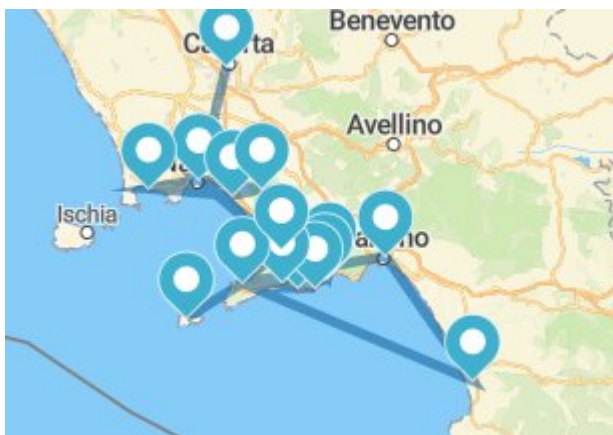


A movie-worthy tour taking in Naples, the ruins of Pompeii and Herculaneum, the imposing Vesuvius and the glamorous Amalfi Coast

The "Naples and the Amalfi Coast" tour is one of the most popular and stunning road trips in Europe. A journey through a region that will captivate the traveller from the very first kilometre, thanks to its fascinating history, its delicious cuisine, its stunning Mediterranean coastline and its countless leisure options. In the shadow of the imposing Vesuvius, this fascinating itinerary sets off from the bustling and authentic city of Naples and runs along the Bay of Naples to the magnificent archaeological sites of Pompeii and Herculaneum. Almost two millennia later, the tragic eruption that froze time for entire Roman cities and their inhabitants back in AD 79 is still alive in the local psyche. Take an incredible journey through history and reach the very crater of Vesuvius! The itinerary ends with a tour of the divine Amalfi Coast, declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO, and the Gulf of Sorrento. An exclusive summertime resort since Roman times and frequented by artists and celebrities from around the world, you'll be enthralled by the unusual beauty of vertical landscapes and charming picture-postcard villages painted in pastel colours and perched on jaw-dropping cliffs. Nestled between the sea and the mountains, this delightful tour covers one of the most magnificent and glamorous stretches of the Mediterranean coastline. The stunning Amalfi Coast, with chic locations such as Amalfi, Positano and Ravello, has become the perfect retreat for lovers of the sea and the 'dolce vita'. The landscapes that lead to the Greek ruins of Paestum are world-famous and the local cuisine is spectacular, turning this tour into the dream of bon vivants. And for those who wish to continue exploring, we recommend a hydrofoil trip (in Italian, "aliscafi") to the incredible and exclusive island of Capri. The perfect location to switch off from the hustle-and-bustle of everyday life and revel in unforgettable moments.



Departures:

from January 2021 till December 2021

Destinations:

Naples, Caserta, Pompeii, Ercolano Naples, Monte Vesubio, Atrani Salerno, Ravello, Amalfi, Praiano, Conca dei Marini Salerno, Positano, Sorrento, Salerno, Paestum, Capri and Castellammare di Stabia Naples.

Categories:

Archaeological, Cultural, Family and Over 55s.

Day 1: City of origin - Naples

Flight departure from the city of origin to Naples and rental car pick-up. And here your adventure on Italian soil begins! We'll spend today exploring this passionate city, the third largest in Italy and one of the oldest, most artistic and most surprising in the country. An ancient city that seduces the traveller with its street culture, its passion for life and its beautiful expansive bay with views to the imposing Mount Vesuvius. And this sea was the very gateway for the various peoples and empires that dominated this beautiful region from ancient times on. Discover its magnificent historic quarter (declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site), its famous archaeological treasures, its elegant castles and palaces, its baroque churches and its outstanding museums... What's more, its authentic streets and piazzas give the city a truly unique atmosphere. Founded by the Greeks in the fifth century BC, it was over time conquered by Romans, Normans, Bavarians, Spanish viceroys, Bourbons... The result is a genuine way of experiencing the seductive yet chaotic lifestyle, an eclectic fusion of architecture and monuments, unique traditions and culinary delights that will take you on a journey stimulating all five senses. You'll step foot into one of the country's gastronomic temples, where you can savour some of the very best pizzas, fish dishes, pastas and coffees in the whole of Italy. (Note: There are tours of underground Naples. Under the city streets is a fascinating network of catacombs, burial chambers, Greek grottoes and magnificent ruins. Admission not included. Check opening hours). Overnight stay in Naples.

