



Independent walking tour (SOR2)

Around the *Finis Terrae* of the Sorrento Peninsula

*Sorrento, Massalubrense & Punta Campanella
(with an optional extension to Capri)*



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INTRODUCTION

The Sorrento Peninsula has been a tourist destination for centuries, certainly since the days of the Grand Tour and perhaps even as far back as Roman times. In Victorian times Sorrento became a corner of paradise for many North Europeans, drawn by the bright Mediterranean sunshine and the dramatic fusion of mountains and sea, allowing them to forget the cold winter back home. Today Sorrento still exudes the same charm and elegance of those times, in its wonderful location looking across the Bay of Naples, with Mount Vesuvius in the background. Its historical centre is definitely worth a prolonged visit and the immediate surroundings offer many opportunities for great walks.

On this beautiful Sorrento tour you will be rewarded with fantastic panoramas, which change with every twist of the path as you walk around the tip of the peninsula. You'll enjoy the most spectacular scenery of the western part of the Amalfi Coast and have great views of the mythical 'Islands of the Sirens', the nearby island of Capri, and across the Bay of Naples to Ischia, Procida, Naples itself and, of course, Mount Vesuvius, dominating the bay. Behind you are the Lattari Mountains plunging into the sea, and on many occasions you have views over both the Bay of Naples and the Gulf of Salerno, the 'Due Golfi'.

This walking tour is a wonderful discovery of the western part of the Sorrento Peninsula, which includes some amazing stretches of unspoilt coastline, like the Baia di Ieranto, a nature reserve managed by FAI, the 'Italian National Trust' and Punta Campanella, the Land's End of the area. You'll discover some stunning small inlets, like the Marina di Crapolla, where St. Peter supposedly landed on his way to Rome, Marina del Recommone, a 'corner of Paradise' and Marina del Cantone, now a more fashionable seaside resort.

It shows you the best parts of the Sorrento side of the peninsula, completely different from the Amalfi Coast, but equally beautiful and takes in some of the most beautiful walks to be made in the area, some of which are listed among the 'world's best walks'. You will walk along well-maintained footpaths and paved alleyways, through attractive countryside with beautiful terraced olive & lemon groves, vineyards and cultural treasures like rural chapels, ancient farmhouses, old watermills and wonderful villas and villages, where you can sit down and relax with a drink.

And of course there is Sorrento itself, which has a beautiful historic centre and of course its famous terraces with stunning views over the Bay of Naples. Also in its immediately surroundings, and even 'downtown' (into its 'underground' Valley of the Mills), some wonderful walks can be made.

Last, but perhaps not least, this tour gives you the opportunity to do some more 'touristy' excursions, like the world-famous excavations at Pompeii, or go for a visit to the world famous island of Capri.



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 good paths, parts of them waymarked. Average walking times: from approx 4 - 5 hours each day (several longer & shorter options available).



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DAY-TO-DAY PROGRAMME

Day 1 – Arrival in Naples

Arrival in Naples (airport) or Salerno (train station). You travel to your beautiful agriturismo on the ridge between the Bay of Naples and the Gulf of Salerno, in the middle of some orchards, where you will have a lovely meal made from local organic produce tonight.

Accommodation: Sant'Agata sui Due Golfi - Agriturismo ***

Day 2 – Roundwalk along the Syrenuse path

Today you'll make a roundwalk over the ridge dividing the Bay of Naples from the Gulf of Salerno, discovering the very different landscapes and a number of charming little hamlets. Through pinewood, olive grove and orchards you walk towards the charming little hamlet of Colli di Fontanelle. An optional detour brings you to the Colle Sant'Angelo, a great viewpoint overlooking the whole plain of Sorrento & Bay of Naples. Then you walk back along the southern side of the ridge, now fully immersed in the Mediterranean colours and the lovely smells of the Mediterranean herbs. The path runs parallel to the coast with spectacular views over the 'Islands of the Sirens'. Then the path descends quite steeply and continues through olive groves towards the little hamlets of Monticelli and Torca. From here you then walk back up to your agriturismo to have another night dining on local delicacies.

