



presents

A SAMPLE ITINERARY
for
FIRST TIME TO ITALY WITH KIDS

Friday, July 8 **Arrive Venice**

You will arrive in Venice at 11:20 a.m. on AZ #1463. Meet your assistant in the arrivals area. You will be taken by private boat directly to your accommodations.



Your first order of business: an *espresso* or *espresso doppio* (double) to help you stay awake this afternoon! The kids can have *spremuta*, fresh orange juice, often made from the wonderful blood oranges of Sicily.

A fun game for the kids to play is to see how many lions they can find in Venice. The symbol of St. Mark and Venice is the winged lion, and they can be found in carvings, statues, paintings, etc.

Once you get settled in at your hotel, a simple and entertaining start to your time here is to walk to the *campanile* (bell tower) at St. Mark's Square. You can have the views without the effort! Take the elevator up the campanile in the piazza. From the bell tower you will get a bird's eye view of Venice, and the pigeons in the square down below. It's a great way to get a feel for the shape of the city, and from that vantage point, there are rooftops galore, but the network of canals is not visible.

Alternately, perhaps you'd like to get your bearings on the water. You can "cruise" the Grand Canal independently (*vaporetto* (water bus) #1 and #82 go the whole length of the canal).

A typical Venetian thing to do is to take a stroll, and it's a great walk from Piazza San Marco east, down the wide promenade, the Riva degli Schiavoni. Bustling and busy, it's also a great place to watch the boats go by – large car ferries, vaporetti, water taxis, tugs, red and white fire boats, gondolas, cruise ships, pleasure motor boats in all shapes and sizes. Continue to walk east to visit the Arsenale, an immense structure which was once the center of ship building in the world in the 15th and 16th centuries. A huge walled area, accessible with four gates, enclosed the massive shipbuilding operations. (Check out the models and plans of the Arsenale in the Museo Storico Navale (Historical Naval Museum) for the whole story—very interesting.) Today you can't go inside the Arsenale; it's a military zone, but you can visit one of the main gateways, with two large crenellated towers, linked by a bridge over the entrance to the Arsenale. The detailed doorway has a majestic winged lion, plus four lions on either side of the gate. The lions are quite ancient, treasures brought from Greece.

Enjoy an early dinner near the hotel and turn in early for a well-deserved good night's rest.

Saturday, July 9 **Venice**

Start this morning with a visit to the Rialto Market to see Venetian commerce in action. Rialto is the geographic heart of Venice, and the oldest settled area of the city. Its name derives from the Latin *rivus altus*, or deep stream, which afforded some protection from the lagoon's tides. In

the heyday of the Republic of Venice, Rialto was its world-famous commercial center, renowned for its exotic markets, banks, and as a gathering place to learn the latest news.



A treat for the senses, you will see artistic piles of peaches and cherries, artichokes and red chicory from Treviso. Fruit, vegetables and fish tend to be strictly seasonal. Next to the fresh produce market there is the Pescheria. In this Neo-Gothic building, you will see the market full of writhing eels, soft shell crabs, huge swordfish and crimson-fleshed fresh tuna.

Maybe a stop at the public gardens would be good here so that the kids can run around a bit. Have some lunch, and then enjoy this fun tour:

Venice Walking Tour with Scavenger Hunt (3 hours, 9:00 a.m. start time)

Our expert guide will meet you in the lobby and escort you on a walking tour of this romantic city that begins in *San Marco Square* with the magnificent *Basilica of San Marco*. One of the most unique cities in the world, Venice offers priceless art, stunning architecture and an element of mystery with its canals and winding alleyways. Admire the church's rich, detailed mosaics and the sculptures that adorn this enchanting structure. Next, learn about Venetian art and style with a tour of the gothic *Doge's Palace* that dates to approximately 1309, and its trove of treasures. This visit concludes in the Rialto area where clients will stroll over the city's oldest and best-known *Rialto Bridge* to end in the bustling Rialto Market for a glimpse of local life.

Sunday, July 10 **Venice to Florence**

Take the 12:25 p.m. train from Venice to Florence today. In order to arrive at the train station, you will take a private water taxi, which you will need to arrange on your own. You will arrive at 2:30 p.m.



