

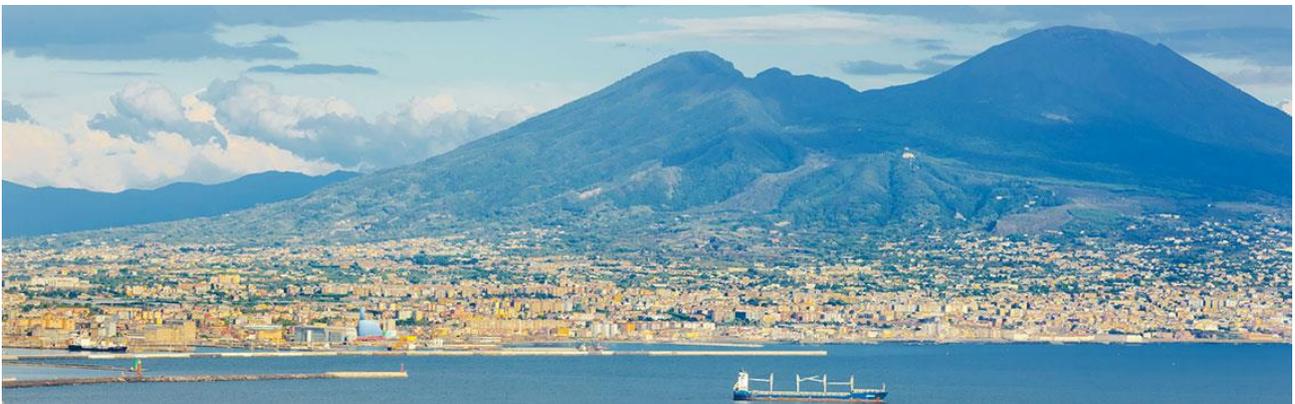


davincitravels.com

## NAPLES AND ARCHEOLOGICAL UNESCO SITES

*Magical itinerary through Campania Unesco sites*

*Before the Italian unification of 1860, Naples rivaled Paris as a brilliant and refined cultural capital. It's one of Italy's top città d'arte, living art city, with world-class museums and a staggering number of fine churches. The backdrop of Vesuvius and the islands in the bay, make the city enchanted and unforgettable.*



### D01: NAPLES

Our journey starts in the beautiful Naples (*NeaPolis*, greek meaning for "New City").

Walk through the historical city centre and go for shopping in the very famous street *Via Toledo* bordering the typical narrow streets of *Quartieri Spagnoli*. Enjoy the visits of the church monastery of *Santa Chiara*, *Cappella Sansevero*, *Piazza del Plebiscito*, *Gesù Nuovo*, *Pio Monte della Misericordia*, *Duomo di San Gennaro* and *Museo Archeologico Nazionale*.

***Piazza del Plebiscito***, the vast square next to the Palazzo Reale (Royal Palace) was laid out by order of Murat, whose architect was clearly inspired by the colonnades of St.Peter's in Rome. The large church of San Francesco di Paola in the middle of the colonnades was added as an offering of thanks for the Bourbon restoration by Ferdinand I.

***Museo Archeologico Nazionale***. The National Museum of Archaeology is famous for its unrivaled collections. It includes the legendary Farnese collection of ancient sculptures, together with local sculptures and almost all the *good stuff*: the best mosaics and paintings from Pompeii and Herculaneum.

***The church of Santa Chiara*** is a monastery church and is a Neapolitan landmark as well as object of old songs. Visitors and believers are enchanted by this oasis of peace from the traffic jam, fascinated by the soaring lines of the white façade. It was built in the 1300s in Provençal Gothic style, and it's best known for the quiet charm of its cloister garden, with columns and benches sheathed in 18<sup>th</sup> century ceramic tiles painted with delicate floral motifs and vivid landscapes.

***Cappella Sansevero*** This chapel/museum has one of the most intriguing sculpture collections. The chapel was founded in 1590 by Prince Giovan Francesco di Sangro, fulfilling a vow to the Virgin after recovery from an illness. It shows the inimitable Veiled Christ, one of the most impressive sculpture masterpieces in the world.

**Duomo di San Gennaro** Though the *Duomo* (dome) was established in the 1200s, the building you see was erected a century later and has since undergone radical changes, especially during the baroque period. Inside the cathedral, 110 ancient columns salvaged from roman-pagan buildings are set into the piers that support the 350-year-old wooden ceiling. On the right aisle of the cathedral in the Cappella di San Gennaro, are multicolor marbles and frescoes honoring Saint Januarius, miracle-working patron saint of Naples, whose altar and relics are encased in silver. The holiest place for neapolitans.

**Gesù Nuovo** the oddly faceted stone façade of this church dates to the late 16<sup>th</sup> century. It was designed as part of a palace, but plans were changed as construction progressed, and it became the front of an elaborately decorated baroque church.

**San Lorenzo Maggiore** a French Gothic style church built in the Middle Ages and decorated with 14<sup>th</sup> century frescoes. The cloister is instead of the 17<sup>th</sup> century it reveals ruins of an old Roman Forum and a Greek agora(square).

