Villa San Michele

Region: Puglia **Sleeps:** 8

Overview

Set on five acres among olive and almond trees and brimming with history, this villa in Puglia was once a chapel and monastery dating back to the 1300s. It's now a chic Italian getaway within 5-30 minutes of medieval towns and pristine beaches with secret coves.

Traditional stone architecture extends throughout, acting as a decorative piece of its own. The villa blends classic décor and antique furnishings with stylish modern features, such as craftsman vessel sinks. Four simple bedrooms sleep eight, each with their own bath, and the full kitchen and common areas are spacious and inviting, complete with fireplaces and 'cantina' dining.

Outside, a private oasis with sun loungers beneath canopies, a swimming pool, and exotic gardens with fruit trees await. Alfresco dining on original stone piazalle or covered terrace is a must with the wood-fired pizza oven on hand. Plus, the villa boasts a secret, underground limestone cave dating back to the 7th century with medieval frescos!

A stay at this ancient villa places you only 3km from the foodie haven of Ceglie Messapica, complete with its famous Trulli houses. Be sure to try Osteria Pugliese – a local favourite and New York Times recommended.

Perfect Puglia: *"Set in five acres of exotic gardens with olive trees and giant cacti (think Jurassic Park) our home for the week sleeps eight and blends stylish décor with antique furnishings and stylish modern features. 'Wow, we are sleeping in our very own castle!' shouted my excited five-year-old boy Zak..."*
Read the full review of Villa San Michele, over on the Daily Mail (http://www.dailymail.co.uk/travel/article-5055635/Oliver-s-Travels-family-friendly-break-perfect-Puglia.html)

As mentioned in... (https://www.thetimes.com/travel/destinations/europe-travel/italy/amalfi-coast/best-holiday-villas-in-italy-tuscany-sorrento-puglia-bmjrjqj2z?gaa_at=eafs)

Facilities

Historical Sites • Exclusive • Air-Con • Recommended • Wine Tasting • Private Pool • <1hr to Airport • Walking/Hiking Paths • Romantic • Chef/Cook Available • Special Offer • Has Discount • Quirky (Unique) • Ideal for Teens • Cots (Cribs) • Maid Service Available • Pets on Request • Beach Nearby • Ground Floor Bed & Bath • Parking Space • Wi-Fi/Internet • Rural Location • Washing Machine • Outstanding Landscapes • Coffee Machine • Outdoor Pursuit & Activities • Tourist Towns & Villages • TV • DVD • Dishwasher • Microwave • Outdoor Games • Working Fireplace/Woodburner • Heating • Wine-Tasting Available • High Chair(s) • Fenced Grounds

Interior & Grounds

Villa Interior

Ground Floor

- Entrance room with vaulted ceiling and fireplace
- Large double height vaulted sitting room, 32' flat screen TV/DVD player
- Large vaulted´Cantina' with a table seating 10, original stone floor, door to rear and large glazed arched doors to the front of the property
- Fully-equipped kitchen with oven, hob, grill, fridge and toaster
- Two double bedrooms leading off the main room, both with vaulted ceilings and en-suite bathrooms with showers
- Stone vaulted rear reception room- Large bathroom with shower
- Suite with king-size bed, sitting room with desk, printer/scanner and en-suite bathroom with double bathtub and circular shower

First Floor

- Twin bedroom and stairs to roof terraces

Outside Grounds

- Swimming pool (15.5m x 6m), open April to October
- Covered veranda for al-fresco dining
- Large original stone courtyard
- Olive, Almond, walnut, mulberry, fig, pomegranate, lemon, quince and prickly pear trees
- Covered wood-fired oven- Sun loungers
- Outdoor shower
- Table tennis
- Barbecue
- Parking

Facilities

- Wi-Fi
- Music stereo

- TV
- Iron and ironing board
- Range cooker

Location & Local Information

Villa San Michele is situated in Ceglie Messapica, a charming small town of whitewashed houses and narrow streets located in the province of Brindisi on the edge of the Valle Itria. It is famous for its Trulli; stone built conical buildings typical of this area of southern Italy.

