

# Untold Italy Episode 224: Brilliant Bari - Puglia's bustling capital

This is the Untold Italy Travel podcast, and you're listening to episode number 224.

Ciao a tutti and Benvenuti to Untold Italy, the travel podcast, where you go to the towns and villages, mountains and lakes, hills and coastlines of Bella Italia. Each week your host Katy Clarke takes you on a journey in search of magical landscapes of history, culture, wine, gelato, and, of course, a whole lot of pasta. If you're dreaming of Italy and planning future adventures there, you've come to the right place.

## **Katy**

Ciao a tutti and Benvenuti. Welcome to your regular dose of Italian dreaming. Summer is just about to get started for you in the northern hemisphere so I thought we'd take another trip to one of our favorite regions in Italy - Puglia! - for a virtual wander around beautiful Bari, the region's capital.

Bari is a port city on Italy's Adriatic Coast and also a stop for cruise ships going to and from Croatia and Greece. It's a vibrant place with elegant boulevards a fascinating old town and a delicious food culture. And like most port cities it has a few stories to share.

So of course I've invited our resident Puglia expert Paolo back on the show to give us a little peek inside Bari and let us know what we should do when we go there. Let's dive right in shall we?

## **Katy**

Bentornato Paolo. Ciao, and welcome back to the Untold Italy podcast.

## **Paolo**

Ciao! Ciao Tutti.

## **Katy**

Ciao. How wonderful to have you back on the show again. It's been way too long. What have you been up to lately?

## **Paolo**

Working, but in a good way! I like having people, showing them around. I still really enjoy a lot having guests.

## **Katy**

Yeah, it's fun, isn't it? Puglia is just such a welcoming place. I love it. Now, Paolo, we've gotten - we've been able to know each other pretty well over a few years, but some people listening might not have been introduced to you. Could you please share your story and what you do?

## **Paolo**

I'm a tour guide, and also I work as a travel consultant. I've started having the idea of working in this business when I went to university, 1996. Well, tourism back then was absolutely not an option. I still remember my mum in tears when I announced that I wanted to study art history and history. But now, after so many years, I work as a tour guide, basically, all year along. I don't need to do any other things because before in the wintertime, I had to work, I don't know, in a farmhouse. I've done so many things to basically earn enough for the year. But now this is what I do.

## **Katy**

Mum's okay now.

## **Paolo**

Yeah, mum's okay.

## **Katy**

Mama is fine. We love having Paolo with us on tour with us in Puglia. He's so much fun and truly a wealth of knowledge about Puglia, which, from a tourist perspective, isn't as well advanced as places like the Amalfi Coast. And that's actually why we love it. But today we're going to talk about a city that's perhaps not as celebrated as some of the other towns and villages and cities of the Puglia region. But it's definitely very interesting if you like history, culture, and food. And so Paolo, shall we let everyone in on the little secret that is Bari?

## Paolo

Yeah, I love Bari. I'm very careful when I suggest people to go to Bari because you have to be well-prepared because it's a big place. There's a lot of people. It can be like a mess. If you're not used to Southern Italy, it can be a little bit overwhelming, but it's so much fun. And now it's also very safe. There's a lot of new places because it gets it's more and more used to have guests. But I think it's fantastic. I think that if you really want to understand the spirit of Puglia or Southern Italy, I think the Bari is definitely the best place.

## Katy

Maybe we should tell everyone exactly where it is and why it's an important city in Puglia and Italy.

## Paolo

Bari is important, first of all, because it's centrally located. It's in the center of the region and it's the center of the railway system, there's the airport, there's a big port. So if you want to go to Croatia, Montenegro, Albania, Greece. You can go to Brindisi, but Bari is definitely the biggest place. They calculated about 2 million people passing from Bari every day. So it's really a busy place. It's the only place in Puglia where we have IKEA, if that makes sense. So we all go to Bari also for shopping. For us, it's like It's the biggest place for clothing, but also for furniture. Bari is the place to go for us. But also is the place where they organize the biggest concerts, the biggest events. So it's always a lot of opportunities in Bari.