Symbol for the kids to search for in Florence: either the lily or the Medici family crest. Their family emblem—a number of balls (somewhere between 6 and 12, depending on time period) on a gold shield—is prominently displayed on buildings all over Florence and Tuscany which have Medicean connections or which were financed with Medici money.

Check out the city center on your own this afternoon. You might enjoy visiting the Duomo (a.k.a. Santa Maria dei Fiori); this, the adjacent baptistry, and bell tower are considered the religious center of the city. The Duomo Museum is nice to see; it houses the original panels of the "Gates of Paradise", which are considered the first works of the Renaissance. Stroll through the glorious Piazza Signoria and view the imposing Palazzo Vecchio on the square. (You can visit inside as well.) Enjoy the legendary Ponte Vecchio – the oldest surviving bridge crossing the famous Arno River. It is filled with goldsmiths from end to end. Note the Vassari Corridor above the bridge; the Medicis used this to move from their offices (the Uffizi) to their home, the Pitti Palace across the river.



Monday, July 11 **Florence**

Picnic Tour in a Vintage Fiat (4.5 hours, start time 11:30 a.m.)

A picnic trip in a Vintage Fiat 500 is sure to be the highlight of your time in Italy!

Fabulous for families or anyone wanting to escape the heat and take a well deserved break from the city. We begin with an introduction to the vintage Fiat 500 and then head for the hills!



We head into the Chianti countryside, all around us monasteries, olive groves and grapevines, and your guide entertains you with history and local knowledge. The gently curving roads are a joy to drive and each moment is like driving through a progression of postcards. After several panoramic stops we wend our way through walled cobblestone streets back to the 15th century villa where a picnic with class is laid out

for us beside their private swimming pool. Your guide leads you in a professional wine tasting and olive oil savoring while you enjoy a fantastic meal of many Tuscan specialties. We have access to the swimming pool (particularly popular with kids) and towels are provided. Our tour ends at the villa, and there's no more driving, so you can relax and enjoy the wine!

Tuesday, July 12 _____ Florence

First stop this morning: Seeing Brunelleschi's signature dome from the inside of the church is really something; but if you want to see things up close, you can climb up into the dome itself (463 steps) or up into the bell tower. We suggest you do this first thing, the Duomo opens at 8:30 a.m.

At 1:00 p.m. visit the Accademia, home to Michelangelo's 'David', the symbol of the city with pre-reserved admission. Michelangelo was only twenty-six years old when he won the contract for David. He began work in 1501 and it took him two years to turn the marble block into the iconic image that we know and admire today. Chronicles tell us of the immense surprise and marvel that the Florentines showed as it was uncovered. *'It took the voice away from statues both ancient and modern'*, wrote Vasari, author of a famous biography of the artist. Such a superb work had never been seen before either in Florence or elsewhere, with its manifest expression of awareness of power.



You may be hungry now, so enjoy a visit to the *Mercato Centrale*, which is housed inside a large two-story building designed in the 19th century. If you don't want to sit down for a long lunch, there are some great options here. On the ground floor, vendors sell meats, fish and a variety of cheeses. This is also a great place to pick up foodstuff gifts. 2014 brought the inauguration of the first floor (second floor U.S.) above the food market: imagine a fancy food court, combining tasting stands, shops and a cooking school. 3000 square meters with 500 seats (including a bank & fiorentina shop) and 12 different food stands open seven days a week for a hungry public.

Mercato Centrale Firenze not only revives an area of the city left deserted for many years, but fulfils an extremely relevant and necessary goal: to bring people back to a highly important and vibrant piece of Florence's old center, with traditional shops that give food artisans center stage. Bread and confectionary, fresh fish, fried food, fruit and vegetables, meats and salamis, buffalo mozzarella, cheeses, chocolate and ice cream, fresh pasta, wines, lampredotto and sandwiches: all shops are run by artisanal traders who share a passion for their craft. Yum.

After lunch, take a moderately challenging walk up to Piazzale Michelangelo, where you can view Florence from afar. It will give you a gorgeous overview of the city.

