

The Masseria Torre Coccaro and Maizza

Puglia – July 2012

Located on the south east coast of Italy, or on the heel, Puglia must be a serious contender on anybody's hit list of holiday destinations. Airports at Brindisi and Bari are easy gateways to great beaches, flat manicured arable land full of Olive trees, old hillside towns and villages and a gentle holiday life style. I loved the area, cannot wait to go back and I hope this review excites you enough to want to make your own visit



No one seaside town stands out, but the beaches are long and sandy with a choice of beach clubs popular in Italy. Sun beds can be rented and some hotels have associations with clubs or have their own as did the hotel I stayed in www.masseriatorrecoccaro.com. Small seaside towns in Puglia don't offer wild nightlife, but you will find old fishing ports, nice promenades with bars, ice cream parlours and traditional restaurants serving local specialities, pizza and fish. Being a coastal area expect a lot of fish and guarantees that it will be freshly caught that morning.

There is no reason why you cannot use Puglia as a sun and sand venue only, but the area has a host of excursions to tempt you away from the sun. Most famous is the Citadel of Alberobello and the "Trulli Village" a UNESCO World heritage site www.worldheritagesite.org/sites/alberobello. Lecce is a stone city renowned for its skilled stone dressers who created baroque chapels and buildings. You can visit the city of Crottajhe and the workshops of its ceramic artisans or the castle towns of Convessano and Cisternino. Finally Monopoli is an ancient Roman harbour with a museum.



Masserias, renovated farmhouses, are traditional to the area and are the best choice of hotels. I stayed at the Masseria Torre Coccaro www.masseriatorrecoccaro.com and I highly recommend it. Ideal for young families as the welcome is so warm, but I can see no reason why couples young and old cannot enjoy its charm. In fact many do and I would say the split between couples and Families was 50/50. Peak season August may see more families but the area makes a great venue for either a early or late summer break or a great weekend away.

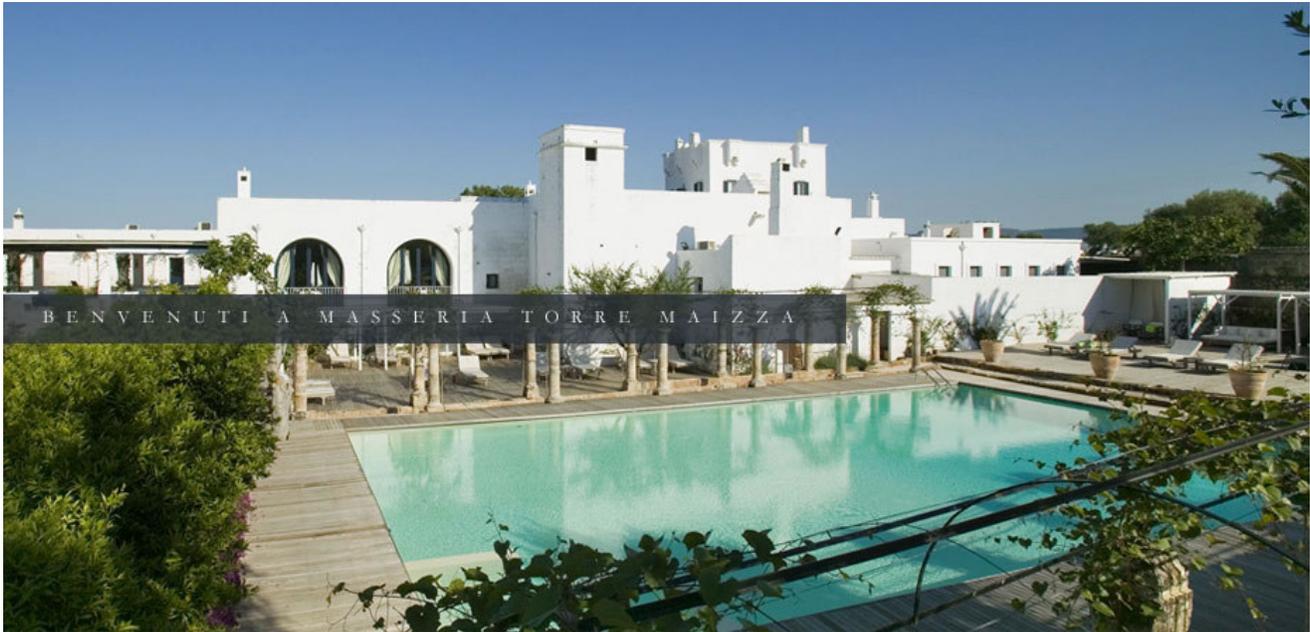


The Coccaro is described as 5 star but don't come expecting all mod cons. The rooms were and are existing outbuildings and come in all shapes and sizes with varied room facilities, but all are comfortable and thoroughly cleaned every day. It has a spa an under used gym and a beautiful swimming pool area with daytime restaurant and bar. Is it 5 star in the true sense of the word? No, but what sets this hotel apart is the 5 star welcome, the 5 star service of the staff and the top quality food provided for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

The hotel is quiet, but can provide its own cooking lessons, horse riding, boat excursions and use of the Coccaro Golf Club at its Sister hotel the Masseria Torre Maizza. Holidays are about making your well earned holiday time easy and nothing was too much for the team at Coccaro, but the beach club was one of the highlights. It took the stress out of a day away from the pool as you knew you were going to be well looked after and enjoy great food.



I didn't stay at the Torre Maizza www.massieratorremaizza but dined at its beautiful terraced restaurant. The food here was much more refined which set the tone for the hotel over the Coccaro. Rustic charm best describes my hotel, but the old farmhouse of the Maizza is complemented with newly built rooms to a high standard. The hotel is a perfect mix of old and new and definitely is a couple's only base. The swimming pool is elegant rather than functional and the nine hole golf course a welcome distraction in the cooling late evening.



There is a wide choice of Masserias in the area, but the Coccaro and the Maizza offer that little bit extra if you can stretch the budget. I loved the hotel, the food, the beaches, but most of all the people and the gentleness of the area. Puglia is a must and if I can help further give me a call on 01268 735301 or email ianprior@westwaytravel.co.uk.

My favourite memories





