

ITALY

The Amalfi Coast & Capri

A Guided Walking Adventure





Table of Contents

Daily Itinerary	4
Tour Itinerary Overview	13
Tour Facts at a Glance	15
Traveling To and From Your Tour	17
Information & Policies	20
Italy at a Glance	21
Packing List	26

Travel Style

This small-group Guided Walking Adventure offers an authentic travel experience, one that takes you away from the crowds and deep in to the fabric of local life. On it, you'll enjoy 24/7 expert guides, premium accommodations, delicious meals, effortless transportation, and local wine

or beer with dinner. Rest assured that every trip detail has been anticipated so you're free to enjoy an adventure that exceeds your expectations.

And, with our **optional Flight + Tour Combo** and **Naples Pre-tour Extension** to complement this destination, we take care of all the travel to simplify the journey. Refer to the attached itinerary for more details.



Overview

The towns of the Sorrentine Peninsula and Amalfi Coast have been part of the European “Grand Tour” since the 18th century, and with good reason. Dramatic limestone cliffs contrast against the clear, blue sea. Clinging hillside towns, groves of fragrant lemons, silvery olive trees, and vineyards are quintessentially Mediterranean. The draw is indeed ancient, dating to the Greeks, who imagined the rocky coastline to be the home of the Sirens of Homer’s *Odyssey*, and later wealthy Romans, who chose the area as a site to construct their villas.

The landscape varies from typical Mediterranean *macchia* (shrub), where a goat may be peeking down from a nearly vertical hillside, to the cultivated terraces of citrus, olives, or vines, testament to centuries of civilization. In addition to feasting your eyes, you literally feast on the bounty of the region’s incredible variety of flavors. Lemons from the Sorrentine Peninsula have inspired the liqueur *limoncello*, sipped ice cold after dinner. Fresh seafood, mozzarella, and pasta dishes unique to the region are among other tastes to be savored in this exploration of a mythical coastline.



Daily Itinerary

DAY 1

Meet in Naples. Walking tour of Pompeii; 2 miles, easy (sneakers acceptable). Transfer to Ravello

Upon meeting in Naples, you drive a short distance to the archaeological excavation site of Pompeii. A two-hour guided walking and historical tour provides a fascinating glimpse into the Roman town frozen in time in 79 A.D. by the eruption of nearby Mt. Vesuvius. In the early evening, you arrive at the picturesque village of Ravello, perched high on a hilltop above the seaside town of Amalfi. Both Ravello and Amalfi, powerful towns in the Middle Ages, are rich with art and history. Ravello, the smaller and quieter of the two, has enchanted writers, artists, musicians, and travelers for centuries—Richard Wagner, D.H. Lawrence, and Virginia Woolf all spent time here. Its cobblestone ways are free of traffic and bordered by gardens and elegant villas, including the stunning 13th-century Villa Rufolo, famous for its spectacular gardens.

After checking into your hotel—a family-run, Old-World style property situated in the historic center of Ravello—an evening stroll in the lively main square, the Piazza Duomo, provides an opportunity to see the town's 11th-century cathedral. From your hotel's expansive terrace and dining room, where dinner is

served, you are able to enjoy the breathtaking views of mountains plunging into the Tyrrhenian Sea.

Hotel Rufolo, Ravello

An Old-World style, family-run hotel in the historical center of Ravello with a swimming pool (seasonal), new spa, and sweeping views of the Amalfi Coast from lovely terraces. This intimate four-star property also features spacious and elegantly decorated guest rooms.



DAY 2

Villa Cimbrone. Ravello to Scala to Valle dei Mulini to Amalfi; 6-7 miles, easy to moderate, 325-ft. elevation gain and 1,500-ft. elevation loss

Today is spent in the valley between the towns of Ravello and Amalfi. First, a short walk brings you to the Villa Cimbrone, an original 19th-century estate where the splendid and slightly wild garden seems to literally hang on the cliff's edge over the sea. Fragrant rose gardens, small temples, pavilions, and bronze and stone statues lead you to the Belvedere dell'Infinità ("Terrace of Infinity") to take in an awe-inspiring panorama, deemed by former Ravello resident Gore Vidal to be "the most beautiful in the world."

