

Sicily & Amalfi Coast

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All tours are offered with English speaking guides.

Tours' duration is approximate and may vary depending on traffic and weather conditions. Minimum is indicated per coach or group.

Ponza, Italy

Ponza is the Italian island where Italians come to vacation. The island features dramatic coves and cliffs, while the main town features yellow and pink houses, and a harbor full of fishing boats. The volcanic scenery is stunning and the coastline is spotted with private coves and beaches. Snorkeling opportunities abound.

The town features dozens of lively shops and restaurants and well as scooter and bike rental outfitters. Ponza is only five miles long and never more than half a mile wide so exploring relatively easy-- just keep in mind there are some steep slopes.

The beach, Chiaia di Luna, is located near the port with the high cliffs offering a dramatic backdrop to the clear blue Mediterranean.

Sorrento, Italy

Pompeii

By air-conditioned motor-coach and by foot
Min. 20 / Max. unlimited, 4 hours, Euros 60

Ancient Pompeii was a prosperous provincial center with an estimated population of 20,000. Much of the town had been destroyed by an earthquake in 63 AD, and the rebuilding was still in process when the volcano erupted 16 years later. The whole town was buried beneath more than 20 feet of ash and pumice stone. Residents were killed by lethal sulphur fumes or struck by lava and pumice stone that rained down upon the city, although some of the people escaped. Abandoned until the 18th century, Pompeii was frozen in time until excavations revealed this amazing archaeological site. Plaster was poured into empty spaces in the lava to make body casts of some of the victims, such as a young man stretched out to protect his mother and the famous twisted body of a dog still tied to its chain.

The eruption of Vesuvius on August 24, 79 a.D., not only preserved structures, but also evidence of the ancient way of life, such as a fully-equipped tavern with the last customer's money still on the counter. Admire the luxurious mansions and fabulous art of wealthy patricians who came to Pompeii to escape the turmoil in Rome. Their houses were designed around an inner garden with few windows on the exteriors, so residents could forget the outside world and get sunlight from their own court yards. Visit some of the more modest homes, and also explore ancient baths, temples, theaters, markets and huge forum.

- NOTE:**
- Large coaches cannot drive to the tender pier so a mini-bus will shuttle tour participants between the pier and a main parking lot in Sorrento. (Same on the way back, a minibus will take you down to the pier)
 - The drive to Pompeii takes about 1hr. We suggest comfortable shoes to walk on cobblestone streets.
 - Attractions are behind bars and glass windows in Pompeii.

- A late lunch is served onboard the ship upon return.
- Most of the shops in Italy are closed between 1 and 4 p.m.
- You may choose to stay in Sorrento and explore the village on your own.
- The site of Pompei is very busy, it is important to stay with your guide at all times. The pace of the tour is moderate, as there are many highlights to visit in this vast city.
- This tour is not recommended for guests with walking difficulties.
- Timing is subject to traffic on the Sorrentine drive, especially during high season and weekends.

Sorrente, Flavors and Savors

By motor coach and by foot

Min. 20 / Max. 40, 4 hours., Euros 76

Transfer by minibus from the port to the main square of Sorrento to reach the large coaches and be driven to the farm. Guests will stop at La Sorgente OR Le colline, in the sorrentine hillsides with a fabulous view of the gulf of Naples. This agricultural farm lies in a natural area with oranges, lemons, olives and wine worked with equipment and methods dating back to the end of 800. You will have the chance of watching the real method on how to make the MOZZARELLA and you will also be taught on how to cook GNOCCHI. A brunch with your GNOCCHI ALLA SORRENTINA and various cheeses & salumi will follow before re-board the coach to return to Sorrento. Once in town square, guests, after a brief orientation of the city center accompanied by their guide will enjoy a taste of Limoncello in one of the typical place in the narrow roads.

NOTE: • You will spend about 1h30 at the farm
 • After the walking tour in Sorrente, you can either stay in the city or get back to the ship

Capri, Italy

Capri is the outpost of the peninsula of Sorrento. It is called the jewel of the Bay of Naples because of its unmatched scenery, clear skies and beautiful climate. Geologically, Capri is built on limestone. Dolomite cliffs, which at many points tower out of the sea, have been cut by time into fantastic shapes and marvelous grottoes. There are two main massifs: to the east is Monte Tiberio at 1095 feet and on the west Monte Solaro rises 452 feet above sea level. Capri itself is 452 feet and sits between them, in a position that has the Marina Grande to its north and the Marina Piccola on its southern side. The island's second residential center, Anacapri, lies in a sweep of lush countryside to the west of Monte Solaro. Capri is derived from Greek kapros (wild boar).