Day 2: Naples - Royal Palace of Caserta - Naples

We'll continue exploring Naples and visiting such emblematic places as the Museo Archeologico Nazionale, a true-life history lesson where you'll see valuable historical remains, many of them unearthed on the sites of Pompeii and Herculaneum. Stroll through the monument-rich neighbourhood of

Santa Lucia and the bustling Piazza del Plebiscito, Piazza de Galleria Umberto I and Via Chiaia; and admire the magnificent church of San Francesco di Paola, the Palazzo Reale, the Castel Nuovo, the Cathedral, the Carthusian monastery of San Martino, and the Palazzo and Museo di Capodimonte... The magnificent Royal Palace of Caserta, declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO and considered one of the most important monuments of Italian artistic heritage, is just a half-hour drive from the city. Designed in the 18th century by Carlo III de Borbone, the palace boasts impressive gardens and valuable works of art. And if besides enjoying the beautiful panorama of the Gulf of Naples you also fancy a hydrofoil excursion (in Italian, "aliscaffi"), we recommend a trip to the idyllic island of Capri, one of the best-loved destinations for the international jet set. (Note: To reach the island of Capri from Naples, you can head to the port of Molo Beverello, located opposite the Castel Nuovo. More information on Day 6, as another (shorter) option is to visit Capri from the port of Sorrento. Whether you set off from Naples or Sorrento, remember that you must board without your car, as there are strict restrictions on the use of vehicles on the island. Both ports have pay-per-space parking facilities in the immediate vicinity. The schedules and frequency of crossings depend on the season. Please check in advance). Overnight stay in Naples.

Day 3: Naples - Herculaneum - Pompeii - the Vesuvius - Naples

Today, we recommend a fascinating "stroll through history". We'll start the day in the ancient city of Pompeii, one of the most visited archaeological sites in the world and which was buried after the violent eruption of Vesuvius in AD 79. Located about 30-40 minutes by car from Naples, the visit to Pompeii will give you an insight into the structure and customs of a city from the classic period. (Note: Leave Naples on the A3, take the exit for Pompeii and follow the signs to Pompeii Scavi. The car parks are well signposted. We recommend around 3 hours for the visit). Once there, your sight will be drawn to the imposing Vesuvius. It's still baffling today to imagine how a dense mantle of ash and "lapilli" (fragments of lava) buried the flourishing city and its thousands of inhabitants for seventeen centuries. Time seems to have come to a standstill in this ancient Roman city, forming a perfectly preserved outdoor museum. Without a doubt, one of the most striking images on the entire route will be at the Granai del Foro (the forum granary), where you'll see body casts that were made in the late 19th century by pouring plaster into the hollows left by disintegrated bodies. A place that provokes recollection and reflection on life. (Note: You can pay for an audio guide or join a guided tour). En route back to Naples, we recommend stopping off at the ruins of the seaside town of Herculaneum, which suffered a similar fate to Pompeii after the eruption of Vesuvius. Perfectly preserved, it boasts some amazing archaeological remains. (Note: This site is smaller than Pompeii, so we recommend 90 minutes for a decent visit). After having lunch at a typical local restaurant and tasting the famous Vesuvian wines cultivated in fertile volcanic earth, we'll head off to explore the majestic Vesuvius itself. Vesuvius National Park, declared a Biosphere Reserve, is open to visits. Here you can climb up to the 1,281-metre volcano, the only active one on continental Europe. Possibility of signing up to a guided tour. From the car park at the summit, an 860-metre-long path leads to the crater. In spring and summer, you can do the full itinerary. In winter, though, seeing as the days are shorter and the Vesuvius National Park closes at 3 pm, it's difficult to include this last visit in the itinerary. On top of that, weather conditions make it difficult to access Vesuvius. Overnight stay in Naples.