You then leave Ravello on foot for the ancient village of Scala, with the route weaving through cobbled ways and former mule paths, once the only roads connecting the network of hill farms and villages. Located across the valley from Ravello, Scala is the oldest village on the Amalfi Coast and one with close ties to the Marine Republic of Amalfi. Its position as an important defensive point in the Middle Ages brought much prosperity to its prominent merchant families and at the height of its economic splendor, the town was a flourishing religious center with more than 100 churches. Arriving in the town's central square, there might be time to stop in the 12th-century Duomo of San Lorenzo before continuing on to Minuta, one of Scala's six hamlets spread out across the mountainside and home to a beautiful 11th-century church. Meaning "small," this tiny hamlet boasts big views from its setting on a little promontory between two mountain valleys that lead down to Amalfi and Atrani. Looking down the valley, you spot the morning's final destination, Pontone—the lowermost of

Scala's hamlets—as well as the ruins of the 12th-century Basilica of Sant'Eustachio, a fascinating stop along the way. Arriving in Pontone, you are invited inside a wonderful trattoria and welcomed like extended family. A traditional lunch is prepared—perhaps risotto with wild mushrooms or homemade linguine puttanesca—from the fresh, seasonal produce of community farmers.

After lunch, a 15-minute (and 150-foot) ascent through terraced lemon groves and grape arbors leads to a saddle, the highest point of the afternoon's walk, with views of the entire valley. You then descend a steep limestone-paved path and mountain trail to a brook rushing down from the mountain ridge, once a power source to the numerous paper mills for which Amalfi was famous. The trail descends stone steps through a shaded forest and follows contours of the hill into the Valle dei Mulini ("Valley of the Mills"). You walk past ruins of the mills into the heart of Amalfi, where you are free to explore the maze of whitewashed alleys, do a bit of window shopping along the Via Lorenzo d'Amalfi, or visit the stunning 11th-century landmark cathedral in the Piazza Duomo. Later, you return to the tranquility of Ravello via the tiny town of Atrani. Upon arrival at the hotel, you may choose to relax, or browse the colorful ceramic shops in this delightful town before dinner on your own at one of Ravello's many fine restaurants.

Hotel Rufolo, Ravello

DAY 3

Bomerano to Sentiero degli Dei to Montepertuso to Positano; 6 miles, moderate, 300-ft. elevation gain and 1,000-ft. elevation loss, possibility of vertigo in certain places. Transfer to Capri

Today's walk begins on a southern slope above the Amalfi Drive, one of the most stunning coastal routes imaginable. The route you follow is the lower trail of the Sentiero degli Dei ("Path of the Gods"), one of the classic walks of the Amalfi Coast region. The path winds westward below the limestone ridge of the south-facing mountains with spectacular views of the sea and dramatic coastline. From grassy terraces ingeniously clinging to the hillsides, you walk past grazing sheep and goats, through bushes of heather, rosemary, and rock rose, and on to a mixed forest of oak and chestnut.

You arrive in the enchanting hillside town of Montepertuso for a well-deserved lunch of local cheese, cold cuts, and grilled vegetables at a favorite family-run restaurant. The country restaurant is part of the Slow Food Movement, an international association promoting food and wine culture, while also protecting local food and agricultural biodiversity worldwide.



(Alternatively, you may choose not to participate in the morning walk and be driven to Positano for sightseeing and to meet the group for lunch in Montepertuso.)

Later you continue descending many ancient stone steps (elevation loss of approximately 1,000 feet) to Positano, where pastel-colored houses built into the steep hillside spiral down narrow streets to the café-lined beach. (Those who prefer may take a public bus, rather than the stairs, down to Positano.) Once a small fishing village, Positano is now a chic seaside resort—thanks in part to John Steinbeck, who, after a visit there in 1953, wrote: “Positano bites deep. It is a dream place that isn’t quite real when you are there and becomes beckoningly real after you have gone.”

Following a visit in Positano, you shuttle to Sorrento’s port to board a ferry for the short ride to the Isle of Capri (between 25 and 40 minutes). This nautical approach provides excellent views of the Sorrentine Peninsula and the striking “teeth” of Capri, the Faraglioni cliffs. Upon arrival at Capri’s Marina Grande, you board the funicular and ascend to the island’s elegant main square, Piazza Umberto I, or as the locals simply call it, La Piazzetta. After checking in to your cliffside hotel, you may enjoy an *aperitivo* on the terrace overlooking the waters below or among the citrus trees of your hotel’s garden. Dinner, likely the fresh catch from the waters below, is served at the hotel’s restaurant.

Hotel Luna, Capri

Accessed through a charming wisteria-covered pathway, this lovely four-star hotel enjoys a stunning, secluded location facing the sea and Faraglioni cliffs. Additional features include panoramic terraces, an outdoor lounge bar, and large swimming pool (seasonal). Comfortable rooms are furnished with antiques and face the quiet courtyard.



