



## Grand Tour – from Lecce to Reggio Calabria

*10 nights/11 days, 4 hotel transfers (4\*). Wednesday to Saturday.*

*For groups, minimum 25 pax*

*Validity: September, October, November 2011*

*and May, June, 1/15 July, September, October and November 2012.*

**First day, Wednesday: Airport/Lecce.** Arrival at the airport, transfer to Lecce, Hotel President (4\*), check-in, welcome drinks with your guide, program illustration. Dinner and overnight stay.



**Second day, Thursday: Lecce/Lecce.** After breakfast, guided tour of Lecce, a wonderful city, famous for its **Baroque** works of art. Lunch at the hotel, the guided tour of Lecce will continue in the afternoon. Lecce is a very ancient city, whose origins are historically mysterious. Many myths and legends are linked to Lecce. Several monuments and art works date back to the Roman Age, among these the Roman Amphitheater in St. Oronzio's Square and the Roman Theatre dating back to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D.; St. Oronzio's Column, taken to Lecce from Brindisi in 1666, represents one of the last two columns of the Appian Way; Charles V's Castle, surrounded by walls and ramparts; St Niccolò and Cataldo's Church of 1180, decorated with frescoes and with annexed abbey characterized by two wonderful cloisters.



At the end of the tour, back to the hotel, dinner and overnight stay.

**Third day, Friday: Lecce/Gallipoli/Matera.** After breakfast at the hotel, check-out and departure for Gallipoli. Guided tour of Gallipoli, a little town situated on the West Coast of the Salentina Peninsula, in the Gulf of Taranto, it overlooks the Ionian Sea. Gallipoli is divided into two areas: the Old Town and the New Town. The historical center is characterized by ancient buildings and frescoes, it stands on a calcareous island connected to the dry land by a stone bridge. Around 1500, defensive walls were built around the city in order to protect its inhabitants by enemy attacks. The height of the walls was reduced at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in order to build a panoramic route that surrounds the old island.



Towards the south the Promontory of Pizzo is visible, while towards the West you can admire the Piccioni Rock, Campo Island and on a very clear day the Sila Mountain; on the South you can admire St. Andrew's Island, where there is a big lighthouse, built in 1866. Lunch at a local restaurant, *Scoglio delle Sirene*, the menu is completely based on seafood. After lunch, departure for Matera, stop at the *OROHOTel* (4\*), check-in, meet your guide, program illustration, dinner and overnight stay.

**Fourth day: Saturday: Matera/Amantea.** After breakfast, check-out at the hotel and departure for Matera, the regional capital of Basilicata. The suburb called "Sassi" (Stones), which, until the end of 1700 was a perfect example of integration between man and the environment, in the last two century has endured a significant deterioration, rising again thanks to various interventions. Since 1993 it has been declared **Unesco world heritage site**.



It should be noted that in 1935, Carlo Levi, famous Italian doctor, writer and painter, spent his exile in Matera. This experience inspired him the novel *Cristo si è Fermato ad Eboli* (Christ Stopped at Eboli), published in 1945. After the visit, departure for Amantea, lunch at a motorway restaurant. Arrival at the hotel and dinner, overnight stay.

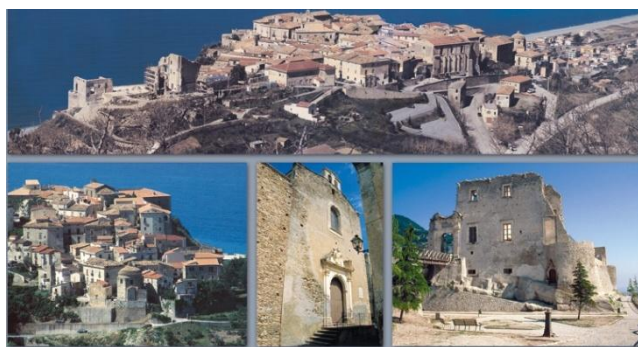
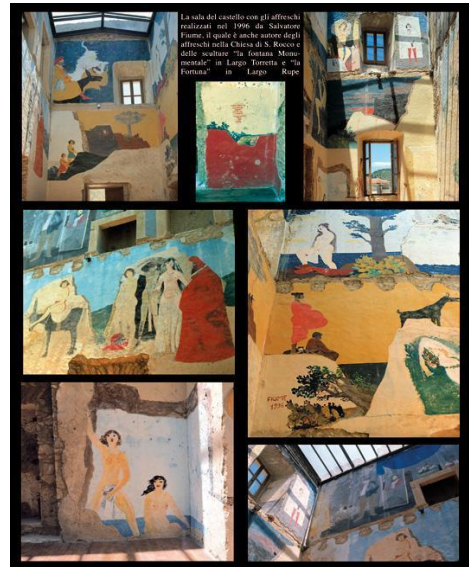
**Fifth day: Sunday. Amantea/Amantea.** After breakfast, visit to Amantea, starting from the *Sunday Market*, founded by Durazzo d'Anjou in 1432. The sellers are farmers of the area. Later on, visit to the Convent of San Bernardino, where famous works of art such as *Madonna con Bambino* (*Madonna and Child*) by Lorenzo Bernini (the famous architect of St Peter's Square in Rome) are preserved.



Last year the sculpture's head, severed with a hammer by a French soldier during the invasion of 1806, was miraculously recovered and was put back in its original place in front of the cameras of the most famous European TV networks. Afterwards walking tour of the historical centre, where you can visit *Il Palazzo delle Clarisse*, a former convent, and nowadays a charming place, home to a renowned restaurant, where we will stop for lunch.

