Bus from Bari airport to Matera (view PugliAirbus schedules here). The result list will show "Bari Aeroporto" as the departure station and "Matera, Viale A. Moro fronte 'Pianeta Casa'" as the arrival station (1 hour 15 min/EUR 3-6)
2. Walk 8 minutes or taxi* from Matera Bus Station to Day 1 Hotel (10 min/EUR 10-15).

- or book your private transfer from the Bari airport to the Day 1 Hotel, e.g. Autonoleggio Castellano - (1 hour 15 min/fares depending on number of passengers, starting at EUR 70)

***Note:** There is a taxi operator on the square where the bus drops off but the office might not be attended continuously. If the walk is not an option for you, and you have a reliable arrival time, we will gladly pre-arrange a pick-up for you (around EUR 20). Do note that the taxi will need to circumvent the old town, so it won't be as direct as walking.

DEPARTURE INFO

Your trip ends on the final day after breakfast.

Flying out of the Brindisi-Salento Airport (BDS):

- Taxi from the ending hotel to the Brindisi Airport (40 min/EUR 70-90); hotel can help arrange this.

Or public transportation

1. Taxi from the ending hotel to the Ostuni train station (5min/EUR 15)
2. Train from Ostuni to Brindisi (no pre-booking necessary) (20 min/EUR 3).
3. Shuttle Bus from Brindisi to the Brindisi-Salento Airport (35 min/EUR 3)

Flying out of the Bari Airport (BRI):

- Private transfer from the ending hotel to the Bari Airport (1.5 hours/EUR 120-140 for 2 persons)

Or public transportation

1. Taxi from the ending hotel to the Ostuni train station (5 min/EUR 15)

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2. Train from Ostuni to Bari Centrale (no pre-booking necessary) (1 hour/EUR 6)
3. Autobus Tempesta from Bari Centrale to the Bari Airport (hourly departures) (30 min/EUR 4)

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Welcome to Matera

DAY 1: Sun, Apr 26th

Highlights Welcome drink, bike fitting, dinner in the "Sassi" of Matera

Arrive in Matera, unique in all of Italy for the cave dwellings that ring the central city. Inhabited by refugee clerics and monks from Greece and the Balkans during the 8th and 9th centuries, the cave churches and domestic dwellings carved into the town's calcarenite or semi-sandstone cliffs at one time housed as many as 25,000 people. Today, the churches and caves are preserved as a World Heritage Site as being the "most outstanding, intact example of a cave-dwelling settlement in the Mediterranean." Settle into our hotel and enjoy our welcome dinner after fitting bikes.

Level
Meals Dinner
Lodging Hotel San Domenico

Matera

DAY 2: Mon, Apr 27th

Highlights Guided walk of the Matera's "sassi", Appian Way

We'll start the morning with a loop ride exploring Matera's surroundings. Sights along the way include the fortified Massaria Jesce, which was an ancient Roman "post office" on the Appian Way - one of the most important Roman Roads. We'll also visit the cave crypt of San Michele Arcangelo with frescoes dating to the 14th century. This afternoon features a guided walk exploring Matera's history including a typical sassi, a cave dwelling house. Fodor's has described the sassi as "one of the most unique landscapes in Europe," on this tour we'll gain a better understanding for the living conditions of what is believed to be one of the first human settlements in Italy.

Distance 41 km (26 mi)
Gain 315 m (1033 ft)
Terrain Hilly
Level
Meals Breakfast
Lodging Hotel San Domenico

Locorotondo

DAY 3: Tue, Apr 28th

Highlights Gioia del Colle, Trulli, vineyards, Locorotondo

Today we shuttle from Matera to Gioia del Colle, famous for one of Frederic II castles. Start cycling and enjoy this ride through olive groves and vineyards on the way to the "Valle d'Itria" which is the heart of Puglia's trulli region. Trulli are conical shaped dwellings unique to this part of Italy. Originally used as storage sheds for farmers, they quickly became popular as temporary shelters. Our destination is the small but vibrant town of Locorotondo which we'll call home for the next two nights. This afternoon get lost in the whitewashed maze of lanes and historic buildings towering over them.

