



Guided walking tour (GCAM)

Campania Felix the Italian Paradise

*Naples, Pompeii, Vesuvius, Amalfi & Ravello,
Capri, 'Sentiero degli Dei' & Positano*



TRIP NOTES

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INTRODUCTION

The region of Campania marks the real starting point of southern Italy, a sought-after place since Roman times when it was labelled the Campania Felix or 'happy land'. There is the great city of Naples, and amazing Roman sites, but also beautiful countryside, wonderful islands, like the world-famous Capri, and of course, stretches of spectacular coast. The best of the coastal scenery is on the southern side of the Sorrento Peninsula, the Amalfi Coast. This is definitely one of the most beautiful coastlines in Europe, with a long tradition as one of the premier tourist destinations in Italy.

But it's not just the scenery, the history of the region is fascinating too. First you visit the intriguing city of Pompeii, the world-famous ruins, which gives you a real life impression of what a Roman city looked like. You also visit Mount Vesuvius, the volcano which caused the destruction of Pompeii.

Then you travel on to the heart of the Amalfi Coast, the charming city of Amalfi. It was once one of the four great sea republics of Italy and a powerful state. Nowadays it is a perfect place to enjoy history and nature and at the same time relax beside the shore. We visit some of the historical villages, like Ravello and Atrani and, for those who like walking, there is the wonderful short walk into the intriguing Valley of the Mills, the location of Europe's first paper mills, almost 1000 years old. The tour ends with Italy's most beautiful footpath, the 'Sentiero degli Dei', or 'Path of the Gods', which winds through some unique scenery down to the postcard village of Positano.

You can opt to travel by boat to the beautiful island of Capri, visiting not only its highlights, but also some wonderful hidden corners where its old charm is still intact.

On this short tour, we take you beyond the crowds to experience the hidden treasures and authentic culture of this Italian paradise. You will discover the hidden charm of Rome, and the hidden tracks of Mount Vesuvius. You will see that it's with good reason that the Amalfi Coast has become Italy's most famous coastline, but also that it only takes a little effort to get 'off the beaten track'. Just a few hundred metres from the crowds, you will find yourself surrounded by nature.

You'll discover the real Italian paradise!



Please note: this is a moderately easy tour which is suitable for those who have some experience of walking and a good general physical condition. Most of the walks are on well maintained paths. Average walking times: from approx.. 4 to 5 hours each day.



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DAY-TO-DAY PROGRAMME

Day 0 – Arrival in Naples

Arrival in Naples in case you want some extra time here. Several hotels can be booked, according to your wish (either 'downtown' centrally located, or near the harbour or train station, ranging from 3 to 5-star. Of course the hotel used on Sunday night is recommended).

N.B. If you arrive one day earlier you have the possibility to pay a visit to the world famous archaeological museum, where all the artefacts from Pompeii and Herculaneum are exposed, and/or the equally wonderful Capodimonte museum.

Day 1 – Arrival in Naples

Today you arrive in the bustling city of Naples. Depending on your inbound travel arrangements, you travel by taxi either from the Airport or train Station to Hotel San Francesco al Monte, in a commanding position with spectacular views over Naples, its Bay, Mt. Vesuvius and the islands. You will be welcomed by your Tour Leader here, and have time to fresh up and settle in your room, your spectacular home for tonight. Those who want can join in for a great short walk which brings you along ancient stairways (or the alternative Funicular) to one of the most amazing spots of Naples, the Castle Sant'Elmo and the adjacent Monastery of San Martino. In alternative you can be guided around our hotel (which has many centuries of history and is worth a guided visit!) or take the time to relax, freshen up and unwind and perhaps dive into the amazing rooftop pool. Towards the end of the afternoon we meet all together on the rooftop terrace for an *aperitivo*. We will then settle for dinner on the spectacular terrace with a view embracing the whole Bay of Naples, the City, Mt. Vesuvius, Sorrento & Capri !

Accommodation: Naples - Hotel San Francesco al Monte **. Meals included: 1 'aperitivo' + 1 dinner**

Total walking distance: 3-4 km. Approx. walking time: 1-1,5 h.