Accommodation: Sant'Agata sui Due Golfi - Agriturismo ***

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

Day 3 – Down to Marina del Cantone

Today's walk brings you to the charming little seashore village of Marina del Cantone, on the southern side of the Sorrento Peninsula. First you walk back down to Torca, and from there you descend along well-maintained paths to the very picturesque inlet of Marina di Crapolla (where, according to legend, Saint Peter landed on his way to Rome). Here you are free to have a swim, before returning to the long-distance path, 'Alta Via dei Monti Lattari', and now follow it all the way along the coast. You walk in a beautiful landscape, dominated by dry-stone walls and olive groves, always overlooking the sea. In the afternoon you reach the beautiful little bay of Recomme, where you can perhaps opt to go for a swim already. The last stretch to Marina del Cantone is a wonderful walk: past the ruins of a medieval watchtower, and over the rocky headland, you reach the coastal hamlet of Marina del Cantone. Here you settle in at a good family-run 3-star hotel. Your luggage will already be there waiting.

Accommodation: Marina del Cantone - Hotel */******

Total walking distance: 6 km. Approx. walking time: 3,5 h. walking

Day 4 – To Ieranto Bay

Today you make a roundwalk from Marina del Cantone, discovering the southern side of the Sorrento Peninsula. You follow the *Alta Via dei Monti Lattari* from Marina del Cantone to the beautiful little village of Nerano, dominated by the sheer cliffs of the headland. Here a drink in the local museum/bar in the small square is a must, before heading for the walk down to the nature reserve of the beautiful Baia di Ieranto, now managed by the Italian 'National Trust' (FAI). First you head for the medieval watchtower on the Punta Penna headland overlooking the whole Amalfi Coast and Gulf of Salerno, with views reaching as far as the Cilento National Park. Then you retrace your steps down into the 'core area' of the site, where you'll find a small visitor's centre as well as a very interesting 'industrial heritage'(the remains of an old mining industry - now turned into a museum). Strolling through the olive



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groves and Mediterranean scrubland here is a real pleasure. Perhaps you can opt for a walk down to the beach before returning along the same route to Marina del Cantone.

Accommodation: Marina del Cantone - Hotel */******

Total walking distance: 12 km. Approx. walking time: 5,5 h. walking

Day 5 – To the Finis terrae of the Peninsula

Today you walk from Marina del Cantone to Punta Campanella, the *Finis Terrae*, or 'Land's End' of the Sorrento Peninsula, where you are face to face with the island of Capri. You can opt to follow the *Alta Via dei Monti Lattari* all the way from Marina del Cantone to the very end of the path, or take a local bus to Termini, the last village before the headland. From here you then follow the medieval steps up to the small church of San Costanzo, where you have 360° views, over both the Bay of Naples and the Amalfi Coast. A spectacular path, running along the impressive cliffs of the headland, then brings you to the tip of the peninsula, where according to legend Ulysses erected a temple in honour of Athena. In some parts the path can be a bit demanding, though never too difficult. The return, between Punta Campanella and Termini, is on a very comfortable path, the old Roman Via Minerva, with great views of Capri and a number of medieval watchtowers, which once protected the coast. From Termini you can then take the local bus to Sorrento, or opt for an extension of the walk. A beautiful route through the olive and lemon groves can bring you to the village of Massalubrense. From here you can take a bus or continue your route, now more or less level, contouring the hills above Sorrento. You then reach a wonderful viewpoint, from which many painters over the centuries have depicted Sorrento and made its fame. From here you descend down to Sorrento, where you settle in at your centrally located hotel.

Accommodation: Sorrento, Hotel */******

Total walking distance: 7,5 km. Approx. walking time: 4,5 h. walking

Day 6 – Exploring Capri, Sorrento, Pompeii or Mount Vesuvius

From Sorrento you can undertake many interesting excursions. Of course there are the 'classics', the day-trip to the island of Capri (where you can make several great roundwalks - if you want to do more than one we suggest an extension on Capri) and the visit to Pompeii (with perhaps a walk onto Mt. Vesuvius), or the lesser known Herculaneum. Of course we suggest to do both!

