

**ALONG THE AMALFI COAST:  
Sorrento, Capri & the Amalfi Coast  
October 5 – 10, 2017**



The **Amalfi Coast** is often thought of as the most beautiful coastline in Italy – and one of the most beautiful in the world. Having done nearly 30 tours in various parts of the country we know Italy very well – and we have to concur with that assessment of this region’s beauty. The scenery is just stunning; the fragrances intoxicating; the engineering feat of the coastal road amazing to witness; and the colorful towns so attractive and inviting as they cling to the mountains with vistas over the azure waters. The entire area is designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Our tour will begin in lovely **Sorrento**, looking out on the **Bay of Naples** and **Mt. Vesuvius**. This was historically the terminus of the “Grand Tour” of Italy popular with northern

Europeans in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and it still maintains its very charming draw. A ferry whisks us over to famous **Capri** so we can capture the best of this utterly captivating island on a day-trip. Then it’s time to explore the Amalfi Coast itself using the town of **Amalfi** as a base while we explore nearby towns like famously jaw-dropping **Positano** and lofty, serene **Ravello**.

This tour will also bring us to a **winery** high up in the hills — perhaps the best in the region — where we enjoy a tasting of their various wines accompanied by an excellent lunch. And how about a fun **pizza-making session** at a real working farm in the hills with glorious views out to sea. We’ll toss in **world-renowned gardens** as well as a visit to a traditional **paper maker**, a prominent industry in Amalfi for centuries.

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### **Day 1, Thursday, October 5, 2017 — Arrival in Sorrento**

We'll meet at our beautiful 5-star hotel in the center of **Sorrento** in the early evening to enjoy a welcome drink and get to know our fellow travelers. Afterwards we'll head out for our first of several excellent meals on the tour.

*Overnight in Sorrento.  
Welcome drink and dinner included.*

{Please note: There are many options for traveling to Sorrento. Please see *Arrival & Departure Logistics* further on in this detailed program. Also, should you wish to arrive a day early in Sorrento to shake off jet lag or just to have extra time there we can arrange a pre-tour hotel night for you if you'd like. See *Accommodations*.}

### **Day 2 – Capri**

First thing this morning we set out for the famed **island of Capri** (pronounced CAH-pree). A scenic boat ride (about 25 minutes) whisks us over there. Once we land we'll start by heading up to the lesser-visited town of **Anacapri**, where we'll ride a chairlift to the highest point of the island – **Monte Solaro**. What an experience to be up here suspended among the blue sky, the white limestone terrain, and the turquoise sea below. It's a wonderfully picturesque



moment. For those who wish we'll set out on footpaths back down to the town – about 30 minutes downhill. Or you can ride the chairlift back if you prefer. Next up is a visit to **Villa San Michele**, the lovely home of the Swedish physician Axel Munthe, who wrote *The Story of San Michele*, published in 1929, and which enticed northern Europeans with longing for the warm south. He built the home on the site of one of Emperor Tiberius's villas. The gardens are beautiful; the grounds studded with classical statuary; the views spectacular. We also stop in at the church of **San Michele Arcangelo** enlivened by a delightful Eden-themed octagonal majolica floor dating from 1761.

After lunch it's time to explore **Capri town** itself. We'll take in the charming central Piazzetta whose cafés have long attracted international jet-setters and stroll along the main shopping street where you'll see shop after shop of the most famous fashion designers. If you're up for more nice walking, there's a great excursion heading out to the famous **Faraglioni**, the island's signature rocks rising sharply out of the sea. The hotel at this point was designed by Le Corbusier, and it was a U.S. headquarters during World War II, hosting Eisenhower and Churchill.

Eventually we have to tear ourselves away from this wonderful island and head back to the ferry. Tonight is a free evening in Sorrento, and there are many restaurants in town to choose from – from simple and casual to the more elegant.

*Overnight in Sorrento.  
Breakfast, Lunch included.*

### Day 3 – Winery / Road to Amalfi

This morning you'll have some free time to poke around and explore Sorrento on your own. There are numerous pretty churches to pop into. Or perhaps a few of the many shops specializing in lemon products, ceramics, or artisan woodcrafts might pique your interest.

Then it's time to head to the hills as we ascend one of this region's numerous mountain roads to reach a very well-known **winery** of the area. At the time of our visit they'll likely be busy with the harvest, so we'll see a bit of the winery without getting in their way and then enjoy a delicious lunch at a restaurant next door to be accompanied by a few of their wines.



After this delightful experience we drop down the other side of the mountains, arriving on the world-famous **Amalfi Coast**. Just a bit down the coastal road is the town of Amalfi itself and our base for the next three nights. After settling into our historic hotel (see *Accommodations* further on in this detailed program) you may wish to have a walk along the beach, begin a preliminary exploration of the town on your own, or simply have a drink at the hotel and take in the lovely views of the sea. We also have a group dinner in town this evening.

