



Cilento Coast

Kayaking along the coast of the Sirens

Pisciotta & Palinuro, Ascea & Greek Velia, Marina di Camerota, the 'Infreschi' Coast, Scario & Gulf of Policastro



6-day Sea Kayaking Adventure



TRIP NOTES 2023

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INTRODUCTION

The region of Campania marks the real starting point of southern Italy. It has been sought after since Roman times when it was labelled the Campania Felix, or 'happy land', hardly a surprise considering the fact that it includes the great city of Naples, beautiful countryside, Roman ruins, small islands and stretches of spectacular coast. On the southern side of the Sorrento Peninsula, the Costiera Amalfitana is probably one of Europe's most well-known and dramatic stretches of coastline, with its towering cliffs and picturesque coves.

But Campania's real secret is located south of Salerno, and immediately south of the wonderful Greek temples of Paestum. Here the coastline bulges out into an expanse of mountainous landmass known as the Cilento, now a National Park with World Heritage listing, an area which can be considered as the real 'authentic' southern Italy.

The Cilento coast is fairly rocky territory, with the crystalline sea lapping at the shore. There is a wild kind of beauty here; rocky ridges set between small picturesque inlets and richly scented pinewoods backing onto wide sandy beaches. Aleppo pines loom over the multicoloured undergrowth of myrtle and cactuses; whilst huge, centuries-old olive trees grow right down to the shore. Inland the Cilento is largely undisturbed by the 21st century and you enjoy visiting medieval and quaint fishing villages where the traditional way of life is still evident.

This tour brings you along the southern coast, along the mythical Cape Palinuro, charming Marina di Camarota, and the pristine Costa degli Infreschi, ending in beautiful Scario, one of the most scenic village of the Cilento Coast. The tour starts from the charming side village of Pioppi, home of the 'Mediterranean Diet', or from the beautiful medieval hilltop town of Pisciotta, located in the middle of the olive groves. The view from your hotel there is simply stunning. From the Marina di Pisciotta you will then embark in southern direction, alternating rocky shores and sandy beaches, heading for Cape Palinuro. Beyond the Cape lies charming Marina di Camerota and after that we'll be paddling along one of the most beautiful stretches of coastline of the Cilento National Park, the so-called 'Costa degli Infreschi', a virtually untouched coastline, not without reason a protected marine area.

You will go ashore in some of the nicest old fishing villages, like Marina di Pisciotta, Marina di Camerota and Scario. But you will also have the chance to visit some of the villages inland and enjoy a stroll through attractive countryside, with all their cultural treasures like rural chapels, ancient farmhouses, old watermills and charming medieval villages.

On this amazing kayaking adventure you will explore the entire coastline of the Cilento National Park, one of the biggest and most diverse of Italy. You will see that some parts, like Marina di Camerota and Palinuro, for a reason have become popular seaside resorts, but also that it takes only a little effort to get 'off the beaten track'.

At only a few metres away from the villages, you will find yourself surrounded by nature. On this tour we take you beyond the crowded beaches, and you'll be lying on isolated beaches and paddling alone with the seagulls... Out of season we will virtually have the beaches for ourselves. In short, you'll discover a real Italian paradise.



Please note: this is a moderately easy tour which is suitable for those who have some experience with sea kayaking and a good general physical condition. Average (net) kayaking times: approx.. 4-5 hours each day.



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DAY-TO-DAY PROGRAMME

Day 1 Arrival. Pisciotta

In the early afternoon you are being picked up from the train station (Palinuro/Pisciotta) by private car and brought to your accommodation, in the heart of the Cilento National Park. You'll stay either at a beautiful agriturismo at Marina di Casalvelino or in a nice hotel in the heart of the historical town centre of the small hilltop village of Pisciotta, from where you'll have some astonishing views over the coastline you will explore during the coming days. The very scenic old town, which dominates the surrounding hills covered with olive groves and forests, is definitely worth exploring! Towards the end of the afternoon we meet our tour leader and the rest of the group. After a brief introduction of the tour, we will go down to the harbour where our kayaks wait for us and outfit everyone with paddle and PFD and offer some basic kayaking instruction. Then we go for a short introduction trip. Then we have our relaxed 'aperitivo' at the harbour and return to our stunningly located hotel, overlooking the glorious Mediterranean. In the evening we eat all together in a nice restaurant right in the heart of town.

