



SICILY AND THE AMALFI COAST

MAY 3 - 12, 2018

TRIP SUMMARY

HIGHLIGHTS

- Experiencing the best of southern Italy, from the bay of Naples to the island of Sicily
- Exploring charming towns and ancient ruins, including Pompeii
- Walking on the Path of the Gods and climbing two volcanoes
- Savoring regional cuisine, local wines, and fruits and vegetables fresh from the farm

TRIP AT A GLANCE

Dates:	May 3 - 12, 2018
Location:	Naples Bay, Amalfi Coast, and Sicily
Cost:	\$3450.00
Activities:	Hiking
Arrive:	We'll meet at our hotel in Naples at 6:00 PM on May 3
Depart:	You can fly out of Catania, Sicily (CTA) anytime on May 12

TRIP OVERVIEW

The Amalfi Coast is simply stunning: rugged mountains, craggy seashore, and azure blue ocean serve as a backdrop to tiny villages perched on steep hills. The hiking is delightful, the history is fascinating, and the cuisine is exquisite. The island of Sicily shares all this and yet is different in every way with its own distinctive feel. The southern coast of Italy has other delights too: we'll spend time exploring Capri, visit the ruins of Pompeii, climb Vesuvius, eat pizza in Naples, learn Sicilian cooking at an agriturismo, ascend Mt Etna, taste local wine, and visit several UNESCO World Heritage sites, including an ancient necropolis. Add all this to friendly people and its little wonder that this area is widely regarded as the perfect vacation spot.

RATING

This trip is for women who have some experience hiking and want to combine hiking with immersion in the history and culture of the area. We spend 3-6 hours hiking on most days at elevations ranging from sea level to over 10,000' (Mt. Etna). Some hikes are on well-maintained trails; others involve walking over loose dirt, rocks, ash and many stone stairs, and include stretches with some steep ascents and descents. The trip is rated 3. Prior to beginning the trip, participants should be engaging in aerobic conditioning, such as walking vigorously up hills, jogging, cross country skiing or stair stepping for 30 - 45 minutes at least 3 - 4 times a week. **Rating:** 1 2 **3** 4 5.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- An Italian guide and an Adventures in Good Company trip leader
- Nine nights double occupancy lodging
- All meals including beverages from dinner on May 3 to lunch on May 12
- Ground transportation in Italy once you've reached the hotel on day 1, including boat, bus, ferry, and airport transfer on the last day
- All activities on the itinerary, including guided tours of Pompeii and Syracuse, 2 wine-tastings and a cooking class, guided ascent of Mt Etna

What's not included: transportation to and from Italy, transportation to the hotel on day 1, guide gratuities, travel insurance, and optional activities including entry to Taormina Greek Theatre.

OUR ITINERARY

Below is the proposed itinerary for the trip. As is true on any adventure travel trip, plans for any specific day may be modified due to weather considerations, unforeseen circumstances, new opportunities, and group interests.

DAY 1



MAY 3, THURSDAY

Our trip officially starts today at our hotel in Naples, Italy at 6pm. You can either fly directly into Naples or fly into Rome (always a fun city in which to spend time) and take the train from there. Vibrant Naples is steeped in history with atmospheric neighborhoods and many world-class museums. We'll gather at 6pm to introduce ourselves, meet our Italian guide, and review the trip itinerary. Southern Italy is known for its fabulous cuisine and tonight we'll enjoy the first of many delicious meals. Overnight Chiaja Hotel <http://www.chiaiahotel.com/napoli/> or similar. D