Distance 47 km (29 mi)
Gain 370 m (1214 ft)
Terrain Gentle
Level
Meals Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Lodging Hotel Leonardo Trulli Resort

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Loop ride to Alberobello

DAY 4: Wed, Apr 29th

Highlights Guided tour of Alberobello and trulli, cheese tasting

We'll pedal to the iconic "trulli" town of Alberobello where we'll have a guided tour to learn more about these conical shaped buildings and the people who built them. Take time to explore this unique town and have lunch on your own before getting back on the bike and heading back to Locorotondo. Before dinner together, we'll learn more about and sample the fresh mozzarella, burrata and stracciatella for which Puglia is renowned.

Distance 45 km (28 mi)
Gain 435 m (1427 ft)
Terrain Rolling hills
Level
Meals Breakfast, Dinner
Lodging Hotel Leonardo Trulli Resort

Bicycle to Ostuni

DAY 5: Thu, Apr 30th

Highlights Ostuni - La cittá bianca

Our ride today will take you first through vineyards and olive groves to the whitewashed town of Ostuni. Our hotel is located in the center of this amazing village which spans three hilltops and is crowned by a Gothic cathedral. Destroyed by Hannibal during the Punic Wars in 1st and 2nd Centuries BC, Ostuni was rebuilt by the Greeks and takes its name from them as “Astu néon or "new town". Rebuilt by the Normans in the 10th Century, Ostuni then flourished during the Italian Renaissance under Duchess Isabella of Bari. This is an imposing and beautiful city from afar and within.

Distance 38 km (24 mi)
Gain 382 m (1253 ft)
Terrain Hilly
Level
Meals Breakfast
Lodging Ostuni Palace

Loop ride through the Valle d'Itria

DAY 6: Fri, May 1st

Highlights Ancient olive mill, the beach, Carovigno

We'll take a loop ride from our hotel today through the Valle d'Itria. The first stop will be to visit an underground olive press dating to pre-Roman times and used until the 19th C. Our ride continues on the Via Appia Traiana just before reaching the Adriatic Coast. Built by order of the Roman Emperor Traiano in the 2nd century A.D., the Via Traiana connected Rome to Brindisi, one of the most important ports for commerce with the Middle East. We’ll parallel the coast today with a possible dip at a local beach before continuing to the medieval town of Carovigno and back to our hotel. The October 1, 2023 departure will be at Vico Bianco.

Distance 42 km (26 mi)
Gain 361 m (1184 ft)
Terrain Rolling hills
Level
Meals Breakfast, Dinner
Lodging Ostuni Palace

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Farewell

DAY 7: Sat, May 2nd

Level

Meals Breakfast

Highlights Buon viaggio!

Whether you are headed to Brindisi, Bari or Rome we hope you enjoy your travel or trip home. Thanks for joining us in Puglia.

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WHAT'S INCLUDED

When you book a tour with ExperiencePlus! our goal is to ensure your only focus each day is to hop on your bike and explore scenic cycling routes in new destinations. Inclusions may differ depending on which tour style you pick but all ExperiencePlus! tours include the three most important aspects of a guided bike tour.

- Superb tour leaders who are fun and multilingual, bi-cultural experts, and cycling enthusiasts. They will support you and help you navigate confidently on and off the road.
- High quality bikes selected for the terrain you are cycling on and correct bike fitting to ensure comfortable cycling.
- Thoughtfully designed itineraries and routes that take advantage of stunning cycling destinations and the freedom of bicycle travel.

PRE-TRIP SUPPORT

- Bicycle training programs designed specifically for your tour and fitness level.
- Planning tips on what to pack, hotel recommendations and other helpful details from our Travel Planning Pages: https://ep-2023.localhost/travel-planning/
- A gift of your choice (cycling jerseys, socks, or a t-shirt) as our way of saying thanks for choosing ExperiencePlus!
- *Traveler services including assistance booking extra nights at the tour starting and ending hotels. (*Explorer Tours excluded)
- See "What's Included" for tour-specific inclusions and be sure to check the "Keep in mind" section under "Tour Summary" online.

BICYCLES

For a full list of what's included with your bike see: https://ep-2023.localhost/what-to-expect/our-bikes/. If you would like to bring your own pedals and shoes we recommend doing so. On Explorer tours we include a GPS device on all bikes. We ask that you bring your own helmet to ensure the best fit. If you would like us to provide you with a used helmet, please contact us.

NAVIGATING, DAYSHEETS AND VAN SUPPORT:

Each day you'll receive a daily briefing with a highlighted route map. About 14 days prior to your tour, we will provide you with access to RideWithGPS Experiences, our platform to distribute information on each tour day's activities, meals and ride, as well as GPS-routes.

