



Exploring Naples

*Napoli, Italy's Most Vibrant City – above & underground.
Pompeii, Vesuvius & Campi Flegrei*



TRIP NOTES 2021

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GENIUS LOCI TRAVEL - The Real Spirit Of Italy



INTRODUCTION

Love it or hate it, there is no place quite like Naples. It is a city so beautiful, thanks to its unique setting, with the backdrop of Mount Vesuvius and the magnificent Bay of Naples, with its three stunning islands, that it started to become a favourite 'tourist destination' already 2000 years ago. The rich & famous of the Roman Empire flocked here and centuries later it formed the culmination of the "Grand Tour".

Today Naples has the fame of being a seductive, colourful, and notoriously ungovernable city, as famous for its art as for its mafiosi, for its pizza & vibrant street life. It definitely is a place that delights in defying categorization. And a place you must visit at least once in a lifetime.

The historic centre of Naples is a unique mix of splendid noble palaces, stunning churches and popular and lively working-class districts – all perfectly blended. There is a good reason that the 'centro storico', the historical heart, is now recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Take your time to stroll through the whole centre - from the one end to the other and back – and you will fall from surprise in surprise. Naples also boasts a complete underground city, which can be accessed in various points, to make you go back in time to the Greek, the Roman, the early Christian or medieval period. Or if you want to travel back to the future, explore its stunning underground 'metro' – among the most beautiful in the world. Do also climb up some of its hills, to Capodimonte, or to Castel Sant'Elmo and the beautiful cloister of San Martino, to take in some of its world famed views over the Bay of Naples, with Mt. Vesuvius, Sorrento & Capri. And of course, while in Naples, why not visit Pompeii – and eat a pizza!

Naples is not an 'easy' city – you must know where to go to get the best out of it. This short tour gives you in a few days a perfect impression of what the city has to offer. A great add-on to your hiking tour along the Amalfi Coast or on the islands of the Bay of Naples. And then you will want to come back for more!

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

Upgrades can be arranged – in several stunning hotels. Genius Loci Travel, as the leading adventure travel company in Campania, can book your room in any hotel you could dream of! We do not look for luxury for the sake of luxury, so if you're looking for the right blend of discrete luxury, excellent service, gracious hospitality and a spirit of authenticity, do not hesitate to ask us.

This tour can be extended, to allow for a longer stay in Naples and/or daytrips to Pompeii, Herculaneum or Capri. Check out our extended tour which includes the Campi Flegrei as well!



DAY-TO-DAY PROGRAMME

Day 1 – Arrival in Naples

Arrival in Naples. From the airport or train station you take a taxi or local bus to the city centre and settle in at your centrally located hotel. Perhaps you have some time for a first stroll already, before going for dinner in one of the great pizzeria's or restaurants of the city.

Accommodation: Naples - Hotel ***

Day 2 – Roundwalk through the heart of Naples

Directly from your hotel right in the heart of the city, you start a great and rewarding round walk through the city centre, touching of course – but not only!- the most interesting 'highlights', such as the Royal Palace, the royal theatre, the beautiful 'Galleria' the medieval castles and some amazing churches. You'll be strolling as well through unknown lively (but safe!) neighbourhoods, with their unbelievable history, where you can find Greek, Roman and medieval buildings in the space of a few square metres. The walk also brings you through quiet parks and along the sea shore, to relax from the hectic street life in Naples. You'll travel up to the cloister of San Martino with a rewarding view of the Bay of Naples. And of course, if you still have the time you can also pay a visit to the world-famous archaeological museum, where all the artefacts from Pompeii and Herculaneum are displayed.

Accommodation: Naples - Hotel ***

Day 3 – Capodimonte & the Sanità

Today you first travel up to Capodimonte, either on foot or by bus. This area not only boasts a beautiful park with wonderful views of the Bay of Naples, but also one of the world's most important museums, which contains

masterpieces by Caravaggio, Tiziano, Botticelli, Perugino & Raffaello. And yes, also Andy Warhol and other modern art. From Capodimonte you'll walk down along the so-called 'Miglio Sacro' (Holy Mile), partly through lively alleys, partly underground. It's here where you will discover the close connection between Naples, early Christianity and the cult of the death. Wander through the catacombs and admire some of the most impressive churches. Then come back to modern life again while eating a great pizza in one of Naples' most authentic neighbourhoods, the Sanità. You walk back into town and now take your time to explore the old Greek-Roman heart of the city, the Decumani. Stroll through the alleys where crumbling facades and stunning baroque churches stand next to each other. Admire the stupendous cloister and sit down in their gardens for a rest. See the scenic streets where Christmas stables are produced all year round. And yes, dive into the underground again: there is the choice between the Roman Forum, Greek aqueducts and the theatre where even the Emperor Nero has declaimed his verses. Then travel on to your next destination, either on the Amalfi Coast or in the Bay of Naples. In alternative, opt for another night in Naples and try out one of the fabulous 'osterie' in the neighbourhood.

EXTRA DAYS

You can travel by local train to Pompeii, considered to be the world's most fascinating ruins. A visit to Pompeii gives you an amazing insight into the life of a Roman city, especially when walking along its chariot-marked back streets. You will be captivated by the exceptional frescoes to be found throughout the city or by the opulence of the villas, with their atriums and charming peristyles, owned by the rich and influential of the day. Visit the amphitheatre as well as the Villa of Mysteries with its masterpiece frescoes depicting the secret Dionysus rites, the Roman Forum and basilica, temples, public baths, and the tiny Odeon created for music recitals. In alternative – or in addition – you can also visit the excavations of Herculaneum, smaller, but with some very well preserved, magnificent villa's.

What is less known to many is that also the 'new' town of Pompeii is definitely worth the detour, if only for its amazing sanctuary. Go for a stroll here and then have an 'aperitivo' to look back on a great day.



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In case you want to make a great roundwalk as well, we recommend climbing Mount Vesuvius, the volcano that with the fatal eruption of 79 AD completely destroyed the bustling city of Pompeii. With Genius Loci Travel you can make an amazing roundwalk here, completely different from the standard visit to Vesuvius. Explore the impressive volcanic phenomena to be seen around the crater: lava flows, pumice fields and grottos, before hiking the top, with some great views over the whole Bay of Naples.

Another area which deserves a visit is the area of the Campi Flegrei, the 'Burning Fields' – just West of Naples. But rather than 'do' this area in a day trip, we recommend our Naples & Campi Flegrei Tour, which features a (short) stay in the area.

TOUR DETAILS

ACCOMMODATION & MEALS

Accommodation is on a bed and breakfast basis in very good 3-star hotels. All rooms have en-suite facilities. When dinners are not included, you will be free to organise your meal. You can either eat at the premises of the hotel or choose from the wide choice of restaurants in the area. Your accommodation holder can give you good tips.

No picnic lunches are included in the tour price, but these can be prepared for you by the accommodation holders, or materials for picnics can be purchased in the villages where you'll be staying.

INCLUDED

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

NOT INCLUDED

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

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

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

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

FOOTPATHS & WAYMARKING

All walks lead through urban areas, hence there is no waymarking in place. With the route descriptions provided together with the maps you will always be able to find your route. A local guide can be provided.

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