DAY 4

Anacapri to Monte Solaro to Anacapri: Option 1) 4.5 miles, easy to moderate, 1,000-ft. elevation gain. Option 2) 5 miles, easy with challenging sections, 1,000-ft. elevation gain. (A chairlift ride is also available to shorten or substitute for this morning walk). Additional afternoon option; guide choice, 2.5 miles, easy to moderate

Capri's early-morning light invites exploration as you drive up the winding road via public bus to Anacapri, a small town of 5,000 residents, formerly connected to the Marina Grande only by the Phoenician Steps—a flight of 800 stone steps reputed to have been built by the Greeks. The morning's destination of Monte Solaro—Capri's highest point at 1,926 feet above sea level—may be reached on foot via one of three routes; the least-strenuous ascent is by the 12-minute *seggiora* (chairlift)!

The first and easier walk option departs Anacapri via paved then gravel switchbacks to the lush valley of Cetrella and the Eremo di Cetrella, a hermitage perched on the cliff's edge with spectacular views over Capri and the Faraglioni. From here you ascend a panoramic trail to the top of Monte Solaro while enjoying breathtaking views of the sheer drops down to the sea.

The second and more-challenging option begins with an easy walk over a paved and fairly flat trail to the Belvedere della Migliera viewpoint with vistas of neighboring Ischia and Procida islands. From here a moderate to challenging 30-minute climb up the rough, steep mountainside brings you to Monte Cocuzzo at 1,640 feet above sea level. A final gentler ascent leads to the top of Monte Solaro, where you take in views across the whole of the Bay of Naples, Vesuvius and the islands of Ischia and Procida on one side; and the Sorrentine peninsula, the Amalfi Coast, and the islets of Galli on the other.

After enjoying a refreshment and stunning view over the Bay of Naples and the Amalfi Coast, you return to the base of Monte Solaro—again, either on foot or by chairlift—and are free to enjoy lunch on your own in the village of Anacapri. Regrouping after lunch, your guides lead you to the Church of San Michele, an 18th-century gem whose majolica tiles of Adam and Eve are one of the finest examples of Neapolitan Baroque artwork.

In the later part of the afternoon you have several options for exploring Capri at your own pace. You may choose to browse in the island's chic and inviting shops, enjoy a swim in the hotel's outdoor pool, or join your guide(s) on an easy-to-moderate walk discovering more of Capri's highlights. For dinner on your own, you can venture into one of Capri's numerous restaurants to enjoy, perhaps, a signature *insalata caprese* followed by perfectly grilled fish or scampi.



Hotel Luna, Capri

DAY 5

Ferry transfer to Sorrento. Colli di San Pietro to Monte Vico Alvano to Arola; 5 miles, moderate, 1,000-ft. elevation gain

The day begins with a morning ferry to Sorrento, from where a short transfer brings you to the estate of Colonna Castle in Colli di San Pietro. A few long switchbacks on a sustained ascent lead to a small plateau at the center of Monte Vico Alvano. From here you may ascend another 95 feet to reach the peak and a large iron cross from where there are fantastic views over the Bay of Naples and the Gulf of Salerno. As you descend through a chestnut forest to the saddle between Monte Vico Alvano and Monte Comune, wonderful views of the Amalfi Drive and the Sentiero degli Dei (Path of the Gods) open before you. This saddle is the watershed between the Gulfs of Naples and Salerno, and in the springtime is filled with wild asphodels, rock roses, and orchids. You continue the descent to Arola where our friends Tony and Camillo welcome you for a spectacular lunch on the terrace of their family-run osteria overlooking the sea. The Slow Food restaurant features traditional Sorrentine recipes made with farm-fresh produce, including homemade ricotta and provolone cheeses.

Returning to Sorrento and checking into your historic seaside hotel—a luxurious property with an expansive terrace and swimming pool—you soon depart for a group dinner at a nearby restaurant for a taste of traditional Sorrentine cooking.



Grand Hotel Royal, Sorrento

Set in a late 19th-century villa, this luxurious four-star, superior-rated hotel commands a breathtaking view over the Bay of Naples and Mount Vesuvius. Elegant guest rooms feature local Vietri-tiled flooring, inlaid furnishings crafted from traditional Sorrentine wood, private balconies, and spectacular sea views. The Grand Hotel Royal also boasts a

private beach, swimming pool, restaurant, and lounge bar.

DAY 6

Termini to Monte San Costanzo to Termini; 3 miles, easy to moderate. Afternoon options of Termini to Sorrento; 4-5 miles, easy to moderate, or 2-3-mile option, easy to moderate

A splendid view of Mount Vesuvius and the Bay of Naples greets you at breakfast. Today's walk begins a 30-minute drive away at the tip of the Sorrentine Peninsula in Termini, the last of the 23 hamlets which form the entire territory of Massa Lubrense. From the town's main square, a grassy path leads you to a small pine grove between two promontories. From here, the walk loops around the first promontory, where there are outstanding views of the Bays of Jeranto and Mitigliano as well as Capri rising starkly from a glistening blue sea. Looping around to the second promontory, a short walk brings you to the chapel atop Monte San Costanzo, where you are rewarded with views of Nerano and the entire Massa Lubrense territory. You descend from the summit across the grassy hillside, rich with Mediterranean scrub (*macchia*) and sprinkled with orchids and various types of broom, and continue back to the small village of Termini.