DAY 2



MAY 4, FRIDAY

Capri, the name of both the island and the main town, is a must. While Capri is known for its exclusive boutique shops, it is an area of incredible natural beauty and human history, and has much more to offer than shopping. And amazingly, once you get away from the town center, it is surprisingly uncrowded. After a 45-minute hydrofoil ride across the Bay of Naples, we walk from the town's central piazza past striking villas and gardens, ending in steps that descend steeply to the Grotta di Matromania. The Grotta, a series of hidden caves carved into the island's limestone cliffs, is the site of ancient pagan worship ceremonies. From there we continue onto the Terrazza di Tragara, a stretch of trail offering spectacular views of the Faraglioni sea stacks, one of Capri's signature sights, and the top of Monte Solaro, the highest point on the island. We'll have some free time in the afternoon to enjoy one of Capri's lovely beaches or to further explore the island and town. We will take the hydrofoil back to Naples in late afternoon for dinner and the evening at our hotel. Hiking: 3.5 - 4 hours with 1,000' elevation gain/loss, on paved and dirt paths. Overnight Chiaja Hotel or similar. B, L, D

DAY 3



MAY 5, SATURDAY

We'll get an early start this morning, starting with a visit to what is widely regarded as one of the most important archeological sites in Europe. The story of Pompeii is well known: the eruption of Mt Vesuvius in AD 79 buried the town in hot ash, where it was forgotten for 1500 years. The ash preserved the city and the subsequent excavations have provided detailed insight into town life 2000 years ago. We'll be there about three hours and then visit a nearby family winery to sample wine and other local products. For a different perspective in the afternoon, we will climb to the top of Mt. Vesuvius. Along the way our guide will explain the mountain's geological and natural history. After the walk, we transfer to the charming town of Minori, just up the coast from the better known and more crowded town of Amalfi. Dinner and overnight stay at Hotel Santa Lucia (<http://www.hotelsantalucia.it/>) or similar. Walking/hiking: 3 hours in Pompeii, 2 hours hiking on dirt paths on Mt Vesuvius, 350 feet elevation gain/loss.

DAY 4



MAY 6, SUNDAY

A private transfer this morning takes us to Agerola and the start of today's trail. Our trail is rightly called the "Sentiero Degli Dei", the gods' walk. This route lives up to its name with dramatic views of a rugged coastline, and distant sightings as far as the island of Capri - it may be your favorite hike of the trip!! We reach the shore close to Positano and spend some time in this world-famous little town that clings precariously to a high cliff. After lunch we take a boat to Amalfi. Again, the view of the colourful houses cascading down from the steep hill into a dark blue sea is just magnificent. In Amalfi we'll visit some of the town's famous sites, including the Piazza Duomo and the ornate 11th century cathedral of Saint Andrew. The Amalfi Coast is known for its lemon groves and limoncello, a liqueur made from lemons, and we'll finish with a visit to a local producer before returning to Minori for dinner and the night. Overnight Hotel Santa Lucia. About 4.5 hours hiking with some ups and downs but an overall elevation loss of 600 feet. B, L, D

DAY 5



MAY 7, MONDAY

This morning we visit Valle Mulini (Valley of the Mills), a delightful valley that was once the center of Amalfi's important paper industry. In late morning we'll reach the enchanting town of Ravello. Ravello is called the balcony of the "Costiera" because of the amazing views we can enjoy from here. This small, somewhat sleepy village is a lovely oasis of quiet in the sometimes overly busy Amalfi coast, with lush gardens, nice little squares, and cobbled back alleys. We have some free time to explore the town, before returning to Naples in the afternoon. It would be a shame to leave Naples without sampling its world-famous Neopolitan pizza and that is what we'll do for dinner. We then head to the port where we board the overnight ferry to Sicily, in a cabin with twin beds and private facilities. Hiking: 4 hours, 1150 elevation gain/loss (B, L, D)

