

Your personal guide to Sorrento and the Amalfi coast for 2011

What to see, what to do and where to go.

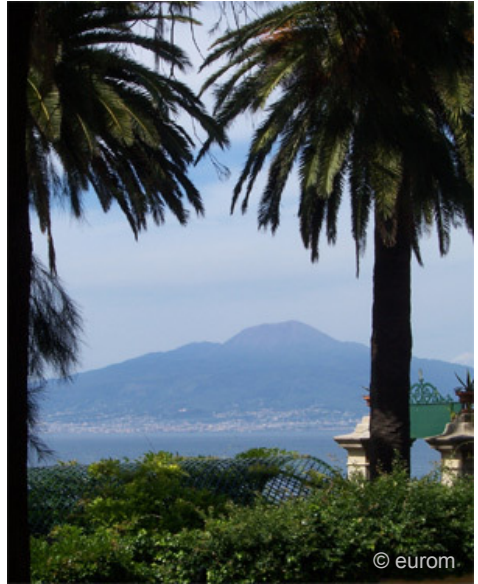


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Your personal guide to Sorrento



View along Corsa Italia with the Bell Tower



Vesuvius from Comunale Park

Starting from Tasso Square, the heart of Sorrento, you are minutes away from the historical centre with its Cathedral and Bell Tower, Church of Carmine, Basilica of St Antonino, Church and Cloister of St Francis, Dominova Seat and more magnificent churches. Surrounding these are narrow streets full of shops, cafes, stalls, restaurants, craft workshops, beautiful piazzas and proud buildings coloured in Neapolitan yellow and Pompeian red.

The Villa Comunale public park, next to the Cloister of St Francis opens up to a space full of exotic plants, seasonal flowers, statues and large trees which provide shade to sit and enjoy wonderful panoramic views across the Bay of Naples towards Vesuvius. A short walk along ancient bougainvillea-covered walkways, past entrances to hidden villas and lemon groves, brings you to the picturesque fishing harbour of Marina Grande with restaurants at the water's edge offering fresh sea food pasta, grilled white bait and more.

The Correale and Museobottega della Tarsialigneia (Wood Inlay) museums offer a glimpse of life and traditions of previous generations. The Correale also has a garden with wonderful views across the bay and is to a lemon grove called the Fonda Lagruminato which is open to the public and has products to try.



Early morning mist on hills behind Sorrento



Marina Grande fishing harbour

The ferries at Sorrento's port, Marina Piccola, help you sail away to dream places such as Capri, Ischia, Naples and Amalfi, or you can just relax on the intimate small beaches or the chic bathing platforms that decorate the waterfront.

The above photographs attempt to reflect the atmosphere and character of Sorrento's unique location. With the Lattari mountains in the background and a coastline facing the Bay of Naples with Capri, Ischia, Naples and Vesuvius in the distance, it is difficult not to be amazed by the ever changing views. More difficult to capture with words and images are the sounds, sights and aromas of Sorrento in the evenings. Restaurants and cafes spill over into the squares, shops open until 10 pm or later, Italian families and visitors stroll along the main street and square, the air is tinted with the appetising smell from wood burning ovens. Add to this the distant lights of Naples skirting Mount Vesuvius, and you have a perfect end to every day.

As for tomorrow, lets see what's on offer

Richard Edwards
friendsofsorrento.co.uk



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Towns and villages to visit



Coastal town between Naples and Sorrento

The following coastal towns are accessible by bus or train from Sorrento and are listed in order of location when travelling from Naples.

Castellammare di Stabia Spa baths. Cable car to Monte Faito.

Vico Equense Large 'Bikini' beach. Giusso castle. Museums.

Meta Famous Alimuni Beach. View from Scutolo Point.

Piano di Sorrento Bustling town. Villa Fondi. Museum. Cassona beach.

Sant' Agnello Cliff location overlooking bay. Marinella beach.

Sorrento Following the coast around the Sorrentine Peninsula you come to

Massa Lubrense Elegant coastal town. Puolo and La Cala di Puolo beaches.

Villages on the Sorrentine Peninsula can be reached using the local (blue) bus service and to link up with a number of pleasant 'well marked' walking trails. See Activities page for Walks and also the Country Tour around the Peninsula.

