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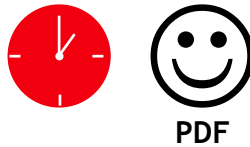
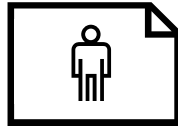
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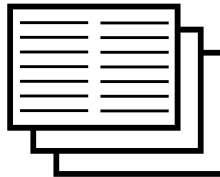
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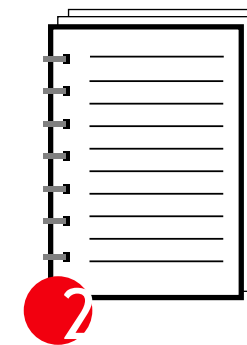
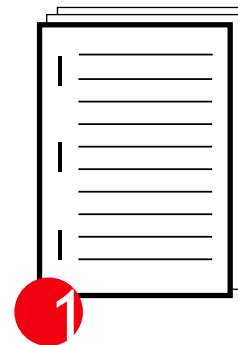
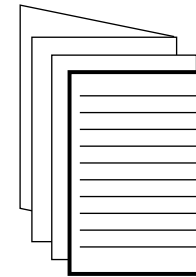
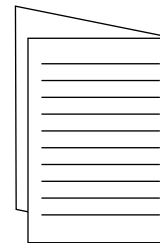
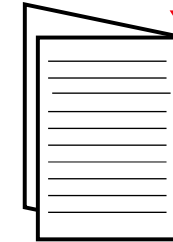
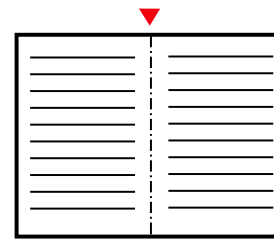
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assembling the guide



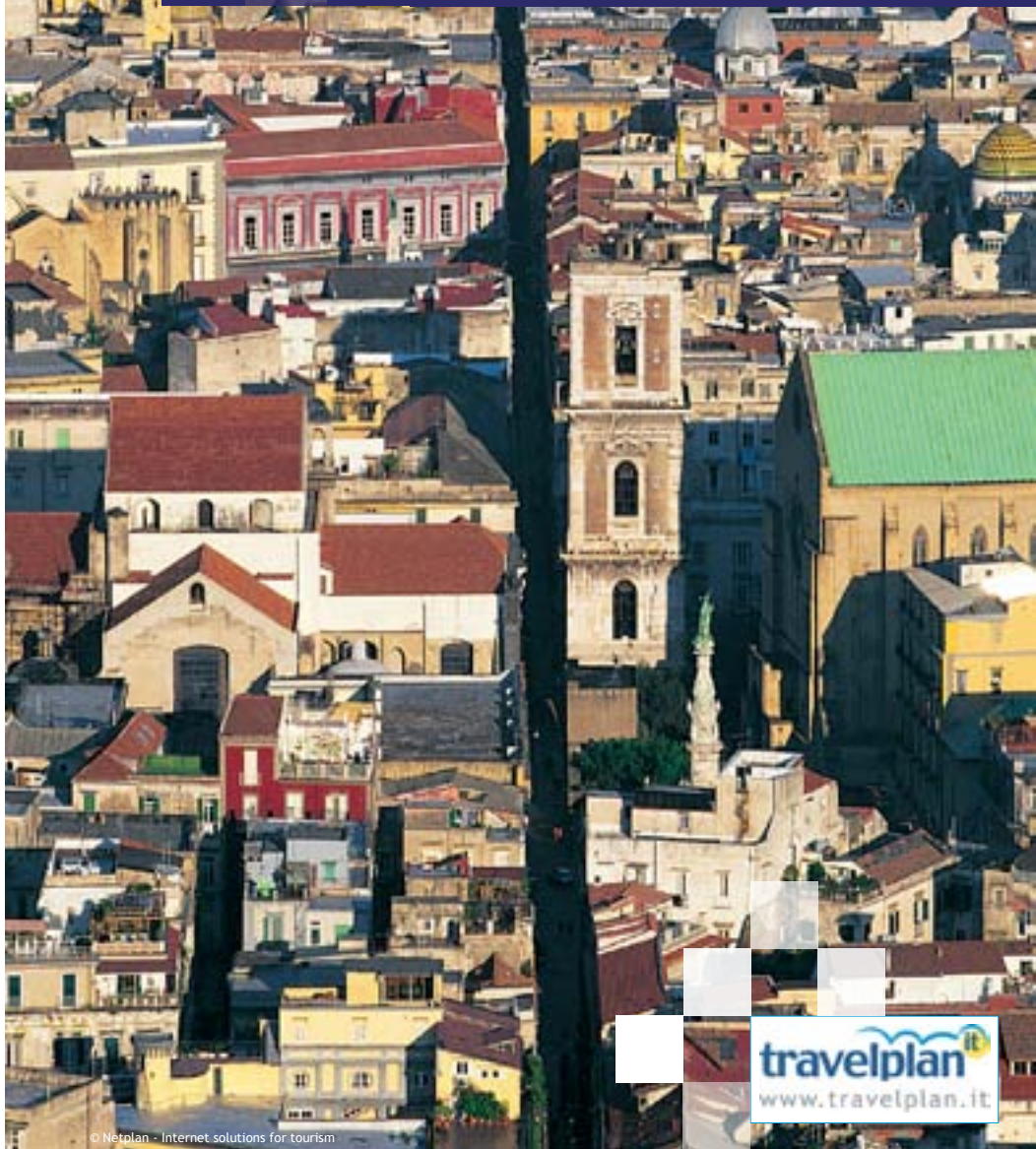
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THE NAPLES CITY GUIDE