While you are there, visit the beautiful Basilica di San Miniato al Monte (St. Minias on the Mountain), which stands atop one of the highest points in Florence, and has been described as the finest Romanesque structure in Tuscany and one of the most beautiful churches in Italy. St. Minias was Florence's first martyr. He was beheaded during the anti-Christian persecutions of the Emperor Decius and was then said to have picked up his head, crossed the Arno and walked up the hill of Mons Fiorentinus to his hermitage. A shrine was later erected at this spot and there was a chapel here by the 8th century. Construction of the present church



was begun in 1013 as Benedictine monastery; the Olivetans run it now. The monks make famous liquors, honey and tisanes (herbal teas), which they sell from a shop next to the church.

When you come back down, you will be in the Oltrarno area again – literally “the other side of the Arno River” – which is considered by many to be the most beautiful and characteristic area of Florence. This quarter has many artisan workshops, which maintain age-old traditions, such as working with gold, silver, and wrought iron or creating paper, hats or shoes. Stroll through the quaint streets and enjoy the heritage and history of Florence as it thrives in this charming neighborhood. The Oltrarno is also home to a trio of treasured churches—Santa Felicitá, with not just one, but two of Jacopo Pontormo's masterpieces; Santo Spirito, designed by Brunelleschi; and Santa Maria del Carmine, where the Brancacci Chapel is located. There are many terrific restaurants in the area.



Enjoy the rest of the day with no activities, then have fun making pizza at about 5:00 p.m.

Be a Florentine Pizzaiolo for a Day (2 hours)



Discover the secrets of Italian pizza! Clients are greeted with a bubbling glass of *spumante* to help loosen up their hands, and then will enjoy the sheer fun of working alongside some of Florence's best pizza makers in front of their wood-burning ovens. With a friendly English-speaking staff, learn about choosing the correct flour and coordinating the array of delectable, fresh toppings. Then, clients will knead the dough to make their delicious Italian specialty, baking them under the supervision of a master pizza maker. Pizzas will be enjoyed during an early lunch or dinner at the restaurant, accompanied by a favorite drink. This is a great outing for clients with children ages three and older.

Wednesday, July 13 Florence to Rome

Take the 11:24 a.m. train from Florence to Rome, where you will arrive at 12:55 p.m.

Here the kids can search for SPQR, which is an acronym of a Latin phrase, *Senātus Populusque Rōmānus* ("The Senate and People of Rome"), referring to the government of the emblem of the modern-day Rome. It appears on coins, at the end of documents made public by inscription in stone or metal, in dedications of monuments and public works, and was



emblazoned on the standards of the Roman legions.

Once you get settled in your hotel, do some independent exploration today; we'd suggest northern Rome for this. Head to Piazza Barberini. The Via Veneto epitomizes the glamorous Rome of "La Dolce Vita" – you can imagine Sophia Loren riding in a convertible with a scarf wrapped glamorously around her neck! Walk north to the church of Santa Maria della Concezione and see the Capuchin Crypt. (Closed between 12 and 3. If it's closed, be sure to stop here later, but you may want to read up on it and determine if it's acceptable for your children.) Although Via Sistina will also take you to your next destination, it does not have the "House of Monsters" that you'll find at Via Gregoriana 28. Baroque painters Frederico and Taddeo Zuccari had their house near the top of the Spanish Steps fitted out with gaping, monstrous mouths for doors and windows.



You'll then come upon the Spanish Steps. This is Rome's living room, a meeting point for many Romans (and tourists). Built with a gift from the French in 1725, but named after the Spanish Embassy to the Holy See (which is still located in the piazza), the steps lead to the French church, Trinità dei Monti. The piazza just to the right is Piazza Mignanelli, home to Valentino's atelier—see the V above the door?