## Katy

I think it's not so big, though. It is big and busy, but I think if you compare it to something like Naples, it's still not as crazy as Naples.

## Paolo

No, because roughly, you can say that it's like 250,000 people. The city itself, 500,000 if you consider the villages all around, but nothing like Naples. I usually say that it's like the polite Naples, like the civilized... it's easier than Naples. Now, I must confess something, Katy. I'm originally from Lecce. People from Lecce and people from Bari don't really get along. Actually, we don't understand each other. When we speak dialect, totally different. And because of football, there's a big rivalry. I hope that nobody from my town is listening to this podcast because I talk so well about Bari, they might hate me for that.

## **Katy**

But they are very different just in sooo many ways. Lecce is more refined and a bit more elegant. If you like that type of thing in Lecce, you will just really love Lecce. But I love Bari, too, because it's really vibrant and exciting. Maybe do you want to just tell everyone a bit about the history of Bari and how it's probably had its fortunes change a little bit over the centuries?

## **Paolo**

First of all, if you go to Bari, and especially the historical part of Bari, you immediately have a sense of the Middle Ages because the best of Bari, the old part, it's basically all developed during the Middle Ages. It's one of the main places that pilgrims used to go on the way to Jerusalem. People of Bari managed to go to Turkey to steal the body of St. Nicholas, Santa Claus, and it's still there, still in Bari, it's still in the church dedicated, obviously, to St. Nicholas. And a lot of pilgrims still go to Bari to pray in front of the tomb of St. Nicholas. It's so connected for the same reason to Eastern European countries. Like I was in Bari yesterday, and they were celebrating St. Nicholas, and it was so full of Greek Orthodoxes, little groups with their priests going to Bari to pray. So you feel really in this atmosphere of a bridge that connects Western Europe with Eastern Europe. And I think that is very fascinating.

## **Paolo**

And also for people that are interested in architecture, the Romanesque style style of the Middle Ages in Southern Italy, it's basically born in Bari. So the Church of St. Nicholas is the very first example of the Romanesque style that then you can see in a lot of churches and castles all over the region. Then, after the 1500s, the importance of body became less and less because of a big war that we had with the Ottoman Empire, and then became the center of the region in more modern times as the central hub where you have everything.

## **Paolo**

There's the biggest opera house, concert, music, but also shopping, but is also the center of crime. We had so many problems, and it's still a place where you have to be careful. Not in the city center anymore, but it's undoubtable that we have crime problems in Bari. But in the '90s, it was completely inaccessible. You literally couldn't go to Bari, especially in the old town. It was very, very dangerous. And I think that the worst moment was at the beginning of the '90s when they put fire on the Opera House. That was probably the symbol of the worst moment that Bari had.

## Paolo

We started having a reaction at the beginning of 2000. Like, 2001, we had a guy called Michele Fazio, which is like a young boy that was killed, was an innocent guy, innocent boy, killed by accident during a crime shooting.

## Paolo

And that is probably the beginning of a reaction. A reaction that slowly has arrived in 2009 when they finally reopened the theater. And so we use 1991 as a lowest point, and 2009 as a symbol of the Renaissance. Now, cruise ships are back in Bari. You can safely go to Bari. There is a lot of shops, a lot of cafés. It's full of energy.

## Paolo

It's a place that really... It's really interesting. And it's, I think, the only place, at least in Puglia, that after World War II, wasn't really emptied. If you visit Puglia, a lot of the historical centers have been emptied after World War II. People had the possibility of getting a new house, and so they moved out of the city center. In Bari, a lot of people have kept living in the Old Town. So you said like Lecce is more refined, but also because it's less crowded, the old town, than Bari.

## Paolo

Instead, if you go to Bari, you see all the balconies with clothes lines, a lot of people sitting outside chatting, a lot of small shops, like fruit shops, fish market. It's more alive, and it's a place full of people that don't belong to middle-class or wealthy families. It's really simple families. And that gives her a really strong strong character.

