ISSUE #3

Veni | Vidi | Vici

CaesarTheDay
Expat Life
Planning

Your guide to conquering retirement in Italy

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Southbound and Off the Map



Ciao amici —

We're back, and this time we're headed somewhere most expats never think to look: **Basilicata**.

If Italy had a witness protection program, this is where it would send you. It's rugged, overlooked, and often confused for Calabria by people who clearly failed geography. But here's the truth: for retirees who value peace over polish, Basilicata might just be the last affordable place in Italy where you can live beautifully and quietly — without tourists trampling your doorstep or price tags that require a second mortgage.

This month's issue dives deep into the backroads and mountain towns of a region that even Italians forget exists. You'll get:

- The best towns for real retirement living (yes, some with 7% tax perks)
- What €500/month actually gets you here (spoiler: it's more than you'd expect)
- The pros, the cons, and the very real tradeoffs of choosing a place with more sheep than Aperol
- Healthcare, housing, transit, weather, wine — all broken down without the sugarcoating

Since the last issue, more of you have joined this list, picked up the book, sent messages, and started plotting your own version of the escape plan. It's happening. Slowly. Strategically. Which is exactly how it should.

And if you're one of the people who's always said, "I want the real Italy, not the filtered one" — well... this is about as real as it gets.

So pour something strong (Aglianico, preferably), and let's head south. Way south.
It's time to give Basilicata the spotlight it's earned — even if it wants absolutely nothing to do with it.

-Cesare





Basilicata: The Italy Everyone Forgot (Which Might Be the Whole Point)

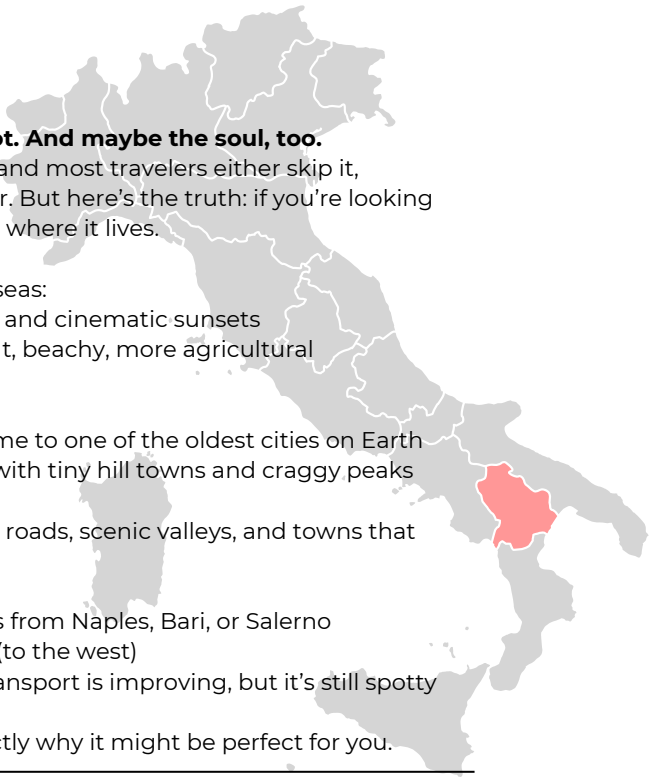
Basilicata doesn't care if you've heard of it. It doesn't need you to visit, follow it on Instagram, or say "wow" in Cinque Terre font. It just quietly exists — carved into mountains, baked under southern sun, and populated by people who, frankly, aren't waiting around for outsiders to validate it.
Wedged between Puglia, Campania, and Calabria, Basilicata is the second-least populated region in Italy, and one of the last places where you can buy a stone house on a hill and not compete with twelve Berliners and a digital nomad from LA. It's poor, proud, and weirdly beautiful — with landscapes that swing from lunar rock formations to pine forests to Ionian beaches that haven't been flattened by cruise ships.
And yet, it has history. It has soul. It has Matera, one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world and a UNESCO site that went from "cave-dwelling poverty" to "James Bond chase scene" in under a century.

But Matera is just the start. The rest of Basilicata — the hill towns of the Potenza province, the remote parks, the hidden coastal towns of the Ionian south — is where the real living happens.

This is not a region that holds your hand. It's a region that gives you space. To disconnect. To spend less. To live slower. To walk up into town for groceries, not down into traffic. To not be marketed to, extracted from, or treated like a tourist in your own home.

It's not for everyone. If you need cappuccino art and a daily Aperol spritz by the Duomo, look elsewhere.
But if you're ready to trade flash for depth — if you're tired of the noise, the prices, and the constant performance of modern life — Basilicata might just be your reset button.

Where is Basilicata



It's not the heel, the toe, or the shin — it's the sole of the boot. And maybe the soul, too.
Basilicata sits quietly between Puglia, Campania, and Calabria, and most travelers either skip it, mislabel it, or speed through it on the way to someplace flashier. But here's the truth: if you're looking for the real Italy—undiluted, unfiltered, and unbothered—this is where it lives.

Tucked in the instep of the Italian boot, Basilicata touches two seas:

- A small stretch of **Tyrrhenian** coast near **Maratea**, with cliffs and cinematic sunsets
- A longer **Ionian** coastline near **Metaponto** and **Policoro**—flat, beachy, more agricultural

The region is divided into two provinces:

- **Matera (east):** drier, more exposed, moonlike in places—home to one of the oldest cities on Earth
- **Potenza (west)**: mountainous, forested, and cooler, dotted with tiny hill towns and craggy peaks

It's small, sparsely populated, and stitched together by winding roads, scenic valleys, and towns that still shut down for lunch and mean it.
Getting here is easier than people assume:

- You can reach Potenza or Matera by regional train or Flixbus from Naples, Bari, or Salerno
- The nearest major airports are Bari (to the east) and Naples (to the west)
- But if you want to explore freely, you'll want a car—public transport is improving, but it's still spotty inland

Basilicata isn't built for tourists. It's built for locals. Which is exactly why it might be perfect for you.



