



Independent walking tour (SAL1)

Salerno City Trek

*Exploring beautiful Salerno, gateway to the Amalfi Coast,
Paestum & the Cilento National Park*



TRIP NOTES

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INTRODUCTION

Salerno, the second city of Campania, is still an underrated gem. Thanks to its unique setting, at the entrance of the Amalfi Coast, with the backdrop of the green Picentini Mountains and the magnificent Greek temples of Paestum and the Cilento National Park at just a few km. to the South, it is an ideal place to spend a few days.

Salerno once was a powerful city, as demonstrated by the fact that it boasted Europe's first medical university. But many other traces from its glorious past are also visible today. The historic centre of Salerno dates mostly back to the early Middle Ages. It has a clear, northern, feel about it, perhaps thanks to the Longobards and Normans who were among the founding fathers of the city. Its centre is a unique mix of splendid noble palaces, churches with stunning fresco's and popular and lively working-class districts – all perfectly blended. Take your time to stroll through the city centre -from the medieval quarters to the sea side boulevard. Salerno boasts one of Italy's most beautiful churches, the Duomo, where the relics of St. Matthew are conserved in a stunningly beautiful crypt. In several places also its Greek and Roman history come above the ground, and its archaeological museum is one of the most interesting in the area. But above all climb the hills just behind the city centre, to take in some of the best views in the area. From the amazing 8th century Arechi castle, views over the Amalfi Coast, the city and the whole bay are stunning.

Another day walk brings you to some of the most picturesque, yet virtually unknown hamlets of the Amalfi Coast, just above the well-known Vietri sul Mare and to the great abbey of Cava dei Tirreni, once one of the most powerful abbeys in southern Italy. You'll walk across a variety of landscapes, from the city centre straight into real mountain scenery, through chestnut forests, mountain meadows and bare rocky wilderness, terraced lemon groves and broad sandy beaches.

Salerno is a nice relaxed city – perfect for a short break. This short tour show you in a few days what the city and its immediate surroundings have to offer. A great add-on to your hiking tour along the Amalfi Coast or on the islands of the Bay of Salerno. And then you will want to come back for more!

The premises where you'll be staying during this tour are all very special, full of historical interest. The standard of the tour is 3-stars – with stays in excellent handpicked hotels or B&B's.

This tour is an excellent extension (or pre-tour), for one of our walking tours along the Amalfi Coast or in the Cilento National park. In case you opt for a longer stay in Salerno: from here it's possible to make daytrips to Paestum, Pompeii, Amalfi, Positano and Capri.

In case you want to discover the 'unknown' Amalfi Coast: we recommend a combination of Salerno with some hikes in the nearby villages of the Amalfi Coast: Vietri, Cava dei Tirreni, Cetara and Tramonti.



Please note: this is a moderately easy tour, suitable for those with some walking experience and a good general physical condition. Most of the walks are on good paths and clear trails, but only partly waymarked. Average walking times: from approx. 5 to 6 hours each day.



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DAY-TO-DAY PROGRAMME

Day 1 – Arrival in Salerno

Arrival in Salerno. From the train station you take a taxi or local bus to the city centre (private transfer on request) and settle in at your centrally located hotel or B&B. Perhaps you have some time for a first stroll already, before going for dinner in one of the great pizzeria's or restaurants of the city.

Accommodation: Salerno - Hotel ***

Day 2 – Salerno & its castle

Directly from your accommodation right in the heart of the city, you start a great and rewarding round walk through the city centre, touching of course – but not only!- the most interesting 'highlights', such as the Duomo, the theatre, the narrow alleys of the medieval town centre, with its many noble palaces and churches with IX and X century fresco's. The literal highlight of today is the amazing Arechi castle, named after the Lombard prince who established his capital at Salerno in the 8th century. Views over the Amalfi Coast and the whole bay are stunning from here. Back down in town you'll discover the beautiful gardens of Minerva and the roots of the 'Scuola Medica Salernitana', Europe's most important medical 'university' in medieval times. The walk also brings you through quiet parks and the ideal end of the day is a stroll along the sea shore boulevard with a drink at the harbour.

Accommodation: Salerno - Hotel ***

Day 3 – The Ceramics of the Amalfi Coast

Today's walk takes you from the charming little town of Vietri sul Mare, the first village of the Amalfi Coast to the little hamlet of Corpo di Cava situated on the mountain slopes high above the valley of Cava dei Tirreni. After strolling through the old town centre of Vietri sul Mare, browsing its many ceramics shops, you will walk down its little alleys to its nice marina, before heading up towards splendid Raito with its wonderful views of the coast. After a coffee break at Raito you then continue uphill to yet another beautiful little village – Albori. From here the path takes you inland towards the valley of Cava dei Tirreni. Past the church of San Vincenzo you will walk through shaded chestnut woods, and pass at one of the hidden marvels of this area, the remains of a Roman aqueduct still standing 20 m. tall! In the afternoon you arrive at the millennium-old Benedictine Abbey of Corpo di Cava, one of the most impressive of southern Italy. After an extensive visit you walk down to the heart of Cava dei Tirreni (optional local bus), where you can stroll under the portico's of this charming city known as the 'Bologna of the South'. Those who feel like it can opt for a nice dinner here, before travelling back by local bus or train (10 min.) to Salerno.

Accommodation: Salerno - Hotel ***

Day 4 - Departure

End of the tour.

EXTRA DAYS

You can travel by local train to Paestum, considered to be the world's best preserved Greek temples. As 'Archeology Magazine' wrote: ancient Paestum is "perhaps one of the most unjustly overlooked sites of the ancient Mediterranean world." The magnificence of the Greek temples as well as the remains of the Roman city, in combination with the amazing archaeological Museum, a lunch at a buffalo mozzarella farm and a few hours on the beach this makes a great day trip.



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Also Pompeii can be easily reached by local train. A visit to Pompeii gives you an amazing insight into the life of a Roman city. You can as well visit the smaller excavations of Herculaneum with some very well preserved, magnificent villas. By local boat you can make a great day trip to the Amalfi Coast (Amalfi, Minori/Maiori, Positano). Also the beautiful island of Capri can be reached by boat.

TOUR DETAILS

ACCOMMODATION & MEALS

Accommodation is on a bed and breakfast basis in very good (3-star) accommodations. All rooms have en-suite facilities. Dinners are not included, as there is a wide choice of restaurants in the area, ranging from 'fine dining' to simple, but delicious pizzeria's. Your accommodation holder can give you good tips. 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.

UPGRADE/CHANGES IN ACCOMMODATION

It is possible to book an upgrade in some of the places en route. Details and prices on request.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

Moderately easy (2): Mostly easy walks, though some include walking uphill (often a bus or 'funicolare' can be used as an alternative uphill). Extensions or shortcuts are also possible on many days.

Fitness: High standard of fitness is not necessary but you should be able to walk for up to 5 hours a day.

FOOTPATHS & WAYMARKING

The city walks leads mostly through urban areas, hence there is no waymarking in place, while in the mountain areas the waymarking is scarce. With the route descriptions provided together with the maps you will always be able to find your route. A local guide can be provided.

INCLUDED

- 3 nights Hotel in Salerno *** - BB
- Extensive route notes, with description of the route & tourist information
- Maps at 1 : 10 000 scale (or better)
- 24/7 assistance

NOT INCLUDED

- Departure taxes & visas
- Travel Insurance
- Tourist tax
- Drinks and meals not mentioned in the itinerary
- Optional additional tours or activities

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