campania







how to get here

by air: direct flights link all the major Italian and European cities with Naples Capodichino airport (www.gesac.it, tel. 848 888777). Long haul flights land at Rome Fiumicino (tel. 06 65951), from where you can continue to Naples by plane, train or bus by train: the Italian railway network links the whole of Italy with the station of Napoli Centrale (www.trenitalia.it, tel. 892021 www.italotreno.it, tel.060708)

how to use this guide

Q auricoltico in a

curiosities, in-depth treatments, useful information

coloured insets
the text of presentation is
accompanied by a series of
coloured insets:
recomendations of things to
do if you are staying just 1 or
3 days and hints on what to
buy, where to go with children
and what's on ("shopping",
"outings with children" and
"events")

themed insets every itinerary features certain themed insets which, in addition to the specific topic, highlight the most important things to see and do in that particular area.

The colours used refer to the respective guides in the series, where the places and topics featured in the insets are presented more fully.

abbreviations
the abbreviations Doc, Docg
and Dop indicate official EU
recognition of quality
products. The Doc
(Denominated origin
controlled) and Docg
(Denominated origin
controlled and guaranteed)
labels refer to wines, Dop
(Denominated origin
protected) to local
gastronomic specialities.

theme guides

art and archaeology

places of devotion

the sea

spas and fitness

specialities

regione campania general guide **campania**

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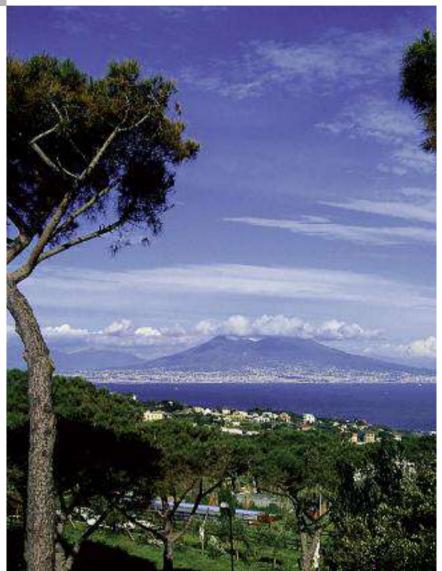
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Why visit Campania





Naples and the Vesuvius

famous travellers

This land is so happy, so delightful, so fortunate that it is obvious that it is nature's favourite. This revitilizing air, the perpetually clear skies, the so fertile land, the sunny hills, the dark forests, the mountains lost among the clouds, the abundance of vineyards and grapevines... and so many lakes, the copiousness of the running waters and springs, so much sea and so many ports! A land open at all sides to commerce and that, as if to encourage man, reaches its arms out into the sea.

Plinius the Elder, 1st century B.C.

The splendid natural beauty, a mild climate, with few rivals in this world, the archaeological remains. the historical artistic wealth, the famous culinary heritage, the great contemporary artistic events, music and theatre: in the heart of Europe and the Mediterranean, the Campania Region never ceases to enchant its visitors like the legendary siren. Partenope, from whence the myth arises. "Most fertile of lands", the ancients called it: "Campania Felix" in the diaries of the travellers on the Grand Tour. The distinctive character of this extraordinary destination is the inimitable variety of age old historical charm, superb natural scenery. dotted with monuments among the most visited and famous in the world: Vesuvius, with Pompeii and Herculaneum at its feet; the enchanted Gulf, closed in by the Sorrentine and Amalfi peninsulas, Capri and the Phlegrean tuff, with Ischia and Procida: the superb Royal Palace of Caserta...

Naples, capital of the south for more than 600 years, remains, quite naturally, the heart of this formidible area for whomsoever desires to travel with eyes and mind open in search of new stimulus. The other parts of this region offer visitors emotions just as amazing, with the added benefit of the tranquility of destinations less well known and therefore less crowded: Salerno, with its medieval core, its waterfront, its wise and ambitious urban planning, all in the context of a vast province. Where the Sele plains make way for the exhuberant natural oasis of Cilento: Benevento and Sannio, an unusual intertwining of pristine nature, antique civilisation and traditional cuisine that never ceases to re-invent itself: Avellino, in the mountainous Irpinia, green heart of the Campania, jealous custodian of tradition, popular feasts and authentic folklore; the Terra del Lavoro, with its grandiose bourbon Royal Palace and Park designed by the genius of Vanvitelli, with rare gems of the calibre of Casertavecchia and ancient Capua. There is more where you least expect it, tenebrous grottoes, age old castles, antique sanctuaries and religious sites of endless fascination like Montevergine and Pietrelcina...

Let us not forget the care of our bodies and the many alternative wellness centres, generously equiped with a caleidoscope of pleasures for all tastes: modern thermal spas in incomparable scenery, crystalline seas, equiped establishments, protected area, agritourisms, wine, lemons, cherry tomatoes, mozzarella, mouthwatering pastries, flavours always different and original, great chefs and typical trattorias...

In all seasons, outside of the usual holidays; for all budgets, from the most demanding jet set travellers, to the families looking for an honest price/quality ratio

Naples, City of a thousand faces





View of the Gulf of Naples

famous travellers

There is no one that has not dreamt of seeing Naples.

Paul Edme de Musset, 1885

In the shadow the Vesuvius tourism's roots run deep: on the imprints of great greek columns refined aristocrats and roman emperors built their sumptuous villas and oasis all along the shoreline of the Gulf

It is not a coincidence that at the begining of this third millennium the peculiar magic of this civilisation continues to generate new sources of amazement: the recovery of age old monuments and traditions - folklore, gastronomy, genuine cultivation – that were thought irreparably lost, events and shows worthy of the great international circuit, new fodder for artistic and scientific research.

The artistic treasure of Naples to visit are, in fact, to many to count: the historical centre, a patrimony under the tutelage of UNESCO, the palaces, churches, catacombs and underground passageways, the Archaeological Museum, the places of medieval and renaissance power amassed around the Castel Nuovo and Royal Palace, the unforgettable waterfront from Castel dell'Ovo to

The hilly area of Vomero offers masterfully restored buildings like the Capodimonte Royal Palace and the Certosa (monastery) of San Martino, museum collections amongst the most important in the world. A trip through the twentieth century city takes you, among the notable urban and architectural sights, to the rationalist Mostra d'Oltremare, with its park, sports complex and exhibition space. Science is also witness to the recovery of industrial archaeological complexes and the originality of a scientific tradition that renews itself. Unusual and surprising is the exploration of the new homes of contemporary art: monumental structures like the PAN. Palazzo delle Arti Napoli, the MADRE. Museo d'Arte Contemporanea Donnaregina (Donnaregina Contemporary Arts Museum), and the

unique artistry of the metro stations that evidence

the original horizons of farseeing cultural politics.

Naples, in the final sum, remains, deep in its roots, even with all the difficulties and contradictions inherent to all big metropolitan cities, an extraordinary place to live, admire, and enjoy with all the senses: for the depth of the art and civilisation that has idelibly marked its history; for the mild climate that accompanies day and night the shows, musical and theatrical events, exhibitions. fairs and religious gatherings; for the gourmand possibilites to search out the age old culinary tradition, the seafood and the unique typical products (buffalo mozzarella, pizza, Docg wine, varied and refined pastries) in all their local translations, or for finding fine hidden little shops

where craftsmen still ply their wares.



Campania > Artecard

All inclusive 3, 7 or 365 day ticket for immediate (no queing) entrance to the main museums and archaeological sites of the Region, and travel ono the UnicoCampania public transport system. www.campaniartecard.it

City Sightseeing

Trips of 50 minutes to 2 hours that permit you to hop on or off at will for the duration of the ticket or of the trip. tel. 081 5517279 www.napoli.city-sightseeing.it

Ente Provinciale per il Turismo di Napoli piazza dei Martiri 58 tel. 081 4107211 www.eptnapoli.info

Azienda Autonoma di Cura Soggiorno e Turismo di Napoli Palazzo Reale tel. 081 402394 www.inaples.it

Museo Archeologico Nazionale

piazza Museo 19 tel. 081 4422149

Museo di Palazzo Reale piazza Plebiscito

Museo Nazionale di Capodimonte via Miano 1

tel. 081 400547

Museo Nazionale di San Martino largo San Martino 8 tel. 081 5781769

tel. 081 7499111

MADRE

via Settembrini 79 tel. 081 19313016

Museo PAN via dei Mille 60 tel. 081 7958604

The mask of Pulcinella

The typical neapolitan mask seems to have been invented in 1656 by Andrea Calcese, known as Ciuccio,

a tailor from Acerra, a town in the Province of Naples. The character already existed in the Atella region and the name comes from the Italian word for chick, pulcino. Pulcinella is the epitome of "poor", of a person treated badly, and is known for always being hungry, therefore having a

voracious appetite. He seems innocent, inexpert, a bit "thick", but is in reality a man with a million resources: with great charm he manages to squeeze out of all kinds of trouble. The philosopher Benedetto Croce defines him as "the portrait, the character or the ideal of the neapolitan".

not to be missed Piazza del Plebiscito Castel Nuovo The historical centre Castel dell'Ovo National Archaeological Museum Capodimonte Museum Museum of San Martino

MADRE

naples in 1 day Royal palace and Piazza del Plebiscito Castel Nuovo National Archaeological Museum "Spaccanapoli" and the historical centre Castel dell'Ovo and the waterfront

The origins of the city are lost in time and charming legends. The most tenable hypothese puts the beginnings of the city in the 9th century BC. when the greeks colonised the Gulf on their way up to the high Thyrrenean mineral deposits. In 326 it was declared a Roman colony. After the fall of the Roman Empire. Naples became the capital of an important Duchy, that namaged to stave off the invading Longobards. In 1137 the Duchy fell into the hands of the Normans, who favoured cultural integration.

The Port of Naples became the most important in the world. After the death of Frederick II of Svevia. Carlo D'Angiò made his triumphal entrance to Naples in 1266. Power passed into the hands of Alfonso d'Aragona in 1442, after a long war that brought the city to its knees. In a short time, however, the situation changed: important civil engineering (the construction of sewage conducts and streets) and restoration works were undertaken (at Castel Nuovo the Triumph Arch was built). Other works (like the opening of via Toledo, the construction of the Spanish Quarters – formerly barracks – and the restoration of the Chiaia Riviera) were completed during the following two centuries during the Spanish rule (1503-1707), up to the arrival of the Bourbons (1734), who reigned the Kingdom of Naples until 1860 when Italy was finally united.

Our journey of discovery of the city begins in the historic core which preserves ancient greek-roman imprints, to continue with the places of power of the medieval-renaissance period concentrated around the Castel Nuovo and Royal Palace. We will then follow along the waterfront from the Castel dell'Ovo to Posillipo, to end up on the green hills of Capodimonte and Vomero.

Royal Palace

Pompeii and Herculaneum

Vesuvian Villas of the Miglio

Royal Palace of Portici

d'Oro (Golden mile)

art and archaeology Sant'Elmo Castle

Castel Nuovo Historical centre and **Underground Naples** Monastery and Museum of San Martino National Archaeological Museum

Capodimonte Museum MADRE

Duca di Martina Museum

Royal Palace and Piazza del Plehiscito Castel Nuovo Monastery and Museum of San Martino National Archaeological Museum "Spaccanapoli" and the historical centre

naples in 3 days

Capodimonte Museum Castel dell'Ovo and Borgo Marinari Waterfront and Mergellina Posillipo MADRE Museo d'Arte

Contemporanea Donna Regina



nature and parks

Cloister of Santa Chiara Cloister of San Gregorio Armeno Gardens of the Royal Palace Botanical gardens Capodimonte Park Virgilian Park

Villa Comunale Villa Floridiana Vesuvius National Park

for young people

Arenile di Bagnoli (summer) Borgo Marinari Piazza Bellini and historical Piazza dei Martiri and surrounding area Piazza Vanvitelli and surrounding area

shopping

Nativity scenes and shepherds of San Gregorio Armeno Coral and Cameoware Porcelain of Capodimonte

Antignano Market (Vomero)

Food Market of Pignasecca (Montesanto)

Fish Market of Porta Nolana (via Marina)

Lavic rock, copper, wrought iron and wicker objects

outings with children

Aquarium of the Anton Dohrn
Zoological Station
Castel dell'Ovo
Archaeological Museum
(educational tours
for children)
Vesuvius National Park





Cloister of the San Gregorio Armeno Church

specialities

Babà Coffee

Buffalo Mozzarella Dop Margherita Pizza Dop

Neapolitan Salami Sfogliatella shortcrust and crinkly pastry

Spaghetti with clams

Apricots and cherry tomatoes from the Vesuvius

Wines of Vesuvius

spas and fitness

Beauty centres of the major hotels

The historical centre: from Spaccanapoli to Piazza Mercato

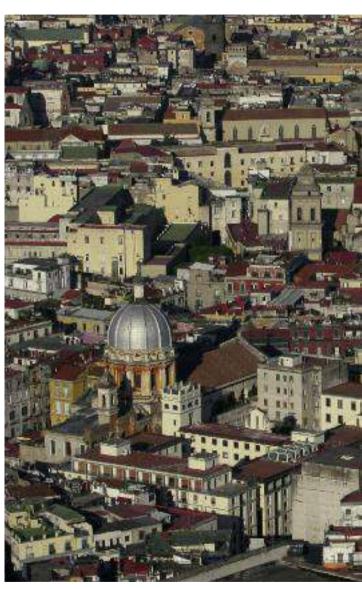
The "womb" of Naples is the greco-roman historical centre: a chessboard divided by three main roads, the decumans, intersected at right angles by roads called "cardinals".

It is here that the pulse of the City is best felt: the alleys, the artisan workshops, the innumerable artistic marvels that surprise you in the least expected places, the voices of the "napolitani". It is also the cultural centre of the City, with the University on via Mezzocannone, the literary cafès of Bellini Square, the bookshops of Port'Alba, and the Italian Institute for Historical Studies on via Benedetto Croce.

The **Piazza of the Gesù Nuovo** is the entrance gate to the old centre.

The **steeple of the Immacolata** (1747) and the **Church of the Gesù Nuovo**, which on its facade preserves the 15th century ashlar-work of the Sanseverino Palace (before it became a church it was the property of the Sanseverino family which used it as its palace), introduce baroque religiousness to the city. The inside of the church is an exultation of marble, stucco and frescoes, with works by Francesco Solimena, Luca Giordano and Massimo Stanzione.

Not far away is the austere church of **Santa Chiara**, built in 1310 by Roberto d'Angiò in a Provencal gothic style and transformed with baroque decorations in the mid 1700's. After being damaged by the bombings of 1943, it was restored back to its original, more sober, form.



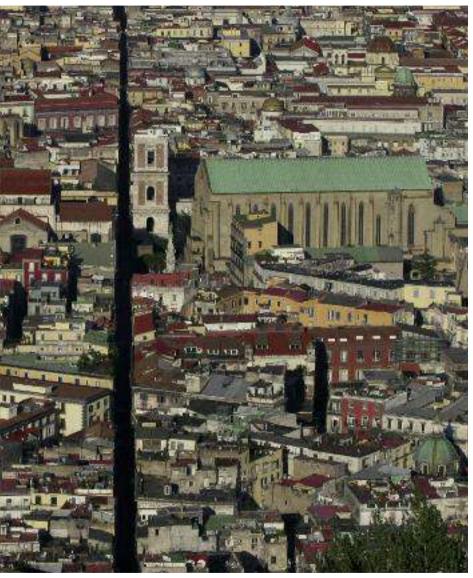


Sfogliatellas and other delicacies

The Sfogliatella, typical neapolitan pastry, was invented, as it seems, in the 18th century by Pintauro.

Filled with sweet aromatic ricotta cheese with candied fruit bits, it is called frolla when it is roled in short pastry, crinkly when it is wrapped in very fine layers and fried.

At Pintauro, on via Toledo, you can enjoy this classic sfogliatella pastry. The famous Scaturchio pastry shop, in piazza San Domenico, prepares a sweet and a salty version. Other delicacies are the famous babà; puffy, soft and impregnated with rum; and the "pastiera", once an Easter delicacy, now available all year round, made with short pastry, ricotta, cooked grain and





candied fruit bits.
Do not miss out on the struffoli at Christmas time, fried balls of soft dough soaked in honey and covered in coloured sugar sprinkles and candied fruit.
A must: neapolitan coffee — hot, sweet and very very strong.





Here you will find the sepulchral monuments of the royal Anjou family (14th century), work of sculptors of the Tuscan school. A stroll in the **cloister of the Poor Clares** is not to be missed. It was designed by Domenico Antonio Vaccaro. Here Naples suddenly becomes silent and perfumed by narcissus and wistaria; yellow, green and blue are the dominating colours of the tiles that dress the magnificent octagonal columns and the seats on which the neapolitan "riggiolari" Donato and Giuseppe Massa painted pastoral and mythological scenes.

In via Benedetto Croce the 14th centruy
Filomarino della Rocca Palace can be found,
home to the philosopher Benedetto Croce, who also
founded the Italian Institute for Historical Studies,
still a busy didactic centre with a rich library. Piazza
San Domenico is one of the Aragons'most notable
urban legacies, a peaceful co-existance of contrasting
architectural styles: the church (13th century) was
the official Aragonese dynastic church, of which the
funereal arches remain: the steeple of San Domenico
(17th century) and the lovely façades of the
Corigliano Palace (18th century), today seat of the
University Institute Orientale, and the Sansevero
Palace.

In piazzetta Nilo stands the hellenistic statue of Nilo, rediscovered in the middle ages, to which the Neapolitans have given the affectionate name of "Body of Naples". Here the little church of Sant'Angelo a Nilo stands. Constructed in 1385 and altered in the 18th century, it contains the beautiful Renaissance tomb of Cardinal Rinaldo Brancaccio, made in Pisa from 1426 to 1428 by Donatello, Michelozzo and Pagno di Lapo, and sent to Naples by sea, alongside other works from the 15th and 16th century. Strolling along via San Biagio dei Librai (also known as Spaccanapoli) you can browse in the little shops full of antiques, religious objects and jewelry. At number 114 we come across a masterpiece from the late Mannerism period of the 17th century – the **Chapel of the Monte di Pietà**, part of the monumental Carafa Palace and decorated with frescoes by Belisario Corenzio with the help of Luigi Rodriguez and Batistello Caracciolo.

Almost hidden in a tiny alley that intersects with vico San Domenico we find the small but extraordinary **Sansevero Chapel**. A visit to this spectacular baroque complex is a must.



The veiled Christ in the San Severo Chapel

Main Door of the church of the Gesù Nuovo

A triumph of a single artwork is to be found in the statue of the *Veiled Christ*, sculpted by Giuseppe Sanmartino: the effect, the virtuosity of the handling of the marble and the play of light make it a true masterpiece. It will be difficult to contain your curiosity for the many inventions and anatomical machines exhibited, which gave the Prince Sanseverino the fame (not deserved) of being a witch and a sorcerer.

Via San Gregorio Armeno, with its lively bustling scene, is characterised by the belltower of the church with the same name. In the two months before Christmas San Gregorio Armeno become the most vivacious area of the centre, and it fills up with stands that sell little figurines and decorations for nativity scenes. Apart from the traditional baby Jesus, Mother Mary and father Joseph figures the craftsmen compete with one another to make figurines depicting current political and gossip column personalities.

In the complex of the convent of San Gregorio Armeno, annexed to the church, and characterised by the sumptious Baroque nave and by the extraordinary caisson ceiling, a visit to the cloister with its gardens, orchards and citrus groves, is not to be missed.

At the end of this street we find ourselves in the heart of the greco-roman city, corresponding to the part of town that was the agora and forum, and where the layers can still be seen.

The centre of all of this was piazza San Gaetano, where the San Paolo Maggiore Church built between the 8th and 9th century, and the San Lorenzo Maggiore Church, which in the cloister hosts greco-roman excavations, are to be found. It is here that the great writer Giovanni Boccaccio met his darling Fiammetta on Holy Saturday in 1336.



of Santa Chiara



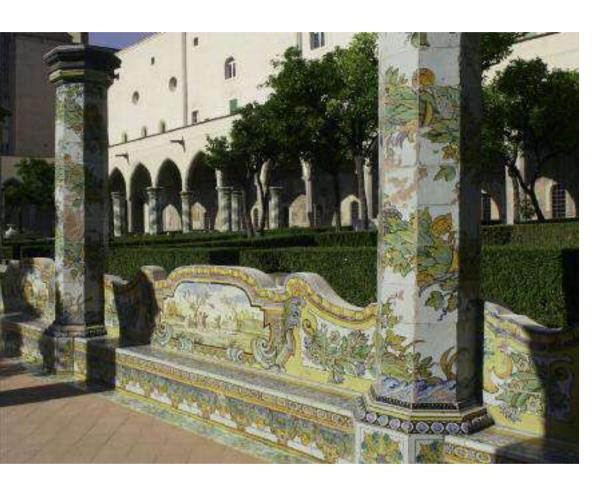
Born in the 1800's they have been restoring dolls here for three generations. The family tradition lives on in the footsteps of the founder Luigi Grassi, with his grandson, also a Luigi, and his daughter Tiziana continuing the work. You can visit the historical shop, in via San Biagio dei Librai 81, by appointment calling 081 203067 www.ospedaledellebambole.it







Piazza San Domenico Maggiore
The artisan shops
of San Gregorio Armeno



famous travellers

You can, from Piazza Dante, via Port'Alba, reach via dei Tribunali, and from Toledo by the Maddaloni Palace reach San Biagio dei Librai, and with a guidebook in hand go looking for the building where a plaque that was cemented to the wall by its proprietor assures "In this building the most illustrious citizen of Naples was born, Saint Gennaro" and where the porter, asked to confirm this clamorous news, with a slight rising of his shoulders answers "that's what they say".

Giovanni Ansaldo, 1961





Facade of the Duomo

Detail of a decoration in the church of Santa Maria del Purgatorio ad Arco

A trip in the underground of Naples is a tremendously exciting experience that reveals the secrets, history and legends of the city. No one knows the exact dimensions of the "dark" Naples, but spelunkers have, in the last few vears. counted up to 700 cavities for a total area of 1 million metric cubes. To begin this time travel one starts from piazza San Gaetano, in the heart of the historical centre, for a two hour trip through subterranean passages and cisterns. The Greek-roman theatre is interesting, with a picturesque low entrance in Cinquesanti alley. From the cloister of the San Lorenzo Maggiore church it is just a few paces to step backwards 2,600 years among the stones of the greek walls. In the Spanish Quarters the descent is to 40 mts below the ground along stairs to arrive at the ancient cisterns and aqueducts used more recently as shelters from the bombing during the war.

In via Tribunali, to the left, the little Santa Maria del Purgatorio ad Arco church is characterised by a bizzare baroque decoration: the skull and bones in front of the Church symbolise the devotion of the Neapolitans to the "pained souls", known as "pezzentelle", a slang for "without relatives". Just a little ways on is the church and former convent of San Pietro a Majella, where since 1826 one of the most important conservatories of music has its home. There you can see the paintings of Mattia Preti, masterpieces of Italian painting in the 17th century.

The nearby **piazza Bellini** is very lively, especially in the evenings, and full of cafès. In the opposite direction, towards the end of via Tribunali, the **church of the Girolamini** rises and houses **the gallery** of the same name with paintings from the 16th-18th centuries.

Via Tribunali intersects with via **Duomo**, which in turn takes its name from the Cathedral, a gothic structure completed by Robert of Anjou in 1313. The façade has been often renovated, as the original one collapsed in the 1349 earthquake. Inside, the structure is based on the latin cross with three naves and is richly decorated. You can clearly see the 18th century baroque interventions on the central nave. Along the left nave is the entranceway to the

paleochristian basilica of **Santa Restituita**. Founded in the 4th century by the Emperor Constantine, today it reveals a Baroque interior created after the 1688 earthquake. The ample fragments of mosaic pavement seem to belong to yet another paleochristian basilica, **Stefania** (6th century). Under Santa Restituita you can see greek-roman archaeological remains.

On the left of the apse is the entrance to the **Baptistry of San Giovanni in fonte**, built between the 4th and 5th century, and therefore the oldest bulding of its kind in the western Christian world. On the square structure rests a mosaic covered dome.

Other than the medieval chapels rich with frescoes and décor, the 17th century **Chapel of the Treasure of San Gennaro** is a must. For the rich embellishments the most famous of contemporary painters were summoned (Fanzago, Domenichino, Ribera, Lanfranco). The magnificent chapel is highlighted by the precious decorations and large silver reliquery busts. It is here that for the two weeks of celebration of the miracle (the liquifaction of San Gennaro's blood) the reliquery of San Gennaro's blood is on exhibit.

At number 288 of via Duomo is the **Filangieri Civic Museum**, donated to the City in 1882 by Gaetano Filangieri, Prince of Satriano. The collection is composed of a vast series of art objects — from arms to porcelain, books and furniture.





The miracle of San Gennaro

Hope, expectations, tension and invocations are uttered by the faithful that take part in the liquefaction of Saint Gennaro's blood. For 600 years, on the first Sunday of May (commemoration of the first translation of the Saint's corpse) and on September 19 (day of his martyrdom) a special mass is held following a procession that crosses the narrow lanes of the historical centre.

The Cathedral, which has a beautiful door and columns of African and Egyptian granite that once graced the Temple of Apollo, contains the celebrated blood of San Gennaro, or Janarius. It is preserved in two little ampullas in a silver reliquary and three times a year it miraculously liquefies to the great joy of the people.

Charles Dickens, 1845



Miracle of San Gennaro





San Lorenzo Maggiore Church





Belltower and interior of the basilica of Santa Maria del Carmine

Going up past the Duomo, to the right on a cross street, is the Donnaregina Palace. This is where

MADRE Museo d'Arte Donna Regina

(Contemporary Art Museum) has its seat. The building was projected by the celebrated Portoguese architect Alvaro Siza and is a grand museum with an international feel. The permanent collection is made up of works by artists that have worked in Naples in the past: it hosts works that were once shown in piazza del Plebiscito and the Archaeological Museum, as well as works conceived, projected, painted and constructed expressly for this museum: important works of such artists as Long. Bianchi. Clemente, Horn, Kapoor, Kounellis, Paolini, Sol Lewitt, Serra, and others, Cross via Duomo and on the right on via dei Tribunali is the Pio Monte della Misericordia complex, founded in 1601; it is on of the city's oldest charitable organisation. The octagonal church has, on its main altar, Caravaggio's masterpiece depicting the Acts of compassion. The Gallery is also interesting, put together over time with private donations. One of the major benefactors of this gallery was the painter Francesco de Mura who, in 1782, left 192 of his paintings (of which 42 remain today).

At the end of via dei Tribunali we find ourselves in front of Castel Capuano, the oldest of the four castles Naples boasts. Built in the Norman era, it became the Palace of Justice and was the seat of the

Civil Court until a few years ago. One of the gates of Naples is also here. **Porta Capuana**: erected in 1484 it was the most important eastern entrance to the city.

Here, and in the nearby **Porta Nolana**, by the train station of Piazza Garibaldi, there are two of the most picturesque of the city's markets, specialising in fish. fruit and vegetables.

Not far away is the Church of San Giovanni a Carbonara constructed between 1343 and 1418 Here the elegant Caracciolo del Sole (1427) and Caracciolo di Vico (1516) chapels are to be found, as well as the grandiose tomb of Ladislas of Durazzo (1428), king of Naples.

The last stop is **piazza Mercato**, one of the crucial corners of Neapolitan history: here Konradin von Hohenstaufen was beheaded in 1268, and in 1647 Masaniello gathered his people during the anti-Spanish revolt that he led.

The square is dominated by one of the most popular and venerated churches in whole of Naples, the Basilica of Santa Maria del Carmine, dedicated to Santa Maria la Bruna. In her honour, in July, a fireworks competition is held that culminates in a blaze at the highest bell tower of the City (75 m). Finally, on Via Nuova Marina, we come to the Port. It was begun by Charles II with the foundation of the Molo Angioino (the Angevin Pier), and enlarged over the centuries until the early 1900s, when it reached its present day dimensions.



Pizza fit for a queen

A good crust distinguishes a Neapolitan pizza from those made in the rest of the world. 3-4 centimeters

wide and cooked to the right point it encircles a disc of soft and elastic consistency. To prepare the most classic of pizzas, the Margherita (invented, as it seems in 1889 by the pizzamaker Raffaele Esposito of the Brandi pizzeria when Queen Margaret of Savoia visited

Naples), the pizzamaker must work with his palms and thumbs, use San Marzano tomatoes. mozzarella, olive oil, grated Parmigiano Reggiano cheese and a few leaves of fresh basil.

1

O, scarce in trivial tenor all, Much less to mock man's mortal sigh, The syllables proverbial fall, "Naples, see Naples, and - then die!"

Herman Melville, 1857



MADRE - Donnaregina Contemporary Art Museum



MADRE - Donnaregina Contemporary Art Museum

Castel Capuano

The Acts of Compassion by Caravaggio





From Castel Nuovo to Foria and the Sanità

The area between Castel Nuovo and the National Archaeological Museum, going by via Toledo, is the centre of Naples. Considered by the Neapolitans to be the most representative, it contains some of the most symbolic monuments of the City: the Maschio Angioino, the Royal Palace, piazza del Plebiscito, the San Carlo Theatre, the Umberto I Gallery, the National Archaeological Museum.

Castel Nuovo (named so as to distinguish it from the older royal residences - Castel dell'Ovo and Castel Capuano) is also known as Maschio Angioino.

The impressive fortress, on which work was begun in 1279 by Charles I of Anjou but subsequently modified by the Aragonese, has a trapezoid base and is surrounded by a moat where the foundations of the five cylindrical towers stand.

The **Triumph Arch** marks the entrance to the castle and is its main ornament. It was erected to commemorate the triumphal entrance to the city by Alfonso of Aragon in 1443.

The magnificent sculpted reliefs represent the best finest examples of Renaissance sculpture in the south. Inside the castle is the Palatine Chapel, the only building that still has its original look, and the extraordinary Barons' Hall. The **Civic Museum** here was inaugurated in 1992.

Castel Nuovo dominates the centre of **piazza Municipio**. At the high end of the square **San Giacomo Palace** rises, seat of the City of Naples; it incorporates the 16th century San Giacomo degli Spagnoli Church. Behind the altar rests the magnificent tomb of the Viceroy Pedro da Toledo.



Castel Nuovo



famous travellers

But, look: what mean yon surly walls? A fortress? and in the heart of town? Even so. And rapt I stare thereon.

Herman Melville, 1857





The Royal Palace

Q

The artisans of rua Catalana

In the area of via Medina, close to piazza Municipio, the narrow rua Catalana opens. It is known for its numerous shops working iron, copper and tin. This, and the adjoining streets (via Graziella, via Basile and calata Ospitaletto), has become theatre of the permanent exhibition of humourous lampposts and iron sculptures signed by master ironmongers.

famous travellers

The first impression is that of having landed in the palace of some oriental emperor. There is nothing in all of Europe that even comes close to this theatre, not even in the remotest way. Your eyes remain dazzled, your soul raptured...

Stendhal

The **Umberto I gallery** (1887-1890) above has a splendid iron and glass covering 57 meters high, and below an elegant inlaid marble floor. There are shops, cafès and bookstores on the inside. **Santa Brigida Church** is part of the complex and has a beautiful fresco called *Heaven*, by Luca Giordano, in its dome.

The **San Carlo Theatre**, inaugurated on November 4, 1737, and named after its patron Charles of Bourbon, is the oldest opera house in the world. The building, partially destroyed by fire in 1816, was restored by Antonio Niccolini, the designer of its façade. In the early 1800's the San Carlo Theatre lived through one of its most glorious seasons ever thanks to the impresario Domenico Barbaja who commissioned works by musicians such as Gioachino Rossini and Gaetano Donizetti.

Coming out of the theatre we find ourselves on piazza Trieste e Trento (once piazza San Ferdinando) where the historical café Gambrinus still stands, once the preferred meeting place for poets and intellectuals.