Stroll toward Via Margutta, but before you head down that street, go to Via Alibert 16; here you'll find the Alinari shop. This is the oldest photographic business in the world. The Florentine Alinari brothers founded their enterprise in 1852, and produced more than one million plate-glass negatives in their lifetimes. At their Rome shop you can buy beautiful prints of their work depicting the city in the 19th century, as well as some hefty coffee table books on photography. Over the years, an impressive array of artists -- Fellini, Picasso, Stravinsky, Puccini -- have lived, found inspiration and created masterpieces on this tiny street. (Gregory Peck's character in "Roman Holiday" lived on this street.) Our favorite shops are Saddler's Union (at #11) featuring leather goods, and La Bottega del Marmoraro (#53B), a tiny shop overflowing with small marble plaques. For €15 or so, the owner, Signor Fiorentini, will chisel any words you want into a piece of marble. There are also a couple of restaurants here that we like: Babette and



Margutta Ristor Arte.

Walk up Via Babuino to the Piazza del Popolo, one of the main entrances used by pilgrims to enter the city for centuries. Visit the church of Santa Maria del Popolo to view some of the works of Caravaggio (not to mention Rafael and Bernini) and take in the view from the Pincio Hill. You can stroll through the Villa Borghese, Rome's equivalent of Central Park if you need to escape the hustle and bustle. Explore the Tridente area, which includes the Ara Pacis, with its new building designed by Richard Meier; Via Condotti; home to many of Rome's high-end retailers, cafes, and scenic streets.

Thursday, July 14 Rome

This morning you can stroll through the Villa Borghese, Rome's equivalent of Central Park to escape the hustle and bustle. It's a large area, covered with spreading shade trees, grass, park benches, wide paths, fountains, cafes, stalls with snacks and cold drinks. Some possibilities:

- **Rent bikes and surreys** – There's something for everyone in the family. Rent surreys to pedal the whole family around (this is great if you have little ones, or teens can go off on their own). You can also rent bikes, kid's bikes, tandems, and pedal karts. Rentals are available on Pincio (Viale dei Bambini and Viale di Villa Medici) and in front of the zoo, Bioparco di Roma.
- Bring a **picnic** (a picnic supper is delightful on a long summer evening) and a ball to kick around.
- The **Giardino del Lago** is a good spot for a picnic, or you can rent row boats and row around the small artificial lake. There's also a tiny little canal (ditch) that flows into the lake – float leaves or bring a small plastic boat to sail in the ditch.
- **Playgrounds** – Playgrounds with slides, bouncy things, climbing structures are located next to the Giardino del Largo, the obelisk, Borghese Museum, and the biggest one at Viale Goethe, near more pony rides.
- **Take the tram around Rome** – Rick up the #3 tram for a ride through Rome, on Viale delle Belle Arti (in front of the Museum of Modern Art). A 40 min. ride takes you along the park, through Roman neighborhoods, past ancient walls and aqueducts, right to the Colosseum. You could get off there, or keep on going, past the Circus Maximus, up the Aventine, to Piazza Porta S. Paolo and the Tiber River. (At the Tiber, just get off and take the #3 tram going back to the Borghese Gardens). The tram goes slow, it's pleasant and relaxing, the perfect things for a lazy morning.



Piazza Navona is a must see for those coming to Rome for the first time, yet those who are returning to Rome also enjoy revisiting this magnificent setting. The square itself is built on the former Stadium of Domitian, built by Emperor Domitian in 86 AD. This explains the long, oval shape of the square. The stadium, which had a larger arena than the Colosseum, was mainly used for festivals and sporting events. It is here that you will find Bernini's Fountain of the Four Rivers—the fountain features four figures, each representing a river from a different continent - the Nile, Ganges, Danube and Rio de la Plata. The statues are at the base of a rock supporting an obelisk, originally located at the Circus of Maxentius, near the Appian Way.

If you're a little hungry while you're here, perhaps you can stop at the famed Tre Scalini for a *tartufo*, a terrific ice cream concoction created with flair.

At the end of the piazza, you'll see a battered Greek-style statue, named Pasquino, one of several "talking statues". Rome's talking statues are a tradition, born in the 1500s as Roman citizens became frustrated with over-taxation and papal politics. They would hang their caustic criticism, stinging epigrams and short satiric verses on the statue. A person could be punished for exercising his or her opinion publicly; it was more difficult to punish a statue! Pasquino not only represents an ancient tradition but is still opining today.

