Recently named one of the “20 Places to See Now” by National Geographic Traveler this tour takes you through the heart of fascinating Puglia in Italy’s southern region, with its landscapes steeped in Greek, Norman, and Arab history. Visiting Puglia means setting out on an inspiring journey few have done so come and explore the heel of Italy’s boot and discover sights, tastes, and gorgeous seascapes you’ll find nowhere else.

Puglia is comprised of sun-bleached landscapes, silver olive groves, picturesque seascapes, and memorable hilltop and coastal towns. Puglia juts into the Adriatic and Ionian Seas and the waters of both are stunningly beautiful, veering between translucent emerald-green and dusky powder blue. It’s no wonder why savvy tourists keep coming back to this wonderful well-kept secret of a place. You may want to book this trip to Puglia before this secret gem is revealed to the world!

Your Itinerary:

Day 1 - Depart USA for Puglia Italy: Depart JFK airport for your trans-Atlantic flight to Puglia Italy. Dinner and breakfast will be served on board your flight.

Day 2 - Arrive Martina Franca – Puglia: After clearing customs, you will be met by your tour guide and transferred to your hotel in Martina Franca. The 4 star Park Hotel San Michele will be your home for the next five nights to discover a region of Italy that few Americans have. After checking in you will have free time to explore on your own. The town of Martina Franca rises on the hill of San Martino, between the Adriatic and Ionian Seas. The town’s jewel is its lovely historic center, a memorable maze of winding alleys, where whitewashed simplicity sits side by side with baroque extravagance. Martina Franca is an incredibly photo genic town, so come equipped to take lots of pictures! Tonight join your fellow travelers for a welcome dinner. (D)

Day 3 - Castellana Grotto Caverns & Alberobello: This morning you depart for the Castellana Grotto Caverns. The “Grotte di Castellana” are one of the most important attractions of Puglia and a natural heritage of inestimable value to Italy. The beauty of the Caves of Castellana attracts tourists from all over the world. Your journey continues on to the city of Alberobello, a UNESCO World Heritage site because of its unusual districts of trulli. What is a trullo? A trullo is a small dwelling built from the local limestone, with dry-stone walls and a characteristic conical roof. It is a traditional and simple type of structure which you’ll see dotted around this part of Puglia. You will have free time to enjoy before returning to your hotel. (B, D)

Discover the Charms of Italy’s Rustic Southern Region on this Unforgettable Trip!

Adventure Travel
“Exclusive” Tour
$3,299

Your Tour Includes:

- Roundtrip airfare from JFK - including all airline taxes & fees!
- 4 Star Hotel Stays:
  - Park Hotel San Michele
  - Ristoppia Resort
- 16 Meals:
  8 Breakfasts
  8 Dinners including wine & mineral water!

Visits & Admission fees Included:

- Fully Escorted
- Visit Matera used for the filming of Mel Gibson’s “The Passion of the Christ.”
- Bari sightseeing with local guide
- Excursion to Trani the “Pearl of Puglia”
- Visit Castellana Caverns
- Visit Alberobello a UNESCO World Heritage site
- Lecce sightseeing with local guide
- Locorotondo Wine tasting
- All Sightseeing and entrance fees as per itinerary
- Plus much more!

All sightseeing and entrance fees included!
No Optional Tours to Purchase.

PLEASE NOTE: Adventure Travel recommends that you be in good physical condition to fully participate in this tour. It may require extended periods of walking over even and uneven surfaces and steep terrain.
Day 4 - Matera, Locorotondo & Cisternino: Visiting Matera is like taking a step back in time. The town consists of houses carved out of the rock face along the steep ravine. Our guided tour takes us into a “sassi”, one of the typical houses. Matera was used for the filming of Mel Gibson’s “The Passion of the Christ.” Our journey continues on to Locorotondo, where everything is shimmering white aside from the blood-red geraniums that tumble from the window boxes. Situated on a hilltop on the Murge Plateau, it’s a “Borgi più belli d'Italia” (www.borghitalia.it) – that is, it’s rated as one of the most beautiful towns in Italy. The streets are paved with smooth ivory-colored stones, with the church of Santa Maria della Grancia as their sunbaked centerpiece. This is the liquid heart of the Puglian wine region and we will sample some of the local spumante at a Cantina del Locorotondo. On our journey back to our hotel we make a stop at Cisternino. The characteristic historic center is made up of chalky-white homes and buildings, side streets and alleyways dotted with geraniums, arches, tiny colonnades, stone friezes and stairways. The old city wall can still be seen, along with the two cylindrical towers built during the Anjou nomination (B, D).

