

THE AMALFI COAST!

A GUIDE BY
THE KITCHY KITCHEN

WHY AMALFI?

At the end of our honeymoon trip to Italy, Craig and I headed to the world famous Amalfi Coast! During our stay, we visited a few of the Campania region's coastal towns, like Positano, Sorrento, Ravello, Amalfi and more! We didn't make it to any of the three island outposts of Capri, Ischia or Procida—though they seem like worthwhile destinations if your schedule and budget allow. If your next trip to Italy takes you to this stunning 50-kilometer stretch of Italian coastline, here are a few things to eat, see and do while you're there!

xoxo,
Claire





OVERALL AMALFI NOTES:

If I had to choose three things that encapsulate the Amalfi Coast, I'd have to pick: limoncello, ceramics and the landscape. Let's start with the later because the scenery here is absolutely insane! There's beautiful terraced towns sprinkled with cotton-candy colored buildings, and of course, the vibrant blue water lapping up on picturesque beaches with jaw-dropping cliffs. These crazy cliffs are what make this place famous and they also make driving here both breathtaking and terrifying! Seriously, the cliffside highways are pretty shocking at first, but you get used to it after a while. I'd say after about Day 3, Craig and I were zipping up and down the highways like pros! Hot tip: Don't look out the window and down, it's a giant drop down to the water and very unnerving. If you're not up for all of the white-knuckle driving, consider hiring a driver or taking public transportation (there are tour buses that zip up and down the coastline).

Next item of business, limoncello! When in the South of Italy, skip the gelato and go straight for the limoncello instead. Don't worry, it's not hard to find. It's offered with most meals here, and it's totally worth trying. Also worth mentioning, though I do not recall the name, but during our afternoon in Positano we stopped at a cart selling the most delicious lemon granita! If you happen to spot this cart, be sure to stop. It was was such a tasty treat!

As far as the ceramics I mentioned earlier, there are shops all over this area that specialize in Italian pottery. They're over priced for the most part, but worth popping in to a few to get a feel for the local style. Lastly, the most popular town to visit, and quite possibly the most beautiful, is Positano. While I don't recommend staying here (it's where all of the tourists and college students are), it is worth spending a day here because there is a lot to do and see in the area. More on that below!

WHERE TO STAY:

We stayed in Ravello, a beautiful ancient city with a lovely small town feel. There was this gorgeous ancient church there that was recently refurbished and you can walk around inside, which I really loved. For romance, stay at Villa Cimbrone, especially if you're here on honeymoon! This place was built by Baron Grimthorpe (of Big Ben fame!) at the beginning of the 20th century and the gorgeous rooms are like mini museums, filled with antique furniture and frescoed ceilings. There's also a beautiful library with a massive stone fireplace, as well as, expansive gardens (which are also open to the public) with dramatic views. Plus, the breakfast here is insane! They bring lots of foods to nibble on (picnic-style, my favorite!) and it all feels very fancy and luxurious. Greta Garbo and her fiancé eloped here in 1938 for pete's sake! There's also a Michelin star restaurant on the premises and a secret gelateria with vines growing inside of it. The gelato wasn't life-changing but the fact that it is so hidden away and covered in pretty vines makes it worthy of a visit in my book. While you're in Ravello, be sure to visit Villa Rufolo. It overlooks the Gulf of Salerno and it has beautiful towers, cascading gardens filled with exotic plants and flowers, and views for days! Other great places to stay include: San Pietro Hotel, Santa Caterina in Amalfi, or Casa Angelina, just outside Praiano.





WHAT TO WEAR:

When packing, think: Kathryn Hepburn on holiday, and you'll look great! We're talking, silk, cotton, linen, straw hats, and anything Guicci! You also can't go wrong wearing white here, so pack a lot of options to mix and match, and have fun with it! It's going to be warm during the day and cold at night because this area is all on the coast. So you're going to need to bring a jacket or a warm shawl. Another thing to remember, if you plan to eat at Michelin star restaurants you'll need to bring formal wear (blazers for men for sure). We didn't rent a boat while we were here, but you can, and it seems like an amazing way to see everything! So if you plan to do this, you'll want sensible footwear and a jacket that won't leave you shivering if it gets a little wet.

SHOPPING:

Positano has the best shopping, as well as, the more classically photogenic areas of Italy. Think: Super clear waters and beautiful cotton candy, easter egg colored buildings.

BOTTEGA DI BRUNELLA, POSITANO

Want to drape yourself in linen during your trip? Hit up this chic boutique for all things linen! You'll fit right in during your stay wearing anything from this chic shop.