*Overnight in Amalfi.*

*Breakfast, Lunch with Wine Tasting, Dinner included.*



### Day 4 – Ravello / Amalfi

This morning we head for **Ravello** — a stunning little village situated way, way up high above the coast. You can imagine the sweeping panorama of the coast from here. Actually, you won't just have to imagine it. Gore Vidal lived here for many years as did other notables (see below). Ravello is famous for its top-notch classical music summer festival and for some dramatically beautiful villa gardens overlooking the mountains and coastline, which we will visit. The site of **Villa Cimbrone** on a cliff-top promontory, with magnificent views to the Amalfi Coast and land falling sharply to the Mediterranean below, is beyond compare. A wisteria-clad pergola stretches almost the whole length. Within the grounds is a historic hotel that hosted Greta Garbo,

D.H. Lawrence, Virginia Woolf, Winston Churchill, and Salvador Dalí. The cascading gardens of **Villa Rufolo**, among artistically crumbling ruins, were the inspiration for Richard Wagner to compose the second act of *Parsifal*. A complex of remarkable early buildings frames the view over the Amalfi Coast. One of the

oldest surviving palaces in Italy, the Villa Rufolo dates from the 13th century and incorporates Saracen and Norman styles in its scattered towers and buildings.

Ravello is also well-known for its ceramics, and we'll have a chance to stop in at a small factory-shop.

After Ravello we drop back down to sea level and return to our base in historic **Amalfi town**. We'll have time to explore this sweet little town with its very noteworthy **Cathedral of Sant'Andrea** and its lovely **Cloister of Paradise**. Then we come upon the Valley of the Mills, so named because the *Amalfitani* have harnessed the power of the stream in their mills for the production of paper since the 13th century. It was from here that paper artisans introduced their technique to the rest of Europe. We'll visit an ancient **paper mill**, now restored and converted into a small museum. Further along are terraces packed with beautiful aromatic lemon groves. This corner of the world produces a sweet strong liqueur called **limoncello**, of which you may grow quite fond (or not). So that you may become acquainted with this special beverage we have to stop in at a *limoncello* maker in town to sample it.

The rest of the day you're free to roam the town further on your own, and dinner is open this evening.

*Overnight in Amalfi.  
Breakfast, Lunch included.*

### **Day 5 – Positano / Pizza-Making**

Our day begins with an excursion to **Positano** — certainly one of the most famous and picturesque villages along the Amalfi Coast. Built on a steep mountainside that drops right into the Mediterranean Sea, the town's colorful buildings all piggy-back one over another, creeping up the hill. For generations the inhabitants eked out a living by fishing and cultivating little terraces carved out of the mountainside. You're free to roam the town on your own, checking out the shops for clothing and ceramics. Have a coffee at a beachside café, or take the very pleasant walk to a quieter beach around the bend.



Then it's time to head up to a working farm where our gracious hosts will welcome us with an *aperitivo* and instruct us on the art of **pizza-making!** Our lunch will include other goodies, too, and we'll have a chance to explore their vegetable and fruit gardens – and all of this in an idyllic setting overlooking the sea.

Later we'll **travel by boat** back to our hotel in Amalfi (sea conditions permitting) so that we can enjoy a different perspective on this amazing coastline.

This evening we'll enjoy our farewell dinner and see if we can decide on what our favorite experience was on this stunning trip!

*Overnight in Amalfi.  
Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner included.*

### **Day 6, Tuesday, October 10, 2017 -- Departure to Naples**

This morning it's time to say *arrivederci*. We have a private transfer by bus from Amalfi to Naples' central train station – approximately 90 minutes. From here you can opt to spend time in Naples or continue your travels by train elsewhere in Italy. If you're flying out you can reach the Naples airport by taxi, about 3 miles away.

### **ACCOMMODATIONS**

The following are the hotels that we plan to use for the tour at the time of publishing this itinerary. We reserve the right to make changes to the accommodations.

#### ***Sorrento – 2 nights***

With a nice mix of old-school splendor and boutique chic the vibe at our selected 5-star hotel could be described as elegantly casual. The 80 or so spacious guest rooms are well-equipped and have painted-tile floors and carved walnut beds. The hotel's garden is a delight with lemon trees, fountains, and Roman busts. Service is professionally attentive and cordial. From the rooftop pool and bar/restaurant area you can enjoy a magnificent outlook with the Bay of Naples and Mount Vesuvius forming the panoramic backdrop. Live music is featured a few nights a week. The hotel is in the heart of Sorrento, making it easy to stroll the appealing city center in your free time and choose from the many good restaurants for dinner the second evening. (Please note: the pool might not be open at the time of our tour.)



#### ***Amalfi town – 3 nights***

Founded as a convent in 1222, allegedly by St. Francis of Assisi, our iconic 4-star property (43 rooms) was the first hotel to open on the Amalfi Coast in the early part of the 19th century. It has coved ceilings, graceful arches, and marble columns along with Flemish religious artwork, church and convent artifacts, antique furnishings, and mosaic flooring, all of which blend nearly seamlessly with modern comforts. It's an intimate atmosphere brimming with historic character. Guest rooms overlook the sea, which is right across the street. Past guests include Otto van Bismarck, Benito Mussolini (:-/), Ingrid Bergman, and Tennessee Williams, among other noted figures. One of the restaurants and its bar are in the 15th-century Saracen tower, perched on a rock



over the sea. The famed southern Romanesque cloisters and the beautiful baroque chapel form the heart of the hotel. Below the tower is a seawater pool (which may not be open at the time of our tour). Just a 5-minute walk and you're in the center of town with its numerous restaurants, cafes, and shops.

