

## Barumini and Cagliari

### Itinerary:

*Cagliari – Barumini (3 hours)*

- Archaeological area “Su Nuraxi” Barumini

*Cagliari city sightseeing (1 hour)*

- Panoramic sight from Monte Urpinu Park
- Molentargius-Saline Park and birdwatching (flamingos)
- Our Lady of Bonaria Basilica and Sanctuary

**Duration: 4 hours**

**Activity level: moderate**

### Description

Cagliari – Barumini 60 km (by bus, minibus or private car).

Barumini is situated at the foot of the Gesturi Giara (plateau) in the River Mannu valley right in the Marmilla area (70 km north of Cagliari). It is world famous for the presence of the monumental complex of "Su Nuraxi", which has become one of UNESCO's protected World Heritage Monuments.

Barumini has very ancient origins clearly demonstrated by the presence of the "Su Nuraxi" Nuragic complex, situated instead at the entrance to the village, represents one of the major expressions of Sardinian Megalithic civilisation. The excavations which were carried out by the famous archaeologist, Giovanni Lilliu from 1951 onwards, have brought to light an enormous monument dating back to the II millennium BC. Barumini was also inhabited during the Roman period as can be seen from the numerous traces of defensive walls.

Back to Cagliari for the city sightseeing tour.

Once on the top of **Monte Urpinu Park** from viale Europa observation platform (100 meters above the sea), you enjoy **unequaled panoramic view**: Castello district with its fortified walls, Cagliari ponds, Golfo degli Angeli and the surrounding hinterland, as far as Sette Fratelli mountains.

Our tour continues to the **Poetto beach**: it is truly vast and closed off at one end by the **Sella del Diavolo (Devil's Saddle Headland)**. A legend has it that the particular shape of this limestone headland comes from an epic fight between angels and demons that took place in the skies over the **Gulf of Cagliari**. During the fight, Lucifer was unsaddled by his horse and lost his saddle, which fell on the land, giving it its particular shape.

It is the longest beach in Sardinia and the main coastal resort for the cagliaritari. It stretches for around 9 km. The sea can be blissfully crystal-clear when the much awaited north-westerly mistral wind is blowing.

Close to Poetto is **Molentargius Saline Nature Park** that includes the ancient salt mines (saline), whose use is certified by documents dating back to the Roman period, and the Molentargius pond

itself, with its protected wildlife. Home to **flamingos** and other species of residential and migratory birds. With their pink plumage, long legs and necks, and strongly hooked bills, flamingos cannot be mistaken for any other type of bird.

At the end you discover **the basilica, the sanctuary and the convent of Our Lady of Bonaria** that are built on the hill south-east of the city centre. The initial church, which maintains its original Gothic architecture, was built after 1323 and it was then donated to the Order of Our Lady of Mercy, who then built a convent. In 1370, during a terrible storm in the gulf of Cagliari, a ship wrecked and part of its load, a large case containing a very fine **statue of Our Lady**, was found on the shore in front of the church. Both the statue and the case are on public display. The building of the adjacent basilica started in the 18th century and it was then resumed, but not finished until 1926. The complex is surrounded by a small but pleasant park, with nice views over the port.