

Matera and the Riace Bronzes

Tour 19 - 26 May 2015



The town of Matera (illustr.) situated on the edge of a ravine dates back to the middle ages when Byzantine and Benedictine monks built churches and monasteries out of the rocks known as Sassi. The area has its origins in neolithic times and was colonized by the Greek Achaians, the Romans, the Normans and then by the Monarchs of the Kingdom of the two Sicilies. The strange rock formation and the town built within the rocks is a site of extraordinary mystery and beauty.

The hotel we have selected is the Locanda di San Martino which is built in the Sassi and offers every comfort including a spa.

Our tour also takes us south to Reggio Calabria to view the Riace Bronzes - two unique Greek statues that surpass any other bronze sculpture of all times comparable only to Michelangelo's David.

We will fly from London to Bari and back.

Our recommended flights are:

outward - 19/05 2015 - Easyjet EZY8365 - London (Gatwick) to Bari - departing 11:20 - arriving 15:10
returning - 26/05 2015 - Easyjet EZY8366 - Bari to London (Gatwick) - departing 15:45 - arriving 17:35

The Itinerary

Tuesday 19 May

5 pm Arrive by bus at the Hotel.
Visit the Romanesque Churches of S.Francesco and San Giovanni Battista in the centre of the town.

Dinner by invitation

Wednesday 20 May

10 am Walking in the Sassi Area we will visit the beautiful Romanesque Cathedral and the small Churches within the Sassi Caveoso and Barisano (S.ta Maria de Idris (illustr.), San Pietro Caveoso, San Lucia delle Malve, San Nicola dei Greci)

Afternoon We will go to San Giuliano Dam (WWF Fauna Oasis 15 miles from the centre of the town) and visit the stupendous Cryptic of the Original Sin or of the 100 Saints, restored from the Scaletta Club (under the auspices of Avv. De Ruggieri) within the wild landscape of the 'gravina'.

Dinner at leisure



Thursday 21 May

9 am We leave by bus to go to Reggio Calabria stopping en route to visit the archeological site of Sibari, the Greek town well known for the sybaritic way of life, luxurious and indulgent. Lunch on the sea.
We will continue our journey to Reggio Calabria arriving around 5 pm.

Our Hotel there is the Altafiumara Resort and Spa on the coast a short distance from the town centre.

8 pm **Dinner** (by invitation) in the Hotel Restaurant which has beautiful views over the Coast.

Friday 22 May

10 am Visit the National Archeological Museum of Calabria to see the amazing Greek civilization there culminating with its masterpiece the Riace Bronzes (illustr.).

Afternoon free to visit the town. Reggio is famous for its shopping and its beautiful promenade on the sea (illustr.).

Dinner at leisure



Saturday 23 May

9:30 am We leave for our return journey to Matera, stopping for lunch at Bernalda where there is a renowned local trattoria (by invitation).

Afternoon We will visit Metaponto - a very important colony from Achaean of the 8C to 7C BC with an archeological visit to the magnificent museum

Return to our Hotel - Dinner at leisure

Sunday 24 May

10 am Visit to the Domenico Ridola Museum - which was directed by Elena Lattanzi before she went to direct the Archeological Museum in Reggio Calabria. She restored it in the present form and we will be accompanied by her successor. Nearby are the 16C and 17C Churches of S. Francis of Assisi and of the Purgatory.

Free for lunch

Afternoon North of Matera is Altamura where we will visit the neolithic village of Murgia Timone, the Church of the Dove with a Romanesque facade and beautiful frescoes and the Church of S.ta Maria della Valle dug inside the sassi, with a gothic facade).

Evening We will end the day with an aperitif al fresco in one of the many bars of the Sassi followed by a **dinner** (by invitation) in a well known local restaurant, specialised in fish dishes.

Monday 25 May

10 am Leave for Gradina, an adorable town, almost a small Matera, all built within their Sassi. The place does not appear in any official map, but it is full of beautiful churches and exciting sites. Dr. Canosa, the former director of the Museum in Matera, who is very keen on the presentation of this special town will be our hostess and arrange for us a very special day.

Evening Dinner at leisure

Tuesday 26 May

9:30 am Leaving the hotel for our return home, we will drive by Trani, a lovely stone-built port and fishing village. The centre-piece of the town is the most beautiful Norman Cathedral of Italy, the 11C Duomo. Set right on the sea it is dedicated to San Nicola the Pilgrim. The church is made of 3 churches: one on top of the other; the lower one consists of a forest of ancient columns, a magnificent labyrinth where we end our Norman adventure.

PRICES

Members	£1525	Others	£1745
Friends	£1600	Single supplement	£ 185

The price includes:

7 nights bed & breakfast; 3 dinners; 1 lunch; entrance fees; guiding and transport, including airport transfers.

Accademia Italiana /Artstur

55 Exhibition Road, London SW7 2PN - Tel. 020 7591 0312 - Mob. 0772 0812 183
artstur@gmail.com - www.artstur.com