**Reggia di Capodimonte and Museo di Capodimonte** the grandiose 18th century neoclassical Bourbon royal palace houses an impressive collection of fine and decorative art. Capodimonte's greatest treasure is the excellent collection of paintings well displayed in the **Galleria Nazionale**, and a staggering collection of the famous porcelain and majolica from the various royal residences. Another remarkable number of pieces is in *Museo della Ceramica Duca di Martina* now located to Villa Floridiana.

## **D02: ERCOLANO - POMPEI - COSTA AMALFITANA - SORRENTO**

*Herculaneum* is something unique. It differs from Pompei first for for the different modes of their "end", as Pompei was covered from ashes and lapilli while Herculaneum was flooded from a river of mud and lava that, in certain areas, reached 25cm thickness. This tragic event, though, allowed the total conservation of the old town, from its roads to the shops and houses. The Gym, built in the I century B.C., is the first main setting that is possible to visit. The visit continues to the quarter of the aristocratic's houses where is possible to see the *Casa Albergo* and *Casa dell'Atrio* masterpiece mosaics.

**Pompei** is one of the most famous archeological sites of the world, not only for the size of the excavation that allowed the city to remerge, but also because Pompei offers a unique, realistic vision of 2000 years ago real life. The city was buried under a rain of *lapilli* and ashes while the citizens still carried out their daily life duties. At the moment of the eruption the city was already 7 centuries old and before the Roman conquest in 89 B.C., it had been seized by the Greeks and the Etruscan. In 1787 Johann Wolfgang Goethe wrote about Pompei with extreme passionate affection. The excavation came to light in 1709 in the occasion of the founding of a well, that became the chain reaction for the founding of the theater of *Herculaneum*. Only after 1860 (the unification of Italy), the knowledge of the ruins of Pompei and Herculaneum were brought to light, as well as the problem of preservation of such a heritage in highly densely populated area - without forgetting the chance of another disaster as the Vesuvio is not active since 1944.

**Costa Amalfitana – Amalfi** - After trading spices and precious fabrics, wandering in the most important *emporium* in the south of Italy and the Eastern Mediterranean (Naples, Messina, Palermo, Tunisi, Alexandria of Egypt, Antiochia and Istanbul), the sailors of the Republic of Amalfi would go back to their daily life, that consisted of subtracting cultivable areas from the inaccessible nature of the coast, along the narrow valleys carved by streams that came down from the mountains to the sea. With hard work and constancy, they rise dry walls, "muracine", in order to sustain the "terraces" i.e the agricultural survival system to preserve olives, citrus and vegetables that will change into forest of oaks and chestnuts. They were shaping one of the most suggestive landscape of Italy. An enchanting whole of agricultural cultivation sloping towards the sea deep in the Mediterranean maquis. A mesmerizing maze of streets and steep stairs looked over by white houses that holds on to cliffs and rocky balconies. Amalfi is its capital, a small-town laid seafont. It boasts one of the most enchanting cathedrals of *Campania* and south of Italy.

## **D03: SORRENTO - POSITANO - PAESTUM**

The extraordinary position of Sorrento on the sea, the sweet landscape of vegetables and citrus, the nostalgic note of the Naples songs gave beauty to *Surrentum*. In the 1700 thanks to the initiative of Carlo III di Borbone there was a new tourism wave. Today Sorrento preserves its own beauty and charme. *Its Duomo* the Church was built during the Renaissance in the XV century.

The old citizens of *Paestum* (now Positano) escaping to the Saracens built this little beauty. Known for the superb scenario and the villas that stand out for their white colors here and there placed on the “terraces”. The myth of Positano started when it was possible to encounter Picasso, Bacchelli, Pirandello and Morante in the village's streets. Later, many famous stars followed: from Liz Taylor to John Steinbeck. A famous daily trip is to *Montepertuso*, a little village that draws the name from a great deep rift born in the mountain beside. One of Italy's most majestic site lies on the edge of a flat coastal plain: the remarkably well-preserved Greek Temples of *Paestum*. This is the site of the ancient city of *Poseidonia*, founded by Greek colonists probably in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC. When the Romans took over the colony in 273BC and the name was latinized to *Paestum*, they changed the layout of the settlement, adding an amphitheater and a forum. Much of the archaeological material found on the site is displayed in the well-labeled *Museo Nazionale*, and several rooms are devoted to the unique tomb paintings discovered in the area, rare examples of Greek and pre-Roman pictorial art. At the northern end of the site opposite the ticket barrier is the *Tempio di Cerere* (temple of Ceres) built in 500 B.C it's now thought to haven originally dedicated to the goddess Athena. Follows the *Tempio di Nettuno* (Temple of Poseidon) a magnificent Doric edifice with 36 fluted columns and an extraordinarily well-preserved entablature that rivals those of the finest temples in Greece. Certainly, an unexpected worthy visit, take the right time for it.

#### **D04: TIME FOR FAREWELL**

**Individual quote of participation ON REQUEST.**

**DVT - davincitravels – [www.davincitravels.com](http://www.davincitravels.com)**  
*massimo@davincitravels.com - beatrice@davincitravels.com*  
*Florence - Italy - Phone +39 0571 913093*