

Italy: Pompeii, Capri & the Amalfi Coast

Air Package Itinerary

Steep terraced hillsides line the blue-green gulf of Salerno, and a heady sweetness fills the air. Who knew that any walk could rival the tour of Pompeii? Yet here you are, perched above a sea of Sfusato Amalfitano lemons—a rare local variety with a sweet floral scent. Jaw-dropping scenery surrounds you as you trace ancient mule paths through terraced hillsides, beneath limestone peaks—the island of Capri and crystalline waters serve as the backdrop. Pause trailside at a local farm, where our friends welcome you for lunch. Under the pergola on their terrace, enjoy homemade grilled sausages, vine-ripened tomatoes and greens, local pecorino or mozzarella cheese, and a glass of homemade *limoncello*—the perfect inspiration for completing this iconic trail. Your walking tour takes you on to Sorrento, Capri, and the rest of this beguilingly beautiful coast.



Highlights

- Stroll the stunning gardens immortalized by Wagner in his opera *Parsifal* at the Villa Rufolo.
- Explore the ruins of Pompeii on foot, learning about daily life in this ancient city before Mount Vesuvius buried it under a blanket of volcanic ash.
- Enjoy striking panoramic views and a tasty picnic lunch during a hike along the “Path of the Gods.”
- Stop by the Museo della Carta and discover the ancient art of papermaking.
- Design and craft your own ceramic tile, under the supervision of an expert, local artisan in Minori.



On all Guided Adventures you can count on ...



Expert local guides to introduce you to the best of your destination.



Gracious accommodations that are a clean, comfortable home away from home.



Off-the-beaten-path places you'd never find on your own.



Experts to handle all the details.



A maximum of 18 fun-loving fellow travelers to share the journey.



Flight + Tour Combos include plane tickets, airport car service, and pre- and post-tour accommodations.



Delicious, authentic multi-course meals—virtually all are included.

Activity Level

This tour is one of our Guided Walking Adventures, rated moderate with challenging sections, with an average of 4 to 6 miles of walking per day. This tour features a combination of paved roads and easy terrain mixed with moderate hills, uneven footpaths on downhill slopes, several steps, and hiking trails with gravel, rocks, and roots. There are daily ascents and descents, with an average elevation gain of 500 feet and a maximum gain of 900 feet (and loss of 1,200 feet). On rainy days, the footpaths can be muddy and steps can be slippery. Both morning and afternoon walking options are available most days. On one

afternoon, walking is optional and on your own, with route directions provided by the guides and lots of suggestions for self-guided discovery.

FLIGHT DAY

Depart from the United States or Canada

Your vacation is about to begin! Spend your first night aloft and arrive ready for an unforgettable trip.

ARRIVAL DAY

Arrive in Naples, Italy

Start off your first day in Naples right by having a Country Walkers representative greet you at the airport. A complimentary car service will whisk you to your centrally located hotel. From here, you are perfectly positioned to explore this charming city at your leisure.

DAY 1

Join your *Italy: Pompeii, Capri & the Amalfi Coast* tour

Pompeii walk; 2 miles, easy. Ravello; 1 mile easy

After enjoying an included breakfast your guides meet you at 9:00 a.m. in the lobby of your Naples hotel. They'll be wearing Country Walkers shirts. Please ensure that your luggage is in the lobby and you're dressed for walking. Walking shoes or sneakers with sturdy tread are required.

After an orientation and safety briefing led by your guides, you'll board a private motorcoach and travel to Pompeii. Upon arrival, meet a local expert for a guided tour of the site. At dawn on August 25, 79 AD, the violent eruption of Mount Vesuvius caused the total destruction of Pompeii. In just a few moments, all the residents of the city perished, doing whatever they could to survive. Tremendous amounts of ash and cinder covered and preserved the scene precisely as it was at that instant. That's why, today, we know how Romans lived 2,000 years ago. Your guide will reveal, for example, that posters were used for advertising elections and supporting party candidates, and that the word "candidate" comes from candid, the name of a special tunic worn by those running for office to prove they had no criminal record. Lunch is

on your own in Pompeii.

Early in the afternoon, shuttle to your hotel in Ravello and settle in. Later in the afternoon, there is still time to roam the terraces of Ravello with your guides, beginning in the peaceful, pedestrian-only center. Admire the white-faced Duomo in Piazza Vescovado and the Arabic-Norman towers of Villa Rufolo, where German composer Richard Wagner was inspired to create music for the scene in Klingsor's magic garden in his opera, *Parsifal*.