DAY 6



MAY 8, TUESDAY

We wake up to Sicily! Although perhaps best known as the home of the Mafia, more recently it has gained renown for its natural beauty, interesting history, and delicious food. A private transfer brings us the little town of Castelmola, known for a breathtaking view of Mt. Etna and the sea as seen from its quaint cobblestone streets. An easy 1.5 - 2-hour walk, mostly downhill, brings us to the medieval town of Taormina, located on the shores of the Ionian Sea. After checking in at our hotel, we'll have free time to relax, take advantage of the town's shopping possibilities, or visit the historical town center and the famous Greek Theatre. The theatre, originally built during the 3rd century BC, is still used for performances during Taormina's annual summer arts festival. Taormina is also known for mulberry gelato, which we may have to sample. Hotel Continental (<http://www.continentaltaormina.com/en>) or similar. Hiking 1.5-2 hours, 1,000 feet elevation loss. (B,L,D)

DAY 7



MAY 9, WEDNESDAY

This will be our most challenging hike, we will hike Mt Etna! Mt Etna is the highest volcano in Europe and the one of the most active in the world. No worries, eruptions are quite predictable and we won't be caught by one although weather could alter our plans. We'll drive to the southern flank of Mt Etna and then be transported by cable car and 4x4 vehicles to 9500 feet. Accompanied by a certified mountain guide, we ascend to Mt Etna's four summit craters on a trail that at times has loose rocks, scree, and gravel. From the top we gaze at sweeping views of the Ionian Coast, before retracing our steps on our descent. On our return we transfer to southern Sicily, where the lovely agriturismo that will be our lodging for the next 2 nights awaits us. Here we'll sample the cuisine and hospitality for which Sicily is famous. Overnight in an agriturismo near Syracuse. Hiking: 5.5 - 6 hours, maximum 1500 feet elevation gain/loss. Actual distances and elevations gains/loss will be based on local guides' recommendations and volcanic conditions.

DAY 8



MAY 10, THURSDAY

We enjoy not packing up today, as we spend the day visiting the Pantalica, a collection of cemeteries with rock chamber tombs cut into a limestone promontory. Dating from the 7th to the 13th centuries BC, it was made a UNESCO world-heritage site in 2005. It is an important nature reserve with a variety of local flora and fauna and our hike explores both the natural and archaeological aspects. Returning to our agriturismo, we further experience Sicilian cuisine with a cooking class and wine tasting. Overnight in agriturismo near Syracuse. Hiking: 5 hours, 800 feet elevation gain/loss. (B, L, D)

DAY 9

MAY 11, FRIDAY



Having enjoyed our time in rural Sicily, today we head to Syracuse. Syracuse is known for its beautiful baroque architecture, its rich culture, and its Greek history. It played an important role in ancient times where it was a major Mediterranean power. We'll check into our hotel, located in the city's historic center, and then go on a guided tour to learn about and explore the ruins in its archeological park. We'll visit other parts of the city, including the peninsula of Ortigia, where Syracuse was founded. We'll have some free time in the late afternoon before attending our final wine tasting. That night we enjoy a final farewell dinner, celebrating all we've learned, all the food we've eaten, and the camaraderie we've shared. Overnight in Catania (B, L, D)

DAY 10

MAY 12, SATURDAY



Sadly, our trip officially ends this morning, continue to other explorations or, if you must, fly home from the Catania airport. We'll arrange group airport transfers based on your departure time. (B)

ADDITIONAL TRIP INFORMATION

GETTING THERE

There are two ways to get to Naples (plan to arrive not later than 4pm so you have time to get to the hotel and get settled before meeting everyone at 6pm.) Specific details for both options will be available in the Pre-Departure document that will be sent six months prior to the trip start date.

- Fly directly to Naples (NAP). The airport is only about four miles from the city and from there you can take a taxi. If you want to use public transport, you can take the Alibus that departs from the bus station of the airport.
- Fly to Rome (FCO) and take the train to Naples. It takes approximately 1 hour and 20 minutes by Railways Eurostar (ES) or 2 hours by Intercity (ICPlus).

Note This trip begins in Naples and ends in Catania, Sicily.

If you would like help with any travel plans we recommend our travel agent Sara Schuitemaker at sara@scaneastwest.com or call 800/727-2157

ACCOMMODATIONS

Most of our accommodations are locally owned small 3 star hotels in double rooms with private bathrooms, as specified in the itinerary. We'll also spend one night in double cabins on the overnight ferry from Naples to Sicily and two nights at an agriturismo in Sicily.

