



Jewels of the Bay of Naples

*Capri, Ischia & Procida: exploring three amazing islands in the
aquamarine waters of the Mediterranean*



TRIP NOTES 2019

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INTRODUCTION

The Bay of Naples is one of the most spectacular areas on the planet, with a tremendous wealth of both natural and cultural treasures. It presents beautiful diverse landscapes and an amazing amount of history. The blue waters of the Mediterranean are dominated here by the world's most famous volcano, Mount Vesuvius (Italian: Vesuvio), the only volcano on the European mainland to have erupted within the last hundred years.

A unique part of the charm of the Bay of Naples can be found on its three main islands, all different, all beautiful. During this tour you'll visit all three: Capri of course, the most famous, but also Ischia and Procida.

You start your tour on the smallest and least known island: Procida. Just like its big neighbour Ischia, Procida is of volcanic origin. Its beauty lies in its coloured houses and picturesque inlets, which was the setting for the film 'Il Postino'. The little uninhabited island of Vivara, linked to Procida by a pedestrian bridge, is another of the hidden gems that Procida has managed to keep from the attention of mass tourism.

Next you travel on to the largest of the three: Ischia. Known as the 'green island', with mountains rising up over 2000 feet, it has been famous for its almost subtropical climate and thermal spas since Roman times. Here you make a number of beautiful and varied walks: from the medieval castle to cave dwellings, through forests and along deserted beaches, through nice historic villages and amazing terraced vineyards. You can also walk across a number of extinct volcanoes.

You then travel on to the world-famous island of Capri, the last stop on this tour. Capri, unlike the other two islands, is made of chalkstone, just like its natural continuation: the cliffs of the Amalfi Coast. This makes up for its particular features, such as the world-famous 'Faraglioni', its natural arch and its impressive cliffs. But if you wish you can also visit its amazing Roman villas and indulge in its fashionable 'dolce vita' too.

The premises where you'll be staying during this tour are all very special, and full of historical interest. The standard of the tour is 3/4 stars.



Please note: this is a moderately easy tour which is suitable for those who have some experience of walking and a good general physical condition. Most of the walks are on good paths, some of them just recently restored by the local authorities. Average walking times: approx 5 hours each day.



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DAY-TO-DAY PROGRAMME

Day 0 Naples

Arrival in Naples in case you arrive earlier. From Rome (and many other cities) Naples can easily be reached. There are regular AV (high-speed), Eurostar and Intercity trains: travel time by high-speed train = about one hour, cost around € 40; by IC train = about two hours, cost around € 20; by normal, regional trains = almost 3 hours, cost around € 11. Several hotels can be booked according to your wishes (either 'downtown' centrally located, or near the harbour or train station, ranging from 3- to 5-star).

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

Day 1 Arrival in Naples. Boat crossing Naples - Procida

Today you arrive in the bustling city of Naples. Should you arrive early you can take some time to go for a short stroll through the colourful streets, soaking up its atmosphere, or visit a museum. Towards the end of the afternoon you meet your tour leader and the rest of the group at the harbour. After a brief welcome meeting, you will take the boat to Procida, the smallest and most colourful of the three islands of the Bay of Naples. After settling in at your welcoming hotel you can relax in its great garden, or sit in its pool overlooking the Mediterranean, with great views of the island of Ischia. In the evening you dine at the nice hotel restaurant.

Accommodation: **Hotel *** - Procida**. Meals included: 1 dinner

Day 2 Procida & Vivara

After breakfast you start a beautiful roundwalk to discover Procida, considered the most authentic island of the Bay of Naples, with its colourful houses and idyllic fishing harbours. Procida is only a small island, and therefore it's possible to 'do' the whole island in one day. You first pass through the narrow streets and walk up to the historical heart of the island, 'Terra Murata', or 'walled land', dominated by its castle, where you'll enjoy marvellous views. Then you walk down to one of the most picturesque spots in Italy: the small fishing harbour of Corricella. Its unique setting and coloured houses were used as the movie set for "Il Postino". Here you will need some time to look around and take lots of pictures. Along the south-eastern coast you then continue the walk along the wooded headlands of Pizzico and Solchiaro. The walk ends at the charming little harbour of Chiaiolella, where you have the time for a swim at the large sandy beach or have a glass to drink on one of its terraces, before returning to your hotel. Those who still have some energy can extend the walk and explore the small island of Vivara, linked to Procida by a small (pedestrian) bridge. This island, the ridge of an old volcano, is now a nature reserve and one of the last bits of unspoilt nature in the area. You'll walk through a timeless Mediterranean landscape, through green forests and with the blue sea all around you. You then return to the hotel along the large sandy beach. In the evening you'll have another great dinner here.