Tonight, enjoy a welcome cocktail on the panoramic terrace of your hotel before moving to the dining room for dinner.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 2

Ravello countryside and Amalfi

Ravello circuit; 5 miles, easy to moderate, 1,000-ft. elevation gain and loss. Amalfi; 1 mile, easy

After breakfast on the terrace, join your guides for a hike departing directly from the hotel on foot. Leave Ravello through the medieval gates to the north of the town where you are immediately immersed in a rural landscape. Climb to an area dedicated to the cultivation of chestnuts. Reach the locality of Passo O'Lupo (literally, Pass of the Wolf), and enjoy a simple picnic lunch to refuel you for the descent towards Fontana Caruso, the setting for the English playwright, E. M. Forster's work entitled "History of a Panic." Descend on foot to Ravello, where you have some free time to relax by the hotel's scenic swimming pool, or shop before reuniting late afternoon with your guides and travel companions. Perhaps you'll opt to sit down at a sidewalk café and try a *delizia al limone*—a confection made from Limoncello-soaked sponge cake and lemon custard—or a slice of *pastiera*, a cake made with ricotta cheese and ground wheat that's been soaked for several days in running water.

Travel to seaside Amalfi where you'll stop at the Museo della Carta, a unique museum housed in an ancient paper mill, to learn how paper was made from rags. During the 15th century, Amalfi's paper was so prized that many foreign authors demanded to be published in Naples just so they could use the coveted material. This artisanal tradition continues today, and exquisite handmade paper is available in the museum's gift shop. Enjoy leisure time to visit the beautiful Duomo and stroll along the city's charming side streets—which should be refreshingly free from the daytime crowds.

Regroup for a memorable dinner of local specialties at a favorite seaside restaurant.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 3

Minori, Ceramic workshop. Independent exploration of Ravello

Ravello to Minori; 3.5 miles, easy to moderate, 1,200-ft. elevation loss. Optional independent walk Minori to Ravello; 1 mile, moderate, 1,200-ft. elevation gain

Depart Ravello on foot, passing by remarkable monuments and churches. And then, the dramatic green shades of the Dragon Valley come into view with the sea in the distance. Ravello is famous for its churches, and you'll pass many on today's hike. The 11th-century San Giovanni del Toro church is one fine example. The route is initially paved following the Valley of Reghinna Minor, downhill. Your route then meanders on a well-beaten pathway through a rural landscape of woodlands, passing former paper mills and a few scattered houses. You may occasionally pass pack horses and mules, a transportation method used for ages on the Amalfi coast to carry heavy loads up and down the mountains. You'll arrive in Minori before lunch with time to enjoy the beach and perhaps take a dip in the sea. Feel free to explore the Roman villa (no charge) en route. Founded by the Etruscans in the 7th century BCE, Minori was a favorite Roman summer residence. In Minori, experience the local art of ceramics in an included hands-on class where you craft your own tile under the supervision of a local artisan and savor a light lunch in the studio.

Early this afternoon, shuttle or walk back to Ravello (maybe popping into the Sal de Riso pastry shop for a decadent pastry to fuel you on your walk!). The 1,000-step climb through the peaceful hamlet of Torello is worth it for the views. Back in Ravello, continue your exploration of the city on foot perhaps with a visit to the Villa Cimbrone gardens, where walking paths lead through meticulously maintained greenery and past elegant statues to the famous Terrace of Infinity. Take a guided tour of Villa Rufolo, whose beautiful cascading gardens inspired composer Richard Wagner to write the second act of the opera *Parsifal*. Check the concert schedule in advance and don't miss the extraordinary opportunity to take part in the Ravello Festival. Symphonic, chamber, or organ concerts are held in spectacular sites throughout the season, typically in the evening. Purchase your ticket online at ravellofestival.com, vivaticket.it, or at the ticket office on the main square (boxoffice@ravellofestival.com). Take a break for gelato at Il Baffone, easy to spot on via Roma alleyway just a few minutes' walk from the main piazza. Tonight, keep your eyes open for a restaurant for dinner on your own.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 4

Agerola and the “Path of the Gods”

Agerola to Nocelle; 4 miles, moderate, 600-ft. elevation gain

Today, shuttle to Agerola, Italy’s dairy capital, where you’ll gradually descend on foot along a scenic stretch between Biscotto Caves and Nocelle known as the “Path of the Gods” for its heavenly views. The path is well-marked and offers views of Capri and the islets of Li Galli, or Sirenuse, where the mythical Sirens attracted seafarers with their melodious songs. Near Colle Serra, where you cross the pass, stop to enjoy an included picnic lunch prepared by a local farmer and your guides. Expect a simple and authentic meal of fresh vegetables picked from a local garden, sausages, and fresh mozzarella enjoyed in a setting that affords amazing views of the sea and cliffs.

You then continue down to Nocelle, where the “Path of the Gods” ends, and walk a relaxing paved road to meet your driver and transportation. With your guides, drive to Sant’Agnello di Sorrento. Settle in at your deluxe historical hotel, a former Jesuit monastery and the oldest hotel on the peninsula. Stroll the manicured gardens or the terrace overlooking the bay, enjoy the swimming pool, or maybe take advantage of the private beach for a dip in the blue waters.