## Paolo

What I love in Bari is to go for food tours, even on my own, because especially in the evening, there's a lot of old people that are frying things. Bari is famous for fried polenta pasta or they make fried dough. So you walk and you see these ladies well-organized at the front of their house, frying. When home restaurants became popular, people of Bari said, Oh, we do this since so long ago because you can easily find people that cook some pasta for you. There is a section where there's ladies making pasta all day in the middle of the street. It's really unbelievable. It's a place so fantastic.

## **Katy**

Yeah, it's really fun. I have to say to everyone that it obviously has a little bit of a dark past, but I felt completely - it was really safe in Bari, and I was walking around. It was just myself and Olivia, so it was two women, and we felt completely safe. We did like trying the foods there. Oh, my goodness. Some of the best food I've had in Italy, like the crudo, the seafood, which is basically Pugliese sushi, for want of a better word, is so fresh. You can get the sea urchins. Do you know how much a sea urchin costs in Australia or at a fancy restaurant? It's like \$30, \$40, I don't know. In Bari, €1!

## **Paolo**

Wow. Yeah, it's true.

## **Katy**

It's so good. It's probably the freshest one you'll ever eat, too. If you're up for it, not everyone's cup of tea. But the other thing I really love there, Paolo, and maybe you can tell us a bit more about it, is the mind-blowing, literally, focaccia. So amazing.

## **Paolo**

There are so many bakeries I actually have a map of my favorite bakeries making focaccia. You know the secret? There's potatoes in the dough and a lot of olive oil. It's like a pizza, but it cooks in a pan with a lot of olive oil. So it's super crunchy and it's so soft inside thanks to the potatoes. And it's just cherry tomatoes and olives. Be careful because we leave the pit in the olives. Every time you find something with olives, make sure that you don't like eat it too fast because you might eat or crush your teeth with the olives. In the old town, the line for the baker is to grab a slice of focaccia. It's always fun to watch.

## **Katy**

Because it's fresh and it's good. It's not even just good. It's like... seriously, people, I'm not joking - this is incredible stuff. You actually go there and you've got the olive oil dripping down your chin and you don't care. You're like, why did I order one slice? I needed four. But it's really delicious. There's nothing like it.

## Paolo

But so many I think. It's like the typical pasta that now is iconic in all Puglia. It's the Orecchietta, which is this little ears-shaped pasta that we make with broccolini. We call them Cime di Rapa, which is the top of the broccoli raves - with anchovy, garlic, bay leaf, and lots of olive oil. That's super good.

## Paolo

My favorite is the Octopus Panini, especially in a public event, or there are some places where they grill the octopus and they put it in a sandwich. So rustic, but so good. But I can stay here forever. If you don't stop me, I can talk about food forever.

## Katy

It's really... I think the thing is it's really fresh and it hasn't been modernized, shall we say? No one's trying to be trendy or cool in Paris, really. They're just doing their thing and it is really delicious.

## Paolo

I think, because I'm always concerned about the future of the area with this tourism that is growing so much. I think that what makes the difference in Bari is that there's a lot of locals there. So the quality of the recipes, the ingredients, it's kept fresh because a lot of locals still live in the old town. So there's not really restaurants in Bari that are just for tourists. And on top of that, there's a big university. There's a lot of people every day. They go for conventions, other stuff. It's really like a place that is alive. It's not a place for tourists.

## Katy

We can eat a lot in Bari. It's so good. But what else can we do? You mentioned St. Nicholas, and I think that's such an interesting story, how they went and stole the bones. Maybe you can tell people about that.

