

BRINDISI – HISTORIC AND ARTISTIC ITINERARIES

Itinerary 4: the surrounding of the city (by car or bike)



Departing from Crispi Square, at the Railway station, you turn left at the second street which is “Via C.Colombo” and cover the full length of this historic road, up until you reach the crossing, where you will find the **1 Hell’s Tower**, built in 1484 together with the Aragon walls that join this piece of history to the **Swabian Castle** (see Itinerary 1). Turn left into “Via Provinciale San Vito” and continue for approximately 800 mt, where on the left you will find the **2 Tancredi Fountain**.



The Tancredi Fountain was built in 1192 by King Tancredi in occasion of the wedding of his son Ruggero with the daughter of the Emperor of Costantinopoli.

The Fountain was restored, and entirely modified, in 1549 and in 1828.

This fountain was once used by travellers for refreshing their transport animals while arriving through one of the most important entrance ways to the city. The fountain also played a part in keeping the beautiful surrounding gardens irrigated.

Near there is the ancient "Fontana di Monsignore" (Bishop's fountain), built about in XVI century.

Continuing in the direction of the area known as "Casale", at the first crossroad which corresponds with the "Cillarese Canal", you will see the **3 monument** dedicated to **Aldo Moro**, a modern work of art by Marcello Avenali, in metal, inaugurated in 1980.

From here turn right and take the panoramic road of "Via A. Vespucci" where on the right, following the ports coastal line known as **Seno di Ponente** (the west-cove), you can admire the northern side of the Swabian Castle, and the small port of the **4 "Lega Navale"**, the Italian Nautical Association. Continuing through "Via Napoli" and "Via Pisa", turn right onto "Via Benedetto Brin", and cover the full length of "Via Maddalena" and "Via Materdomini", arriving at the area known as "la Sciaia", following the road signs, you will get to the new tourist port known as **5 Brindisi Marina**, near the dam known as "Bocche di Puglia" which connects the mainland with the island of St' Andrea, where the fortresses of the **6 Aragones Castle** are.

Approaching Brindisi from the sea you will see the Aragones Castle, better known as Sea Fortress which was built in 1491 on the island opposite the port, by Ferdinand I the Aragones, in defence of its city, against possible sea attacks. For many centuries, it has been utilized for this purpose.



It is made up by two distinct parts: the Red Castle, so named for the distinct and characteristic colours of its bricks, and the Fortress, built afterwards as a depot housing the garrison.

Nowadays it is being restored.

Continuing along the "litoranea" (coastal) road toward north, with the sea on the right for approximately 4 km, reaching the locality of **7 "Punta Penne"**, where you can see one of the ancient guard towers, built during the XIV century to prevent enemy troops disembarking at this point. There are several of these towers along this coast line, almost all of them being frustum-pyramidal shaped structures resting on square bases.

A few kilometres ahead you will reach the crossing which connects to the airport. Following the indications, you will find the beautiful Romanesque-gothic church of **8 St. Maria del Casale**, which is not too far away from the airport.



The church of St. Maria del Casale, near the airport, is a splendid example of Romanesque-gothic style of XIII century.

It is a National monument since 1875, and has an elegant facade of red and white stone; its portal is surmounted with a hanging adorned structure.

Inside there is a latin cross shape nave, with a series of fine Byzantine frescos, among them one can find "The Last Judgement", painted in four levels by Rinaldo from Taranto, "The Tree of the Cross", with twelve branches that symbolize the

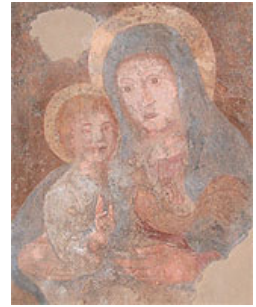
apostles and the Brindisi's heraldry.

During March 1310 the Pope Clemente V established a tribunal to pass judgment on crusaders. The order was condemned, and therefore abolished by the pope two years later.

The construction of the adjoining cloister and of the convent were completed between the years 1635 and 1638.

Once you have visited this beautiful church, you can head in the direction of the city of Bari by turning onto the state road n. 379, which you will follow until you reach the exit lane indicated by the **9** church of **St. Mary the Mother of the Church**. Here you can take some time out and enjoy the quiet surroundings of this beautiful sanctuary.