Following lunch, you may choose to partake in one of two walk options, including walking all the way back to Sorrento, or to be driven back to town for some last-minute shopping, independent exploration, or to enjoy the hotel's swimming pool.

This evening you enjoy a farewell dinner at a local family farm, feasting on their seasonal products, wine, and *limoncello*.

Grand Hotel Royal, Sorrento

DAY 7

Departure from Naples

After enjoying a leisurely and copious breakfast, you are transferred late morning to Naples, where you bid farewell to your guides and continue your explorations or make connections for onward travels.

ITINERARY CHANGES

Please bear in mind that this is a typical itinerary, and the actual activities, sites, and accommodations may vary due to season, special events, weather, or transportation schedules. We reserve the right to alter the itinerary, since tour arrangements are made up to a year in advance and unforeseen circumstances may arise that mandate change. Itinerary changes are made to improve the tour and your experience.

A NOTE ABOUT TRANSFERS

While transfers on this tour are not long, many of the roads along the Amalfi Coast are very narrow, winding, and exposed to drop-offs. If you are prone to motion sickness by sea or by land, please plan accordingly.

RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

Country Walkers is a leader in active travel with responsible tourism an integral part of our core values. Our tours reflect our dedication to best travel practices—and to the preservation of indigenous cultures and the environment. Country Walkers has made a donation on behalf of every traveler to the CW Travelers Fund, which supports designated projects in the communities and habitats in which we travel. We invite you to learn more about our efforts and initiatives for giving back.

Here are a couple of examples that highlight our sustainable practices:

Being Italy, it is impossible not to mention its food and wine... on the Amalfi Coast & Capri tour, we support sustainable practices simply by eating and drinking delicious food and wine at three family-run farm establishments that are members of the Slow Food movement, thereby enjoying and protecting traditional food and wine and agricultural biodiversity.

In addition to food, we also put safety first on the Amalfi Coast. Country Walkers has made a donation on behalf of every tour participant to the local mountain rescue team. The trails and ridges of the Sorrentine Peninsula, above the busy coast, are surprisingly unpopulated and represent a large area for the local mountain search and rescue corps to service. Mainly relying on local volunteers and donations, your contributions help the rescue team obtain and maintain equipment for rapid emergency response to visitors and locals alike.

Tour Itinerary Overview

TOUR MEETING POINT AND TIME

Grand Hotel Santa Lucia (lobby), Naples, Italy, 2:00 p.m.

Via Partenope, 46
Naples, Italy
Tel 011 39 081 7640666
Email reservations@santalucia.it
santalucia.it

NIGHTS 1 & 2

Hotel Rufolo

Ravello, Italy
Tel 011 39 089 857133
Email info@hotelrufolo.it
hotelrufolo.it
Wireless Internet, hair dryers, and laundry service available.

NIGHTS 3 & 4

Hotel Luna

Capri, Italy
Tel 011 39 081 8370433
Email luna@capri.it
lunahotel.com
Wireless Internet, hair dryers, and laundry service available.

NIGHTS 5 & 6

Grand Hotel Royal

Sorrento, Italy
Tel 011 39 081 8073434
Email royal@manniellohotels.com
royalsorrento.com
Wireless Internet, hair dryers, and laundry service available.

TOUR DEPARTURE POINT AND TIME

Grand Hotel Santa Lucia, Naples, Italy, 12:00 p.m.

EMERGENCY CONTACT

One Call International

Email mail@oncallinternational.com

If communicating from within the US

Text 603.945.0103

Tel 800.555.9095

If calling from outside the US

Tel 603.894.4710

When calling from outside the USA, you will need to dial the access code for the country you are calling from (a complete list of access codes, provided by AT&T, can be found on the Country Walkers website under Travel Tips and Travel Resources: International Access Codes).

In the unlikely event you are unable to connect by phone with One Call, or the region you are calling from does not have an access code, you should speak with a live international operator and ask them to place a collect call to 800.555.9095 or 603.894.4710.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

We offer guests the opportunity to purchase a Travel Protection Plan. Please contact us for details.