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History and culture



Naples: National Museum Alexander and Dario at Isso's Battle

Naples is an ancient city: its origins date back to the **9th Century B.C.** when the city of Parthenope was founded on the site where Castel dell'Ovo now stands. In the 6th century B.C., this city was abandoned and was given the name of "Paleopolis" (old city) and the new city of "**Neapolis**" was founded next to it. Its name means exactly that, new city.

Under the rule of the **Roman Empire**, the city of Naples enjoyed economic and cultural prosperity. The area became popular for holidays due to its beautiful coastline. Luxury thermal spas sprung up around Naples which became famous throughout the empire and which attracted politicians and intellectuals such as **Cicero** and **Virgil**.

After the fall of the Roman Empire, Naples became an independent Duchy of **Byzantium** (763 A.D.), and was an essential part of the conservation of Byzantine dominion in Italy. This autonomous state under Byzantium lasted for almost four centuries, during which the city of Naples developed its economic and

cultural affairs even further.

The Byzantines were followed by the Normans, who made Naples a part of the **Kingdom of Sicily**. The next few centuries were a mixture of peace and war, until **Emperor Frederick II** came to the throne. He started a particularly rich and flourishing cultural period that culminated in the founding of the **University of Naples** (1224).

When the Anjou dynasty took over, the city became the capital once more and its population, buildings and economy all grew in size. However, Naples enjoyed one of its most wonderful periods of artistic and cultural splendor under **Aragon rule**: churches and monuments were built and the city became a central meeting point for many foreign artists.

During the following centuries, the city was ruled by the Spaniards, against whom there was an unsuccessful popular uprising led by "**Masaniello**" (1647).

After a short period of Austrian rule (1707-1734), Naples finally became an autonomous Kingdom, thanks to **Charles of Bourbon**.

In 1806, Napoleon gave the throne of the Kingdom of Naples to his brother Giuseppe Bonaparte, and thus started a brief French period for the city (until 1815).

The Bourbon family returned to the throne of the two Sicilies but their rule ended a few years later when **Garibaldi** entered the city in 1860. A plebiscite of the people decided that the city of Naples should be annexed to the **Kingdom of Piedmont**, which then became the **Kingdom of Italy** in 1870.

Churches and Museums



Naples: San Martino Chartreuse

All the most beautiful and charming churches in Naples:

Cathedral-Duomo

This was built around the end of the 12th century. The Cathedral of Naples has undergone several restorations over the centuries, partly carried out to repair the damage from earthquakes and partly to increase its artistic beauty. The relics of San Gennaro, the patron saint of Naples are kept in the cathedral.

Church of Santa Chiara

This church originated in 1300 and was restored after the Second World War during which it was damaged in air-raid bombing. It was returned to its original Provencal Gothic style. The funeral monument of Robert I of Anjou is to be noted. In the nearby Convent in Piazza del Gesù, there is a wonderful majolica-tiled Cloister to be seen.

Church of San Lorenzo Maggiore

This is a magnificent building dating back

to the end of the 13th century, which was restored in the 17th century. Every Christmas a life-size nativity scene is set up inside the church.

Church of San Gregorio Armeno

A wonderful example of Neapolitan Baroque art. The church is completely covered inside with frescoes and has cloisters that were designed in 1580 with a beautiful marble fountain in the center.

Church of Gesù Nuovo

The opulent interior of this church, filled with multi-color marble and with altars inlaid with semi-precious stones such as agate, amethysts and lapis lazuli, are a sight to be seen.

