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Congratulations, you are now “EXPERT PUBLISHERS”.

Suggestions for printing and assembling the guide:
Summary

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THINGS TO SEE
4 Churches, Palaces and Monuments

THINGS TO TRY
6 Eating and Drinking
7 Shopping
8 Hotels and lodgings

THINGS TO EXPERIENCE
9 Events
10 La Dolce Vita

ITINERARIES
11 Beaches, marinas and nature reserves
12 Positano, Ravello, Vietri and other places not to be missed
History and culture

Sorrento

The earliest evidence of human settlement in the Sorrento Peninsula indicates Greek and Phoenician activity, however, this fertile land was soon taken over as a Roman colony, until the final collapse of the Empire. In the Middle Ages (c. 9th century AD), Sorrento managed to release herself from outside control, including Naples, and thus the Duchy of Sorrento was born. The Duchy of Sorrento covered the whole of the peninsula, and was soon to become a prosperous economy based on ship chandlery, and the sale and production of citrus fruits and wine. The Duchy later (1100) relinquished its independence to become a protectorate of Normandy, with the advantage of receiving protection against attacks from pirates and the Lombards. 1544 is an important date in Arabian-Sicilian style. A number of its first quarter century and partly reconstructed at a later century structure.

Amalfi

Amalfi was originally a Roman colony, which gained more and more importance over the centuries, and after the fall of the empire it became a diocese (596 AD).

Later, the whole coastline, along with Amalfi, became property of the Duchy of Naples, until 839, when the city declared its independence and became an autonomous republic. The Maritime Republic of Amalfi was soon to become an important maritime commercial center, trading with the whole of the Italian peninsula, North Africa, the Middle East and the Byzantine Empire. The Republic bought spices, precious stones, carpets and fabrics from the Arabs, and sold them throughout Italy. Soon, Amalfi’s wealth not only attracted the attention of pirates, who were promptly driven back by the city’s army, it also became the target of neighboring states. In 1131, after a long succession of attacks, Amalfi was annexed to the Kingdom of Sicily, although still retaining a certain degree of autonomy in the management of maritime commercial affairs. Gradually, commercial relations with the East and the Byzantine Empire. The Republic bought spices, precious stones, carpets and fabrics from the Arabs, and sold them throughout Italy. Soon, Amalfi’s wealth not only attracted the attention of pirates, who were promptly driven back by the city’s army, it also became the target of neighboring states. In 1131, after a long succession of attacks, Amalfi was annexed to the Kingdom of Sicily, although still retaining a certain degree of autonomy in the management of maritime commercial affairs. Gradually, commercial relations with

Churches, Palaces and Monuments

Sedil Dominova - Sorrento

A unique testimony to the ancient “sedile”, which was the building in which the city fathers gathered to make laws and decide on economic and administrative matters. A magnificent majolica-tiled dome covers the arcaded loggia of the Sedil Dominova.

Amalfi Cathedral

Amalfi’s cathedral was built in the 9th century and partly reconstructed at a later date in Arabian-Sicilian style. A number of its original ancient features remain, such as the bell tower, the bronze posts on the main door and the Chapel of the Crucifix. The Cathedral leads directly to the fascinating Chiostro di Paradiso, the Paradise Cloisters.

Basilica di San Antonino - Sorrento

This basilica was built around the 10th century in honor of Saint Anthony, patron saint of navigators, and in c.1300 it became the home of the “Confraternita dei Battenti”, an heretical confraternity originating from Naples. It was splendidly restored in the 17th by the Theatine Fathers. The crypt holds the tomb of Saint Anthony, where thousands of votive offerings have been made by sailors.

Sedil Dominova – Sorrento

Housed inside an old paper mill, the museum exhibits ancient machinery for production of “Bambagina” paper, which is still in working order.

Civic Museum – Amalfi

On display in the museum is a seventeenth century paper copy of the Tabula Amalpha, a precious maritime manuscript, dating back to the 11th century, containing some surprising information about the Maritime Republic.

Saint Francis Cloisters - Sorrento

The Saint Francis Cloisters have been

Sedil Dominova – Sorrento

All the churches, museums and palazzi you need to see, to get a full picture of the history and culture of the Sorrento Peninsula and the Amalfi Coast...
Eating and Drinking

Arsenals are a precious testimony to the glorious maritime past of Amalfi. Of the 22 pointed-arch arcades that used to open out towards the sea, only 12 remain today.

Raito Provincial Museum of Ceramics - Vietri
This fascinating museum is housed inside Villa Guariglia, where magnificent artifacts narrate the history of traditional ceramics craftsmanship in Vietri.

Sorrento and Amalfi cuisine is strongly linked to the produce that grows in this fertile land. The wonderful climate is perfect for the cultivation of citrus fruits, oranges and lemons, olives and vines, which together paint a characteristic landscape. Even the sea, which washes the coast of the peninsula, is particularly generous. Fish and crustaceans are the star attractions, and are used by local chefs to prepare delicious dishes: lobster boiled on its own or cooked with tomatoes, octopus casserole, shrimp sautéed or fried lightly in breadcrumbs, spider crab soup. Let’s not forget the famous gnocchi alla sorrentina, made with tomato sauce, basil and mouth-watering fiordilatte mozzarella, which, in Sorrento, is braided. All dishes are neatly finished off with a dash of the characteristically sweet-tasting extra virgin olive oil, produced from olives grown in this area.