Inhabited since the Palaeolithic age, the island was in classical times first Greek then Roman. Many Emperors lived part-time on Capri and Roman nobles resided on or visited the island until the 6th century. The island endured Saracenic incursions in the 6th and 7th centuries and thereafter became the dominion of the Lombards, then Spain, then the French and British. Around the beginning of the 19th century the island faced a welcome artistic invasion when artists, writers and poets settled here. Capri's Faraglioni and the Blue Grotto are very famous and beautiful. The Blue Grotto is the most celebrated of all the grottoes of Capri. It was already renowned in ancient times but was rediscovered in 1826 by a German named Augusto Kopisch. Many tourists visit the Grotto each year and none fail to be stunned by its magical atmosphere. The walls and the concave ceiling of the Grotto are so imbued with blue that every object has a silvery outline and even swimmers in the water look blue. Delightful climate, brilliant skies and scenery and a bounty of attractions make the island a perfect holiday resort in any season.

Amalfi, Italy

Amalfi was one of the original maritime Republics and has a glorious history. Compared to the ancient cities of Campania, it was founded rather late, around the 6th century, yet Amalfi flourished while other ancient towns were in decline. Its inhabitants were expert sailors and built up an extensive trade with the East, founding churches and hospitals and making their town the richest in the south of Italy. The Amalfi fleet, together with those of Naples and Gaeta, defeated the Saracens who were about to launch an attack on Rome in 849. The 11th century saw the town at its pinnacle of greatness. Its dockyards built ships for foreign countries as well as Italy's own fleets. Amalfi minted its own money and had its own maritime laws, the famous "Tabulae Amalphitane", which is kept in the town's museum. Amalfi sailors were the first to use the compass. The founder of the order of St. John of Jerusalem also came from Amalfi. Amalfi was, alas, defeated by Pisa and although it was among the first maritime republics to rise, it was also the first to fall into decline. It became part of the principality of Salerno, losing and regaining its independence under the Normans, only to lose it again under Norman Roger II. After belonging to a succession of different lords, it was then taken by the Aragonese, with a subsequent history similar to that of other Campanian towns. The Cathedral of Amalfi, atop its great steps, remains as a testimony to the town's ancient glory and is dedicated to St. Andrew. In the 13th century crypt there stands a great statue of St. Andrew sculpted by Michelangelo Naccherino and two statues of St. Stephen and St. Lawrence by Pietro Bernini. Attached to the Cathedral is the so-called Cloister of Paradise, accessible via an arched passageway decorated with frescoes by Pietro Cavallini. Sarcophagi, Roman and medieval objets d'art are kept here. The other tower, built at the same time as the Cathedral's bell tower, is now annexed to a hotel that occupies the old 12th century monastery.

Ravello

By air-conditioned motor coach
English speaking guide only

Min. 25 / Max. 40, 3 hours 30 min., Euros 54

You will enjoy a pretty and panoramic drive climbing up from the harbor in Amalfi to Ravello, one of the most famous and popular spots along the Amalfi coast. You'll see the duomo as you enter the main square of Ravello. The linear facade conserves, from the original Roman design, three oculi and a lit window above the entrance portal. Decorated with a classical marble cornice, it has a bronze door that was crafted in 1179 by Barissano da Trani. On the right hand side of the church stands the bell tower, built in the 13th century. When the duomo is open you can peek inside and see the majestic marble pulpit, richly cased with mosaics, friezes and columns, supported by six slim spiral posts resting on marble lions. You'll visit the Villa Rufolo, a spectacular complex formed by the main palazzo, built in the second half of the 13th century, and various buildings in Arabian-Sicilian style on a wide terrace facing the gulf. After entering the smaller 14th century tower, the tour continues along a small avenue flanked by cypresses until reaching the Moorish courtyard decorated with friezes and arabesques in front of the palazzo. Beyond the knights room, the picturesque belvedere opens up; a luxurious garden with pines, cypresses and exotic plants. From here you can descend to the lower terrace, bright with flowers and exotic plants. Richard Wagner was particularly struck by the spectacular nature of the gardens and saw in them the materialization of the magic garden, or Klingsor, in his "Parsifal". Enjoy the return ride back to Amalfi; your senses will be saturated by the spectacular panorama.

NOTE: This tour involves some walking. The local authorities of the Amalfi Coast often apply new traffic regulations such as a change of the drop off/pick up site, establishment of one-way through the Amalfi drive etc. These rules could affect the coach tours.