The museums to visit to learn all about this city's history and culture:

National Archeological Museum

This is the most important archeological museum in Europe and contains the collection of objects that belonged to the Bourbon family and also a series of bronzes, sculptures and other objects found in the digs at Pompeii and Herculaneum. The famous "Tirannicidi" and all the sculptures on show in the "Galleria dei Grandi Maestri" (Great Masters Gallery) must be seen.

Capodimonte Museum and Gallery

This Museum, opened in 1950, houses works of art ranging from the 13th to the 18th century which belonged to the Farnese family and which were then inherited by the Bourbon family. The "Roman Collection" that includes works of art by Michelangelo, Tiziano, El Greco, Raffaello and Botticelli is an essential part of any visit.

San Martino Museum

This museum is in the wonderful Certosa (Carthusian Monastery) of San Martino, and is dedicated to Neapolitan history and culture. There is a very interesting section on nativity

scenes which displays examples from the 18th and 19th centuries. The monumental sized "Cuciniello" nativity scene is well worth a visit.

Royal Palace Museum

This is the Museum of the seventeenth-century Royal Palace where all the furniture, sculptures, porcelain and paintings belonging to the Bourbon dynasty are kept. The "Palace's Sacred Art" Collection can be seen in the palace chapel.

Historical buildings and monuments



Naples: Castel Maschio Angioino

The buildings that were the center of civil and political life in the city:

The Royal Palace and Gardens - This is a wonderful Renaissance style area, dating back to the 17th century. It was the residence of the Spanish Viceroy. The royal gardens are full of tree-lined avenues, shaded by magnolias and Holm oak trees, with rare plants, statues and "secret gardens".

Reggia di Capodimonte - This palace, ordered by Charles of Bourbon and built in 1738, dominates the whole city and has a wonderful view of the Bay of Naples. The building had a dual role, as a museum and as a royal residence, right from the start. The Reggia's wood, the splendid setting for the sovereigns' hunts, still has about 4000 varieties of centuries-old trees.

Castel Maschio Angiolino - This castle was built towards the end of the 13th century on the instructions of the Anjou family, and became an important cultural center where

artists and writers such as Giotto, Petrarca and Boccaccio stayed. The Aragon dynasty expanded the building with two towers and a fantastic Arc de Triomphe. The Cappella Palatina chapel is also worth visiting.

Castel dell'Ovo - A large fortress from the 12th century that is a dominant presence on the Naples seafront. It was a royal residence for many centuries, and played an important strategic role.

Castel Sant'Elmo - Castel Sant'Elmo is a majestic, six-point star-shaped building that dates back to 1329 and which was first used as a prison. It is surrounded by ramparts and forts and stands over the city: there is a spectacular view from its terraces.

Places and charm



Naples: Piazza del Plebiscito

The best way to get to know Naples is to walk around its ancient streets, discovering the hidden wonders of this amazing city:

SpaccaNapoli

This road is called by this name (it literally means Split Naples) as, when seen from the top end, it literally splits the city into two parts. SpaccaNapoli is a long straight road, or several roads about 2 km long and just 6 meters wide. On both sides a tightly-packed labyrinth of narrow, charming alleys spreads out. This is the old, working-class, full-blooded Naples. Walking along the SpaccaNapoli, it is possible to follow an itinerary in one of the most characteristic areas of Naples, that corresponds to the "Decumano inferiore" of the Greek-Roman city, with churches, historical buildings, squares and old tiny craftsmen's shops and laboratories.

Vomero

This is an extremely peaceful, relaxing area of the city just the opposite of SpaccaNapoli.

The area is full of museums, monuments, shops and historical coffee shops. A truly unforgettable experience is a trip on the Montesanto cable railway, from where it is possible to have a great view of Castel Sant'Elmo and the Certosa di San Martino.

Quartieri spagnoli

One of the most fascinating places in the city that has to be explored bit by bit in this tight-knit labyrinth of alleyways and streets. When Spanish rule began around 1530, the city underwent a lot of transformations: churches, palaces and roads were built, including the wonderful **Via Toledo**, which took its name from the viceroy Don Pedro di Toledo. This is the period when the Quartieri Spagnoli sprung up, in an area that is now bordered by Corso Vittorio Emanuele and Via Toledo and which totals about 800,000 m².

Via San Gregorio Armeno

This road is famous worldwide as the "nativity scene road". In this road, which links the old city center to the main roads, there are some important monuments such as the San Gregorio Armeno Monastery. This is also the city center for hundreds of artists' and commercial businesses: sculptors, silversmiths, gilders, and many craftsmen that make figurines for nativity scenes, and who still use traditional methods.

Galleria Umberto I

This gallery was built at the end of the nineteenth century. Galleria Umberto is an imposing building with four wings in iron and glass and a wonderful, huge dome in the middle. The style is similar to that of the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele in Milan.