The baroque **San Fernando Church**, which gives onto the same square, is home to a great tradition: every Good Friday the *Stabat Mater* of Pergolesi is performed.

Crossing the piazza Trieste e Trento the famous piazza del Plebiscito opens up, the largest of the city, spectacular backdrop of cultural events and concerts. It is characterised by the profile of the San Francesco di Paola Church, with its neoclassical colonnade and its Pantheon of Rome inspired interior.

At the centre of the square the two great **statues** of Charles of Bourbon (work of Antonio Canova) and Ferdinand I on horseback face the **Royal Palace**. Construction was begun in the early 1600's based on a project by Domenico Fontana. Enriched by Joachim Murat and Carolina Bonaparte with neoclassical embellishments and decorations, some from the Tuileries, it was damaged in 1837 by fire, and restored by Gaetano Genovese.

To visit the priceless interior cross over the honour courtyard and enter the Historical Living Quarters Museum (30 rooms on one floor) which has preserved the original furniture and décor. The monumental staircase of coloured marble inlay and the Small Court Theatre, a ballroom transformed in 1768 by Fernando Fuga into a gracious Rococo ambience, are beautiful. In another part of the palace the National Library, with its more than million and a half volumes and several priceless medieval codices, can be found. The famous papyrus of Herculaneum are preserved here.



2

New Years in piazza del Plebiscito

In 1994, when Piazza Plebiscito became a walking area, it also became the symbol of the rebirth of the city. Since then, the square hosts a concert of famous singers and celebrities during the New Year's Eve and international art events during the rest of the year.





Umberto I Gallery
The San Carlo Theatre



Piazza del Plebiscito and San Francesco di Paola Church



Italian Institute of Philosophical Studies

From piazza del Plebiscito, going up along via Gennaro Serra, you reach via Monte di Dio in the Pizzofalcone quarter, first nucleus of the Greek settlement.
Here you will find the Italian Institute of Philosophical Studies inside the Serra di Cassano Palace with its splendid stairway.
The main entrance was walled up in 1799 by the Dukes of Serra di Cassano, after their son Gennaro,

martyr of the Partenopean Revolution of 1799, was hung.

As a Unesco report states, the Institute "has conquered a dimension incomparable anywhere in the world and contributes to make Naples a true cultural capital".

"we wanna see Don Peppe!"

Crowds of Neapolitans under the balcony of Doria d'Angri Palace where Garibaldi was staying

From piazza del Plebiscito the vital via Toledo begins, the main axis of the urban expansion projected in 1536 by order of the Viceroy Pedro de Toledo. Many Neapolitans simply call it Toledo, for others it is via Roma (because it was so called from 1870 to the 1980's). Via Toledo is one of the main streets of the city, characterised by ancient churches and palaces such as the Carafa di Maddaloni (1582) and the Doria D'Angri (1755), fruit of the genius of Luigi Vanvitelli. From his balcony Garibaldi proclaimed the annexation of Kingdom of the Two Sicilies to the Kingdom of Italy.

Off to one side of via Toledo, at the foot of the San Martino Hill, the Spanish Quarters' spiderweb unfolds.

Once in piazza Carità, a little detour must be made to visit two jewels of Renaissance art: the churches of Monteoliveto and Santa Maria La Nova.

Built in the 1400's, the church of **Monteoliveto** (or **Sant'Anna dei Lombardi**) preserves its simple interior and the rigorous formality of the original structure. *The Del Pezzo and Ligorio altars* are masterpieces of Renaissance sculpture. The magnificent lifesized terracotta sculptures of the *Lament of the Dead Christ* (said to represent the members of the Aragon royal family) are hosted in the capital area.

The **Santa Maria la Nova Church** is also Renaissance, with its imposing cloisters. Built in the 1200's it was completely restructured starting in 1596. Also splendid the gilded wood caisson ceiling, into which 46 panels, painted by the major Neapolitan artists of the day, were inserted at the end of the 1500's.

The last part of via Toledo gives onto piazza Dante.

Decorated by the monument to Dante (1872) by Tito Angelini, it is enclosed by the hemicycle of the **Foro Carolino**, constructed by Luigi Vanvitelli. **Port'Alba** stands out to the left of the hemicycle, from which you reach the street of the same name, site of some of the oldest bookstores of Naples.

Near to piazza Dante is the **National Archaeological Museum**, the most important museum of classical archaeology in the world.

Charles of Bourbon put the largest art collection in Italy, the Farnese collection inherited by his mother Elisabeth, into this building (the old "Study Palace" or university). Over the years the largest archaeological collection of all time, relics from the city and from the villas buried under the ashes of Vesuvius in 79 BC, was brought here.

The most important collection of the museum is that of the mosaics, paintings, jewellery and objects recovered from the buried vesuvian homes. A collection unmatched peer in the world that attracts, needless to say, millions of visitors.

Another highlight is the classical sculpture collection, some roman copies of Greek originals, amongst which the celebrated Farnese sculptures (the Bull, the Hercules and dozens of others). The cameo and cut gem collection, which includes the extraordinary Farnese Cup, is also very rich. The vast epigraph collection includes over 2,000 pieces representing all of the languages once spoken in Campania (from Greek to Oscan, Etruscan to Latin). The Egyptian collection is only second in importance in Italy to that of Turin. There is a section dedicated to the Papyrus Villa, the famous roman house in Herculaneum that brought to light so many relics, amongst which the celebrated statues in bronze and marble.

The **Secret Cabinet** is a part of the museum that houses a 19th century collection of Greek and Roman objects considered "obscene" at the times, reserved only for authorized visitors. It includes now sculptures, frescoes, mosaics, amulets, oil-lamps and graffiti with erotic themes from the digs at Pompeii.





The Spanish Quarter

Planned following a chessboard motif in the 16th century to accommodate the Spanish troops and their families, the Spanish Quarter has been transformed over the ages into a city within the city, a picturesque and lively quarter. Strolling about these streets (carefully), one encounters kids playing ball and stands that sell just about everything.



"I am leaving. I will forget neither via Toledo, nor any of the other quarters of Naples: to my eyes it is, without a doubt, the most beautiful city in the universe"



The Mosaic of Alexander the Great The National Archaeological Museum



The Art Metro
Tyrannicides.
National
Archaeological

Museum







Art in the Metro

"The best contemporary art museum in Italy" That is how Line 1 of the Naples Metro has been defined. The stations, in fact, from Vanvitelli-Dante that connect the historical centre to the Vomero, are known as the art stations.

Architects of international acclaim have redone the contours of the stations, and the stations themselves have become enriched with works of contemporary art.

In the Museo station, done by Gae Aulenti, a large bronze horse head, called Cavallo Carafa (belonging to the National Archeolocal Museum) and a copy of the Farnese Hercules, made by the students of the Naples Academy of Arts, are exhibited.

From the museum you get onto piazza Cavour: here begins via Foria that crosses the popular Sanità, Vergini and Sant'Antonio districts. The lovely 16th century church of Santa Maria della Sanità, with its grandiose pincer-shaped stairs that frame the crypt, is to be seen. From the church you gain access to the Catacombs of San Gaudioso. In this quarter you can find the 17th century Palace of the Spaniard (dello Spagnolo) and the Sanfelice Palace both works of Ferdinando Sanfelice and used as models for theatrical backdrops.

Further along, via Foria reaches the **Botanical** gardens.

Created in 1807 by Giuseppe Bonaparte, it was originally conceived to study plants useful to agriculture, commerce and for medicinal purposes. Today, the area of circa 12 hectares contains about 10,000 species for a total of 25,000 plants, one of Italy's most important collections for content and area. Particularly interesting is the rich variety of succulents.

Back at the Archaeological Museum, ascend towards Capodimonte on via Santa Teresa degli Scalzi. Next to the big Incoronata del Buon Consiglio Church are the catacombs of San Gennaro, among the oldest and most amazing of Campania. Going further up the hill you arrive at the Royal Palace of Capodimonte, which houses the museum of the same name.





Totò and Eduardo, poets of the Sanità

"I am from the Sanità district, the most famous in Naples" Totò loved to exclaim, and in fact he was born here in 1898. His house in via Santa Maria Antesaecula has become a shrine where one can go to pay homage to the great King of Laughs. Eduardo de Filippo, on the other hand, went to school in this quarter, and he has immortalised it in one of his most famous theatrical productions, *The Local*

Authority (1960).

Q

Fontanelle

Cemetery

A gigantic bone deposit in tuff caverns where thousands of bones and skulls form macabre structures. Here started the Cult of the Souls in Purgatory, the

deaths due to the cholera epidemic in 1836. Adopting a skull, or some other remains of the dead, and not ever leaving them without a candle, means getting protection from them

can get into the cemetery from

Santissima del Carmine, in via

the small church of Maria

Fontanelle.

getting protection from them and having them pleasantly visit you in your dreams. You

From the vast piazza Carlo III you can admire the gigantic façade (600x150 m) of the Albergo dei Poveri (Hospice

Three young friends that were travelling together in Italy last year visited the Museum of Studies, in Naples, where various ancient relics found in the excavations of Pompeii and Herculaneum were on display... The youngest, stopped in front of an exhibit, seemed not to hear the exclamations of his companions, so absorbed was he in profound contemplation.

Théophile Gautier, 1852



Catacombs of San Gennaro



for the poor), begun in 1751 by Ferdinando Fuga. The work, which was meant to lodge all the poor in the realm, remained incomplete. Cultural events are hosted in the restored area.



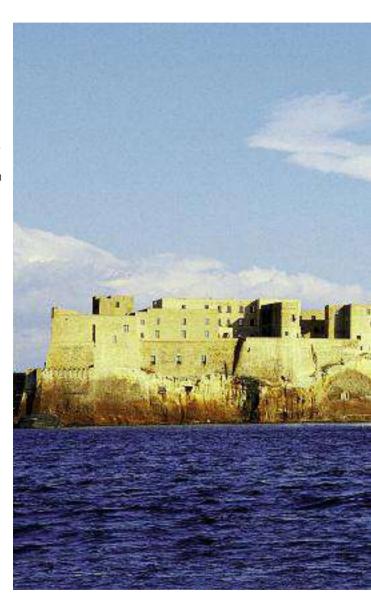




The waterfront: from Chiaia to Posillipo

The waterfront between Castel dell'Ovo and Posillipo, with its panoramic view of the entire Gulf, Vesuvius and the islands, is the most famous scene of Naples.

The profile of the coast is dominated by the massive tuff wall of the Castel dell'Ovo, the oldest of the city, that sits on the little islet of Megaris facing the famous Santa Lucia quarter. Now connected to land by a small bridge, the island was chosen by the roman patrician Licinius Lucullus as site for his new villa. It was transformed into a convent by the Saint Basil monks in about 492 AD. Under the Normans in the 12th century it became a fortress. The Hall of the Columns, so called because it re-used the powerful columns of the original villa, must be visited. From the cannon terrace, on the high part of the castle, you can enjoy a marvellous view of the gulf. Under the walls of the castle is Borgo Marinari, constructed in the 1800's, it was originally meant to house fishermen, their boats and their families. It now houses nautical clubs, restaurants, bars and trendy night spots.



famous travellers

If there is a place on earth where you can be happy, then it is on the Santa Lucia waterfront.



Via Caracciolo and the Villa Comunale (City Park)





Castel dell'Ovo

Q

Virgil the wizard

The name of Castel dell'Ovo (Castle of the Egg) derives from a legend tied to the poet Virgil, to whom the medieval Neapolitans attributed magical powers. One of the wizard's talismans was said to be hidden in the castle: an egg preserved in a jug and locked in an iron cage. The castle would never crumble as long as the egg remained intact.

8

Walking along the very famous via Caracciolo you can enjoy some of the most beautiful scenery of Naples, from Vesuvius all the way to the hills of Posillipo, dotted with houses immersed in green and all framed by the intense blue of the sea. Via Caracciolo runs parallel to Villa Comunale, the City Park, once called Royal gardens and designed by Luigi Vanvitelli at the end of the 1700's, and to the old waterfront that even today is called the Riviera di Chiaia. You can visit the Zoological Sation. (founded by the German Anton Dohrn in 1872) and the oldest **Aguarium** in Europe. On the Riviera di Chiaia, in the neoclassical Villa Pignatelli, is the Principe Diego Aragona Pignatelli Cortes Museum, still with its original furnishings. The Bank of Naples keeps its rich collection of paintings here. A Carriage Museum is soon to be opened in the old stables with a collection of period coaches and harnesses.

Via Caracciolo ends at **Mergellina**, where according to legend the current dragged the lifeless body of the siren Partenope. Also here the view is breathtaking, the hills of Posillipo and Vomero with Vesuvius in the distance

Near to piazza Sannazaro is **via di Piedigrotta** (so called because it was at the foot of the grotto, today a tunnel, dug in the 1st century BC by the Romans who wanted to make transit from Pozzuoli to Naples easier: in fact the other side of the tunnel is called Fuorigrotta, or out of the grotto) that ends in front of **Santa Maria di Piedigrotta**. Between the church and the Mergellina Station is the entrance to the **Park of the Tomb of Virgil**, one of the most visited sites of the Grand Tour. The park hosts the so-called tomb of Virgil, a 1st century AD sepulchre traditionally identified with the burial of the poet. In 1939 the tomb of another great poet, Giacomo Leopardi, who died in Naples in 1837, was

also transferred here.
Leaving the waterfront behind, going on to the
Western district, in piazzale Tecchio we find the
Mostra d'Oltremare; a large exhibition centre built in
the 1930's of great historical, architectural and
environmental value. The area of about 700.000
square metres houses buildings, gardens, fountains
and a large open-air arena the serves as a theatre.



Q

The PAN (Palazzo delle Arti Napoli)

In via dei Mille, PAN has been inaugurated in the 18th century Roccella Palace. This cultural centre welcomes contemporary art in all its forms: from painting to sculpture, architecture to photography, design to cinema.



The PAN, Palazzo delle Arti Napoli

2

I think of you every day, when, opening the balcony I see this sparkling sea unfold itself under the oranges of Posillipo, furrowed by the many boats, whose two little white veils are similar to the white wings of the seagulls. At my feet the grassy fields of the Royal Villa, dotted with rose bushes, already green like our most beautiful ones in Spring.

Alphonse de Lamartine, 1820



Detail of the Villa Comunale bandstand





Villa Comunale, with the Aquarium in the background

Q

Luxury Shopping

The ideal shopping trip begins on via Toledo and then goes on to the vias Chiaia, Calabritto, Filangieri, dei Mille, the streets considered the most elegant, and with the famous stores. Some of the big name fashion brands have shops here, from soft luxurious leather ware to clothing and ties. The Chiaia area is rich with noble buildings from the 16-1700's and scenic

façades like those on piazza dei Martiri, always considered one of the best addresses of the City, while the nearby Amedeo district offers a lovely repertory of Liberty-style architecture.

famous travellers

The magnificence of a night in the full moon, like the one we enjoyed strolling the streets and piazzas, along the infinite waterfront of Chiaia, and then up and down along the shore. One is really overcome by the sensation of the infinity of space. To dream like this is worth while.

Johann Wolfgang Goethe, 1787

From Mergellina the beautiful scenic **Via Posillipo** goes up the hill, the old *Pausilypon* (Greek for "pain reliever"). You can see the enormous **Palazzo Donn'Anna** and numerous villas immersed in green.

At the extreme end of the promontory of Coroglio is the Villa del Pausilypon, the remains of the luxurious home of Publius Vedius Pollio, one of Octavian's supporters. Upon his death the villa went to the emperor.

The grandiose villa was composed of several buildings erected between the 1st century BC and the 4th AD, to cover an area of about 9 hectares. At the centre was the huge residential structure, around which were built a grandiose **theatre**, an *odeion* and thermal baths. Apart from its private dock on the Cala dei Lampi, the complex included its own roads and the tunnel known as the 'Grotta di Seiano', that crosses the rocky coastline to Coroglio, which today is the point of access to the complex.





The Piedigrotta Festival and the Neapolitan song

It was during this festival that in 1835 the Neapolitan song rose to the status of a musical genre. *Te voglio bene* assaje, its melody composed by Gateano Donizetti, became famous all over the world. The most famous Neapolitan songs were written during the last two decades of the 19th century, but the tradition continued in the 20th century, with very popular singersongwriters, and the Nuova Compagnia di Canto

Popolare, which became famous worldwide with its Gatta Cenerentola by Roberto De Simone. The genre is still thriving thanks to the activities of singer-songwriters, rock groups and jazz musicians.

There saw we learned Maro's golden tomb, The way he cut, an English mile in length, thorough a rock of stone, in one night's space.

Christopher Marlowe, 1588





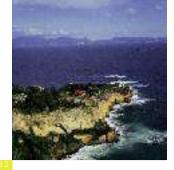
Naples, Mergellina

Q

Palazzo Donn'Anna

One of the most celebrated of the city for its spectacular position, like an enourmous cliff that surges up from the sea, Palazzo Donn'Anna is one of the symbols of Posillipo. Constructed in 1642 by Cosimo Fanzago for Anna Carafa, wife of Filippo Ramiro Guzman, Viceroy of Naples, it remained incomplete and assumed the fascinating aspect of an ancient ruin. It is the source of many dark legends:

Donn'Anna, abandoned by her husband, who went back to Spain, is said to have gone insane after being betrayed by a lover.



Panorama from the Virgiliano Park

The most spectacular panorama of Posillipo is enjoyed from the **Virgiliano Park**, located on the top of the hill. From between trees, gardens and sporting facilities, one's eyes roam over the entire Gulf of Naples, the Phlegrean Fields, and over to the sea, from which the island of **Nisida** emerges. This magical scenery inspired a whole generation of painters in the 1800's, known as the School of Posillipo. Their rendering of this enchanted panorama did much to contribute to the fame of the beauty of Naples.

From the sheer cliffs of **Coroglio** and the **cove of Trentaremi**, to the western edge of Posillipo, we can see nearby **Bagnoli**. Today it is the object of an ample project aimed at recuperating the marine environment, the beach and the former Italsider ironworks abandoned years ago.



Q

the beaches for a dive into the city

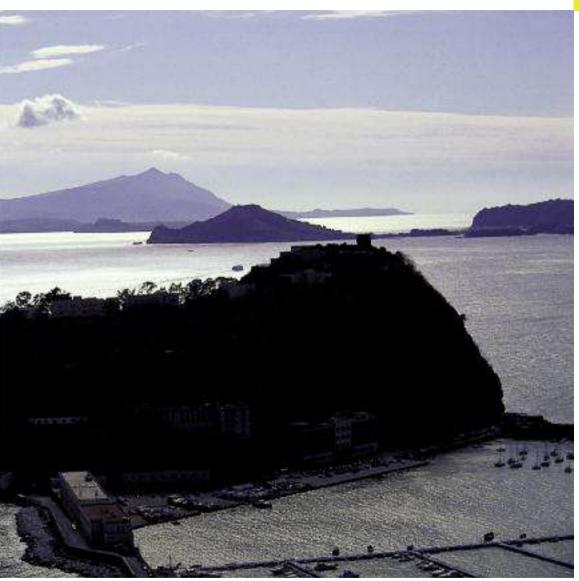
In the summer months, the beaches of Posillipo are assaulted by bathers. Under Palazzo Donn'Anna there are many bathing establishments. At the end of the descending path of the same name is the Marechiaro lido, once a tiny fishing village, nostalgically described by the poet Salvatore Di Giacomo in the song by the same name (immortalized by a small plaque). The far point of Gaiola with the cove of Trentaremi is beautiful, and

the natural amphitheatre is grandiose with its high walls of yellow tuff. This is where the protected marine reserve Gaiola Underwater Park is. Here you can see the remains of some of the buildings of the nearby roman villa of Publius Vedius Pollio, submerged due to bradyseism (a geological phenomenon).

famous travellers

Say, tell or paint what you will, but here all expectations are exceeded. This shore, the gulfs, the coves... May all those who lose their minds in Naples be forgiven!

Johann Wolfgang Goethe, 1787



Nisida and, in the background, Capo Miseno, Procida and Ischia

The hills: from Vomero to Capodimonte

The **Vomero** district was born in the 1800's, in a green zone famous for its views of the Gulf. Today the small Liberty Style villas exist side by side to modern buildings, and are one of the most lively quarters of Naples, with a wealth of shopping attractions

The heart of the Vomero is Piazza Vanvitelli, from which it is easy to reach Villa Floridiana, a gift of Ferdinand of Bourbon to his morganatic wife Lucia Migliaccio, the Duchess of Floridia. The elegant building, built by Antonio Niccolini and surrounded by a large park with fake ruins, sumptuous paths, fields and a panoramic terrace, today houses the Duca di Martina Ceramics Museum. The nucleus of the collection are the pieces donated by the heirs of Placido De Sangro, Duke of Martina, an avid collector of coral, ivory, snuff-boxes and most of all porcelain and majolica. The collection of porcelain from Capodimonte and the Far East are especially interesting.



famous travellers

A forty year-old widow, far from beautiful but none-the-less kind, at the time rented me half of her small house... at the foot of the mountain that dominates, the close by villa of Princess Floridia, wife of the old King. It is, perhaps, the only part of Naples that is a bit tranquil.

Capodimonte Museum





Villa Floridiana



famous travellers

Beneath, the great city with its four hundred thousand souls, its red tiles and irregular masses of brick-work, contrasting with the gilded domes of the superb churches.

A.J. O'Reilly 1884

From Piazza Vanvitelli you can get to the top of the hill (with the escalator, if you wish), to the Castel Sant'Elmo and the Certosa (charterhouse) of San Martino

Castel Sant'Elmo dominates the city with its imposing profile. With the nearby charterhouse, it is visible from many parts of Naples This massive fortress was built in the 14th century by Robert of Anjou and was completely restructured under the Pedro de Toledo government (1537-1546). The ground plan forms a six-pointed star; part of it is carved into the tuff rock, and it is surrounded by bastions and moats. From the glacis you can enjoy a spectacular 360° panorama of Naples. The Castle hosts the brand new museum in progress, "Napoli Novecento", comprising a set of paintings, sculptures, drawings and engravings that document the artistic production in Naples during the twentieth century.

Next to the Castle is the monumental complex of the **Certosa of San Martino**, also projected by Robert of Anjou. It was begun by Tino di Camaino in 1325, and later transformed in the 1500's and the middle 1600's by the most noted architects of the day (Dosio, Fanzago), thus becoming the most complete example of Neapolitan Baroque and one of the city's most grandiose monuments.

The inside of the church is a triumph of frescoes, sculptures, polychromatic marble and paintings. The frescoes were done by, among others, Giovanni Lanfranco and Battistello Caracciolo. Even the presbytery and the sacristy are richly decorated: oils by Ribera, Massimo Stanzione and Guido Reni, wardrobes and choir-stalls of inlaid wood. The vault of the 'Cappella del Tesoro' is decorated with the luminous fresco by Luca Giordano, The Triumph of Judith. The halls around the cloister house the National Museum of San Martino. The museum has sections dedicated to sculpture and painting, minor arts and theatre.

The section dedicated to the scenes of the city is very important, starting with works from the 1400's and including the famous *Tavola Strozzi*. Particularly interesting is the cribs' section made up of works by artists from the 1700's and by two exceptional groups of works: the wooden figurines of San Giovanni a Carbonara from the 1400's and the **Cuciniello Crib** from the 1800's, named after its donor. Do not miss the **Prior's Apartment** (the restored living quarters of the Prior), set in a very panoramic position, and the beautiful gardens of the convent.





the 'pedamentina' of San Martino

From San Martino, follow the steps of the long steep Via Pedamentina, to arrive to Corso Vittorio Emanuele and then on to Via Toledo in the heart of the lower city. With its 414 steps it is one of Naples' oldest streets. At the end of the first ramp there is an old gate that takes you into the belly of the hill. From there, the royal guards warded off the assaults on the Castel Sant'Elmo.



Naples as it was at the end of the 1400's. The 'Strozzi Table'. Museum of San Martino





View of Castel Sant'Elmo and the Certosa of San Martino from Castel Nuovo

Cuciniello Crib. Museum of San Martino





The highest point of the city is the **Eremo dei Camaldoli**, an hermitage at 457 mt above sea level. It was constructed in 1585 and has a splendid view over the Gulf, the islands and the Phlegrean Fields. The border of the urban weave of the hill, it also merits a visit to fully enjoy the nearby **Camaldoli Park**.

From Camaldoli, going down along Viale Colli Aminei, you arrive to Capodimonte. The name derives from the late latin "Caput de Monte" (top of the mount) and clearly indicates its position; a hill on the highest part of the City. Here rises the Royal Palace of Capodimonte, surrounded by a vast park. Charles of Bourbon, a dedicated hunter. wanted to construct a hunting lodge here. After having done so, he had it enlarged to house the precious Farnese collections. The building. designed by Antonio Medrano, was finished only in 1839. Located in the immense park are the hunting lodge of Vittorio Emanuele II, a small lodge known as "of the Queen", the Chapel of San Gennaro, the building of the old 1737 porcelain factory of Charles of Bourbon, the hermitage of the Cappuccini monks and the Fagianeria (pheasant breeding facility).

Today, the Royal Palace is home to the **National Museum of Capodimonte**, one of the most important in the world for painting and the decorative arts



The Inebriated Silenus by Ribera and the Crucifiction by Masaccio, Capodimonte Museum

The main nucleus of the Museum is the Farnese Collection, started by Pope Paul III and inherited by Charles' mother Elisabeth Farnese. The picture gallery has more than 200 masterpieces: Masaccio, Botticelli, Raphael, Ribera, Titian, Mantegna, Correggio, El Greco, Lorenzo Lotto, Parmigianino, Carracci, and Bruegel. There are also two preparative drawings by Raphael for the 'Segnatura Room', and by Michelangelo for the Pauline Chapel in the Vatican. Also exceptional is the gallery of 13th-19th century Neapolitan painting: the Saint Ludovico of Tolosa by Simone Martini, the evocative Flagellation by Caravaggio, and again the works of Ribera, Luca Giordano. and Francesco Solimena. The section dedicated to the **1800's** is rich with the School of Posillipo painters, from Anton Smick Pitloo to Giacinto Gigante, and the masters of Naturalism. like the Palizzis. The many artists of the late 1800's and early 1900's - from Domenico Morelli to Vincenzo Migliaro – complete the artistic panorama. The **contemporary section** is also renewed by the presence of artists such as Alberto Burri, Andy Warhol, Carlo Alfano and Mimmo Paladino.

The Museum holds other surprises: the **Historic Apartment**, with the **porcelain sitting room** of Queen
Maria Amalia, for example. The collection of **decorative arts** is one of the richest in all of Italy with unique works
like the precious Farnese Box and the wall tapestries of
d'Avalos, and the exceptional porcelain works like the *Aurora Cart* by Filippo Tagliolini.



the Capodimonte Porcelains

In 1738 Charles of Bourbon wed Maria Amalia, daughter of August the Strong of Sassony and founder of the celebrated porcelain factory of Meissen. The King decided to open a porcelain factory to produce precious pieces like the famous "porcelain sitting room" of the Queen, and a multitude of other elegant and curious objects: vases and snuff-boxes, soup-tureens and plates, statuettes and bowls.

In 1759 Charles, now King of Spain, took the manufacture with him to Madrid. The production continued in Naples in the Fernandea Royal Factory. Today the Neapolitan craftsmen keep the ancient art alive, continuing to make works inspired by the old masters, as well as with original creations.



Porcelain in the Capodimonte Museum Capodimonte, that rises on the mountaintop... is a vast palace begun by Don Carlos, presently King of Spain. Here are housed all the riches...from the Parma Palace of the Farnese family that Charles took to Naples when he came through this Duchy to the throne of the Two Sicilies. The position of this palace is the best of the world.

Marguis de Sade, 1776

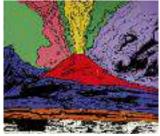


The Flagellation by Caravaggio, Capodimonte Museum



the Capodimonte Observatory

Located in a splendid position on the Miradois Hill and housed in a neoclassical building, the Astronomic Observatory, the first of the modern observatories of Europe, was founded in 1819 by the astronomer Giuseppe Piazzi. The museum contains a rich collection of historic scientific instruments.



Vesuvius by Andy Warhol, Capodimonte Museum

The Phlegrean Fields





View of the Phlegrean Fields

famous travellers

A land where only stones breathe, deserted, with boiling water, and with the remains of a past shaped by spent and half-spent volcanoes; the most marvellous region of the world under the purest of skies and the most perfidious of terrains.

Johann Wolfgang Goethe, 1787

The Phlegrean Fields is a place of profound and ancient fascination. Here history, legend, myth and mystery melt into a fickle landscape. Rich with history and art, the Phlegrean Fields are also extraordinarily beautiful, with the signs of volcanic activity clearly evident.

The myths sung by Homer and Virgil, the Greek culture that spread onto the rest of the peninsula, the record of the times in which the Roman aristocracy built sumptuous villas: all of it helped to increase the fascination of an area where extraordinary natural beauty and the wonderous opera of man create an incomparable scenery. Archaeology lovers will find so much to see: impressive ruins, archaeological parks and underground cities. Not to mention the exquisite local seafood tradition to renew their spent energy.

The Phlegrean Fields (from the Greek Flegraios, or "burning") is an enormous volcanic area that extends to the west of the Gulf of Naples from the hill of Posillipo to Cuma, and includes the islands of Nisida. Procida. Vivara and Ischia. The volcanic nature of the zone is immediately obvious in the widespread presence of tuff, pumice. geysers of scorching steam and the craters that form natural amphitheatres. Some craters have become lakes like Averno. Lucrino. Fusaro and Miseno. Active vulcanic phenomena are visibile close-up. like in the famous Solfatara with its lake of lava, and the thermal springs of Agnano. In order to safeguard the delicate environmental equilibrium, the area was made into the Phlegrean Fields Regional Park in 1997.



Azienda Autonoma di Cura Soggiorno e Turismo di Pozzuoli largo Matteotti, 1/A tel. 081 5266639 www.infocampiflegrei.it

Soprintendenza Speciale per i Beni Archeologici di Napoli e Pompei piazza Museo 19 - Napoli tel. 081 4422111 www.sba-na.campaniabeniculturali.it

Ente Parco Regionale dei Campi Flegrei Via Lungolago, 74 - Bacoli tel 081 5231736

tel. 081 5231736

Riserva Naturale WWF Astroni via Agnano Astroni 468 tel. 081 5883720

Bacoli Cento Camerelle via Cento Camerelle Piscina Mirabile tel. 081 5233690

Baia
Parco Archeologico
tel. 081 8687592
Museo Archeologico dei
Campi Flegrei
tel. 081 5233797
Parco Sommerso di Baia

Cuma Parco Archeologico via Licola tel. 081 8040430

tel. 081 8688923 www.areamarinaprotettabaia.it

Pozzuoli Solfatara via Solfatara 161 tel. 081 5262341 Rione Terra tel. 848 800288

phlegrean bradyseism

The pressure of the incandescent lava under the Phlegrean Fields has always provoked the raising and

lowering of the terrain (bradyseism). The consequences of the variations of sea level can be seen in many parts of the area, particularly in the Serapis Temple in Pozzuoli.

the Wine Trails of the Phlegrean Fields

The road from Naples ascends to Posillipo and then goes down again to Bagnoli and Pozzuoli. The

climate and the terrain have permitted the cultivation of local wines that have the Doc marking "Campi Flegrei". The Doc wines are Piedirosso and Falanghina, cultivated here for centuries; Biancolella and Coda di Volpe for the whites, Olivella and Sciascinoso for the reds

not to be missed

Museo Archeologico dei Campi Flegrei (Bacoli)

Castle of Baia

Cuma Archaeological Park

Rione Terra (Pozzuoli)

the phlegrean fields in 1 day

Pozzuoli Baia Cuma the phlegrean fields in 3 days

Pozzuoli

Solfatara

Lakes of Averno and Lucrino

Baia

Bacoli

Cuma



art and archaeology

Amphitheatre of Pozzuoli Sybil's Cave (Cuma) Casino Reale (Fusaro lake) Archaeological Museum of the Phlegrean Fields (Bacoli) Archaeological Park of Baia Archaeological Park of Cuma

Rione Terra (Pozzuoli)

nature and parks

Baia Protected Marine Reserve

Phlegrean Fields Regional

Nature Park

Crater of Astroni Nature Reserve

for young people

Bacoli

Pozzuoli seafront

Miseno

Stufe di Nerone Thermal Baths

shopping

Ceramics and terracotta ware Wines

outings with children

Amphitheatre of Pozzuoli Sybil's Cave (Cuma)

Solfatara





Baia - Sacello augustali

specialities

Miseno mussels Buffalo Mozzarella Dop Blue Fish

wines

Campi Flegrei Doc

spas and fitness

Stufe di Nerone (Baia)

Agnano Thermal Spa
Puteolane Thermal Spa

(Pozzuoli)

44

Once famous for its lake, in the oldest volcano of the Phlegrean Fields, Agnano got its name from the latin "anauni", snakes: legend had it that they descended in large numbers to the lake to quench their thirst. The lake was drained in 1870 (in its place nowadays there is a horse racing track).