Back to the hotel, free afternoon, dedicated to the resort's activities with dinner and entertainment, overnight stay.

**Sixth day: Monday. Amantea/Fiumefreddo/Amantea.** After breakfast, departure for **Fiumefreddo Bruzio**, beautiful Medieval village, included in the club of the most beautiful villages of Italy. The village stands on a rocky promontory from which you can enjoy the view of the volcanic island of Stromboli, Capo Vaticano and Capo Palinuro. Fiumefreddo Bruzio was a source of inspiration for the Italian artist, *Salvatore Fiume*, who was fascinated by its extraordinary beauty. Here he created many of his masterpieces, some of which he donated to the local Community. These frescoes are exhibited in the *Room of Desires (Stanza dei Desideri)* in the Castello della Valle Dimora. We will visit churches, palaces and the castle, that was in part destroyed by the French Army in 1806, to capture the last of the *bandits*. Since 2007 it has been declared "**Monumento Contro Tutte le Guerre**" (Monument Against All Wars). In the main church, we will admire, one of *Solimeni's* masterpieces, that the most



famous Italian art critic, Vittorio Sgarbi, judged as one of the finest exhibits in Calabria. After the tour, transfer to a small local farm, situated on the surrounding hills to watch the "**Rite of Homemade bread**", a



custom still well rooted in **Costa dei Borghi Antichi**, while elsewhere it's just a memory. The bread will be served with *Pitta avanti o' Furno*, accompanied by the specialty of the house: bacon, homemade local cheese and salami, pickles, wine and spring water. In the afternoon, back to the hotel, free time and dinner, overnight stay.

**Seventh day: Tuesday. Amantea/Rossano/Civita/Amantea.** After breakfast, departure for *Rossano*, *Diocesan Museum*, where we are going to see the *Codex Purpureus Rossanenensis*, a Gospel dating back to the VI century A.D., that miraculously escaped wars and fires. It includes 186 pages made of parchment engraved in gold and silver. In front of the Museum we will be greeted by a **folk group** that, using local musical instruments, will tell us about the history of Calabria.



Afterwards we will visit **Civita**, a small picturesque village perched on the rocks of the Pollino Park, above the famous “**Gole del Raganello**” (**Gorges of the Raganello River**) and “**Il Ponte del Diavolo**” (**The Devil Bridge**). **Civita** includes a small Albanian community that moved to Calabria in the Byzantine period. In this place we will enjoy a specialty of the place called **arbresch**. In the afternoon back to the hotel, dinner and entertainment, overnight stay.



**Eighth day: Wednesday. Amantea/Pizzo/Reggio Calabria.**

After breakfast, departure for the final destination: Reggio Calabria.



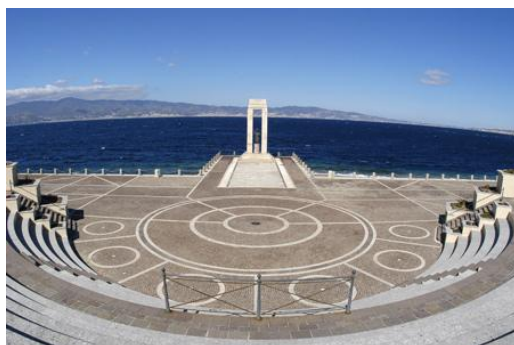
During the trip we will stop at **Pizzo Calabro** to visit the “**Chiesetta Votiva di Piedigrotta**” (**Votive Church of Piedigrotta**), whose peculiarity lies in the fact that everything inside the Church, from the altar to its statues, was excavated and hand sculpted in the tufa rock by the Barone Brothers. Also in the morning, visit to the Castle where Gioacchino Murat, Grand Admiral of France and brother-in-law of

Napoleone Bonaparte, was executed. Lunch at a local restaurant. Drive to Reggio Calabria in the afternoon. Check-in at the hotel (4\*), a short time to admire the nearby boutiques, dinner at the hotel, overnight stay.

**Ninth day: Thursday. Reggio Calabria.** After breakfast, walking tour to the waterfront, defined by the great Italian poet and writer G. D’Annunzio, “**The most beautiful Kilometer in Italy**”. Later on, visit to the **National Museum**, which displays the most precious historical artifacts of Calabria, including the famous “**Bronzi di Riace**”. Afterwards, visit to the private **Bergamot Museum**, where we will enjoy a lunch based on bergamot, the famous citrus fruit that grows only in this land: Calabria Greca.



In the afternoon, visit to the **Cathedral**, to admire the Baroque art from Calabria. Back to the hotel, dinner, overnight stay .



**Tenth day: Friday, Reggio Calabria/Scilla/Reggio Calabria.** After breakfast, departure for Scilla, also called the *Venice of the South*. Visit to the Ruffo di Calabria Castle, a powerful military fortress, and **Chianalea**, a beautiful and picturesque village that fascinated world famous poets and artists.



Lunch at a local restaurant and see view of Sicily from *Baia delle Sirene Beach* (The Mermaid Beach) where you will taste the local specialty: swordfish.

Back to the hotel in the afternoon, free time for your shopping, dinner at the hotel, overnight stay.

**Eleventh day:** Saturday. After breakfast, check-out, farewell and airport transfer. End of services.

**PRICE: € 985,00 p.p.**