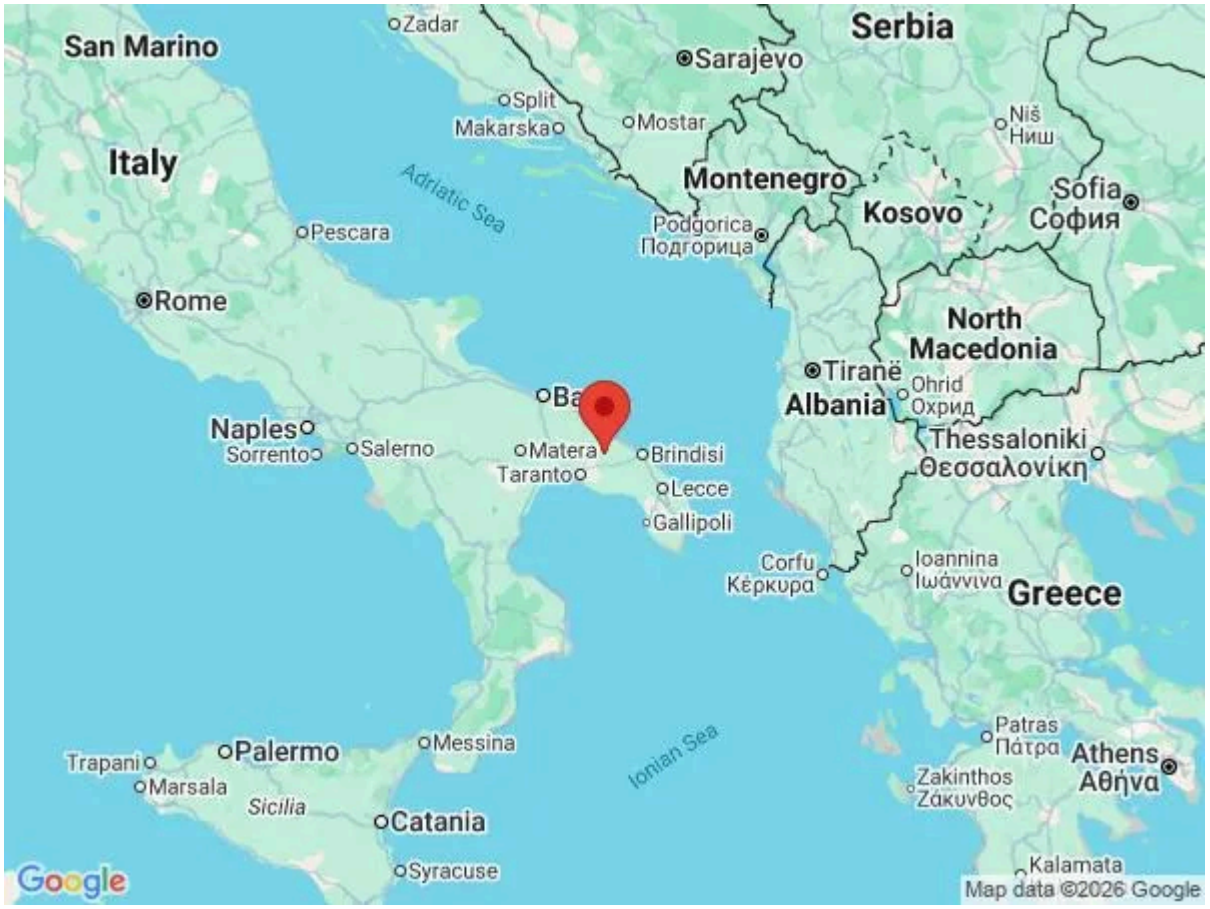
The landscape is typical of the area, particularly rich in nature and history. Dotted around the surrounding land are countless Trulli as well as ancient farms called Masseria. It is home to dry, stone walls, olive groves, vineyards, and woods with ancient oaks.

The town of Ceglie is close and also rich in history and culture. It traces its origin back 15 centuries before Christ and was originally part of Magna Grecia (Greater Greece).

Puglia is considered one of the best places to eat in Italy by Italians, and Ceglie Messapica is regarded as one of the best places to eat in Puglia. There are many restaurants in Ceglie, ranging from simple trattoria to high quality affairs. Many of them will offer some version of what is known as Cucina Povera, literally "poor cooking", derived from a time when the residents of this area of Italy had to make do with simple ingredients and transform them into something more.