Posillipo Hill

This hill, that is part of the sides of a crater, separates the Gulf of Naples from Pozzuoli dalla Grotta Romana. Since ancient times, this area has always been considered a residential area, where it is possible to rest

from the efforts of city life. The very name of the area is a demonstration of this: the Greek term Pausilypon means "a respite from pain". The beautiful villas with their wonderful views over the Gulf can still be admired today, like, for example, the seventeenth century Palazzo Donn Anna.

Underground Naples

This is a "city under the city" that is exceptionally old: archeological digs have found artifacts dating back 5000 years. The Greeks built imposing funeral monuments underneath the city, while the Romans built aqueducts, caverns and tunnels. The public can now visit some parts of these underground areas if accompanied by a guide.

Piazza del Plebiscito

This recently renovated square is the most magnificent in Naples: it is built in the form of an amphitheater and is surrounded by wonderful monuments such as the Basilica of San Francesco di Paola, which is similar to St. Peter's in Rome, the Royal Palace and the Galleria Umberto I.

Piazza Bellini

This is a spot that is full of life, filled with open-air coffee shops that crowd around the monument built to commemorate the composer of the same name and the archeological site that has brought to light the ancient Greek walls that once stood on the square's site.

Piazza del Gesù Nuovo

This square is cut in two by SpaccaNapoli, the famous, ancient road in Naples. There are some of the city's most important monuments here: Palazzo Pignatelli, the Guglia dell'Immacolata (a huge church spire), the Church of Gesù Nuovo, the Monastery of Santa Chiara.

Eating and Drinking



Naples: Spaghetti with seafood

Getting to know Naples also means tasting its wonderful delicacies, being attracted by the strong tastes of the city's cuisine. These tastes are the result of "contamination" by other cultures: over the centuries, the Arabs, Normans, Spanish and French all ruled the city, each contributing to the city's gastronomic culture. The result is a unique type of cooking that continues to be halfway between refined and popular folk style, in which the local produce of this fertile area is prepared using elaborate recipes that often take a long time to prepare. The importation to Italy of the "New World" products in the sixteenth century: potatoes, peppers, beans, coffee and especially tomatoes, ingredients that are frequently used in Neapolitan cooking, was fundamental for the creation of the city's traditional dishes.

Neapolitan cooking is particularly well-known worldwide for the **pizza**, a dish that we have dedicated our **virtual itineray** to, but also for its tasty, imaginative recipes such as the sauces used for pasta, and their fish dishes and desserts.

A typical Neapolitan menu may start with a wonderful **mozzarella in carrozza**, which must have anchovies in it, and then continue with a pasta dish of **spaghetti "alla puttanesca"** or **spaghetti with clams**, or **maccheroni with Neapolitan ragù sauce**, which still takes several hours to make and is the true rival of the Bolognese sauce.

As a main course, we can recommend "**impepata di cozze**" (mussels) or **oven-baked mullet**. Then to "freshen up your mouth" after fish dishes, there is nothing better than a good mature cheese. In Naples there is **scamorza** and **caciocavallo**: remember that the longer these cheeses have matured the stronger their flavor.

Some parts of the Campania region are covered with vineyards, such as, for example, the Avellino area. This area produces some famous wines: **Greco di Tufo DOC**, **Taurasi DOCG** and **Fiano di Avellino**. The latter is ideal as an aperitif and for accompanying fish dishes. Other wines to note are **Lacryma Christi del Vesuvio** that can be white, red or rosé and **Aglianico del Taburno**.

Our Neapolitan menu can continue with a **dessert** taken from Neapolitan cake-making tradition: a **babà**, which is usually flavored with rum, or a **sfogliatella**, or some **struffoli**. You really shouldn't miss the chance to taste the real **pastiera napoletana**, the special pastry so typical of this area that is made from wheat and ricotta cheese and then flavored with orange blossom essence.

This sort of meal must end with **coffee** and an "**ammazzacaffè**" (after dinner liqueur), especially in Naples. Be ready to taste one of the best coffees that you have ever drunk: Neapolitans are true masters in transforming the coffee grains into a work of art! After coffee you must try **limoncello**, a wonderful after dinner liqueur made from the rinds of the famous **lemons** from **Sorrento** or the **Amalfi coast** and which are often used to flavor creams and desserts.

Shopping



Naples: Cameo

If you want to buy some typical, local handmade products, the ideal thing to do is to walk around the **Quartieri Spagnoli**: this area still has the highest number of old craftsmen's shops. The sophisticated, expensive **Capodimonte porcelain**, **cameos**, and **gouaches** are particularly famous. The latter are small paintings that represent the most charming and characteristic Neapolitan views, which date back to the eighteenth century, when the first visitors wanted to take away a souvenir of the city.

