

# Villa San Michele

Region: Puglia Sleeps: 8

## Overview

Immersed in the green of the countryside and within easy reach of stunning beaches, this beautiful historic masseria sleeping 8. It has a large swimming pool and offers discerning guests the opportunity to enjoy the relaxed Puglian lifestyle.

The spacious property is situated at the end of a long drive in over five acres of grounds with extensive areas of olive and almond trees. It offers total seclusion, but the vibrant Puglian town of Ceglie Messapica, famed for its restaurant scene, is still easily accessible.

This ancient house, constructed entirely of stone, was initially the Chapel of San Michele and was built in 1300. Over the following centuries it was transformed into a nobleman's residence.

The house is comfortably furnished with a stylish mix of antique, vintage and modern furniture and offers spacious living areas and modern facilities. Outside are terraces, a covered area for al fresco dining and a large, original stone piazzale, or patio. There is a barbecue and wood fired pizza oven.

## Facilities



# Interior & Grounds

## Bedrooms and Interior

The accommodation is in the original stone construction whose thick walls keep the house cool in summer and warm in the winter months. There are four bedrooms and four bathrooms sleeping a total of eight people (further rooms can be added by arrangement).

*Ground Floor* (with limestone flooring throughout):

- 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
- Kitchen, with range style oven, dishwasher, large refrigerator.
- 2 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
- Large bedroom, en suite bathroom with double bathtub, circular shower.

*First floor*

- Twin bedroom and stairs to roof terraces.

## Outdoor Features

- Covered veranda for al fresco dining
- Large original stone courtyard
- Covered wood fired oven
- Swimming pool with loungers, pool towels, outdoor shower.
- Table tennis
- Barbecue

The 13 by 6 metre pool is reached by twin sets of steps and is surrounded by a large paved area with loungers and umbrellas. A shower is ingeniously placed under the branches of a spreading olive tree.

The grounds have been planted with desert plants, designed to stand the long dry summers in the region. Trees include Olives, Almonds walnuts, mulberries, figs, pomegranates, lemons, quince and prickly pears.

### \*The 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.



## Location & Local Information

Van San Michele is situated in Ceglie Messapica, a charming small town of white washed houses and narrow streets located in the province of Brindisi on the edge of the Valle Itria. It is famous for its Trullis, 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 Caelia 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 considered one of the best places to eat in Puglia. There are many restaurants in Ceglie, ranging from simple trattoria to Michelin starred 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 extend 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.



# Terms & Conditions

- Security deposit: €500. This is paid on arrival and will be refunded in full after departure subject to damage inspection.
- Arrival time: 4 pm onwards.
- Departure time: 10 am.
- Energy costs included?: Included in the rental price.
- Linen & towels included?: Linen and towels are included in the rental price.
- Smoking Allowed?: No smoking in the property.
- Insurance: It is recommended that all guests take out insurance to cover against potential cancellation and any accidental damage caused during your stay at the property.