

# AMALFI COAST TRAVEL GUIDE – LOGISTICS AND ITINERARY



My first big trip overseas without parents was to Italy with my girlfriends. Of all the places in the world that I had read about and not visited, the Amalfi Coast was top of my list. To this day, this is still one of the most memorable trips I have ever taken, and I think it is very valid to be on the top of everyone's bucket list!

## SHOULD I VISIT THE AMALFI COAST?

The Amalfi Coast really is one of the most amazing places ever. Yes it is very touristy and not a secret at all, so there are crowds and steep prices, but it's for a reason! It is so beautiful, and I loved it so much. It has everything I had always dreamed of about European beaches – the dramatic cliffsides, colorful cottages, hidden cove beaches, and amazing food. You should definitely go if you are thinking about it at all – just make sure you save up so that you can do it properly.

The Amalfi Coast is best added on to your southern Italy trip as it is pretty far from the more popular northern Italian towns like Florence and Venice. We did 3 nights in Rome, 1 night in Naples, and then went on to the Amalfi Coast with a stop in Pompeii on the way there. This was super fun! Other southern Italy destinations include Puglia, Sardinia, and Sicily.

Also, in my **Cinque Terre guide**, I cover the differences between Amalfi Coast and Cinque Terre if you are trying to choose – so check that out.

Once you're ready to book your trip, check out my **step by step trip booking guide** to make it seamless.

## WHAT TIME OF YEAR SHOULD I VISIT THE AMALFI COAST?

We went in late May, and the weather was much less warm than we had anticipated. Being from Texas, we just expected the beach to be beach-weather-warm in May, but we literally had to buy scarves and ponchos – more to come below on that – to survive the cold coming off the water. On the other hand, the crowds were not there yet in May which made it a lot more enjoyable and tourist-free. I do love a good people watching though, so don't let the crowds deter you during peak season. Like all of Europe, especially the beaches, peak season will be August, and the best weather will be May – September.

## HOW DO I GET TO THE AMALFI COAST?

Our trip started in Rome and ended in Positano. Along the way we trained to Naples and spent a night there, got a private car to take us to Amalfi so that we could make a pit stop in Pompeii, and then we ferried to Positano for our final night. I would not recommend spending any time in Naples if you are going for a nice Italian vibe – it was actually quite scary and crime-ridden. We did enjoy eating some authentic Napoli pizza, and our bed and breakfast was truly enjoyable, but not worth a detour if you have limited time in Italy. Pompeii was very cool if you are into that sort of thing. According to [Trenitalia](#), you can actually train to Pompeii and then train on to the Amalfi Coast, so that's an option as well.

### BY CAR

You are more than welcome to rent a car in Italy and do the driving yourself. The roads on the Amalfi coast are truly the most frightening roads I have ever seen, but if you are super confident, then go for it.

Another option is to get a private driver from either Rome or Naples (like we did). This will be pricy, and much pricier than a train, but say you're on your honeymoon or just feel like being fancy – go for it. Quick searches tell me it will cost about 400 Euros from Rome and 110 Euros from Naples (still have to pay for the train to Naples though).

### BY TRAIN

The most probable way that you will be reaching Amalfi is via train from Rome. A quick search on [Trenitalia](#) actually shows that there are direct trains to Salerno (the train hub of the Amalfi Coast) for either 1 hr 30 mins on the fast train or 3 hrs for half the price on the Intercity slow train. \*\*Please note that in my experience, trains in Italy are not very nice – they can be a little grungy and rarely run on their scheduled time. Maybe upgrading to first class could be worth it as well.

Once you get to Salerno, you can get to your destination along the coast via bus or ferry. Ferry is actually more direct because you won't have to change buses – [here is the ferry schedule here](#). Buses look a little trickier, but if you are used to figuring out public transportation, you will be fine. [Here is a bus schedule I found](#). It looks like if you are headed to Positano, you will switch buses in Amalfi.