Daily information also includes Tour Leader phone numbers, hotel information and interesting historical and cultural information. On Classic, Bike and Boat and Expedition tours we also navigate using our signature chalk dust arrows. Our arrows make navigating very easy—you may never need to look at the map. On Explorer tours the terrain and destinations are not always conducive to using chalk arrows so we'll ride as a group or you can navigate on your own with the GPS tracks. On tour you will have a support van providing water and snack resupply, mechanical assistance, a lift for tired cyclists, and luggage transfers. On some itineraries the van will not be able to follow sections of the route that stray from the road for example onto cycling paths.

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Need More Miles? On many days it is possible to add miles to the day, just talk to your tour leader about your options.

Need Fewer Miles? If you aren't sure about your abilities or how much you want to ride remember the support van is available to offer snacks, encouragement, a lift over the next hill, or to the next hotel. You are on vacation and we're here to help make it perfect for you.

TIPPING YOUR TOUR LEADER TEAM:

If you feel your tour leader team has demonstrated great expertise and service, common practice within the travel industry is to tip. Tipping is voluntary and greatly appreciated, and gratuity amounts vary widely. Should you decide to leave a tip, as a guideline, we suggest 5% of the tour cost per traveler — this is for the entire tour leader team, not each tour leader. You can give the tip to any member of the tour leader team, as they share it evenly. In order to avoid social tensions, we encourage you to tip as individuals and not as a group. If you feel your tour leaders did not quite meet your expectations, please let us know. *Tips are included in Expedition pricing.

PHOTOS:

By reserving space on tour, you agree that ExperiencePlus! may use, re-use and reproduce any images, photos or videos sent to us, or that are taken by our guides or other travelers, in any medium, including but not limited to print, electronic media, or Internet, free of charge and without your right to inspection. If you do not want us to use any images of you, you must inform us or your tour leader in writing at the start of the tour.

OUR TOUR STYLES

We realize that one size does not fit all and there are as many ways to travel by bike as there are different types of cyclists and travelers. No matter what you are looking for in a cycling vacation, we have a tour with just the right pace for you.

Classic Tours: Dream of traveling through a region by bike? then our Classic style bike tours are for you! Our unique chalk arrows lead the way as you explore small villages and world-class cities while traveling at your own pace.

- Tour Length: 7-15 days
- Hotels: 3-4 stars, most itineraries include at least one two-night stay at the same hotel.
- Road Type: Pavement, bike paths.
- Multi-night Stays: Occasionally
- Navigation: Chalk Arrows
- Price: $$$
- Tour Levels: 1-4.5

Explorer Tours: Travel further off the beaten path - we let the destination dictate where we ride, not the road surface.

- Tour Length: 7-8 days
- Hotels: 2-3 stars, occasional multi-night stays at the same hotel.
- Road Type: 30-50% gravel or hard-packed dirt, the rest pavement.
- Multi-night Stays: Occasionally
- Navigation: Group riding and GPS
- Price: $$
- Tour Levels: 1-4

Bike and Boat Tours: Spend days cycling and your evenings relaxing on a private boat as you cruise to your next port.

- Tour Length: 7-8 days, some itineraries have land-based extensions available.
- Barge/Boat: 3-4 star, same cabin for the entire boat trip.
- Road Type: Pavement
- Navigation: Chalk Arrows
- Price: $$$
- Tour Levels: 1-4

Expedition Tours: Multi-week tours where you spend long days on the bike with the added satisfaction of pedaling across multiple countries.

- Tour Length: 15-40 days
- Hotels: 2-4 stars, typically there is a 2-night hotel stay every 5-7 days.
- Road Type: Pavement with occasional hard-packed dirt or gravel.
- Multi-night Stays: On rest days
- Navigation: Chalk Arrows
- Price: $$$
- Tour Levels: 4-5

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We know that travelers have different cycling abilities and preferences for the number of miles, elevation gain, and type of terrain they want on a bicycle tour. We have rated each day of our tours on a scale of 1-5. Our Tour Level's are an average of the day rating on tour. We recommend looking at the daily summary on the PDF and Website Itinerary to see details about each day's ride.

LEVEL 1 - 1.5

Level 1 - 1.5 days will be mostly flat and the distance will rarely exceed 50 km. Level 1 - 1.5 tours are suitable for beginner cyclists, those traveling by bicycle for the first time, or multi-generational groups with a desire for a nice and easy bike tour with plenty of opportunities to stop and enjoy the scenery.