Near Piazza Navona you will also find the lovely church of Gesù, the mother church of the Jesuits. Originally very austere, Il Gesù's interior was opulently decorated starting in the 17th century. Now its frescoes, sculptures and shrines make it one of the foremost examples of Roman Baroque art. In the church of Sant'Ignazio, also close by, *trompe l'oeil* columns soar above the nave, and architraves by Andrea Pozzo open to a cloudy heaven. Trickery was also

involved in creating the dome: the monks next door claimed that a real dome would rob them of light, so Pozzo simply painted a dome on the inside of the roof. The illusion is fairly convincing if you stand on the disc set in the floor of the nave. Walk away, however, and it dissolves. Nearby, the church of San Luigi dei Francesi's Contarelli Chapel is adorned with three stunningly dramatic works by Caravaggio, the baroque master of the heightened approach to light and dark. Sant'Ivo Alla Sapienza by Borromini is an absolute masterpiece with its unique architecture.

Or just stroll around, shop, and eat gelato. Just be sure you stop by the freshly cleaned Trevi Fountain and toss a coin in over your shoulder to ensure your return to the Eternal City.

Small Group VIP Colosseum Night Tour (2.5 hours, start time 7:30 p.m., maximum 12 participants)

Enjoy a rare experience at the Colosseum, visiting at night to explore special access areas after the crowds have left. Some 5 million people visit the Colosseum every year but you'll see it like very few have the chance to do. Enjoy that exclusivity as your guide regales you with hair-raising tales of the Colosseum's bloody past. In the darkness of night, those stories feel even more spine-tingling than usual, and with the amphitheater almost empty, you'll find it easier to hear and interact with your guide. As well as being especially evocative, the Colosseum at night is cooler and much more comfortable.

Your guide will lead you on an exclusive visit down into the underground, where animals and gladiators awaited their turn to fight. The underground may only be visited on pre-booked tours with a limited number of participants, so this is a rare opportunity! Combined with our later entrance time, this makes our Colosseum Night Tour the most exclusive Colosseum visit available – as well as the most enjoyable.

Next you'll experience your own 'Gladiator' moment on the arena floor. You'll travel with an official Colosseum guard who will unlock a special gate, swinging it open to reveal that iconic walkway onto the floor. Walk in the footsteps of gladiators as you step out on to the arena floor and scream "Are you not entertained?" into the empty amphitheater (if you so please). This is the most incredible vantage point in the Colosseum so take your time to soak it up.

Of course we'll visit general access areas of the Colosseum too. An added bonus of our Colosseum Night Tour is a visit to Piazza Venezia, seeing the building that represents new Rome and new Italy, by far one of the most beautiful buildings to be seen at night. From here you will walk up to the Capitoline Hill, with its magnificent square designed by Michelangelo (Piazza del Campidoglio). From a vantage point overlooking the Roman Forum, your guide will tell you tales from the empire, whose reach you won't believe.



For this section of our tour we'll travel in small groups of only 12 people or fewer. Colosseum restrictions mean that two groups will combine for the VIP tour inside the amphitheater but when you visit the underground and arena floor, no one else will be allowed inside - so you'll share these incredible spaces with only your guide and a maximum of 24 other people. Seeing the Colosseum may be an opportunity that only comes once in a lifetime - but seeing it this way definitely is! Perfect for families, for those who don't like the heat of day, and for visitors who want a different experience, our VIP Colosseum Night tour is one of our most atmospheric experiences. High demand and limited availability often mean this tour sells out months in advance though so book now to secure your place!

Friday, July 15 **Rome**

The Vatican Experience: St Peter's Basilica and the Sistine Chapel with Reserved Entrance and Scavenger Hunt (4 hours)

Enjoy an informative tour of the Vatican accompanied by an expert guide with pre-reserved entrance times to the Vatican Museum and Sistine Chapel. Our special relationship with the Vatican enables us to reserve your entrance to avoid waiting in the immense lines that one finds most of the year. Transfer by taxi with your guide to the Vatican for this four-hour in-depth tour where you will learn about the great artists who helped to embellish one of the most fascinating sovereign states in the world. Visit the *Vatican museums* which includes some of the world's most precious artistic and religious treasures including the *Galleries of Maps, Candelabras and Tapestries*, the *Raphael Rooms*, and Michelangelo's stunning frescoes in the *Sistine Chapel*. Afterwards, a visit to *St Peter's Basilica* completes the tour with its splendid sculptures and mosaics of great historic and religious importance.