Climate Snapshot

Basilicata isn't for the weather-obsessed. It's for people who want real seasons, fresh air, and don't mind layering up in winter. The region has three distinct climate zones, and where you land will shape your lifestyle—and your heating bill.

🌤️ **Matera & Eastern Hills**

Dry, dramatic, and sun-scorched in summer. Winters are cold but rarely snowy.
Think desert light with olive groves instead of cacti. Windy at times.
Best for: people who hate humidity and don't need lush landscapes.

❄️ **Potenza & the Mountains**

This is Basilicata's alpine zone. Snow is common, summers are short and crisp, and heating is non-negotiable. Great for fireplaces, not bikinis.
Best for: lovers of altitude, quiet, and fleece.

🌊 **Ionian Coast (Policoro, Metaponto)**

Warm, muggy summers and mild winters. Coastal humidity means fewer dramatic swings but stickier days.
Best for: sun-seekers and anyone who needs palm trees in view to be happy.

TL;DR for Retirees:

- You'll likely use both heating and cooling systems if you live inland
- Snow is real in Potenza, but unheard of on the coast
- Summer on the Ionian coast = sunscreen and siestas
- Humidity is real near the water, and wind is constant in the hills
- The entire region has over 250+ sunny days a year—just don't expect Tuscany-in-June vibes

🕵️‍♂️ **Myths of the Italian South: Let's Clear a Few Things Up**

No, Basilicata is not run by the mafia. No, you're not going to get mugged by "boat migrants." And no, southern Italy isn't some lawless, crumbling mess where donkeys outnumber doctors. Are there poor areas? Of course. Are some towns quieter, grittier, or underfunded? Definitely. But you'll find paved roads, fiber internet, functioning hospitals, and an astounding number of espresso machines per capita. The south isn't backwards—it's just not curated for foreign consumption. Which, for many of us, is exactly the appeal.



Beyond Matera: How Basilicata Is Actually Structured

Matera gets all the attention—and fair enough, it's stunning. But Basilicata is much more than one UNESCO city carved into stone. If you're seriously thinking about living here, you need to understand how the region breaks down in terms of lifestyle, access, weather, and daily rhythm.
Here's the real framework:

🏺 **Matera Province (East)**
This is the more accessible, well-lit half of Basilicata—figuratively and literally.
The terrain is dry, dramatic, and open, with towns spread across low hills and wide plateaus. It feels more "southern Puglia-adjacent" than mountainous.
You've got:

- Matera itself — ancient, cinematic, increasingly international
- Montescaglioso, Ferrandina, Pisticci — compact hill towns with strong local traditions
- Good train/bus connections to Bari and Taranto
- Olive groves, stone farmhouses, open skies
- 7% flat tax towns are concentrated here

Best for: retirees who want sun, scenery, cultural roots, and some logistical ease

⛰️ **Potenza Province (West)**
This is mountain country. Rugged, wooded, and dramatically vertical. Many towns cling to hillsides like they're defying gravity—and time.
You've got:

- Potenza, Melfi, Venosa, Castelmezzano, Lauria
- Real snow, real winters, real solitude
- Fewer tourists, slower pace, lower property costs
- Smaller villages may lack healthcare access—do your homework

Best for: introverts, hikers, budget retirees, and those who like their peace with a bit of fog

🌊 **Ionian Coastline (South)**
This is Basilicata's little-known beach zone. Flat, agricultural, humid, and calm. The water's warm, the terrain is gentle, and the towns are mostly functional rather than charming.
You've got:

- Policoro, Scanzano Jonico, Metaponto, Nova Siri
- Summer heat, beach clubs, sandy coastline
- Some seasonal tourism but still off most radar
- Easier lifestyle for those who want flatter ground, warmer weather, and a little more infrastructure

Best for: sun-lovers, people with mobility issues, beach walkers, and those who want a retirement rhythm that feels coastal but not chaotic

Bottom Line:
Basilicata is not one unified lifestyle.
It's three micro-regions, each with its own personality, climate, strengths, and gaps.
You don't just "move to Basilicata." You pick the corner of it that speaks your language—literally or metaphorically.

City by City: 12 Towns to Watch



Pisticci

Imagine the whitewashed curves of a Greek island village dropped into Lucanian olive groves—that's Pisticci. A hill town with serious charm and wide views of the Ionian plain, it's got history, character, and a sense of place that feels grounded, not manicured. You won't find trendy cocktail bars here, but you will find quiet streets, a strong community vibe, and proximity to both Matera and the sea. The town center is small and walkable, and it's part of the 7% flat tax zone, which makes it doubly appealing for strategic retirees. It's not fancy. That's the point.



Montescaglioso

Anchored by a massive Benedictine abbey, Montescaglioso is the kind of town where the past isn't just preserved—it's lived in. Locals gather in the piazza like it's still 1957, and time moves to the rhythm of market days and church bells. It's perched high above the Bradano valley, just a short drive from Matera, but it feels a world apart. The town has bakeries, bars, a bank or two—and not much else. Which is exactly why it's so livable. You'll need a car, but you won't need a plan.