EVERYWHERE

If you're on the Amalfi coast, you're basically required to buy two things to bring home: Pottery and Limoncello. Luckily, every town on the coast has plenty of both, so you'll never be without options. Positano is the most crowded and touristy, so expect the prices to be a bit steeper there.







FOOD & DRINK: SOME OF MY FAVS

TAVERNA DEL CAPITANO

This restaurant is also in the town of Massa Lubrense and comes highly recommended. It's a little hard to find but definitely worth the journey. The seafood is incredible, but so is the wine list, and it's been that way for fifty years.

QUATTRO PASSI

This spot is also located in Massa Lubrense. It's a lovely Two Michelin star restaurant, featuring fresh seafood and handmade pasta. My favorite was the zucchini risotto with local prawns, topped with zucchini flowers.

TORRE DEL SARACINO

You'll find this restaurant in Vico Equense, and it's the very best of the best, so try to make your way here if you can! The atmosphere is "white tablecloth" and the food quite composed, but so delicious. Make sure to try the olive and fennel soup with crispy fish and almond puree - delicious local flavors.

HOTEL LE SIRENUSE

This place is quite tasty but also slightly Americanized, meaning, just look up the geotag on instagram. The dining room is gorgeous, with indoor vines creeping up the walls, and the food is fresh and bright. Also, the view of Positano and the sea is one of the best in the area.

LA CAMBUSA

Fresh, fresh, fresh! Hit this place up for dinner after checking out the local markets so you're well informed on what's what before ordering. Opt for the simplest options to really taste the local flavors - grilled sea food, handmade pasta, and plates of mozzarella with fresh produce.



FOOD & DRINK: SOME OF MY FAVS

CHEZ BLACK

You'll find this gem in Positano, right down on the seashore. There's not many things better in life than enjoying great food with an amazing view, so this place should be at the top of your must-do list while in the area. Think: Fresh seafood, bright flavors, grilled fish, prawns, etc. Our favorite dish here was grilled mozzarella wrapped in lemon leaves. So good. They also serve delicious plates of fresh prawns served on traditional Amalfi ceramics.

DA GEMMA

The seafood here is so good. We ordered a few different pastas with seafood and everything was just PERFECT. Delicious, simple foods. Come here to sit on the terrace and drink an ice cold fiano while eating alici marinati! Next to it you'll find A Sciulia di De Vita Maria frozen yogurt—we didn't get to try it (too full!) but it looked very good.

LA TAGLIATA (ALSO REFERRED TO AS IL RITROVO)

Located high above Positano in the town of Montepertuso, a lovely area that's a nice relief from the chi-chi beach and Armani crowd, you'll find this amazing restaurant serving delicious meat and domesticated game in a fun, grill-in-the-room atmosphere. It's a must visit for sure!

HOTEL LO SCOGLIO

The combination of a perfect view and a perfect meal is hard to come by, but this restaurant located in the town of Massa Lubrense has both. Make sure to try the marinated specialities, all made in house and so delicious.





WINERIES:

CANTINE MARISA CUOMO

Many of the Amalfi wineries are a bit further inland, but Marisa Cuomo is right on the coast, overlooking the sea. This winery is so pretty and the white wines here are really delicious. Come here for formal wine tasting with restraint. The lunch we had here was light and simple but the wine was really excellent. The most fascinating part of the tour was the vineyard on the cliffs - the vines grow on a trellis overhead, for easy picking.

Ciro Picariello

Further inland near Avellino, this winery creates interesting fiano sparkling that has to be disgorged before serving. Imagine flavors of beeswax and lavender honey, with plenty of minerality. Perfect for enjoying seaside.

Luigi Tecce

Taurasi appellation near Irpinia. These Aglianico wines are powerful, weird and wonderful. The production of Taurasi is very limited, vinification takes place without intervention in large open chestnut vats. Full-bodied with firm tannins and high acidity, giving them good aging potential.

Casebianche

Further south in Paestum, which is an ancient little town famous for its water buffalo. If you go down there, there's have an organic farm called Vannulo with a "yogurteria" /ice cream shop next door with all buffalo's milk products and it's AMAZING! The winery grows mostly Aglianico and Fiano, in the area of Torchiara, inside the Cilento national park, among citrus, olive and fig trees.

De Conciliis

This is where my dear friend Whitney Adams worked harvest in 09 (she recommended all of these fabulous wineries). I love them. Bruno is the winemaker and the person I lived with. If you do go down to Paestum, they are nearby in Prignano Cilento. Classic Campania reds and interesting skin contact Fiano.