Tour Facts at a Glance

TOUR LENGTH (WITHOUT FLIGHT PACKAGE)

7 days, 6 nights

DEPARTURE DATES AND PRICE

Please refer to our website for the most current list of departure dates, scheduled group tour and private tour prices.

TOUR MEETING POINT AND TIME

Grand Hotel Santa Lucia (lobby), Naples, Italy, 2:00 p.m.

TOUR DEPARTURE POINT AND TIME

Grand Hotel Santa Lucia, Naples, Italy, 12:00 p.m.

ACTIVITY LEVEL

This tour is one of our Guided Walking Adventures, rated moderate with challenging sections. Walks average 4-8 miles per day, with shorter and longer options on some days. There are steep ascents and descents daily on terrain that includes steep, high, and ancient stone steps, gravel paths, and asphalt. Elevation gains and losses can be up to 1,500 feet. The climbing time on the ascents ranges from 15 minutes to one hour. There are very few stretches of flat walking. Some paths may drop sharply on one side; therefore, this tour is not recommended for anyone suffering from severe vertigo or fear of heights. A walking stick is recommended even if you do not usually use one. The pace on this tour is steady with stops en route to explore villages, or to visit cultural and historic sites.

INCLUSIONS

- » Two expert, local guides (for groups of 8 or more), with you 24/7
- » All meals except for one lunch and two dinners; local wine included
- » All accommodations while on tour
- » Transportation from the meeting point to the departure point
- » Entrance fees and special events as noted in the itinerary

- » Destination information (weather, visa requirements, etc.) and other travel assistance available 24/7 provided by One Call International
- » The unbeatable and cumulative experience of the Country Walkers staff

LET THE JOURNEY BEGIN

Prior to your adventure you will be asked to sign a Passenger Participation Agreement and you will receive:

- » Luggage tags
- » List of travel companions and guide biographies

GRATUITIES

Gratuities for all hotels, meals, and services that are included in your tour price will be paid by Country Walkers. Should you wish to tip your Country Walkers guide(s), the standard in the industry ranges from \$10 to \$15 per person, per guide, per day (or \$20 to \$30 per couple, per guide, per day), and can be paid in USD or local currency. Gratuities for your bus driver are included in the tour price, but additional tips are always welcome.

Traveling To and From Your Tour

If you are interested in reserving the **optional Flight + Tour Combo** and **pre- or post-tour extensions**, please refer to the attached itinerary for more details.

TOUR MEETING POINT AND TIME

Grand Hotel Santa Lucia (lobby), Naples, Italy, 2:00 p.m.

Your guide(s) will be wearing a Country Walkers shirt.

Please note: Your guides will be at the Grand Hotel Santa Lucia prior to 2:00 p.m. to greet you and load baggage; please plan on leaving the hotel no later than 2:00 p.m., ready for an easy walking tour of Pompeii.

MOST CONVENIENT AIRPORT

Naples Capodichino International Airport (NAP), Naples, Italy
gesac.it/en

Naples can be reached from Italian airports such as Rome, Milan, and Genoa, and from other major international cities.

GETTING TO THE MEETING POINT

From the Naples airport:

Taxi: A taxi from the airport to the Grand Hotel Santa Lucia takes 20-30 minutes and costs approximately 25-30 euros. Taxis are readily available outside of the airport.

Private transfer: You may arrange a private transfer directly through the Grand Hotel Santa Lucia. Please contact the hotel directly for reservations and rates.

From the Naples train station:

Taxi: A taxi from Naples train station to the Grand Hotel Santa Lucia takes 15 minutes and costs approximately 15 euros (plus approximately 50 cents per piece of luggage). Taxis are readily available outside of the train station.

RAIL INFORMATION

Approximate travel times for train travel to the Naples central train station from various Italian cities are as follows: from Florence: 3-4 hours; from Rome: 1¼-2½ hours; from Milan 4½-5 hours.

Please note: the above travel times are dependent upon train type and speed. Additionally, some of these journeys require station changes. For further rail information, including reservations, schedules, and up-to-date fares, please contact either Rail Europe at 800.622.8600 or raileurope.com, or Trenitalia at trenitalia.com (Trenitalia operates most train services in Italy).

PRE-TOUR ACCOMMODATIONS

If you are not reserving our optional Flight + Tour Combo, you may wish to stay at the Grand Hotel Santa Lucia, our meeting-point hotel. To make a reservation, please contact the hotel directly.

Grand Hotel Santa Lucia

Via Partenope, 46
80121 Naples, Italy
Tel 011 39 081 7640666
Email reservations@santalucia.it
santalucia.it

Built in 1900 in the Art-Nouveau style, the Grand Hotel Santa Lucia combines traditional Italian elegance with countless modern amenities. With an ideal location at the water's edge in the middle of the Centro Storico, the hotel positions you perfectly to explore the surrounding city. Enjoy views of the entire Bay of Naples, the majestic Castel dell'Ovo, Mount Vesuvius, and distant Capri.