Capo Ruins of Villa di Pollius Felix ruins, 'Bath of Queen Joan' sea pool.

Sant'Agata Mountain village with excellent views from the 'Desert'.

Nerano Pleasant village and start for a number of walking trails and a beach

Marina del Cantone Beach and views of Li Galli (Home of the mythical Sirens)

Termini Village with views of Capri and access to La Cala di Mitigliano beach

Marina di Puolo Pleasant fishing village and beach.

Marina della Lobra Picturesque fishing village with small beach.



View of Capri from the Peninsula



Positano on the Amalfi coast

After Massa Lubrense and continuing along the Amalfi coast you find these towns and villages, all in superb settings with outstanding views.

Positano Perched on mountain side with Cathedral, boutiques and beach.

Priano San Luca church, beaches, diving, tranquil setting and panoramic views.

Conca dei Marini Emerald Grotto, convent of St Rosa and the Conca tower.

Amalfi Cathedral, beach, boat trips to 'Emerald Grotto'.

Atrani Just 700 m from Amalfi, typical fishermen's town with Cathedral.

Ravello Breathtaking views from the Belvedere, Cathedral, villas and gardens.

Scala Quiet village overlooking Ravello with Cathedral and vineyards.

Minori A delightful seaside resort, Roman villa ruins, Basilica and churches.

Maiori Largest seaside resort on Amalfi coast. Long volcanic beach.

The Amalfi Drive excursion is an excellent way of visiting Positano, Amalfi and Ravello as well as experiencing the breathtaking scenery along the infamous Amalfi coast road. There are also bus services to these towns from Sorrento and in the Summer season ferries connect Sorrento, Positano, Amalfi and Minori.

Another excursion which provides the opportunity to see some of the towns and villages on the Sorrentine Peninsula is the Santa'Agata Sui Due Golfi Country Tour. As well as visiting some of these places stops are made to sample local produce.

Other places to visit

Sorrento is literally surrounded by world famous archaeological sites, historical cities and areas of outstanding beauty. Some of these can be reached by public transport from Sorrento but for other more distant locations an organised tour may be more appropriate in terms of travel time and comfort. The tour's authorised guides also focus on the more interesting aspects of the location as well as providing background information.



Pompeii



Ravello



Capri

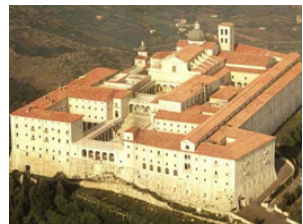
First time visitors should consider Pompeii or Herculaneum, Capri and Ravello as an introduction to the history, culture and environment of the region. The Amalfi Drive tour along the infamous Amalfi coast road is highly recommended for its breathtaking scenery and visits to Positano, Amalfi and Ravello.



Caserta



Ischia



Cassino

Nature lovers may choose Ischia to visit the thermal springs or exotic gardens at La Mortella, home of late composer Sir William Walton, or Caserta where they can explore the magnificent parks of the Palace, known as the Versailles of Naples. Ravello also has beautiful gardens at Villa Rufolo and the Villa Cimbrone as well as having breathtaking views.

Lovers of history will be able to visit the archaeological sites of Pompeii, the well preserved Herculaneum, Greek temples at Paestum, and the Archaeological Museum of Naples where many of the excavated treasures from Pompeii and Herculaneum are displayed. Rome 'the eternal city' can also be visited for a day tour from Sorrento.



Herculaneum



Paestum

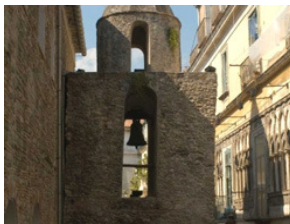


Naples

Other destinations include Vesuvius where you can walk up to and around its volcanic crater and enjoy superb views over Naples and towards Sorrento. Salerno on the Cilento coast, best remembered for the Allied troops landing on its beaches, during the Second World War. The Monte Cassino Abbey, founded in 529 and faithfully restored to its former glory, with original frescoes and mosaics.



Rome



Salerno



Vesuvius

Friends of Sorrento can pre-book excursions on behalf of visitors and offer a comprehensive choice, including a Family and Friends package which includes two excursions and airport transfer at an attractive rate.