### **TOUR COST and IMPORTANT TRIP DETAILS**

\$3,295 per person (with 14-15 participants)

\$3,495 per person (with 11-13 participants)

\$3,595 per person (with 8-10 participants)

Tour pricing is based on double occupancy.  
Single supplement: \$895

*A note about tier pricing:* There are certain fixed costs involved with operating a trip of this nature regardless of the number of participants who have signed up. With a smaller number of group members, the fixed costs (per person) are higher. In order to cover those fixed costs for a smaller-sized group, we prefer to charge a bit extra in order to ensure that the trip can run rather than have to cancel a trip due to a low number of sign-ups



Costs are based on double occupancy of a room. If you are traveling solo and wish to share a room, we will match you with a roommate if one is available. Otherwise, the single supplement fee will apply.

#### **Tour cost includes:**

- Accommodations in Sorrento (5-star) and Amalfi (4-star)
- Buffet breakfast each morning in the hotels
- Lunch every day (except the arrival and departure days)
- Three dinners
- Mineral water and limited wine with meals
- Welcome drink
- Winery tour and tasting
- Private ground transportation by minibus
- Public ferry transportation to/from Capri
- Public boat from Positano to Amalfi
- All entrance fees for sights mentioned in the itinerary
- Venture Out tour manager accompanying the group
- Professional local guides for Capri, Ravello, and Amalfi



#### **Tour cost does not include:**

- Airfare to Italy
- Transportation to Sorrento at the start of the tour (see below)
- Two dinners
- Gratuities for drivers, porters, and restaurant staff

- Additional hotel nights pre- or post-tour that may be desired or required by flight schedules or other factors
- Travel insurance
- Passport and other expenses of a personal nature such as minibar charges, laundry, telephone calls, etc.

**Currency Exchange Rates:** Our costs to operate this tour are tied directly and entirely to the exchange rate between the Euro and the Dollar. Over the past few years the value of the U.S. dollar has fluctuated in quite a volatile manner against the Euro. *We reserve the right to alter the trip pricing indicated here should there be a significant fluctuation of the dollar.* Please read the Terms & Conditions that accompany the Trip Enrollment Form.

### FACTORS TO CONSIDER

*The towns that we visit have to be explored on foot, so it is very important that you do not have any limitations when it comes to walking. We cannot drive through these towns on our bus (even on a smaller bus). In general, adding it all up, you should be comfortable walking a total of about three miles each day (but not all at once) and also standing while visiting many of the sights. Occasionally there are places to take a seat. Please check with us if you have any concerns in this area.*



We have structured the days in this program in the most logically flowing way in order to keep travel times to a minimum. The region is fairly compact, so there are no long drives -- the longest being about one hour.

### WEATHER

Please note that we are not visiting the Amalfi Coast during the summer so it is unlikely that the hotels' pools will be open, and the temperature of the sea water might be too cool for you – or perhaps not. The average sea temperature is about 70 F in October. Air temperatures should still be pleasant – with an average high temperature of about 72 F and overnight lows in the mid 50s F. Average rainfall is about 4 inches in October, so there's a chance we could see rain at some point.



### ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE LOGISTICS

**Arrival:** There are numerous options for reaching Sorrento. Naples is the closest major city, and from

Naples you can do a private transfer, a train, a bus, or a ferry. Costs range from about 5 Euros for the train up to 80 Euros for a private transfer for 1 to 3 persons, and travel time is between 45 and 75 minutes depending on the mode of transportation chosen. Venture Out can provide you with further details.

**Departure:** We have a private transfer by bus from Amalfi to Naples' central train station – approximately 90 minutes. From here you can opt to spend time in Naples or continue your travels by train elsewhere in Italy. If you're flying out you can reach the Naples airport by taxi, about 3 miles away.

### **CAVEAT**

While as accurate as possible at the time of printing, this itinerary should be considered an approximate indication of the schedule and scope of activities, trip routing, and meals, rather than an inflexible schedule of events; it is subject to change due to circumstances beyond our control. We reserve the right to maintain flexibility in order to take advantage of unforeseen opportunities. This trip is subject to the Limitation of Liability and all the Terms and Conditions as detailed in the Trip Enrollment Form.



To realize the maximum enjoyment from your Venture Out trip, we encourage participants to have flexibility, a sense of humor, curiosity and enthusiasm about new people and places, and an openness to the unexpected. With a spirit of adventure and positive attitude, we're sure you will have a very special travel experience. If you are uncertain about the level of comfort, difficulty, or any of the activities described in this itinerary, please email us or call Venture Out at 1-888-431-6789 to discuss your concerns.

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