In Sorrento restaurants and in Amalfi Coast restaurants you will find wines ranging from rosso Sorrento to Gragnano, all of which are produced from vines cultivated in the many terraced vineyards of the region. One of the gastronomical symbols of Sorrento is limoncello, a delicious digestive liqueur made from the infusion of Sorrento lemon peel in pure alcohol. Another typical liqueur is nocino, made from Sorrento walnuts and coffee beans.
Shopping

Traditional crafts in the Sorrento Peninsula and the Amalfi Coast are a great source of shopping opportunities, including wooden ornaments, ceramics and gastronomical products. Sorrento’s main shopping street, where you can find most stores and fashion boutiques, is Via San Cesareo.

If you’re planning a trip to Sorrento, make sure you go to some of the many workshops of the wood inlayers. This ancient technique originated right here in this town, and later spread throughout the whole region. The process is quite complex: small pieces of different types of wood (walnut, olive, orange, holly) are arranged into exquisite patterns or pictures. If you are looking for a special gift, you’ll be spoilt for choice, from furniture to tiny ornamental boxes.

When it comes to the region’s gastronomical specialties, we suggest you pick up and take home some delicious limoncello, as well as a few lemons: just sprinkle a few slices with sugar and enjoy. Nocino is another of the region’s typical liqueurs, which is certain to bring a smile to the faces of your friends.

If you’re planning a vacation in the Sorrento Peninsula and the Amalfi Coast, you’ll have a wide range of accommodation possibilities to choose from. You can stay in one of the Sorrento Hotels, Amalfi hotels or Positano hotels, and use it as a base from which to take daily excursions to explore the magnificent surroundings. You can choose any category to suit your budget, from five stars to bed & breakfast. Sorrento and Amalfi have a lot to offer in terms of tourist accommodation.

If, on the other hand, you’d rather be close to nature, you may decide to opt for one of the campsites on the Amalfi Coast or around Sorrento.
La Dolce Vita

Sorrento and the Amalfi Coast are full of life and opportunities to have fun. There are plenty of open-air cafés, local trattorias, nightclubs and concerts held in the gardens of villas. In Sorrento an aperitif in Piazza Tasso in the heart of the city is a must, followed by a romantic dinner of one of the local specialties in one of the many Sorrento restaurants, to the soothing tones of live traditional music. After dinner and a glass of limoncello, take a walk around the stores in Via San Cesareo, which are open late. After that, there are numerous possibilities to continue the evening, from elegant wine bars with lounge music, glamorous nightspots popular with celebrities, and classical music concerts in the charming Cloisters of Saint Francis.

Sorrento Summer of Music - from July to September - Sorrento

Every year in springtime, Amalfi celebrates her glorious past as a Maritime Republic with an Historical Regatta, including perfectly recreated period costumes and sea vessels, representing the four ancient Maritime Republics: Amalfi, Pisa, Genoa and Venice.

Festa di Sant’Andrea - November, January and June - Amalfi

Amalfi’s patron saint is celebrated on two separate occasions: On November 30 (birthday celebration) a statue of the saint is taken from the Cathedral and carried in a procession through the streets and squares of the city. June 27 is the commemoration of the miracle that saved the city from the pirate Barbarossa (1544). The statue is carried to the sea, where a festival of music and fireworks awaits the procession.

Regatta of the Ancient Maritime Republics - May/June - Amalfi

The “Sorrento Summer of Music” Festival takes place every year in the cloisters of the monastery of Saint Francis in Sorrento, and its honorary President is the famous cellist Uto Ughi. Against the attractive backdrop of the Saint Francis cloisters, great names from the international music scene perform alongside emerging talent throughout the summer. Plenty of classical music and chamber music, but also jazz and other genres.

Incontri Internazionali del Cinema di Sorrento - December - Sorrento

Sorrento’s International Cinema Festival first began in 1963, and every year awards are presented to the best of Italian and foreign features and shorts.

Wagner Music Festival - from June to September - Ravello

This extraordinary musical festival dedicated to Richard Wagner first debuted in 1953, presenting a series of symphony and chamber concerts every year, along with opera, ballet, cinema and theater: an assortment of artistic representations held together by the common denominator of the “dream”, which was one of the German composer’s favorite themes.

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Sorrento and the Amalfi Coast regularly play host to a wealth of cultural events, particularly in the spring and summer seasons. Fabulous international musical events alternate with religious festivals, historical re-enactments and fêtes.

If you are planning to come here for a particular event, we advise you to book a Sorrento hotel well in advance, or choose from among the many Amalfi hotels or Positano hotels.

