

Best Places to Visit in 2018: Basilicata Ranks Third

Alexandra M. Fanelli (January 10, 2018)



In Italy's deep south, there is a region that for decades has never gained the attention it deserves. The New York Times, however, just placed Basilicata as the third best place to visit in 2018.

[The New York Times](#) [2] has announced its list of 52 places to go in 2018, and No. 3 is the Italian region of [Basilicata](#) [3]. "Easily Italy's best-kept secret, Basilicata is revered for beautiful beaches, ancient towns and dearth organized crime" wrote the NYT.

In between the regions of Apulia and Calabria, there is the region of Basilicata, "the arch of Italy's foot." The region, also known as Lucania, has been long overlooked in modern times and it was considered as one of the poorest regions of Italy. By the middle of the twentieth century, much of its population had emigrated in search of a better life.

Dating back to the prehistoric age, Basilicata has been influenced by the Greek, French, Spanish and Arabian Invaders that marched through the land throughout the ages.



Filled with small and enchanting villages where the silence and colors of nature detach the visitor from the turmoil of city life, the region offers pure air, genuine flavors and Flintstone-esque architecture.

A large part of the region is covered by the [Apennine](#) [4] mountains which run from the north to the south in the center of Italy. The landscape is also full of hills and deep valleys, including the [Pollino National Park \(Italian: Parco Nazionale del Pollino\)](#) [5], Italy's largest national park, which covers nearly two thousand square kilometers and extends to Calabria.

The region also has two coastlines, one on the Tyrrhenian Sea between [Campania](#) [6] and [Calabria](#) [7], and a longer one on the Ionic coast, along the Gulf of Taranto, between Calabria and Apulia. Both offer wide beaches, either sandy or pebbly, and clear waters.

The greatest destination in Basilicata is the town of [Matera](#) [8], thought to be one of the world's oldest towns, dating back as far as the Paleolithic times. The city is known for its remarkable architecture and landscape, such as the cave dwellings of the Sassi -literally the stones- designated UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1993. As a matter of fact, Matera was also the chosen setting for [Mel Gibson](#) [9]'s Blockbuster "The Passion of the Christ" for its fascinating location reminiscent of Biblical times.

Over the past years, Matera has been undergoing extensive re-development since it was chosen as the 2019's European Capital of Culture, which will provide the economic platform for a more prosperous future.

Discover the other Italian places that made the list [>>](#) [10]

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- [3] <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basilicata>
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