Naples is also tied to the traditions of the tooling of leather goods, and items in gold and silver.

If you are interested in buying the famous **nativity scene figurines** made in terracotta, the best place to go is **Via san Gregorio Armeno**: here you can find all types of figurines, all made by hand.

All the great names of "Made in Italy" fashion can instead be found in the elegant area near the **Riviera di Chiaia** that includes Via Poerio, Piazza dei Martiri, Via Calabritto, Via dei Mille and Via Filangeri. There is a historical

shop for Neapolitan male fashion in Piazza Vittoria: **Marinella**. It has been possible to buy shirts, pullovers, foulards and, most famously of all, ties in this shop since 1914. Some of the shop's most loyal customers were **Luchino Visconti** and **Aristotele Onassis**, and also **Gabriele d'Annunzio** and **Gianni Agnelli**.

Hotels and lodgings



Naples: harbour with Vesuvius's background

When organizing a holiday in Naples, the first thing to think about is our needs in terms of accommodation: Naples offers a wide choice and can satisfy all sorts of needs.

Choose one of the several hotels in Naples if you are looking for a solution that can combine excellent service with the advantages of being in the old city center and being able to visit all the most important artistic and cultural sites on foot.

If you intend to stay in the city for a mid-long term period, we recommend you rent an apartment in Naples. In this way you will be able to completely immerse yourselves in this special city's spirit, experiencing its daily lifestyle and following its rhythms.

If your budget is not large enough to allow you to choose between the previous two options, don't worry: travelplan.it can suggest another two possibilities. You can save a lot of money compared to hotel prices if you choose one of the **Bed & Breakfast establishments in Naples**. Alternatively, if your budget is even smaller, you can opt for staying in a campsite in Naples.

Finally, the rural farmhouse accommodation in Naples and nearby are an ideal base if you want to spend time exploring the places near to the city. The area around Naples has endless possibilities for this purpose, archeological sites, nature sites and eating and drinking routes.

Events



Naples: San Gennaro

Naples is a city that is full of life and that has strong ties with its historical and cultural roots. Many events are organized each year that are linked to the rich Neapolitan culture in some way or other: travelplan.it has chosen some of the most important regular events for you.

If you are planning a **trip to Naples** in a period that coincides with some of these events, we recommend you book your room in the hotels in Naples a fair time in advance.

Maggio dei monumenti - April/May/June

Every springtime since 1994, Naples has become the stage for a series of shows and traveling cultural events. During this period, private collections and monuments that are normally closed to the public are made accessible for everyone. Each spring, the Maggio dei Monumenti event has a different main theme and depending on this theme, special itineraries shows and other artistic events are organized in the old city center and in the areas around Naples.

Festival for San Gennaro - 19 September

The celebrations for Naples' patron saint usually begin on September 16th and continue until the Sunday after the saint's day, which falls on September 19th. This is an ancient ritual: the first festival is thought to have been held at the end of the fourteenth century, when the blood of San Gennaro, kept by the bishop of that era, returned to a liquid state on the anniversary of the Saint's martyrdom: September 19th. Since then, Naples commemorates the miracle with a fascinating religious procession, with rose petals and silver statues of saints and with more pagan celebrations that involve the whole city.

Pasta Show - October

An international event entirely dedicated to pasta, one of the symbols of Made in Italy throughout the world. This event has recently been held in the Stazione Marittima of the Port of Naples in Piazza del Municipio opposite the spectacular Maschio Angioino. 10,000 square meters of exhibition space containing historical and educational itineraries about pasta and its production processes, exhibitions, debates, shows and, of course, a chance to taste the products.

San Carlo Theater

Built in 1737, this is the oldest theater in Europe. Its season includes many appointments with ballet, opera and concerts and attracts some of the most famous artistes.

La Dolce Vita



Naples: Scaturchio confectionery

Naples is a sun-filled city... even at night. If you like being with people and enjoying yourself, this is the city for you. You will be affected by the city's euphoria, you will become extra-sociable and you will feel as if you belong in the city, not just there to visit the museums and monuments.

If you intend to spend your evening here, we recommend that you don't leave immediately but that instead you stay the night in one of the hotels in Naples: it would be just too bad to realize that it is time to leave, just when the best part of the evening is beginning!

Nights in Naples have a lot to offer, for everyone's tastes.

The **Old City Center** is the area where all the most alternative clubs can be found and it is mostly university students who go there.