Full details of available excursions with itineraries and costs can be seen on our website. **www.friendsofsorrento.co.uk**

Activities and Events

Sunbathing and Swimming

The private beach platforms in Sorrento offer excellent facilities and there are small beaches near Massa Lubrense, Marina del Cantone, Amalfi and Positano. The coastal towns of Castellammare di Stabiá, Vico Equense, Meta, Piano di Sorrento and Sant'Agnello also have beaches. A Blue Mini Cruise from Sorrento goes along the Amalfi Coast with stops for swimming and visits to Positano and Amalfi.



Walking

There are many leisurely walks in the countryside around Massa Lubrense with superb views of the coast and sea. Many start or finish in a village or harbour linked by a regular 'blue' bus service from Sorrento. For more information on these walks and others on the Amalfi coast, see www.giovis.com and also the publication 'Sorrento, Amalfi and Capri Tours. Car Tours and Walks' by Julian Tippet.



Food and Wine

Explore the side streets and Marina Grande to find restaurants serving traditional meals using fresh produce. Try one of the local wines such as Lacrima Christi (Tears of Christ), the liqueur Limoncello, made from local lemons and Nocillo from walnuts. Incidentally, there are a number of Michelin star and other award winning restaurants in this area.



Country Tour

There is a Country Tour excursion (20 euros -10 for children) which takes visitors on a road train from Santa'Agata through the local countryside and villages of the Sorrentine Peninsula. It is a good opportunity to taste local produce and to see an area that has many well marked and maintained walking trails to suit all ages and abilities (see Walking section).

Music

Classical and jazz concerts take place from April to November in a number of venues in Sorrento, Amalfi, Massa Lubrense, Positano, Capri, Ischia and Ravello. Neapolitan songs and dances can be enjoyed at Sorrento's Teatro Tasso, and the San Carlo Opera House in Naples has a seasonal programme of opera, ballet and concerts.



Cooking

With such a reputation for cooking it is hardly surprising that a number of cooking schools give visitors a chance to 'mix it'. Potential master chefs can spend four hours in well equipped kitchens learning how to prepare a traditional Neapolitan meal with the experts. At the end of the lesson they can sit down to enjoy their culinary achievements together with a glass of local wine and take home a hat and apron as proof of new kitchen skills.



Events

Traditional festivals and religious celebrations take place throughout the year together with other events. These include art and film festivals, cultural exhibitions, stage and beach concerts, classic car rallies, sailing regattas, cycling tours and more. They are too numerous to list here, but you can view the main ones on the events page of our website.



Free Personalised Events Itinerary

Clients who book an excursion or hotel using Friends of Sorrento's services receive a personalised itinerary which includes a detailed list of events taking place in and around Sorrento during the days of their visit.

Hotels

Since the days of the 'Grand Tour', hotels have played a major role in adding elegance, sophistication and character to locations in the Neapolitan Riviera. The architecture and gardens of these fine buildings have been restored and maintained to provide a visually appealing environment for passing visitors as well as staying guests. Indeed some have become landmarks in their own right, such as the Excelsior Vittoria overlooking the port of Sorrento



Excelsior Vittoria in Sorrento



Cocumella in Sant'Agello

We include photographs of a number of 4* and 5* hotels, in traditional classic and more contemporary boutique styles, to help illustrate the elegance and charm they have added to Sorrento and other locations. Innovative design and sympathetic renovation have managed to achieve a sensitive balance between traditional surroundings and the technological and wellbeing requirements of today's travellers in terms of wi-fi access, spa treatments and fitness suites.



Relais Blu in Massa Lubrense



Ambasciatori in Sorrento

Hotels like the Excelsior and Tramontano have interesting histories in their own right and these can be reviewed in a series of articles, on our website, about luxury hotels in Sorrento and the Amalfi coast. These include Le Sirenuse in Positano, the Caruso in Ravello and the Capri Palace on Capri.