Day 4: Naples - Amalfi Coast (Atrani - Ravello / Villa Rufolo - Amalfi - Positano - Sorrento)

Departure towards the famous Amalfi Coast and the Gulf of Sorrento, one of the most beautiful places in the world and located on the shores of the Mediterranean, unsurprisingly declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. Ahead is a photo-friendly panoramic road that runs parallel to the coastline and that at every curve reveals stunning vertical landscapes of cliffs plummeting into the sea, mysterious grottoes, underground galleries, breath-taking bays and picturesque villages with genuine architecture that seem trapped in time. Discover one of the most glamorous coastlines in the world at your own pace thanks to your hire car! Frequenting by celebrities from around the world, its fame dates back centuries, when it was chosen by the Roman Caesars as a place of rest. Get ready to discover outstanding landscapes and stunning pastel-coloured villages perched on seemingly impossible vertical drops, framed between a deep blue sky and a turquoise sea, and sheltered among vineyards, lemon groves, olive trees and bougainvillea. You'll have three days ahead to fully enjoy the scenery and the cuisine. Soak up the authentic Italian dolce vita! Off we go! Our first stop will be in Atrani, where we'll be able to taste the famous "scialatielli", a pasta dish typical of this village. The itinerary then takes us to the elegant town of Ravello, with a visit to Villa Rufolo, whose beauty inspired Richard Wagner in the past. Its fabulously lush gardens command magnificent views over the sea. (Note: Admission not included. The town currently plays host to interesting concerts). If you have time, head to Villa Cimbrone, about 600 metres from the Piazza del Duomo. Converted into a luxury hotel, its "Terrazzo dell'Infinito" also offers incredible views over the Gulf of Salerno. Onward journey to Amalfi, one of the oldest and most powerful maritime republics of Italy. Small and manageable, you can stroll around the town in half an hour. Don't miss the stunning Duomo di Sant'Andrea! Our next stop will be Positano. Known as the Pearl of the Amalfi Coast and perched on an almost impossible slope, Positano has for centuries fascinated tourists, artists and writers with its magical atmosphere, its narrow alleys and its charming shops where you can find everything from handmade ceramics to haute couture fashion... Stunning and exclusive in equal measures, its steep streets, flanked by pastel-coloured villas, descend to caress a beautiful pebble beach. We'll then head back on the road to Sorrento. (Note: If you have time, between Amalfi and Sorrento you can visit Praiano, an old fishing village converted into a pleasant holiday resort, and Conca dei Marini, where you can visit the Emerald Grotto. Visit not included. Please check schedules). Take advantage of the stop-off to savour the delicious "sfogliatella", a delicious puff pastry filled with ricotta. We'll round off this amazing tour along the incredible Amalfi Coast in Sorrento. Overnight stay in Sorrento.

Day 5: Sorrento - Salerno - Paestum - Sorrento

More time to enjoy the aromatic Sorrento, exploring its historic quarter, its beautiful bay, its stunning harbour with views of Mount Vesuvius, its peaceful coves and mysterious grottoes, its charming terraces overlooking the sea, its famous ice cream parlours, and its much-admired Marquetry Museum, to name just a few attractions... From Sorrento, we'll head off to the Gulf of Salerno, following the jagged coastline and observing villages perilously clinging onto vertical cliffs. The beauty of its landscapes and curves, sometimes blind to the eye, call for somewhat leisurely driving. And then we'll arrive in Salerno! Known in the Middle Ages as the capital of medicine, this charming town captivates the traveller with its historic quarter and the Duomo di San Matteo. The typical "torta ricotta e pere" will tantalise even the most demanding palates! Back on the road. After hugging the coastline and driving through lemon groves and palm trees, we'll arrive at another of the jewels of this tour: the ancient temples of Paestum. Declared a World Heritage by UNESCO, here we'll find some of the best preserved Greek temples in the world. Founded at the end of the 7th century BC by Greeks from the city of Sybaris, and originally known as Poseidonia, it was one of the main cities of the Mediterranean. The fascinating Museo di Paestum invites the traveller to delve into the history of the area, from prehistory to ancient times. What's more, the 5 kilometres of walls surrounding the archaeological site make Paestum one of the best preserved walled complexes in the world. (Note: Admission not included. Please check visits schedules). Overnight stay in Sorrento.