Many clubs are in Piazza dei Martiri, Piazza Amedeo and Piazza San Pasquale. These places are busy almost every evening, people go for a drink and then head off in all directions: the night is still young and there are so many clubs in Naples to try out! **San**

Pasquale di Chiaia, Lungomare Mergellina and **Piazza Sannazzaro** are the places where you can find all the "cool" clubs in Naples. The most popular Wine Bars are here, such as the **Enoteca Belledonne**, a small wine bar in Vico Belledonne n° 18 and **S'Moove**, a trendy club in Vico dei Sospiri. In Vico dei Sospiri there is also another very popular bar: the **Joyce Irish Pub**.

If you are still not tired, why don't you use up the last of your energy at the **White** in Vico Satriano, the coolest lounge bar at the moment. The discotheque **La Mela** in Via dei Mille is more down to earth, but incredibly popular

A special day



Naples: Cathedral of San Gennaro

In this "hasty" itinerary we have deliberately neglected the Neapolitan museums: visits to the **Archeological Museum** and the **Capodimonte Museum** would take several hours each. It is better to get a feel of the city by walking its streets, admiring its monuments and the interiors of its superb churches. We are sure that you will be enchanted by this city and that you will want to come back again to spend more time here.

One piece of advice: if you decided to get around by taxi, never tell the taxi driver you are in a hurry. He is capable of committing the most terrifying actions to keep you happy!

Morning

Our one day itinerary starts from the Naples Cathedral, or **Duomo** as it is called: the wonderful **Cathedral of San Gennaro** that houses the relics of the city's patron saint. From the Cathedral you can walk to **Via San Gregorio Armeno**, the street famous for its Neapolitan nativity scenes, and where you can visit the beautiful **Monastery and Cloisters** inside that bear the same name as the street.

A short distance away, either on foot or by taxi, there is another holy building that you really wouldn't want to miss: the **Church of Gesù Nuovo**, with its luxurious interiors inlaid with semi-precious stones. **Via Toledo**, in the heart of the **Quartieri Spagnoli** begins near the church. While you are walking along this street, why don't you choose one of the restaurants in Naples there and stop for a welcome break. Try a pasta dish: filling but not too heavy. There are lots you can choose from: from the classic **maccheroni** with tomato and basil sauce or spaghetti with clams or "alla puttanesca". In the winter, we suggest you try one of the tasty fish soups that are a traditional part of Neapolitan cuisine.

Afternoon

At the end of **Via Toledo** you will find the entrance to the splendid **Galleria Umberto I** on your left, a building that reminds you of the **Galleria Vittorio Emanuele** in Milan. A short distance from the Galleria you can see the **Teatro San Carlo**, one of the oldest in Europe and the fantastic **Palazzo Reale** surrounded by its beautiful gardens. Here you could stop off for a rest at the **Caffè Gambrinus** in Piazza Trieste e Trento (just near there), a historical Neapolitan bar where you can try a "tazzuttella" of real coffee in a sophisticated nineteenth-century atmosphere. After taking a quick look at the charming **Piazza Plebiscito**, carry on with your tour, going to the monument the **Maschio Angioino**, next to the Royal Palace. If you still have time you can go to visit the amazing **castel Dell'Ovo** by taxi or by bus and admire the wonderful view of the city and the Bay of Naples from there.

Evening

What is the best way to end a fantastic, busy day discovering Neapolitan culture? Going for a pizza of course! Choose one of the restaurants in Naples recommended in our guide and enjoy this simple but tasty work of art. After dinner, try a cocktail in one of

the wine bars in Naples. And then what? Who knows where you will end your evening: in Naples anything is possible! Just one last suggestion: make sure you remember the name of the hotel in Naples where you spend the night!

On the pizza trail



Naples: Pizza Margherita

Naples is one of the key cities of Italian cooking, the home to the famous food that is a symbol of Italy worldwide: the pizza.

The **Naples itinerary** proposed here is entirely dedicated to pizza, its history and its ingredients, that are all from this region. Before going on to the subject of pizza, we prefer to stop and look at its basic ingredients: tomato and mozzarella cheese.

San Marzano tomatoes are a pillar of Neapolitan cooking and the Mediterranean diet. There are countless recipes based on this food, also known as "red gold": pasta dishes with sauces or in stock, side dishes, main courses, and of course, pizzas.

Originally from Peru, exported to Italy by the Spanish rulers and grown in Italy for the first time in the borough of San Marzano, this variety of tomato is the most suited for transformation into the famous canned "**peeled tomatoes**", a typical Italian product that is well-known worldwide. Their particular elongated shape, the firm interior

with no seeds and their bright red color make them unique and recognizable among the thousand existing varieties of tomatoes.