## Paolo

It's in common with so many other places. Like in Amalfi, there's an Andrew, in Venice, there is a Mark. The idea of having an important saint to attract the pilgrims on the way to Jerusalem, it was very important. So when the Arabs took over in Turkey and they started to control the Eastern part of the Byzantine Empire, People of Bari felt that they needed to

save... Let's face it, they stole it. So they went to this town in Turkey, Myra, where St. Nicholas actually lived his own life to get the body. They calculated, I don't know who did it, like the 75% of the body. So they took basically the bigger bones and they brought them to Bari. Then the Venetians went to the same spot and got the rest. So if you go to Venice, you might find the 25% of Saint Nicholas' body. And immediately after, in two years, they built this incredible church, which is huge for the standards of the Middle Ages on the seaside of Bari, with an underground part, the crypt, where the body is actually buried and where pilgrims could, and they still do, could enter from one side, get out from the other side, and kept going to find a boat and go to the other side.

### **Paolo**

What I really find interesting is that in the church, there's still this group of scholars that are trying to find connection more and more between the Catholic and the Greek Orthodoxes. So Bari is still very important for that. And if you go to Bari, you can notice that the Church of St. Nicholas, the main church, it's used for the Catholic ritual for the Mass. But in the crypt underground, there is a little chapel that is used by Greek Orthodoxes. So in the same spot, you have these two different religions, in reality, it's ones that don't really get along, but in Bari, they have a place where they can talk. I think that St. Nicholas in Bari has given this importance, this possibility of a meeting point between East and West.

### **Paolo**

The other curiosity, I think it's interesting. They collect money in Bari because St. Nicholas the saint that protects women that want to get married. So if you have a daughter, you pray to St. Nicholas for a good marriage, and they still collect money to help to organize the wedding. So they celebrate St. Nicholas twice in Bari. The biggest celebration is in May, usually from May 7th to May 9th, and it's when basically St. Nicholas has arrived in Bari. So the procession is with this statue on a boat arriving in Bari. Like remembering when the body has arrived in the Middle Ages.

### **Paolo**

But the main celebration, where the one that is most famous all over is in December, which is when they basically decide which family is going to get the money to organize the wedding. Yeah, they still do that. It's something that really is a very important for the locals. It's still something that everybody believes in.



**Katy**

So how do they decide who gets the money?

**Paolo**

There's a little committee. Obviously, they have a request, but they get in touch with these people all year long, so they know who actually needs to have support.

**Katy**

Oh, that's nice. I like that.

**Paolo**

I think that that's another thing that you immediately notice when you get to Bari is the strength of the community. It's still very important for us to have big families, but beyond the family, it's really like the community that can be, let's say, the neighborhood. So people still share the street as a place of meeting. They really support each other. That doesn't mean that they love each other. So that's something that I want to underline. People usually think, oh, How nice they love each other. No, not really. But they know that they need to be together. It's a sense of community. You belong to a group. It's like a family. You don't love everybody in your family, but you still feel that you're part of a family. I don't know if that makes sense.

**Katy**

I think that's the best way I've ever heard anyone describe that sense of community, because I think we have maybe... visitors might have some idea of what that is, and it's a bit what we would call lovey-dovey and all very like there's no conflict or there's no traumas. But realistically, in any family, there are going to be those ups and downs. But it sounds like people pull together when they really need to.

**Paolo**

When I try to explain this, I find it very difficult because we are very ourselves-oriented. For instance, if I pursue the happiness, I'm focused on myself, like my career, my relationship. It's always me, me, me. Instead, in places like Bari, people really think, like 'What's the best for my group?' 'What's the best for my family?' So it's really like a sense of identity, really more

than just let's love each other. Because you know that probably by yourself, you can't really make it. Instead, if you belong to a group, you can make it.

### **Katy**

Yeah. So has there been some times when they've really had to pull together as a community to overcome? It sounds like in the 1990s, things were pretty rough. So is that an example of when they really had to pull together to overcome their troubles?

### **Paolo**

I think that the lowest point was when they killed this boy by accident. It's Michele Fazio. He basically was walking in a neighborhood and he was killed by accident when they were shooting. That shocked everybody because that was a moment when they realized that this crime situation was involving everybody and especially innocents. So I think that for the first time told everybody, this is something that we have to face together. It's not anymore something that we can say that it's away from us. They felt that danger so close that slowly they started to react.