Day 2 – Naples, Vesuvius & Pompeii

This morning we travel by train to Naples, under the shadow of Mount Vesuvius, the volcano that completely destroyed the bustling city of Pompeii with the fatal eruption in 79 AD, creating the world's most fascinating ruins. With your private taxi you drive up Vesuvius as far as you can, and then start an amazing roundwalk, completely different to the standard Vesuvius visit (and normally closed to the public), which makes you feel like you're in a completely different world! The walk takes you past the impressive volcanic phenomena to be seen around the crater: lava flows, pumice fields and grottos and the amazing 'Valley of the Giant', culminating in a walk to the top. The literal highlight is a spectacular detour, led by a specialist volcano guide, which will take you right around the crater rim and up to the highest point at 1281 metres (4000 feet), where you get the very best view of the Bay of Naples, one of the panoramic wonders of the world. You then descend to have a relaxed lunch on the slopes of Mt. Vesuvius, before travelling on to Pompeii. The perfectly preserved remains give you an amazing insight into the life of a Roman city, especially when walking along its chariot-marked backstreets. You will be captivated by the exceptional frescoes to be found throughout the city or by the opulence of the villas, with their atriums and charming peristyles, owned by the rich and influential of the day. Visit the amphitheatre, as well as the Villa of Mysteries with its masterpiece frescoes depicting the secret Dionysus rites, the Roman Forum and basilica, temples, public baths, and the tiny Odeon created for music recitals. At the end of the afternoon we return to Naples. Those who want can go for a short stroll through the colourful streets, soaking up its atmosphere, and have a drink in the centre of town. Tonight we go for a short stroll to the best pizzeria in town (and the pizzas in Naples are already considered to be the best in the world!).

Accommodation: Naples - Meals included: 1 breakfast, 1 dinner

Total walking distance: 12 km. Approx. walking time: 4-5 h.



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Day 3 – By boat to Capri: discovery walk of the island

Today we travel by boat across the Bay of Naples, to the rightly famous island of Capri, which the Roman emperors used to like to visit as tourists many centuries ago, and has never since lost its fame. We'll arrive in Marina Grande, the main harbour, and walk up through lemon groves and gardens to the central square of the little town of Capri - the famous 'Piazzetta'. Then you make a beautiful roundwalk around the eastern part of the island, which shows you most of the 'highlights' of the island. These are both cultural and natural wonders, always accompanied by beautiful views in an unrivalled Mediterranean landscape. The walk brings you past the ruins of the Imperial Villa Iovis, which belonged to the Roman emperor Tiberius, the Arco Naturale, and the Faraglioni - three sea stacks off the south coast, maybe the most famous and painted rocks in the world. You have a great picnic lunch in an amazing spot, after which you'll have time for a coffee or an ice cream. Walking back to the centre you have the opportunity to visit the Certosa and the Gardens of Augustus, where you can also opt to walk down to Marina Piccola, along the spectacular Via Krupp. This walk can be extended or shortened in a number of ways. Late in the afternoon you travel by local bus (short, very scenic ride) to your hotel. A nice meal in a relaxed atmosphere is the perfect end for the day.

Accommodation: Capri - Meals included: 1 breakfast, 1 dinner

Total walking distance: 10 km. Approx. walking time: 4-5 h.

Day 4 – Anacapri, the other side of Capri

Today we will explore the lesser known part of the island, Anacapri. First we travel by private taxi along a very scenic road to the village, from where, either by a very scenic chairlift or with a beautiful, but demanding walk, you reach the top of the highest mountain of the island, Monte Solaro. From here the views over the whole Bay of Naples are spectacular. Then you go for a wonderful walk around the savage southern coast, with its impressive sheer cliffs, ending in the westernmost point of the island, where you have lunch and could perhaps have a swim underneath the lighthouse. Then, along a recently restored footpath, which is especially interesting due to its beautiful flowers, you walk to the famous 'Blue Grotto', or 'Grotta Azzurra'. You come across a series of fortresses dating back to the Napoleonic wars, some of which are still in good condition and very scenic. After an (optional) visit to the Grotta Azzurra, you can either walk or take a local bus back to Anacapri. You go for a short stroll through the characteristic narrow streets of Anacapri, and may behave a drink in the piazza, before returning to the hotel. You are free to explore the large choice of restaurants, ranging from simple pizzerias to exclusive restaurants, for your own dinner arrangements tonight.

Accommodation: Capri - Meals included: 1 breakfast

Total walking distance: 9 km. Approx. walking time: 4-5 h.