Accommodation: **Hotel **** - Procida**. Meals included: 1 breakfast, 1 dinner

Day 3 From Procida to Ischia

This morning you'll have some more time to discover the northern side of Procida. After a last stroll and a drink at the colourful harbour you take the boat for the short crossing to the island of Ischia, known as the 'Green Island', the largest island in the Bay of Naples. Your first short walk here leads you to one of the most interesting extinct volcanoes on the island, the Fondo dell'Oglio. Then you have a great 'country lunch', based on local produce, after which you make the short walk back down to the harbour again. A taxi transfer to your hotel is



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organized for you, but we suggest wandering around for a bit in Ischia Porto, or perhaps visit its famous 'Terme' and then do the short walk from the harbour to the castle where you will be sleeping, through the pretty streets of the old town centre. The last short stretch in the fortified island itself is very scenic and has beautiful viewpoints of the town centre. You sleep in an amazing hotel, inside the old medieval castle of Ischia, built on a rocky island off-shore, which certainly deserves to be explored as well. In the evening you dine on fish or some other local specialty, prepared by the chef of the renowned hotel restaurant. A great dinner, in a unique spot: the terrace of our hotel, overlooking the whole Bay of Naples.

Accommodation: **'Il Monastero' ***S - Ischia**. Meals included: 1 breakfast, 1 lunch, 1 dinner

Day 4 The South Coast of Ischia

From the hotel at the castle you walk down through the intriguing alleys of the fortified rock to the bridge which links the castle to the old town centre. From here you start a linear walk along the beautiful south coast of the island, through a spectacular landscape of terraced vineyards and fantastic lava sculptures, with unforgettable views over the Bay of Naples and Capri. The first part of the walk goes over the cliffs, through vineyards sculpted like Asian paddy fields, and small hamlets. Then you pass the small hamlet of Testaccio where you descend to the large sandy beach of *Marina dei Maronti*. Just behind the beach there are several narrow canyons with thermal springs, known about since Roman times, where you can take some time to go for a swim! Then you walk along the beach to the charming fishing village of Sant'Angelo, where you take some time for an 'aperitivo', before travelling back to the hotel and have another great dinner with spectacular views from the terrace once again.

Accommodation: **'Il Monastero' ***S - Ischia**. Meals included: 1 breakfast, 1 dinner

Day 5 Mountains of Ischia

Today you'll discover the mountains of the island, a chain of extinct volcanoes which occupies the whole central part of the island. First you travel by private bus to the small hamlet of Fiaiano, where you have time for a coffee. From here you walk through some amazing scenery up to Monte Epomeo, the highest mountain on the island. You have lunch near the top in a charming restaurant. Then you walk on to the *Capo dell'Uomo*, Ischia's second largest mountain. All this is along easy, comfortable paths. Through forested areas and vineyards, along rock dwelling of monks and hermits, and always with incredible views over the sea, you'll then walk down to Ischia's westernmost village, Forio. After a stroll through its pleasant town centre you reach the end point, where there's a beautiful white church. After a stroll and a drink, your bus brings you along the northern coast back to Ischia Porto. In the evening you are free to choose from a large choice of restaurants in the colourful harbour of Ischia or 'downtown', ranging from simple pizzerias and cosy *trattorie* to exclusive restaurants.

Accommodation: **'Il Monastero' ***S - Ischia**. Meals included: 1 breakfast, 1 lunch

Day 6 From Ischia to Capri

In the morning your taxi brings you to the harbour, where you take the boat to the rightly famous island of Capri. This island was already renowned in ancient times: Roman emperors liked to come here as tourists, and it has never since lost its fame. You arrive in Marina Grande, the main harbour, and walk up (optional 'Funicolare') through lemon groves and gardens to the central square of the little town of Capri, the famous 'Piazzetta', the centre of mundane life. Then you make a beautiful roundwalk around the eastern part of the island, which shows you most of its 'highlights'. These are both cultural and natural wonders, always accompanied by beautiful views in an unrivalled Mediterranean landscape. The walk brings you past the ruins of the Imperial Villa Iovis, one of the villas of the Roman emperor Tiberius, the Arco Naturale, and of course the Faraglioni, three sea stacks off the south coast, perhaps the most famous and most painted rocks in the world. You have a great picnic lunch in an amazing spot, after which you have the time for a coffee or an ice cream. Walking back to the centre you have



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the opportunity to visit the Certosa and the Gardens of the Emperor Augustus, from where you can also opt to walk down to Marina Piccola, along the spectacular Via Krupp.

This walk can be extended or shortened in many ways. Late in the afternoon you return to the hotel in the centre of Capri for some relaxation. A nice meal in a relaxed atmosphere is the perfect end for the day.