In alternative - or in case you will want to book some extra days, there are also several nice options for an easy roundwalk, and perhaps a swim. A beautiful short walk brings you to Capo di Sorrento, and from there down to the great Roman villa on the headland. This was also the Queen's favourite bathing place, a beautiful little bay. Depending on whether you want to extend the walk you can reach the small fishing village of Marina di Puolo, before returning to Sorrento. There are also several nice options for an easy roundwalk 'downtown', you could dedicate some time to do some 'shopping' and of course you should admire the Bay of Naples from one of the great panoramic terraces, a favourite pastime in Victorian times!

Accommodation: Sorrento - Hotel */******

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



Pompeii from Sorrento

This morning you can travel by local train to Pompeii, considered to be the world's most fascinating ruins. A visit to Pompeii gives you an amazing insight into the life of a Roman city, especially when walking along its chariot-marked back streets. 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. In case you want to make a great roundwalk as well, we recommend climbing Mount Vesuvius, the volcano that with the fatal eruption of 79 AD completely destroyed the bustling city of Pompeii. You can make an amazing roundwalk here, completely different from the standard visit to Vesuvius (and normally closed to the public), which makes you feel like you're in a completely different world! What is less known to many is that also the 'new' town of Pompeii is definitely worth the detour, if only for its amazing sanctuary. Go for a stroll here and then have an 'aperitivo' to look back on a great day.

Accommodation: Sorrento - Hotel */*****

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

Day 7 - Departure

After breakfast you return by train, bus or boat to Naples (airport).

TOUR DETAILS

ACCOMMODATION & MEALS

All nights are spent in beautiful, characteristic family-run hotels (generally 3/4-star; 5-star on request). All rooms have en-suite facilities.

Most of the accommodations are on **B&B** basis. Only on the first two nights at the agriturismo in Sant'Agata are on **Half Board** basis. Where no evening meals are included you are free to choose from the wide choice of restaurants in the area for your dinner arrangements. Your accommodation holder can give you good tips. On some occasions you can also choose to eat at the premises of the hotel.

No 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 near the small village of Sant'Agata sui Due Golfi, on the high plain dominating both the Bay of Naples, as well as the Gulf of Salerno and the Amalfi Coast, in a beautiful agriturismo.

Nights 3 & 4: The next nights are spent in the romantic & fashionable little coastal village of Marina del Cantone, with its large beach and many good restaurants. You stay either in a comfortable 3-star hotel, or (on request) in a 4-star hotel. All hotels are at walking distance from the shore.

Nights 5 & 6: The last two nights are spent in beautiful Sorrento, with its charming historical centre and great parks and terraces overlooking the Bay of Naples. You stay in either a comfortable 3-star hotel or a beautiful 4-star hotel. All hotels are located in the town centre and are at walking distance from the train station and harbour.



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INCLUDED

- 2 nights Agriturismo in Sant'Agata sui due Golfi*** – HB
- 2 nights Hotel in Marina del Cantone*** – BB
- 2 nights Hotel in Sorrento***/**** – BB
- Extensive route notes, with description of the route & tourist information
- Maps at 1 : 25.000 scale (or better)
- GPS Tracks
- 24/7 assistance
- Luggage transport
- Private transfers as specified

NOT INCLUDED

- Visas & Departure taxes
- Travel Insurance
- Tourist tax
- Drinks and meals not mentioned in the itinerary
- Optional additional tours or activities
- Tips
- Items of personal nature

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

Moderately easy (2-3): Mostly easy walks, though some include walking uphill, sometimes on paths with rough surfaces. On most days extensions or shortcuts are possible.

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

FOOTPATHS & WAYMARKING

Most paths are relatively 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*).

Waymarking: Only a small part of the route is waymarked (partly by us); elsewhere you need 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 SANT'AGATA SUI DUE GOLFI, linked to Sorrento by a frequent bus service. A taxi pick-up service can be arranged either from Naples (airport or train station) or from Sorrento, Pompeii or Castellammare di Stabia, which can all be easily reached from Naples by the local Circumvesuviana train.