Enjoy the rest of the day on your own. Some suggestions: You might then enjoy a visit to Castel Sant'Angelo. This structure started out as a fancy tomb for the Emperor Hadrian. In the Middle Ages, it became a fortress, a stronghold of the popes. During the Renaissance, beautifully decorated apartments for the popes were added. It was also a prison, with dungeons where people were kept for years and years. At the top of the castle, the Terrace of the Angel is a wide-open space, with panoramic views of Rome in all directions (this is our favorite view of Rome). Rome looks like a city in miniature, thousands of red roofs, hundreds of domed churches, the milky green Tiber River winding through the city. And the crowning glory, a spectacular 18th-century bronze angel (namesake of the castle) sits atop that represents the Archangel Michael. You can also take a walk through the Borgo neighborhood or hike up the dome of St. Peter's. This area is also a great place to shop for religious gifts.

Enjoy this fun experience—you'll have dinner and see a great neighborhood at the same time.



Rome Food Tour (4 hours, starts at 6:30 p.m., maximum 10 participants)

Trastevere is a neighborhood like no other. Its ivy-coated, cobblestone streets come alive at night earning it comparisons to Greenwich Village and Paris's Left Bank. On this four hour walking tour we will explore this ancient neighborhood indulging in over 10 food and wine tastings along the way at 7 of some of Rome's most historic and locally loved places. You will also get a chance to meet the families that have been serving up the foodie treasures we savor for generations. There are few activities in Rome filled with as many hidden surprises and enchanting moments, join us for an unforgettable evening.

Highlights Include:

- If you were shooting a movie in Rome, the iconic trattoria, Da Enzo al 29 would be your location of choice and their award-winning food isn't half-bad either
- Tasting wine in Spirito di Vino's wine cellar that is 150 years older than the Colosseum is not your run of the mill experience
- Fulfill your childhood dream with a visit to Rome's famous family-owned cookie factory
- Go behind the scenes at one of Rome's most well-known bakeries to taste their award-winning pizza and see how its baked
- The Polica family has been selling the finest meats and cheeses at Antica Caciara, their

- legendary delicatessen since 1900
- Sample homemade ravioli among other sumptuous pasta dishes along with wine
- Gelato at Fatamorgana, the *gelateria* that brought “gourmet gelato” to Rome
- Hidden historical & cultural sights and surprises making it so much “more than a food tour”

Saturday, July 16 Rome to Capri

Take the 11:53 a.m. train from Rome to Naples this afternoon, where you will arrive at 1:00 p.m.

You will then take a cab from the train station to the MOLO BEVERELLO PORT and take a ferry to Capri.

Capri is a walker's paradise, full of incredible views and scenery, so here are a few walks to experience it firsthand.