Atella

Located in the Vulture region, Atella is a quiet, forest-fringed town surrounded by vineyards, hot springs, and ancient abbeys. It's not on any tourist map—and that's part of its charm. What you get here is stillness, clean air, and affordability in the extreme. The town itself is modest, but it's close to Rionero, Melfi, and Venosa, giving you access to services without giving up the peace and views of rural life. It's best for people who truly want to go off-grid without being isolated. Think of it as a place to write a novel—or just finally finish your taxes in peace.



Castelmezzano

This is Basilicata's fairytale village. Clinging to jagged peaks in the Dolomiti Lucane, Castelmezzano looks like it was carved by hand out of mountain bone—and in some ways, it was. There's a tiny community, a few trattorias, and a lot of silence. But there's also the Volo dell'Angelo (a zipline that connects it to nearby Pietrapertosa), epic hiking, and a kind of peace that's hard to find elsewhere. It's not an everyday base for everyone—you'll need to be okay with steep climbs and winter isolation—but for the right person, it's magic.



Venosa

Venosa punches above its weight. Home of Horace, Roman ruins, a Jewish catacomb, and more wine than you'll know what to do with, it's one of Basilicata's cultural gems. The old town is elegant, with wide piazzas, baroque churches, and a castle that anchors everything. Despite its deep history, it doesn't feel frozen in time—there's life here, and a bit of quiet pride. You'll find medical care, a weekly market, and good connections to nearby towns like Melfi and Rionero. If you want a place with heritage and a heartbeat, Venosa is worth scouting.



Maratea

Basilicata's best-kept coastal secret. Perched on the Tyrrhenian coast, Maratea combines mountain drama with Mediterranean breeze—and without the Amalfi price tag. Its historic center is tucked into the cliffs, while beach clubs and hidden coves stretch along the winding coast below. You'll find a giant statue of Christ (yes, like Rio), charming piazzas, and a small-town rhythm that hums even in August. There's a hospital nearby in Lagonegro, good seafood, and a little seasonal tourism—but nothing like the chaos of Campania. You'll want a car and some patience with curves, but you'll be rewarded with sunsets and space.

City by City: 12 Towns to Watch



Melfi

A fortress town with a volcanic soul. Melfi sits on the slopes of Monte Vulture, surrounded by vineyards that produce some of southern Italy's most powerful reds. The castle here hosted popes and emperors; now it hosts retirees, wine lovers, and locals who still live by the rhythms of the land. It's well connected to Potenza, has solid services, and a real hospital—not just a clinic. Property prices are low, but the town has a working vibe, not a tourist gloss. Ideal if you want community, scenery, and a glass of Aglianico with lunch.



Policoro

Want flat land, warm seas, and functioning supermarkets? Policoro delivers. It's the practical face of Basilicata's Ionian coast—less postcard-pretty, more "real town with a beach." There's a train station, large supermarkets, multiple pharmacies, and even a few modern apartment blocks. In summer it gets livelier, but it's not a resort town—locals live here year-round. It's one of the easier places in Basilicata to live without a car, and the weather makes heating bills almost irrelevant. Not charming, exactly—but it works. And for some retirees, that's the charm.



Lauria

Lauria is a layered hill town on the edge of Basilicata's southwest—close to Calabria, but with a character all its own. It has a serious past (think medieval rebel strongholds), and while it's not polished, it's authentic down to the last stone. The town's split into two main districts, with shops, services, and even a few cultural festivals that draw locals from neighboring valleys. Mountains surround it, and it's one of the better spots if you like to hike but still want a café within walking distance. It's a bit insular—so be ready to integrate.



Tursi

Tursi is scrappy, scenic, and slowly being rediscovered. Its ancient quarter, Rabatana, is perched on a rocky ridge and still feels like a forgotten movie set. There's a modern part of town below with supermarkets and services, but the magic is in the contrasts—old and new, cave and concrete, silence and slow revival. Property is cheap, tourism is minimal, and the 7% tax zone status adds appeal. It's a better bet for a second base or long-term renter than a forever home—but for some, that's all part of the plan.



Rionero in Vulture

Small but surprisingly energetic, Rionero is a wine town with a heartbeat. Surrounded by vineyards and thermal springs, it has a few claims to fame—great Aglianico, historical roots, and a bit of industry that keeps it going when other towns sleep. You'll find healthcare access, train links to Potenza and Melfi, and housing that's still underpriced for what you get. It's not touristy at all—but it's functional, friendly, and full of potential. If you want to live among Italians and drink well while doing it, this could be your sleeper hit.



Nova Siri

Tucked along the Ionian coast, Nova Siri offers a unique dual identity: an ancient hill town up top, and a newer beachside resort area (Marina di Nova Siri) below. It's not flashy, but it's functional—flat terrain, proximity to the beach, and walkability in the newer part. You'll find basic services, cafes, a train station, and one of the longer stretches of clean, sandy coastline in Basilicata. It's a low-key base for sun-lovers, especially those seeking affordable seaside living without the chaos of southern Puglia. Retirees will appreciate the calm, the cost, and the fact that it still feels Italian—not Instagrammed.



Wait...Are These All 7% Towns?

Pretty much—**but that's not why we chose them.**

Yes, every town featured here (except Matera and Potenza) qualifies for Italy's 7% flat tax scheme. But that's not the reason they made the cut. These places were picked because they're **walkable, authentic, beautiful in weird and wonderful ways**, and still have functioning local life that isn't just souvenir shops and spritz menus.

The fact that they also happen to offer a **massive tax break on your foreign income?**
Let's just call that strategic alignment.