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Sorrento & Amalfi: view of Ravello
Beaches, marinas and nature reserves

A fascinating itinerary on the trail of the natural beauty and maritime splendor of the Sorrento Peninsula and the Amalfi Coast. Sandy beaches, crystal-clear seawater, rocky coastlines and charming marinas: take time to discover these extraordinary places that seem timeless and ultramodern at the same time. Our advice is to choose one of the many Sorrento hotels, Amalfi hotels or Positano hotels and use it as a base from which to take daily excursions around the area. For enthusiasts of marine life, diving centers operate in all seasons, with snorkeling and scuba equipment.

Punta Campanella Marine Reserve
Punta Campanella is a protected area stretching for 30km and includes several municipalities from Massa Lubrense to Vico Equense. The Marine Reserve unfolds along the coast of the Sorrento Peninsula, taking in lush headland and rocky inlets. Places to visit include the Bay of Ieranto, with its tiny islets and Li Galli, where mermaids tried to entice Ulysses with their song. This is a great place for diving and for discovering the natural marine habitat of the "land of the mermaids”.

Vietri sul mare
This town is just 3km from Salerno, the provincial capital. Overlooking the Gulf of Salerno, Vietri sul mare is a kind of terrace at the center of which rises San Liberatore mountain. Marina di Vietri, with its wide beaches and clear blue sea, stretches out at the feet of Vietri. Don’t miss the 17th century Saint John the Baptist Cathedral, with its great majolica-tiled dome.

The Emerald Grotto
It is one of the natural marvels of the coast. The Emerald Grotto is not far from Amalfi in the municipality of Conca dei Marini. The water’s distinctive emerald color is caused by water from the Tyrrhenian Sea, entering and partly filling the grotto, through a crevice linked to a 12m channel leading straight into the sea. A showcase of stalactites and stalagmites of all sizes can be seen in the grotto.

Marina Grande Beach
Pastel-colored houses which contrast with the bright blue of the sky, and the deep blue of the sea; beach lined neatly with brightly colored cabins. Marina Grande is bursting with vitality. It is the ideal place to relax and have fun for hours on end.

Bagni di Regina Giovanna (Queen Joan’s Baths)
This part of the coast is in the cape of Sorrento, a few kilometers from Sorrento itself. According to legend, the Bagni di Regina Giovanna take their name from Queen Joan II of Anjou (15th century), who loved bathing in this stretch of blue sea. Not far from the baths you can see the remains of an aristocratic Villa overlooking the sea, which dates back to the 1st century AD.

Positano, Ravello, Vietri and other places not to be missed

Massa Lubrense
This pretty town has one of the best views in the whole of the peninsula, a great many ancient farmhouses to visit, and typical Mediterranean vegetation. Massa Lubrense is the ideal place for a vacation: permanent spring weather, breathtaking views and an enchanting historical center. At the heart of the town is Largo Vescovado, a charming balcony overlooking the sea, where you can admire the 16th century Santa Maria delle Grazie Church.

Positano
Enticing and charming, with white houses climbing up the rock face, overlooking the blue sea, Positano is one of the most romantic towns along the coast. Since 1800, the magic of the town has fascinated writers and artists from all over the world, such as Goethe, Steinbeck, Picasso and Diaghilev. Even the world of cinema was seduced by its beauty: Rome’s legendary Dolce Vita found its home from home right here in Positano. After a relaxing stroll through the streets of the town center, why not take a visit to the Collegiata di Santa Maria Assunta, a church that dates back to the 1200s, which is home to a wonderful Byzantine icon called "Madonna di Positano”.

Furore
This ancient town has roman origins, and is situated inside a fjord of the same name, overlooking the blue Tyrrhenian and protected by the Lattari Mountains. A unique, breathtaking view that must not be missed, if you are in the Amalfi area.

Ravello
350m above sea level, Ravello is one of the most fascinating places along the Amalfi Coast with a rich history. Its wonderful view has fascinated and inspired writers such as Gore Vidal (who has lived here for years), actors such as Greta Garbo and composers such as Richard Wagner, who composed his Parsifal
here. Do not miss the magnificent Villa Rufolo, whose gardens host the Wagnerian concerts every summer, Villa Cimbrone, with its wonderful view overlooking the whole of the coastline, and the Saint Panthaleon Cathedral, with its 13th century bell tower.

Vietri sul mare
This town is just 3km from Salerno, the provincial capital. Overlooking the Gulf of Salerno, Vietri sul mare is a kind of terrace at the center of which rises San Liberatore mountain. Marina di Vietri, with its wide beaches and clear blue sea, stretches out at the feet of Vietri. Don’t miss the 17th century Saint John the Baptist Cathedral, with its great majolica-tiled dome.

Praiano
At the time of the Maritime Republic of Amalfi Praiano was the summer residence of the Doges. Situated between Positano and Amalfi, this town is still charming today. It is between 80 and 180m above sea level and has a wonderful view and enviable climate. In the higher part of town, visit the Church of Saint Luke the Evangelist, patron saint of the town. The lower part gently leads down into Marina di Praia, a pretty seaside resort, protected by a medieval Sea Tower.
You're going to love the Italian portal Travelplan.it because it's just like having a guidebook at hand, free and always up to date. That's why over 100,000 travelers like yourself log on every month and discover a passion for our country, along with absolutely everything needed to visit it. Because there's only one way to see Italy: with those who really know it.