There is another option to train to Naples and then take a regional train to Sorrento. You would not purchase your regional train to Sorrento until you get to Naples. We did this option on the way back to Rome, and the train was very grungy – so just be noted. Also note that Naples train station is rife with pickpockets, so be aware of your surroundings. From Sorrento, you also have the ferry or bus option. Here is a [bus schedule that goes to both Positano and Amalfi](#) – they note to sit on the right hand side for the best views! From personal experience, also know that if you get carsick or are hungover.... this is not the most fun trip with all the winding switchback roads. You've been warned! Here is the [ferry schedule from Sorrento to Positano](#) – change the Arrival to Amalfi if you are headed there.



## PRACTICAL TIPS

I can foresee two questions you have – how do you pick your transportation and how far in advance should you book it?

How to pick – it's really whatever you want to do. If you don't really care about being fancy or stopping in Pompeii, I would recommend taking the fast train from Rome to Salerno. From there, I would plan on taking the ferry because you can never get enough seaside views of the beautiful villages. If you want to come into the coast in style, then I would still train to Naples to save some money, and then get a drive from Naples to your final destination in the Amalfi Coast.

How far in advance – The fast trains from Rome will book up, whereas the slow and regional trains won't. So as soon as you know your plans, I would go ahead and book your train. If you are more of the wait and see type, you should not have any issues booking your train on the day of departure. As far as the ferries, the websites do say to book ahead of time, but I doubt you will have any problem booking once you get to Salerno, especially considering you may have train delays. If you are nervous, go ahead and book the ferry that you think you will most likely take. Don't fret too much about it.

## IS THERE A LANGUAGE BARRIER IN THE AMALFI COAST?

No. Like all touristy regions, all of the Italians will know how to speak English.

## WHERE SHOULD I STAY IN THE AMALFI COAST?

For us the choice was first between Amalfi and Positano, and second between a hotel or AirBnB. When we went, AirBnB was just becoming a thing, so we actually went the hotel route. Because we went the hotel route, hotels are so expensive that we chose to spend two of our three nights in Amalfi and just one in Positano to save money. If I were to give you advice or to go back, I would recommend budgeting to stay in Positano the whole time. It's so freaking adorable and cozy, and I loved it with all my heart. I

assume now that there are plenty more affordable options thanks to AirBnB. We at the time stayed in **Hotel Savoia**, and it had great views but was nothing super fancy (though the price felt otherwise).

Please note that there are lots of other towns on the Amalfi Coast that are much less touristy than Positano or Amalfi. I unfortunately have zero experience out of these two, but do your research to see if you can save some money / beat the crowds in another location – Sorrento and Ravello are supposed to be beautiful too. On **Mr. and Mrs. Smith**, there are six hotels around the Amalfi Coast that look so fabulous, maybe for a nice honeymoon or anniversary trip.

If you want to be super stylish in the Amalfi Coast, I would recommend using **TripAdvisor** to find a hotel. If you just want to be there / are on a budget, use **AirBnB** (though they still are not cheap).

*Side note on Capri:* you may be asking yourself if you should spend any nights on Capri. If you are a super fancy person, then the answer might be yes. We visited Capri on a boat, and it was a little too fancy for us. Everything was very expensive and the people were very fabulous. I enjoyed being in Positano so much that I can't imagine being happier on Capri, but talk to some friends that have stayed out there and see if it is the right move for you.

*Side note on how steep it is:* please be warned when packing your bags how steep the towns are on the Amalfi Coast. I was such an amateur and had packed by bag to the max capacity so it was a cool 50 pounds. When I had to walk up the stairs carrying my 50 pound bag to our hotel in Positano, I literally almost threw up and died and had a heart attack all at the same time. Either plan ahead of time and book a courier service to bring your bags up, or even smarter use **my packing guide to pack in a carry-on** and save yourself from the impending near-death experience.