From the dried lake bed emerged archaeological proof of a huge roman thermal baths complex: remains of a *natural sauna* (that used the natural heat released from the sides of the Mount Spina) and of a *thermal establishment*.

In the same basin are the **Stufe di San Germano**, thus named by a bishop of Capua that enjoyed its benefits in the 6th century. They were used by the local people during the entire middle ages up to the present day. Not far from the present day entrance to the thermal establishment is **La Grotta del Cane** (the Dog's Grotto), a niche carved into the hill where carbonic acid vapours are emitted: this heavy gas rises only a short distance from the ground, thus killing the animals that breathe it. The name has its origins in the barbaric practice of introducing a dog, which would then slowly but surely show signs of suffocation.

In Agnano is the verdant **Astroni Reserve** (a WWF oasis for the protection of the fauna): the huge crater of a spent volcano, covered in woods, in which small hills and lakes have formed.

The habitat is characterised by "vegetational inversion" – cooler near the ground and warmer up by the slopes of the volcano – and so we find chestnut, elm and oak trees down below, and mediterranean scrub up high. The guided tours inside the park and around the three lakes are a delight for children, that can observe the many types of birds, reptiles and amphibians found within.



Q

the thermal spas of the crater

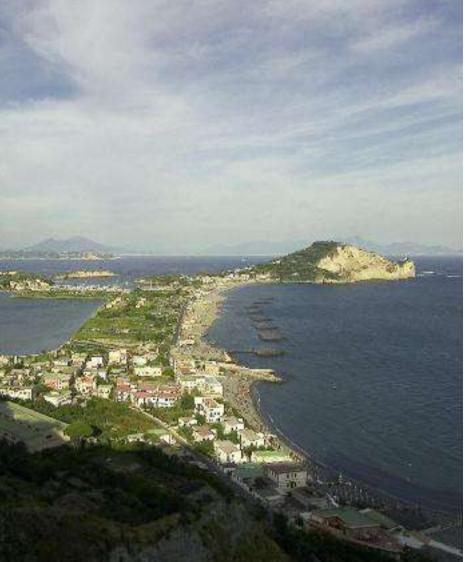
Found on the bottom of an ancient volcanic crater, the Agnano Spa Centre offers a hydrological patrimony

formed by 72 springs. The waters, that bubble up at a temperature of between 20°C and 70°C, are recommended for the treatment of arthritis and rheumatism, muscular pathologies, respiratory ailments, ear, nose and throat disturbances and gynecological conditions.

The establishment also houses specialised medical centres equipped with avantgarde technology.

I wanted to see this grotto. I resolved to take a dog ... We reached the grotto at about three in the afternoon, and proceeded at once to make the experiments. But now, an important difficulty presented itself. After I had taken off my coat and bathed a handkerchief with cologne, and tied it over my face, and got all ready, and was wrought up to the highest pitch of enthusiasm, I recollected that we hadn't got any dog.

Mark Twain. 1867





Panoramic view from Monte di Procida

1 0

Pozzuoli

46

Pozzuoli is one of the worlds' most fascinating archaeological areas. Main port of the region in Roman times, the city revealed a surprising and unexpected "underground Pompeii" with the excavations in the Rione Terra.

Founded in 520 BC by Greek colonists who gave it the name *Dicearchia*, or "Just Government", it was named *Puteoli* by the Romans (for the malodorous sulphur vapours that its wells emitted), and became one of the main ports of the Tyrrhenian Sea.

The **Temple of Serapis** (I-II century BC) is proof of the lively commerce conducted in *Puteoli*. The temple is so called because of the discovery of a statue of an Egyptian divinity. In reality, the so-called temple was a food market, a *Macellum*. The shops were lined up under the arches on the sides of the courtyard, and the apse was dedicated to the imperial cult and to the gods that protect the market (Serapis among them). The columns of this hall are good measures of the force of the volcanic phenomenon of the Phlegrean area: you can see the small holes dug by marine shellfish when they were underwater for a long due to bradyseism.

The oldest part of town is **Rione Terra** (abandoned in the 80's due to the effects of bradyseism, but now under restoration), on the high part of the tuff rock that dominates

the port. Archaeological excavations are revealing the fascinating texture of this Roman city, preserved intact underground, with its store lined streets. Houses and fountains alternate with shops and restaurants. This was once the glorious acropolis of Puteoli, impermeable defence against the enemy. The most significant monument of the area is the Temple of Augustus, rediscovered after the baroque Cathedral of San Procolo burned down in 1964. It is, in fact, the *Capitolium*, the temple of the Capitolium trinity cult.

The **Amphitheatre** dates to Flavian times, and is the third largest in the world. Its functional architecture is an excellent example of the exceptional technological levels reached in that era: it has underground spaces, wide stairwells, corridors, a contraption to lift the wild beasts' cages and even a device to reenact naval battles.

Pozzuoli does not just offer archaeological remains. This lively town has a strong sense of identity: ingrained ties to an age-old maritime tradition (evidenced by the excellent cuisine) and a meeting place for young and old alike. With its port (departure point of the ferryboats to the islands), its streets, small squares, lovely seafront and many bars, make this a lovely place to spend pleasant hours.







famous travellers

A boat trip (to Pozzuoli); some short drives in a carriage; walks on foot through the most astonishing landscape in the world.

Johann Wolfgang Goethe, 1787





Flavian Amphitheatre

47

The Solfatara

At the Solfatara, near Pozzuoli, you can see the inside of a crater with boiling lava, full of its vapours and steaming mud. This active volcano is one of the main attractions of the Phlegrean Fields. The feeling here is one of restlessness: the earth tormented by fire makes for a surreal scenery of unimaginable colours.

Born 4,000 years ago almost in the exact centre of the Phlegrean Fields, the Solfatara (from the late latin *Sulpha Terra*, or sulphurous earth) presents itself lively with geysers, sources of gas, mineral water springs, spouts of home mud and seismic shocks. The biggest geyser is called 'Bocca Grande' (Big Mouth), a natural source of pressured water vapour. It shoots out at 160°C and contains a mixture of gases that give it a peculiar "rotten egg" smell.

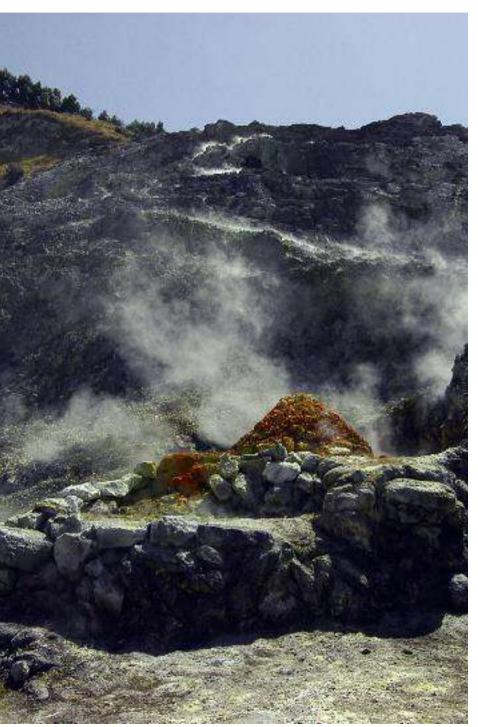


The Solfatara



There lies between Naples and Great Puteoli, a chasm deep cloven, and Cocytus churns there his current; the vapor in fury escapes from the gorge with that lethal spray laden.

Petronius, I AD



Geysers of Solfatara



Lakes Lucrino and Averno

Hercules, after having stolen Geryon's cattle, had them walk on a thin strip of land he himself constructed on the sea, thereby closing in the water that makes up the Lake of Lucrino. The name may come from Jucrum and it would refer to the hefty profits earned from the farming of fish and mussels in the lake.

Near to the lake are the 'Stufe di Nerone' (Nero's Stoves), sweat holes carved into the tuff rock to take advantage of the geysers that emanate from the volcanic ground: they were part of a grandiose thermal system that spreads over the entire side of the mountain. They are still in use.

The lake of Averno is surrounded by wooded hills. The austere scenery and the motionless water induced the ancient inhabitants to consider it the entrance to Hades (Aeneid and Odyssey). The word Avernus derives perhaps from the Greek "aornon", or "without birds", because they fled in fear from the mouth of Hades

In the 1st century AD the emperor Augustus decided to turn the area into a naval base, the Portus Julius. connecting the two lakes to the sea with canals. But the new port soon filled with sand, and while the fleet transferred to Miseno, on the shoreline villas and spas were built.

Thanks to the boat excursions organised in the area by the Baia Underwater Park, you can still see the structures of Portus Julius, the entrance to the canal and the lay-out of the coastal road. Nothing remains of the port structures along the shoreline of Averno. One of the aristocratic villas that took its place has a magnificent ruin known as **Temple** of Apollo, which in reality is the large room of a thermal spa. A trail along the shoreline takes you to a cave, which up until 1932 was thought to be a Sybil's Cave. In truth it is a 200 meters long tunnel that once connected the lake of Averno to the lake of Lucrino.



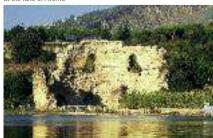
Monte Nuovo

The profile of Monte Nuovo, the volcanic crater that rose in 1538, is behind the lakes. A terrible eruption

buried the village of Tripergole and its surrounding area where a hill was formed from the massive amounts of pumice, rocks and cinder, and is now covered with a mantle of pine trees and mediterranean scrub. From the summit, easily reached with a nice walk,

you can admire the volcanic crater, whose bottom is covered in rich vegetation. Recently, the Nature Oasis of Monte Nuovo has been founded.

"Temple of Apollo" at the lake of Averno



famous travellers

You cannot imagine anything more romantic than the short walk from the lake of Averno to the entrance of the cave, especially for those with their heads full of legends... It is possible that Virgil had this place in mind when he elaborated his tale.

Johann Gottfried Seume, 1802





Baia. Underwater Archaeological Park

Baia, Bacoli and Miseno

In **Baia** you arrive to the richest of the Phlegrean archaeological wonders. The grandiose Roman ruins speak of ancient splendour, when the area was the centre of the most elegant holiday resorts.

The luxurious and licentious lifestyle there provoked the invectives of both Seneca and Propertius, while Horace described the gulf as "the most enchanting in the world"

Most of the fabulous buildings of Baia have been submerged by the sea. These ruins constitute the

Baia Underwater Park

Excursions with special boats and underwater films show the mosaic pavements, walls, columns and other remains. At the centre of the area is the villa of Lucius Piso, father-in-law of Julius Caesar. At Punta Epitaffio a nymphaeum of the emperor Claudius was discovered, a luxurious hall decorated with statues that, after having been recovered, are now exhibited at the Archaeological Museum of the Phlegrean Fields in the Aragonese Castle. The entire side of the hill that gives onto the Gulf of Baia is covered in archaeological ruins spread out over the terraced land. They make up the Baia Archaeological Park, a huge complex of buildings

The area is divided in three sections: to the south the Venus section, in the centre that of Sosandra, and to the east Mercury.

that were probably an imperial residence.

The Venus thermal spas are in a great covered hall with a half cupola. The complex also included a large circular hall outside of the archaeological park, almost at the port, known as the Temple of Venus.

The Sosandra spas spread out over the scenic terracings with a lower portico, a nymphean theatre, residences with arched walkways and gardens, is to be imagined covered in mosaics, statues and paintings.

The Mercury thermal complex gets its name from the grand hall with dome where echoes return. Just north of the park, visible from the street, is the Diana Temple (3rd century AD). Named after its marble bas reliefs of animals, it is a large octagonal thermal hall.

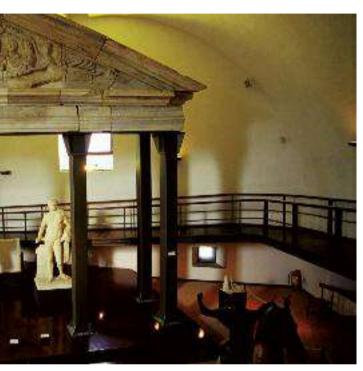
The splendid Aragonese Castle (built in the 1400's and restructured by the viceroys) serves as a backdrop for the Phlegrean Fields Archaeological Museum, home to the relics from Baia, Miseno and Pozzuoli. The view from the terraces of the fortress is unforgettable.



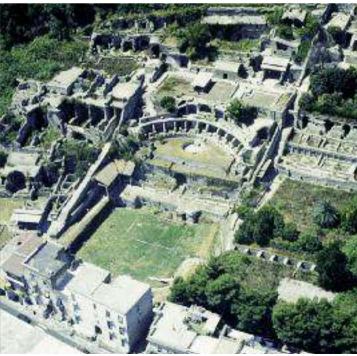


Nero's Baths, the ruins of Baiæ, the Temple of Serapis; Cumæ, where the Cumæn Sybil interpreted the oracles, the Lake Agnano, with its ancient submerged city still visible far down in its depths.

Mark Twain, 1869



The Nymphaeum of Punta Epitaffio Archaeological Museum of the Phlegrean Fields





famous travellers

And each time we reach higher ground, we discover an ample and splendid landscape. In front, the calm, blue sea; down below, enveloped in a light haze, the coast of Italy, the classic coastline of even rocks; Capo Miseno closes in the distance, everything in the distance.

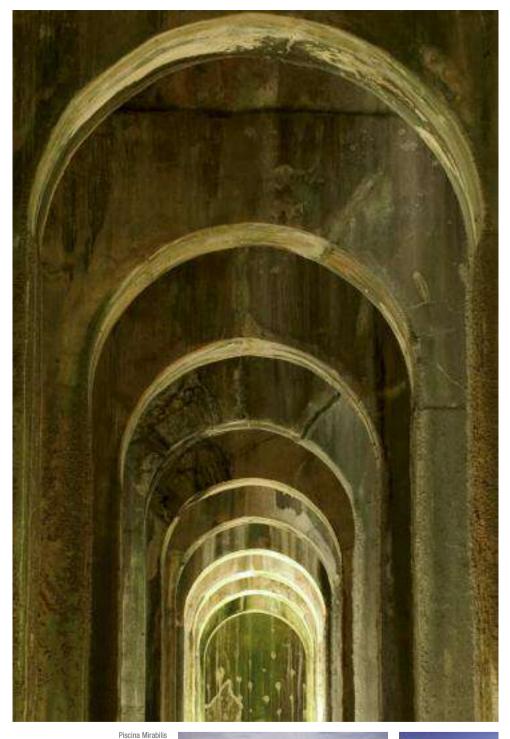
Guy de Maupassant, 1890

54

The architectonic and sculptural complex of the Shrine of the Augustals from Miseno is on the ground floor of the museum. It is a small temple from the Augustinian period (1st century AD) dedicated to the imperial cult. The facade and the statues of Vespasian and Titus remains of the structure, as well as the bronze equestrian statue of Domitian (when he was killed, the face of the statue was replaced with that of Nerva, his successor). On the upper floor we find the extraordinary complex of the Nymphaeum of Punta Epitaffio (the cape that closes to the east the Gulf of Baia), in an exhibit that reconstructs the original hall designated to host sumptuous banquets. Submerged by the effect of bradyseism and found during underwater excavations in the 70's, it is a triclinium coated in marble and decorated with statues that recall episodes of Polyphemus' drunkenness. Ulysses and his companion offer wine to the Cyclops (whose statue is lost). Two statues of Dionysus and various portrait-statues of personalities of the Imperial family complete the group. Another priceless part of the museum shows statues and architectonic decorations from the excavations of the Rione Terra of Pozzuoli. The Plasters of Baia section is also interesting. It shows fragments of the moulds used to reproduce famous statues found in that which is probably the atelier of the Baian sculptors that specialised in decorating the sumptuous villas of the coast.

Between Baia and Miseno, Bacoli was constructed on the Roman city of Bauli. On the highest part of the city there is a grand installation of two-story cisterns known as **Cento Camerelle** (1st century BC). The upper cistern, with a rectangular layout, is divided into four naves; the lower one is a complicated network of tunnels dug into the tuff rock. A thin strip of coast separates the sea from a salt lagoon, the lake of Fusaro, creating a formidable ecosystem where fish and mussels are farmed. On the lake, on an islet united to the land by a small bridge, is the 1700's 'Casino Reale', a gracious Rococo building by Carlo Vanvitelli. Capo Miseno – the name derives from the herald of Aeneas, of whom, according to legend, the promontory is an immense tomb – was chosen by the Romans in the time of Augustus to take the place of Portus Julius of Baia, by now buried in sand. The main Roman naval fleet was stationed here. Miseno is also an important bathing destination, much appreciated by children who can splash about in all safety on the shallow soft sandy bottom. On one side of the mythical promontory is the Bay, on the other side the lake of Miseno (also known as the "Dead Sea" for its shallow waters), a coastal lagoon joined to the port by an outlet, and to the sea by a canal that crosses the big beach of Miliscola. Of the ancient city all that remains are the ruins of the public baths and the Shrine of the Augustals, dedicated to the imperial cult (reconstructed in the Archaeological Museum of the Phlegrean Fields). The most imposing monument of Miseno is surely the **Piscina Mirabilis**, an immense reservoir for the restocking of the fleet. Carved into the tuff rock, with the vaults upheld by four lines of pillars, this grandiose space, empty and silent, illuminated by a dim light, is extremely evocative.

Upon exiting Bacoli, the street climbs up to **Monte di Procida**, one of the most panoramic spots of the entire phlegrean area. From every corner a magnificent view is to be enjoyed, whether over the Gulf of Pozzuoli, with Vesuvius and Mount Faito on the horizon, or of Ischia and Procida.



The 'Casino Reale' at Fusaro Miseno. Moresca cove





Cuma

From the Fusaro area you go to the oldest part of the Phlegrean Fields: Cuma, the first of the Greek colonies on Italian land, founded in about 730 BC. It soon became a flourishing commercial centre, destination of important mercantile routes and centre for the exchange of goods with the inland, gaining supremacy along the entire coast. Its inhabitants went on to found other cities along the coast, among which *Neapolis* in 470 BC.

The Archaeological Park includes the acropolis and a part of the lower city where the forum, the Sybil's Cave, the 'Arco Felice' and the Amphitheatre are to be found.

On the acropolis of Cuma, an outcrop perched on a vertical cliff over the water, traces of Greek fortifications are still visible. Two great temples, transformed into churches in the middle ages, also give testimony to the Greek period. The Temple of Apollo, with very little elements of the first archaic temple, still has its podium and shows the traces of a Roman remake in Augustan times. There are also traces of the octagonal baptistery of the paleo-christian church. Of the Temple of Jupiter the oldest phases are barely identifiable, whereas the Roman period and paleo-christian church are better documented.

For the Romans Cuma was a sacred place, a holy city:

For the Romans Curina was a sacred piace, a noty city: according to the tale of Virgil, here the Sybil revealed to Aeneas his future as founder of Rome. It is understandable, then, that the most important feature of the acropolis is the so-called **Sybil's Cave**: a long tunnel that ends in a three-roomed niche, believed to be the seat of the Sybil of Cuma. The lower part of the city was the **Forum** in Samnite and Roman times, an ample rectangular arcaded square. The most important monument here is the grandiose **Temple of Jupiter**, of the Hellenistic period (3rd century BC), frequently restructured up until the Imperial era. Near the Forum there is also a large thermal complex dating back to Republican times. Outside the city walls are the remains of the **Amphitheatre** (2nd century BC), one of the

Leaving the city going east one passes under the 'Arco Felice' (20 mt high, 6 wide) constructed to allow the Via Domitiana through Mount Grillo.

oldest of the Roman world.





where the Sybil lives

The Sybil of Cuma was a priestess sacred to the god Apollo: from her cavern she gave ambiguous

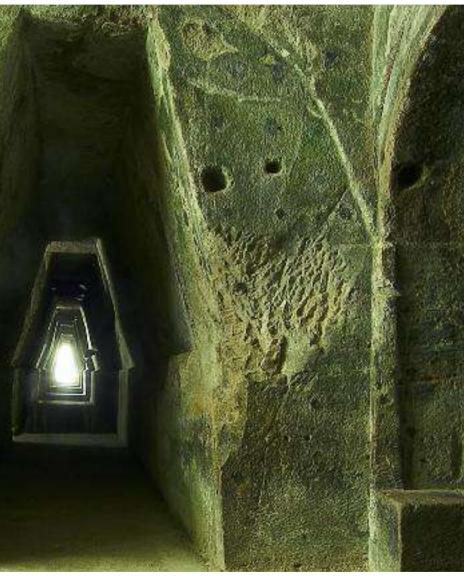
interpretations of the future. Legend has it that the priestess had received immortality from the god, as she had requested. She had, however, forgotten to ask for eternal youth, thus becoming old and shrivelled. In Petronius' Satyricon she is depicted as tiny, locked in a bottle, and

invoking death in vain. The fame of Sybil and her cave is also tied to Virgil, who writes of her in the 6th book of the Aeneid. Aeneas goes to Cuma to the Sybil, who reveals to him his future as founder of the glorious Roman civilisation.

I saw the places of Virgil... then the lakes of Averno and Lucrino, and stagnant waters of Acheronte. I saw the fatherland, and the house of Sybil and that fearful cave from which fools do not return and where wisemen do not dare go.

Francesco Petrarca, 1343







The Temple of Jupiter



57

Vesuvius





The crater of Vesuvius

famous travellers

At a distance the mountain seems to be harmless, the blue outline of the lofty cone terminating in a dense bank of smoke, like storm clouds gathering around the snowy peaks of the distant Apennines; but when the adventurous tourist wishes to approach nearer to its blazing crater, and toils up its torn and blackened sides, he will see in the immense chasms and rents traces of might convulsions.

A.J. O' Reilly, 1884

Whoever says Vesuvius, says Campania.

Neapolitans call the most famous mountain in the world 'A Muntagna. It is the symbol of the City that, with its perfect form, closes the Gulf.

The majestic cone dominates a disquieting and evocative environment. Tormented landscapes of savage beauty await the visitor: the panorama from the top of the mountain extends from the Sorrentine Peninsula to Capo Posillipo, giving rise to unforgettable memories, especially in the tenuous light of sunrise or with the intense ones of sunset.

Vesuvius is the only active volcano in continental Europe, and is also one of its most dangerous, as the land at its feet is densly populated and the houses arrive up to 700 mt above sea level. The summit to the left is that of Mount Somma (1133 mt), and to the right the cone of Vesuvius (1281 mt). They are seperated by a valley called 'Valle del Gigante' (Valley of the Giant), in turn subdivided into 'Atrio del Cavallo' (Hall of the Horse, West) and 'Valle del Inferno' (Valley of Hell, East).

The original inhabitants had forgotten that they were dealing with a volcano: it was known solely for its excellent wines and for the thick vegetation that covered its summit. It became suddenly famous when, in 79 BC, it erupted. Entire cities, among which Pompeii, Herculaneum and Stabia, were destroyed. The last eruption, filmed by Allied troops, was in 1944. Since then the volcano has been dormant.

In 1991 the institution of Vesuvius National Park was decreed, and the "World Biosphere Reserve" status was given to it by Unesco. This comprises all of the area around the volcano, the entire archaeological system of Pompeii. Herculaneum. Oplontis and the Miglio d'Oro (Golden Mile) with its splendid examples of 1700's and 1800's villas. As for the flora, the territories of the Vesuvius and the Somma differ in certain aspects. The former is more arid and sunny, with typical mediterranean vegetation, pine woods and holm-oak stands. The latter is moister, with woods of chestnut, oak, adler, maple and holm-oak trees. Among these you can come across, rarely, a splendid stand of birches, unusual for this mediterranean environment. There are also many orchids, 23 species in all, and the bright yellow broom, that so enchanted the poet Giacomo Leopardi. The fauna of the Park is also particularly interesting.



Azienda Autonoma di Cura Soggiorno e Turismo di Pompei via Sacra 1 tel. 081 8508451 www.pompeiturismo.it

Ufficio Turistico di Ercolano via IV Novembre tel. 081 7881243

Ente Parco Nazionale del Vesuvio via Palazzo del Principe -Castello Mediceo Ottaviano (NA) tel. 081 8653911 www.epnv.it

Fondazione Ente Ville Vesuviane Uff. Eventi - Villa Campolieto

Uff. Eventi - Villa Campolieto Corso Resina - Ercolano (NA) tel. 081 7322134 www.villevesuviane.net

Cimitile

Complesso delle Basiliche Paleocristiane - via Madonnelle tel. 081 19143141

Ercolano

Scavi - Corso Resina tel. 081 7324311 Villa Campolieto - C.so Resina tel. 081 7322134

Museo Vulcanologico dell'Osservatorio Vesuviano via Osservatorio 14 tel. 081 6108483 www.ov.ingv.it

Oplontis

Scavi - via Sepolcri 12 Torre Annunziata (NA) tel. 081 8621755

Pompei

Scavi - via Villa dei Misteri 2 tel. 081 8575347 www.pompeiisites.org Santuario della Madonna del Rosario tel. 081 8577111 www.santuario.it

the Vesuvian Observatory

The Vesuvian Observatory is the oldest scientific institution dedicated to the study of volcanos, and was founded in 1841. The original seat, an elegant neoclassic-style building, is on Vesuvius, between Herculaneum and Torre del Greco at a height of 608 mt. The old Bourbon building hosts a permanent exhibition that takes the visitor for a fascinating journey into the world of volcanos.



the Wine Trails and typical products of Vesuvius

Central to the Trail is the Vesuvio Doc, which safeguards the famous old Lacryma Christi wine. not to be missed

Pompeii

Herculaneum

Climb to the top of Vesuvio

Villa Campolieto

vesuvian area in 1 day

Pompeii

Vesuvius National Park

vesuvian area in 3 days

Pompeii and Herculaneum

Vesuvius National Park
Portici Royal Palace

Vesuvian Villas of the Golden

Mi

Sanctuary of Pompeii

5 O

The Park has many **trails**, differing in the scenery and levels of difficulty.

The Park Authority of Vesuvius has realised 9 trails for those who love to hike, well signalled with four different trail types: agricultural (Trail 7) panoramic (6), educational (9) and loop (from 1 to 5 and 8).

The historic climb is that which takes you to the crater: the trail, of medium difficulty, leaves from Herculaneum, takes three hours and is four km long, taking you to 1170 mt, where the view extends over the entire gulf on one side, and into the abyss of the crater on the other. It is 600 mt wide and 200 deep.

The trail has been travelled by many: from Ceckov, who lived it like a torment ("What martyrship it is to climb Vesuvius! Walk, walk, walk, and the summit is still so distant!") to Chateaubriand, the most audacious ("Here I am on the top of Vesuvius. I am writing sitting on the mouth of the crater and am ready to descend into the depths of its crater!")

Today it is possible to go up by car or bus. The best roads leave from Herculaneum, Ottaviano and Somma Vesuviana. The road that goes up from Herculaneum is the most interesting for its beautiful views of the gulf and for the evocative natural environment. The first part takes you through vineyards. From 1017 meters one proceeds on foot over a path made of lava cinder that takes you to the edge of the crater.



art and archaeology

Pompeii and Herculaneum

Oplontis

Portici Royal Palace

Vesuvian Villas of the Golden Mile nature and parks
Vesuvius National Park

for young people

'Granatello' port in Portici

San Giorgio a Cremano

shopping

Coral and cameos

Lava rock, copper and wrought iron and wicker objects

outings with children

Pompeii

Vesuvius National Park

Vesuvian Observatory

Park of the Royal Palace

of Portici

Villa Bruno at San Giorgio

a Cremano





Villa Campolieto

specialities

Vesuvian wines

Vesuvian apricots
Cherry tomatoes on the vine
Stockfish from Somma
Vesuviana

spas and fitness

Thermal spas of Torre Annunziata

Herculaneum and its treasures

62

After a long sleep, Vesuvius woke up on the 24th of August of 79 AD, taking the local population by surprise. The eruption was apocalyptic: life at the foot of the volcano was cancelled. Of the cities that were buried even the memory was lost. After 1,700 years, these lost cities of the Vesuvius started to reappear, offering to all of humanity the two most important archaeological sites in the world: Herculaneum and Pompeii. Unlike Pompeii, covered by a layer of ashes and lapillus, Herculaneum was submerged by a 25 meters thick layer of mud and lava. It was the mud that preserved it all, sealing everything; cloth and food underwent a slow transformation, remaining, however, un-altered in their wrapping, almost petrified. In 1709 Prince d'Elboeuf, digging a well in one of his villas, came upon the Theatre by chance. In 1738 Charles of Bourbon ordered the start of the excavations. The most clamorous surprise was the majestic Villa of Papyri, from which the bronze and marble sculptural patrimony (today in the Archaeological Museum of Naples), and the papyrus library (more than 1.800 philosophical texts, now housed in the Naples National Library) were extracted. In 1927, the excavation of the homes and public offices begun: in the north they reached the Forum, centre of economic, social and political life, to the east the sports centres, and to the south the suburban thermal spas.

At *Herculaneum* the wealthy Romans enjoyed their vacations, as testimonied by the sumptuous villas on the sea. The streets, paved with vesuvian lava rock or limestone, outline the charactaristic "insulae" (island) urban planning. One of the most beautiful dwellings of the city is the House with the Mosaic Atrium, which owes its name to the beautiful black and white pavement. In the garden of the luxurious House of the Deer statues of deer attacked by dogs, of the Satyr with goatskin, and a drunken Hercules were found. The Thermal spas of the Forum were the public bathing houses of the city. In the House of the carbonised furniture, the wooden furniture is still in its original place: a bed and a small table. The House of the mosaic of Neptune and Amphitrite, with its shop (the most well preserved), has a grandiose atrium and the most beautiful mosaics of the city. The House of Argus, on two floors, has a garden encircled by porticos and columns. In the public realm, the **Forum** was excavated, crossed by the main street (decumanus maximus) and the Shrine of the Augustals, decorated with frescoes. Along the 'decumanus' there are porticos that bring to mind a public gathering place, probably the Basilica. Noteworthy the Palestra, a grand augustian building with an open-air swimming pool with, in its centre, a bronze fountain in the shape of a hydris. Outside the city walls the Suburban Thermal Spas can be admired. The Villa of Papyri, only partially excavated, is open to the public, but the **Theatre** is not. It takes about half a day to visit the Herculaneum excavations

House of Neptune



Q

typical products

Vesuvian agricultural products, thanks to its rich mineral soil, excellent drainage and mediterranean

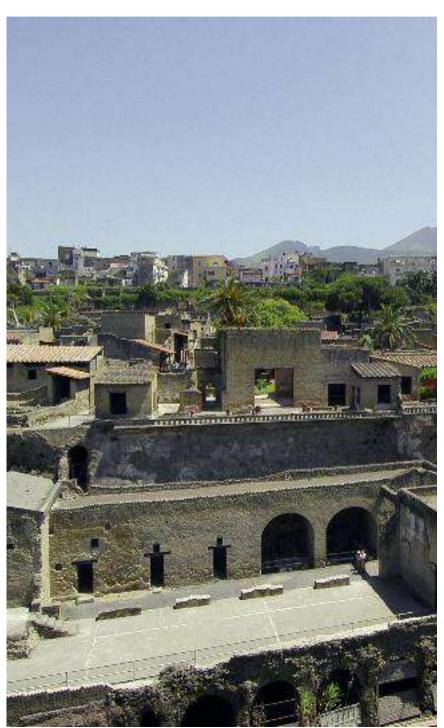
climate, are unique in their variety of produce and original flavour. Typical products are the apricots and cherries, as well as the famous cherry tomatoes "del piènnolo" (on the vine). On the slopes of the volcano the Falanghina grapes of Vesuvius, Coda di Volpe (locally known as Caprettone) and the

Piedirosso del Vesuvio are cultivated. These grapes are harvested to make the famous Lacryma Christi (Tears of Christ), a wine with a pleasant bouquet and an aromatic and dry flavour. The great Catalanesca table grape is cultivated on the slopes of Mount Somma, where a great deal of honey is produced.