Departure: The tour ends in SORRENTO after breakfast on day 7. A frequent train service can bring you to Naples, while a frequent bus service can bring you directly to Naples Airport. Another frequent bus service can bring you to Amalfi/Salerno. Several taxi services are available to bring you directly to your next destination.

TOUR VARIATIONS

You can also include extra nights in any of the accommodations en route. *Extra walking or sightseeing options will be provided!!! Especially from Sorrento there are many options for extra daywalks & day activities.*

At the beginning or the end of the tour there is also an opportunity to visit Naples and/or Pompeii. The tour can easily be extended with a few days in Naples or on the island of Capri (see below). Several good accommodations are available. Details and prices on request.

SUGGESTED EXTENSIONS

Several hotels in Capri/Anacapri can be booked as an extension to your tour. There are many direct boats and hydrofoils from Sorrento to Capri. The program would then be as follows:

Day 7

Early in the morning you travel by boat to the island of Capri. After arriving at Marina Grande, the main harbour, you walk (or take the *funicolare*) up to the small town of Capri itself. After exploring the town centre, with its famous *piazzetta* where the jet set used to gather, you begin your beautiful roundwalk around the eastern part of the island, which shows you most of its 'highlights', both cultural and natural.

You walk the characteristic, Moresque-influenced streets past one of the best spots in Capri – the exceptional, yet relatively unknown Villa Lysis – and continue through an unrivalled Mediterranean landscape towards the ruins of the Imperial Villa Iovis, which once belonged to the Roman Emperor Tiberius. From here views over the Bay of Naples are spectacular! Then you walk back down and proceed towards the Arco Naturale, before heading down to the Grotta di Matermania, reputed to be one of the places where the god Mithras was worshipped. There are several great spots for a picnic lunch, but also a number of nice little restaurants to enjoy lunch. The final part of your walk takes you along the pristine southern part of the island to the *Faraglioni* – three sea stacks, perhaps the most famous and most painted rocks in the world, just off the south coast. Walking back to town you have the opportunity to visit the Convent of San Giacomo and the Gardens of Augustus, from which you can opt to walk down to Marina Piccola along the spectacular Via Krupp. This walk can be extended or shortened in many ways, depending on how much time you want to dedicate to relaxing and shopping! In the evening you are free to explore the culinary delights in one of the many fine restaurants in town.

Accommodation: Capri, Hotel */******

Distance: 10 km. Approx. 4-5 h. walking



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Day 8

Today you will discover the lesser known part of the island, Anacapri, which is more rural and mountainous than the east. You start your walk from the top of the highest mountain, Monte Solaro, which you reach by chairlift (unless you want to walk – there are some beautiful, but quite demanding walks up to the top). From the peak of Monte Solaro, where you can enjoy marvellous views over the island, the Bay of Naples, the Bay of Salerno and the Amalfi Coast, a spectacular walk around the savage southern coast of the island brings you past impressive sheer cliffs to a lighthouse. Here, at the westernmost point of the island, you could perhaps enjoy the clear seawater by going for a swim. You then continue the walk along the coast, passing a series of fortresses, only recently restored, that the English helped to build a couple of centuries ago to defend the island from the fleet of Napoleon. Finally, you make your way down a path which is particularly interesting for its flowers, until you arrive at the famous *Grotta Azzurra* – the Blue Grotto. Don't be fooled by the innocuous appearance from outside the cave! Inside you will experience something truly unique, as the incredible blueness of the waters takes your breath away. Having taken in the visual delights, you take the bus back to your hotel (or walk through the back alleys to Anacapri) and find another romantic restaurant where you can relax and enjoy another delicious meal to top off your day.

Accommodation: Capri, Hotel */****

Distance: 9 km. Approx. 4 h. walking

Day 9

After breakfast you take a taxi down to Marina Grande for your boat to Naples and then get the shuttle bus to the airport or train station. Extra nights can be booked in a hotel in the city centre or elsewhere (upon request).



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