The second essential ingredient for a real pizza is mozzarella and especially the Campania-made **mozzarella di bufala**. This fresh cheese has a long history, even though in the past it was not for sale but was made and eaten by the family as it was so easy to come by.

The buffalo, originally from India, was introduced to Italy around the year 1000. Its milk, which contains more fat and protein and which is tastier than cow milk, was once used to produce other more mature types of cheese. Mozzarella di bufala has now been one of the most famous Campania products for more than a century. It is made with the genuine traditional old-fashioned methods: four and a half liters of buffalo milk are still needed to make one kilogram of Campania mozzarella.

Now let's talk about **pizza**, starting with its thousands of years of history.

The forerunners to our pizzas were in fact served to the ancient Egyptians, Greeks and Romans: these were flat focaccia loaves that were flavored with herbs and spices.

When buffalo and tomatoes were imported to Italy, the pizza as we know it today began to be created.

Halfway between refined cuisine and a traditional working-class meal, the pizza became one of the main dishes and a symbol of the Neapolitan cooking culture starting from 1700. It was finally consecrated however in 1889, when the famous pizza maker Raffaele Esposito stepped over the threshold of the Reggia di Capodimonte and paid tribute to the Queen, Margherita di Savoia with three types of pizza. The one the queen liked best was topped with **mozzarella fiordilatte**, **tomato** and **basil** and was named **Pizza Margherita** in her honor.

Pizzas are available in most restaurants in Naples, where they are offered in a thousand

varieties. However, as true purists, we recommend that you try the most typical pizza in Naples, the one with true Campania-made mozzarella di bufala: remember that you will only eat a pizza like this in Naples! One of the pizzerias we recommend is Brandi, a traditional pizzeria that dates back to 1780.

Well, after talking about pizza, don't you fancy a glass of beer? Sorry to have to tell you this, but beer in Naples is only drunk and not made. But don't worry: after a dinner full of special local products, you can allow yourself a foreign drink!

If you really want to drink something made locally, however, we will happily suggest some typical Campania wines.

Vesuvius and the cities that fell victim to it



Pompeii: Villa dei Misteri

Archeology and natural wonders: places around Naples provide lots of opportunities for making enjoyable trips out of the city. We have prepared a short list of places to visit if you are planning a trip to this part of the world. For accommodation, you have two alternatives: choosing a hotel in Naples as your base, or choosing a hotel near the sites that you intend to visit.

We suggest you: Hotel Santa Caterina.

Vesuvius

Vesuvius is an extremely fascinating natural phenomenon: with Etna, it is the only active volcano in Europe, surrounded by extremely fertile land that has luxuriant vegetation. Over the centuries it has been the cause of destruction of entire cities. The first cities to be submerged by the rivers of lava from the volcano were **Pompeii and Herculaneum** in 79 A.D.

The trip that we suggest in this itinerary is rather tiring, both due to the physical effort required and the amount of time needed to complete it. We can, however, assure

you that the experience will make it all worthwhile! To reach Vesuvius from Naples you can either go by car (Highway - Autostrada - A 3 Naples-Salerno, exit *Ercolano*) or by train (*Circumvesuviana railway, Ercolano-Scavi* station and then by shuttle bus run by *Trasporti Vesuviani*). After a journey of about 20 minutes that will take you to 1000 meters above sea level, the journey will then continue on foot for another 1000 meters: at the end of this hard climb you will finally reach the edge of the crater! It is better if you make this trip with an organized tour, to avoid running pointless risks: remember that Vesuvius is still an active volcano!

Pompeii

In 79 A.D. Vesuvius erupted and buried this ancient Campania town with a seven-meter high blanket of ash and lapillus. The many archeological digs that have been going on for decades have discovered many of the monuments that survived the disaster, such as the *Antiquarium* (where the casts of the inhabitants buried under the lava are kept), the Temple of Apollo, the Temple of Vespasian, the Slaughterhouse, the Temple of Jupiter, the Thermal Spa Bath-house and the Surgeon's House. Digs are still ongoing and recently work has been carried out to uncover all the parts of the *Casa del Bracciale d'oro* (the house of the golden bracelet), including the fountains in what was once the garden of this Roman *domus*, and the fragments of the numerous frescoes. Pompeii is slowly returning to light and in a certain way, also to life. Recently an ambitious project was created: to recreate the ancient wine production of the city. The result is "Villa dei misteri", an extremely fine wine that is aged in oak barrels and is distributed in a limited edition. Pompeii is about 30 minutes from Naples and can easily be reached by car (Highway - Autostrada - A 3 Naples-Salerno) or by train, using the *Circumvesuviana railway* (Pompeii station).