63

I have just come from speaking... of Vesuvius and of the recently discovered ancient city of Herculaneum. Nothing is more remarkable than having found an entire city in the bossom of the earth.

Charles de Brosses, 1739



Scavi di Ercolano



Pompeii, the buried city

Pompeii, with four fifths of its urban area already excavated, is the most famous and evocative archaeological site in the world.

The eruption of Vesuvius in 79 AD buried the city in a 6-7 meter thick layer of ash and cinder. Most of its inhabitants, escaping from their homes, found their deaths on the shore. The remaining few, in a vain attempt to save themselves in their basements, died asphyxiated: the moulds of their agonized bodies. obtained by pouring plaster into the cavities left by the bodies in the layers of ash, give moving testimony to the tragedy. A walk amongst the excavations of Pompeii is a unique experience. It is a journey into the past: one captures the feeling of life in ancient times, public, and, above all, private. The most surprising aspect is, in fact, the high number of homes, luxurious or humble, that have preserved their bottles, glassware and ovens. Even more surprising the amount of furnishings that have remained intact, permitting us to see into the most personal aspects of the life of the inhabitants. In the summer months evening tours of the excavations are held. Along the route the most evocative aspects of Pompeii by night are revealed, accompanied by haunting music. A multi-media presentation re-enacts the dramatic phases of the eruption.

The Forum was the active centre of the city: a large rectangular piazza (38x142 mt), it was paved with travertine and closed in on three sides by porticos. The *Capitolium* (a temple dedicated to Jupiter), the Temple of Apollo (built in the 3rd century BC and made up of a 48 lonic columned portico) and the Basilica, the most important public building, seat of the courts of justice and centre of economic life, all give onto the square. The Vespasian Temple also gave onto the square, and was dedicated to the Imperial cult, as did the graineries and the *Macellum*, the covered fresh produce, meat and fish market, with indoor "tabernae" (shops).

Nearby is the **Forum Thermal baths**, divided into sections for men and women, with shared central heating.

The via Abbondanza (th road of Abundance) was the main artery of the city (tha name is modern, as are all Pompeiian names) along which all sorts of businesses plied their trade: craftsmen, stores, inns and laundries. The Stabiane Baths, the oldest of Pompeii, is along this road. Not far is the famous brothel, a two-story building whose true purpose was revealed by the many erotic paintings and licentious graffiti decorating it.









famous travellers

The appeal in short was genial, and, faring out to Pompeii of a Sunday afternoon, I enjoyed there, for the only time I can recall, the sweet chance of a late hour or two, the hour of the lengthening shadows, absolutely alone. The impression remains ineffaceable.

Henry James, 1900

66

Of all the houses, the **House of the Faun** is considered the most beautiful: for its architectural elegance and for the famous mosaics, like the one representing the battle of Alexander and Darius, a masterpiece now in the Archaeological Museum of Naples.

The **house** belonging to the merchant brothers **Vettii** is admired for the many splendid frescoes that adorn the walls. The **Menandro house**, that takes its name from a painting showing the Greek comedy playwright Menandro, is the source of a rich collection of exceptionally high quality silverware (now in the Archaeological Museum of Naoles).

The **Villa dei Misteri** (of the Mysteries) is one of the most important buildings of Pompeii for its paintings. The most famous is the huge fresco that gave the Villa its name: 29 life-sized figures, painted with vivid colours on a red background, seem to depict some sort of Dionysian initiation ceremony or Orphic rite.

In the Theatre District two theatres have been recovered from the ashes: The **Teatro Grande**, where shows are organised in summer, and the little Odeion. Nearby is the lovely **Temple of Isis**. An epigraph demonstrates that the **Amphitheatre** is the oldest of the ones we know. Here gladiators wrestled with one another and with animals. Next to the amphitheatre is the **Palestra Grande** (Big Gymnasium), constructed under the reign of Augustus and used for gymnastic exercises. It is a large porticoed area with in its centre a swimming pool with diving board. A sunset visit to the **via dei Sepolcri** (the road of the Tombs) is particularly evocative, as the road passes by funeral monuments on its way to Herculaneum. A tour of the Pompeii excavations takes at least one day.

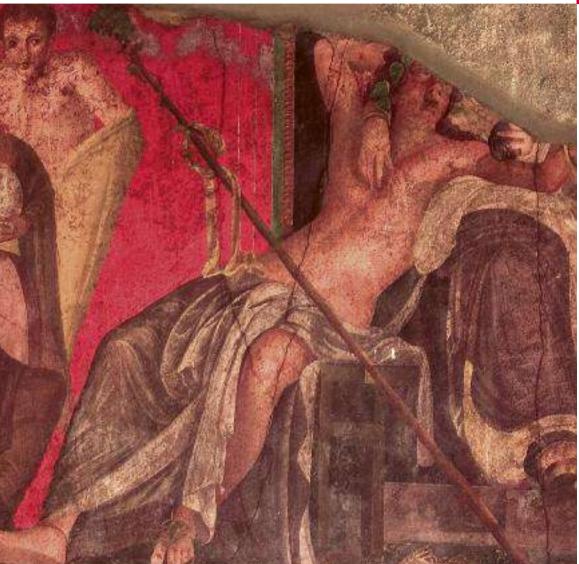


Q

the Villa of Poppea at Oplontis

In Oplontis, an ancient suburb of Pompeii, also destroyed by the eruption of 79 AD (now belonging to the town of Torre Annunziata), a villa that might have belonged to Poppea Sabina, Nero's second wife, has been found. It is one of the most grandiose and best preserved examples of vacation villas (1st century BC). Although it had been already partially abandonded at the time due

following an earthquake in 62 AD (17 years prior to the eruption), the Villa, for its decorations and the beauty of its panorama, has no need to envy Imperial residences.



Fresco in the Villa dei Misteri

the Sanctuary of the Blessed Virgin of Pompeii

The Sanctuary of the Madonna del Rosario (our Lady of the Rosary), built at the behest of the blessed Bartolo Longo, is one of the major centres of Marian devotion in Italy and the whole world. Built between 1876 and 1891, it was enlarged in 1933-39. The interior of the Pontifical Basilica is richly decorated with marble, frescos and mosaics. On the main altar a XVII century canvas of the Madonna di Pompei, by the

School of Luca Giordano, is venerated. It is surrounded by paintings on copper by Vincenzo Paliotti. On May 8th and the first Sunday in October, the Supplica, a prayer to Our Lady written by Longo himself, is recited in the Sanctuary. Every year the Sanctuary, described by Pope John Paul II the 'International

centre of spirituality for the Rosary', is visited every year by around 4 million pilgrims from all over the world. The corridors next to the Basilica are plastered with votive offerings, and the Museum exhibits precious objects received from sovereigns and the faithful from every country.

The Royal Palace of Portici and the villas of the Golden Mile

The Miglio d'Oro (Golden Mile) is a part of the road that goes from Portici to Torre Annunziata, flanked by stupendous Villas. The Neapolitan aristocracy began to build here in the 1700's to imitate King Charles of Bourbon, who had a beautiful palace at Portici made for himself. To those who dared make mention of its dangerous vicinity to Vesuvius, Queen Maria Amalia would answer "God, the Immaculate Virgin Mary and Saint Gennaro will worry about that"! And so was born one of the architectural and

historical patrimonies of the area, the Golden Mile of

The Royal Palace of Portici, intended as the summer home of King Charles of Bourbon, briefly served a double purpose: royal Residence and home of the Herculanean Museum (objects uncovered at the excavations were kept here). Today the palace is seat of the Agriculture Faculty of the University. In the main body of the palace some of the frescoed rooms on the "noble floor" are interesting. The Park is very beautiful, a favourite meeting place for the residents of Portici. Ferdinand IV had the "little fort" (small copy of the fort in Capua) built here to render military exercises more realistic.

The **Vesuvian Villas** (there are 121) were built with a taste for the splendid views of the Gulf. It is here that the Bourbon aristocracy spent its holidays until, after the unification of Italy, a steady decline set in. Many have only recently been restored.

At Herculaneum a visit to **Villa Campolieto** is well worth it. It is the most famous of the works of Luigi and Carlo Vanvitelli, renown for its beautiful exhedra that opens onto the Gulf and where, in the summer, an important theatre festival is held. The plays are also performed at other villas along the Golden Mile, like **La Favorita** (The Favourite), realised in 1768 by Ferdinando Fuga, with its lovely park by the seaside.



Villa Ruggiero

the Vesuvian Villas





For almost 200 years Torre del Greco has been synonymous with coral. The famous master craftsmen still create splendid ornaments working with this precious material. Another ancient tradition is the working of Vesuvian lava rock: a hard, black compact rock that takes on a silvery As I was leaving the old picture gallery at Portici I encountered three English Officers that were on their way in. I went off at a gallop towards Naples, but, before getting to the Maddalena Bridge, I was joined by the three Englishmen who told me that those paintings are among the most extraordinay things in the universe.

Stendhal, 1817





Villa Favorita

Villa Campolieto

The Royal Palace
of Portici





famous travellers

Villa Favorita was once used for many games and amusements in Autumn. With its garden, its flowers, its orange groves and resting house, it was an enchanted place.

Errico Alvino, 1845

60

Nola and the Cimitile Basilicas

70

Among the cities on the very fertile plains that stretch out around Vesuvius. Nola is worth a visit. Do not miss the Historic Archaeological Musuem in the halls of the former Canossian Convent. Preserved here are relics that date back to the Bronze Age (circa 4,000 years ago) found not far from the city, buried by the great eruption known as "Pomici di Avellino" (Avellino Pomice) in 1900 BC. In the atrium the Cippus Abellanus, a block of stone with, incised on two sides with oscan writing, a federal treatise between Nola and Avella. In the **Diocesan Museum**, next to the Cathedral. 1600's wooden reliquary busts and codices in miniature are exhibited. In the historic centre, on piazza Giordano Bruno, sits the Orsini Palace. constructed between 1460 and 1500, today seat of the Courts of Justice. A stroll on the hills around the town can be interesting as the Episcopal Seminary. the Capuchin Convent, the picturesque Cicala Castle ruins, with its hamlet, and the Camaldoli Hermitage can all be found there.

A few kilometers from Nola is the town of **Cimitile**, famous for its magnificent complex of **paleo-christian basilicas**. The name derived from a cemetery in use since the 2nd century AD. Near this pagan necropolis the first Christians buried their dead and found refuge from persecution. San Felice was buried here, and around his tomb a sanctuary developed. In 394 the noble Paolino, who later became Bishop of Nola and Saint, had a Basilica constructed. Around these sacred places a complex flourished, made up of basilicas, churches, and shrines, in all at least 13 buildings, all decorated with frescoes and mosaics; one of the most fascinating examples of paleo-christian art in Italy.



On Easter Monday, in front of the Madonna dell'Arco, ends the pilgrimage that every year sees a dense crowd of barefoot faithful follow an ancient trail up to the Sanctuary of Maria Santissima dell'Arco (from the name of the ward of the Vesuvian town of Sant'Anastasia, known as Arco for the presence of a Roman aqueduct). The faithful are called 'fujenti' ('runners' from the

neapolitan for "those that run"). They dress in white shirt and trousers with a light blue scarf around their necks (the colour of the Madonna) and a red one around their waists. They are also known as "beaters" for the rhythm their feet beat. Inside the sanctuary the walls are covered in a

enormous number of ex-votos received over the centuries.





I had just entered Nola, when something strange caught my eye...I saw a kind of tower, tall and narrow, all decorated with red paper, gilted wood and silver friezes, carried on the shoulders of men...this colossus seemed at any moment ready to lose its equilibrium and topple over; all the figures were in motion, the flags flapping; it was a fantastic vision.

Ferdinand Gregorovius, 1853







The Nola Festival



the Gigli Festival of Nola

The Festival celebrates the return of Bishop Paolino from his imprisonment in Africa (410 AD) when he

was welcomed back with flowers and candles (cilii, from which the name gigli). In memory of this event for centuries the Nolans have carried ever larger candles and torches (up to the present day 25 mt high wooden towers) covered in paper-mache decorations. The heavy gigli are made to

"dance" by the "paranze di cullatori" (the teams of the 'rockers') each carried by about 128 people. The festival takes place on the first Sunday after June 22nd, the feast of San Paolino.



The Islands of the Gulf of Naples

72





Ischia. Aragonese

famous travellers

The islands of our archipelago, down there, on the Neapolitan sea, are all beautiful.

Elsa Morante, 1957

All different, due to their diverse natural charactaristics and attractions, the three islands are a must for any tourist in search of excitement: from the evocative Procida to the health spas of Ischia, to the mythical Capri, rich with Roman remains and immersed in exceptional natural beauty. Legendary places, rife with history, whose fascination only grows with time.

All three can be reached from Naples or from Pozzuoli. Procida and Ischia, known as the Phlegrean islands, are north of the Gulf, in front of Pozzuoli. Capri is in front of the Sorrentine Peninsula.



Azienda di Cura Soggiorno e Turismo Ischia e Procida via A. Sogliuzzo 72 Ischia tel. 081 5074230 www.infoischiaprocida.it

Azienda di Cura Soggiorno e Turismo Capri piazzetta Cerio 11 tel. 081 8370918

www.capritourism.com

Certosa di San Giacomo

Capri

via Certosa di S. Giacomo tel. 081 8376218 Museo I. Cerio piazzetta Cerio 5 tel. 081 8376681 Villa Jovis via Tiberio tel. 081 8370634 Villa San Michele viale Axel Munthe Anacapri tel. 081 8371401 Grotta Azzurra Gruppo Motoscafisti via Provinciale Marina Grande ufficio tel. 081 8375646 pontile tel. 081 8377714 www.motoscafisticapri.com

Ischia

Museo di Pithecusae corso Angelo Rizzoli Lacco Ameno tel. 081 900356 www.pithecusae.it not to be missed Procida

Terra Murata Marina di Corricella

Ischia
Lacco Ameno
Forio d'Ischia
Sant'Angelo

Ischia Ponte

Capri
Blue Grotto
Piazza Umberto I
("la Piazzetta")
Punta Tragara and the

Faraglioni
Villa San Michele (Anacapri)

procida in 1 day

Marina Grande Terra Murata

Marina di Corricella Marina di Chiaiolella ischia in 1 day

Port of Ischia Lacco Ameno Forio d'Ischia Sant'Angelo

Ischia Ponte

capri in 1 day

Via Krupp

Blue Grotto
Piazza Umberto I ("la Piazzetta")

Certosa di San Giacomo

Marina Piccola

Punta Tragara and the Faraglioni Baths of Tiberius



art and archaeology

Procida Terra Murata

Ischia
Aragonese Castle

(Ischia Ponte)
Archaeological Museum
of Pithecusae (Lacco Ameno)
Santa Restituta excavations
(Lacco Ameno)

Madonna del Soccorso sanctuary (Forio) Capri
Certosa di San Giacomo
Villa Jovis
Villa Malaparte
Villa San Michele (Anacapri)
Bagni di Tiberio
Casa Rossa (Anacapri)
Chiesa di Santo Stefano
Museo Archeologico

"I. Cerio"

nature and parks

Procida

Natural Oasis of Vivara

Ischia

Mount Epomeo

La Mortella Garden (Forio)

apri

Mount Solaro (Anacapri)
Mount Barbarossa Oasis
(Anacapri)
Augusto Gardens

for young people

Procida

Marina of Chiaiolella

Ischia

'Rive Droite' at Ischia Porto Sant'Angelo

Capri
Anacapri
La 'Piazzetta'
Via Camerelle

shopping

Procida

Limoncello

Lacework and embroidery

Ischia

Artistic ceramics

Natural cosmetics

Wine

Capri

Capri Limoncello

Caprese fashion

Capri essences Caprese sandals

Wine

outings with children

Procida

Marina of Chiaiolella

Terra Murata

Ischia

Aragonese Castle (Ischia Ponte)

Farmers Museum of Ischia

(Panza)

Sea Museum (Ischia Ponte)

Sant'Angelo

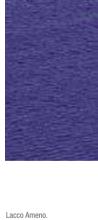
Capri

Baths of Tiberius

Monte Solaro chairlift

Blue Grotto





Panorama from Monte Corvino

specialities

Procida

Lemons of Procida

Ischia

Ischia Rabbit

Doc Wines of Ischia

Capri

Caprese salad Limoncello of Capri

Caprese Ravioli

Caprese cakes

Cicerchie soup (Anacapri)

Doc Capri wines

spas and fitness

Establishments and thermal parks, beauty centres of the major hotels

Capri

Beauty centres of the major hotels

Procida

Procida, the smallest and least known of these islands, has kept unaltered its mediterranean identity. With strong seafaring ties, it is an ideal destination for those seeking an out-of-the-way holiday, far from the mass tourism routes. It is geologically tied to the Phlegrean Fields area that from the west of Naples goes to Cuma. The tuff ground and the jagged coast confirm its volcanic origins. Compared to Ischia and Capri, famous tourist destinations, Procida still today seems like an island "to discover", fascinating for its quiet streets, the vivid colours of the ancient buildings and the villages clinging to the rocks above the little ports. The rich vegetation that acts as backdrop for the mediterranean architecture, the pristine and splendid sea and the beautiful boulders of the coast, all make for unusual and exciting scenery.

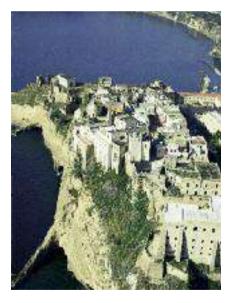
The Port of Sancio Cattolico, also known as Marina Grande, is where the boats that arrive from Naples and Pozzuoli dock. The brightly coloured houses that face the sea are the first images that welcome the visitor. This fishing village is dominated by the Castle that sits on the top of a sheer cliff overlooking the sea, on the inside of the highest part of the island, Terra Murata, heart of the island. This unusual quarter-city, that encloses medieval houses with courtyards and gardens, churches, buildings and a castle, has remained more or less intact for three hundred years.

Entering the city by its little alleys one is overcome by the magic of a rhythm of life from another era. From the belvedere the view is enchanting. The small port of Corricella is very characteristic, with its delightful architecture of intricate little houses one upon the other: intertwining alleys on to which doors and windows open make it seem like a natural stage setting.

The favourite place for bathers is the Marina di Chiaiolella, a lovely semicircular inlet closed by the old Santa Margherita promontory. The waterfront is the preferred promenade of the island. Separated from the Chiaiolella by a narrow strip of sea is the Procida lido, a busy bathing establishment. A long bridge unites la Chiaiolella with the islet of Vivara, an oasis protected by the WWF. Permission from the City of Procida is required to visit it.



Procida. Marina della Corricella



Terra Murata

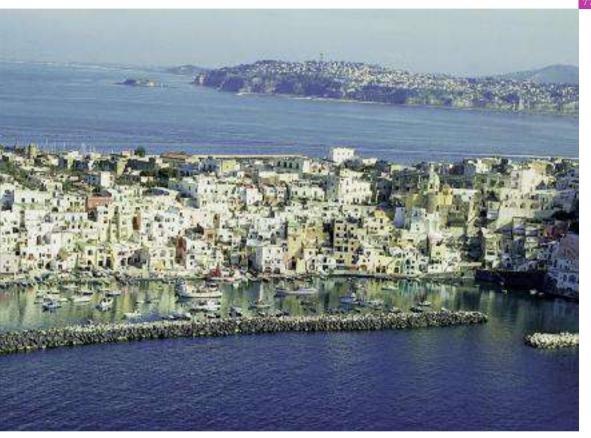
famous travellers

I was writing the story of Graziella on my knees, this sad and pleasant foreboding of love that I had found in the past in this same gulf, and I was writing it in front of the island of Procida, in sight of the ruins of the little house between the vines and the garden on the coast that her shadow seemed to point out to me like a finger.

famous travellers

My island has small solitary roads closed in by ancient walls, on the other side of which orchards and vineyards that seem like Imperial gardens stretch. It has several beaches of delicate and clear sand, and other shores that are smaller, covered in pebbles and seashells, and hidden between high cliffs.

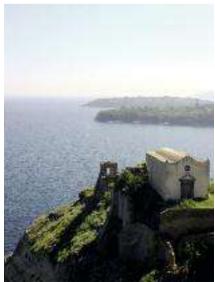
Elsa Morante, 1957





Procida in art

The first to celebrate Procida's charm was the french Alphonse de Lamartine in his novel Graziella (1852). In more recent times, Elsa Morante set her novel Arthur's Island (1957) in Procida, with a procidean boy as protagonist. Many films have been made here, among which "The Postman" with Massimo Troisi, based on the poet Pablo Neruda's stay in Italy.



View of Vivara

78

The largest island in the Gulf of Naples is a very popular destination and is visited in all seasons by travellers from all over the world, thanks also to its particularly mild climate. For its extraordinarily beautiful scenery the island has merited the name Green Island: the fertility of its terrain, which produces prized wines, also paints the island with heautiful flowers

Apart from the attraction of the scenery and its **bathing facilities**, that which makes Ishia a must are its **thermal baths**, famous for the quality of its waters and the landscape that is the backdrop for spas and thermal parks. The thermal wealth of the island is immense: 29 basins, and hundreds of mineral springs and fumaroles.

The use of the thermal-mineral waters for therapeutic reasons is ages old, and has contributed to spreading of the island's fame the world over. It has attracted the attention of travellers fascinated with the idea of treating their ills naturally and amidst an enchanted and uncontaminated scenery. Next to the baths, in fact, the islands' biggest claim to fame is its **scenery**. Breathtaking landscapes of valleys and hills, cliffs and beaches, woods and mountains.

The main centre is **Ischia**, made up of the two hubs of the Port, bathing and thermal venues, and Ponte, characteristic village dominated by the Aragonese Castle, a combination of construction from differing times closed in by a fortified wall

Enchanting are the towns of **Casamicciola Terme**, of the renown thermal springs, and **Lacco Armeno**, also famous for the curative nature of its spring waters.

Here, in the beautiful Villa Arbusto, the **Archaeological Museum of Pithecusae**, with many precious artifacts, has its home. Ischia was, in fact, the first Tyrrhenian settlement of the Greeks, founded in the 8th century BC, with the name Pithekousa (island of the 'pithekou' or monkeys, or the 'pithoi', clay vases). Some of the most important relics of the museum date back to those times, like the famous **Coppa di Nestore** (Nestor's Cup). From the crypt of the nearby **Santa Restituita Church** one enters the excavations of a paleo-christian basilica and the museum's relics that tell the story of the island from the time of the Greeks to the first Christians.

Forio, less visited by mass tourism, holds on to its strong tradition of fisherman's village. Here, on a rocky outcrop, the Santa Maria del Soccorso church stands out, with its tradition of local architecture intact. Sunset, in this little corner of paradise, with the reflected red of the blazing sun that seems to burn the white walls of the church, is a unique experience.

A 5th century **tower** dominates the centre of town and is home to the Civic Museum. The renown **beach of Citara** is one of the most beautiful on the island.

Near to Forio is the spectacular garden of Villa La Mortella, home of the composer Sir William Walton, projected by the famed landscape architect Russell Page. On the southern part of the island is the enchanting Sant'Angelo, a tiny fishing village now become an elegant tourist centre. Inland are Panza, in a lovely panoramic position, Serrara Fontana, from which excursions to Mount Epomeo depart, and Barano d'Ischia, on the hills that descend to the wide beach of Maronti, dotted with thermal springs and fumaroles. Mount Epomeo (788 mt) gives the island its unmistakable shape, dominates the coast below and offers breathtaking views over the Gulf of Naples. Once on the summit, a visit to the hermitage of San Nicola (15th century), entirely carved into tuff rock, is rewarding. Thanks to its climate, you can enjoy the beautiful sandy beaches of Ischia in almost any season. Food-lovers can explore the secrets of a cuisine strongly anchored in tradition and of wines produced with care by wine-makers with a true vocation.



Q

delicacies of land and sea

The wine and flavour trails of the island of Ischia are not to be missed: an itinerary that takes you to the wine cellars, vineyards, typical restaurants and artisanal shops to enjoy the great typical products and wines that prompted the Romans to call it 'Aenaria'. Great whites and reds from local grapes are still produced on the island today. The most cited of the whites are the Biancolella

and the Forastera, of the reds the Pere 'e palummo ("pigeon foot", with its grape-stalk red colour). Apart from the great seafood to be enjoyed in any of the island's many restaurants, Ischia is also famed for its traditional "land" cuisine, the most famous dish being rabbit,

and for the flavourful cherry tomatos.

Ischia could be seen as an immense vineyard; her fruits are exquisite and her figs were praised by Horace...

Audot, 1834



Forio. View from Chiaia beach



Ischia from the top of Mount Epomeo

Q

Nestore's Cup

The Archaeological Museum of Pithecusae in the Villa Arbusto houses Nestor's Cup (750 BC), which carries one of the oldest known Greek inscriptions, an allusion to the cup of the King of Pylos cited in Homer's *lliad*: "Of Nestor... the cup good to drink from, but he who drinks from it will soon be overcome by the desire for Aphrodite of the beautiful crown".



30

"One of the magnetic points of the earth". That is how the writer and painter Alberto Savinio described Capri, one of the most famous islands on earth. This immense cliff that rises from the abysses is a true miracle combining earth, sky, sea and light. The marine grottoes, the Faraglioni with their extraordinary shapes, the green of the vegetation on the steep rocky slopes, the incomparable scenery, the mix of nature, art, culture, and jet-set society, make this most dreamed of and celebrated island of them all.

Capri has enchanted writers, poets, musicians and painters. Many are the producers that have chosen this as set for their films, and many are the famous stars that have filled the tables of its celebrated little square, "la piazzetta".

One of the first admirers of the island was the Emperor Tiberius, who lived here during the last years of his life. The true vocation of the island was discovered in the mid 1800's, when visitors from all over the world chose it as their home, forming a cosmopolitan colony that has spread the myth of Capri and the Blue Grotto.

The most important town on the island is **Capri**, accessible from the dock of the **Marina Grande** by bus, taxi or chair-lift.

The hub of town, characterised by homes with terraces and pergolas, is the famous "piazzetta", nickname of the tiny Umberto I Square, the open-air salon of tourists and high society life. The Baroque church of Santo Stefano dominates the square, with its arabesque cupola and priceless Roman pavement, transplanted from Villa Jovis. To the right is Palazzo Cerio, dating back to 1372.

The complex of the **Certosa di San Giacomo** is one of the finest examples of Caprese architecture. Built in the 1300's and expanded in the 1600's, it has a gorgeous view of the Faraglioni. In spite of the numerous reconstructions, the original lines are conserved particularly in the medieval extrados vaults, typical of Capri.

The gardens of Augustus are not far away, and the view of the Faraglioni and the Marina Piccola is stunning. The park, criss-crossed by innumerable alleys and little stairways, is an oasis of green with a magnificent belvedere. From the gardens one arrives at the Marina Piccola by way of via Krupp, a tortuous street that descends to the sea. It offers enchanting glimpses of views onto the sea and the Faraglioni. The most famous walk of Capri is the one that takes you to the belvedere of

Tragara, a shaded square with views over the **Faraglioni** and the Marina Piccola. Under Tragara begins the street that descends to the Faraglioni, the three famous rock-cliffs. The first, *Stella*, nearest to the coast, is 109 mt high, the middle one, *Faraglione di Mezzo* is 81 meters, and the third, known as *Scopolo*, is 104 meters high and inhabited by the rare blue lizard.

Breathtaking scenery immersed in luxuriant vegetation also accompany you along the way from Capri to the **Arco Naturale** (Natural Arch), a scenic rock arch on a sheer cliff over the sea. The **Grotta di Matermania** is reached going down the stairs. It is a grandiose natural cove already consecrated in Roman times by the Cibele cult, the "great mother of the latins" (the Latins' *Magna Mater*). Imbedded in the rocky landscape of Masullo Point is **Villa Malaparte**. Built at the end of the 1930's by Adalberto Libera for the writer Curzio Malaparte, it is still eccentric and extraordinarily modern.



and... shopping

Capri is a truly wonderful setting for shopping. If you are looking for the latest designer garment, precious jewellry, or delicate lace, then the picturesque streets of Capri (particularly via Camerelle) and Anacapri are the ideal places to find everything you desire. Small boutiques and tiny craftsmens' shops give the visitor the possiblity to admire and buy local products.

You can visit the workshops where unforgettable essences are created, made from the flowers of the island, and the showrooms where prized limoncello of all qualities is exhibited. Caprese sandals are famous the world over.



famous travellers

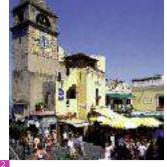
The island of Capri is a miracle. Yes, a miracle!... I have been to Capri three times, for long periods, and I tell you: the impression will remain with me until death.

Ivan Sergeevic Turgenev, 1871





The Faraglioni of Capri



Piazzetta (little square) of Capri

On the northeastern point of the island rises Villa Jovis (Jove's Villa), the most conspicuous Roman remains on the island, ordered built by the Emperor Tiberius. You get there from the town of Capri following a long walk that passes the San Michele Church, skirts the panoramic park of Villa Astarita and then leads to the archaeological area. The grandiose ruins dominate a marvellous panorama towards the Sorrentine peninsula and are on a sheer cliff 330 meters high, known as the Jump of Tiberius, from which, it is said, the Emperor had his victims thrown. The Villa is a huge palace on many levels, with the 'working parts' (fover, thermal baths, servants quarters, private apartments of the Emperor, and receiving rooms) all grouped around a central nucleus, occupied by a gigantic cistern. At Anacapri the ruins of another imperial villa, Damecuta, can be found.

Anacapri, the other inhabited centre, is smaller and a more quiet town than Capri, with gracious streets, white houses immersed in green, and tranquil elegant hotels.

The most important monument is the **San Michele Church**, built in the 1700's and designed by Domenico Antonio Vaccaro, it has a beautiful majolica pavement. This is where the famous **Villa San Michele** is, built on roman ruins by **Axel Munthe**, the Swedish doctor and author who lived on the island for 50 years. The author set his novel, *The Story of San Michele*, here, helping to spread the fame of the island of Capri.

The elegant and original villa is furnished with pieces from the 1700's, as well as works of art and relics from Roman times. The garden that surrounds the house is of rare beauty. Anacapri is the departure point for the chairlift and the trail that conduct you to the top of **Mount Solaro** (589 mt), the highest point of the island, from which the view is enchanting.

A vacation on Capri is not complete without a visit to the **Blue Grotto**, whose enchanted cavern attracts visitors from all over the world. One can arrive by boat from the Marina Grande or by land from Anacapri, to then be transfered onto little boats able to penetrate the very low and narrow entrance to the grotto.

Known to the Romans, and rediscovered in the 1800's, it owes its fascinating aspect to a geological phenomenon that caused its lowering by about 20 meters, bringing the entrance to the cave to almost below sea level. The light, filtered by the crystalline water, fills the cave with an exceptional colour: an intense blue with silver reflections that covers everything it shines on. Not very large, 54 meters long, 14 wide and 30 high, the grotto goes inwards through the Pillar Gallery, rich with stalactites.