This is what happens when you plan smart and don't follow the crowd.
You end up somewhere affordable, livable—and yes, legally optimized.

🗺️ Want the Full 7% Map?

Explore every town in Italy that qualifies for the 7% flat tax regime—updated regularly and searchable by region, infrastructure, proximity to hospitals, and transit access (Work in Progress).

🧭 Bonus: Includes a downloadable planning tool, full FAQ, and links to the legal framework.

Everything's live at CaesarTheDay.com — no fluff, no paywall, just the goods.

📲 **Scan to explore and share with a friend.**



Matera: Where Stone Tells Stories

Matera looks like it shouldn't exist. A city carved into pale limestone cliffs, its ancient cave dwellings—once home to generations, then abandoned slums—have become UNESCO-protected icons, boutique hotels, and enviable Airbnbs. Yet unlike most places that go from obscurity to spotlight, Matera hasn't lost its footing.

It's one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities on Earth. But beneath the cinematic glow of every drone video and magazine spread, it's still a working Italian town. Families, retirees, and small businesses share space with tourists. There are grocery stores and government offices. Children go to school a few streets from where monks once prayed in stone chapels. Beyond the Sassi, life is refreshingly ordinary.

And that's the key: the Sassi aren't the whole story. They've been restored, gentrified, and in many cases priced into the stratosphere. But the newer neighborhoods—around Piazza Vittorio Veneto and beyond—offer normal, livable housing, often with panoramic views and surprisingly reasonable rent. You're not required to live in a cave to enjoy Matera.

The Vibe

There's a stillness to Matera—sunlight on stone, silence broken by bells or footsteps. But it's not frozen. The town hums just below the surface, especially outside the tourist core. It attracts artists, writers, and those burned out on big-city living. It's quiet without being boring, grounded without being remote.

The Practical Side

This is not a remote mountain hamlet. Matera has real infrastructure: regional trains to Bari (under two hours), a hospital, pharmacies, supermarkets, and fiber internet. The city is compact and walkable—if you're okay with hills—and there's a local bus system if your knees protest. Housing ranges from modest modern apartments to restored townhouses with serious views. Avoid the tourist districts if you're budget-conscious; elsewhere, €500–700/month can get you something solid. Healthcare access is good for a town its size, and it's one of the more navigable cities in southern Italy for retirees.

Bottom Line

Matera offers that rare balance of beauty and function. You're living in a postcard, yes—but also in a place where you can get your teeth cleaned and your phone repaired without making a day trip out of it. It's not coastal, it's not breezy, and it's not for everyone. But for those craving history, quiet, and grounded Italian life with just a touch of drama, it's a one-of-a-kind place to land.



Potenza: Altitude with Attitude

Potenza doesn't try to impress you. In fact, it barely tries at all—which is part of its charm, if you're into that kind of thing.

At over 800 meters (2,600+ feet), it's the highest regional capital in Italy. And yes, you'll feel it—especially in January, when the snow settles in and the mountain fog gives the whole city a noir filter. But Potenza isn't some charming alpine fantasy. It's a gritty, working city with layered streets, brutalist apartment blocks, and more escalators than anyone expects. Seriously—there's an indoor escalator system that links downtown to uptown like a public transit Escher painting.

So why feature Potenza? Because it works. The infrastructure is solid. There's a major hospital, a university, decent public transportation, and actual city services—something many smaller Lucanian towns just can't provide. It's a place where things happen on time. Garbage gets picked up. You can get a haircut and a new identity document in the same morning.

But Potenza also has soul. Look past the concrete and you'll find lively piazzas, weekly markets, traditional festivals, and layers of history—from Roman ruins to Norman castles to modern cafés where people still drink espresso like it's a sacrament.

Property here is incredibly affordable, and rents can be shockingly low for a regional capital. English is rare, but people are kind (and curious about what you're doing there). The pace is slower than the north but faster than you'd expect in such a "forgotten" region.

It's not for everyone. If you're moving to Italy for cobblestones and pastel facades, keep scrolling. But if you want a base that's reliable, underpriced, and totally unpretentious, Potenza might surprise you. Just pack a good coat—and maybe some extra vitamin D for winter.

The Practical Side

This is where retirees who want function should look. There's a large regional hospital, solid public transit, government offices, a university, and all the bureaucratic access you'd expect from a regional capital. Rents can be as low as €350–€500/month for a 1–2 bedroom apartment in town. The cost of living is low, heating bills are high in winter, but everything works: you'll find modern supermarkets, doctors, pharmacies, and shops without having to leave town. Potenza is hilly, but the escalator network takes out much of the sting. It's not sexy—but it's solid. And sometimes, that's the most underrated luxury of all.







Wine, Food & Culture Highlights

Basilicata doesn't perform for tourists. It cooks for its own people, bottles wine for its own tables, and throws festivals because that's what it's always done—not because anyone's filming it.

Let's start with the food. The flavors here are intense, rustic, and proud. Think roasted peppers and chili heat, bitter greens sautéed in local oil, wild boar ragù, and dried pasta shapes like ferretti or strascinati you've never seen outside southern kitchens. Bread is sacred—especially the thick-crusted loaves of Matera, made with ancient grains and shaped like mountain peaks. Cheese is usually made from sheep's milk or goat's, and it's either creamy and fresh (ricotta salata) or hard and biting (pecorino di Filiano). And don't skip the lucanica—a fennel-laced sausage that's been around since Roman times.