Day 5 – From Capri to the Amalfi Coast

In the morning you will first head down to the harbour of Capri, where our private boat is waiting to take us to Amalfi. But not before discovering all the beauty along the southern Coast of Capri and the Sorrento peninsula. The boat journey brings us first along the stunning east coast of Capri, where we'll visit several grotto's and pass in the middle of the famous 'Faraglioni'. Then we make the crossing to the westernmost point of the Sorrento peninsula, Punta Campanella, the 'Land's End', now a marine protected area. Here we'll discover some of the most unspoilt stretches of coastline. We go ashore in Marina del Cantone and go for a short walk into a stunning nature reserve, where we are welcomed by the staff of the Italian 'National Trust'. We'll have our lunch in an idyllic setting. Our private boat then picks us up again and brings us to the amazing 'Siren's Islands' (owned by the Russian ballet dancers Massine and Nureyev) and a number of secluded beaches. After a refreshing swim of the boat in between these beautiful island we finally head for Amalfi, where we'll arrive towards the end of the afternoon. After settling in our great hotel, there is still some time to discover Amalfi's medieval town centre with its wonderful Duomo and the paradise cloister. We'll conclude the day with a great dinner in one of the most spectacular spots of the whole Amalfi coast: Amalfi's medieval watch tower, overlooking the whole coastline, and a very special place for fine dining.

Accommodation: Amalfi - Meals included: 1 breakfast, 1 lunch, 1 dinner

Total walking distance: 6 km. Approx. walking time: 2,5 h.



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Day 6 – The historical heart of the Amalfi Coast: Amalfi, Atrani & Ravello

From Amalfi you first walk to the beautiful little town of Atrani, along a very scenic path, with great viewpoints over the town centre. From Atrani you proceed through the narrow little white streets and then up the 'Valley of the Dragon', until you reach Ravello, another highlight of the Amalfi Coast, where you have plenty of time to look around. Ravello not only has a very interesting history, and many medieval monuments, but also offers beautiful views over the Amalfi Coast, and boasts great villas with stupendous gardens. You pay an extensive visit to the dramatically located Villa Cimbrone, with its amazing gardens and one of the coast's most famous viewpoints. Then you walk back down to the little town of Atrani through the hamlet of Castiglione, passing vineyards and lemon groves. In Atrani, one of the best-preserved towns on the coast, you now take the time to look around the narrow little white streets of the town centre, and perhaps have a glass to drink in the square. From here it's now only 15 minutes back to Amalfi, passing along the coast. In the evening you are free to choose from a large choice of restaurants, ranging from simple pizzerias to exclusive restaurants.

Accommodation: Amalfi - Meals included: 1 breakfast

Total walking distance: 6 km. Approx. walking time: 4/4,5 h.

Day 7 – The 'Sentiero degli Dei' – down to Positano

In the morning you take the local bus for a very scenic drive to the village of Bomerano, high above the coast, where you can take a coffee and buy some sandwiches. Then you start walking along one of the most famous footpaths of the area, the 'Footpath of the Gods'. This path really lives up to its name, suspended between the sky and the Mediterranean. It winds through unique scenery, with unrivalled views over the coast and sea. For a few hours you will be walking along some of the most spectacular scenery on the whole Amalfi Coast, until you reach the charming little hamlet of Nocelle. Here you have a nice lunch in a good restaurant, with amazing views over Positano and the Amalfi Coast. Passing another spectacular valley you then arrive in the little village of Montepertuso. After Montepertuso it's only a short walk down to Positano itself, one of the most charming towns on the coast. You travel by boat back to Amalfi, admiring once again the impressive scenery, including the path you've already walked, but now from below. In Amalfi there is still some time for a swim or an 'aperitivo'. In the evening you then all join together for the final meal. You are picked up by private boat and brought to a nice restaurant located in a beautiful little bay nearby.

Accommodation: Amalfi - Meals included: 1 breakfast, 1 dinner

Total walking distance: 9 km. Approx. walking time: 4-5 h.

Day 8 – Departure from Amalfi

The tour ends today after breakfast in Amalfi. You can make your way to Salerno or Naples, either by boat or bus. A taxi transfer can be arranged on request.



