

# Once You're There

## Lecce

Lecce is famous for its unique Baroque architecture, which transforms its' every corner into a masterpiece of art and history. The city is perfect for exploring on foot - with beautiful sights, squares, and extraordinary monuments at every turn.

September is the ideal time to stroll around without high season crowds and discover iconic places such as:

- **Piazza del Duomo:** One of the most beautiful squares in Italy, surrounded by Baroque buildings, including the Lecce Cathedral and its' bell tower.
- **Basilica of Santa Croce:** A Baroque masterpiece, with a facade rich in fascinating details.
- **Piazza Sant'Oronzo:** The heart of the city, home to the Roman Amphitheatre and the statue of Sant'Oronzo, the patron saint of Lecce.
- **Castello Carlo V:** A 16th-century castle built by Emperor Charles V, this fortress offers exhibitions and an interesting view of the city's past.
- The **historic center of Lecce** is made of narrow streets and charming alleys, perfect for exploring on foot. Wander through the various streets where you can discover small artisan shops, historic cafés, and elegant boutiques. Here, you can purchase many local products such as "*pasticciotto*" (a traditional pastry), local wines (*Primitivo*, *Negroamaro*, or *Salice Salentino*), "*salentine ceramics*", "*tarallini*" (a type of crackers / breadsticks), "*rustico leccese*" (another traditional pastry), "*caffè leccese*", and olive oil.



Piazza del Duomo



Basilica of Santa Croce



**Piazza Sant'Oronzo**



**Castello Carlo V**

## Near Lecce

*Note: We recommend renting a car for getting around, as local public transport is highly unreliable.*

### Explore the beaches of Salento

September is the ideal month to enjoy the beaches of Salento, with the sea still warm and the number of tourists decreasing.

Our suggestions:

- **Punta Prosciutto:** One of the most renowned beaches, with fine sand and turquoise waters. The beach is set in unspoiled nature, with sand dunes and vegetation that gives it a wild appearance.
- **Torre dell'Orso:** Located near Otranto, this beach is famous for its' crystal-clear waters and the famous "Due Sorelle" (Two Sisters), two sea stacks rising from the water. The beach is well-equipped and offers a spectacular view.
- **Grotta della Poesia:** An iconic natural pool in the Adriatic Sea, famous for its crystal-clear waters and legendary charm.
- **Porto Cesareo Beach:** A stunning coastal spot with clear turquoise waters, soft white sand, and a relaxed atmosphere, perfect for swimming and sunbathing.

- **Baia dei Turchi:** A hidden paradise nestled among the vegetation, this beach is near Otranto and is famous for its clear waters and fine sand. It's ideal for those looking for a quieter, less crowded spot.
- **Pescoluse e dintorni (e.g.: Le Maldive del Salento, Posto Vecchio, Papeete Salento):** With crystal-clear waters and fine white sand, they are among the most beautiful and famous beaches. The environment is peaceful, and the area is also highly appreciated for its unique marine landscape.
- **Baia Verde (Gallipoli):** One of the liveliest and most touristy beaches in Salento. Fine sand and clear waters make it ideal for relaxation, and it's also a fine option for those who the nightlife.
- **Santa Maria di Leuca:** Located at the southernmost tip of Salento, Santa Maria di Leuca offers a series of small bays nestled between cliffs, where the water is crystal-clear and the scenery is breathtaking. It's also famous for its' lighthouse and marina.
- **Spiagge di Torre San Giovanni (e.g.: Astor Beach, Lido Coco Loco):** With white sand and crystal-clear waters, this beach is one of the busiest in the summer months. Great for families and those looking for good touristic infrastructure.
- **Last, but not least... Boat trips** in Salento are an incredible experience, thanks to the beauty of its' marine landscapes, crystal-clear waters, and rugged coastlines. If you love the sea and want to explore Salento from a different perspective, a boat trip could be an excellent choice! Here are starting points where you can take wonderful boat trips from: Otranto, Santa Maria di Leuca, Torre Vado, Torre dell'Orso. You can either book the trip directly on-site by walking around local touristic areas or book it online through the website of one of local operators.







## Discover the historic villages of Salento

If you are keen on “getting a taste” of local traditions and exploring some picturesque villages of Salento, here are our top suggestions:

- **Otranto:** A city rich in history, with its’ splendid cathedral, the Aragonese castle, and the famous Adriatic coast. Once there, don’t miss the panoramic view from the top of the castle and Bauxite Lake with its’ unique landscape and emerald-green waters.
- **Gallipoli:** A charming town overlooking the Ionian Sea, famous for its’ historic center with white houses, Baroque churches, and the Gallipoli Castle.
- **Nardò:** A village with authentic charm, featuring its’ Baroque historic center and the beautiful Piazza Salandra.
- **Galatina:** A charming town that dates back to ancient times and is a home to some beautiful examples of Baroque architecture, particularly the famous Basilica di Santa Caterina d'Alessandria.