Blessed with enchanting coves and imposing cliffs, Capri has lovely bathing establishments on its rocky shoreline and some on white sandy beaches. Some of the establishments on the rocky shore are at the Faraglioni (easily reached descending on foot from Tragara crossing a lovely stand of pines), and the Grotta Azzurra and Faro at Anacapri. Sandy beaches are to be found at Marina Grande, Marina Piccola and the Baths of Tiberius. Yet the best way to enjoy the sea at Capri and the incomparable scenery is to circle the island on a host



the wine trails, and the trails of flavour and tradition of the island of Capri

The sunny slopes of Capri still embrace the vineyards that produce Falanghina, Biancolella, Greco, and Piedirosso grapes from which the Doc wines of Capri are made. A walk on the slopes of Mount Solaro and among the vegetable gardens and gardens that cover the island is a good occasion to taste the exquisite delicacies that this earth has produced for more than two thousand

years, and the dishes man has made with them: do not miss the Torta Caprese.



I suddenly found myself in an extraordinary grotto (the Blue Grotto) and gave out an involontary cry of delight. In front of me, around, above and behind, I saw things too marvellous to describe. Imagine a completely blue cavern, as though God was amusing himself making a tent with pieces of firmament.

Alexandre Dumas, 1835



83

The Sorrentine Peninsula





Sorrento

famous travellers

We descend towards Sorrento on steep roads, lined by walls that protect thick groves of lemons and oranges with fruit-laden limbs, rose bushes and camelias in flower, palm and pine trees which free their green cusps in the air.

Louise Colet. 1863

The marvellous natural scenery makes the Sorrentine Peninsula one of the most famous tourist destinations in Italy. Protruding into the Tyrrhenian Sea, almost touching the island of Capri, it extends from Castellamare di Stabia to Punta Campanella, watershed between the gulfs of Naples and Salerno. Art and tradition characterise the numerous towns, the most famous of which is Sorrento: perched on an imposing cliff over the sea, this charming town holds on to its medieval and classical memories, while also preserving Renaissance and Baroque architecture.

In this very famous area there is no lack of 'wellness tourism', like the thermal baths at Vico Equense, one of the most picturesque towns of the coast. But the great attraction of this land is in its natural beauty: the coastal road is one of the marvels of Italian scenery. Citrus groves, vineyards and olive groves that softly pour down the slopes towards the sea, the road follows the tortuous coastline, where curve after curve opens up incredible views of the Gulf of Naples, Vesuvius and Capri. The coast is high, craggy and rocky, with sheer limestone cliffs that crumble into the sea, coves and rocky shores.



Azienda Autonoma di Cura Soggiorno e Turismo di Sorrento e Sant'Agnello via L. De Maio 35

tel. 081 8074033 www.sorrentotourism.com

Azienda Autonoma di Cura Soggiorno e Turismo di Vico Equense via Filangieri 100 tel. 081 8015752 www.vicoturismo.it

Castellammare di Stabia Scavi Archeologici di Stabia via Passeggiata Archeologica tel. 081 8714541

Sorrento

Museo Correale di Terranova via Correale 50 tel. 081 8781846

Vico Equense Museo Mineralogico Campano

Museo Mineralogico Campan via San Ciro, 2 tel. 081 8015668

For excursions along the trails of the Peninsula please contact the Legambiente (Environmental Union) "II Gheppo" in Vico Equense, tel. 081 8024771.
For underwater excursions in the Punta Campanella Marine Reserve you need a permit issued by the Management Authority, viale Filangieri 40
Massa Lubrense tel. 081 8089877
www.puntacampanella.org

delicacies on the

Peninsula

A journey amidst the flavours of the Sorrentine Peninsula cannot but begin with the famous **biscuits**

of Castellamare di Stabia. In nearby Gragnano the exquisite pasta must be tried, made by the famous artisan pasta-shops that still use the old machines. Vico Equense is famous for its "pizza by the meter", a long rectangular pizza intended to be sold by length, invented in the 1950's. The walnuts and oil of the Sorrentine Peninsula are also to be tasted and have been awarded the Dop marking. Do not miss the Wine trails and the typical products of the Sorrentine Peninsula: a journey through open-to-the-public wine cellars,

vineyards, typical restaurants and artisan shops. The area is famous for the production of great traditional wines like

Gragnano and Lettere.

not to be missed

Sorrento

Massa Lubrense

Bay of Ieranto

the sorrentine peninsula in 1 day

Sorrento

Vico Equense

Massa Lubrense Bay of Ieranto

in 3 days

Sorrento

Castellammare di Stabia

the sorrentine peninsula

Vico Equense

Massa Lubrense

Nerano

Bay of leranto

Agerola





art and archaeology Antiquarium Stabiano

(Castellammare di Stabia) Baths of the Regina Giovanna (Sorrento) Correale di Terranova Museum (Sorrento) Inlaid Wood Museum

Villa di Arianna

(Sorrento)

(Castellammare di Stabia)

nature and parks

Monti Lattari Regional Natural

Marina di Punta Campanella Natural Reserve

for young people

Nerano

Sorrento

Vico Equense

shopping

Dairy products and cheese Sorrento limoncello Wood inlaid furniture

and objects Rosoli

outings with children

Mount Faito cableway Mineralogical Museum Campano (Vico Equense)

Beaches of Vico Equense





Veduta della Costiera Sorrentina

specialities

Castellammare biscuits
Creel shrimp

Agerola Dairy Products

Sorrento Lemons

Sorrento Walnuts

Gragnano Pasta

Pizza by the meter

Monk's Provolone cheese

Fiordilatte braid cheese

Limoncello liqueur

Lemon delicacies

Sorrentine Peninsula Doc wines

Wines of Gragnano and Lettere

spas and fitness

Beauty centres of the major hotels

Stabia thermal baths Vico Equense

From Castellammare di Stabia to Sant'Agata sui Due Golfi

Castellamare di Stabia is famous for its shipyards and its thermal spa establishments.

The name comes from a medieval castle (*castrum ad mare*) to which the place-name *Stabiae* (destroyed in the eruption of Vesuvius in 79 AD together with Pompeii and Herculaneum) was added. The **archaeological excavations** here have uncovered ancient structures: the necropolis of the Madonna delle Grazie and numerous Roman buildings, two of which are open to the public.

Villa San Marco and Villa Arianna.

Vico Equense, famous for its thermal baths and for "pizza by the meter", also preserves numerous traces of the past: the Annunziata Church, the only gothic church on the Peninsula, Castello Giusso, founded by the Angevins and restructured at various different times between the 1600's and 1800's, and the interesting Antiquarium, where the relics of an archaeological burial site from 7th-5th century BC are exhibited.

From Vico Equense the road becomes tortuous, following the sinuous slopes of Mount Lattari. The road follows down all the way to Meta, a holiday swimming area with the lovely beaches of Marina di Meta and Alimuri. In the historic centre of town is the noted Santa Maria del Lauro Basilica. From Piano di Sorrento, a natural terrace of tuff rock, Sorrento can be admired from afar, and, behind Punta del Capo the profile of Capri is visible. Sant'Agnello gradually slopes down towards the sea and enjoys mild temperatures even in the summer.

Soon after is **Sorrento** itself, the most famous place on the coast.

The city sits high above the sea on an imposing tuff outcrop with deep gorges. The houses are immersed in luxuriant green and surrounded by groves of olive, lemon and orange trees. The whole is framed by the high reliefs of the Sorrentine Peninsula. Sorrento is a tranquil place, to be enjoyed in all seasons for its mild climate, the perfume of its gardens and the panoramic terraces that give onto the sea.

The town became famous in the 1800's, but its history has

much deeper roots. The name Surrentum is possibly tied to the legend of the siren and theories of a Phoenician foundation are entertained. What is certain is that in Roman times it was the favourite dwelling of the aristocracy. The town centre is piazza Tasso, which takes its name from the author of "Jerusalem Delivered", born in Sorrento in 1544. The Cathedral dates to the 15th century, and has seen many restructurings over the ages. The Choir is made of refined inlaid wood, a traditional craft the city excels in. The Correale di Terranova Museum houses the relics of the past in the 1600's home of the Correali, "the most beautiful provincial museum of Italy", according to Amedeo Maiuri. The archaeological section is important, with its famous Base of Augustus, as is the medieval section with marble works of the 10th and 11th century. The collection of furniture, porcelain and paintings is vast.

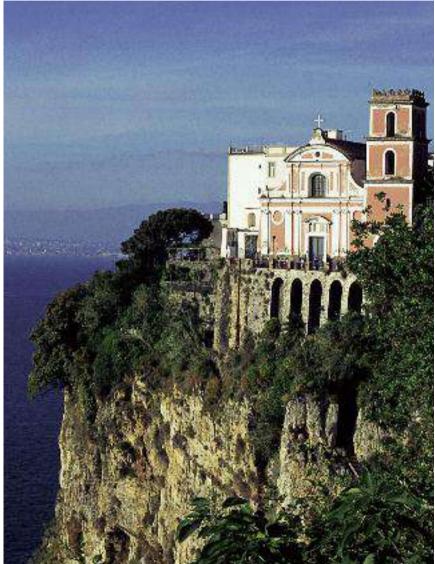
The San Francesco Church is from the 1700's, and from there you can get to the Villa Comunale, a public garden on the edge of a sheer cliff that offers spectacular views. From the Villa a paved road takes you to the Marina Piccola, which has numerous bathing establishments and a port from which the boats for Capri and Naples leave. The biggest beach is Marina Grande, traditional destination of Sorrentine strolls.



The lemons of the Peninsula are famous for having created Limoncello liqueur. The best, hand-made, has a

simple recipe: lemon rinds, alcohol, water and sugar. Sorrento is, however, a centre of exquisite gastronomic delights. A stroll about town is not complete without a lemon sorbet, a 'hot ice cream' (the local semifreddo) or its most famous dessert, the Lemon Delight.







The Cathedral of Vico Equense

the art of wood inlay of Sorrento

The art of wood-working in Campania has ancient origins and traditions: but sorrentine wood inlay is a separate glorious chapter. What makes this unique inlay so special is not just the mastery and inventivness of the artist, but his profound knowledge of the material. It is, in fact, very difficult to recognise and choose the diverse qualities of wood to create a chromatic spectrum that

permits the delicate designs.

famous travellers

I can only immagine that heaven on earth looks more or less like the Capo di Sorrento. Outside my window an emerald sea spreads out, olive, orange and lemon trees climb up the my front doorstep. Only now do I begin to regain some of my senses in the face of all of this grace of God.

Isaak F. Babel, 1931

After Punta del Capo, where the ruins of **Villa** of Pollio Felice (1st century BC, known as the Baths of the Regina Giovanna) face the sea, is **Massa Lubrense**, a popular and panoramic health resort

The town is less well known than others on the Peninsula and therefore not as affected by mass tourism. Thanks to this, it retains its secluded nature and preserves flavours and that special feeling lost in other places, like the old farm buildings. Close by is **Marina della Lobra**, a fishing village with its houses built on the beach and at the little port.

Around Massa Lubrense there are many charming little villages: **Termini. Nerano**, a town halfway up the shore with houses and terraces that come down towards the sea, and the vast and beautiful Marina del Cantone. From Massa you can continue to the far extreme of the Sorrentine Peninsula, in front of Capri: Punta Campanella. In antiquity this place was sacred: perhaps it was here that the Greek temple dedicated to the sirens, so written about by the ancient authors, surged. In the Classic Era the temple was dedicated to Athena, the Romans then built a road that led to it from Sorrento. Some of the old stoneslab paved stretches are still visible as one nears the Punta. The tower-lighthouse, built in 1335 and rebuilt in 1566, signalled the arrival of pirates with the sounding of a bell, hence the name of the Point: Campanella means bell.

Here one discovers the wilder and more enchanted face of the coast. One can explore this fascinating natural environment following a trail that reaches the evocative **Bay of leranto**, a rocky cove at the feet of Mount San Costanzo, today the property of the FAI (Italian Environmental Foundation) who insures its environmental integrity.

From Massa Lubrense one can go up to **Sant'Agata sui Due Golfi** (Saint Agatha of the Two Gulfs), in a magnificent panoramic position over the gulfs of Naples and of Salerno, and reach the ancient 18th century carmelite hermitage called **Deserto** (desert).



Q

the diver's sanctuary

The rock of the Vervece, in full view of Massa Lubrense, is where, in 1974, Enzo Maiorca set a new world record for depth (87 mt) without breathing aids (in apnoea). Every year, on the second Sunday of September, Mass is celebrated on the islet, followed by the laying of flowers by underwater divers in honour of a little bronze Madonna that lies at a depth of 15 meters.

Q

on the trails of the Peninsula

A day walking along the footpaths of the peninsula is the best way to discover the marvellous sights of this

natural balcony overlooking the bays of Naples and of Salerno.

The Lattari Mountains form the backbone of the peninsula. The terrain is uneven, with rises and precipices, peninsulas and deep gullies. The nature walks are very varied in length and degree of difficulty.

From Punta Campanella, designated a Marine Nature Reserve, more experienced walkers will be able to reach the enchanting Baia di leranto. I remember well the place and the moment when the car that was taking me on the road that goes to Sorrento towards Sant'Agata crossed the backbone of the sorrentine peninsula when suddenly the other sea appeared, the Gulf of Sorrento, and the little Sirenuse islands, and all the scenery around me was suddenly arid, naked and wild, without a tree, without a house, and in front of me there was only a series of curves on the edge of the cliff over the water, far below me, and the little street that courageously ventured between curtains of rock that skirted one abyss after the other.

Raffaele La Capria, 1992



Massa Lubrense

Q

the Punta Campanella Marine Reserve

A protected marine reserve (1539 hectares of seabed), it is between the Sorrentine Peninsula and Capri, where evocative submarine grottoes can be found: the most spectacular being the *Grotto of Cala di Mitigliano*. Diving and boat visits are permitted in the Reserve.

The Amalfi Coast

92





Villa Cimbrone, Ravello

famous travellers

The Day of Judgement, for those amalfitans that go to heaven, will be a day like any other.

The incomparable beauty of the Amalfi Coast has enchanted visitors from all corners of the earth. The lush green terraces, suspended over a sparkling sea, the wealth of art and the architectural characteristics. make it one of the most celebrated places on earth. Wild, daring and romantic, the Coast is an obligatory stop in any journey to Italy. From a geographic point of view the "coast of the Sirens" is the southern slope of the Sorrentine Peninsula, which in the north closes the Gulf of Salerno The scenery is characterised by mighty cliffs that drop into the sea, rich with bays and coves like the splendid Emerald Grotto at Conca dei Marini and the Fiordo (Fjord) di Furore. Amidst vertiginous slopes. sheer drops and precipitous cliffs, there are places where nature is still uncontaminated, like the Vallone di Porto Oasis.

The little villages that dot the "divine coast" are all to be explored, enjoying a clear blue sea, the stupefying views, the artistic treasures and the lively high society life. Shopping is also a venerated activity: in the characteristic boutiques of "Positano Fashion", the ceramic shops of Vietri or sampling a delicious meal of traditional cuisine.

the Lattari Mountains
Regional Park

The Lattari Mountains Regional Park comprises the Sorrentine-Amalfi Peninsula and separates the Gulf of Naples from that of Salerno, in a terrain that descends from over 1000 mts high to a wild, craggy shore. Those who enjoy hiking will find a system of 34 signposted trails that traverses the entire area, the most evocative of which being the "Sentiero degli Dei" (Trail of the Gods).

The mild climate to be found in all seasons and the uncontaminated environment favour land and sea animal life, as well as lush vegetation into which cultivation (vineyards, terraced olive and citrus groves) are admirably integrated.



Azienda Autonoma di Cura Soggiorno e Turismo di Positano via del Saracino 4 tel. 089 875067 www.aziendaturismopositano.it

Azienda Autonoma di Cura Soggiorno e Turismo di Amalfi via delle Repubbl. Marinare tel. 089 871107 www.amalfitouristoffice.it

Azienda Autonoma di Cura Soggiorno e Turismo di Ravello via Roma 18 bis tel. 089 857096 www.ravellotime.it

Azienda Autonoma di Cura Soggiorno e Turismo di Maiori corso Reginna 73 tel. 089 877452 www.aziendalurismo-maiori it

Comunità Montana dei Monti Lattari-Penisola Sorrentina Via A. Coppola 1 - Agerola tel. 081 8025811

Amalfi

Museo Civico Pal. Morelli - p.zza Municipio 1 tel. 089 8736211 Museo della Carta - Pal. Pagliata via delle Cartiere 23 tel. 089 8304561

Conca dei Marini

Emerald Grotto, which can be accessed both from the SS 63 via lift or stair and from the sea through an artificial wharf. From Amalfi, the grotto can be reached by board trip (tel. 089 873090).

Maiori

Museo della Collegiata di S.Maria a Mare - largo Campo tel. 089 877090 not to be missed

Cathedral of Amalfi

Positano

Cathedral of Ravello

the coast in 1 day

Amalfi Positano the coast in 3 days

Amalfi

Ravello

Positano

Fiordo di Furore

Vietri sul Mare

Archipelago Li Galli

1



art and archaeology

Cathedral of Amalfi
Cathedral of Ravello

San Giovanni del Toro (Ravello)

Villa Rufolo (Ravello) Santa Maria de Olearia Complex (Maiori)

nature and parks

Lattari Mountains Regional Natural Park Marina di Punta Campanella

Natural Reserve

Valle delle Ferriere State Natural Riserve

for young people

Amalfi Maiori

Positano

Praiano

shopping

Ceramics of Vietri sul Mare Limoncello of Amalfi Positano Fashion

Wine

outings with children

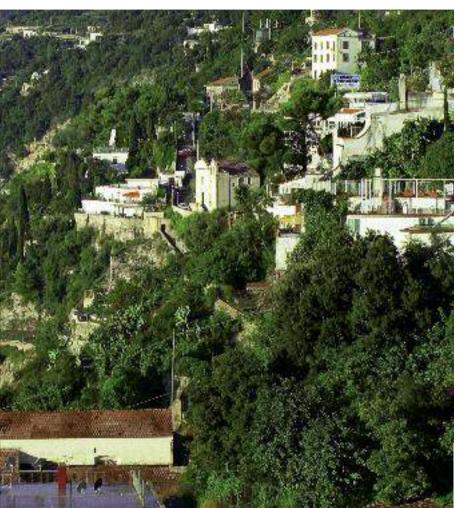
Amalfi Paper Museum

Positano

Valle delle Ferriere State

Natural Reserve

Beaches of Maiori





Amalfi Coast

specialities

Anchovie straining (Cetara) Amalfi lemons
Minori pasta
Cetara Red Tuna

Amalfi Coast Doc wines

spas and fitness

Beauty centres of the major hotels

From Positano to Amalfi

Set into the mountain, surrounded by rich mediterranean vegetation, **Positano** is so picturesque as to seem a spontaneous stage setting. Seen from the sea it looks like a huge nativity scene, a waterfall of little multicoloured houses clinging onto its sides

The town develops vertically. The homes, one on top of the other, are characterised by arched porticos that give onto the sea, and are painted in pastel colours, giving it the look of a multifaceted precious stone. It is not for nothing that Positano is called "the gem of the divine coast".

The narrow streets, lined with boutiques, run downhill between the houses flowing onto the **Spiaggia Grande**, a wide beach. From here there is a beautiful view of the sea, as well as of the town as it clambers up the mountainside.

On the main square of Positano is the parish church of **Santa Maria Assunta**, there since the year 1,000. The great coloured majolica cupola is visible from all over town. The little beaches of Positano are charming, and easy to get to on foot or by boat: Fornillo, Fiumicello and Arienzo.

Positano is a holiday destination appreciated for VIP vacations. Around 1940 Irene Kowaliska, a painter who lived here in **Villa Sette Santi**, used Positano as inspiration for her paintings on cloth. The **Villa Stella Romana** has been host to, among other Popes, Pope John Paul II. Illustrious artists, fashion moduls and screen stars love to come here to relax.

A few miles from the coast are Li Galli, or "Sirenuse", a tiny archipelago made up of three islets: the Gallo Lungo, the Rotonda and the Castelluccio, considered the ancient dwellings of the enchanting Sirens. Positano is not just about the sea: pleasant walks take one to visit the evocative areas around Lattari Mountains. like Montepertuso, so-called because it is said that the Madonna appeared here in a hole in the cliff ("pertuso" stands for hole). A stairway of 1,700 steps takes you to **Nocelle**. It is from here that the famous Trail of the Gods (Sentiero deali Dei) begins, with beautiful views over the entire coast. Or you can reach the beautiful coastal Punta San **Pietro**, where there is a little church on a precipice over the sea.





shopping in Positano

Positano is synonymous with summer fashion. In the labyrinth of alleys the miracle of "made in

Positano" fashion was realised: dozens of boutiques show off their whimsical summer-wear, by now known the world over. Textiles and colours lay down the law in the world of beachwear: pareus to bikinis, casual and "gran gala" evening wear, even characteristic wedding

dresses. The hand-made leather footwear can be ordered to size.

On sale are the colourful local ceramics, the paintings by the many artists that propose views of the enchanting gulf, and a wide range of typical products.

famous travellers

Positano bites deep. It is a dream place that isn't quite real when you are there and becomes beckoningly real after you have gone. Its houses climb a hill so steep it would be a cliff except that stairs are cut in it.

The small curving bay of unbelievably blue and green water lips gently on a beach of small pebbles.

John Steinbeck, 1953





Li Galli



Q

the myth of the Sirens

The Sirenuse archipelago (now known as Li Galli) in front of Positano, three solitary rocky islets, were considered to be the dwellings of the Sirens, mythical figures that attracted seafarers with their chants, often causing them to wreck. The myths probably served as warnings: the islets were meant to be a reference point for the sailors, if they got too close to land they would end up on the rocks. In 1924, on the islet of Gallo Lungo, the

Russian dancer and coreographer Leonide Massine built a villa (restructered in 1927 by the areas eventually bought by Rudolf Nureyev.





Amalfi
Valle delle Ferriere

On a slope cultivated with vines and olive trees one finds **Furore**. The ancient name for the entire area was once *Terra Furoris*, for the deafening noise made by the sea and the wind during tempestuous nights as they echoed among the high walls of the sheer **fjords** that come straight down from the plateau of Agerola. A steep set of steps takes you to the bottom. The attraction of this piece of coast is irresistable, with the fjords wedged between vines and cliffs, tiny houses and the sea.

Praiano, halfway up the promontory of Capo Sottile, was the summer residence of the Doge of Amalfi, a precocious sign of the future of the village toward becoming a relaxing holiday resort. The lower part of town goes towards Marina di Praia, a beach carved between two high rock walls. Guarding over this marina is one of the many watch-towers that dot the coast.

The nearby **Conca dei Marini** is a fishing village hemmed in by a marine loop that offers a stunning slice of panorama. The two extremes of this marvellous bay are **Capo di Conca**, dominated by the Torre di Conca (erected in the 1500's) testimony to the terrifying incursions of pirates, and the **Emerald Grotto**. The waters breaking into the grotto take on an intense green hue, caused by light filtration. This grotto is full of stalactites and stalagmites, often fused together to form limestone columns of up to 10 meters.

From Conca you can get to the **plateau of Agerola** (650 mt), passing through woods and fields. The area, blessed with flowering fields renown since antiquity, is famous for its dairy products and for the exceptional views of the coast from above.

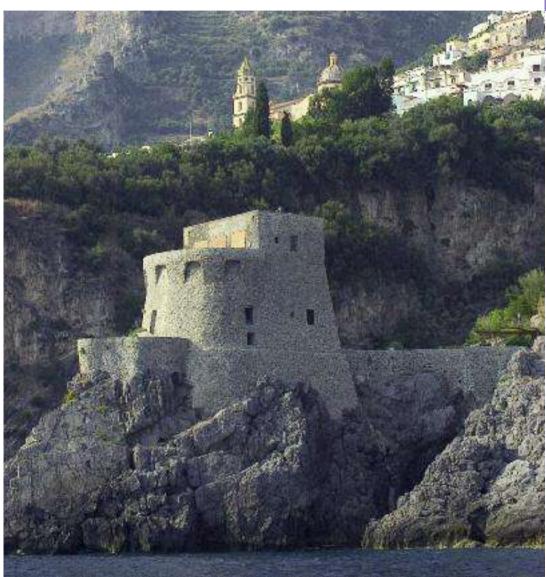
The heart and soul of the coast is Amalfi. In the serene blue of the sky and sea. Amalfi, guarded by its port, seems held in the palm of a hand. Above, the scenic drapery of the mountains, hinged like a backdrop, dotted with houses; below, a picturesque weaving of alleys and steps, all the way to the Piazza, where the Cathedral dominates from the top of its majestic stairs. A unique scene, where historic memory intertwines with unforgettable natural beauty. Suspended between the slopes of Lattari Mountains and the sea, the picturesque alleys of Amalfi today host a large number of tourists, but there was a time, when the powerful Marine Republic had its moment of maximum splendour between the 10th and 12th centuries, that they kept the outsiders (Longobards and Saracenes) at bay. Rich and populated Amalfi enjoyed lively contact with the Orient. In memory of its ancient power every four years, in June, Amalfi holds the "Historic Regatta of the Marine Republics".

The town of Amalfi, clinging to the slopes of the coast, is characterised by the famous **Duomo** (9th century). Its scenic position at the top of steep stairs, that open up among the houses gathered around the small square, give a particular flavour to Amalfi's historic centre.

The imposing polychromatic façade of the church, illuminated by gilded and enameled mosaics, is impressive. Traces of the middle ages are to be found in the elegant *Cloister of Heaven*, with its arabesque lines. From the cloister go to the *Crucifiction Chapel*, where the Diocesan Museum is hosted. In this chapel is the entrance to the crypt, dating back to the 1200's. The complex is one of the best examples of Romanesque architecture of the Amalfi coast. An exploration of Amalfi that desires the inclusion of the less known places should make a stop at the **Antichi Arsenali**, where famous galleys, with over one hundred oars, were constructed and destined to commerce with the Orient.



There are many "votive kiosks", tiny chapels of majolica tiles or with frescoed walls, spread around Praiano. They are spontaneous testimony to popular devotion, placed on walls of houses or on the borders between properties, they begged for divine protection.



Q

Amalfi paper

There is no documentation about the origins of paper production. In 1220 Frederick II, however, prohibited the notaries of the kingdom, especially those from Amalfi, from using "bambagina" paper (as it was then called) for the writing of Acts, because it was considered more perishable than parchment. None the less, its spread could not be arrested, and the art of paper-making was

diffused all over the Coast, especially after the Council of Trent decreed the obligation of recording all the sacramental acts, deaths and religious events. In the 15th century the fame of Amalfi paper was such that many foreign authors demanded to be published in Naples to be able to use

the prized material. Even today, in a reduced manner, the paper-makers of Amalfi, the oldest in Europe, still handmake the precious paper for use by artists or limited editions.

Praiano

The aerial precipice of Amalfi is immersed in a network of pure colours that does not repeat the nauseating and lazy colours of certain famous tropical seasons along the route of the great journeys. Here is the garden that we are eternally and uselessly searching for, after the perfect places of our childhood.

Salvatore Quasimodo, 1966

The *Tabula Amalphitana* is preserved in **Palazzo Morelli**, seat of the municipality and of the Civic
Museum. It was the first code of naval law,
established in the times of the Republic and valid for
the entire Mediterranean Sea. The famous "drafts" of
Domenico Morelli, one of the most famous painters
of the 1800's, from which the mosaics which adorn

the church were created, can be admired.

Amalfi is also famous as the home of handmade paper.

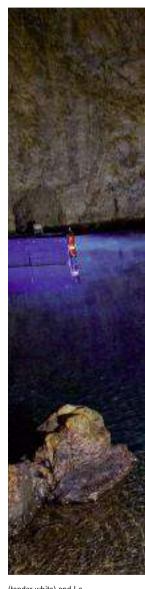
The first workshops were opened along the Valley of the Mills, where the Paper Museum is. This area, crossed by the Canneto River, and that of the nearby Valley of the Ferriere, a charming natural environment, constitute a Natural Biogenetic Reserve. The ascent from Amalfi is tiring but fascinating. The remains of the mills that brought the water to the paper workshops are discovered, and the walk in nature that hides secret charms, is rewarded with springs and waterfalls, and glimpses of the sea between the Jush mediterranean scrub

Almost tied to Amalfi, **Atrani** preserves in the intricacy of its little streets, stairs and overpasses, its medieval texture. During the Republican era of Amalfi, Atrani was inhabited by noble families. Here Doges were crowned and buried.

Between alleys, arches, courtyards, little squares and with its typical small stairways, it seems like a nativity licked by the sea.

Atrani faces the sea with the characteristic profile of the **Maddalena Church** (1274) that is topped by a belltower and cupola that is covered with vividly coloured majolica. The neoclassic church of **San Salvatore de' Bireto**, on piazza Umberto I was founded in 940. It was in this church that the election ceremonies and inaugurations of the new Doges of the Republic were held.

The **Grotto of the Saints** can be reached by the state road. Here the ruins of the ancient benedictine monastery of Santi Quirico e Giulitta, founded in 986, are visible. The little grotto is decorated with byzantine style frescoes that date to the 12th century.



Q

the stairs of the Coast

What would the Amalfi Coast be without its stairs? They are everywhere: a characteristic of its villages, agile and indispensible communication system to overcome impervious height differences. It does not take long to become accustomed to them, one soon learns to appreciate its picturesque and, above all, ecological aspect, useful also in disintoxication from stress and city noise.



the Wine Trail of the Amalfi Coast

The Road twists amidst terraces that hold hanging vineyards on precipices over the sea, suddenly opening with marvellous views, between the valleys and gorges where the splendid architecture of the coast clambers upwards. The traditional vines are cultivated here, and are renamed by the locals, like Falanghina, become Bianca Zita (white girl); Biancolella, become Bianca Tenera

(tender white) and Lo Sciascinoso, Olivella. The wines produced are all Costa d'Amalfi and Ravello Doc wines (www.sito.regione.campania.it /agricoltura/home.htm)







Amalfi Cathedral



From Ravello to Vietri

102

One of the gems of the Amalfi coast is **Ravello**, 350 meters above sea level, where the light effects and magical architecture create a vision of rare intensity. Its name is immortalized in Boccaccio's *Decameron*.

Famous for its tranquil and serene atmosphere, Ravello offers architectural gems of rare elegance. The 11th century **Duomo**, dedicated to San Pantaleone, is rich with artistic treasures like the grand bronze central door adorned with 54 panels. To the right of the Cathedral a square tower marks the entrance to **Villa Rufolo**. Immersed in a verdant park of exotic and mediterranean flora, the original structure dates back to the 13th century; and even today some of its arab-siculian architecture is evident. The polychromatic arabesque colonnade is splendid. The garden is one of the most beautiful in Campania.

Nature and man's touch compete to create a highly evocative atmosphere: villas lined by lime trees and cypresses, cascades of flowers. From the belvedere the sea seems infinite. Each summer, in the gardens of the villa, the concerts of the *Ravello Festival* are held. Wagner's inspiration for the Klingsor Garden, in his opera *Parsifal*, came from the gardens of Villa Rufolo. Notable is the brand new Oscar Niemeyer Auditorium, which enriches Ravello's already exceptional music scene.

Villa Cimbrone was, originally, a simple hut. It was bought in 1904 by Ernest William Beckett, who transformed into an exceptionally fascinating Villa. It has hosted many celebrated personalities, from Winston Churchill to Greta Garbo.

There is a very special feeling in the cloister of the villa, still showing elements of the ancient arab-sicilian style it was built in.

The belvedere is a terrace that gives on to infinity, and has no equal in the world.

San Giovanni del Toro and Santa Maria a Gradillo churches, both built in the 12th century, also merit a visit. The San Giovanni del Toro church has a pulpit rich in mosaic decorations.

The **Coral Museum**, which exhibits coral, cameos, decorated mother-of-pearl and shells from Roman times to the 1900's, is also interesting. **Scala** is close to Ravello, one of the most picturesque site of the coast. Its Cathedral has a wooden *Deposition from the Cross* dating back to the 1200's.