This church, also known as "**Church of Jaddico**" was built between 1963 and 1965 by incorporating the wall of an ancient church, probably built by the Crusaders, with a painting (fresco) of Our Lady who keeps Jesus with one hand and a rooster with the left hand; that's why this area is called Jaddico (the dialect form of Gallico, that comes from "rooster" in Italian). On this wall, during 1962 and 1963 there were some apparitions of Our Lady, so a group of citizens headed by Teodoro D'Amici started the building of the church.



The next stage of this tour will take you 10 km north to the **10 Protected Park of Torre Guaceto**. To visit this Nature Reserve and Protected Marine Area it is necessary to contact the Serranova Visitors Centre (tel. +39 0831.989885). This ancient sighting tower was built in the 1531 by the marquis de Alarçon, as protection to the coast and its surroundings, where drinkable water was available. This area was inhabited during the XII century b.C. The populations which lived here during the Bronze Age developed activities such as ceramic manufacturing and also had navigational relationships with the Mycenaean people.



The protected park of Torre Guaceto, situated about 18 km north of Brindisi, is an important area of naturalistic interest; it was born to the end of seventies and nowadays is managed by the Consortium formed from the town councils of Brindisi and Carovigno and from WWF Italia.

During the summer the Consortium organizes excursions like ciclotrekking (by bicycle), walks and seawatching (more info +39 0831.989885).

The entire area is rich of a diversity of habitats and landscapes; the ecosystems includes Marine Protected Area, approximately 730 hectares of sea facing the coast, and about 210 hectares of the Natural State Reserve; it has international relevance according to the Ramsar agreement guidelines.

The area is dominated by the ancient Aragonese tower, nowadays WWF Center of Environmental

Education.

The marine habitat is extremely rich of animal and vegetable species; the seabed represents an important wealth for the sea of Salento territory. In the area close to the coast there are few coral reefs and the Oceanic Posidonia sea grass, offering perfect conditions enabling a wide variety of marine species to inhabit this area of sea. The presence of the "Caretta Caretta" turtles is quite relevant, as far as the dolphins. Here is possible to practice "sea-watching", swimming on the sea surface, with the park's guide, to observe the flora and marine fauna.

The Natural State Reserve include the humid zone, Maquis and the beaches with their old-ages sandy dunes.

The Maquis is populated by some mammals like the badger, the weasel, the fox, some little rodents, the reptiles like green lizard and some endemic species of lizards. The shrubs host nests of Blackcap, Goldfinch, Little-eye, Serin, Nightingale, Cinciallegra, Robin and Blackbird.

The flora is characterized by the aromatic plants of Myrtle, the Evergreen Mastic, the Aleppo Pine tree, the Evergreen Oak, the Alaterno, acacia, brooms and secular plants of juniper that produce berries called "Cuddles". The cane-brake area is characterized by "phragmites" and some plants of "typha", biomarker of the presence of fresh water (Guaceto means "fresh water", from the arab word "gaw-sit"). Here there is a mix of subsoil's fresh water and marine water that form a brackish marsh. The zone is a natural destination of numerous migratory birds, as the Hawks and the mallards, and residence of several amphibians and invertebrates.

On the beautiful beaches, where the wild rabbits live, one can find the marine species of radish, narcissus, lily, the convolvulus, and other species which form the naturalistic landscape of the whole zone. Here the old-age sandy dunes strengthened by the plants' root, offer an enchanting landscape that may remind the desert's dunes.

The best period for visiting the park is from March to November, when it's very interesting to admire the intense colours of the flowers and of the small plants, and observe the migratory birds and wildlife.

The park is always open, for booking a visits one can call the Visitor Centre of the Consortium (+39 0831 989885).

To reach the **11 Serranova** village is very easy: from the Serranova exit on the SS 379 you follow the provincial road passing through the beautiful country side, adorned with century-old olive trees that have extraordinary shapes and dimensions.

From here, travelling in the direction of "S.Vito dei Normanni", you will find the monastic settlement of "Jannuzzo", where on a natural high ground, partially encircled from the "Reale Canal", there are several caves of various sizes; among these there is the famous **12 Crypt of St. Biagio**, with frescos from the XI century on the vault and on the sidewalls, like episodes from the of Gospel. To visit these caves you can contact the "Coop.Thalassia" (tel. +39 0831 989885 – 0831 989986).



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