DELAYS AND LATE ARRIVALS

If you are delayed or miss the scheduled group meeting point for any reason, we kindly request that you contact our emergency assistance provider, One Call International. This service is available 24 hours/day, 7 days/week to assist you with any type of travel delay. Please refer to the Emergency Contact details on your Tour Itinerary Overview page for One Call International contact details.

TOUR DEPARTURE POINT AND TIME

Grand Hotel Santa Lucia, Naples, Italy, 12:00 p.m.

Depending on your destination, it may not be possible to depart Italy for the U.S. on the last day of the tour. Please check airline schedules carefully. If you plan to schedule return flights immediately following the tour's conclusion, please call your airline directly for specific check-in requirements. Should you need to depart the tour earlier than the scheduled departure time, a private transfer from Sorrento can be arranged through the final hotel on your itinerary. Please contact the hotel directly for reservations and rates.

LEAVING NAPLES

The concierge at the Grand Hotel Santa Lucia in Naples can assist with taxi transfers to Naples Capodichino Airport or Naples train station. For further information regarding rates and transfer times, please refer to the Getting to the Meeting Point section.

Information & Policies

GUARANTEED DEPARTURES

Country Walkers guarantees the departure of every tour*—no exceptions and no disappointments! From the moment you make your deposit, you can start preparing for your adventure. We take care of all the details to ensure a seamless, small-group experience (with an average of 6 or 7 guests per guide). For best availability, reserve your trip today!

**except in cases of force majeure*

RESERVATIONS

Reservations for this tour may be made by calling Country Walkers at 800.464.9255. We can confirm your reservation with a deposit of \$350 per person. Final tour cost is due 90 days prior to tour departure date. As arrangements are confirmed at least a year in advance, the tour price is subject to change.

GUEST RESPONSIBILITIES

Each guest has the responsibility to select a trip appropriate to his/her abilities and interests and to prepare for the trip by carefully reading the confirmation materials. To join this trip, you must be in good health and capable of completing activities as described in the day-to-day itinerary. Our in-house experts welcome the opportunity to discuss the tour in more detail. In order to meet your needs, we ask that you please share any relevant physical limitations or health conditions when you make your reservation.

CANCELLATION POLICY

Cancellations received 91 days or more prior to the tour start date will incur a loss of \$150; cancellations received between 90 and 61 days prior to the tour start date incur a loss of 25 percent of the tour price; there are no refunds within 60 days of the tour start date. Up to 91 days prior to departure, you may transfer your reservation, depending on availability, from one departure to another in the same calendar year at no cost*. Please notify us in writing.

*One transfer per year; afterwards a modest per person transfer fee will apply.

Please note that tours with seasonal prices may involve a higher price. Italy at a Glance

Italy at a Glance

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS



U.S. citizens: Passports are required and must be valid for at least three months beyond the dates of travel. Visas are not required for stays of up to 90 days. For more information, see travel.state.gov.

CURRENCY

Italy uses the euro (EUR). For current exchange rates, visit oanda.com.

Many businesses in Europe will no longer accept credit cards without PIN numbers (chip and pin cards). Always contact your bank or your credit-card company for details on fees and card use when traveling.

Travel Tip

Have a variety of options to start your trip: ATM card(s), credit card(s), some dollars to exchange, and some euros in small denominations.

TIME ZONE

Italy is in the Central European Time Zone, Eastern Standard Time plus 6 hours. For more information on worldwide time zones, see: worldtimezone.com.

PHONE & INTERNET

Italy country code: +39

Cell phone coverage throughout Italy is extensive, but cannot be guaranteed to be accessible on all American mobile carriers or to function at all times while on the trail or in remote areas. For more information regarding international phone use, please refer to countrywalkers.com/phones.



Internet access is generally very good in towns and villages; however, it is not guaranteed at all of the hotels used on the tour. For more details regarding Wi-Fi availability, please refer to the Tour Itinerary Overview.

LANGUAGE

Italian is Italy's official language.

While knowledge of the local language is not necessary, you may want to learn some fun and useful phrases; see bbc.co.uk/languages/italian or the enclosed Reading Guide for a suggested phrase book.

Travel Tip

- Bringing your own hair dryer or other electrical device? You'll need a travel converter, available at most hardware, travel, or consumer electronic stores.
- For laptops or an electronic device with a dual voltage switch, you'll need the adapter plug but not a converter.