## HOW DO I GET AROUND THE AMALFI COAST?

We have already discussed the bus and ferry situation for getting from Amalfi to Positano. There are also ferries from either village to Capri. When we relocated from Amalfi to Positano, we took a ferry. Within each village, you can of course just walk everywhere.

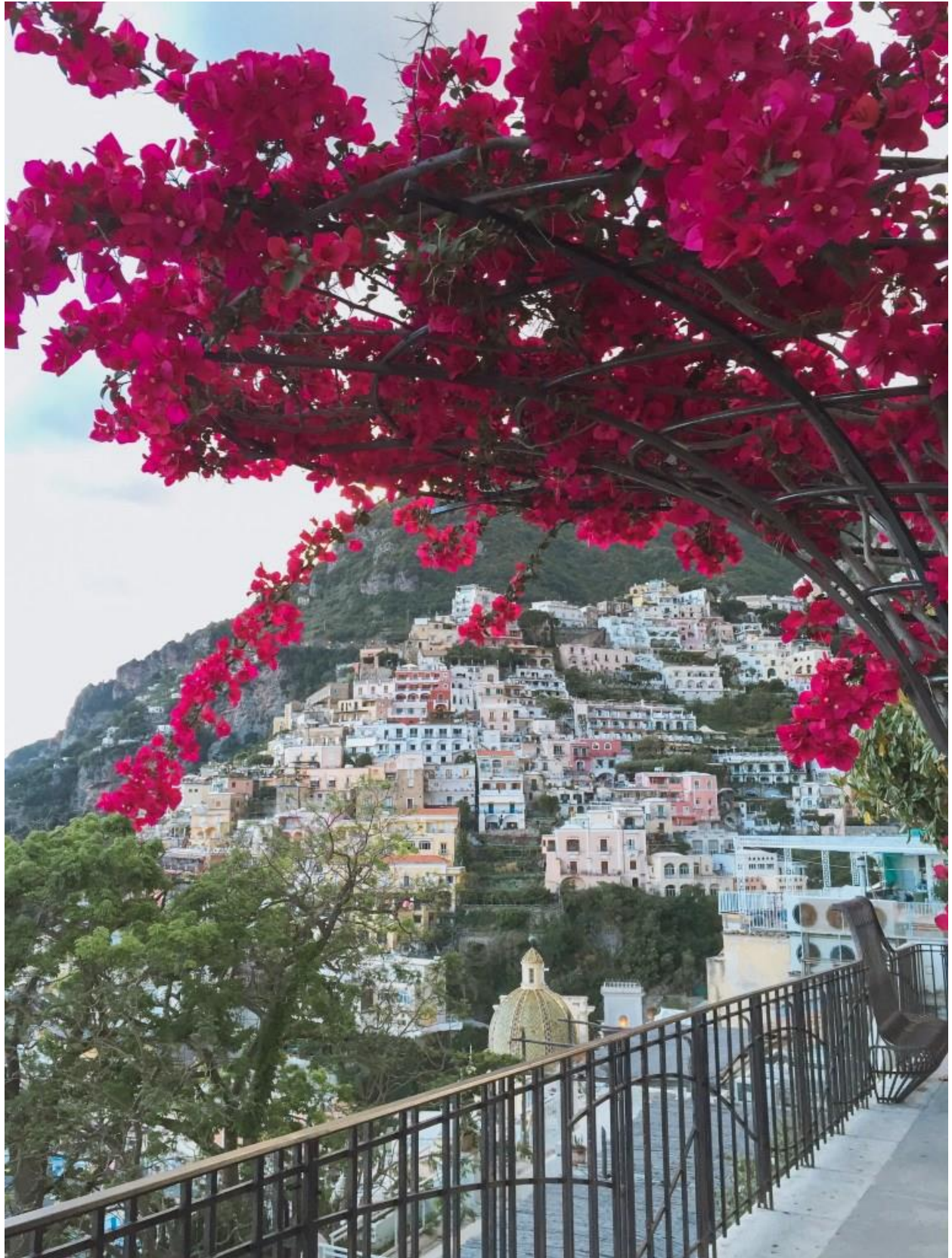
## HOW MANY DAYS SHOULD I SPEND IN THE AMALFI COAST?