Tonight, reconvene for dinner at your hotel’s fine restaurant.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 5

Ferry to Capri

Capri walk; 4 miles, easy to moderate. Optional walk to Augustus Garden; 2 miles, easy to moderate

This morning, board a hydrofoil to ferry across the Sorrento Peninsula to the celebrated island of Capri. Arriving at the famous *piazzetta*, the hub of the island, you’ll set out along an easy walking path leading to Villa Jovis. As you stroll, inhale the enchanting aroma of jasmine and take in views of manicured gardens full of flowers. Built by Emperor Tiberius in the first century AD, Villa Jovis was a strategic point where Tiberius could dominate and control the opposite coast. Enjoy incredible views from here including the Jump of Tiberius—a sheer cliff soaring more than 1,100 feet—the infamous site from which Tiberius had

his enemies thrown into the sea.

Continue walking through a thick Mediterranean park where strawberry trees, myrtle, clematis, honeysuckle, laurel, wild asparagus, and cyclamen thrive. After passing by Villa Lysis, built by an eccentric French count in 1905, you can choose to explore Capri's inviting shops and cafés or continue to Arco Naturale and Grotta di Maternania. These two rock formations are located in a natural cove used to honor Cybele, the Magna Mater, or Great Mother, of the gods. Find the cove down a long flight of stairs leading through a thick forest. Be sure to take time to stop for lunch on your own in one of the island's cozy restaurants or to picnic in the shade of a garden overlooking the azure sea.

Your small group will gather after lunch and walk to the eastern rim of Capri. Here, you'll see the amazing, and famous, Faraglioni cliffs, three rocky colossi protruding from the sea. Then, venture to the Augustus Gardens for gorgeous views of the cliffs and the curled Via Krupp. The trail ends at Capri's shopping district. From here, loop back to the *piazzetta*, where you began your walk.

There is time to discover the fascinating area around the *piazzetta* before returning via hydrofoil (or ferry) to the mainland and Sorrento. En route, take in the panoramic vistas of the Amalfi Coast from the sea. Walk back or shuttle to your hotel and save some time to enjoy the hotel amenities, including a large manicured garden with a swimming pool and private beach.

Dinner is on your own tonight. Perhaps you'll try *Gnocchi alla Sorrentina*, made with a tomato sauce and *fiordilatte* (local mozzarella).

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 6

Independent exploration of Sorrento and Sorrento Peninsula

Sant'Agata, Torca, and Malacoccola; 2.5-4 miles, moderate, 700-900 ft. elevation gain

Today, you'll enjoy a leisurely breakfast and time for an independent exploration of Sorrento. Choose to relax poolside with a book this morning, or visit Sorrento on foot or by shuttle. Among the town's many attractions are the Museo Correale, called the "most beautiful provincial museum in Italy," the museum is housed in the summer residence of the Correale family, and its exhibits span 24 rooms on four floors. Explore Villa Fiorentino, a lovely, restored residence with a gorgeous garden. Enjoy an independent lunch

at one of the many cafes and restaurants in town. Afterward, taste the flavor of the day at Gelateria Da David (named for the owner, Davide).

Reunite as a group after lunch, and drive to Sant'Agata dei Due Golfi, where you'll follow the red-and-white markings of the Alta via dei Monti Lattari trail. This path winds upwards into a beautiful chestnut forest. As the woods open up, masses of multicolored, aromatic flowers come into view. Right before the promontory of Malacoccola, the view of the entire Gulf of Salerno opens before you. Your next stop is an organic family farm (which you reach on foot, or via your dedicated minibus). You'll visit their impressive vegetable garden and step into the rooms where olives, tomatoes, eggplants, hot peppers, and much more are made into delicious preserves and liquors. Relax with an *aperitivo* while the sun sets, and/or roll up your sleeves during a hands-on cooking lesson to assist with the meal preparation. Afterward, feast on gourmet specialties during a festive farewell dinner overlooking the cliffs of Sorrento.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 7

Independent exploration of Sorrento

This morning, enjoy breakfast and spend another day at Grand Hotel Cocumella. Take a break, relax, and maybe visit downtown Sorrento for some last-minute shopping and exploring.

Lunch and dinner are on your own with plenty of options nearby. We provide detailed city information to help you plan your day.

Included Meals: Breakfast

DEPARTURE DAY

Departure

After an included breakfast this morning complimentary transportation will be provided to Naples Capodichino Airport based on your departure time.

Included Meals: Breakfast



What's Included

Air Package

Tour Only

Exceptional boutique accommodations	✓	✓
13 on-tour meals: 6 breakfasts, 3 lunches, 4 dinners	✓	✓
Local guides with you throughout tour	✓	✓
Local wine and/or beer with dinner	✓	✓
Entrance fees and special events as noted in the itinerary	✓	✓
Telescopic walking sticks provided on tour	✓	✓
Roundtrip airfare	✓	
One extra night in Naples and one extra night in Sorrento	✓	
Airport car service for arrival and departure	✓	
Pre- and post-tour breakfasts	✓	
Business-class upgrades available	✓	