Accommodation: **Hotel 4**** - Capri**. Meals included: 1 breakfast, 1 picnic lunch, 1 dinner

Day 7 Anacapri, the other side of Capri

Today you will discover the lesser known part of the island, Anacapri. You reach the top of the highest mountain of the island, Monte Solaro, either by a very scenic chairlift or a beautiful, but demanding walk. From here the views of the whole island, but also of the Amalfi Coast, Vesuvius and the whole Bay of Naples are spectacular. Then you go for a wonderful walk along the savage southern coast of the island, with its impressive sheer cliffs. The walk will bring you to the westernmost point of the island, where you have a great lunch and could perhaps have a swim underneath the lighthouse. Then you walk along a recently restored footpath, which has particularly interesting flowers, on the beautiful western coast, with great views over the aquamarine Mediterranean. You come along a series of fortresses dating back to the Napoleonic wars, some of which are still in good shape and very scenic. Halfway through the afternoon you reach the world-famous 'Blue Grotto' or '*Grotta Azzurra*'. After an (optional) visit you can either walk or take a local bus back to Anacapri. You go for a short stroll through the characteristic narrow streets of Anacapri, and maybe a drink in the piazza, before returning to the hotel for some relaxation. Tonight you are free to explore Capri's large choice of restaurants, ranging from simple pizzerias to exclusive restaurants, for your evening meal.

Accommodation: **Hotel 4**** - Capri**. Meals included: 1 breakfast

Day 8 Capri

The tour ends in Capri after breakfast today. You return to Naples by boat (or, in case you extend your holiday, to Sorrento, Amalfi, Positano or Salerno). Extra nights can be booked, here or elsewhere (upon request).



TOUR DETAILS

ACCOMMODATION & MEALS

All nights are spent in beautiful, characteristic hotels, mostly historical buildings (3/4-star). All rooms have en-suite facilities.

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

Some of the lunches are included in the tour price. On other days you are free to have your own lunch. Here you have the option of having your lunch in a nice restaurant, or purchasing your supplies for a picnic lunch.

Nights 1 & 2: The first two nights are spent on the idyllic island of Procida. Your accommodation is a welcoming 3-star hotel in a beautiful setting, with a great garden overlooking the Mediterranean.

Nights 3, 4 & 5: These three nights are spent in an exclusive hotel in the ancient monastery of Ischia, located on its 'Rocca', a small rocky island linked to the main island by a bridge. A wonderful and quiet setting, yet at walking distance from the town centre with its many bars and restaurants, and attached to the Aragonese castle.

Nights 6 & 7: The last two nights you stay on the romantic & fashionable island of Capri, with its characteristic houses built onto the steep slopes of the mountains. You'll stay in a beautiful 4-star hotel, very centrally located. It is family-run and the friendly staff will make you feel at home.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

Moderately easy (2): Mostly easy walks, though some include walking uphill, sometimes on paths with rough surfaces. On some days some stretches are difficult for those suffering from vertigo (but NOT dangerous!). On these days alternative options are available. Extensions or shortcuts are also possible on most days.

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

FOOTPATHS & WAYMARKING

Most paths are relatively well maintained, but during the season some paths can get overgrown (*we are in continuous contact with local authorities to keep the paths clean – please help us by providing your feedback on the quality of the paths*).

Waymarking: Only a small part of the route is waymarked (partly by us); elsewhere it is necessary to follow the route descriptions provided together with the maps. With these it is always possible to find your route. In case you don't feel confident a local guide can be provided for some trails.



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INCLUDED:

On our GUIDED WALKING TOURS we include almost everything:

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

NOT INCLUDED

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

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE

Arrival: The tour starts in NAPLES (Stazione Marittima), a city with an international airport, and connected to Rome and all other major Italian cities by a frequent (high speed) train service. Both from the airport and the train station there are regular shuttle buses to the harbour. A taxi pick-up service can be arranged either from Naples airport or train station.

Departure: The tour ends after breakfast in CAPRI on day 8. A short transfer brings you to the harbour (included), where you travel back by boat to Naples (or, in case you extend your holiday, to Sorrento, Amalfi, Positano or Salerno).

EXTRA NIGHTS

It is possible to include extra nights at the beginning or the end of the tour. The tour can easily be extended with a few days in Naples or Sorrento, or on the Amalfi Coast (see below). Many good accommodations are available. Details and prices on request.



TOUR VARIATIONS

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

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

Bespoke Adventures

Many of these tours can be turned into Private '[Bespoke Adventures](#)' to accommodate private group travel.

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

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

OPTIONS FOR EXTRA DAYS

Extension 1: Campi Flegrei. Two days in one of the world's most interesting areas, from both an archaeological and naturalistic point of view. Can also be easily visited from Procida (half hour by boat).

Extension 2: One or more extra days in Naples are recommended to those who want to visit [Naples](#) and/or haven't already visited Pompeii or Vesuvius, only 20-30 minutes by local train.

Extension 3: A few days on the famous Sorrento peninsula, preferably in Sorrento itself. From Sorrento, Pompeii/Vesuvius is only 20-30 minutes by local train and some stunning walks can be made in the area, e.g. to the "Land's End", Punta Campanella.



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