A charming seaside village, **Minori**, with its little pink houses over the beach, also offers splendid scenery. For its lovely position along the coast, it was where the ancient Romans dedicated themselves to *relax*, as witnessed by the many ruins, amongst which the **Villa Romana**, from the 1st century BC, a 2,500 sq mt archaeological complex containing a *viridarium* (garden), a nymphaeum-triclinium, and the splendid mosaics. At the **Antiquarium Museum** there are relics dating back to the 1st century BC. In the centre of the village, near to the little port, is the **Basilica of Santa Trofimena**, patron of the city, built in the 12th century. Many other little churches and towers dot the area.



Q

artists in Ravello

Other than Wagner, musicians, writers and artists have found in Rayello their artistic inspiration: the inventions of Grieg's *Peer Gynt* owe much to the woods of Ravello. Toscanini, Leonard Bernstein, Rostropovich, and Bruno Walter also spend relaxing time here. Mirò, Escher, Turner, whose seascapes of the area are to be found in London's Tate Gallery, as well as the writer

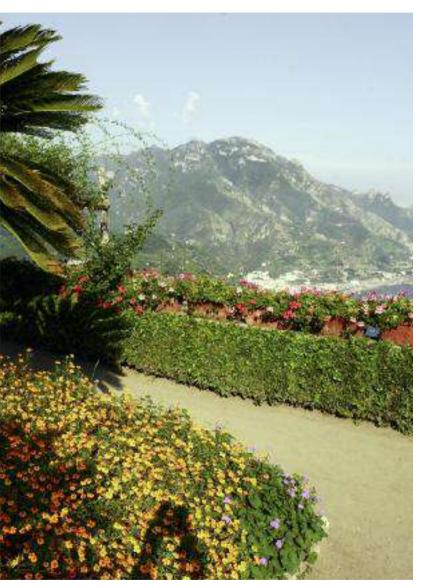
and art critic Ruskin, were also guests here. Forster, author of *Room with a View*, describes parts of the town; David Herbert Lawrence wrote many chapters of *Lady Chatterley's Lover* here, and Andrè Gide set part of his novel *The Immoralist* here. Many more came here to enjoy the

unique beauty, others settled here for good: Virginia Woolf, Paul Valéry, Graham Greene, Tennessee Williams, Rafael Alberti and Gore Vidal.

10

...close to Salerno is a coast looking out at sea, called by the locals the coast of Amalfi, covered with little towns, gardens and fountains, and men rich and profitable in the art of trade and other. Amongst the towns there is one called Rayello.

Giovanni Boccaccio, 1351



Villa Rufolo



Villa Cimbrone Ravello Cathedral







With is long beach and lovely shoreline, Maiori boasts the best hotels of the area. Ruins of castles and towers give testimony to its medieval splendour, when it was encircled and defended by walls and fortifications. The church of Santa Maria a Mare dominates the town, and on every year on August 15 festivities commemorate an event dating to 1204. when fishermen pulled a statue of the Virgin from the water after it had been dumped by a boat from Constantinople that was in trouble and had sought refuge in the Majori bay during a tempest. On the main altar there is a wooden sculpture of the Madonna and Child, and a collection of art is cared for in the Sacristy Museum and the crypt below it. The popular **sanctuary** dedicated to the **Madonna** delle Grazie has medieval origins, but was restructured in the 1700's.

The unusual stone complex of **Santa Maria Olearia**, a benedictan abbey built around the year 1000 is worth a visit. In the buildings that hug the rock cliff, in one of the natural grottoes of the area, there are halls, chapels, and small frescoed porticos. A boat trip will take you for a visit to the **Grotta Sulfurea** and the **Grotta Pandora**. The first one is rich in sulfuric-magnesic water with therapeutic properties; in the second one the emerald-green scene, the stalactites and stalagmites create an unforgettable scenario.

Also around **Minori** one can find many signs of the past, a lovely seaside resort as well as a grand Roman villa.

A few kilometres from Maiori is **Erchie**, with a tower on a boulder which separates the two beaches. The benedictine monastery Santa Maria de Erchie, founded in 980 and destroyed in 1451, gave this place its name. This small village with the characteristically white houses, the delightful beaches and the crystaline sea is ideal for a moment of relax in contact with nature.

Roman Villa Minori

Just before Vietri is **Cetara**. This has always been a fisherman's village and its name comes from the latin word 'cetaria', or tuna fishing net. This village with its picturesque white architecture and its intimate beach is one of the jewels of the coast. In between the little square houses the church of San Pietro stands out with its majolica cupola and its bell tower from the 13th century.

At the base of the Amalfi Coast, on the side facing the Gulf of Salerno. Vietri sul Mare dominates from the small Valle di Bonea above, erected on the bastions of limestone and sloping down to the coast. With its small churches, their majolicacovered domes, and the small tile-covered houses. Vietri seems suspended between heaven and earth. In ancient times the town was Etruscan, but it was later dominated by the Samnites, the Lucanians and finally by the Romans. The church of San Giovanni Battista (St John the Baptist), dating to the 17th century, with its majestic dome and high bell tower, is located at the highest point of the old centre of town. The **ceramics** industry, for which Vietri is world famous, was already a booming business in the Middle Ages. Over the centuries artisans and artists have created prized works, a part of which can be admired in the Ceramics Museum which is located in the belvedere-tower of the Villa Guariglia in Raito.



Q

the ceramics of Vietri

The advantageous position of the town, the ample supply of water and the richly wooded hills are all

elements which over the years have lead to the development of the factories. The ceramics of Vietri, small masterpieces, are decorated with yellow and blue, the colours of nature and the sea, and with lemons and trusses of grapes. It is a pleasure to stroll about, to browse in

the shops, visit the factories, and let your imagination be caught up in the whirlwind of colours and ideas. The choice is practically infinite and each shop differs in style and design.



Ceramics of Vietri

10

I have never seen more gracious places. The first you find is Maiori...
The solitary streets and tranquil trails enter into the mountain, from which clear and fresh waters spring. So much romantic solitude restores one's soul and gives birth to the desire to live there in peace, or at least spend a summer.

Ferdinand Gregorovius, 1861



Panorama of Conca dei Marini





Panorama of the Amalfi Coast

Q

pasta in Minori

Thanks to the stream Farinola or Reginna Minor, which activated the mills, Minori has a florishing pasta tradition: at the beginning of the 1900's its reputation was not second best to even the famous pasta of Gragnano in the province of Naples. The fusilli, made of semola, grain and water, are twirled with a thin iron rod.

Q

the straining of anchovies in Cetara

Cetara is known to gourmets for this 'distilled' dish, obtained by a special process of the salting of the anchovy caught in the gulf of Salerno. The straining seems to be a noble descendant of the 'garum', the ancient fish sauce used by the Romans for flavouring their dishes. The precious liquid was obtained by pressing anchovies.

Salerno and Cilento





Arconte Cove

Salerno is a fascinating synthesis of what the Mediterranean can offer to those who want to know it better. The city is continuously improving to better host tourists and visitors from all over the world. Its province is the largest of the Campania. Together with the Amalfi Coast, the archaeological areas of Paestum and the uncontaminated Cilento, it also includes the high plains crossed by the Sele River, its tributaries and the Vallo di Diano.



Ente Provinciale per il Turismo di Salerno via Velia 15 tel. 089 230411 www.eptsalerno.it informazioni e acc. turistica piazza Vittorio Veneto.1 tel. 089 231432

Azienda Autonoma di Cura Soggiorno e Turismo di Salerno

Lungomare Trieste 7/9 tel. 089 224916 www.aziendaturismo.sa.it

Azienda Autonoma di Cura Soggiorno e Turismo di Cava de' Tirreni Corso Umberto I 208 tel. 089 341605

www.cavaturismo.sa.it Azienda Autonoma

di Cura Soggiorno e Turismo di Paestum via Magna Grecia 887 tel. 0828 811016 www.infopaestum.it

Ente Parco del Cilento e del Vallo di Diano piazza Santa Caterina, 8 Vallo della Lucania tel. 0974 719911

www.cilentoediano.it

Comunità Montana Monti Picentini

via Santa Maria a Vico Giffoni Valle Piana tel. 089 866160

Cava de' Tirreni

Complesso dell'Abbazia della SS Trinità - via Morcaldi 6 tel. 089 463922

Paestum

Parco Archeologico Museo Arch. Nazionale via Magna Grecia 919 tel. 0828 811023

the School of Medicine

13th century it obtained the right to be the only School of Medicine of the realm from Emperor Frederick II: of Salerno this signed a period of The School of Medicine greatest scientific discovery. boasts ancient origins, with The 14th century saw the its roots possibly dating beginning of its decline, back to the 6th century, to when the important

the School of Medicine then

functioning at Velia. In the

universities of Bologna and Padova were founded. The School continued to function until 1812, when it was finally closed by Joachim Murat.

not to be missed

Historical centre of Salerno

Paestum

Punta Licosa

Palinuro

Marina di Camerota

Certosa of Padula

salerno and cilento in 1 day

Salerno Paestum

Salerno

Punta Licosa

Palinuro and Marina di Camerota

salerno and cilento in 3 days

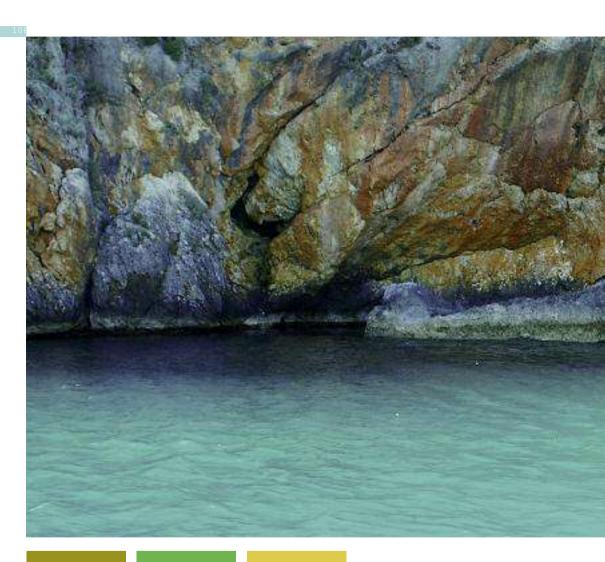
Paestum

Velia excavations

Grottoes of Castelcivita and of Pertosa/Auletta

Certosa of Padula

Teggiano



art and archaeology

Cathedral of Salerno

Paestum

Sanctuary of Hera Argiva

Velia

Certosa of Padula

nature and parks

Cilento and Vallo di Diano

National Parks

Oasis of Diecimare

Oasis of Persano

Foce Sele e Tanagro Nature

Reserve

Grotto of Castelcivita

and of Pertosa/Auletta

for young people

Salerno waterfront

Agropoli Marina di Camerota

Palinuro

shopping

Chestnut woven baskets
Copper and wrought iron
objects

Wine and typical products

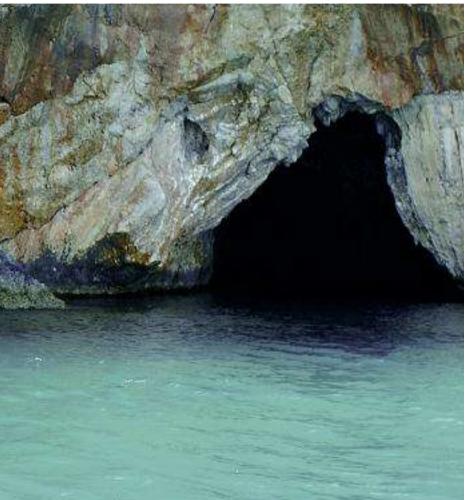
outings with children

Arechi's Castle
The Living Museum of Hera
Argiva

National Parks of Cilento and Vallo di Diano

Night strolls among the temples of Paestum

Beaches between Palinuro and Marina di Camerota





Grotta degli Infreschi

specialities

San Marzano tomatoes
Buffalo Mozzarella Dop
Menaica anchovies
Paestum artichokes
Controne beans
Cilento dried figs
Castel San Lorenzo wine Doc
Cilento wine Doc

spas and fitness

Contursi Thermal Baths

Montesano sulla Marcellana

Salerno

From above, in the bright frame of sea and sky, Salerno seems as though it is hanging to the sides of the mountain, in a spectacular position on the gulf. The city became the most flourishing of southern Italy with its conquest by the Longobards in the 8th century, especially under Duke Arechi II. Seat of the principality, Salerno entered a period of splendour, also becoming an important scientific centre with its much celebrated **School of Medicine of Salerno**, the oldest such institution in the west. After the Longobards followed the Normans, and then the Hohenstaufen emperors, all of whom favoured the growth of the city, a growth that only ended in the 16th century when the Spaniards took over control.

It was in Salerno that the Allied forces disembarked in 1943. Today the city is in full rebirth, theatre of a transformation into 'city-laboratory', a model of urban revival of international importance.

The heart of the city is the **medieval quarter**, whose main artery is **via dei Mercanti** (Merchants' street). The narrow city streets, today rich with shops, follow the form of the medieval urban plan and conserve beautiful historical buildings and much of its religious architecture.

buildings and influct of its religious architecture. The **Duomo** (11th century) is dedicated to San Matteo and is the most important monument of the city, a masterpiece of Norman architecture. The vast porticoed atrium has, above its ancient columns, an elegant loggia decorated with inlaid wood. The atrium is dominated by an imposing romanesque belltower. On the inside two magnificent ambos are richly decorated with mosaics from the 7th and 8th centuries, and there are numerous 1500's and 1600's paintings. The Baroque crypt from the 1600's is covered in polychromatic marble. There are numerous funeral monuments, the most important of which is that of Queen Margherita of Durazzo. The **Duomo Museum** is next to the cathedral, and offers a panorama of Salernitan art over the centuries.

The nearby **Provincial Archaeological Museum** is not to be missed, housed in the complex of Saint Benedict, it is one of the most interesting topographical museums of Campania.

The hub of economic life of the city is to be found in the 1800's quarter of the city near to the Lungomare **Trieste**, one of the longest waterfront in Italy, lined by palm trees, and from which you can enjoy a lovely view of the gulf. The **Verdi Theatre** was inaugurated in 1872. Its halls overflow with Renaissance-inspired décor and follow models of ancient classic inspiration. It is the cultural centre of the city. The **Villa Comunale** (City Park) is an oasis of green, a lovely public garden. Looking up towards the hills you can see the imposing **Arechi's Castle**, from which there is an enchanting panorama.



the Abbey of the Holy Trinity at Cava de' Tirreni

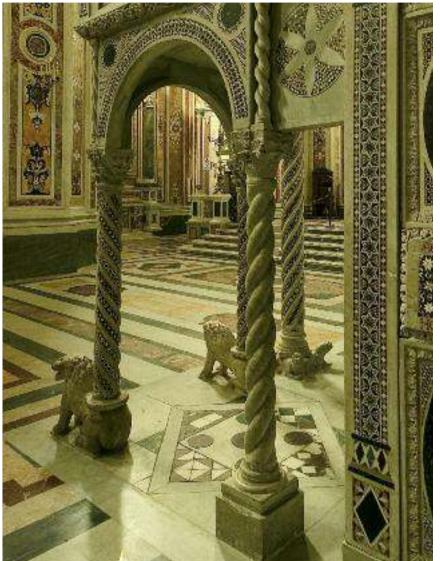
A few kilometers from the dynamic city of Cava de' Tirreni, whose centre is characterised by picturesque porticos that have inspired it to be nick-named the "Bologna of the south", the Abbey of the Holy Trinity (11th century) sits in a panoramic position surrounded by a circle of mountains. It is one of the most important monastic foundations of the South. The elegant Baroque church

and its monastery house important works of medieval art. Next to the complex is also the Museum of the Abbey, which contains relics from the monastery.

famous travellers

How wonderful to look upon, like Ulysses, on a clear day the Gulf of Salerno towards south-east, with as backdrop the high hazy coast and the crystalline mountains. One abandons the gods of today to discover a new self.

David H. Lawrence, 1920



The Abbey of the Holy Trinity at Cava de' Tirreni



Salerno





The Sele Plains

Close to Salerno is **Pontecagnano**, the first bathing area of the Salerno coast. The interesting National Museum of Agro Picentino is to be found here, full of relics relative to the history of the area from the Iron Age to the 6th century BC. Further south is the vast plain created by the Sele river. The area around the mouth of the river (Paestum and Battipaglia in particular) is famous for the production of one of the most loved of all of Campania's products: the buffalo mozzarella Dop. Alongside the quiet roads, here and there, one can spot the buffalo at pasture. One of the most important sanctuaries of ancient times was found here, the Heraion del Sele, a vast complex dedicated to the great Greek goddess Hera. The sanctuary dates back to the 7th century BC and was made of many rooms, the remains of which can still be seen today.

The **Oasis of Persano** is near, once a Bourbon hunting grounds, today a well preserved natural environment. The Sele has created some unique and precious environments here, dominated by a dense wood. The symbol of the oasis is the otter, and this is one of its main habitats in Italy.

The **Natural Reserve of Sele-Tanagro** offers some magnificent scenery and is of great interest from a naturalistic point of view. In this area of rich green vegetation are the springs of the **Contursi Thermal Baths**, noted for its water and for the white mud that is used in beauty and dermatological treatments. There are numerous treatment establishments. The Santa Maria degli Angeli (9th century) and del Carmine churches are of interest, as are the archaeological sites: a Roman villa and a neolithic grave near the Tanagro river.



The Sele Plains





the Caciocavallo Podolico

This cheese is exclusively made from milk of Podolian cattle, bred in the wild around the Sele.

in the Cilento area and few other places in Campania. This peculiarity gives it the characteristic flavour which changes according to the pastures. That cheese smells of milk and hay, but his flavour is slightly grainy and spicy. Served in slices or flakes, it is excellent

accompaniment to red wine, roasted chestnuts and porcini mushrooms.





Q

Giffoni Film Festival

During the last years, the Giffoni Film Festival, hosted at the foot of Picentini mountains, has become the main international event dedicated to children's films.

event en's

> the Regional Natural Park of the Picentini Mountains

The park stretches over 80,000 hectares between the provinces of Avellino and Salerno.

Amid high mountain tops covered in thick and sometimes impenetrable beech-wood stands, green valleys and steep gorges, cut by rivers and waterfalls, are hidden: corners of uncontaminated nature, home to rare bird species.

Here the rivers Calore, Sele,

Sarno and Ofanto rise.

There are two WWF protected oases, sites also cared for the EC, on the inside of the Park: Monte Polveracchio and Valle della Caccia and the Oasis of Monte Accellica.

Paestum

At the edge of the Sele plains, where Cilento begins, is Paestum. It is one of the most precious of the archaeological gems of Italy, known the world over, especially for its spectacular doric temples. Legend attributes them to the Argonauts of Greek mythology, but it was the inhabitants of Sibari that founded Paestum in the 6th century BC. The city, first called Poseidonia, soon became one of the most flourishing of the Mediterranean. Its demise coincided with the fall of the Roman Empire. The buildings were stripped for the construction of churches and palaces, and the ruins forgotten until the 18th century, when travellers began to return here.

The three doric temples from the 5th century BC, among the best preserved of all of antiquity, are the marvels of this **Archaeological Park**, as they stand majestically on the plains in front of the sea: the **Temple of Neptune**, the **Basilica** and the **Temple of Cerere**. The first two are tied to the cult of Hera (Greek goddess of marriage and wife of Zeus). The 5 km long walls constitute one of the best preserved fortified structures in all of Magna Grecia. In summer the **'Night trails' amid the temples of Paestum** permit the visitor to enjoy the archaeological area by moonlight, a magical experience.

In the area of the Roman city, apart from the **Capitolium**.

In the area of the Roman city, apart from the Capitolium, there are other significant remains: the Forum, the Amphitheatre, and the remains of various religious structures. To the west of the temples is via Sacra, the street of the processions, the foundations of which are Greek. Not far from the excavations is the Archaeological Museum of Paestum, home to some of the most important works in Southern Italy. The most important are the frescoes from the 5th century BC Tomb of the Diver. It is a "painted box tomb", made up of four lateral slabs decorated with banquet scenes. The cover depicts a diving boy: the scene probably symbolises the passage from life to the world of the dead. The sculptured metopes are important decorative elements of the temples, as are the frescoes of the 4th century lucanian tombs, with the typical "Return of the warrior" scenes.

The Aeneolithic relics of the Gaudo necropolis are preserved here, as well as archaic, (the terracotta Zeus statue), classic and hellenistic (the bronze statue of Sileno Marsia) era items. In the museum the full room *tomb of a man and a woman* from Agropoli has been reconstructed. With the buried couple there is also a famous vase on which the myth of Bellerophon is painted, signed by Assteas. The relics of the nearby sanctuary of Hera Argiva, the *Heraion* of Sele, are also kept here.

The ruins of **Capaccio Vecchio** dominate the plain of Paestum. The town, flourishing in the Norman era, was destroyed in 1248 by Frederick II because it hosted conspirators. Apart from the ruins of the castle, the sanctuary of the **Madonna del Granato**, built in the 12th century and reconstructed in the 1700's, destination of intense pilgrimage even today, is well worth a visit.



Q

buffalo mozzarella

The exquisite buffalo mozzarella is made only in Campania, and following unchanged centuries-old

traditions. Apart from the Caserta province, the Sele Plains are the only other place for this characteristic product.

There are many dairy farms in the area of the mouth of the Sele river: in some it is possible to watch them make it and then enjoy the fresh results.





The Temples of Paestum

The Tomb of the Diver.

Archaeological Museum of Paestum





Cilento

A scenery of strong contrasts, of incomparabile beauty. Cilento enchants with its vertiginouos cliffs that drop into the crystalline sea, its spotless beaches, its small medieval villages that cling to the hills and its luminous scenery of pristine nature. One of the most beautiful coasts of Italy: one hundred miles of beach, cliffs formed by the sun and the wind, secret coves and mysterious grottoes. The cilentan coast begins at Paestum and ends at Sapri, offering an enormous range of seaside activities: from large, wide and safe beaches on a clear sea, to a more sportive choice of grotto and cove exploration and the diving deep into the uncontaminated bottoms of the sea. All of this amidst hills and mountains with sheer cliffs to the sea, where enchanted villages are nestled. We are far from the madding crowds, we are where the world is still like it once was, a universe with rhythms that still follow the seasons. The Cilento area is also famous for its tasty traditional cuisine, based on typical products used in recipes passed on from mother to daughter. There

is such a variety of local dishes that it will be a pleasure to compare them from town to town and in the many agritourisms and bed and breakfasts active in the area.

With **Agropoli** one enters into the heart of a Cilento made of fishermen and fishing villages. Dominated

by the castle, built in Byzantine times, Agropoli has a lovely medieval village that towers over the wild coast below.

Medieval traces are also found in **Castellabate**.

The village, intest and full of wooder, presents itself.

Medieval traces are also found in **Castellabate**. The village, intact and full of wonder, presents itself like a bundle of intertwining alleys, arches and steep stairs, framed by a vegetation rich with colour and aroma.

From above you can admire the characteristic red tiled rooftops of **Santa Maria di Castellabate**, a bathing and fishing village blessed with lovely beaches and situated between Punta Tresino and **Punta Licosa**.

The pine forest of Punta Licosa is splendid and uncontaminated. Here the coves, hidden and private, are tiny paradises like gems on the crown of one of the clearest seas of Italy. These waters have been declared an Underwater Marine Park, and are a true paradise for passionate deep sea divers. The coast road itself is a source of spellbinding views and evocative nature: from **Montecorice**, with the splendid precipices of the Ripe Rosse over the sea, you reach **Acciaroli**, with its lovely old village

the splendid precipices of the Ripe Rosse over the sea, you reach **Acciaroli**, with its lovely old village and marvellous beach. It is said that a local fisherman was the inspiration for Hemingway's novel *The Old Man and the Sea*. Clambering up a twisting road one arrives at **Pollica**, a fresh oasis of silence, where time seems to have stood still. The view from here is stunning.

Apart from Paestum, Cilento has another archaeological gem: the ruins of the ancient Greek city of **Velia**, whose fame is tied to the great philosophers Parmenides and Zeno, and to the celebrated School of Medicine, later inherited by Salerno. *Elea*, the ancient name of Velia, was founded in the 6th century BC by the Greeks from Focea, attracted to the beauty of the place, and soon became one of the most important maritime centres of the southern Tyrrhenian area. The archaeological area extends to a promontory that was once bathed by the sea, then buried, and to the most important monument, the *'Porta Rosa'*, a magnificent structure that opens in the circumference of the ancient walls.





the towers of Cilento

Beginning in the 9th century AD saracene pirates began their incursions onto the Tyrrhenian coast. Defense towers were built to spot and fight off the invaders, and to this day dot the coast of Cilento.

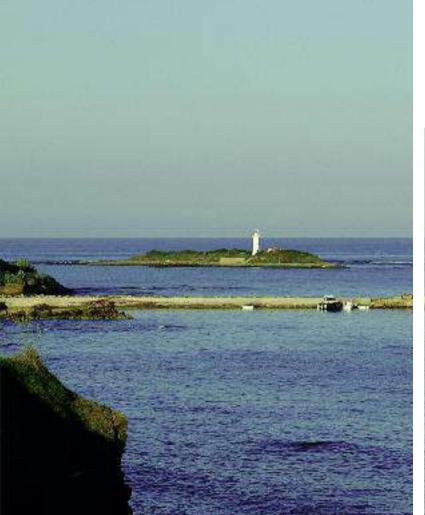
These fortifications were in use until the 1700's, when the pirate menace finally ceased.



the olive tree of Cilento

The splendid olive tree, with its silvery green leaves, is a constant in Cilento scenery. Many hills are completely covered by these trees. The oil they produce is one of the best of Italy, and has earned the denominational marking of Olio d'Oliva Extravergine Cilento Dop.

Cosimo De Giorgi, 1882



Islet of Licosa



Marina of Camerota



famous travellers

In that moment, as we pass by Pisciotta, there appears in front of us, stabbed into the sea, Palinuro, like an enormous shark, covered in gold.

Eugenio Montale, 1932

You can admire the ruins of houses spread on the terraces and built with polygonal blocks of sandstone. On the promontory there were public and sacred buildings: there remain the relics of an lonic temple and theatre of the 3rd century BC, of a rectangular building, and a paved road: on the southern slopes was the market (*Agora*) in the 4th-3rd century BC. You can visit the remains of Roman burial places and a thermal baths establishment, of the port, the sacred well and, higher up, the amphitheatre, the paleo-christian church, the Angevin Tower; beyond the Porta Rosa is the sanctuary of Poseidon Asphaleios.

Leaving behind the glorious deeds of the Romans and Greeks, the coast continues dotted with long sandy beaches, bunches of houses and ancient villages: **Ascea**, medieval in origin, with its charming marina and **Pisciotta**, characterised by the houses wedged in green.

Continuing along the coast it is a constant panoramic delight of magic beauty, up to the legendary promontory of **Palinuro**. It is said that it owes its name to Aeneas' unfortunate helmsman who, as Virgil recounts in the *Aeneid*, fell into the water here and perished.

Palinuro is an internationally renown bathing resort; well visited, it offers beautiful beaches, great hotels and sports centres, campsites and vacation villages. The secret of Palinuro lies in the marine grottoes to be discovered on boat trips: the Blue Grotto, whose waters assume the transparency of sapphires, the Silver and the Blood grottoes. Yellow and green are the dominant colours of the Fetente (stinking) cove, so named for the sulphuric spring that releases an unpleasant odor. The Baia del Buondormire (of the 'good sleep') with its crystalline waters is one of the most romantic beaches of the coast. The Natural Arch (Arco Naturale) is a moulded masterpiece of nature, with its long beach and nearby mouth of the river Mingardo.

Imposing cliffs, coves you can get to only in a boat, and ecceptional grottoes are also to be found at **Marina di Camerota**, famous destination for summer tourism.

We recommend a boat trip to Punta degli Infreschi, with its evocative coves and clear water, and a trip, on land, to **Camerota**, on hills covered in olive groves.

The coast continues to Policastro and Sapri, passing through gracious bathing resorts like **Scario**. In the centre of the gulf to which it gives its name, **Policastro Bussentino** preserves interesting remains of a castle and of medieval walls. A fascinating excursion is that to the Grotto of Bussentino, an imposing fenomenon created by the river, and one of the most interesting of the Campania. On the southern extreme of the Campania, Sapri is one of Cilento's most important towns, with a lovely panoramic waterfront. The coast is full of ample sandy beaches, and inland there are wood covered hills in the area of **Torre Orsaia**

Even though you are seduced by one of the most beautiful seas of Italy, the 'other' Cilento is not to be underestimated. The one of the inland, full of surprises. Nature is still uncontaminated here, like that of the coast, and is protected by the **Cilento e Vallo di Diano National Park**. There are innumerable trails that take you into this park blessed with hills, rivers, woods and paths that cut deep into the wild.

Vallo della Lucania, the most important town of Cilento from a commercial and administrative point of view, is at the centre of the main roads and railways, and the starting point of hikes into the park. Trekkers can take long hikes in the Alburni Mountains (also known as the Dolomites of the South for the clear colour of its limestone walls), on Mount Cervati (the highest summit of the Campania with 1,900 mt), or on Mount Gelbison (also known as Sacred Mountain, popular for the presence of the sanctuary of Madonna di Nova Velia on its summit). The surrounding landscape leaves its visitors fascinated: the karst phenomenon has permitted long gorges to be carved into the rock (the karst swallow holes) and mysterious grottoes, not to mention the small "mirrors of water" to be found here and there

A stop at the evocative and famous **Grottoes of Castelcivita** is a must, with its underground system of caverns.

Inland Cilento is characterised by small villages, among which the evocative **Roscigno Vecchia**, a village abandoned due to the many landslides.

...I took courage, and, taking him by the hand I asked – where are you going, handsome captain? – Looking at me he responded:
-Oh sister, I am going to die for my beautiful country-

Luigi Mercantini, 1857



Natural arch



Capo Palinuro

"they were three hundred, they were young and strong..."

In 1857, a group of about thirty youths led by Carlo Pisacane landed on the coast at Sapri, to begin an anti-Bourbon insurrection. The patriots, however, were all killed by the troops. The famous poem by Luigi Mercantini, "The Gleaner of Sapri" was dedicated to these heroes, and every year in August, at Sapri there is a costumed reenactment of the tragic event.



Vallo di Diano

Nature and art are the stars of the Vallo di Diano (which is part of the **Cilento e Vallo di Diano National Park**), with the marvellous grottoes of Pertosa/Auletta, the village of Teggiano and the magnificent Certosa (monastery) of Padula.

The grottoes of the Angel at Pertosa/Auletta are

set in an evocative natural amphitheatre in the green of the Alburni mountains. They twist and turn for about 2,500 meters through galleries, tunnels and immense caverns; a truly enchanting place full of stalactites, stalagmites and huge underground halls. To add to its charm, this is the only cave in Italy where, to gain access, one has to row across a small lake originating from the underground river. **Teggiano** has one of the area's most interesting historical centre, and is the ancient capital of the Vallo. It was formerly known as Dianum. Located on top of a round hill, it dominates the plains that, in Roman times, were dangerous swamps. Fine examples of Romanesque architecture are preserved. such as the Cathedral and the church of Sant'Andrea, often built on top of existing Roman foundations. The village, with its narrow twisting streets, is nestled around the Castle which was

founded in 1285 and rebuilt in the 19th century.

The town of **Padula** has the most important monastic monument of Southern Italy, the **Certosa of San Lorenzo**. The majesty of the building, a true "convent-city", and the exhuberance of the décor, make this an obligatory visit.

The grandiose enormity of the complex is amazing.