Herculaneum

Etruscans, Greeks and Romans all dominated this wonderful city that stands high over the sea at various times, until it was completely destroyed in 79 A.D. The lava that erupted so violently and washed over Herculaneum destroyed most of the buildings (unlike Pompeii) but saved almost all the objects that were inside the houses, as it covered them slowly. Thanks to this phenomenon, all kind of perfectly preserved objects can now be seen: furniture, ornaments and also papyrus and wooden objects that can still be seen today even though they were carbonized. Looking at these objects will help you to understand the habits and daily life of a population that lived almost 2000 years ago.

Herculaneum is about 10 minutes from Naples and can easily be reached either by car (Highway - Autostrada - A 3 Naples-Salerno) or by train, using the *Circumvesuviana railway* (Ercolano-Scavi station).

Aromas and tastes



Naples: Limoncello

This itinerary will take you on a trip to discover the aromas and tastes of the Campania land. Aromas and tastes that make you heady and which remain firmly stamped on your memories. On your **trip to Naples** you should not miss out on learning about the eating and drinking culture of this region, that is known for its delicious products that are tightly linked to the fertile local land and that are exported all over the world due to their excellent quality. A holiday to Naples can therefore be the opportunity to try these unique products, some of which are available all over Italy, but which only keep their original taste and freshness in Campania.

The local products

In addition to **San Marzano tomatoes** that we have already talked about in our **pizza itinerary**, the fertile Campania soil produces many other fruits and vegetables, some of which are so special and unique that they come under the category "**indicazione geografica protetta**" (IGP- a certification given to some products produced in a specific

protected area of Italy). Let's look at a few of them here:

Lemons from Sorrento and **Lemons from the Amalfi Coast** - famous worldwide as an essential ingredient for **limoncello**, they are very different from traditional lemons: they are larger, have a strong aroma and have a thick peel and juicy pulp. The areas where this special type of lemon is grown, on terraces, has been part and parcel of the landscape on the Sorrento peninsula and Amalfi coastline for centuries.

Annurca Apple - Archeological digs at **Herculaneum** have brought to light ancient frescoes that show this special fruit, as proof of its ancient origins. The Annurca Apple is the most excellent of apples: perfumed, with a crunchy inner and an unmistakable taste.

Montella Chestnuts- the Lombards were the first to notice the value of this versatile fruit in 571 A.D. and set up a law to protect the Montella chestnuts.

Giffoni Hazelnuts - The traditions linked to the cultivation and sale of this type of hazelnut go back centuries, and are documented in the Naples National Museum. The Montella hazelnut is considered one of the finest.

Cheeses and salami

Cheese-making in this area has long-standing traditions: information about the production techniques used goes back as far as 500 B.C. Once upon a time, the working-class areas of Naples were crowded with stalls that sold huge white cheeses, **scamorze** and **caciocavallo** in all shapes and stages of maturation. Other local cheeses include the delicious, super-calorie containing **burrata**, a kind of mozzarella filled with cream and butter, **mozzarella fiordilatte**, made from cow's milk and of course **mozzarella di bufala**. For salami products in Naples, there is salame di Napoli with its unmistakable smoky and spicy taste, that is still made according to the antique traditions of the Campania farm-workers.

Cakes and pastries

While walking in Naples, you will inevitably catch sight of the numerous glittering pastry shop windows that can be found lining the city's streets and squares. You just cannot miss out on tasting one of the typical Neapolitan pastries: **babà**, usually flavored with rum or limoncello, **sfogliatella**, **struffoli**. The **pastiera napoletana** deserves a special mention: it is a dessert made from wheat and ricotta cheese, flavored with orange blossom essence and has ancient origins.

The story goes that in ancient times it was made to celebrate the arrival of Spring. Then when pagan festivals made room for Christian traditions, the pastiera became the traditional Naples Easter cake.

Coffee

In Naples coffee is a ritual you just cannot miss out on. It was once made with the traditional Neapolitan coffee-maker made famous by Edoardo De Filippo and Totò. Today coffee is made with the Italian *moka* espresso coffee maker following a few technical tricks that all Neapolitans know perfectly. First of all, the *moka* should never be washed with washing-up liquid, but rinsed with warm water only. Remember that if you have just bought a *moka* espresso coffee-maker you should use it without coffee grains inside once or twice at first, filled just with water or ready-made coffee. The secret of a good cup of espresso coffee lies in not pressing down the coffee grains too hard in the filter and turning the flame down to a minimum as soon as the coffee starts to "gurgle", leaving it for a few seconds before taking it off the hob and serving.

One of the most famous, traditional coffee shops in Naples where a perfect "*tazzuttella*" of coffee is served is the elegant Caffè Gambrinus in Piazza Trieste e Trento, on the corner of Via Chiaia.



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