Meals here are slow. Seasonal. Local not because it's trendy, but because no one would think to do it another way. In small towns, the best meals often come from someone's cousin who opens their trattoria on weekends. In cities like Matera or Venosa, there's more experimentation—but it's still grounded in tradition. If you're used to food being entertainment, Basilicata resets your palate. Here, it's nourishment, pride, and memory on a plate.

And then there's the wine. You don't move to Basilicata for mass-market Pinot Grigio. You move here to drink Aglianico del Vulture—the brooding, high-altitude red that grows in volcanic soil around Monte Vulture. It's bold, structured, and built to age—like Barolo's rough southern cousin who prefers flannel to suits. These wines are serious, affordable, and criminally underexported. There's also a revival of whites from Greco and Malvasia grapes, but Aglianico is still king here.

The cultural calendar may not be stuffed with opera or biennales, but it's rich in deeply rooted traditions: harvest festivals, religious processions, ancient masks, and age-old rituals that feel both theatrical and personal. Towns like Tricarico and Satriano still celebrate Carnevale with pagan costumes and symbolic chaos. Music is folk-heavy, often with flutes, tambourines, and call-and-response singing. If it sounds like time travel, it is. But it's not a museum—it's still lived.

Basilicata doesn't shout. It simmers. And if you give it time—if you learn the recipes, visit the cantinas, and sit through the saints' processions—it rewards you with a kind of cultural intimacy that the more touristed regions have long since traded for spectacle.

Veni | Vidi | Vino



Aglianico del Vulture DOCG



The heavyweight champion of southern Italian reds. Grown on the volcanic slopes of Monte Vulture, this bold, structured red has deep tannins, black cherry and leather notes, and the stamina to age for decades. It's often called the "Barolo of the South," but frankly, that undersells it. This isn't a knockoff—it's a classic in its own right. Look for "Riserva" on the label if you want something with real age and complexity. Pairs beautifully with grilled meats, wild boar, or anything involving truffles.

Moscato di Rapolla



A semi-sweet white that locals drink with dessert or cheese, Moscato di Rapolla is light, aromatic, and often slightly sparkling. Think orange blossom and peach, without the syrupy heaviness you get from commercial Moscato. Produced in small batches, it's hard to find even within the region—but worth it if you like your wines soft and floral.



Grottino di Roccanova DOC

Made in the forested hills of Potenza province, this lesser-known red is a blend of Sangiovese, Montepulciano, and Malvasia Nera. It's more approachable than Aglianico—earthy, medium-bodied, and food-friendly. This is the wine you drink with everyday pasta or grilled sausages while chatting with neighbors. Grottino doesn't seek the spotlight, but it's quietly reliable and deeply regional.

Malvasia Bianca di Basilicata



This crisp, aromatic white is a great antidote to the region's heavier reds. Grown mostly around Matera and in pockets near Venosa, it offers notes of apricot, herbs, and citrus zest. Great with seafood, fried antipasti, or just on its own during a hot Lucanian afternoon. Not always easy to find, but when you do, it's a reminder that southern whites can have elegance too.

Basilicata isn't a big wine region in terms of volume, but what it lacks in scale, it makes up for in depth. This is a place where grapes are grown on the slopes of extinct volcanoes, where altitude and mineral-rich soil shape flavor, and where tradition still guides the winemaking more than marketing trends.
Most of the region's best wines come from the north, around Monte Vulture, but you'll find small producers tucked into hills across Potenza and Matera provinces. Don't expect tasting rooms with merch. Expect a plastic table, a handshake, and a bottle that'll blow away wines twice the price.

The reds are brooding, the whites are sharp, and almost none of it makes it out of Italy—which is exactly why you should drink it here.



Lagane e Ceci

This is Basilicata's version of pasta e ceci—earthy, rustic, and filling. Lagane are wide, hand-cut noodles (similar to tagliatelle but thicker), typically made without egg. The sauce is humble: chickpeas, garlic, chili, and rosemary simmered in olive oil. No tomato, no cheese, no fuss. Just flavor.

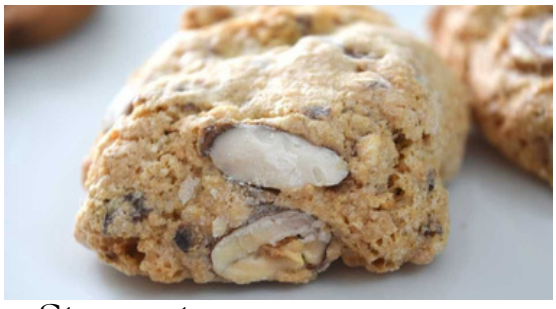
Ingredients

- 250g dried chickpeas (or 1 can, rinsed)
- 300g semolina flour
- Water (to make the dough)
- 2 garlic cloves
- Fresh rosemary
- Crushed red pepper
- Olive oil, salt, black pepper

Method:

1. Soak and cook the chickpeas (or cheat and open a can).
2. Make a simple pasta dough with semolina and water; roll out and cut into wide strips.
3. In a pan, sauté garlic, rosemary, and chili flakes in olive oil.
4. Add chickpeas, a ladle of cooking water, and let simmer.
5. Cook pasta, combine, and toss until creamy.
6. Serve with cracked black pepper—and zero grated cheese.

Wine Pairing:
A glass of Grottino di Roccanova—its earthy red fruit matches the humble pulse-based dish beautifully.



Strazzate

A traditional cookie from the Potenza area, strazzate are rough, cracked little wonders made with almonds, dark chocolate, cinnamon, and a splash of Strega or Amaro. Gluten-free by default, they're crispy outside and soft inside—perfect with afternoon coffee or a little dessert wine.