1. The famous **Via Krupp**, considered to be one of the prettiest roads in the world, reopened in June 2008 after a 30-year restoration. To get there, start at the Piazzetta Umberto I in Capri, and follow Via Vittorio Emanuele to Via Matteoti, which then hits Via Krupp. Before heading down the path, consider visiting the beautiful Gardens of Augustus or the Carthusian Monastery, both right at the top of the trail. At the bottom, you'll be at Marina Piccola (small marina), where you can have a drink or go for a swim.
2. From the Piazzetta in the town of Capri head down Via Vittorio Emanuele to Via Camerelle, then follow Via Tragara towards the **Arco Naturale** (Natural Arch). Follow the signs, stopping at Le Grotelle restaurant for a drink or lunch, and then head down a steep hill to the gorgeous Cave of Matermania. From there, the path takes you down to the Punta Tragara, with incredible views of the famous Faraglioni rocks. This trail has lots of steps, both up and down, but the end part from Punta Tragara back to the town of Capri is an easy wander.
3. Hike to the top of **Monte Solaro**, Capri's highest point. Allow about 1 - 1.5 hours for the hike, or take the chairlift, which is just a 12-minute ride and which you can take up or down. There are a few trails up, but the easiest is from the main square in Anacapri: head towards the Villa San Michele, but before reaching the villa, take a narrow road to your right signposted "Monte Solaro", and follow it to the top (which is visible the entire time anyway). Once up there, don't rush down: you'll have a 360 degree view of the island, so buy a drink or lunch at the top and enjoy.
4. There is a relatively new walking path along the coast between the **Blue Grotto** (Grotta Azzurra) to the Lighthouse, called the Path of the Little Forts, or The Old Walk of the Forts. Both ends of this 6 km trail can be reached by bus, but the path is easier if you start at the lighthouse and walk to the Blue Grotto rather than the reverse. Allow about 3 hours for the hike and note that while tour boats are going in and out of the Grotto you can not swim - but wait until 5 pm and you'll likely be allowed in the water (but you'll have to be back on the ferry to Sorrento before then.)
5. It's a somewhat strenuous 45-minute walk, but worth it: head to the Roman ruins of **Villa Jovis** from the town of Capri. You'll see incredible views and see some archeological remains, which was built 2,000 years ago by the Emperor Tiberius.

The challenge with Capri is that it can be difficult to get away from the tourists. Walking is a great way to do it (and so is spending time in the town of Anacapri).

Sunday, July 17 Capri

Enjoy a boat cruise around the island. Your expert guide will meet you at the port of Capri where you will take a private boat (a traditional Caprese Gozzo) to circumnavigate the island and have a chance to view the famous grottoes - the Blue Grotto*, the White Grotto and the Faraglioni Rock Formations. You'll be on the water for 2 to 2.5 hours, and you can enter coves if you'd like. Wear your swimsuits under your clothes so you can swim off the side of the boat!



Relax at La Fontelina Beach Club this afternoon. You have a reservation.

Monday, July 18 Capri

Hike to the top of **Monte Solaro**, Capri's highest point. Allow about 1 - 1.5 hours for the hike, or take the chairlift, which is just a 12-minute ride and which you can take up or down. There are a few trails up, but the easiest is from the main square in Anacapri: head towards the Villa San Michele, but before reaching the villa, take a narrow road to your right signposted "Monte Solaro", and follow it to the top (which is visible the entire time anyway). Once up there, don't rush down: you'll have a 360 degree view of the island, so buy a drink or lunch at the top and enjoy.



Head for a beach club this afternoon (or anytime after 9:30 a.m.)

Tuesday, July 19 Capri to Sorrento

Take the ferry from Capri to Sorrento today. You must check out by 10:00 a.m. but you may be able to keep your bags there.

This afternoon, get your bearings in Sorrento and enjoy the view. If you are in the mood for a casual place for dinner, and many often are after a day of travel, check out Da Franco for its excellent pizza. (*Pizzeria da Franco on Corso Italia, 265*)



Time passes pleasantly in Sorrento; there are, of course, hundreds of tourist shops, but also relaxed cafes and restaurants where you can sit at pavement tables and watch the world go by. The tourist focal point is Piazza Tasso, where tables and chairs crowd the central square, which is built over a gorge. As you look out to sea, the old, more attractive part of town is on your left, and the station on your right.

There aren't a great deal of actual 'sights' in the town, although there are plenty of panoramic views, pleasant spots, and shopping opportunities. The fourteenth century Chiesa di San Francesco has a charming flowery cloister, and a small garden next to the church offers a spot of tranquility with gorgeous views across the Bay of Naples. South of Corso Italia there is a medieval cathedral, and more of the town's history can be seen at Museo Correale, near the station.

Wednesday, July 20 Sorrento

Amalfi Coast Private Driver Service (8 hours)

Enjoy the Amalfi Coast with your private driver. You can reach some towns such as Amalfi and Sorrento on your own by boat if you'd like but not Ravello or any of the other small charming locales along the shore. You can go wherever you'd like, but here are a few suggestions.