I think 3 nights is just right. Our itinerary was perfect in that we explored a little, boated around a little, and got two full days of bliss. To be clear, I would much rather spend 3 weeks than 3 days, but please don't short yourself anything less than that.

## WHAT IS THERE TO DO IN THE AMALFI COAST?

### WALK THE STREETS

Honestly, the true beauty in in the Amalfi Coast is just being there. It's just so fabulous and beautiful, and you don't need to do much more than exist and be thankful. Both towns have basically one street that winds up into the cliff that is just covered in shops. Save your money for the shops in Positano because they are so freaking adorable. I loved all the linen stuff, the handmade shoes, the pottery, and the lemon shop there. I could spend all day walking in and out of those shops touching, smelling, and looking at the pretty things.







## BEACH

Two of my friends laid on the beach while we shopped. The beaches are rocky and small, and not a huge feature of the area. You have to have Euros to rent chairs, umbrellas, and towels, and you don't get waiter service like other areas in Europe. It's nice to do if you have time, but the real beauty of the villages is just exploring.



CAPRI/BOAT RIDE



We did an all day private boat ride that was super fun and glamorous. Obviously you could also do a shared one and spend much less money, we were just feeling extra. We boated along the coast which is just so freaking dreamy and went to Capri. We docked at Capri for lunch and walked around for a couple hours. Capri really intimidated me because we were wearing cover ups and flip flops, and everyone looked very wealthy and impeccably dressed in normal, non-beach clothes (granted it was like 50F windchill which we were not expecting). All the stores were also very expensive and pretty, see my souvenir guide below to see what was worth it. All in all, it was fun to be able to say I went to Capri, and the streets are really cute. Just be warned and prepare by packing a glamorous cover-up or something.

Also do be smarter about the weather than we were, and dress accordingly. It is colder on the water than on land, and we were there in May. I am sure in August there is no need for a sweater, but we definitely should have had one on.

As mentioned above, you can also get to Capri via ferry to save a LOT of money.