ELECTRICITY

Alternating current of 220V and 50Hz is used in Italy. Plugs have two round prongs. For a full listing of electrical outlets worldwide, see electricaloutlet.org

WEATHER

Italy has a range of climates, depending on the region. In general, spring and fall are ideal for an active vacation, with daytime temperatures in the 60s to low 70s, evenings in the 50s, and occasional short rain showers.

In the northern Alpine areas, summer through early fall is an optimal time to travel. Springtime brings wildflowers, long days, and, on the table, early tender vegetables such as asparagus and artichokes. By late summer and fall, the warm days continue with highs in the low 80s, landscapes take on a golden hue as the grape harvest gets underway, and autumn specialties appear, such as mushrooms and truffles.

For up-to-date forecasts, see qwikcast.com. For historical average temperatures and rainfall, see weatherbase.com.

ITALIAN CUISINE & WINE



Considered one of the world's finest cuisines, Italian food is undoubtedly one of the best things about traveling in Italy. Based on fresh local ingredients, Italian cooking is consequently very regional.

Northern Italy is the home of risotto, polenta, and slow-cooked meat dishes such as *osso bucco*. The cuisine of Tuscany and Umbria in central Italy also features meat and game dishes, such as *bistecca alla fiorentina* (Florentine steak), sausages, and roast pork, as well as vegetable- and bread-based dishes such as savory bruschetta, *ribollita* (vegetable soup), and *panzanella* (bread salad).

Southern Italy and Sicily are justly known for fresh seafood—spaghetti with tiny clams, or a main course of swordfish braised in a light tomato sauce—and fresh vegetables are also prominent—spaghetti with zucchini, or the well-known *insalata caprese* of tomatoes, basil, and fresh mozzarella cheese.

Meals in Italy typically have several courses, starting with an *antipasto* (an appetizer); then a *primo* (first course), which is usually pasta or risotto; a *secondo* (main course), which is a meat or fish dish; and *dolce* (dessert).

Wine has been produced in Italy for millennia, and the country's climate and geography of coastline, foothills, and mountains allow grape growing in 20 regions from the Alps in the north to southernmost Sicily. Restaurants feature their regions' local wine.

Please see the detailed itinerary for region-specific sample menus, local delicacies, and wines.

Travel Tip

Coffee is served throughout the day in its many different ways. Italians tend to drink *caffè latte* or cappuccino until about 11:00 a.m. (a *latte* is a cup of hot milk). After 11:00 a.m., they usually drink *un caffè* (espresso). If you'd like it with a little milk you should order a *macchiato*. You'll need to specify if you want it *con latte caldo* (with hot milk), or *con latte freddo* (with cold milk), or *con schiuma* (with foam). Lastly, there's no charge to stand at the bar with a drink, but a small fee is added to the bill when you sit at a café table.

LIFE IN ITALY



Shopping hours

Shops and stores are generally open Monday to Saturday between 9:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m., and from 3:30 to 7:30 p.m.; department stores and supermarkets are open all day from 9:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Open-air markets generally open from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., although in larger cities such as Florence, open-air markets are typically open all day, even on Sundays.

Meal times

Breakfast is served at hotels from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 or 10:30 a.m. Lunch is served in restaurants from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. and dinner is usually served from 7:30 to 11:00 p.m. (Restaurant meal times may vary by region, trending from earlier to later as you travel from north to south.)

Tipping

Tipping in restaurants is not compulsory in Italy. In restaurants the menu or bill indicates *servizio incluso*, meaning “service is included.” However, locals tend to leave a small amount in coins after a meal or a coffee—roughly one to two percent of the total, or one to two euros for a meal of up to 50 euros. For a coffee or a drink in a bar or café, 20 to 50 euro cents is appropriate.

Travel Tip

Most restaurants have a “cover charge” or *il coperto*, a per-person fee of one to three euros that is added to your final bill. It is a legitimate practice and it is considered the “fee” for the place setting, the bread, tap water (which is fine to drink), and breadsticks.

Taxi drivers aren’t generally tipped, but you could round up the total, letting the driver keep the change. For luggage assistance, a small tip of one to three euros is appropriate.

TRAVEL RESOURCES

National Italian tourist board official sites

italia.it and enit.it

Italian public holidays

To assist in travel planning, it may be helpful to be aware of Italian public holidays, festivals, or calendars of events. Visit the Italian tourist board’s website noted above, then click on Useful Information, More Information, and National Public Holidays. For local events, visit the regional tourism websites (links can be found on the region’s page on italia.it, in the Discover Italy section).

TRAVEL IN ITALY

Trains

Trenitalia: trenitalia.it (Italy’s national train company)

Travel Tip

Be aware that you may need to validate your train ticket by “punching” it before boarding, using a small machine located on the train platform, which stamps the time and date on it.