Founded in 1306, the monastery followed the order's rules which dictated that the monks' cells, gathered around the cloister, be separated from the common areas which were located near to the church. The church of San Lorenzo is separated by a wall into two parts. In the first, near the entrance, sat the lay brothers, and near the presbytery, the cloistered monks. There are also two choirs. The old kitchen is also interesting, with its huge dominating "cooker-hood" in the centre, and connecting tunnels to the wine cellar and oil press. The Abbot's **Apartment** is the real gem of this convent, made up of ten rooms that open onto a splendid garden. The library has a lovely majolica pavement, and the ample Cloister onto which the monks' cells open, is also impressive. With a surface of almost 15,000 sq mt it is one of the largest in Europe: the two storeys on which the convent is built are connected by a grandiose double helix stairway.



Q

the wine trail flavours and history of Cilento

The trail runs all along the coast from Salerno to Marina di Camerota, with some small detours. It is an

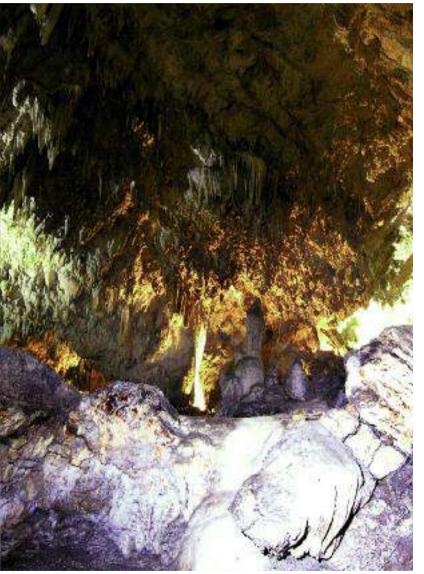
excellent way to get to know the typical products of the area in the historical centres and among the natural beauty of the area. Wine cellars, typical restaurants, characteristic handicrafts, are all to be found in a context of picturesque villages rich with history and vineyards facing the

sea. Honest and simple hospitality can be found in any one of the many agritourisms.



Cilento cuisine

The cuisine of Cilento is a true example of the farm culture: the dishes reflect the prime ingredients used, and the methods and traditions that have accompanied these people throughout their long history. The recipes, passed on by word of mouth from generation to generation, are based on the typical products of the area: from fish to exquisitely fresh vegetables, from beef to hand-made pasta.



Grottoes of the Angel Pertosa/Auletta



Cloister of the Certosa di Padula Kitchen of the Certosa di Padula





Caserta and Matese

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Royal Palace of Caserta

famous travellers

The palace will be more beautiful than Versailles... the acqueduct is so magnificent that I have never seen one similar elsewhere.

This is the area referred to as "Campania Felix" by ancient populations due to its privileged position and the fertility of its soil. Irrigated by the Volturno and favoured by a mild climate, the province extends from the sea to the Apennines, alternating between lush vegetation and places of great historic and cultural interest. The vast plains of the Caserta area open onto the sea and host one of the most famous and widely visited monuments of the Region: the Royal Palace (Reggia) of Caserta.

Santa Maria Capua Vetere, Capua and Sessa Aurunca, are also of historic and archaeological interest, all concentrated in the area of Caserta known as Terra di Lavoro. The Domitian shore is the province's coastline, an area rich with pine stands, wide sandy beaches and famous bathing establishments.

Inland, the massif of **Matese** offers marvellous uncontaminated nature and villages where art and popular traditions are still strongly felt; one of the least contaminated areas of Italy.



Ente Provinciale per il Turismo di Caserta Palazzo Reale

tel. 0823 321137

www.eptcaserta.it

Ente Parco del Matese piazza della Vittoria, 31

San Potito Sannitico tel. 0823 786015 www.parcorergionaledelmatese.it

Comunità Montana Monte Santa Croce

via Roma 30 Roccamonfina tel. 0823 921276 www.comunitamontanasantacroce.it

Calvi Vecchia

Scavi archeologici di *Cales* strada statale Casilina tel. 0823 652533

Santa Maria Capua Vetere

Museo Archeologico dell'antica Capua via Roberto d'Angiò 48 tel. 0823 844206

Caserta

Reggia e Parco via Douhet 22 tel. 0823 277380/448084 Oasi di San Silvestro Centro Ambientale WWF tel. 0823 361300 Complesso Monumentale del Belyedere di San Leucio

Giugliano

tel. 0823 301817

Area archeologica di *Liternum* (località Lago Patria sulla Circumvallazione)
Pro Loco Litorale Domitio tel. 081 0602760

San Tammaro

Museo dell'Agricoltura Meridionale Real Sito di Carditello tel. 0823 277376

not to be missed

Royal Palace and Park of Caserta Casertavecchia

Santa Maria Capua Vetere Sant'Angelo in Formis

Lake Matese Valle dell'Inferno

caserta in 1 day

Royal Palace and Park of Caserta Casertavecchia

caserta in 3 days

Royal Palace and Park

of Caserta San Leucio Village

Casertavecchia

Santa Maria Capua Vetere

Piedimonte Matese

Lake Matese



art and archaeology

Royal Palace and Park of Caserta San Leucio Village Casertavecchia

Santa Maria Capua Vetere Sant'Angelo in Formis Rovine di Liternum

Sessa Aurunca

Sant'Angelo d'Alife Castle

nature and parks

Matese Regional Park Lake of Matese Regional Natural Reserve of Foce Volturno and Costa di Licola Regional Natural Park of Roccamonfina-Foce del Garigliano

for young people

Casertavecchia Baia Domizia

Marina of Varcaturo

Natural Regional Park of Matese (skiing, canyoning, free flight, free climbing)

shopping

Wooden, copper, wrought iron and wicker objects Embroidery, laceware

outings with children

The Royal Palace and Park of Caserta Amphitheatre and Museum of the Gladiators at Santa Maria Capua Vetere Variconi Oasis Castles and Lakes around the Matese





Caserta Royal Palace, Fountain of Diana

specialities

Campanian buffalo meat Chestnuts from Roccamonfina Buffalo Mozzarella Dop

wines

Falerno del Massico Doc

spas and fitness

Sinuessa Thermal baths

The Royal Bourbon sites: Caserta, San Leucio and Carditello

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The Royal Palace of Caserta is one of the most sumptuous palaces ever to be constructed for a King. In 1751 King Charles of Bourbon engaged the architect Luigi Vanvitelli to design a palace that could compete with the great residences of the other european sovereigns, in particular Versailles. In just a few years, an enourmous complex began to take form on the vast plains, and with time around the Palace the city of Caserta was born.

The immense dwelling is made up of four courtyards and thousands of rooms, chapels, museums and theatres. In the 120 hectare park wide boulevards, fountains, waterfalls and numerous other contructions were created (a bus service is available to help you visit it all). Stunned by the sumptuous architecture, George Lucas chose the Royal Palace as setting for some scenes in the *Star Wars* series.

The Palace has 1,200 rooms, 34 stairways and 1,970 windows. The *lower foyer* opens into the entrance atrium, from which you can admire the four courtyards with their park views. From the honour stairway one goes to the *upper foyer* and directly in front, the **Palatina Chapel**, a rectangular hall with its barrel-vaulted caisson ceiling decorated with gilded rosettes and a semicircular apse. To the left of the chapel are the **Royal Apartments**, pompously decorated with marble and paintings, and furnished with period pieces and precious objects. The **Palatina Library** occupies three rooms. A request of **Maria Carolina**, it had more than 10,000 volumes. The *Royal Nativity* scene has been reconstructed in one large hall.

The **Gallery** of the Royal Palace of Caserta is divided into various sections. The *Picture-gallery* contains portraits of the kings and queens of the Bourbon family, both from Spain and France.

One of the wings of the palace houses the so-called **Opera Museum**, or the **Vanvitellian Museum**, with a collection of drawings, sketches and plans of Vanvitelli's masterpiece, as well as wooden models of the Royal Palace. In the second courtyard is the **Little Court Theatre**. Built in a horseshoe form, with five levels of boxes and a sumptuous royal balcony, it is a true masterpiece of 1700's theatrical architecture.

Q

bridges of the Maddaloni Valley

The Bridges of the Maddaloni Valley are fruit of the genius of Luigi Vanvitelli, and built in the 1700's for the Carolinian acqueduct that feeds the waterfalls of the Park of the Royal Palace of Caserta. This masterpiece of sequential arches is an imposing structure, made even more monumental by its architectural similairity to roman acqueducts.

If the Royal Palace is an exultation of architecture and décor, then the **Park** mirrors its importance in the majestic fountains, with subtle plays of water, and in the lush green that disappears into the horizon. The central boulevard, about 3 kilometers long, makes a powerful impact, adorned with fountains, waterfalls and groups of statues tucked away in the geometry of the woods, grass lawns and flower beds. The sequence of water culminates in the **Great Waterfall**, known as the *fountain of Diana*. There is also an **English Garden**, wanted by Maria Carolina of Austria. It is rich with rare and exotic plants, greenhouses, thickets and paths. There is a lovely pond with the statue of *Venus* and. typical of the Romantic style,

The 'Royal Site' finds its completion in the nearby village of San Leucio (famous for the production of high quality silk) with its elegant Casino Reale del Belvedere (Royal Lodge), home to important cultural events.

fake ruins adorned with statues.

San Leucio is a suburb of Caserta where, in 1700's on orders of Ferdinando IV, a silk factory was installed. The village that grew around it had its own statutes, with utopian (for its time) laws: the workers employed by the *Royal Silk Factory* and their families enjoyed equal rights, free obligatory education for the children, and a fraction of the revenue was invested in a fund for the aid of the sick and the elderly.

The silk production from San Leucio became known all over Europe, and even today is prized the world over.

If San Leucio represented a corageous push towards a new model of industrial development, then the **Royal Site of Carditello** was its imitator in the field of agricultural development, once again instituted by Ferdinando IV. There was buffalo breeding, and a dairy farm for the production of mozzarella. To facilitate the Sovereign on his visits, a small palace, agricultural buildings and a church were built in the mid 1700's. This residence now houses the Southern Agricultural Museum.



The gardens of the park are stupendous, in perfect harmony with strip that is all one garden.

Johann Wolfgang Goethe, 1787



Internal view of the Royal Palace of Caserta





Belvedere Lodge at San Leucio

famous travellers

One cannot disagree with the fact that it is a dwelling fit for the ancient masters of the world.

The village of Casertavecchia

A visit to **Casertavecchia** is unforgettable, one of the most evocative and well preserved medieval villages in Italy. Here, amid little stone paved streets, aristrocratic buildings and ancient churches, old traditions are still deeply felt.

In the summer an important festival of music, theatre and dance is held.

A stroll along the medieval streets gives one the sensation of going back in time. At the centre of the village is piazza Vescovado, onto which faces the **Cathedral of San Michele**, a magnificent example of arab-norman architecture with a polychromatic lantern and belltower, the *episcopal palace*, the *seminary* and the *canonical house*, to form a closed rectangular courtyard. Of the characteristic buildings, the **Mullioned House** is worthy of note, an example of a 15th century aristocratic home. The ruins of the **Castello**, built in the 9th century are also preserved.





San Silvestro woods oasis

Protected by the WWF, the oasis is made up of beautiful holm-oak, maple and chestnut woods that

continue from the Park of the Royal Palace, as a sort of theatrical backdrop. It occupies the area of the Royal Holding of San Silvestro, and was used by Ferdinando IV to satisfy his venatory and agricultural passions, based on other European royal holdings. The woods are inhabited by

small mammals, some deer and several bird species.



Cathedral of San Michele



Church of the Annunciation Virgin with the Child





Terra di Lavoro

This vast area of the province of Caserta has many interesting historic and artistic places: from the Roman ruins of Santa Maria Capua Vetere, Calvi and Sessa Aurunca, to the medieval remains in Aversa, Capua and Sant'Angelo in Formis.

Founded by the Normans, **Aversa** has a stupendous romanesque **Cathedral** from the 11th century, home to works of great importance. The complex of the Annunziata with its baroque church is also beautiful. Cicero called ancient Capua *Altera Roma*, or "second Rome", the city where Hannibal idled, and it now corresponds to the modern town of **Santa Maria Capua Vetere**. Its monuments recall the magnificence of the past: the glorious Campano Amphitheatre, the Mitreo, and the Collegiata di Santa Maria.

The remains of the **Amphitheatre** (from the Augustian era in the 1st century AD) are imposing, and second only in size to the Colosseum in Rome. Built following an eliptic plan, it was four stories high and decorated with statues. It could host up to 40,000 spectators. The arena is well preserved, while only some pillars and a lateral arch remain of **Adrian's Arch**, also known as the Arch of Capua, under which the Appian Way passed.

The **Mitreo** is one of the best preserved monuments, used as a place of worship of the persian god Mithras, it dates back to the 2nd-3rd centuries AD. It is a long rectangular subterranean hall, and on the far wall a fresco of the god killing a bull can still be seen (2nd century AD).

The Cathedral or Collegiata di Santa Maria dates to the 5th century. The façade of the church presents itself with three great doors. The inside of the church, with five naves, has 51 ancient columns of varying forms and materials, almost all topped by moulded capitals. The church contains important works of art. The Archaeological Museum of Ancient Capua houses relics from the remains of the Roman city. The original Gladiator Museum, unique in its genre. will be particularly appreciated by children.

A few kilometers from Santa Maria Capua Vetere is the present-day **Capua**: in Roman times only a small landing on the handle of Volturno, known as *Casilinum*, it now offers magnificent examples of medieval art, buildings and churches, as well as an important museum.

Enclosed by a long ramparts (16th century), the city maintains its medieval feeling, particularly in the oldest part of its centre. There you will find the three small churches founded by the Longobards: San Michele in Corte, San Giovanni in Corte and San Salvatore a Corte, The heart of the village is the Cathedral (9th century). containing prized paintings and scuptures. The pride of the city is the **Campano Museum**, which is rich in historical. artistic, archaeological and religious documentation of the civilisation in Campania. It is situated in the 14th century Palazzo Antignano and is famous for its collection of the 'Matres Matutae', the mothers of Capua, tuff statues that figure sitting women with numerous children in their arms dedicated to the fertility goddess (dated between the 5th and 1st centuries BC). There is also a collection of latin epigraphs and archaeological material from Roman Capua, as well as the medieval sculptures from the Gate of Frederick II of Hohenstaufen

Not far from Capua, on a highland from which a marvellous view of the great plain of Caserta can be enjoyed, is one of the most important medieval monuments of Italy: the **Basilica of Sant'Angelo in Formis**. It was founded in the 10th century on the remains of a temple dedicated to the goddess Diana, but rebuilt in 1072 under orders of the Abbot Desiderio of Montecassino. The inside has three naves and three apses, and is covered in colourful frescoes, a cycle of painting unique in Southern Italy.



the Wine Trail of Terra di Lavoro

The trail includes all the most important gastronomic areas: Caserta, Aversa, Santa Maria Capua Vètere e

Sessa Aurunca, the spent volcano Roccamonfina and the limestone reliefs of Màssico.

Wines produced here have been famous since ancient times, as are the other local products: the chestnuts from Roccamonfina, the campanian annurca apple, the buffalo mozzarella Dop and the smoked provolone cheese.

(www.sito.regione.campania.it /agricoltura/home.htm).



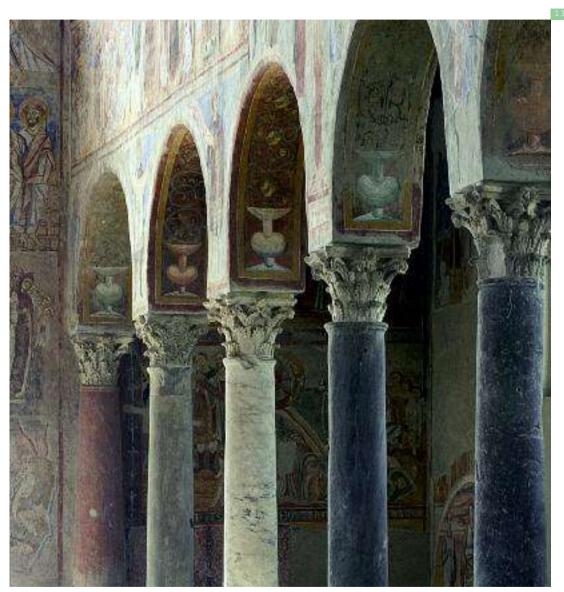
the annurca apple

The queen of apples is cultivated only in the Campania region, and its greatest concentration is in the province of Caserta.
One of the peculiarities of this apple is that it ripens on hay on the ground.
The popular feast dedicated to the fruit is held in autumn in Valle di Maddaloni.

famous travellers

In Capua there was a magnificent amphitheatre, of which one can still admire the ruins; because it was Capua, the civilised city par excellence, that invented gladiator fights.

Alexandre Dumas, 1857



Basilica of Sant'Angelo in Formis

"Mothers" of Capua Museo Campano

> Amphitheatre Santa Maria Capua Vetere

Basilica of Sant'Angelo in Formis, apse









In the area near Calvi Risorta the rests of *Cales* are found. Ancient crossroad of antique people, the Auruncans, Etruscans, Latins and Samnites, it has now become famous for its agricultural machinery, amongst which the "calesse", a two wheeled 'cart'. Aside from the Romanesque Cathedral of San Casto there are Roman remains to be visited: of particular importance are the Central Thermal Baths and the Theatre, both from the 1st century BC.

Close to the border with Lazio is **Sessa Aurunca**, ancient city of the Auruncans. Situated between orchards and olive groves, it preserves proof of its glorious past.

The Romanesque **Cathedral** goes back to the 12th century. Inside there are lovely mosaics and re-used Roman columns. The **Duke's Castle**, built during the reign of the Longobards over ruins of a Roman building and enlarged by the Hohenstaufen emperors, it hosts the Museum in the Castle, with relics from the necropolises, the temples and the Roman villas of ancient Suessa.

The remains of the **Roman Theatre** (1st century BC) are at the edge of town, surrounded by a grandiose **cryptoporticus** from the 1st century AD. Next to the theatre we can find remains consistant with ancient thermal baths. Take a relaxing stroll to the **Ponte degli Aurunci**, on the road that connected old Sessa to the via Appia near the coast. This ancient viaduct was built in the 1st and 2nd centuries AD and consists of 21 arches.



In the area around Caserta many other towns have also known how to enhance their historical heritage: **Maddaloni** with its Archaeological Museum of Antica Calatia (in the charming lodge of the dukes of Carafa), **Teano, an area with a rich historic and architectural heritage and** its Archaeological Museum of Teanum Sidicinum (in a splendid lategothic building in the heart of the historic centre of town), and **Succivo** with its Archaeological Museum of Agro Atellano.







the rites of Holy Week at Sessa Aurunca

The rites of Holy Week at Sessa Aurunca represent one of the most intense popular religious moments, deeply felt by the entire community. Whether in the Procession of the Mysteries of the Passion, or in the group of the Deposition of Christ from the Cross or of the Grieving Virgin, everyone has a role to play: the little boys with their thuribles full of burning incense, little girls dressed

as winged angels, the hooded monks or the women dressed in mourning to sympathise with the Grieving Virgin over the dead Christ.





The Cathedral of San Paolo, Aversa



The Domitian Coast: from Licola to Baia Domizia

The other hub of tourism in this area is the beautiful **Domitian Coast** famous for its many kilometers of beaches.

The scenery, designed by the dunes of fine white sand and the green pine stands, twists its way along the ancient Via Domiziana, northeast of Naples. The entire area is a strong tourist attraction, well equipped with hotels, resorts, pensions and camping grounds. Although mostly visited in the summer, above all by families with children and by young people, is also very nice in the off-season. It is a land of wide open spaces and many resources: a tranquil sea and protected nature (the Regional Natural Reserve Foce Volturno and Costa di **Licola** and the Regional Natural Park Roccamonfina-Foce del Garigliano).

Going from Naples towards the north along the via Domiziana, there are many interesting towns: the first is Licola, noted for its ample and quiet beaches. There is a pine forest equipped with accomodations and sports facilities.

Marina di Varcaturo, developed in the 1950's, is a favourite of young tourists. The lidos offer wide beaches, swimming pools and the possibiltiv to take part in various sports.

On Lago Patria, a small body of water on the coast, there once was the city of *Liternum*, of which today only some remains are visible. The Forum has three main monuments: the Temple, the Basilica and the Theatre. A little further on is the Patria tower and the tourist swimming establishment of Marina di Lago Patria.

The area between Villaggio Coppola (with an 18-hole golf course) and Mondragone attracts thousands of tourists every year for the beauty of its miles of coast: near the mouth of the river Volturno is Castel Volturno a centre noted for the production of buffalo mozzarella and for its lovely pines, then **Mondragone**, a lively town. You can enjoy a relaxing holiday at Bagni di Mondragone. in the thermal baths that take their name from Sinuessa, the Roman colony famous for its hot

At the centre of the Gulf of Gaeta, just before the mouth of the Garigliano river. Baia Domizia finally appears, a lovely tourist oasis with a balsamic pine forest and very fine sand.

Along the entire coast the visitor can count on wide sandy beaches, ideal for children and equipped with sports facilities. Here you can practise any sort of sport, from deltaflying to diving, from golf to waterskiing, as well as enjoy a day at the water parks. The beaches are usually very full and in the evening young people come out to meet up in the bars and 'gelaterias'.

The domitian area is famous for the production of exquisite buffalo mozzarella: it is certainly worth visiting one of the many dairy farms in the area between Mondragone and Castel Volturno where vou can watch them hand-make it.



the Roccamonfina Regional Park

The Roccamonfina and mouth of the Garigliano river Regional Park includes the mountainous region of

the spent volcano of Roccamonfina, and the mouth of the river that marks the northen border of the coast of Campania. The volcano, covered in woods, has a diameter of 15 kilometers. Lovely trails run through the Park.





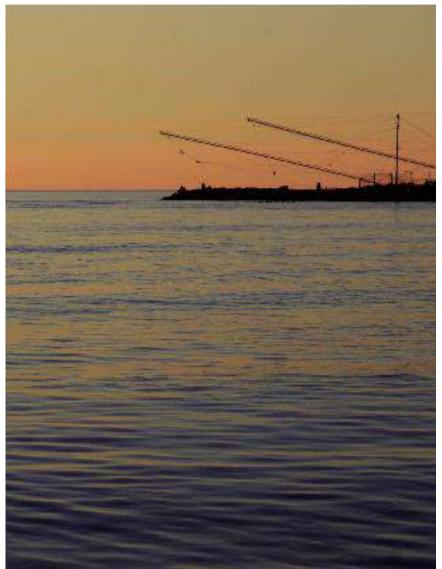
Buffalo herds on the domitian coast



famous travellers

The azure bay seems to borrow more of the blue of heaven as it stretches far away to the horizon; the little steamers and innumerable yachts that ply between the islands give the scene animation and variety.

A.J. O'Reilly 1884





The mouth of the Volturno

Q

the kingdom of the Buffalo

This is the most famous and appreciated mozzarella, produced with whole buffalo milk. Hailing ancient origins, Mozzarella takes its name from the moment in which the curd, after being poured, is "mozzata", that is "cut". Buffalos are mostly bred in the province of Caserta, between Aversa and Mondragone, and on the Sele plain.

The buffalo mozzarella of Campania carries the Dop

marking, quality guarantee for the consumer.

Matese

Horizons of rocky crests, sheer rock faces and steep gorges, majestic tops which reach 2,000 meters: Matese, a synthesis of marvellous unspoiled nature, of art and deeply rooted traditions is an immense territory between valleys, lakes, rivers and mountains, dotted with charming villages on hilltops and splendid woods.

The itineraries for the exploration of the **Regional Park of the Matese** are numerous. Some take you along ancient paths through wonderful landscapes, fortified villages, and medieval castles, so that the pleasure of walking can be combined with visits to the most interesting places in the area. One can also walk into the elm and oak woods or onto the ample high plains, a scenario which is mirrored in the intense blue of the many pools of water, or amid majestic summits that touch 2,000 mt.

There are fascinating naturalistic destinations like the Lake of **Matese**, the **Valley of Hell**, the **Lete river**, the **grottoes of Canto** and the **Quirino Canyon** (the largest canyon in Italy).

Other trails are created for the tourist looking for an alternative way of enjoying nature through a more direct contact with it: trekking, horseback riding, birdwatching, mountain biking, four-wheel driving, endurance, spelunking, free climbing and flights with deltaplanes or hang-gliders.

The main villages of the area are in a circle around the massif of Matese. **Piedimonte Matese**, the most important town and the natural entrance to the park, has a vast artistic patrimony, and is the starting point for interesting hikes to the lakes, the panoramic points, and the many hiking trails on the mountain.

At Castello Matese one can admire the many picturesque medieval towers and enjoy the local cuisine, all the while taking in the magnificent panorama from an outcrop that dominates the Volturno Valley. San Gregorio, in the heart of the massif, is a noted weather station; Letino, with its lovely castle, is at an altitude of almost 1,000 mt and looks onto the lake that borrowed its name The other towns of Matese, on the slopes of the mountain, conserve evocative testimony to an ancient past: castles, convents, and medieval villages will surprise the visitor in Prata Sannita. Gioia Sannitica, and Sant'Angelo d'Alife, From Decembre to April it is even possible to ski around the area of Bocca della Selva: Monte Orso has a nice cross-country skiing trail.

Back down in the plains, do not miss a visit to **Alife**: at the feet of the massif in the valley of Volturno, it still preserves intact the ancient Roman city closed in by massive walls.

The Matese area is not just history and nature. Here old crafts and traditions still live: artisan and artistic ceramics, the old art of woodworking, of copper and wrought iron, popular music, songs, fables, tools and the traditional costumes worn for the village festivals

For those who would like to stay for a few days, the is a wide choice of accomodations around the park; hotels, pensions, agritourisms and Bed & Breakfasts. An additional pleasure can be found in the traditional Matese cuisine, with its simple and genuine flayours.





Matese products

There are many genuine high-quality products to be found here: from the olive oil of Piedimonte Matese to

the famous onions of Alife. Of the numerous local wines varieties, the Pallagrello is the best known. The hills and the mountains of Matese are an ideal habitat for mushrooms and truffles, both white and black, for all the varieties of berries, honey and chestnuts.

The cheese production is highly prized: look for the 'pecorino lauticauda', that takes its name from the breed of sheep from whose milk the cheese has been made

Rarely does one find similar magic in any other place.

Johann Gottfried Seume, 1802





Lake Matese

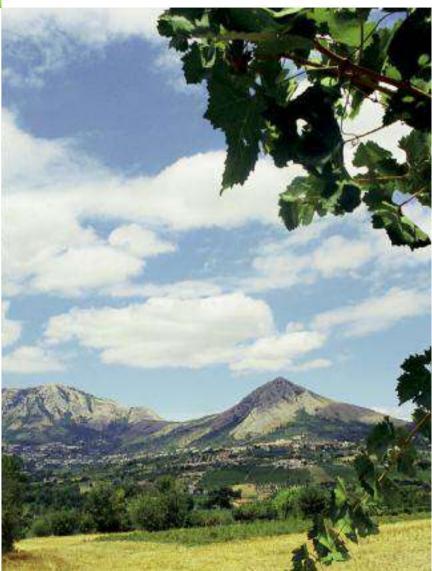
Regional Park
of the Taburno





Benevento and Sannio







View of Sannio

famous travellers

On the way there I tried to persuade the coachman to show me the place where the walnut tree stood, beneath which the witches gathered to celebrate their sabbath. At first he was evasive, saying he knew of no such place, but in the end he admitted that many old women of the neighbourhood knew all about the walnut tree, and that friends of his had actually heard witches flying past on their broomsticks.

Land of ancient history, of legends and old traditions, Sannio offers ideal destinations for the discovery of art in a beautiful natural setting. It is a land of spectacular natural scenery: bare Apennine massifs, hills dotted with vineyards and olive groves, green valleys.

Besides Benevento, there are many interesting towns to visit: all the villages of Sannio, large and small, deserve to be explored for their artistic beauty and scenery. It is rich with the memory of the ancient peoples that have flourished here: Greeks and Samnites, Romans and Longobards.

The historic value and the natural beauty make a

visit to this land a unique experience.

The extraordinary local cuisine is also unique, deeply rooted in the tradition of genuine products and age-old recipes. In Sannio there are numerous agritourism structures and inns of all levels where the many delicacies of the area can be savoured, meeting the demands of even the most demanding

Festivals and feasts animate this area year-round in places like Solopaca, which lends its name to the famous local Doc wine, and San Marco dei Cavoti, home of the crunchy torrone.

gourmet.



Ente Provinciale per il Turismo di Benevento via Nicola Sala 31 tel. 0824 319911/319920 www.eptbenevento.it

Ente Parco Regionale del Taburno-Camposauro piazza Vittorio Veneto, 1 Cautano tel. 0824 973061 www.parcotaburno.it

Benevento

Museo Provinciale del Sannio chiesa di S. Sofia piazza S. Sofia tel. 0824 21818 Museo Diocesano piazza Orsini tel. 0824 22752 Teatro Romano piazza P. Telesino tel. 0824 47213

Cerreto Sannita

Museo Civico e della Ceramica - corso Umberto I tel. 0824 815211

Pietraroja

Parco Geopaleontologico (Paleo-Lab) To book visits tel. 0824 868253 or the Municipality of Pietraroja tel. 0824 868000

not to be missed

Trajan's Arch, Benevento Santa Sofia Church, Benevento Sant'Agata dei Goti Cerreto Sannita Guardia Sanframondi

Geopaleontological Park of Pietraroja

sannio in 1 day

Benevento Sant'Agata dei Goti sannio in 3 days

Benevento Sant'Agata dei Goti

Cerreto Sannita

Montesarchio Solopaca

Guardia Sanframondi

San Lorenzello



art and archaeology

Trajan's Arch (Benevento) Santa Sofia Church (Benevento) Sannio Museum (Benevento)

Roman Theatre (Benevento) Sant'Agata dei Goti

Telesia

nature and parks

Taburno-Camposauro Natural Regional Park Partenio Natural Regional Park Geopaleontological Park of Pietraroja

for young people

Benevento Geopaleontological Park of Pietraroja

shopping

Wines

Torrone from Benevento and San Marco dei Cavoti Liqueur

outings with children

Trajan's Arch (Benevento)
Montesarchio Castle
Butterfly Collection
at the Medieval Castle
(Guardia Sanframondi)
Tower Clock Museum
(San Marco dei Cavoti)

Geopaleontological Park of Pietraroja

"Dinosaur Park" at San Lorenzello





Sant'Agata dei Goti

specialities

Walnut liqueur "Nocino"
Strega Liqueur
Colline Beneventane
Extravirgin olive oil
Laticauda Sannita cheese
Ham from Pietraroja
Torrone from Benevento
and San Marco dei Cavoti

wines
Guardiolo Doc
Sannio Doc
Solopaca Doc
Taburno Doc

spas and fitness

San Salvatore Telesino Telese Thermal Baths L 4 J

Benevento

142

Benevento, legendary "city of the witches", is the repository of ancient memories.

The Samnite city of *Maloentum* was re-baptised by the Romans *Beneventum* in honour of the victory over the King of the Elpiro, Pirro. The Longobards also passed by, as did the Angioines and the Papists. This land held tenaciously on to its character throughout; dating back to perhaps the ancient Samnite warriors, the only ones to resist the superpower of the Roman legions. Taken by the Goths in 490 AD, Benevento fell to the Longobards in 571, who then founded the duchy. After the year 1,000, it became a Papal city and remained part of the Papal State until the Unification of Italy.

The symbol of the City is the **Trajan Arch**, erected at the start of the Trajan Road (via Traiana) on the Benevento-Brindisi tract. It is 15 meters high and has miraculously survived intact, rich with its sculpted decorations, commemorating the glorious feats of the Emperor. Roman memories are also alive in the imposing **Theatre** (2nd century AD), that is the summer venue for concerts and shows. The **Cathedral**, founded in the Longobardian era (7th century) and later completely restructured, retains the façade and the belltower from the original structure.

The most evocative monument is the **Santa Sofia Church**, a masterpiece of the Middle Ages. Founded in the 8th century by the Longobards, it has an usual plan, accentuated by pillars and columns (of Roman origin) and characterised by the intricate design of the vault and arches. The cloister is magnificent and dates back to the 12th century. Since 2011 it's Unesco world heritage site.