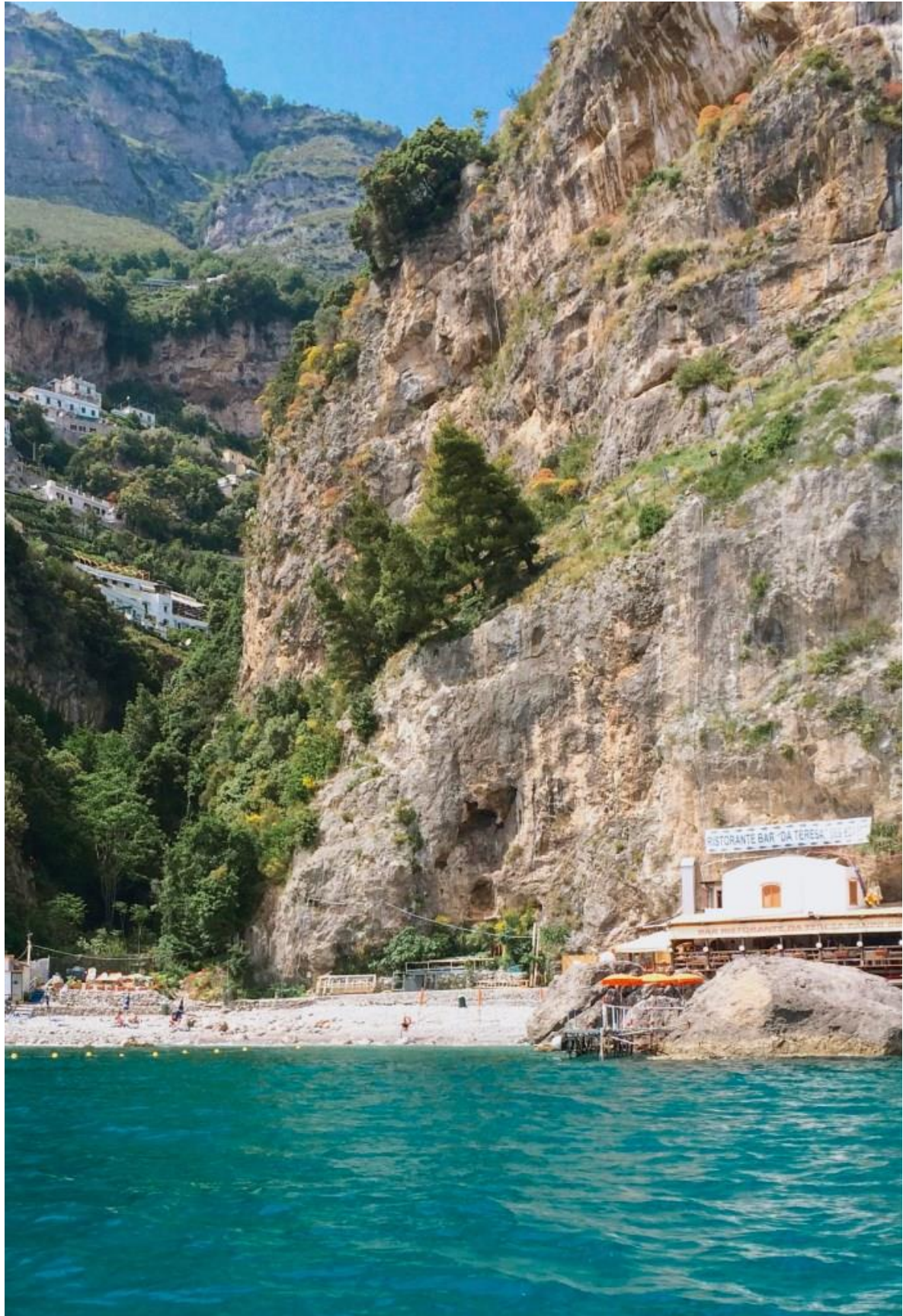


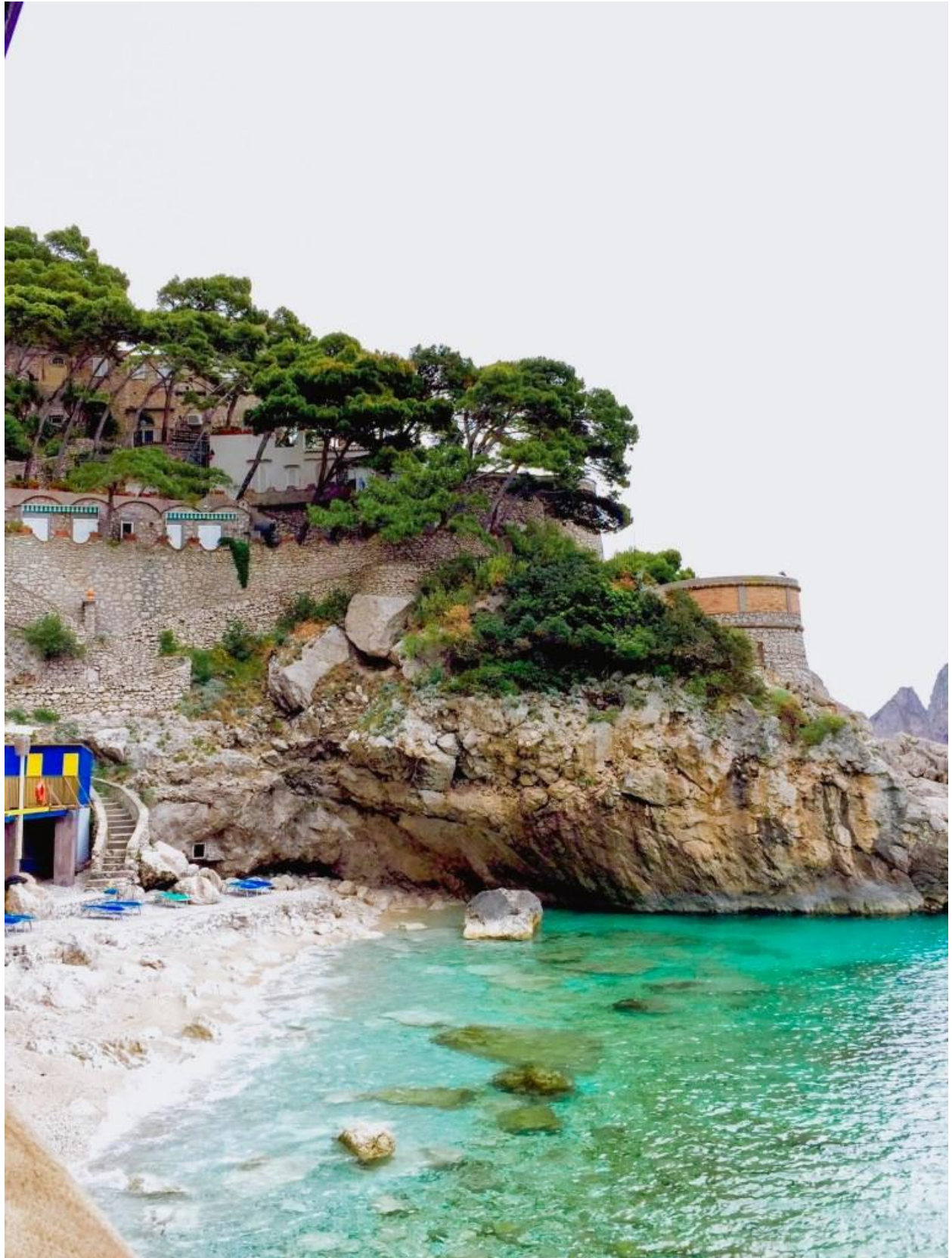


## SANTA CROCE BEACH

When we got to our hotel in Amalfi we asked the front desk to help us get to **Santa Croce** – a seaside restaurant we had read about that you can only get to via boat. Our concierge called a boat and we walked to the dock and got on the boat after paying him 10 Euro each. He boated us over to this beach that has two restaurants on it and chairs and umbrellas. It was so cool. It was just like this private little beach that we spent a few hours on. I would really recommend it. Picture below approaching the beach and of our view from the restaurant for lunch.

According to the interwebs, to find it sans concierge, walk to the port of Amalfi and look for a boat that says “Santa Croce” on it; it will take you to the restaurant. After you have lunch, you can lounge under its umbrellas and chairs. Stay as long as you want, then hop back on the boat.









## COOKING CLASS

Bon Appetit talks about this cooking class, so it must be good. It's in a hotel in Ravello hosted out of the hotel's garden. You supposedly make a full four-course meal paired with wines – DREAMY.

### Cooking Ravello

## FIORDO DI FURORE

So I hadn't seen this place all over Instagram before I went to the Amalfi Coast, but I wish I had so I could check it out. Do a Google Images search on Fiordo di Furore for this super cool looking beach just behind this arch that I took a picture of from the water. I'm not sure how to get there, but it is in between Amalfi and Positano.



## WHERE DO I EAT IN THE AMALFI COAST?

So the whole area is just so overpriced. We got free breakfast at our hotel, lunch wherever we felt like it in the town, and dinner at fancy restaurants on the water. Dining on the water is so fun and fancy, but it really is so expensive – so maybe just go for one big night out. The most fun part about eating dinner on the Amalfi Coast is getting a free shot of Limoncello with your bill!

