

Apulia

Barone Olive Tree

Estimated age:
a thousand years

Olive Tree
(Olea europea Linné)

Municipality: Manduria (TA),
Masseria Fellicchie

Circumference of the trunk:
about 10 m
Height: 8 m

Salento is a land where olive-growing has thousands of years of tradition that becomes lost in the mists of time. Since the colonisation of the Greeks, who often brought their own varieties and grafted them onto the wild olive trees they found on the southern coasts of Italy, the Apulian territory has developed its agriculture around the olive tree. The olive thrives in the hot, sunny Mediterranean climate and has remarkable longevity. Many of Apulia's olive trees have stood for centuries, and some are over a thousand years old. Among the oldest olive trees in the region is an extraordinary tree known as "Il Barone", which still grows in the Taranto countryside at Masseria Fellicchie, in the municipality of Manduria, a short distance from Avetrana and the sea. Believed to be thousands of years old, the tree is meticulously cared for by the owner. However, recent years have been filled with anxiety due to the Xylella epidemic, a bacterial disease that can kill a tree in a few years. There is a constant fear that the esteemed "Il Barone" will succumb to this devastating disease. The olive trees of Salento bear witness to centuries of history, to the people and events that have shaped these lands for generations. They form a priceless heritage, not only of agricultural and environmental worth, but also of profound cultural significance that deserves to be preserved and protected.