The Provicial Museum of Sannio is found in the monastery of Santa Sofia, one of the most important in Campania. The archaeological section has prehistoric relics. Greek and Italic ceramics. Egyptian statues from a temple dedicated to Isis, and Hellenistic-Roman statues, as well as a coin collection that extends from Magna Grecia to the Duchy of Benevento. The medieval section is also very rich, with jewelry, weapons, tools and sculptures, not to mention the paintings dating from the Baroque to the 1900's. The history section recalls the events and traditions of Sannio, and is housed in the magnificent Rocca dei Rettori, a castle built in 1321. In the lower part of the Palazzo di Prefettura, in the heart of the city, is the Arcos Museum "Arte Contemporanea Sannio": in the garden of the former convent of San Domenico is the **Hortus Conclusus**, an ensemble of sculptures by Mimmo Paladino that evokes mythical times. In the summer the city hosts a popular showcase that includes music events, prose, dance, exhibitions, conventions, and workshops organised in the historical venues of the city centre.



the witches of Benevento

The legend reads that there was a centuries old walnut tree near Benevento, under whose branches the witches

met before they took off in flight on their broomsticks. The witch, in beneventan "janara", is one of the last remaining figures of rural paganism: the legend of the witches also recalls the tragic persecution of "wise" women.



typical products

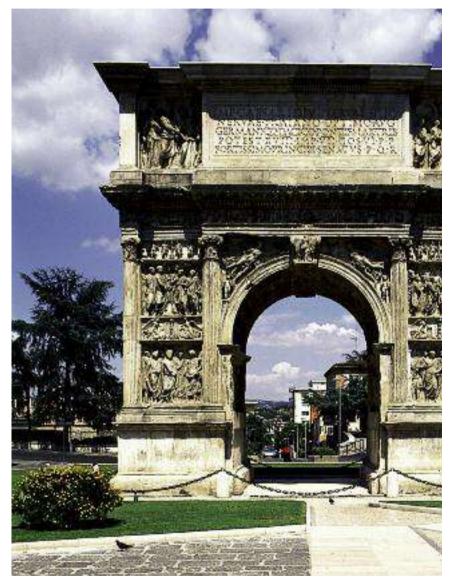
The torrone of Benevento has been known since Roman times. That hard crispy interior covered in chocolate is a specialty of San Marco dei Cavoti. The liqueurs of Benevento are also well known: the 1800's Strega (witch), also the name of a celebrated literary prize, and the Nocino, prepared with the prized walnuts of Benevento picked on the day of San Giovanni. The area also

boasts two Dop olive oils: the "Sannio Caudino Telesino" and "Colline Beneventane". Among the various cheeses and cured meats is the prized Pecorino di Lauticada (a breed of sheep) and the Prosciutto of Pietraroja.

famous travellers

We touched the via Appia, the most beautiful of the ancient roads... from where we were it points straight to Benevento, and goes on to die in Brindisi; this is the road that Horace followed in his poetic journey.

Alexandre Dumas





Trajan Arch

Hortus Conclusus by Mimmo Paladino

> Santa Sofia Church





The Caudina Valley

In the Caudina Valley, near Arpaia, one finds the Caudin Forks pass, where the Romans suffered a humiliating defeat by the Samnites in 321 BC. The most important village is **Sant'Agata dei Goti**. Perched on a tuff ridge between two rivers, with a beautiful view, this village has maintained its charm over the centuries.

It stands on the remains of ancient Saticula, a Samnite village which later became a Roman colony. The current name stems from the VI century AD, when a colony of Goths settled. Strolling through the streets of the old centre, between churches, monasteries and noble palaces, one enters in a world where time has stopped. The Castello Ducale, of Norman origin, is a must as is the beautiful Cathedral (X century) with traces of the ancient mosaic floor and frescoes in the crypt; the San Menna church (XII century) which shows the majestic structure of the first Christian temples and traces of mosaics; the church of the Annunziata, with its rich portal (XI century) and the wood painting of the Annunciation, a catalan work of the XV century.

Montesarchio, the ancient *Caudium*, is a famous Samnite centre, with a Castle from the XV century. In the Bourbon period the Rocca (fortress) was a political prison, where Peorio, Nisco and other patriotes of the Italian Risorgimento were imprisoned.

Vitulano is the starting point for excursions in the Taburno-Camposauro Regional Park. The hermitage of San Menna and the complex of the Holy Trinity (mid XVI century), with a Vanvitelli style bell tower, are open to the public. A little further on is Solopaca, the most important wine centre of the area valley of the Irpinian river Calore. The oldest Doc wine among those of the Benevento province is produced here. The Grape Feast is held in September, and the Mostra del Vino Novello on the day of San Martino (11 November).

Near the beautiful Palazzo Ducale one can still see the walls in *opus reticulatum* of a roman temple, the so-called "House of the Fairies".





the Taburno-Camposauro Natural Regional Park

The park gets its name from the mountain range of the Taburno (1934 m) and Camposauro, of which the profile, together with that of the mountain Pentime, reminds us of a reclining woman, hence the nickname "The sleeping woman of Sannio". The area includes beautiful valleys: the Caudina, Telesina, Vitulanense valleys, and the valley of the Isclero with oak, chestnut and beech woods.

Aglianico wine comes from the Kingdom of Naples, where they make a good Greco.

Sante Lancerio (butler to Pope Paul III), 1559







Q

the Wine Trail and the typical products of the Samnite land

The province of Benevento is a must for the demanding wine tourist. The dynamic viticulture which is

practised in this zone, produces six Doc wines, which are considered among the best italian wines: Aglianico del Taburno, Taburno, Guardioli, Sannio, Sant'Agata dei Goti and Solopaca.
The itinerary of wine cellars open to the public, vineyards and typical

restaurants, leads us along cultivated green hills with vineyards and olive groves, dotted with churches, villages and medieval castles.



Morcone

The Telesina Valley and the Valley of the Fortore river

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The Telesina valley gets its name from the town **Telese** the ancient *Telesia* seat of renown thermal establishments. The therapeutic waters and the luxurious greenery create the ideal place for a relaxing wellness holiday. Remains of the Roman city (walls, gates, paved streets) are open to the public, combined with nice walks. Guardia Sanframondi is another gem of Sannio area: a medieval village on a hill with vineyards, olive groves and orchards. From the majestic 6th century Castle, fortified in 1100, one enjoys a magnificent view. Cerreto Sannita is a delightful town, world famous for its ancient tradition of ceramics, now shown in a permanent exhibition of ancient and modern ceramics. Important are also the Cathedral and the church of San Martino, both of the 18th century, in Rococo style. It is also one of the entrances to the Matese massif.

Cusano Mutri, a medieval village perched around the Castle, with the white houses on a sheer drop to the valley, is famous for its excellent mushrooms celebrated in autumn with popular village feasts. **Morcone**, a friendly mountain resort, seems to roll down the slopes of Mount Mucre.

Near the town of **Pietraroja** (famous for its ham) you will find the Geopaleontologic Park with fossil, animal and vegetal remains dating back 200 million years. The discovery in 1993 of the fossil of a small dinosaur, named Ciro, caused a sensation. At **San Lorenzello** the park with reconstructions of life size dinosaurs will fascinate children.

The area northeast of Benevento is an oasis of mountains, soft green hills and valleys rich in streams.

One can spend days in an atmosphere of introspection and spirituality, in places which are specially dear to the devout. Thousands of faithful make a pilgrimage each year to Pietrelcina, the birthplace of the Saint Padre Pio. The places of the Saint can be visited: the house he was born in and the elm tree of Piana Romana under which he prayed **Pesco Sannita** is a village with feudal architecture. bathed by the river Tammaro. The historic centre is characterized by the sculpted stone decorations. from the arches of the doorways to the beautiful flights of steps. In the 18th century church of San Salvatore the remains of Santa Reparata, martyr of the 3rd century, are kept in a case of wood and glass. Also interesting are the 6th century church of the Madonna dell'Arco and the chapel of San Giuseppe. with its altar in majolica. On a hill, in the high basin of the Tammaro river, perches San Marco dei Cavoti, home of the delicious torrone (nougat) born here in 1891, crisp and covered with extra quality chocolate. The characteristic medieval village is surrounded by walls and gates. The largest village of the Fortore Vallev is San Bartolomeo in Galdo. well positioned in the middle of woods. Interesting are the Renaissance Palazzo Martini and the coeval church of San Bartolomeo, with two interesting portals and a rose window in Catalan style.



of Pietraroja

Little Ciro (*Scypionyx* Sanniticus is the scientific name) is the first dinosaur found in Italy and one of the

best preserved in the world, complete with inner organs and muscle fibers perfectly visible. He lived 110 million years ago and measures 60 centimeters: only a few weeks old, he had practically just hatched from his egg.





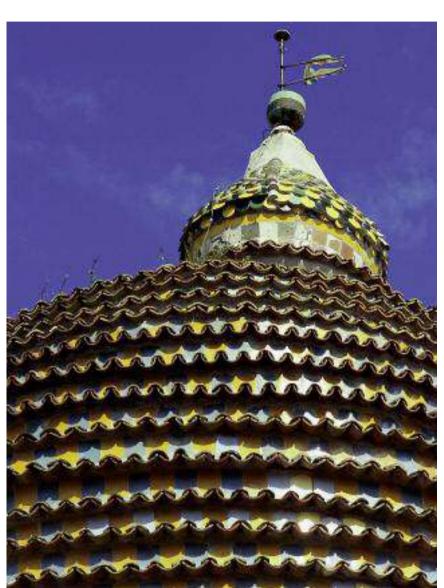


Benevento shows all of its history to those able to decifer it: remains of Samnite walls, great Roman monuments, the medieval castles; the bridge on the Calore of which Dante speaks...

Guido Piovene, 1951

Pietrelcina...I remember every stone – I will keep it with me like the pupils of my eyes.

Saint Pio from Pietrelcina, 1918



The dome of the Cathedral of Cerreto Sannita



della Sofferenza (House for the Relief of Suffering). In 2002 he was proclaimed Saint by pope John Paul II.

Q

the septennial rites of Guardia Sanframondi

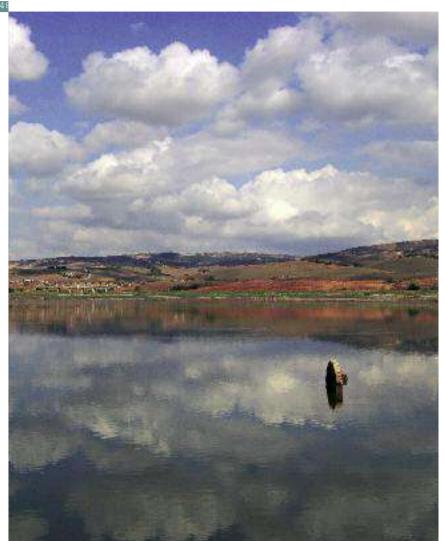
Every seven years in August, Guardia Sanframondi performs the penitential rites in honor of the Assunta (Assumption) with the enthusiastic participation of the people: in the procession men walk with thorn crowns, others are hooded and flagellate themselves on the back, young men personify biblical figures and episodes. Attracting crowds of tourists and scholars, the next event is scheduled to take place in the year 2017.

Q

the Friar of Pietrelcina

Saint Pio (Francesco Forgione, 1887-1968) was born in Pietrelcina. In 1916 he joined the convent of San Giovanni Rotondo (Foggia), where he remained until his death. He received the stigmata, which continued bleeding for a half a century. This phenomenon, which reinforced his fame, drew crowds of faithful. In 1940 the friar started his great work: the Casa Sollievo

Avellino and Irpinia





Conza della Campania, the lake

famous travellers

The Greco wine was so precious, that at banquets it was served only once.

Pliny the Elder, I AD

A mantle of woods covers the "green Irpinia", from an environmental point of view, one of the most beautiful and rich territories of Italy: it includes parks and naturalistic oases, mountains and high plains full of springs, grottoes, lakes, rivers, waterfalls, woods... The magic colours and scents invite walks in an unspoiled environment, long itineraries which at every step reveal spectacular views of grandiose mountains, streams and wide valleys

Discovering Irpinia step by step, amidst the marvels of the landscape, its cultural and artistic heritage emerge: Etruscans, Greeks, Romans, Goths, Longobards...in three thousand years many peoples have passed through these lands and left their marks: in the Roman ruins, the severe catacombs, the Longobard ruins and Baroque monuments. There is no village in Irpinia without a story to tell. Irpinia is also world famous for its glorious winegrowing tradition: it is the land of the Docg wines: Taurasi, Greco di Tufo and Fiano. The recently founded Enoteca Regionale dei Vini d'Irpinia is hosted in the historic Castle of Taurasi, a hub for the promotion and development of the area and its wines, as well as a reception and information point for visitors.

These wines exalt the typical local cuisine: quality products and old recipes guarantee excellent dishes. Inns, trattorias and famous restaurants unite passion, experience and innovation, and offer the possibility to savour real culinary masterpieces. The choice of accomodations is wide and varied, for all tastes and budgets: guesthouses, hotels, agritourisms, B&Bs.



the Wine Trails and Flavours of Irpinia

The province of Avellino, surrounded by vineyards, offers wines of international reputation such as Taurasi, king of the red wines; Greco di Tufo and Fiano, two white wines with an unmistakable bouquet. These three high quality products are the only Docg wines in Southern Italy. The itinerary starts in Avellino and winds its way through the valleys of the rivers Sabato and Calore, and on to the Via Appia, with

its many ramifications. Amidst hills covered with vineyards, olive groves and orchards, the area provides a historical document of the civilizations that succeeded each other over the centuries: Longobard fortresses, Norman castles, Renaissance architecture. (www.sito.regione.campania.it /agricoltura/home.htm).



Ente Provinciale per il Turismo di Avellino via Due Principati 32/A Avellino

tel. 0825 747321 www.eptavellino.it

Provincia di Avellino

Assessorato al Turismo corso Vittorio Emanuele, 144 Avellino tel. 0825 790469

Ente Parco Regionale del Partenio

via Borgonuovo 1 Summonte (AV) tel. 0825 691166 www.parcopartenio.it

Atripalda

Palazzo dell'ex Dogana dei Grani piazza Umberto I tel. 0825 626586

Avellino

Museo Irpino corso Europa tel. 0825 790733 Museo Zoologico via F. Petronelli 8 tel. 0825 781249

Mirabella Eclano

Area Archeologica Antica *Aeclanum* via Nazionale delle Puglie (località Passo di Mirabella) tel. 0825 449175

Montevergine

Museo Abbaziale di Montevergine e Mostra permanente dei presepi Santuario di Montevergine tel. 0825 72924/73424 www.montevergine.org

Sant'Angelo dei Lombardi

Museo dell'Abbazia del Goleto contrada S. Guglielmo tel. 0827 24432

not to be missed

Irpino Museum, Avellino
Sanctuary of Montevergine
Collegiate Church of Solofra
Basilica dell'Annunziata, Prata
di Principato Ultra
Aeclanum Excavations

San Guglielmo al Goleto

irpinia in 1 day

Avellino

Sanctuary of Montevergine

irpinia in 3 days

Avellino

Sanctuary of Montevergine

Sant'Angelo dei Lombardi

Mirabella Eclano

Conza Archaeological Park



Abbey



art and archaeology

Historic centres of Avellino, Sant'Angelo dei Lombardi, Mirabella Eclano Irpino Museum, Avellino

Sanctuary of Montevergine

nature and parks

Partenio Regional Park Monti Picentini Regional Nature Park

for young people

Lake Laceno

Mount Terminio

shopping Lace

Marble objects
Straw works
Incised wood

Wine and typical products

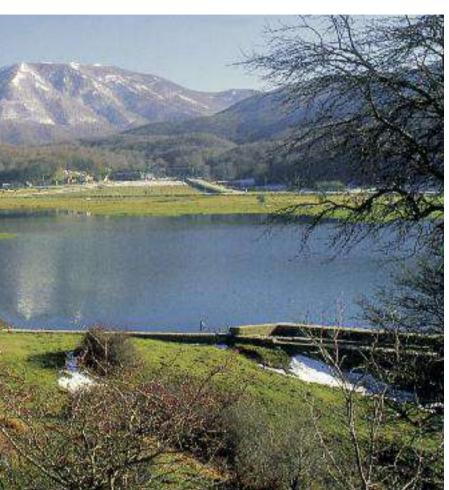
outings with children

Gesualdo Castle
Lancellotti Castle (Lauro)

Lake Laceno

Oasis of Monte Polveracchio and Valle della Caccia

Lake Conza oasis





Lake Laceno

specialities

Chestnuts, apples, hazeInuts
Mushrooms and truffles
Sheep cheese and caciocavallo
Docg Wines Fiano di Avellino,
Greco di Tufo, Taurasi

spas and fitness

Ancient thermal baths of San Teodoro, Villamaina

Avellino, Mercogliano and the Sanctuary of Montevergine

The capital **Avellino** is located in a splendid natural setting, surrounded by the Picentini Mountains. In the centre, with its modern feel, one finds interesting historical buildings; the **Cathedral**, with the beautiful neoclassical façade has paintings from the 1500's and a splendid Roman crypt. The bell tower is majestic. The symbol of the town is the Baroque **Torre dell'Orologio** (Clock Tower) in the Piazza Amendola, which rises above the rooftops of the town. Other representative monuments are the **Fontana di Bellerofonte** (XVII century), designed by Cosimo Fanzago, and the remains of the **Longobard Castle**.

The **Irpino Museum** preserves archaeological material found in the province. In the various rooms (archaeology, renaissance and modern) we find authentic masterpieces: relics from ancient *Abellinum*, among which a magnificent mosaic; the interesting reconstruction of the rich tomb of a chief from Mirabella Eclano, buried together with his dog; wooden statues from the Sanctuary of Mefite in the valley of the Ansanto river; ceramics, porcelain, paintings of the Neapolitan school between the XVII and the XIX century, and a marvellous Neapolitan crib from the 1700's.

From the mountain range of the Partenio (at 1270 meters above sea level), the Sanctuary of Montevergine dominates the city of Avellino. It is the most famous and visited Marian sanctuary of the South, destination of pilgrims from every part of Italy. On the road to the Sanctuary rises Mercogliano, in an evocative surrounding of mountains and hills. Besides the architectural beauty one can admire the splendid view which extends to the gulf of Naples. Here we find the Abbey of Loreto, masterpiece of Domenico Antonio Vaccaro (18th century), rich in art works and

historical documents, with a charming cloister (concerts in summertime) and a library which holds parchment documents, papal bulls and precious incunabula.

Near Mercogliano it is worth your while to make a detour in order to discover the **Medieval village of Capo Castello**, with the remains of the Norman Castle.

From Mercogliano one can drive along the panoramic road or take the cableway which in 7 minutes takes you up a breathtaking slope to the famous **Sanctuary of Montevergine**, just below the top of Mount Partenio, in a marvellous wooded landscape.

The Sanctuary was founded in 1124 on the remains of a temple dedicated to the goddess Cibele. Every year two million pilgrims walk up to render homage to the "Mamma Schiavona", the black Madonna depicted in a painting of the 13th century. The most important times for the pilgrimage are May, August and September, to celebrate Pentecost, the Assumption and the Birth of Maria (the traditional "iuta a Montevergine", which means "outing to Montevergine"). Also important is the feast of San Guglielmo da Vercelli, founder of this church (June 25). The faithful walk up to the sanctuary or travel on wagons decorated with flowers and garlands to the sound of traditional music. The architecture of the monastery and the quest guarters are sober, but the interior of the new Basilica (1952-1961) is luxuriously decorated. The throne with the large panel depicting the black Madonna of Montevergine (late 13th century) is located in the Presbytery. From the back of the lateral naves one enters the "Chiesa vecchia" (old church), Gothic but restructured in the 1600's, which holds a precious collection of art works. In the Sanctuary Museum one finds noble sepulchral monuments and a permanent exhibit of cribs from the 1700's to the present.





the earthquake of 1980

In 1980 Irpinia was devastated by a terrible earthquake. Many people lost their lives and the destruction was widespread. Its tenacious and hard working people, however, have been able to make much of the beauty of this land shine again.

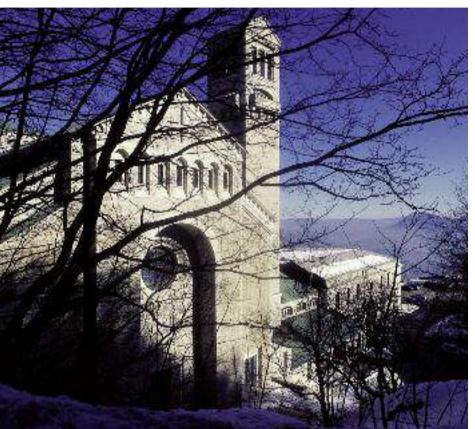


accomodations in monasteries

The Sanctuary of Montevergine offers hospitality in its guest quarters for groups and individuals, who can also take advantage of the cultural programmes organized by the monks and try the delicious honey and the famous herb based liquors. Women can find hospitality in the Benedictine convent in a villa of the 1700's. The convent of San Francesco a Montella, the female

monastery of Santa Lucia in Serino and the Abbey of Goleto all offer hospitality. ...the Campania, exceptional for the cultivation of the vine.

Pliny the Elder, I AD



Sanctuary of Montevergine







The Carnival in Montemarano

The most exciting carnival festivites are in Montemarano, a town east of Avellino, at the foot of the Picentini mountains.

For centuries the people of the town dress up and dance endlessly to the frenetic rhythm known as the "tarantella Montemaranese", the most complex and original tarantelle performed today. More than three thousand people celebrate carnival with this irresistible rhythmic music and dancing, processions and comfits throwing.





typical products

The typical products among these hills and mountains are innumerable: the chestnuts of Montella and Serino, the walnuts of Avella known the world over, honey, mushrooms, black truffles from Bagnoli Irpino, the tomatoes of Montoro, the cheeses of Montella and Bagnoli and the cured meats of Mirabella Eclano. The Irpinian farms, often still family businesses, are still cultivated with traditional

Avellino, Testa Palace

Abbey of Mercogliano

methods to obtain biological products of the highest quality. Many of these farms also offer accomodations, a genuine and comfortable version of farm holiday.

The green heart of Campania

Irpinia includes the Partenio Park and the Monti Picentini Park, the grotto of Caliendo, the Valle della Caccia Oasis at Senerchia, the lakes of Conza and Laceno...

The massif of the Partenio, northwest of Avellino, is part of the **Partenio Regional Naturel Park**: mountains, highplains and woods, where mushrooms, berries and medicinal plants grow. There are numerous accomodations available in the Park: hotels, pensions, agritourisms and bed & breakfasts. At the border of the park towards Benevento, at **San Martino in Valle Caudina**, there is a fine example of the Irpinian cultural heritage: the Pignatellis' Leonessa Castle.

To the southeast, in the large **Monti Picentini Regional Park** (shared by the provinces of Avellino and Salerno) there are summits covered with beechtree woods, deep valleys and gorges with rivers and waterfalls (the Calore, Sele, Sarno and Ofanto rivers are born here), corners of pristine nature and rare bird species. The possibility of hikes is endless, and a nice walk to lake of Laceno on the highplain that goes by the same name is very popular (in winter it becomes a welcoming ski resort).

The eastern part of Irpinia is characterized by pristine nature, rivers and beautiful views: the Campo di Summonte, Sportiglioni grotto and the Acquafredda stream are examples of interesting trails one can take. Historical and archaeological interesting remains can be found in **Avella**. The city coincides with the ancient *Abella*, where was found the *Cippus Abellanus* (2nd century BC), an important document carved in stone in the obscure Oscan language, kept in the Archaeological Museum in Nola.

Among the most important monuments are the remains, well preserved, of the Roman Amphitheatre dating to the late Republican era. The fortified medieval Castle, of which ruins can be seen, was one of the largest in Southern Italy. The San Michele Grotto, with Byzantine frescoes, is also interesting. Lauro, famous for its prized hazelnuts, is also known for the imposing Lancellotti Castle, founded in 1300 in a beautiful panoramic position, then destroyed and rebuilt in the 1800's in a variety of different styles.



Irpinia is an authentic paradise for sports lovers and those passionate about the outdoor lifestyle. Every season offers the visitor any number of a wide range of outdoor activities: hiking, walking, trekking, horseback riding and skiing, the possibility of staying in lovely places like Volturara Irpina, Bagnoli Irpino (with its splendid Laceno highplains) and Campolaspierto, all

equipped with modern skilifts and hotels.



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All the eras were lived out in this region: the ancient Cimmerians with their moonlit funeral rites; the Oscans and the Etruscans with their vaults, the Calcidians, the Sibarites with their soft humanity, and finally the Romans, masters of nature, the fabulous Moors and the Norman horsemen.

Victor Hehn, 1884



Montella The bridge of the Lavandaia



The Roman amphitheatre of Avella



From the Sabato river to the Ufita river

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A fun alternative to the classic tourist itineraries is following the course of the rivers.

The Sabato river is born in the Picentini mountains just south of Avellino. The first town you come across is **Serino**: it is from here that the acqueduct that supplies Naples and other cities starts. The city is also the starting point of excursions to the **Monte Terminio highlands** (1,300mt) and into the Monti Picentini Park, which also has ski-lifts and hotels during the winter months. A detour to visit **Solofra** is a must: set in a beautiful landscape of mountains it has treasures such as the Collegiate of San Michele Church, with paintings from the 1550's and 1600's (the most famous by Francesco Guarino) and the majestic Palazzo Ducale, seat of local government. The city is considered capital of leatherware in Campania.

Atripalda, on the shores of the Sabato river, is the archaeological zone of the ancient *Abellinum*. One can visit the excavations in the area of Civita, with the remains of walls, towers and a Roman house, with a garden, a pool and frescoed rooms. The building of the Dogana dei grani is a good example of industrial archaeology, a container and a museum that hosts relics from the churches either destroyed or closed by the 1980 earthquake, and temporary exhibits.

In **Prata di Principato Ultra**, sitting on an outcrop that dominates the course of the river, is one of the oldest monuments of Irpinia, the Basilica dell'Annunziata. It still retains some paleo-christian structurs of the 6th century, and catacombs dating back to the 3rd-4th centuries AD, with altars, tombs and frescoes: the one depicting the Annunciation is particularly interesting.

Montefusco is the Felsulae recalled by Titus Livius. the famous Roman historian The Great Criminal Court of the Bourbons was held in its castle, and has been nick-named the "Irpinian Spielberg". because many patriotic fighters in the Italian Risorgimento were imprisoned there. Mirabella **Eclano** sits where there was once an important Samnite city, later conquered by the Romans. At the pass of Mirabella are the excavations of *Aeclanum* that have brought to light important remains of the Roman city, among which the public baths, the marketplace, houses, shops and net-like walls. Many of the relics are on exhibit at the Irpino Museum of Avellino. In the centre of Mirabella is the church of Santa Maria Maggiore (end 1800's) which preserves a priceless wooden crucifix of the 1200's, one of the best examples of Romanesque sculpture in Southern Italy.

The wide Ufita valley, to the north, is an area rich in history and tradition, where green hills and tiny villages alternate seemingly without end. In picturesque **Ariano Irpino** are the imposing remains of the Norman era castle and a lovely cathedral. A gorgeous view of the Ufita and Mescano valleys can be enjoyed from here, with the Taburno, Partenio and Matese mountains on the horizon. Pratically all of the area, with its villages nestled on hilltops, is rich in castles: the most famous and best preserved is the massive one that dominates the village of **Gesualdo**, where in the 1500's the famous musician and prince Carlo Gesualdo composed many of his works; and that of **Zungoli**, in an enchanting ancient hamlet.

For a relaxing vacation of wellness one can visit the **Ancient Spas of San Teodoro**, not far from **Villamaina** in the town of Bagni di San Teodoro.



in honour of the wheat: the festival of the straw cart

"The Festival of the Straw Cart" is held every year on the third Saturday of September in Mirabella Eclano. A straw pyramid 25 meters high, covered by ears of wheat and topped by the statue of the Grieving Virgin, is carried to the centre of town on a cart pulled by six bulls. The obelisque is held in place by the locals with tightly pulled ropes.



Gesualdo da Venosa, prince of the madrigalists

The greatest italian madrigalist has also gone down in history for other reasons: in 1590, upon surprising his beautiful wife Maria d'Avalos with her lover in his Neapolitan palace in Piazza San Domenico Maggiore, he killed them both. To escape the revenge of the families of the murdered, he took refuge in his castle at Gesualdo, where he dedicated the last years of his life to sacred music. In

the Capuchin convent of Gesualdo, a painting by Giovanni Balducci (1609) shows the prince on his knees, accompanied by his uncle Carlo Borromeo (later to become a Saint) as he begs forgiveness for the double murder. Facing the prince is his second wife, Eleonora d'Este.

Maria d'Avalos had such hair, that deserved no less gold than crown. She was all ringslets, so the murdered was justified if his life remained forever prisoner of death.

Court Chronicler Corona, 1590



Mirabella Eclano archaeological area



Basilica of the Annunziata in Prata di Principato Ultra



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Alta Irpinia

Alta Irpinia, on the eastern side of the province, is a hilly zone with sheer summits, intersected by innumerable streams. The area was hard hit by the earthquake of 1980, but the rare villages rich in history and natural beauty have been patiently restored in memory of the past.

Montella, famous for its walnuts and chestnuts, is the starting point for excursions into the splendid surrounding mountains. From here one can reach the Santa Maria della Neve Monastery, the Salvatore Sanctuary and the Caprone Grotto, where it is believed that ceremonies to the god Bacchus were held in ancient times. Nearby is the San Francesco a Folloni monumental complex, said to have been founded by Saint Francis of Assisi himself.

Bagnoli Irpino, in a lovely position on the northern slopes of the Picentini mountains, is dominated by

the remains of a 1400's castle. Among the naturally beautiful sites to be visited is the Caliendo Grotto; 300 meters deep it has many small waterfalls that burst from the rock.

Piano Laceno is a touristic centre that is open both

Piano Laceno is a touristic centre that is open both summer and winter, and has many good hotels and restaurants. There are good ski slopes with efficient ski-lifts. On the western edge of the plain is the lake of Laceno, with equipped picnic areas.

At Sant'Angelo dei Lombardi, which takes its name from the cult of Saint Michael the Archangel to whom the Longobards were particularly devoted, one can visit the Romanesque cathedral and the Longobard castle. A few kilometers away is the splendid San Guglielmo al Goleto Abbey, another masterpiece of Romanesque architecture, one of the most evocative of the monumental complexes of Southern Italy. The complex, with its great walls,

dominates the entire Ofanto Valley and includes the monastery and two churches.

The historical centre of **Bisaccia** is interesting: in the Ducal Castle that was founded in the 7th century there are literary cafès and artisan shops. **Calitri**, on the border with the province of Salerno, has a charming ancient village dominated by the Castle, and lovely green areas by the Ofanto river. **Conza della Campania** surges near **lake of Conza**, a large artificial body of water with a refined ecosystem of great naturalistic interest, protected by the WWF.

Archaeological excavations have brought to light important remains and part of the forum of the Roman city, visible in the **Archaeological Park** of ancient *Compsa*.



A sanctuary on a sulphur lake: the Mefite of Rocca San Felice

In the Ansanto Valley is 'Mofeta', a very famous place in ancient times. The lake of sulphureous mud is a volcano that lets off gas and sulphur vapours. Close by, in the 6th century BC the Samnites built a sanctuary venerated by many, dedicated to the goddess Mefite, protectress of health and patron of water and fields. The name is still remembered in the adjective 'mephitic', which refers to

the intolerable smell of the sulphur vapours. The sacred nature of this place has passed down to the nearby Santa Felicita Sanctuary.

Lake of Laceno



There is a place in Central Italy, under high mountains, noble and remembered for its fame, the Ansanto valley; gloomy with dense growth it is closed on two sides by woods, where, full in the middle, between boulders and whirlpools, thunders a river.

Aeneid (VII, 563-567)



San Guglielmo al Goleto Abbey



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