Meals are served picnic style or in restaurants. Vegetarian and vegan options for this trip will not be as robust as you may be accustomed to. Other types of dietary needs, especially gluten-free diets, cannot be accommodated unless supplemental food is brought.

WEATHER

In general, the climate in southern Italy along the coast is very mild due to the geography of the area. Though it can feel a bit cooler and breezy with being on the sea, the average high temperature in May is in the low 70s and the average low is in the mid-50s. Sicily has both higher average temperatures during the day (high 70s) and lower average temperatures at night (low 50s). May is one of the driest months although rain is always possible.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

WE STRONGLY RECOMMEND TRIP CANCELLATION/TRIP INTERRUPTION INSURANCE, WHICH COVERS YOUR COST IF YOU NEED TO CANCEL OR INTERRUPT YOUR TRIP for medical reasons, trip delay, lost baggage, and other unforeseen emergencies. Adventures in Good Company will send you information about travel insurance with your registration information, or you may purchase coverage through your own insurance company. To avoid disappointment and expense in the event that you must cancel your trip we strongly urge you to purchase some type of insurance coverage. You can also sign up for it online at [Travelex Insurance](#). To get the best rates, use 20-0016 as your location number on the Get A Quote page.

PACKING LIST

FOOTWEAR

- 1 pair lightweight waterproof hiking boots.
- 1 pair comfortable walking shoes – athletic shoes, Keens, or Tevas/Chacos
- 2-3 pair socks: wool or synthetic equivalent (Thorlo, Smartwool, Ultrex, or Teko)

CLOTHING

- 1-2 pair comfortable, lightweight, comfortable hiking pants
- 1-2 pair shorts or 3/4 pants (lightweight and quick drying)
- 1-2 lightweight, long-sleeved shirts
- 1 lightweight vest
- 1 lightweight long underwear top
- 2-3 T-shirts or sleeveless shirts; one can be cotton
- 1 medium weight layer such as fleece pullover or wool sweater
- 1 wide-brimmed hat, visor, or baseball cap
- Underwear / Pajamas or whatever you like to sleep in
- Rain jacket
- lightweight hat and gloves for Mt Etna climb
- 2 - 3 changes of comfortable clothes to wear when going out to dinner; e.g. pants and/or skirts, 2 tops
- Swimsuit

EQUIPMENT/ESSENTIALS

- 1 daypack, with a pack cover or large plastic bag to line backpack for waterproofing
- Pair of Trekking Poles (highly recommended)
- Passport and a photocopy of your passport
- Sunscreen and lip block with SPF of at least 15
- travel alarm/watch with alarm or watch
- Sunglasses (100% UV blocking) and retention strap
- 2 liters water carrying capacity (water bottle or hydration system)
- Plug adaptor, European style.
- Short gaiters to keep stones and lava out of shoes.

TOILETRIES (small everything)

- Toothbrush, small toothpaste, dental floss, shampoo, moist towelettes, sanitary supplies and a zip- lock plastic bag, contact lens paraphernalia
- Personal first aid/patch kit - Band-Aids, 1 safety pin, moleskin, compeed (or blister bandages), ibuprofen, any personal medications

Please note: Individuals who have had or have the potential for a severe allergic reaction to insect stings, specific foods or medications must bring an epi-pen. Please consult your physician and tell your guide.

OPTIONAL (not required, personal preference)

- Small journal and pen
- Ear plugs (for a good night's sleep)
- Shower shoes (like flip flops)
- Wash cloth (typically European linens do not include a wash cloth)
- 220V three tier converter
- Compact binoculars
- Camera and film/memory card
- Favorite snack(s)
- batteries/charger
- bandanna
- Clothes Soap (for handwashing)

NOTES ON PACKING

Adventures in Good Company's packing list covers everything you need to assure your safety and comfort. You may not use everything you bring; however, you need to come prepared for all possible weather conditions. At the same time, you must be able to carry your own luggage, sometimes up and down stairs. Bringing a duffel bag or soft-sided suitcase with wheels, rather than a hard-sided suitcase, is easier for packing in the van.