One place that we had an amazing meal at was **Buca di Bacco** in Positano – we actually ran into Giada De Laurentiis here because she was filming a show for the Food Network! So it has to be good!

## IS THERE A PLACE TO GO OUT IN THE AMALFI COAST?

YES! The whole reason I ever made this heading for my blog was because of my night out in Positano. When we ran into Giada at Buca di Bacco, she told us that we had to go to **Music on the Rocks**, so we did! It's a night club right on the beach built into the side of the cliff. We spent our last night here dancing around to really fun music, and as a super-fan of dancing around to really fun music, this was one of my favorite memories from not only our trip, but any trips I've ever taken. You can't miss it if you are headed to Positano!

## WHAT SHOULD I PACK FOR THE AMALFI COAST?

I wore sundresses and cover ups always. At night I also wore dresses with a jean jacket and a pashmina because it was chilly on the water. They love linen there so linen is always fun to wear and buy.

## WHAT SOUVENIRS SHOULD I BUY IN THE AMALFI COAST?

It was very hard for me to leave without 1000s of souvenirs, so let me know what you should look for.

**LINEN!!**



I wanted allll the linens. Capri and Positano definitely had the best shops. Just try and leave without some kind of linen tunic, a linen scarf, linens for your dining room, linens for your bed, or a white linen button down for every man in your life... just try.

## **LEMONS!!**

There is one lemon shop in Positano that you won't be able to miss. It smells like lemons from like 100 yards away. Buy all the lemon candles, lemon soaps, limoncello, lemon candies, lemon everything.

## **POTTERY!!**

The good thing is that the pottery in Italy is very similar to the pottery that you'll see all over the Mediterranean coast – so if you miss buying some here, you'll see it again in Greece, Portugal, Spain, France, etc. Spoon rests, wine corks, oil holders, and shot glasses are all great gifts to bring back. Giant serving platters and bowls will be hard to walk away from.

## **SHOES!!**

Leather shoes are huge in the Amalfi coast. I bought a pair of Tod's look-alike light pink driving moccasins for 60 euros that I still wear all the time. My friends got leather sandals that they handmade for them there that they loved.

## **CAPRI CASHMERE AND WOOL!!**

So since it was freezing cold on our boat trip and we were wearing sundresses and sandals, we all bought some form of warmth when we docked in Capri out of necessity. I actually balled out and bought a merino wool scarf and a hot pink cashmere poncho. I still wear both of these items to this day, and they're some of my favorite souvenirs I've ever bought. Take a look around the stores in Capri and don't be afraid to buy a fancy souvenir that you'll always cherish.

## **MY PERFECT 3 DAY AMALFI COAST ITINERARY**

### **DAY 1**

Check into your hotel, and if you get there before the day is done, head to Santa Croce Beach for lunch / snacks / lounging. Go to Music on the Rocks if you have time!

### **DAY 2**

We spent our second day on the boat and going to Capri. I think going to Capri was a great way to spend Day 2, but could easily switch with Day 3.

### **DAY 3**

We spent the third day traveling to Positano, exploring the town, and dancing the night away at Music on the Rocks. I would highly recommend doing this too! You could also do a little exploring in Amalfi if you didn't stay there either today or on Day 2.

## **HONESTLY, HOW MUCH DID YOU SPEND IN THE AMALFI COAST?**

I honestly can't find any detailed information about how much everything spent in my emails since I went on this trip 4 years ago. I'll give you ballparks of what I think / what it looks like things cost today.

Transportation – 100 Euros (driver to Amalfi at 75 Euros each, train from Positano for 25 Euros)

Hotel – 250 Euros (assuming 100 per person in Positano and 75 per person per night in Amalfi)

Boat Tour – 150 Euros (I think it was 600 total, quite a lot, I know)

Meals – 200 Euros (also not cheap)

Purchases – 300 Euros (I went all out here as well...)

**TOTAL FOR ONE FOR 3 NIGHTS – 1000 EUROS**