Accommodation: Pisciotta - Meals included: 1 dinner

Day 2 From Pisciotta along Punta Telegrafo to Greek Velia

After a leisurely breakfast on the terrace of our hotel we go down to the beach and get into our kayaks. We'll follow the coastline in northern direction, heading for the rocky headland of Punta Telegrafo. Here we can explore a number of sea grottos and land on isolated beaches. We then head for the long sandy beach of Ascea Marina, where we can eat our lunch, and perhaps allow some time for a refreshing swim. Just north of this beach you'll notice the medieval watchtower of Velia, dominating the old Greek city. If we want we can paddle to here and go ashore to pay a visit to this unknown, but very interesting site. We then return along the sandy shore, which abruptly ends at Punta Telegrafo and continue the last stretch back to Marina di Pisciotta. Now we take some more time to explore this charming little harbour, where fishermen still catch anchovies with the millennia old Greek system, called la 'Menaike'. We'll be brought back by a charming open taxi sleep to the old town, right above us. In the evening you can enjoy a nice evening meal in one of the small nearby restaurants.

Accommodation: Pisciotta - Meals included: 1 breakfast

Day 3 From Pisciotta along the mythical Cape of Palinuro to the beach of 'Buondormire'

In the morning we will first have a great breakfast on our beautiful terrace, after which we walk down to the harbour, or we take the charming open taxi. We continue paddling in southern direction today, heading for the mythical headland of Palinuro, named after one of the shipmates of Aeneas. Capo Palinuro is a promontory of sheer limestone cliffs, with many sea grotto's, one of which is the beautiful Grotta Azzurra, not as famous as the one in Capri, but definitely more beautiful!

The first part of our route brings us along rocky shores, covered with forest, maquis and olive groves, with the occasional pebbly beach. Then we reach the sandy beach of Caprioli, where we can go ashore for a short coffee break. We continue in southern direction and soon we reach the area of the Saline, old sand pans, already used in Greek times. We can go ashore at the small beach of Ficocelle and walk up to the small archaeological museum, where all the artefact of Greek and roman times found near the seashore can be admired. A few miles further we land on the small sandy beach in the harbour of Palinuro, where we can have lunch. From Palinuro harbour you can make a beautiful short walk, which climbs up to the top of the headland. Worth it for the views over the whole coastline, with the Amalfi coast and Capri in the back. Then comes the most spectacular part of the journey, the circumnavigation of Cape Palinuro. We'll paddle underneath the impressive limestone cliffs, surrounded by seagulls. We might enter the Grotta Azzurra and a few other sea grottos. Towards the end of the afternoon we go ashore in one of the most beautiful beaches of the Cilento, the 'Spiaggia del Buondormire'. Then we dock our kayaks at the Marinella beach and go for a swim, before walking up the step to our beautifully located hotel, just above the cliffs. Tonight we'll enjoy a nice dinner in one of the greatest spots of the Cilento: our terrace overlooking the whole South Coast of the Cilento.

Accommodation: Palinuro - Meals included: 1 breakfast, 1 dinner



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Day 4 From Palinuro to Marina di Camerota

Today's sea kayaking is easy, only a short stretch to go. But it will take us along some of the most beautiful beaches, with many occasions to stop for a drink, a swim and, why not, a short hike inland. After breakfast we'll walk down to our 'private beach' and get into our kayaks. First we'll paddle around the characteristic rock just off the shore, locally known as the 'Rabbit'. After that we continue to the popular beach of Marinella, with its beautifully shaded bar. A short (optional) hike can bring you from here onto the headland of 'La Molpa', with the remains of a medieval castle. Along this part of the coastline of the Cilento National Park, a number of prehistoric settlements has been discovered, some quite recently.

We'll go ashore near the 'Grotta delle Ossa', where many bones of animals were found. The next stop is the beautiful beach underneath the Arco Naturale, a stunning rock formation. We continue paddling along the sandy coast from there, one of the most popular beaches of the southern Cilento, with many possibilities to go ashore for a sandwich and a drink. The coastline then becomes rocky again, and just before arriving in the charming village of Marina di Camerota we'll find a number of beautiful inlets. We'll go ashore in one of these, where we'll dock our kayaks and walk to our nice hotel.

Tonight you stay in a nice hotel in the village centre, with a swimming pool, but also at just a few hundred metres from the crystal-clear sea. You'll enjoy dinner in the nice garden.