### **Paolo**

If you go in the old town of Bari, it's really touching to pass by the place where this boy was killed because you really understand how narrow everything is, how close everything is to each other. And you probably get a better sense of how these people felt because they felt - we're not safe anymore, we have to do something.

### **Katy**

Goodness, there's so many lessons for that because I think people think that maybe that's a really long tradition of community, but it sounds like it's fairly recent. They've decided that they really needed to pull together at this moment. It gives me a bit of hope for the world because people can do it.

### **Paolo**

I think that what changes is when you I think that you are completely isolated from the others, when you realize that your life instead, it's involved and it's connected to the people around you, then you realize that you need to do something to change, for instance, the safety of a place. It's not something that you have to wait that the government solve, but it's

something that you have to do it in your family first. I don't know if that makes any sense. Probably was a little confusing. But yeah, we always try to think about our little world. Instead, I think in Bari at a certain point, they realized that their world was connected to the rest, and they had to do something to react. Crime wasn't something else, was so close to them.

### **Katy**

There's quite a few examples of that really in the region, isn't it? Even in Matera, which is not in Puglia, but close by. That sense of community people have had to get on with it. There's some beautiful things that have happened because of that and Bari is so fun. What I love is the contrast in Bari between the old town and the new... it's a little bit fancy, isn't it? With this wide boulevard.

### **Paolo**

Absolutely. If you I think if you go to your Bari by train, you have a perfect sense of what you're saying. Because the train station, you walk in front of you, you have this beautiful street full of super fancy shops, now pedestrian, full of cafés. It's called Via Sparano that goes all the way to the Old Town. And when you get to the Old Town, you see dramatic is the changes because you go from an area that is precisely straight with this beautiful boulevards and full of beautiful buildings from the 1800. And then you enter a completely different world. You jump back in the past, the moment you cross Corso Vittorio Emanuele, which is the other big street before you enter the old town.

### **Katy**

Yeah, it's really cool. I loved it. I had to walk very fast from the station because we were running late, but I still managed to appreciate the contrast between those beautiful wide streets and the old town. I love that type of thing. You can also walk along the seafront, can't you? That's really lovely now - the Lungomare.

### **Paolo**

There's so many areas in Bari. You don't necessarily need to be in the historical center to have a nice experience. There's a lot of little sections, for instance, the seafront. It's beautiful. If you go there in the morning, there's a lot of people running. There's the old fish market that is super cool to go and watch. They have this tradition of catching the octopus and then beating on the rock to make it softer. It's really like another world. Also, at night time, there's

a lot of nice places where you can go for an aperitivo, for a drink. You don't feel a tourist. You feel really a part of an alive place and life city.

**Katy**

Yeah, it's really lovely. And there's not really any... Well, there are a few big hotels, but most of it's really B&Bs and small little family-run hotels, isn't it? So you've got a really nice atmosphere.

**Paolo**

Yeah, it's changing, I have to say. In the last five years, I already saw so many things changing. In the past, the only big hotels were basically for business. If you're looking for a nice hotel with a garden, then probably you'll be a little disappointed. But things are changing and more and more of these small B&Bs are trying to fill up this gap. Because, again, tourism is becoming more and more important. Things are changing very quickly, but you don't have a big offer of big hotels like in other places. Not yet, at least.

**Katy**

Another really lovely thing about Bari is you can jump on the train and go to a few nice places like Monopoli and Polignano. It's not a super fast train. You just have to chill out and relax on this train. If you're looking for a slow travel experience, this is not a bad base because you can reach quite a few places from Bari.

**Paolo**

Yes, yeah, I totally agree. Well, you can also go to Lecce. The fast train, it's an hour and 20 minutes, so not too much. The trains are new, very comfortable. I myself travel always bringing my bike because you can do that with the regional trains. So you can travel with your own bike if you want to explore more.