Ingredients

- 250g almond flour
- 100g dark chocolate, chopped
- 2 egg whites
- 100g sugar
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tbsp Amaro or Strega (optional but excellent)
- Zest of 1 lemon
- Pinch of salt

Method:

1. Preheat oven to 180°C (350°F).
2. Mix all ingredients into a sticky dough.
3. Shape into rough mounds—don't smooth them out; the "torn" texture is key.
4. Bake for 15–18 minutes until cracked and golden.

Wine Pairing:
Try a chilled glass of Moscato di Rapolla or even a splash of Amaro Lucano for the full southern Italian finish.

CAESAR'S TIP

Real Lucanian food doesn't need flair. Just olive oil, heat, and a little defiance.







Healthcare & Infrastructure Rundown

Healthcare & Infrastructure: Underrated, Functional, and Surprisingly Well-Connected

For a region often described as “isolated” or “forgotten,” Basilicata’s infrastructure holds up better than you’d think—especially for those used to the American healthcare lottery and suburban sprawl.

Let’s talk hospitals first. There are two main hospital hubs in the region:

- **Ospedale San Carlo in Potenza** – one of the largest and most advanced in southern Italy. It’s a regional reference point for cardiology, surgery, and emergency care.
- **Madonna delle Grazie in Matera** – a well-equipped hospital with a full ER, maternity care, and outpatient specialists.

For smaller towns, you’ll find clinics, pharmacies, and regional health offices (ASL) that handle everything from prescriptions to bloodwork.

Appointments may take a bit longer than in the north, but routine care, diagnostics, and follow-ups are accessible and low-cost—especially with your Tessera Sanitaria in hand. Most larger towns (Venosa, Melfi, Policoro, Rionero) have local medical facilities or small hospitals, and emergency services cover the region well.

Dental care is private, but pricing is often a third or less of U.S. rates. Specialists in Potenza and Matera tend to speak some English, but learning basic Italian health vocab will go a long way.

Connectivity, Roads & Rail

Despite its mountainous terrain, Basilicata has surprisingly solid transport connections—especially if you pick your town strategically.

- **Trains:** The region is served by Trenitalia regional lines. From Potenza or Matera, you can reach Bari, Salerno, Naples, and beyond. There’s also a small station in Policoro for Ionian coast access.
- **Roads:** The SS407 (Basentana) is the main artery connecting the interior to the coast. Roads are curvy but paved, and traffic is light. Just bring your patience and a working horn.
- **Airports:** There’s no airport in Basilicata, but Bari and Naples are the closest international hubs—1.5 to 2.5 hours by car depending on location.

Digital & Daily Life

Fiber internet is available in larger towns and improving rapidly even in hilltop villages, thanks to government rural broadband programs. If you plan to work remotely or stream content, check line speed before committing to a lease—don’t assume the Airbnb Wi-Fi test is reliable.

Daily services like post offices, banks, ATMs, and pharmacies are well-distributed across the region. Public buses exist, but are inconsistent—having a car is close to essential unless you’re based in Potenza, Matera, or Policoro.

Nature as Infrastructure

And let’s not forget the other kind of infrastructure—the kind made of trees and silence. Basilicata is home to two major national parks:

- **Parco Nazionale del Pollino** (shared with Calabria): Italy’s largest national park, full of hiking trails, rivers, and ancient pines.
- **Parco Nazionale dell’Appennino Lucano Val d’Agri Lagonegrese**: Less traveled but stunning, with dense forests, waterfalls, and a handful of semi-abandoned hamlets you’ll wish you could adopt.

There’s also the **Dolomiti Lucane**—the region’s jagged, cinematic mountain range. Towns like Castelmezzano and Pietrapertosa are connected by hiking trails (and yes, a zipline called the Flight of the Angel). These aren’t just Instagram backdrops—they’re part of the daily life, especially if you value solitude, walking, or space.





Clinics & Care by Town

Where to find reliable healthcare beyond the big hospitals

Matera
- Ospedale Madonna delle Grazie – Full-service regional hospital with ER
- Poliambulatorio Matera – Outpatient center for diagnostics and specialty care
- Good pharmacy density across both the Sassi and modern town

Potenza
- Ospedale San Carlo – Major hospital with 24/7 ER, surgical specialties, cardiology, and oncology
- Presidio Territoriale di Assistenza (PTA) – Local clinic system offering preventive care and minor procedures
- Multiple dental clinics, some English-speaking

Policoro
- Ospedale Giovanni Paolo II – Small hospital with basic ER and maternity care
- Local ASL offices for healthcare registration and public services
- Good access to general practitioners and pediatrics

Venosa
- Presidio Ospedaliero di Venosa – Small hospital with radiology, blood tests, and geriatrics
- Dental and eye clinics in town center
- Limited emergency care (stabilization only—serious cases sent to Melfi or Potenza)

Melfi
- Ospedale di Melfi – Active regional hospital with full ER and surgical ward
- Specialists available by referral
- Good regional coverage for those in Vulture towns

Rionero in Vulture
- IRCCS CROB (Oncology Research Center) – Nationally recognized cancer treatment and research institute

🩺 How to Register for Public Healthcare (SSN)

Here's what you'll need to get that Tessera Sanitaria and start using Italy's public system.

🗂️ Required Documents:

- Valid Permesso di Soggiorno (or receipt of application)
- Codice Fiscale (Italian tax code)
- Proof of residency (residenza certificate from your Comune)
- Passport or EU ID
- Payment receipt (if registering voluntarily—see below)

🇪🇺 EU Citizens:
If you're not employed in Italy, you'll register voluntarily with your ASL (local health authority). Expect to pay around €150–€400/year, depending on your region and income bracket.