Positano and Amalfi Coast

By motorcoach and public boat
English speaking guide

Min. 25 / Max. 60, 3 hours 30 min., Euros 44

The tour starts from Amalfi. You will first enjoy an extremely pretty and panoramic drive climbing up from the harbour to Positano. Once there, you will stop along this stretch of coast in Positano and will walk from the coach park to the village. You will admire white, Moorish-style houses clinging to the slopes around a small sparkling bay. In 1953, when writer John Steinbeck lived here, the town was a forgotten fishing village, loved by artists. Since then it has become a retreat for the wealthy and a popular resort area. Spend some time browsing in some of Positano's 200 boutiques, which sell the casual, locally-made cotton clothing the town is famous for. You will have some time at leisure to discover the village, then you will meet your guide and board together the public boat for a ride back to the enchanting village of Amalfi. Amalfi has a Spanish flavor and a prestigious history - its white houses sitting on the rocks facing a bright blue bay. After an introduction by the local guide, you will be free to continue visiting Amalfi Cathedral and village on your own or walk to the landing pier to return to the ship.

- NOTE:**
- This excursion is not suitable for passengers who have difficulty walking
 - Comfortable shoes are suggested as sometimes surfaces are uneven and steep
 - The drive to Positano is approx. 40 minutes
 - Once arrived in Positano you will have to walk from the parking area to the village (20 minutes – steep walk, part on a road with traffic, part pedestrian and stairs)
 - Time at leisure and free discovery in Positano
 - Then meet your guide and board the public board to ride back to Amalfi (30minutes)
 - Guides available in English only.
 - This tour may be offered from June to September only and is subject to weather conditions.
 - The tour timing depends on local traffic and the line of tourists at the public boat departure.

Giardini Naxos, Sicily

Giardini Naxos is the port for the small city of Taormina. Taormina is the most important resort in Sicily and Southern Italy. It is located on Mount Tauro, between the jagged mountains and the calm Ionian Sea. The origin of the town dates back to 398. The Romans considered Taormina an ally, but as the city had sided with Pompeus against Octavianus, it was reduced to the rank of mere colony. But thanks to its strategic position, it succeeded in maintaining a great importance under the various powers which held sway over the island. In 902, after a long siege, it fell to the Muslims who destroyed it. The Caliph Al Muezz later rebuilt Taormina on a grander and much more beautiful scale. In 1079 it was conquered by the Normans and was chosen as the seat of the

Sicilian Parliament for the King's election in 1410. Its most important monument is the theater, built in the 3rd century BC by the Greeks and restructured by the Romans. The site is really spectacular, as the theater is situated between looming Mount Etna and the sparkling blue sea. It is one of the most beautiful landscapes in the world, a beautiful jewel set among the blue sky, aquamarine sea, green valley and white snow-capped peaks of Mount Etna.

Sicilian Brunch, Wine Tasting and Transfer to Taormina

By air-conditioned motor coach
Min. 25 / Max. 40, 7 hours, Euros 85

Leaving the pier by motor coach you will motor on the freeway to the south, leave the freeway in Giarre and continue for Mount Etna joining the scenic road which winds around the slopes of the mountain passing the town of Giarre and the village of Santa Venerina, motoring across vineyards and woods. Driving across Santa Venerina you will be able to see the damages of the earthquake which has hit the area in 2002. You will then reach the estate belonging to the Barons di Villagrande where you will be welcomed by the baroness. This charming lady will guide you in a tour of the cellar and the winery explaining the qualities of the Mount Etna wine and the secrets of a real expert. You will enjoy a magnificent view over the fertile valley and the fields covered with vines which produce the certified Etna wine, which is produced from local vines, and made special by the lava, which has entered the soil during the centuries, and the particular position of the fields in respect of sun. The visit completed you will proceed to the old stable where you will enjoy a sicilian brunch with local products and taste the different qualities of wine produced in the estate. Leave the winery and proceed to reach Taormina. The town is perched on a terrace overlooking the sea and has a delightful medieval character. There will be time for a stroll in Corso Umberto. Just off this pedestrian street there are many small streets where you'll have time to buy local handicrafts and savor some Italian coffee or local sweets. You might decide to go and visit the roman amphitheater on your own.

At the fixed time drive back to the pier.

- NOTE:**
- 45 minutes drive from the pier to the Barone di Villagrande Estate
 - 45 minutes drive to Taormina
 - Time at leisure in Taormina (Shops are open Monday to Saturday from 9am to 1pm and from 4pm to 8pm.)
 - Wine and water are included at lunch

Mount Etna

(depending on weather conditions and local authorizations)

By air-conditioned motor coach

Min. 20 / no Max, 5 hours 30 min., Euros 90

Majestic Mount Etna is Europe's largest active volcano, rising 3340 meters. Her slopes soar up to over 3,296 meters and the flanks are spotted with cones and craters. From the peaks, you can gaze out across the Catania Gulf and view the woods, orchards and vineyards. The main attraction is Etna's crater and the awe-inspiring petrified remnants of lava flows. The tour will start with a drive through the small town of Naxos. Driving to Mount Etna along the motorway, you'll enjoy the journey along a scenic road that winds around the slopes of the mountain, passing the town of Giarre and the villages of Santa Venerina and Zafferana. You'll delight at the ever-changing scenery of lemon groves, orchards, vineyards, and chestnut and pine woods that blend with the hardened lava and endless volcanic cones. The Silvestri crater is located about 1950 meters above sea level. Once there, you will then transfer to 4x4 minibuses or cable car to reach at approximately 2500 meters and then go further up to the base of the main crater at about 2950 meters above sea level by 4x4 minibuses. A professional alpine guide will lead a 30-45 minute hike to see the last lava flow and walk around one of the craters. (Depending on volcano activity.)