Less than half an hour away are the beaches of the Adriatic coast where there are many quiet coves with crystal clear water and long, sandy beaches backed by dunes. A little over half an hour on the other side of the peninsula are the stunning beaches of the Ionian coast where mile upon mile of white sandy beaches extends south to the tip of the heel of Italy.

The airports of Brindisi and Bari, both with direct flights from the United Kingdom, are 30 minutes and 1 hour 10 minutes respectively from the property.



Grotto

Near the property is a large natural limestone karst cave or grotto, some 52 metres deep. The entrance to the grotto, shaded by fig and olive trees opens to reveal a huge cavern. Stone stairs descend in two directions.

There is some evidence that the cave has been occupied by humans since Neolithic times. The cave was settled from around the 7th century AD by Basilian (Byzantine) monks who had escaped persecution in Constantinople, and this religious settlement remained there for several centuries.

Descending into the first part of the grotto, covered in stalactites, is a large altar hewn out of the solid rock. Above and to one side of the altar is a fresco of the Virgin (Vergine Orante), which studies have shown to be the oldest in Brindisi province, dating from the 8th century AD. Directly above the altar is a well-preserved fresco of Christ, (Cristo Pancreator) and another of San Michele, both of which date from the 11th century.

Locals say that tunnels lead from the grotto and run for several kilometres. During the 1800´s the land surrounding the house was a vineyard and during this time an important ancient Messapican vase was found, 30 cm tall, which was transferred to the archaeological collection of the Museum of Berlin.

Local Amenities

Nearest Airport	**Brindisi (50 km)**
Nearest Airport	**Bari (105 km)**
Nearest Beach	**(25 km)**
Nearest Restaurant	**Bars and restaurants (3 km)**
Nearest Shop	**Shops and supermarkets (3 km)**
Nearest Town/City	**Ceglie Messapica (3km)**

Nearest Supermarket	**(3 km)**

What we love

- This villa in Puglia was once the Chapel of San Michele and Italian nobleman's residence
- The underground grotto with 8th and 11th century frescoes is a rare gem you won't find elsewhere
- You're less than a 10-minute drive from Ceglie Messapica, regarded as one of the best places to eat in Puglia, and a half hour from enchanting coastlines

What you should know...

- An additional bed can be addded, on request.
- The pool is reached by twin sets of steps a short walk through the beautiful garden.
- A car hire is recommended to really explore the region's many treasures.
- Please note highchairs and cot are available on request, subject to availability. Please enquire for the exact number.
- Villa San Michele is rural and we recommend renting a car to explore the local area.

Terms & Conditions

- **Security deposit:** €500 paid in cash to the owner upon arrival and refunded upon departure, subject to full inspection.

- **Arrival time:** 3.00 p.m. Check-in outside this time may be subject to an extra cost. Please enquire for more details.

- **Departure time:** 10.00 - 10.30 a.m.

- **Energy costs included?:** Yes.

- **Linen & towels included?:** Yes.

- **Pets welcome?:** On request only and with prior agreement with the owner.

- **Other Ts and Cs:** An additional bed can be addded, on request.
 Weddings, stag/hen parties and any special events are not allowed.
 The pool is open approximately April to October. Please note that pool opening dates are subject to local weather conditions and pool maintenance requirements and that cooler months may not be suitable for swimming.
 Please note highchairs and cots are available at extra cost on request, subject to availability. Please enquire for the exact number.

- **Changeover day:** Saturday. All other changeover days on request.

- **End of stay cleaning:** Standard changeover clean included in the price. Guests are required to leave the accommodation clean, tidy and in the same condition as on their arrival. Any extra cleaning, laundry, maintenance and/or rubbish disposal required will be charged against the security deposit.

- **Minimum stay:** 7 nights. All other durations on request.

- **Heating costs included?:** Yes.

- **Tax:** Italian Visitors Tax payable locally in cash (typically costs €1-€10 per adult per night - please enquire if exact amount is required).

- **Internet access?:** Wi-Fi internet access included.

- **Pool towels included?:** Yes.