**Paolo**

But you can also go north of Bari. There's a little town, it's not that little, which is Trani that I really love. And it's super easy because the train station is not that far from the old town. And you get off the train, it's a nice walk, and you can explore the Old Town.

**Paolo**

There's also Barletta, which is nice, Molfetta, Giovinazzo, Bitonto, so many places also north of Bari, and all easy to reach by train.

**Katy**

Can you get to the Gargano Peninsula there? Because that's on my wish list.

**Paolo**

By train, it's a little longer. By car, it's much easier. By car, you can go along the Coast. You can go through the Salines, stop for a hike to see the Flamingos. You can also enjoy the Gargano area more by car because there's this road from Mattinata to Vieste, for instance, it's really spectacular, very scenic.

**Paolo**

And also to drive up, there's this forest. For us, it's like another world because Puglia is fairly flat. And then all of a sudden this Gargano area is like 1,000 meters above the sea level. With the sea on one side, it's always been attractive for also religious purposes. There's this place. It's actually a UNESCO site called Monte Sant'Angelo. There was a place used by the pilgrims on the way to Jerusalem always.

**Paolo**

But also Padre Pio. Have you ever heard of Padre Pio?

**Katy**

Yes, I've heard of Padre Pio. You might need to explain it to other people.

**Paolo**

Padre Pio was a monk that lived in the Gargano area. And he was a very controversial figure because he claimed to have stigmatism. He was very popular. My mum met him because he died in 1968. So local people, simple people, loved him because he used to give a lot of good suggestions and help to so many people. He opened also a big hospital, which is very important in Puglia. And the church at the beginning fought against him because they thought

that he was not real - an imposter. Now instead, he's a saint. So you can see his places. The Gargano area is like another world.

**Katy**

So for people that don't know, the stigmata is the marks of when Christ was on the cross. So don't ask me how I know that, because my religious education is quite limited. But if you didn't know that, that's what it is. Obviously, people were quite intrigued as to how that happened. Back to Bari. Let's go back. What we're saying is there are so many places you can go to from Bari that you could use it as a base, but you should definitely stop in Bari. Is there some favorite things to do there that we haven't mentioned yet, Paolo?

**Paolo**

Well, one thing, it's opera. I really suggest people to go to the Opera House There's so many theaters in Bari, but especially one called Petruzzelli, very iconic because they put it on fire in the '90s, so it was a big tragedy for the locals. Now has been reopened, like 15 years ago. I think to have an idea of what opera is for the Italians, it's definitely good to go and actually watch a show to see all the Italians well dressed, going there, the atmosphere. I think it's a wonderful experience.

**Katy**

Does it goes all through the year or does it have a specific seasons?

**Paolo**

It's mostly in the winter. It's not really in the summer because obviously it's too hot. But Bari is a place where there's so many music concerts, theater events. Obviously, if you don't know the language, the choice is a little limited. But now, music concerts, a lot of live music events, that's also fun to see. There's a lot of festivals in the streets. That's really cool to get part of the atmosphere.

**Katy**

Yeah, absolutely. You were there in Bari for the St. Nicholas a couple of days ago. What was happening in the streets then?

## Paolo

That's similar to when it's a big celebration for the Saint. When you go there, you see there's a lot of posters with the program. So for 3 days, usually they have a series of events. Now, they make a difference between the religious events and the traditional events. So you have usually a procession, the one in May, it's on the boat. Then the statue stays on an altar in the square with all the lights for one day. There is an entire section where you see a little market where there's everything, from craftsmen to clothing to street food. There's fireworks.

## Paolo

There's this temporary lights. We're very big in that. They put this temporary lights by placing big beams, like big posts, vertically attached with wires on buildings, and then they place on them, on this structure, a lot of round shapes made of wood full of little lights. Now it's LED light, so they can make even bigger things with very bright colors. They decorate the streets and the squares with this light. Even just to see the place full of lights, it's really amazing.