With its unmatched view 1000 feet above sea level above the coast, **Ravello** is a must-see. As you can imagine, the views are extraordinary. If you have time, visit the famous Villa Rufolo or Villa Cimbrone. Villa Rufolo has lovely gardens, with terraced flowerbeds, tree-lined avenues, and incredible views. Villa Cimbrone is a little farther down the road. The garden here is considered by many to be the most beautiful in Italy. The main Avenue of Immensity leads you, under charming pergolas, to the Belvedere of Infinity, the classic Amalfi Coast view.



Minori is home to the splendid Villa Marittima Romana, an ancient Roman villa considered to be one of the most important monuments on the whole Amalfi Coast. The villa is thought to have been the seaside residence of an influential member of the imperial court. The nearby stream would have guaranteed ample supplies of water with which to fill the swimming pool and baths. Despite almost 2000 years having passed, the villa's Nymphaeum still conserves a number of its original frescoes and mosaics. The villa is located in Via Santa Lucia and is open to the general public from 09.00 until sunset. In the 18th century, Minori became famous for its watermills and pasta factories and to this very day, tourists come to taste the town's delicious pasta, served in the small restaurants nestled between the brightly painted houses.

From Minori, the road leads straight to **Maiori**, a fishing town. The town has one of the largest beaches of all those on the Amalfi Coast. In the Middle Ages, what is now a peaceful little bathing resort was the Republic of Amalfi's principal port, its streets lined with such beautiful patrician palazzi that King Filippo IV declared the town Città Regia.

Maiori is dominated by the **Castle of San Nicola de Thoro-Plano**, rebuilt in the 15th century and which, like the adjacent church, is open to the general public. The **Collegiate Church of Santa Maria a Mare** houses a statue of the Virgin which, according to the local legend, was found floating in the water, just off the town's shores. In the complex of **Santa Maria**



Olearia the crypts and catacombs of the first monks to reside here can be seen. You won't want to leave Maiori before paying at least one visit to Salvatore De Riso's pastry shop, where to indulge in such exquisite concoctions as the heavenly ricotta and pear filled hazelnut crumb cake.

Thursday, July 21 Sorrento

Take the 10:30 a.m. ferry from Sorrento to Positano

today. The ride is about 40 minutes.

One of Italy's most exclusive resorts, **Positano** has been attracting celebrities, artists, musicians and writers for many decades. Such renown has led to the presence of chic boutiques; craft workshops, antique dealers, smart cafes and restaurants, and a reputation for fashion confirmed by it being, in 1959, the first Italian resort to see the bikini. The town's Moorish origins are betrayed by its picturesque clustered maze of white and pastel-colored cubic dwellings with their arches, occasional domed roofs, tiny gardens laden with flowers and citrus trees, cobbled alleys, colorful narrow lanes and stepped streets. Dominating all is the distinctive patterned tiled dome of the cathedral.

After checking out the town visit the seaside. There are several beach clubs to consider, like Bagni D'Arienzo, which is just outside of the center of Positano (they have a boat from the Positano pier--or Bar Bagni di Ferdinando in Positano. There is also D'Adolfo, which you have to get on another boat from Positano to get to, just like Arienzo. You can also go to a public beach if you'd like such as Fornillo. Almost 300 meters long, the beach was a favorite of Pablo Picasso because of its position between the medieval Trasita and Clavel Towers.

Positano beaches Fornillo, Arienzo, and Spiaggia Grande all received a Bandiera Blu (Blue Flag) in 2014 in recognition of its water quality, safety, and services offered. The Spiaggia Grande (large beach) has the glorious, rainbow-hued backdrop of the town, but for a more informal atmosphere and lush vegetation, follow the Via Positanesi d'America to the Fornillo beach.



From here, you can relax or participate in water sports such as windsurfing, snorkeling, and sailing. Please ask your apartment manager to check on whether or not reservations are required.

Friday, July 22

Depart Naples

Meet your private driver at 4:15 a.m. for your transfer to the Naples airport.

~ ARRIVEDERCI ITALIA! ~