

Italy at its best – The Amalfi Coast



Declared one of the UNESCO World Heritage Sites for its undisputed beauty and the uniqueness of its natural landscape, the Amalfi Coast really is, one of the wonders of the world.

Houses, Cheek by Jowl, painted in warm pastel colours, stick to the near vertical cliffs like limpets to a rock, cascading into the Turquoise Mediterranean.

This combined with the intense scent of the lemon groves, the bright colours of the bougainvillea, fishing boats, salt air and fabulous food; make this a wonderful place to visit.



Amalfi Coast



Lemons in abundance

So... how to get there

Getting to the Amalfi Coast is easy.

From Rome, catch a train to Naples. Local buses run frequently around the coast although the preferred, safer, quicker and more relaxing option is to be met at the train station by a driver and transferred in your own private limousine. With plenty to see, the 90 minute trip is a great entrée to the region. Mt Vesuvius, famous for the violent and deadly eruption in 79 AD smothering the village of Pompeii, looks dormant and peaceful behind the picturesque and perfectly curved Bay of Naples. Breathtaking views of the Amalfi Coast come into view after climbing the mountain separating Sorrento from the coast. As you wind your way along the narrow and treacherous road to your destination distract yourself with the outstanding beauty of the coast as the locals dodge bullets with the oncoming traffic and overtaking manoeuvre.

Amalfi Coast Road



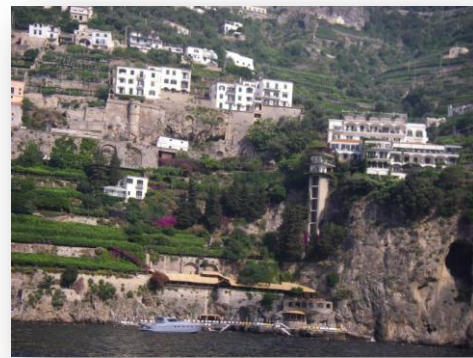
Where to stay- two good options but there are plenty more

A Private Travel client recently stayed at the **Hotel Santa Caterina** www.hotelsantacaterina.it Situated right on the coastline in Amalfi giving it a highly recommended tick. This 19th century 5 star luxurious villa hotel surrounded by its own olive grove and extensive lemon orchard and gardens oozes tranquillity away from the madness of the road above. From the gardens a lift tracks down through the rocks to sea level where the pool and one of the two restaurants are situated. With amazing views over the Mediterranean and a short walk to the town of Amalfi the location and quality of the hotel is hard to beat.

Another great option also highly recommended by a client is the **Hotel Eden Roc** www.edenrocpositano.com This 4 star hotel in Positano overlooks the sea, and is situated a short walk from the beaches, restaurants and the centre of Positano. This family run business excels with its service. A roof top pool and lounge area serve excellent food as an alternative to the beach.



View from Hotel Eden Roc



View of Hotel Santa Caterina

What to do on the Amalfi Coast- Highlights from Private Travel clients

Getting around the coast is easy with an efficient local bus service, taxis and limousine services for longer excursions, but don't cut your time- there is so much to do.

Visit the town of Amalfi

Mandy Brown, said,

"Our favourite pastime was sitting at one of the outdoor restaurant tables inside the entrance of the Amalfi village square people watching".

Allow yourself a day to explore the town of Amalfi and take in the imposing staircase that leads from the square up to the magnificent Duomo di Sant'Andrea. Then head on the road leading out of Amalfi for about 200 metre to La Luna Hotel and restaurant. www.lunahotel.it The open air restaurant has 180 degree views of the Med and great food. For a special occasion make a reservation at Eolo www.eoloamalfi.it Request a table on the terrace.

Duomo de Sant' Andrea in Amalfi



Be your own skipper – what a better way to see the Amalfi Coast than from the water

Mandy Brown said,

“Our best day in Amalfi was when we rented a small speed boat from Amalfi Marine. The boat owner collected us from the steps leading into the ocean below the hotel and took us to the Amalfi Marina where we chose our boat. He gave us a map of the coastline and showed us a few places we should visit and made a suggestion for lunch at a small family owned restaurant in Nerano. We had a wonderful time cruising along the coastline viewing the magnificent properties hanging from the cliffs and dropping into the sea, stopping in at Positano for coffee, Nerano for lunch and dropping the anchor off the Island of Gallo Lungi for a swim and a snorkel“.

There are several boat rental services along the coast, including Amalfi Marine www.amalfimarine.com. Going ashore is easy, the locals mill around the bays in small crafts waiting to assist you in mooring your boat and then bring you ashore for a small fee.



Self-drive charter



Nerano

Pompeii

Jane Jeffries said,

“Visiting Pompeii was a dream come true for me. Understanding how life was in 79 AD before Mt Vesuvius erupted was very evident from the ruins uncovered over the last 50 years. They were more intact than I had imagined. Walking down the stone streets, seeing the worn track from the horse and carts, the baker’s bread and wheat grinder, the brothel with its stone beds and the bathhouse was very real“.

The best way to see Pompeii is by one of the local limousine services (this can be organised from your hotel or in advance with your Private Travel Advisor, including a guide).



Pompeii



Pompeii Bakers Street

Visit Ravello

Mandy Brown said,
"One thing that you can't miss is a visit to the village of Ravello. It's one of the highest villages on the coast famous for its incredible views. It is a 15 minute drive from Amalfi up a very windy mountain road. As well as the ceramic factories, a tour through the Villa Rufulo and its gardens, www.villarufolo.it attending one of the Chamber music concerts at the Villa on a specially erected stage that sits on the edge of the mountain, with a view of the Mediterranean behind it is a must. Even if you are not a chamber music buff this is worth the experience on a summers evening".



Ceramics



Concert at Villa Rufulo

Learn to cook the Italian way

Jane Jeffries said,
"I had booked a days cooking class on line with [Cooking –Vacations](http://Cooking-Vacations) in Positano and while it was good it didn't quite live up to my expectations. We cooked in a restaurants commerical kitchen, Le Tre Sorelle, which was exciting and great restaurant. However the recipes we cooked were more simplistic than I had anticipated and we were only cooking for a couple of hours. I had hoped for something a little more advanced and challenging so ask many questions to ensure you are not disappointed".

To avoid disappointment ask your Private Travel Advisor for recommendations



Squid dish



Bufala and Cherry Tomatoes

A day on the island of Capri

Jane Jeffries said,

“To visit Capri for the day take one of the private boat excursions rather than the regular ferry. The boats are comfortable and take approximately 20 people. You will have time to explore Capri on your own and circumnavigate the island in the afternoon viewing the unusual caves, including the Blue Grotto.”



Coastline of Capri



Caves on Capri

Written by Jane Jeffries
Freelance Travel Writer, July 2011

Travel organised by The Private Travel Company