TOUR DETAILS

ACCOMMODATION & MEALS

All nights are spent in beautiful, characteristic hotels, mostly historical buildings (generally 3/4-star; 4/5-star on some departure dates). All rooms have en-suite facilities.

All accommodations are on a **B&B** basis. Most evening meals are included: we have selected the best available restaurants. On twonights you are free to choose from the wide choice of restaurants in the area. Your guide can give you good tips.

Not all (picnic) lunches are included in the tour price, but these can be prepared for you by the accommodation holders, or materials for picnics can be purchased in the villages where you'll be staying. On some occasions you have the option to have your lunch in a restaurant along the way.

Nights 1 & 2: The first two nights are spent in Naples. Our accommodation is a 4-star hotel in an amazing palace, in the heart of the historical centre.

Nights 3 & 4: These two nights you stay on the romantic & fashionable island of Capri, with its characteristic houses built onto the steep slopes of the mountains. You stay in a beautiful 4-star hotel, centrally located. It is family-run and the friendly staff will make you feel at home.

Nights 5, 6 & 7: The last three nights are spent in Amalfi, the ancient capital of the Amalfi Coast. Your recently renovated 4-star hotel is located in a central position, right in the historical heart of the town just a few metres from the shore.

UPGRADE/CHANGES IN ACCOMMODATION

On some dates we run an upgraded version of this tour, staying in luxurious 4-star hotels. Look for the 'Premiere Inns' signs.

INCLUDED

- Private English-speaking tour leader for 8 days
- Accommodation: 3 nights Amalfi, 2 nights Napoli, 2 nights Capri in good ***/**** hotels
- Meals: 7 breakfasts, 5 dinners (in great restaurants!), 1 warm lunch
- All private & public transfers as indicated throughout the entire itinerary
- Entrance fees of all sites along the itinerary
- Special activities as outlined in the day-by-day itinerary
- Guest experts for special places
- 24/7 assistance
- Luggage transport
- All gratuities for baggage, porters & hotel service

NOT INCLUDED

- Departure taxes & Visas
- Travel Insurance
- Drink & meals not mentioned in the itinerary
- Optional additional tours or activities
- Tips
- Items of a personal nature



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LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

Moderately easy (2): Mostly easy walks, though some include walking uphill, sometimes on paths with rough surfaces. On some days there are stretches which are difficult for those suffering from vertigo (but NOT dangerous!). On these days alternative options are available. Extensions or shortcuts are possible on most days. Be aware that along the Amalfi Coast several walks include walking a big number of steps!

Fitness: High standard of fitness is not necessary but you should be able to walk for up to 5 hours a day in hot sun on dusty or stony tracks.

FOOTPATHS & WAYMARKING

Footpaths: Most paths are well maintained, but during the season some paths can get overgrown (*we are in continuous contact with local authorities to keep the paths clean – please help us by providing your feedback on the quality of the paths*). Both on Procida and Capri, many parts of the route that you follow are paved (pedestrian) alleyways.

Waymarking: Only a small part of the route is waymarked; elsewhere you have to follow the route descriptions provided together with the maps. With these you will always be able to find your route. In case you don't feel confident a local guide can be provided for some trails.

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE

Arrival: The tour starts in ROME, a city with an international airport, and connected to Naples and all major Italian cities by a frequent (high speed) train service. A taxi can be arranged either from Rome airport or train station.

Departure: The tour ends after breakfast in AMALFI. A frequent boat or bus service can bring you to either Sorrento or Salerno, where you travel on to your next destination (Naples and Rome can easily be reached by train). Several taxi services are available to bring you directly to your next destination.

TOUR VARIATIONS

It is possible to include some extra nights before or after your tour, in any of the accommodations 'en route'. For those who have never been to Naples an extra day here is strongly recommended.

At the beginning or end of the tour there is the opportunity to visit Naples. The tour can easily be extended with a few days here. Also in SALERNO (a nice city and a good base for visiting Paestum) or ROME several good accommodations are available. Details and prices on request.

BESPOKE ADVENTURES

This tour is just an example of the tours we can offer. Many of these tours can be turned into tailor-made '[Bespoke Adventures](#)' to accommodate private group travel.

We can organise both "off the shelf" itineraries, as well as create custom itineraries to meet your special needs. Book the dates you want, with the family or friends you wish to bring along!

Longer and shorter versions of this tour are also available. Prices on request.

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