Tramontano in Sorrento

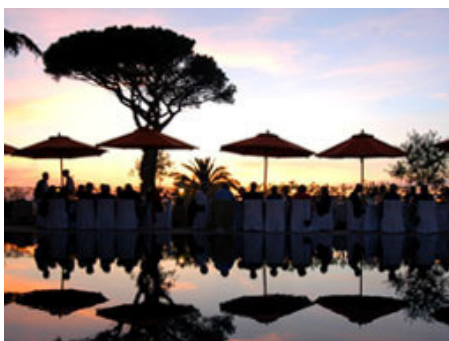


Caruso in Ravello

Should you be interested in staying at these or other hotels in Sorrento or on the Amalfi coast, Friends of Sorrento offers a free hotel enquiry service, where on behalf of the client we look for any promotions that may be available for specific dates. Bookings confirmed as a result of this service receive added benefits such a free transfer from Naples to the hotel or free excursions. For more information please visit our website **www.friendsofsorrento.co.uk**

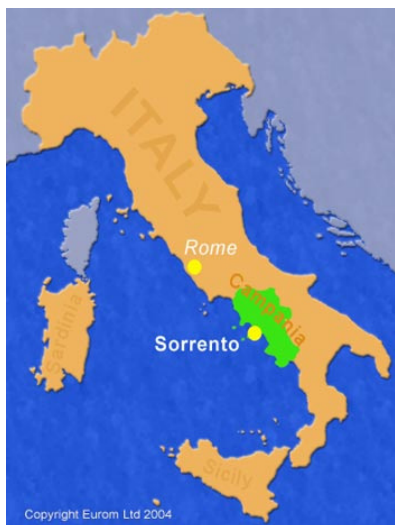


Le Sirenuse overlooking Positano



Capri Palace in Anacapri

Maps



Sorrento in the region of Campania



Sorrento and excursion destinations

Sorrento is located in the southern region of Campania 54 km south of Naples and central to many beautiful and historical locations. For more detailed maps of Sorrento and other locations listed in this guide it is advised to search on Google maps.

Videos

We have a range of videos on various topics including the following locations, Sorrento, Pompeii, Amalfi, Capri, Caserta, Paestum, Naples and Vesuvius, on our WebTV channel at:

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Some suggestions

Transfers from Naples to Sorrento. A shuttle bus service is available from the airport to the main square in Sorrento.

For those who may find the walk a little too steep from Tasso square to, and from, the Marina Grande and the Port, there is a regular 'Orange' bus service that links these places including the local bus and railway.

Sorrento town tours are available on an open-top bus or 'road train' or you can take a traditional horse and carriage through the narrower streets of the historic centre. All these start from Tasso Square.

The local tourist office is situated a few minutes from the main square, in the entrance to the Foreigners Club, and provide free maps for 'Sorrento Country Walks' and 'Massa Lubrense' plus timetables for local buses, trains and ferries. The Foreigners Club is a good spot for drinks and food with beautiful views over the bay. Live entertainment most evenings.

The Caruso Restaurant, close to the main square is also a museum with hundreds of photographs, documents and records of the famous tenor.

For 'picnics' or 'packed lunches' to take on excursions or walks, try Bar Rita, 219 Corso Italia (next to cinema) for freshly made rolls, pizzas, lasagne and cakes.

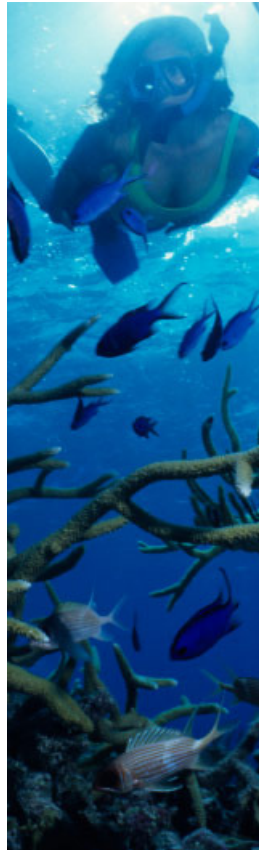
For a quiet typical 'restorante e pizzeria' experience away from the busier streets and squares try Il Pozzo, Via dell' Accademia.

If cocktails in a more modern setting is your preference ask for a Mojito at Photo Food & Drinks Bar in Via Correale.

At the end of the main street, Corsa Italia, past Villa Fiorentino is a typical café, Bar Veneruso, to sit and relax with a cappuccino, cakes or ice cream.

Marameo Beach at Marina Piccola (access from port area) is a smart private bathing establishment with a full range of facilities including fresh sea food.

Please note: These are not adverts just some of the things we've discovered and enjoyed during our visits.



Enjoy your holiday !

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