🇺🇸 U.S. Retirees with Elective Residency Visas:
You'll register voluntarily as well—bring your ERV visa and Permesso, and pay a yearly contribution based on income (typically capped around €2,000/year). You get full access to the SSN, including general care, specialists, and hospital services.

🧾 After Registration:
You'll receive a Tessera Sanitaria (health card), valid for 1–2 years, renewable with your visa. Choose your family doctor (medico di base) through your local ASL.

Cost of Living: Southern Comfort, Without the Price Tag

Let's be blunt: Basilicata is one of the most affordable regions in Italy—not because it's lacking, but because it's still overlooked. You won't find a weekly farmer's market with €18 jars of artisanal tomato jam. You'll find an actual farmer, selling 2 kilos of ripe tomatoes for €3. Bread costs what it did ten years ago. Rent can still be paid in cash. And the local café will remember your order before they ask your name.

The downside? Fewer services in rural towns, longer drives for some essentials, and not many English-speaking professionals. But the trade-off? Peace, space, and the ability to actually live on your retirement income.

If you're used to Northern Italy or even places like Tuscany or Puglia, the sticker shock here is reversed: you'll keep doing double-takes at how little things cost.



Category	Matera	Venosa	Policoro
Rent (1-bed apt, central)	€500–700/month	€350–500/month	€450–600/month
Purchase (€/sqm)	€1,800–2,500	€1,200–1,600	€1,400–1,800
Utilities (Electric/Gas/Water)	€120–160/month	€100–140/month	€110–150/month
Groceries (for 2)	€300–400/month	€250–350/month	€280–380/month
Transportation	Bus & train to Bari	Regional bus only	Bus/train & car useful
Dining Out (2 people)	€35–60 (nice meal)	€25–45 (trattoria)	€30–50 (seaside view)

Why it Works

This region isn't artificially cheap—it's just unhyped. You can live well here without penny-pinching. Rents are sane. Groceries are local. Property taxes are low. And if you cook at home and drink local wine, you might start wondering why you ever paid $19 for avocado toast.

There are trade-offs. You'll probably want a car unless you live in Potenza, Matera, or Policoro. Some healthcare services might mean a drive. And yes, you'll need a bit of Italian to get by. But for many retirees and slowmads, this is the rare place where the dream life and the budget actually align.

Pros & Cons for Retirees

Retiring in Basilicata isn't for everyone—and that's exactly the point. It rewards the flexible, the curious, and those who don't need a British pub on every corner. The pros? Real affordability, unfiltered Italian life, and jaw-dropping nature. The cons? Less polish, more patience, and the occasional goat traffic jam. Here's the honest rundown.



PROS:

- **Exceptionally low cost of living.** You can actually afford to live well on a modest pension or fixed income. Rent, groceries, and property prices are among the lowest in Italy.
- **Genuine Italian lifestyle**. This isn't a Disneyland version of Italy. You'll be immersed in real local rhythms, where markets are still markets, and festivals aren't choreographed for tourists.
- **Access to national parks & nature.** Incredible hiking, clean air, and some of the most dramatic mountain and canyon landscapes in Italy. Nature is part of the daily routine here.
- **Improving infrastructure**. Good regional hospitals, fiber internet in many areas, and decent train links—especially if you stay near Potenza, Matera, or Policoro.
- **Safety & stillness.** It's quiet, safe, and slow in the best ways. You'll sleep like a rock and probably leave your doors unlocked.

CONS:

- **You'll probably need a car.** Outside a few cities, public transit is limited or unreliable. If you're not comfortable driving, choose your town very carefully.
- **Fewer expat services.** Don't expect English-speaking tax advisors, relocation agents, or social clubs. You'll be DIYing most of your move.
- **Limited air access.** No airport in-region. Bari or Naples are the closest hubs—1.5 to 3 hours away, depending on where you live.
- **Harsh winters in the mountains.** Potenza and inland towns can be brutally cold and snowy from December to February. Heating costs add up.
- **Language barrier is real.** In smaller towns, you will need to speak Italian. But hey, it's good for your brain—and your charm.



Final Take: Is Basilicata Right for You?

Basilicata doesn't woo you with fantasy. It doesn't seduce you with vineyards and olive groves curated for influencers. It offers something rarer: a real, livable Italy that still feels untouched by the algorithm. No postcard-perfect piazzas staged for tourism. No overpriced gelato trucks clogging the main square. Just space, silence, slow mornings, and neighbors who'll remember your dog's name before they remember yours.

Is it for everyone? Absolutely not. You'll need a car, a decent grasp of Italian, and a willingness to recalibrate your expectations. Bureaucracy is still a mess, some towns feel deserted in winter, and you may have to drive 45 minutes for a blood draw.

But if you're dreaming of a retirement that trades convenience for character—and sees beauty in simplicity—Basilicata just might be the place to land, breathe, and build something lasting. Before the world figures it out.



The 7% Flat Tax: A Quiet Financial Advantage (Even in Le Marche)

Most people think of southern Italy when they hear about the 7% flat tax scheme — Calabria, Sicily, maybe Puglia. But here's the surprise: Le Marche has a handful of eligible towns too. And if you're the kind of retiree who'd rather have low taxes and low tourists, that's a combo worth paying attention to.