Day 5 - Excursion to Trani & Castel del Monte: After breakfast we depart for the “Pearl of Puglia,” Trani. The town is reminiscent of 1950s films set in old-fashioned seaside Italy: historic buildings fading with casual charm, boats in the harbour and sleepy dogs lazing in the midday sun by the deserted waterfront. Here you will have time to visit the historic centre, with its medieval churches, glossy limestone streets and faded yet charming palazzi, but it’s the cathedral, pale against the deep-blue sea that is the town’s most arresting sight. Enjoy lunch on your own before heading to Castel del Monte. The medieval castle “Castel del Monte” (Italian for Castle of the Mount) proudly overlooks the commune of Andria from a hilltop at an altitude of 540m. Castel del Monte was built by the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II in the 13th century and was declared World Heritage by UNESCO in 1996. (B, D)

Day 6 - Excursion to Bari and Polignano sul Mare: Today is a trip to the capital of Apulia, Bari. An important tourist destination and commercial harbor, Bari lies on a fertile coastal plain facing the Adriatic Sea. Our local guide will take us through the tangled network of crooked streets and passageways that make up Bari’s old town, commonly known as “Bari Vecchia.” Home to many of the city’s churches and historic buildings, the area is a beautiful example of ancient medieval architecture. The most interesting is the Basilica di San Nicola, a crooked streets and passageways that make up Bari’s old town, commonly known as “Bari Vecchia.” Home to many of the city’s churches and historic buildings, the area is a beautiful example of ancient medieval architecture. The most interesting is the Basilica di San Nicola, a

Day 7 – Ostuni: After checking out of our hotel we depart for Ostuni, one of the most stunning cities in southern Italy famous for the dazzling effect of its whitewashed houses. It is a genuine and charming example of Mediterranean architecture. The city of Ostuni is a series of levels, staircases, small roads, alleys, arches. Hints of the Middle Ages are at hand in every corner, in every view to the sea, in the portal of a palace, in the walls of a conven or the front of a church. You will have plenty of time for lunch on your own and shopping before arriving at the Ristoppia Resort, our home and relaxation destination for the next three nights. Located a few kilometers from the crystalline sea of Salento and a short distance from Lecce, Ristoppia Resort is a historic resort that has maintained traditional architecture and can satisfy the needs of those looking for a memorable and unique vacation. (B, D)

Day 8 – Lecce: After breakfast depart for Lecce. Lecce is the Baroque masterpiece of southern Italy and sometimes described as the “Florence of the Baroque” or the “Rome of the South.” A period of prosperity led to grand developments and the wholesale construction of palaces and churches. These buildings adapted the fashionable Baroque style to the soft Historic Lecce is a beautiful baroque town; it’s a

Day 9- Otranto & Gallipoli: Otranto, Italy’s easternmost town and overlooks a pretty harbor on the turquoise Adriatic coast. In the historic center, looming golden walls guard narrow car-free lanes, protecting countless little shops selling local goods. The picture-perfect blue waters, white buildings and diving rocks make Otranto the frequent cover star of maps, books and articles about Puglia. The imposing castle dominate much of the town, giving way to a small port, a series of sea-front promenades and the town’s very own beautiful white sandy beach. Next stop...Gallipoli, the “Pearl of the Ionian Sea.” Gallipoli is a beautiful fishing village on the coast in Southern Puglia region. The beautiful old town is built on a limestone island and linked to the mainland by a 16th century bridge. Its harbors are used by fishing boats and there’s plenty of fresh seafood which makes this a perfect opportunity of lunch on your own before returning to your hotel. (B, D)

Day 10 - Depart for USA: Ciao to Italy! After breakfast you depart for the airport for your flight home with lovely memories of Italy. An early morning departure may be necessary due to flight schedules. (B)