Accommodation: Marina di Camerota - Meals included: 1 breakfast, 1 dinner



Day 5 From Marina di Camerota along the 'Infreschi' Coast to charming Scario

We'll get an early start as the day's sea kayaking will take us along one of the most beautiful stretches of coastline of the Cilento National Park, the so-called '*Costa degli Infreschi*', a virtually untouched coastline, not without reason a protected marine area. But first we can go ashore in the charming village of Marina di Camerota, with its clear South American influence. After a short visit we then start paddling in eastern direction. From the harbour a first stretch brings us past a series of grottos and beaches, after which we reach the medieval watchtower.

This watchtower marks the beginning of the Costa degli Infreschi, one of the most unspoilt stretches of coastline in southern Italy, with the cleanest seawater (Blue Flag). There are several beautiful inlets, reminiscent of the isolated beaches on a tropical island. Another stretch along the beautiful coast brings us to the Porto degli Infreschi. This is the place which gave its name to the whole coast: there is a Roman harbour, with a freshwater spring in a grotto. Of course we go ashore here, and also do we enter the grotto where we can do some sea kayaking in sweet water (and drink directly out of the sea!). We then continue along the wildest part of the coast, with no places to go ashore, until we reach the beach of Marcellino.

Here we have a great lunch, some music, and a bit of relax, before continuing to the charming village of Scario, our last stop, the final destination of our kayaking tour. Upon arrival on the beach here we'll have a drink and make a stroll through the village, before being brought to one of the most stunning viewpoints of the whole Cilento National Park. Views from here not only reach the whole coastline, including Basilicata and Calabria, but can reach even the Aeolian Islands and Sicily. At night we'll stay in a nice family run hotel, and dine on local specialties.

Accommodation: San Giovanni a Piro - Meals included: 1 breakfast, 1 lunch, 1 dinner



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Day 6 Scario (San Giovanni a Piro)

The tour ends in San Giovanni a Piro after breakfast today (unless you booked an extension –strongly recommended). You can be brought to the railway station of Policastro at any time.



TOUR DETAILS

ACCOMMODATION & MEALS

All nights are spent in a beautiful characteristic 3 & 4-star hotels (generally our tours are 3/4-star level; we can book superior 4/5-star on request). All rooms have en-suite facilities.

Breakfast is included, in all accommodations. A number of **evening meals** is included, for which we have selected the best available restaurants. Also some (picnic) **lunches** are included in the tour price. On one day we enjoy a picnic on the beach, while on other days we'll have a nice lunch in a small restaurant on a nice small beach.

INCLUDED

- Private English speaking tour leader for 6 days
- Professional guiding service for each activity
- Accommodation in beautiful ***/**** hotels: 2 nights Pisciotta + 1 night Palinuro + 1 night Marina di Camerota + 1 night Scario (San Giovanni a Piro)
- Meals: 5 breakfasts, 4 dinners, 1 lunch
- All private & public transfers as indicated throughout the entire itinerary
- Rental of high-quality sea kayaks
- Group equipment and technical gear for each activity
- 24/24 h local assistance
- Luggage transport
- All gratuities for baggage, porters & hotel service

NOT INCLUDED

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



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OUTLINE ITINERARY

Day	Itinerary & Activities		Distance
1	Arrival in Pisciotta. Introduction trip.	Pisciotta	2 - 3 miles
2	Roundtrip from Pisciotta (several options).	Pisciotta	7 - 12 miles
3	From Pisciotta along the mythical Cape Palinuro to the beach of 'Buondormire'	Palinuro	11 miles
4	From Palinuro to Marina di Camerota	Camerota	8-10 miles (many options possible)
5	From Marina di Camerota along the 'Infreschi' Coast to Scario	Scario	11 miles

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY / REQUIRED SKILLS

Moderately easy (level 2):

This tour is suitable for kayakers with a minimum of sea kayaking experience. Our helpful guides/instructors will work with you to help you learn a new sport or become more comfortable with the outdoors. The waters of the Mediterranean are usually calm, and you'll encounter only short open water crossings.

Fitness: A good standard of fitness is necessary. You should be able to paddle for up to 3-4 hours.



TOUR VARIATIONS

SHORTER & LONGER VERSIONS

A shorter version of this tour is also available, covering the same stretch of the South Coast, with longer paddling days. See also our other Kayaking tours !

Also a longer version, with two nights in Palinuro and/or two nights in Marina di Camerota is available.

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