Day 6: Sorrento - Capri (optional) - Sorrento - Castellammare di Stabia - Naples

We'll have a few hours now to enjoy Sorrento and its surroundings. Sorrento was in the past the favourite destination of the Patricians and the "garden of the king" for the Bourbons, while for centuries it has been a must-visit for tourists coming to the Amalfi Coast. From the heights, Sorrento looks proudly out at the Gulf of Naples, Vesuvius and the island of Capri. A must-do is a leisurely stroll around the area of Piazza Tasso, in the heart of town, where its narrow streets are always full of life. Corso Italia turns into a pedestrian street and runs through the historic quarter of the town. Another fabulous excursion is to the cloisters of the Chiesa di San Francesco (Via San Francesco). In the summer months, the cloisters regularly host interesting concerts. If on the second day of the trip you weren't able to visit the exclusive island of Capri, today you can do so. (Note: The journey takes about 25 minutes). Capri retains the charm that made it famous among important dignitaries of the Roman Empire. A natural paradise dotted with exquisite villas, Roman ruins and crystal-clear waters... Don't miss the Marina Grande, the island of Capri and the famous Blue Grotto! (Note: Tour not included. Access to the Grotto is with a guided tour and weather permitting). From Anacapri you can take a chairlift to the top of Mount Solaro, from where you can enjoy spectacular views of the whole island. (Note: We recommend returning to Sorrento in the early afternoon). On your way to Naples, and if you have time, you can stop at Castellammare di Stabia, a modern destination that was a summer resort for the wealthiest Romans. Here you can visit the Arianna and San Marcos villas. Back in Naples, we'll bid farewell to this fascinating trip by savouring the local cuisine at a renowned restaurant and enjoying a typical limoncello. Overnight stay in Naples.

Day 7: Naples - City of origin

Arrival at the airport with enough time to drop off your rental car and flight back to the city of origin. Arrival. End of the trip and our services.

Services included in the trip

- Return flight.
- Stay in selected hotel in Naples.
- Selected meal plan in Naples.
- Stay in selected hotel in Sorrento.
- Selected meal plan in Sorrento.
- Rent-a-car.
- Insolvency protection.

Services NOT included

- Accommodation taxes in Naples direct payment in facility.
- Accommodation taxes in Sorrentine Peninsula direct payment in facility.
- Possible toll charges.
- Admission to the archaeological sites.

Important remarks

- - Driving in Naples and/or the Amalfi Coast: 1. We do not recommend driving around the city of Naples, more than anything due to the traffic and having to find car parks, which are often away from tourist areas. 2. On the Amalfi Coast there are two parking options: private parking in a car park, which is expensive, or paid car parks which use automatic machines or the "Easy Park" app in the areas demarcated by the blue line. 3. We advise arriving early to avoid traffic although this is unavoidable, due to the narrow and winding roads. Drive with caution and avoid rush hour..
- - - Triple rooms in Europe are generally rooms with twin beds or a double, in which a folding bed is installed to accommodate the third person. Due to the inconvenience this causes, we advise against using this option as far the possible..
- - - The proposed excursions and tours for each day are purely suggestions, as you can tailor the trip to suit your times, tastes and needs..
- - - A credit card is considered a guarantee, so sometimes you will need one for check-in at hotels..
- - - Hotels usually have cots available. Otherwise, babies will have to share a bed with an adult..
- - - To pick up your rental car, you'll need a credit (not debit) card in the name of the person who made the booking, who must also be the named driver of the vehicle..
- - - Suggested round-trip ferry rides are optional and not included in the final price. If you intend to take the car on a ferry, please let the rental company know at the time of pick-up to receive authorisation. Depending on the conditions agreed to in the rental contract and the company you choose, you might be charged a fee payable at the destination..