Raileurope: raileurope.com or 800.622.8600, a U.S.-based company that provides schedules, reservations, and ticketing for all European train networks (their multi-day/-week/-month passes in one country or combinations of countries may be an economical and convenient choice for European train travel.)



Other local transportation

In addition to its excellent rail network, Italy also has several regional airlines, many regional bus lines, and, in coastal and lake regions, local ferries. Taxis are available at all major airports, train stations, and in smaller towns, and can be reserved in advance (your hotel can usually provide assistance).

Most major car rental agencies are available at Italian airports and train stations. For more information contact Country Walkers, or go to italia.it, and click on “Useful Information.” For driving, you can further navigate to “Rules to drive in Italy.”

Museum information and online reservations

tickitaly.com

Packing List

PACKING TIPS

Pack light! Keep in mind there will be times you may have to carry your own luggage short distances, especially before and after your Country Walkers tour. Due to space constraints, we require you to limit your luggage to one medium piece (approximately 18x15x29 inches or 8,000 cu. in.) and one small carry-on, per person. We recommend packing any personal necessities, medications, your hotel itinerary/emergency contact information, your hiking boots (or shoes), and extra clothes in your carry-on luggage in the event that your baggage is delayed. We suggest leaving valuable jewelry at home. A copy of your passport or other important documents should be kept in a separate area of your luggage. Always be alert when carrying a purse, camera, money belt, or backpack in busy cities, airports, and train stations.

FOOTWEAR

- » Hiking boots or shoes. There are many brands to choose from. Proper fit is crucial, so try on new boots or shoes while wearing socks you plan to use on tour. Be sure to break in new footwear well before your tour begins. By the time you're ready to join your walking tour, you should be able to complete 4-8 miles of walking without discomfort. We require lightweight boots or shoes with proper ankle support and good tread to ensure stability on all types of terrain. Waterproof footwear keeps feet dry in heavy rain and water resistant footwear keeps feet dry in heavy dew. Country Walkers reserves the right to deny participation to any guest not wearing appropriate footwear.
- » Comfortable shoes for evening strolls on uneven, cobblestone streets
- » Synthetic, moisture-wicking socks (cotton socks are not recommended for walking as they will quickly cause blisters)
- » Blister remedy

CLOTHING

- » Lightweight, wash-and-wear long pants
- » Long-sleeved, wash-and-wear shirt
- » T-shirts and shorts
- » Polar fleece or light wool pullover (it will keep you warm even when wet)

- » Dinner attire: dress is smart casual
- » Light jacket or sweater for evening strolls and alfresco dining
- » Church attire: exposed shoulders and knees are not permitted when visiting most churches in Italy. Men may wear long Bermuda-style shorts (to the knee) and women may wear longer skirts (to the knee). Convertible zip-off pants are a good option for both men and women on days that combine hiking and church visits. Women may carry a light scarf, shawl, or jacket to cover bare shoulders and upper arms when needed.

OUTERWEAR

- » Waterproof rain gear: jacket, pants, hat, or hood
- » Windbreaker with hood (your rain gear may be suitable)
- » Hat with a broad brim or visor

EQUIPMENT

- » Pack (minimum size of 25L): large enough to carry water, extra clothing, rain gear, and personal items (camera, etc.)
- » Waterproof cover for pack
- » Water bottle, canteen, or CamelBak-type water reservoir or hydration pack to carry your own water while walking (equivalent of 1-2 liters). Please note: this will help avoid unnecessary plastic waste in a region with minimal recycling and waste facilities.
- » Sunblock and lip balm
- » Insect repellent
- » Sunglasses
- » Toilet kit for when facilities are not available on the walks. Include zip-lock baggies, tissues, and moist towelettes, which can be disposed of upon return to the hotel.
- » Personal first-aid kit including any medications you ordinarily take (in their original container)

OPTIONAL

- » Telescopic walking sticks. (Please note that while telescopic walking sticks are highly recommended for this tour, they are not provided by Country Walkers. Therefore please plan on bringing your own should you wish to use them.)

- » Binoculars
- » Bathing suit for optional swimming in the sea or hotel pools
- » Flip flops or water sandals
- » Camera and charger and/or extra batteries
- » Zip-lock bags (to keep camera and valuables dry)
- » Small notebook and pen
- » Field guides (see enclosed reading list)
- » Folding umbrella
- » Bandana
- » Washcloth (many European hotels do not provide them)
- » Hand sanitizer and/or moist towelettes
- » Motion sickness bracelets or other non-sleep-inducing remedy if prone to motion sickness on bus or boat rides
- » Alarm clock (all hotels do provide wake-up calls)