## Katy

Yeah, that is a thing specific to Puglia. These beautiful lights, they're so amazing. I think Sicily might be trying to borrow them because I saw some in Catania, but it's really what you see in Puglia. It's so spectacular. I can't explain it. There's not a lot of photos of it around either, so they keep it to themselves for some reason.

## Paolo

If you want to see the most extreme example, you can look on YouTube for Scorrano. Scorrano is a little village where 3 of the biggest companies making these lights have a massive event in July. The amount of lights, it's really outstanding. They use it as a showcase because then they rent their lights for the different religious events that each city all organizes.

## Katy

It's beautiful. It's hard to explain. I know in Lecce, I think it was Yves Saint Laurent, one of those, they had a big fashion show where they had it, and they had a very elegant version of that. It was so... Oh, my gosh, it was amazing. There's so many things. Yeah, definitely get to Bari during a festival. That sounds amazing. I'd love to be there.

**Paolo**

There's the castle, the cathedral, there is the Church of St. Nicholas, a lot of beautiful architecture. But at the end of the day, what you will feel, fall in love in Bari, it's really the atmosphere. So many people around walking and enjoying. That is what really... it's really impressive.

**Katy**

Yeah, I agree. I just loved Bari. It's fun. It's got a really nice vibe. Let's not forget that life-changing focaccia. That was something else. Thank you for sharing beautiful Bari with us, Paolo. I know that the Untold Italy listeners would love to stay in touch with you and learn some more. What is the best way that they can do that?

**Paolo**

See, they can find me on Instagram, on Facebook, on my website, which is [apuliahandmade.it](http://apuliahandmade.it). Even WhatsApp. On my website, there's my WhatsApp number, so they can hit me with a message, and I'll be happy to help if they want to plan their trip to Puglia.

**Katy**

We know that you do a very good job, and that's why we love working with you. Anyway, so grazie Paolo. Thank you so much for joining us on Untold Italy again. We love having you on.

**Paolo**

Grazie.

**Katy**

Ciao, Ciao.

**Paolo**

Ciao. Ciao.

**Katy**

Goodness Puglia is so beautiful and so, so interesting. Hearing some of those tragic moments from the regions past is a real contrast to what visitors experience today. Bari is so much fun and very real. I loved it! I was taught how to roll orecchiette by one of the ladies in the street

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there and I have to say I was absolutely awful at it! But of course, they make it look so easy with a flick of the wrist and nimble fingers

Before I went to Bari I was wondering if this street pasta rolling was a bit of a tourist trap but it's really genuine. The ladies love sitting out and chatting to each other and anyone who wanders past. It's a lot of fun and you know what? I don't line up for much these days but I would stand in line for an hour for that fresh out of the oven focaccia!

Bari is an important stop on our tours of Puglia - and our Spring tour is departing in just a few days with Paolo joining us of course. This tour is very popular and sold out well in advance this year. We have 4 trips to Puglia running in 2025 and they are half full already so if you're keen get in touch and we can send you the details

But As always, we've provided the tour information, Paolo's details and all the places mentioned in this episode in our comprehensive show notes at [untolditaly.com/224](https://untolditaly.com/224) for episode 224. We provide these notes so you can relax and listen to the episode. Plus it can be tricky trying to jot down Italian names when you're on the go. I'm sure you'll agree.

Thanks for your ongoing support of Untold Italy. We truly appreciate all of you, our listeners joining us from around the world. If you have a spare moment we would so appreciate it if you left us a 5-star rating and review on your favorite podcast app. That way we can reach more Italy loving travelers just like you and raise the profile of our wonderful guests like Paulo who you heard today.

Next week we're exploring some mistakes travelers make when planning trips to Italy. This is a follow-up from an episode we did a couple of years ago - number [120](#) if you're interested - and I was surprised that there are quite a few things to add. So tune in next week for that information and until then it's - Ciao for now!