

# A VISIT TO CALABRIA IONICA: THE HIDDEN JEWEL OF ITALY

*8 – 14 May 2019*



*Panoramic view of the Monastery of San Giovanni Theristis*

In the words of the Italian writer Guido Piovene in his 'Viaggio in Italia', Calabria is certainly the strangest of Italian regions. Among the vast extent of its mountain one almost thinks of not being in the South of Italy but in the Alps or Scandinavia. Our tour concentrates on the Ionian coast where mountain peaks plunge to the violet blue sea. High in the hills are a wealth of Byzantine and Medieval towns, churches, castles and convents, while the coast is rich with the ruins of Greek settlements.

On the Ionian coast we will be accompanied by Salvatore Mongiardo an authority and author of several books in English on the region.

## **ITINERARY**

### **Wednesday 8 May 2019**

Depart from London Gatwick via Rome to Reggio Calabria the superb capital of the region and home to the Bronzes of Riace. They are now in the Archeological Museum of Magna Grecia. Our hotel is the Grand Hotel Excelsior, located a few steps from the Museum and with splendid views over the sea.

**8 pm** Dinner by invitation



*The Two Bronzes of Riace*

### Thursday 9 May

**10 am** - Guided Visit to the Museum of Magna Grecia where are the famous classical Greek sculptures “The Bronzes of Riace”, the most famous statues from the Classical period of Greek Art. Free for lunch and afternoon. Reggio Calabria offers first class shops on the main road next to the Museum of Magna Grecia. Dinner at leisure.

### Friday 10 May

**9.30 am** - Departure for the Ionian Coast. Arrive in Bovalino to visit the Archeological Park where is the Roman Villa of Casignana. Continue to the ancient Greek ruins of Locri and thence to Gerace for lunch and to visit their Medieval Churches and charming historical centre. Returning to the coastal road we go to our Hotel in Soverato Gli Ulivi, a charming family-run hotel close to the sea. We will be based here for four nights. Dinner by invitation.

### Saturday 11 May

**9.30 am** - Guided visit to the Archaeological Park of Ancient Caulonia.

Proceed inland to Stilo the well known Town of the philosopher Tommaso Campanella to visit very ancient Churches like S. Giovanni where is a famous painting by Battistello Caracciolo. We then visit the dramatically located Norman Church and Convent of San Giovanni Theristis established by Eastern Monks escaping from the Turkish invasion. On our return to Soverato we deviate to the hill town of S.ta Caterina dello Ionio. High above the coast this ghost town raises many questions. Why did this clearly important medieval town die? We cannot answer until we visit it and hear from somebody from the region who, later, will join us for dinner in a charming local Restaurant (by invitation).

### Sunday 12 May

**10 am** - Departure for Borgia to visit the Archaeological Park and the Museum of the Roccelletta. In the afternoon we will go to Tiriolo to visit the Medieval Castle and after lunch the historical centre. We will see the local artisans manufacture with their typical looms to create the cloths, shawls and various other objects typical of the village. Return to hotel. Dinner at leisure.

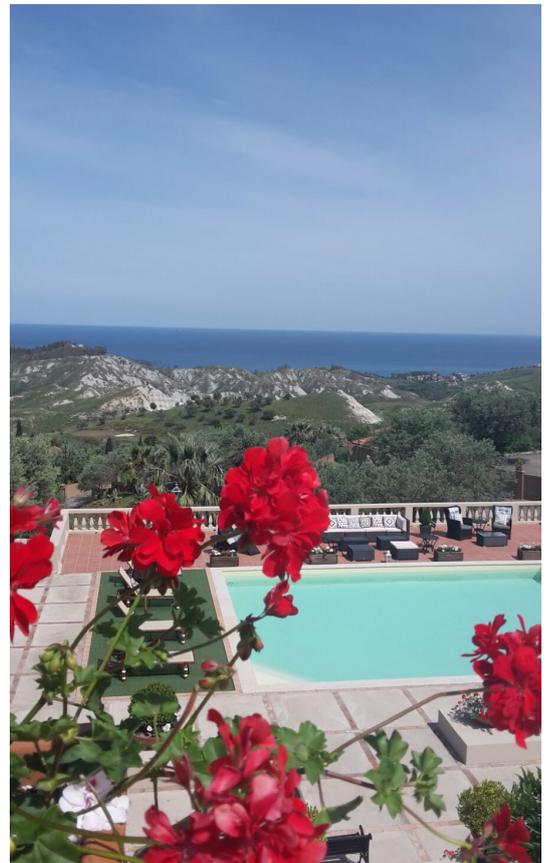
### Monday 13 May

**9.30 am** - Leave for Crotone for a guided visit to the Archeological Museum and its Castle. We will then go to Capo Colonna to visit the Museum of the Sea, the Archaeological Park with its famous Treasure of Hera and the most romantic solitary Single Column of the Temple of the Goddess Hera spectacularly situated above the rocks, overlooking the sea.

Return to the Hotel for Dinner. (by invitation)

### Tuesday 14 May

Early start to Lamezia Terme for Alitalia Flight to London



*From Castle Ferri to the Ionic Sea*

#### The recommended FLIGHTS:

Departing - 9 May

BA: Gatwick → Rome; Alitalia: Rome → Reggio Calabria

Returning - 14 May

Alitalia: Lamezia Terme → London Heathrow via Rome

**PRICE**      **£1495 for members; £1575 for friends; £1660 for others; no single supplement**  
**Deposit £400**

**The price includes** 6 nights B&B, all dinners except that on 9 and 12 May, all transport, guiding, entrance fees. Lunches not included; **FLIGHTS NOT INCLUDED**

**Payment:** should be made by bank transfer as follows:

Bank: CARDONEBANKING - Name: Artstur Ltd; Sort Code: 23 18 84; Account: 78597529