- NOTE:**
- Comfortable shoes are suggested, and a light jacket or sweater is necessary on Mount Etna. It might be cold and or windy even in Summer!
 - It is a 1h15 drive each way to reach Mount Etna.
 - This tour will be available only during summer, weather permitting. You will visit either the North or the South side depending on the current volcanic activity.
 - You will reach approx. 2950 meters above sea level - if you suffer with high blood pressure or heart diseases, please check with your doctor.

Aeolian Islands

There are seven small main islands off the Aeolian archipelago: Lipari, Vulcano, Salina, Alicudi, Filicudi, Panarea and Stromboli. The hill isles are the product of volcanic phenomena and offer an inexhaustible source of fascinating scenery and countryside. The islands have been inhabited since prehistoric times. King Ausone's son, Liparo, founded the first settlement on the Lipari coast. Around 580 BC, Greek colonization began on the Lipari islands. Lipari was besieged by the Athenians during their expedition to Sicily in 427 BC, and in 304 BC it was plundered by Agatocle from Syracuse, who pillaged the wealth of the temples. The Romans conquered Syracuse in 252. In the following centuries it fell into decline before flourishing once again under the Normans. In 1544, a tremendous tragedy befell the islands: Lipari was savagely plundered and destroyed by the Turkish fleet. The 9,000 inhabitants became slaves of the occupying force after 10 days of desperate resistance. Immigrants from Sicily and Southern Italy later repopulated the town. Lipari boasts endless beaches, bays, grottoes and a rich seabed as well as geological and volcanic formations. The archeological museum of Lipari is among the most important in Europe. It highlights many aspects of history, including prehistoric villages from seven thousand years ago.

Island Tour and Archeological Museum

By air-conditioned motor coach and by foot
Min. 20 / Max. 48, 3 hours 30 min., Euros 37

The sightseeing tour around Lipari Island starts from the landing pier after disembarkation by ship's tenders. There will be stops at the Oxidian and Punice Quarries and at the most panoramic points, perfect for viewing the seven Aeolian islands. At the end of the coach tour, you'll walk to the castle area to have a look at the outside of San Bartolomeo Church. You'll also visit the Aeolian Museum made up of five exhibitions (prehistoric, classic, epigraphic, minor islands and volcanic) and a large collection of the most valuable materials excavated on the island since 1946.

NOTE: Half of the tour is by bus, the other half is on foot. At the end of the tour you'll have time to walk around the city or get back on board.

Vulcano

By boat

Min 25 / Max 50, 3 hours 30 min., Euros 49

Disembarking by tender you will reach Marina Lunga, in the Port of Lipari, where you will meet your guide and get on board the private motorboat. After a short sail, you will arrive at Vulcano. Vulcano is a small volcanic island in the archipelago of the Eolie. The island has three volcanoes. One is ancient and has been dormant since the Prehistoric Era. It forms the main mass of the island, with the points of highest elevation being Monte Saraceno at 481 meters, Monte Aria at 500 meters, and Gran Cratere (or Fossa di Vulcano) at 386 meters. Gran Cratere, which is still active, dominates the northern part of the island. Gran Cratere is characterized by its form and strange coloration, especially near the summit. Upon the arrival in Vulcano you will have the opportunity to either walk towards the base of the volcano, enjoy a short visit of the village or go to the thermals wells. The wells, from which sulphurous steam rises, are composed of salt water and clay mud with a very high content of sulphur that prohibits the growth of pathogens. The renowned therapeutic complex can treat principally 3 groups of health problems: those of the joints, skin, and respiratory system. The tour continues to the hot sea waters (you can swim in there if you wish), the fumaroles.

Return to the boat and sail back to Lipari on a scenic cruise passing by the west coast of Vulcano, Vulcanello, Spiaggia di Ponente, Grotta del Cavallo, I Faraglioni, and Lipari.

- NOTE:**
- The ride from Lipari to Vulcano is 20 to 30'. On the way back you will enjoy a scenic sailing of approx. 1hr.
 - If you plan on taking a mud bath, wear dark coloured swim wear, do not wear jewellery as the sulphur has a chemical reaction, be aware that eye-irritation can occur (goggles, beach towel and water shoes can come in handy).
 - The guide will take you to the thermals wells, those choosing to walk to the village or to the volcano base will be on their own.