Daypacks: Your daypack should be large enough to hold the following items: 1 – 2 liters of water, rain gear, lunch/snacks (for the day), sun screen, warm layer (fleece pullover or vest), personal first aid kit, lightweight gloves, hat and personal items such as camera, etc. We recommend a daypack with a capacity of between 1800 and 2400 cubic inches with a hip belt, padded shoulder straps, and 'lifters'. Line your daypack with a durable plastic bag to keep your belongings dry, or have an elasticized pack cover that fits snugly over it. Before you leave home check to be sure that it is comfortable to wear all day and has sufficient space for all of your items. **Note: Fanny-packs and hydration packs are not large enough to hold all of the items you will need for the day.**

Footwear: Well-fitting, sturdy boots or trail shoes are very important to your safety and enjoyment. If you plan to buy new boots, break them in by wearing them around town and taking some short hikes *before* your trip. For general hiking, lightweight or midweight cordura or leather boots with a Vibram sole work well. If you have weak ankles or are recovering from an ankle injury, get boots that come above the ankle— you'll find that this will give you more support in uneven or slippery terrain. Remember to waterproof your boots before the trip. Even boots billed as 'waterproof' need to be treated with a waterproofing product.

Personal First Aid Kit: Bring a small first aid kit with familiar medicine and first aid supplies you might need. Recommendations include the following: blister or foot remedies like moleskin, Compeed, blister bandages, or similar, a small roll of duct tape (always useful!), remedies for respiratory ailments, stomach ailments, sore muscles or joints. The guides will have a first aid kit but having what you know works well for you is a good idea.

Clothing: The clothing listed on the packing list has been chosen for your specific trip conditions and for its versatility for layering. NO COTTON for your active wear! It should all be made from synthetic/synthetic blends, down/down blends or wool/wool blends. Layering is the most practical and efficient method of insulating the body. Several layers of varied weight materials provide better insulation than one thick layer of clothing. Also, adding or subtracting layers allows you to adjust to the temperature at your particular level of activity.

Rain Gear: You will need a parka or jacket made of a coated nylon or a waterproof/breathable fabric like Gore-tex, HellyTech, Membrane, H2No, or Ultrex. **Be sure it keeps water out.** Before making this important purchase, be sure that it fits you properly. It should be large enough to fit over all your layers. In particular, the hood needs to be effective. It should shield your face from the rain and turn with your head. Movement of your arms must not interfere with the hood. Put on your daypack; can you still raise your arms? Your wind/rain pants should be comfortable, allow enough room for your layers, and permit free movement of your legs (for example, can you crouch comfortably?). Partial or full-length leg zippers are useful for easily putting your pants on over your boots. An inexpensive plastic poncho will both leak and tear easily and is not recommended.

Hydration: Being able to easily access your water without assistance, so that you can drink frequently, is important to your safety and enjoyment. One method is to have a water bottle attached to your waist strap. Another option is to use a **HYDRATION SYSTEM** such as CamelBak, Platypus, and MSR bladder bags, which are collapsible water bags with a hose attachment that you drink from. The bags fit inside or outside your pack with the hose positioned over your shoulder so that you can access your water as you hike. Bladder bags can hold 1 - 3 liters of water.

Trekking Poles: Trekking poles are highly recommended for this trip. Trekking poles contribute to your safety by improving your balance and stability, and to your health by saving stress on your hips and knees. If you are not familiar with trekking poles, read this blog post that addresses the most commonly asked questions: <http://blog.adventuresingoodcompany.com/blog-women-travel/bid/154714/Trekking-poles-for-hiking-trips-the-4-most-common-questions> .