- **Average daily mileage:** 20 - 50 km. (12-30 miles) Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Gain:** 0-400 M (0-1200 ft)
- **Terrain:** Mostly flat with occasional gentle climbs at a grade of less than 3%, that are sustained for a maximum of 3km. There might be a steeper but short climb.

LEVEL 2 - 2.5

Level 2 - 2.5 days are ideal for riders newer to bicycle touring looking for a bit of a challenge.

- **Average daily mileage:** 30-60 km (18 - 38 miles). Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Gain:** 400 - 600 m (1200 - 2000 ft)
- **Terrain:** Mostly rolling terrain around 3%. Presents multiple 3% to 4% climbs. May present an occasional steeper climb.

LEVEL 3 - 3.5

Level 3 - 3.5 days are great for active individuals (who run, bike, swim etc. on a regular basis).

- **Average daily mileage:** 50-70km (30-45 miles). Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Gain:** 600 - 900m (2000 - 2800 ft)
- **Terrain:** Multiple Climbs with grades of 4 - 6%.

LEVEL 4 - 4.5

Level 4 - 4.5 days are the best riding days for avid cyclists or very active individuals who are excited to challenge themselves on a bike.

- **Average daily mileage:** 70-90km (45-55 miles) Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Gain:** 900-1000m (2800-3600 ft)
- **Terrain:** Presents multiple steep climbs (6% to 8% grades), 1 to 3km long. Alternatively, 4 — 6% grades for 6 kilometers or more.

LEVEL 5 (EXPEDITION)

Our Expedition tours designed for strong riders looking for the challenge of riding across countries or continents. Long daily mileages mean limited van support so we recommend these tours for riders who feel confident that they can ride every mile.

- **Average daily mileage:** 120 km (75 miles). Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Gain:** 500-2000 m (1600- 6500 ft)
- **Terrain:** Expect and be prepared for any and everything.

REMEMBER

A tour level is the average of the days so we recommend you look at the day level on each day of the itinerary to help you better understand what to expect from your tour.

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TO DO ONCE YOU'VE BOOKED!

- ☐ Read through your Reservation Confirmation and After you Book Information (link sent to you by e-mail), it has important information to help you plan your trip!
- ☐ Check the date on your passport. The expiration date should extend three months past your date of return to your home country.
- ☐ Complete the Customer Information Form: https://ep-2023.localhost/travel-planning/customer-information-form/
- ☐ We recommend you take out travel insurance. Find details at https://ep-2023.localhost/travel-planning/travel-insurance/
- ☐ Choose a bicycle training program: https://ep-2023.localhost/travel-planning/bicycle-tour-training/
- ☐ Peruse our country-specific Travel Planning Pages: https://ep-2023.localhost/travel-planning/

6 TO 3 MONTHS PRIOR TO TOUR START DATE

- ☐ Refer to your Tour Packet/Itinerary to see step-by-step arrival and departure information for your tour, meeting place and time, if a reservation on a complimentary ExperiencePlus! Shuttle (if applicable) is required, along with other important information to help you plan your arrival and departure.
- ☐ Reserve your flights after you know you have a confirmed tour departure. Please check with our office if you do not know if your trip is confirmed.
- ☐ Book your pre and post-tour hotel nights.
- ☐ Begin your chosen training program
- ☐ Final payment is due 90 days (120 days for Bike & Barge/Boat tours) prior to the tour start. Please refer to your Invoice and the Final Payment Reminder e-mail which we send 10 days prior to the due date for detailed instructions.

6 TO 2 WEEKS PRIOR TO TOUR START DATE

- ☐ Start reading one of the books or watching one of the movies from our Reading and Movie Lists: https://ep-2023.localhost/travel-planning/.
- ☐ Plan what you are going to pack and start packing! Refer to the Packing Lists for suggestions, and see luggage limits at https://ep-2023.localhost/travel-planning/packing/.
- ☐ We'll email you your access code to Digital Daysheets, Hotel Itinerary, Participant Roster, names and contact information of your Tour Leaders, emergency phone numbers, and other important departure information about 2 weeks prior to your tour start date. All this will be provided to you via a feature called Experiences via the RideWithGPS App (tracks available but not necessary for navigation on Classic, Expedition and Bike & Boat tours).

DAY OF YOUR FLIGHT

Get as much sleep on the plane as you can. Pack one day of cycling gear in your carry-on just in case. See you soon!

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