💡 **So, what is the 7% flat tax?**

It's one of Italy's most generous tax incentives for foreign retirees. If you qualify, you'll pay just 7% tax on your foreign income (including Social Security, IRA withdrawals, pensions, dividends, and capital gains) for up to 9 years—with no need to file an Italian tax return listing all your income sources.

Who qualifies?

- You must transfer your residency to an eligible small town (population under 20,000) in a qualifying region — and yes, parts of Le Marche count.
- You must not have been a tax resident in Italy in the last 5 years.
- Your foreign income must come from outside Italy.
- You must notify the Italian tax office when enrolling — this isn't automatic.

What it means for U.S. retirees:

This isn't a loophole. It's a strategic tax move. The U.S. still taxes your worldwide income (because of course it does), but you can't claim a foreign tax credit for the 7%—so you'll need smart planning to avoid double taxation. Want help with that? I've got you covered.

Yes, Le Marche Has 7% Towns (A few featured in this newsletter do qualify!)

They're few, but they're there. Inland towns like Montegiorgio, Servigliano, and Force make the list —and offer a slower pace, walkable centers, and beautiful scenery without the tourist markup.

🗺️ View the full 7% Town Map + Database
📄 Read "How the 7% Flat Tax Works (and How It Doesn't)

Bottom Line:

If you're retiring on foreign income, this could save you tens of thousands of euros over a decade. And unlike in Calabria or Basilicata, you won't be baking in August or living miles from infrastructure.
7%, peace and quiet? Le Marche might be the sweet spot you didn't know existed.

Caesar’s Secrets: What Does It Really Mean to Be “Resident” in Italy?



Residenza, Domicilio, and Tax Status — Demystified

Moving to Italy isn’t just a lifestyle change — it’s a legal one. And if you’re not careful, you’ll end up registered in one place, taxed in another, and confused in all of them.

Let’s break it down.

🏠 1. Residenza Anagrafica: Civil Registration

When you hear “residenza” in Italy, this is what most people mean. It’s the registration of your physical presence with your local Comune, showing where you live day-to-day.

- You apply at the Ufficio Anagrafe (civil registry office).
- They’ll verify your lease or property ownership.
- Within 45 days, a police officer (vigile urbano) will likely do a home visit to confirm you actually live there.
- Once approved, you become a resident of that municipality.

This residenza gives you:

- Access to national healthcare (SSN)
- Ability to buy certain vehicles, register utilities, and apply for residency-based discounts
- Access to the 7% tax regime if you’re eligible
- The right to vote in local elections (if you’re an EU citizen)

📍 2. Domicilio: Where You “Center Your Life”

Less commonly discussed, domicilio is a separate legal concept under Italian civil law. It refers to where your main personal and professional interests are centered.

Example: You might reside in Matera but have your domicile in Rome if you regularly work, study, or do business there.

Why it matters:

- It’s rarely enforced for retirees, but it can show up in tax disputes, legal contracts, or court filings.
- It affects where you file lawsuits, receive certain legal notices, or assign a notary.

In most cases for expats: your residenza and domicilio will be the same. But it’s worth knowing the distinction if you split time across towns or own multiple homes.

💶 3. Tax Residency: The Big One

Becoming tax-resident in Italy happens by default if:

- You live in Italy for more than 183 days in a calendar year
- Your main center of life (family, home, business) is in Italy
- You are registered as a resident with the Comune (yes, even if you weren’t there for 183 days)

⚠️ **Important:**
You don't have to hit all three—just one can trigger Italian tax residency.

Once you're tax-resident:

- You must file an Italian tax return
- You're taxed on your worldwide income (unless on the 7% flat tax or similar regime)
- You may still owe U.S. taxes — but the U.S.-Italy tax treaty and foreign tax credits help avoid double taxation

🧾 **Sidebar: What Triggers Italian Tax Residency?**

- ❌ It's not just spending 6 months in the country
- ✅ It can be registering your residenza—even if you haven't stayed the full 183 days
- ✅ Owning a home, enrolling your kids in school, or moving your spouse can all be interpreted as establishing your center of life in Italy
- ✅ AIRE registration (for Italians abroad) is how Italian citizens avoid becoming tax-resident unintentionally

🧠 **So, What Should Retirees Do?**

If you're moving on an ERV or planning a long-term stay:

- Yes, you must register your residenza anagrafica — it's required for healthcare, driver's licenses, the 7% regime, and basic rights
- No, you don't need to worry about domicilio unless you're working or managing business across regions
- Yes, you'll become tax-resident in Italy if you live there more than 183 days OR are registered with the Comune — even if you pop in and out

Plan accordingly.

CAESAR'S TIP

"Think of residenza as your house keys, domicilio as your heart, and tax residency as who gets to audit your bank account. Keep them aligned—or be ready to explain."



Plan it with Caesar

You've got the dream. I've got the blueprint.

By now you know Basilicata is real, gritty, affordable, and surprisingly livable. But knowing where to go is only half the game. Knowing **how to get there—legally, strategically, and without setting your hair on fire**—is where I come in.



Whether you're still in the research phase or knee-deep in paperwork, I offer 1:1 planning support designed for real people, not Pinterest boards.

Here's what I can help you with:
✅ ERV visa check and documentation review
✅ Personalized move timelines and state exit planning
✅ Healthcare and residency navigation
✅ 7% flat tax town selection and application strategy
✅ Notion tools, checklists, and brutally honest advice when needed

👉 First consultation is free. You bring the dream, I'll bring the structure.

📍 Start here: www.caesartheday.com/services

Retiring abroad isn't brave. It's brilliant—when it's done right.

-Cesare